

**SITUATING BULLFIGHTING CULTURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABAKAKAMEGA OF WESTERN KENYA SINCE**

1850

Larry Iswekha Chiteyi

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Conferment
of the Degree of Master of Arts in History of Masinde Muliro University of
Science and Technology**

November, 2023

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources and support and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of any certificate degree in any university or for any other award.

Signature Date

Name: Larry Iswekha Chiteyi

REG. NO: HIS/G/01-54511/2020

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, a thesis entitled “**Situating Bullfighting Culture and its Influence on the Development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850.**”

Sign Date

Rev. Fr. Dr. Lusambili Kizito Muchanga

Department of Social Sciences Education,

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.

Sign Date

Dr. Ahaya Luke Ochieng

Department of Social Sciences,

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, for giving me peaceful moments and encouragement during research, to my children, parents and siblings for their moral support and vigor to push me on during my study period.

COPYRIGHT

The Berne Convention, the Copyright Act of 1999, and other International and State Laws protecting intellectual property provide protection for this thesis as a copyrighted work. Except for brief excerpts in fair dealing for research or private study, critical scholarly review or Postgraduate Studies on behalf of the authors and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, it may not be reproduced in whole or part in any way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first thank Almighty God for affording me good strength, energy and health during the entire thesis writing period. I am grateful to my first supervisor Rev. Fr. Dr. Kizito Muchanga, for his guidance, supervision, and support during my research and my second supervisor Dr. Ahaya Ochieng for his readiness to align my work in a scholarly manner. I must also underscore the great contribution by Prof. P. G. Okoth during my presentations at the department and school levels. Many thanks go to Dr. Runaku and Mr. Chvasu Onzere for helping me to understand the rigors and expectations of postgraduate work. Similarly, I express my gratitude to Mr. Antone Obugo my research assistant for his sacrifice during data collection and supporting me during data analysis. In a more special way, the support from my colleagues; Josephat Kemei and Pascaline Okoba was vital to this study.

I appreciate my employer -One Acre Fund, for the material support and Mr. Martin Mudamba-my former manager, who gave me ample time to go for further studies. In addition, much thanks to Michael Kegode, who offered to step in and took up some of my duties and responsibilities at work during my research.

At a spiritual level, my utmost gratitude goes to my church through the Senior Pastor, Rev. Edward Chilongo for the continued spiritual guidance throughout this research. For this work to be accomplished, several institutions were instrumental in facilitating and helping access sources and materials. They include, the University Library in Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, The Kenya National Archives-Nairobi and the Kenya National Libraries in Kakamega and Eldoret. The Department of Social Science Education (SSE), School of Arts and of Social Science (SASS) and the Directorate of Post-Graduate Studies (DPS) at Masinde Muliro University were all extremely helpful especially with vital comments during defenses. Higher Education Loaning Board (HELB) was most helpful to me through financial support all through my studies.

ABSTRACT

Worldwide bullfighting culture is believed to have been born out of spiritual beliefs. The cultural sport is known for entertainment, cultural, economic and political development. The current study unraveled the phenomenon of bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850. It had three objectives: To trace the origins and development of bullfighting culture, to assess various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega and to examine the influence of bullfighting on the development of the people of Abakakamega since 1850. In the scope, the study was carried out in Kakamega County, focussing on two sub-counties that are occupied by Abakakamega, which are Ikolomani and Shinyalu. The limitations of the study were: First, getting enough information from the Kenya National Archives was a challenge. Little had been documented as far as bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega was concerned. This called for the researcher to utilize the secondary and oral information. The second challenge was getting sensitive information on why bullfighting is so much associated to the owner emerged. To cab this, the researcher also developed good relationships by remaining objective. The study aimed at informing the world of academia with relevant information as far as bullfighting culture is concerned and inform the legislature among the Abakakamega to come up with laws that govern this cultural sport. The study was justified in three ways; academic, philosophical and policy wise. This study was guided by various literatures. They are arranged from the global, continental, regional, national to the study area. The study adopted three theories: Political culture, articulation of modes of production and functionalism theories. This study adopted qualitative research approach. This is because it majorly based its arguments from videos, people's ideas and personal opinions and written data from various scholars. Descriptive research design was also used. This is because, the study intended to have an in depth examining of the history of bullfighting culturally, politically and economically. The target population included the people of Shinyalu and Ikolomani constituencies. Purposive and snowballing techniques were used. Being descriptive in nature, theme and content analysis was employed. The study was further guided by various ethical considerations that ensured attainment of quality work. The study's major findings as per the objectives were as follows; in the first object, bullfighting origins among the Abakakamega originated from interaction of bulls in the grazing fields, wrestling and around the local administrators' (*Abaami*) homesteads. In the second objective, the study found out that as a social and geographical phenomenon, culture and entertainment are the main contributors of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Finally, in the third objective, the study found out that bullfighting is a game and a source of income for many bull owners in Shinyalu and Ikolomani sub- counties in Kakamega County. Major conclusions were also made as per the objectives as follows; in the first objective, the study concluded that the concept of bullfighting in the Abakakamega community of western Kenya has a long history with its origins and developments being traced from within. In the second objective, the study concluded that bullfighting seen today has undergone continuous development since pre-colonial period with a number of aspects contributing to this. Lastly in the third objective, the study concluded that the bulls are highly honored as they play a greater role in cultural, economic and political life of the Abakakamega community. The following recommendations were made as per the objectives of the study. First, the historicity of bullfighting needs to be more unraveled and properly documented. Secondly, scholars from various disciplines need to put their minds together and come up with robust information attached to bullfighting among the Abakakamega to avoid clashing of its history as it is now between the Isukha and Idakho. Thirdly, the church leaders and the community among the Abakakamega should have a dialogue on how to accommodate this sport and not to be viewed as an outdated culture as it is rooted in the community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
TITLE PAGE.....	i
DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xiv
LIST OF PLATES	xv
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvi
OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS	xvii
FRENCH AND SPANISH WORDS	xviii
THE LUHYIA AND KISWAHILI CONCEPTS IN THIS STUDY	xx
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Objectives of the study.....	5
1. 3.1 General objective	5
1.3.2 Specific objectives	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study	5
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	7

1.8 Significance of the Study	8
1.9 Justification of the Study.....	9
1.10 Literature Review	12
1.10.1 The Origin and Development of Bullfighting culture.....	13
1.10.2 Aspects Contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting	31
1.10.3 Influence of Bullfighting to Development	44
1.11.1 Political Culture theory	53
1.11.2 Functionalism theory.....	58
1.11.3 Articulation of Mode of Production Theory.....	64
1.11.4 Relationship between Political Culture, Articulation and Functionalism Theories	78
1.12 Summary of the Gaps identified in Literature Review	80
1.13.0 Research Methodology.....	82
1.13.1 Qualitative Research Approach.....	83
1.13.2 Research design	83
1.13.3 Target population.....	84
1.13.4 Sample size and sampling technique	85
1.13.5 Research instruments	87
1.13.5.1 Primary Data.....	88
1.13.5.1.1 Questionnaire.....	89
1.13.5.1.2 Focus Group Discussion.....	90
1.13.5.1.3 Observation.....	93
1.13.5.1.4 Archival Sources	94
1.13.5.2 Secondary Data.....	95
1.13.6 Data Collection Procedures	95
1.13.7 Validity.....	96
1.13.8 Data Analysis.....	96

1.13.8 Ethical Considerations 97

CHAPTER TWO..... 99

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BULLFIGHTING CULTURE AMONG THE ABAKAKAMEGA 99

2.0. Introduction 99

2.1 Historicizing Bullfighting and its development 99

2.2 Bullfighting as an inherited culture 119

2.3.0 How bullfighting is organized among the Abakakamega 128

2.3.1 Organization of Bullfighting during Pre-colonial and Colonial periods 129

2.3.2 Continuity of Bullfighting in post-colonial period to date..... 134

2.3.3 Kakamega Bullfighting Association..... 142

2.3.4 Duration/Length of Bullfighting..... 156

2.3.5 Rituals and Taboos involved in Bullfighting among the Abakakamega 158

2.3.6 How bullfighting competition is organized among the Abakakamega..... 168

2.3.7 The use of *isukuti* in bullfighting..... 171

2.4 Naming of Bulls among the Abakakamega 171

2.5 Beliefs in the use of herbs and communication with spirits among the Abakakamega..... 174

2.6 Communication with Bulls 181

2.7 Animal Rights During Bullfighting among the Abakakamega..... 184

2.8 Chapter Summary 186

CHAPTER THREE..... 188

ASPECTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF BULLFIGHTING AMONG THE ABAKAKAMEGA 188

3.0 Introduction 188

3.1 Social Cultural Activities contributing to growth of bullfighting	188
3.1.2 Bullfighting as an entertainment.....	188
3.1.3 Bullfighting and festival events.....	189
3.1.4 Church events as a reason to bullfighting growth	192
3.1.5 How Death Sparks Bullfighting	193
3.1.6.0 Bullfighting as a shared responsibility across different Ages and Sex.....	193
3.1.6.1 Teenagers and Bullfighting	194
3.1.6 .2 Youth and Bullfighting	195
3.1.6 .3 Role of elders in bullfighting as a factor for its growth	198
3.1.6.4 Women and Bullfighting	199
3.1.6.5 Men and bullfighting.....	201
3.1.7 Friendship as an aspect for growth of bullfighting culture	202
3.1.8 Availability of Herbs among the Isukha and Idakho communities	202
3.1.9 Availability of grazing fields among the Abakakamega.....	203
3.2.0 Economic and Political Aspects of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.....	205
3.2.1 Economic Benefits from bullfighting	205
3.2.2 Commercial Activity.....	209
3.3.0 Political Aspects contributing to bullfighting growth.....	213
3.3.1 The colonial master and bullfighting	213
3.3.2 The role of <i>Abaami</i> among the Abakakamega as a reason to bullfighting growth	214
3.3.3 Mobilization and County support.....	215
3.3.4 Support from local administration.....	216
3.4 Chapter Summary	222
CHAPTER FOUR	223

INFLUENCE OF BULLFIGHTING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABAKAKAMEGA SINCE 1850	223
4.0 Introduction	223
4.1.0 Bullfighting and Social-economic Developments	223
4.1.2 Direct effect	224
4.1.3 The indirect effect on Bullfighting.	229
4.1.4 Induced effects.....	231
4.1.5 Bullfighting and Tourism among the Abakakamega.....	231
4.2.0 Bullfighting and the Cultural Development of Abakakamega.....	233
4.2.1 Bullfighting as a form of entertainment.....	233
4.2.2 Bullfighting and Festivals among the Isukha and Idakho.....	236
4.3.0 How bullfighting has influenced Politics among Abakakamega	242
4.3.1 Politicians and bullfighting among the Abakakamega	242
4.3.2 Bullfighting and community leadership.....	248
4.3.3 Chapter Summary	250
CHAPTER FIVE	253
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	253
5.0 Introduction	253
5.1 Summary of Key Findings	253
5.1.1 Assessment of the Origin and development of Bullfighting Culture	253
5.1.2 Aspects contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting among the Abakakamega.....	261
5.1.2.1 Aspects contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting during Pre-colonial period	261
5.1.2.2 Aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting during the Colonial period	263

5.1.2.3 Aspects that led to Growth of Bullfighting during Post-colonial period to date	264
5.2.0 Examining the Influence of Bullfighting on the Development of the Abakakamega Since 1850.....	265
5.2.1 Influence of Bullfighting on Social-cultural Development.....	266
5.2.2 Influence of Bullfighting on Social-economic Development.....	268
5.2.3 Influence of Bullfighting on Political Development.....	269
5.3 Critics of Bullfighting.....	269
5.4. Conclusions.....	272
5.5 Recommendations.....	275
5.6 Suggestions for further research.....	277
REFERENCES.....	278
Book Chapters.....	281
Journal Articles, Reviews and Papers.....	282
Online Sources.....	286
Published and Unpublished Thesis.....	288
Unpublished Works.....	288
Archival Sources.....	289
APPENDICES.....	290
Appendix I: Questionnaires.....	290
Appendix II: List of Key Informants (Interview and Oral Interviews).....	292
Appendix III: FGD 1-Bull Owners from Shinyalu.....	294
Appendix IV: FGD 2-Bull Owners from Malinya.....	295
Appendix IV: FGD 3: Local and Community Leaders from Shinyalu.....	296
Appendix V: Local and Community Leaders from Ikolomani.....	297

Appendix VI: DPS –MMUST Approval Letter	298
Appendix V: NACOSTI Letter	299
Appendix VI: Research Approval letter from County Commissioner- Kakamega County.....	301
Appendix VII: TSC County Director of Education Authorization	302
Appendix VIII: Letter of Information	303
Appendix IX: Consent Form for Respondents.....	304

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AD: Anno Domini to mean in the year of the Lord

BC: Before Christ

BCLB: Betting Control and Licensing Board

CGK: County Government of Kakamega

DPS: Directorate of Post Graduate Studies

DPS: Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

E.U: European Union

EAC: East African Coast

FGDs: Focus Group Discussions

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

Ibid: Has been used to mean “in the same place.”

ISBN: International Standard Book Number

KBA: Kakamega Bullfighting Association

MMUST: Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

NACOSTI: National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation

OP. Cit: is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase *opere citato*, meaning "in the work cited."

PAN: Portuguese Animals National Party

SASS: School Arts and Social Science

Sp: Species

UDP: United Democratic Party

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1 : <i>Showing how bulls locking horn among the Abakakamega.....</i>	126
Plate 2 : <i>Showing invitation to bullfighting event</i>	141
Plate 3 : <i>Showing how the community embraces bullfighting</i>	146
Plate 4 : <i>A photo showing bullfighters carrying traditional rods during an event ...</i>	148
Plate 5 : <i>Showing a name of a bull that died.....</i>	151
Plate 6 : <i>Showing bull being transported to the fighting field</i>	154
Plate 7 : <i>a photo showing young boys training a bull on how to fight by watching others fighting</i>	198
Plate 8 : <i>Showing motorcycles used to ferry people attending bullfighting</i>	213
Plate 9 : <i>Showing fans in a bullfighting arena-Malinya</i>	216
Plate 10 : <i>Showing people cheering bulls during a competition events at Malinya..</i>	220
Plate 11 : <i>Showing some youths with clothes written bull names</i>	225
Plate 12 : <i>Showing a bull owner and the researcher</i>	238
Plate 13 : <i>Showing one of the politicians-Boni Khalwale on his entry to the bullfighting arena being carried by a volunteering muscular supporter.</i>	244

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 : A table showing sampled respondents per category.	87
Table 2 : Showing Krejcie and Morgan way of getting sample size.....	88

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Bull Owner: It has been used to refer to a farmer among the Abakakamega who has invested in a bull for bullfighting purpose.

Bullfighting: Referring to physical contest that involves a bullfighter attempting to subdue, immobilize or kill a bull, usually according to rules, guidance, or cultural expectations in countries such as Spain. Colombia, Portugal, South Africa –Zulu. In Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda and among the Abakakamega, it involves two animals (bulls) locking horns among the Abakakamega.

Bullfighting culture: The term has been used in this study to denote the place of belief, customs and practices by communities through the use of bulls in entertainment, bonding people, funerals.

Colonial Period: The term has been used in the current study to refer to the time when Kenya became a British protectorate in the year 1895, and a colony from 1920 to 1963.

Community: A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.

Culture: The ideas, customs, and social behavior of Abakakamega-Isukha and Idakho communities.

Development: A process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, social and political components. In the study, it has been used to mean progress that ensures continuity.

Diehard: People who are strong or fantastically determined or devoted in support of bullfighting.

Growth: It has been used to mean, an increase in numbers, importance and physical size. Therefore, it has been used in this study to refer to the changes that bullfighting culture has undergone since its origin in the pre-colonial period in Isukha and Idakho.

Luhya community: These are groups of Bantu, natives of Western Kenya.

Pre-colonial Period: Occurring or existing prior to colonial period or colonization of Kenya.

Ordinary Population: This is referring to a type of group that is not much privileged often not receiving hereditary titles. It has been used in this study to refer to the Isukha and Idakho communities who supports the bullfighting culture.

Sport: In this study, it has been used to mean bringing bulls together to lock horns as a form of cultural entertainment.

FRENCH AND SPANISH WORDS

Caballeros or cavalleros: Spanish gentlemen who support human bullfighters on the bullfighting arena.

Course landaise: Is an ancient form of bullfighting and bull leaping held in oval or rectangular arenas covered in sand that involved no bloodshed.

Fiesta nacional: National Festival.

Korida: A bullfight.

La ligah: The league.

Matador: A human bull fighter.

Plaza de toros: An open public space or field for bull fights.

Plaza: Is a large open public space founded in Spain for cultural sport.

Toreros: A bullfighter-human.

Toro de lidia: Is a fighting bull.

Toro: A bull.

THE LUHYIA AND KISWAHILI CONCEPTS IN THIS STUDY

Biachi: Traditional granaries

Bihunwa: Young bulls

Ichilishi: A masculine bull among the Abakakamega

Ikhabuse: A type of grass that grows independently in virgin lands that is sweet for animals

Isukura: Salty water sweet for animals among the Abakakamega

Isukuti: Has been used to refer to a traditional drum that produces musical beats that inspires Abakakamega to dance during a bullfight.

Khubunzulukha: To break into pieces

Khumala: To cause death or harm as a result of traditional beliefs or practices

Khwilaha: It involves mentioning spirits of the dead in one's lineage asking them to bless the bull or asking for victory among others

Lirimo: Sword

Makumbusho: Memorial ceremony

Malika: Funeral

Miandu: The word has been used to refer to wealth in terms of number of herds, harvests among the Abakakamega

Mubayo: A 'game' to refer to a bullfight

Mubwayilu: Specific areas for grazing among the Abakakamega

Musambwa : Has been used to refer to the use or belief in ancestral spirits or demons by the living to perform some tasks in bullfighting.

Mutsuni: Uncircumcised male

Mwami (Singular) Baami (Plural): Mwami is an honorific title that was used during pre-colonial and colonial periods among the Abakakamega to mean chief or tribal chief.

Mwarubaini: Neem tree

Mwibombolo: A very fertile place as a result of previous crops such as bananas

Shilembe: A cultural celebration where bulls are used to give old men and heroes a befitting send-off among the Abakakamega

Shipwondo: knickers used by old women during the pre-colonial and colonial periods

Tsiseshe: Traditional straws for drinking *busaa*

Yambobo: A traditional cooking pot used by Abakakamega during pre-colonial and colonial period

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the entire general introduction with its ingredients. It highlights the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research question, scope and limitations of the study. Furthermore, the chapter addresses significance of the study, justification of the study, literature review, and theoretical framework. It also discusses the research methodology and provides a summary of the knowledge gaps that this whole study seeks to tackle and unravel.

1.1 Background to the Study

As posited by Kennedy Alison, the concept of bullfighting was born out of religious beliefs which allude to the significance of sacrificing a bull to a deity.¹ Similar religious beliefs are widely acknowledged in different world cultures and beliefs systems. For example in ancient Greek mythology, the Greek god Zeus took the form of a bull which meant that the bulls had to become divine' creatures.² A bull worshipping religion called Mithraism was developed in the Roman Empire. The god of light Mithra was worshiped by sacrificing a bull. This was a reason enough to build the Roman arena at Merida in Spain which is still used for Spanish 'bullfights' today.³ From the influence of these circulating bull worshipping cultures, Spain was guided by ideas of 'bloodshed and rebirth'⁴and developed a respect for the bull which made it a noble creature, worthy of being sacrificed.

¹A. L. Kennedy. (2000). *Kennedy on Bullfighting Published by Yellom Jersey* (1888), p. 46

²T.J. Mitchell. (1986). Bullfighting: The Ritual Origin of Scholarly Myth. In *Journal of American Folklore*, 99(394), pp. 394-414.

³H.D. William. (1952). The Bull-Fight as a Religious Ritual *Journal of American Amago*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (JUNE 1952), pp. 173-195

⁴L. Kennedy, (2000). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 65-70

In Spain, Portugal and Mexico, for example, key protagonists in bullfighting are human beings and bulls.⁵ The Spanish version pairs off the bull and the matador, with the matador obliged to demonstrate his bravery in risky and daring acts. Bullfighting, has deep roots in Mediterranean antiquity, though attempts to link or compare its contemporary manifestations with ancient ones should take account of the huge socio-cultural differences between the ages.⁶ Modern bullfighting is based on traditions that emerged during the last four centuries on the Iberian Peninsula.⁷ For instance, in Spain alone, there are 16 different and distinguished traditions of “games with bulls” and “bullfighting is an activity that overflows the traditional generic categories of folklore”.⁸ Modernist researchers have found it extremely difficult to classify bullfighting as a cultural category.⁹ In Ancient Egypt, for instance, people worshiped the Apis bull, a god in both life and death. Fights between two bulls began to be represented on the walls of local chiefs’ tombs in the sixth Dynasty and lasted until the reign of Thutmosis III in the Eighteenth Dynasty-Egypt.¹⁰

In Africa, among the Zulu of South Africa, bullfighting as a cultural practice was born out of killing of a bull as a symbol of power claimed by the King alone as early as 1574 B.C.¹¹ The King’s power was symbolized by the strength of a young warrior in overcoming the bull. The strength was assumed by the King and was symbolic of the

⁵A.D. Miller. (1961). *Matadors of Mexico*. Globe, AZ:D. S. King, pp 18-29.

⁶G. Marvin. (1988). *Bullfighting*, Urbana University of Illinois Press, pp. 17-21

⁷J. R. Resina, (Ed.). (2013). *Iberian modalities: a relational approach to the study of culture in the Iberian Peninsula* (Vol. 8). Liverpool University Press, p.65

⁸J. Mitchell, (1986). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 415-420

⁹K. Beilin, (2012). Bullfighting and the war on Terror: Debates on culture and torture in Spain,

International Journal of Iberian Studies, 25(1), pp. 61-72.

¹⁰G.M.Jose. (1994). Bullfight Scene in Ancient Egyptian Tombs: *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. Vol. 80(81), pp. 81-96.

¹¹S.A. Pete & A.D. Crocker.(2012). Ancient rituals and their place in the modern world: culture, masculinity and the killing of bulls-part one. *Obiter*, 33(2), 278-296.

power he had over the Zulu nation.¹² The practice grew into the so-called Zulu traditions called *Ukweshuama* an annual ceremony that celebrates a new crop harvest. It is respected as a day of prayer when Zulu thank their creator and ancestors. A young warrior is asked to confront a bull to prove his courage, inheriting the beast's strength, and power as it dies. It is thus believed that this same power is transferred to the Zulu King.

In Kenya, bullfighting is practiced by the Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya. Essentially, this cultural ritual game is characterized by violence, which is apparently a masculine virtue associated with the ideal masculine man in many world cultures. It manifests itself in two ways: physical and verbal. In many ways, the public display of violence can best be understood in the Freudian perspective that sees cultural practices as a form of expressing what cannot be articulated in direct ways.

Bullfighting culture has continued to grow across the globe as a result of various aspects for instance in Spain, Kings played a big role with their involvement in bullfighting. The first official bullfight being held in honor of the coronation of King Alfonso VIII of the 11th century and continued to be popular.¹³

Bullfighting culture has remained an influencer on the social-cultural, socio-economic and political development. Countries such as Spain, Colombia, Portugal have invested in bullfighting culture as one of the reasons to define development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya continues to be practiced year in year out yet its origin remains unknown with no official accounts available on

¹²Ibid., p.280

¹³ L. Kennedy, (2000). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 65-70

its beginnings. Among Abakakamega the sport attracts huge crowds of fans often comparable with those seen at soccer matches, religious crusades or at political rallies. During this cultural sport done mostly on Saturdays and running throughout the year from January to December, many hours are spent by fans, administrators, bull owners and many other stakeholders to ensure the success of bullfights. Such a sport certainly warrants an investigation to understand how it benefits all those who are involved in it. And to acknowledge the people's huge interest in the sport, the county government of Kakamega has gone a step further to build a bullfighting stadium at Malinya with two more other arenas at Khayegha and Solio awaiting refurbishment for the purpose of promoting this cultural sport. This is a clear testimony of the attraction and love for bullfighting sport by the Abakakamega people, hence the need for research to dig deep and find out what makes it attractive.

However, as bullfighting continues to grow, the rate of poverty among the Abakakamega continues to rise year after year. The last report on poverty index for this area stood at 4.77%¹⁴ hence the question, is bullfighting of any benefit to the Abakakamega? A number of researches have been done on the Abakakamega including those by M. S. Mwayuli and Kizito Muchanga, just to mention but a few. Nonetheless, the issue of bullfighting was not foregrounded any of these two works. The closest is Kennedy Masinde's work on bullfighting and funerals which focuses on the cultural sport as an economic influencer and social practice done by the people of Ikolomani. However, the aspect of bullfighting origins and as a reason for holistic development (economic, social, political and cultural) was not handled in Masinde's work. It is against such a background that this research aims at situating bullfighting

¹⁴Kenya Republic of Kenya, (2009). *Kakamega South District Development Plan 2008-2012*. Nairobi Government Printer.

culture and its influence on the development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study had a general objective and three specific objectives.

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this study was to situate bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Trace the origin and development of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega.
- ii. Assess various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.
- iii. Examine the influence of bullfighting culture on the development of the Abakakamega since 1850.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. How did bullfighting culture originate among the Abakakamega?
- ii. What are the various aspects that contribute to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega?
- iii. How has bullfighting culture influenced the development of the Abakakamega since 1850 to the present?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was carried out in Kakamega County, Western Kenya. It focused on two sub-ethnic Luhya communities, the Isukha and the Idakho who inhabit the sub-

counties of Shinyalu and Ikolomani. These two communities are also referred to as Abakakamega. The term Abakakamega was gazetted through the Kenya Gazette No 3943, -1-7-1995 to refer to Isukha and Idakho and no other document exists to this reference. Furthermore, the term Abakakamega has been used by several scholars in their works. An example is Mwayuli on the ‘*History of the Isukha-Idakho clan among the Abaluhya of western Kenya since 1850-1945*’. In this work, Mwayuli referring to the Abakakamega meant; Isukha and Idakho communities.¹⁵ Also Muchanga Kizito in his Master’s thesis while looking at *Impact of Economic activities of the ecology of the Isukha and Idakho areas of Western Kenya C. 1850-1945*, referred to the two communities as Abakakamega.¹⁶ Furthermore, in the songs composed by the late renowned Luhya popular musician Jacob Luseno, he referred to these people as Abakakamega.¹⁷ This study dwelt on the origins, development and the social-economic impacts of bullfighting on Abakakamega. The research took a period of six months upon receiving permission from relevant authorities to undertake it. The researcher was in the field from September 2022 to February 2023 collecting data.

The term “Since in the title” means that bullfighting culture is continuous process into the contemporary period. It has never ended. Despite bullfighting culture existing among the Abakakamega since 1850, no account has been made. In addition, based on the poverty index level of the Isukha and Idakho communities, an understanding of how bullfighting culture benefits these people needed to be unraveled hence the reason for the study.

¹⁵Mwayuli, M.S. (1989). *History of the Isukha-Idakho clan among the Abaluhya of Western Kenya since 1850-1945*, Kanawazza: Kanawazza University, p.62

¹⁶K. Muchanga (1998). *Impact of Economic Activities on the Ecology of the Isukha and Idakho Areas of Western Kenya c. 1850-1945*. MA. Thesis. Kenyatta University. p. 104

¹⁷J. Luseno (2019). *Amakuru kumumbetsa and Bihubi bi tsing’ombe*, African Entertainment-Nairobi.

This study dwells on the Abakakamega because, they are believed to be the pioneers of bullfighting in Kenya and there is evidence of the catholic missionaries using bullfighting culture to preach the gospel in Mukumu, around 1907. This means the culture had already spread among the Isukha and Idakho communities even before this year¹⁸ Therefore, the current study banked on 1850 when these two communities started settling in this area as the best time to trace the origins of bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

From other researches done by different scholars such as M. Mwayuli,¹⁹ L. Kavulavu²⁰ and Kizito Muchanga²¹ on migration and settlement of the Isukha and Idakho communities, they allude to the fact that Isukha and Idakho people started settling around this area in c.1850.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The first challenge was getting enough information from the Kenya National Archives. Little information had been documented on bullfighting culture. This therefore called for the researcher to utilize secondary data and oral information in coming up with findings and conclusions. Getting sensitive information about bullfighting also posed a challenge. For this instance, this study was not adequately informed by the bull owners on what kind of rituals they perform to make bulls listen to them and what propels them to start a fight. However, through cross examination of the respondents and the FGDs, a lot of sensitive information came out that enriched the study.

¹⁸K. L. Muchanga (2022): Evangelization Paradigm in the Development of the Catholic Diocese of Kakamega, Kenya since 1904, PhD Thesis, Masinde Muliro University.

¹⁹ M. S. Mwayulu. (1988), *The History of the Isukha and Idakho Clans among the Abaluhya of Western Kenya*. Nairobi. Kenya Literature Bureau

²⁰L. Kavulavu (2017), *The History and Culture of Idakho people of Western Kenya during the Pre-colonial Period*, Master's Thesis, Karatina University

²¹K. Muchanga (1988). *Op. Cit.*, p. 23

Due to the fact that bullfighting is not an activity that is done on daily basis but rather done on some Saturdays, planning to attend bullfighting events posed a challenge to this study since the cost of organizing impromptu visits was high. To overcome this limitation, the researcher resorted to looking at the bullfighting calendar of the Abakakamega and chose events that would give more information on the sport. At a personal level, the fear of being trampled by the bulls and getting caught up in cheering crowd stampedes while watching actual fights was also another setback to this study. To curb these limitations, the researcher developed a schedule which was spread across weeks and months which was used throughout the field study to reach out to all targeted respondents and focus group discussion sessions. The researcher also developed good working relationships by explaining the purpose of the study which helped him get sensitive information from informants. The investigator was also well-guided by bull owners on how to ensure safety during bullfighting to avoid bull attacks.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study seeks to inform the community within and outside Abakakamega on how bullfighting, apart from, being a cultural event, has a role to play as far as development is concerned. In this case, the study intends to sensitize the Isukha and Idakho communities on the need to value their culture. Moreover, the findings of the study should enable the Abakakamega to bring their minds together and use bullfighting for their development especially in the area of tourism attraction as a result of comparison on what other countries are doing. ²²The study further, anticipates informing Kenya and the world at large the imperatives of the bullfighting

²²C. J. Steiner and Y. Reisinger (2006). Understanding existential authenticity, In *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(2), pp. 299-318.

events in a society. Also, apart from political development, the study focuses on informing the readers and the people outside the area of study on how livestock, apart from being kept for dairy and beef, can also be used as a cultural, economic and political influencer.

Finally, the study findings are aimed at informing government policy by alerting the County government of Kakamega and the National Government to harness and utilize the huge gatherings of people at bullfighting occasions for special purposes such as unification of people. Furthermore, bullfighting events could easily be used as avenues to address society needs, air people's grievances, sensitize citizens on issues of health, education and constitutional rights among many other issues.

1.9 Justification of the Study

Research justification refers to the rationale for the research, or the reason why the research is being conducted, including an explanation for the design and methods employed in the research.²³ This study is justified in three ways; academic, policy and philosophical. On academic justification, the study is meant to equip the world of academia with relevant knowledge as far as Abakakamega bullfighting is concerned. This was meant to transistorize bullfighting and how the event can broadly contribute to the cultural and development in the society.

In terms of policy, the study is expected to inform the Bullfighting Association in Kakamega, Ministry of Livestock and Department of Veterinary services, County and National legislatures, the tourism sector and the authorities at large, on how they should establish laws to guide the practice of this sport. The study aims at making a

²³Liza, M.Given(2008). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, California: SAGE Publishers, p.1205

formal communication that bullfighting event should be recognized as a sporting activity just like football, athletics among others; hence it should be recognized in the Constitution of Kenya.

This study is anchored on cultural relativism philosophy. This is a philosophical concept that has been developed and discussed by various scholars and philosophers throughout history. However, one of the key figures associated with the formulation of cultural relativism as a distinct philosophical concept is the anthropologist Franz Boas.²⁴ Franz Boas, often considered the "father of modern anthropology," conducted extensive research on the cultural diversity of indigenous peoples in North America. He challenged the then prevailing ethnocentric views of his time, which judged other cultures based on Western standards.²⁵ Boas argued that cultural practices and beliefs should be understood and evaluated within their own cultural contexts, rather than through the lens of one's own cultural norms.²⁶

Boas's work laid the foundation for the development of cultural relativism as an important perspective within anthropology and beyond. He emphasized the importance of cultural understanding, respect for diverse cultural expressions, and the need to avoid imposing external judgments on other societies.²⁷ Boas' work greatly influenced this research's investigation of the reason why Abakakamega are much connected to bullfighting, criticism attached to this cultural sport and what the community is doing to have this culture to continue existing. It is worth noting that cultural relativism is not attributed solely to Franz Boas, as other philosophers and

²⁴L. Robert (1944). "Franz Boas (1858-1942)." *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (223): pp.59-64.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶H. Marshall. (1990). *Franz Boas: Social Activist*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. pp. 4-18

²⁷C., Douglas. (1999). *Franz Boas: The Early Years, 1858–1906*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 13-17

anthropologists have also contributed to its development and discussion over time. However, Boas's pioneering work and advocacy for cultural relativism have made him a significant figure in the history of this philosophical concept.

Cultural relativism is a philosophical approach that emphasizes understanding and respecting cultural practices and beliefs within their own cultural context, without imposing external judgments based on one's own cultural norms. In this study, cultural relativism helps us to locate and understand bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega within the broader context of their traditions, history, and belief systems. It recognizes that cultural practices often have deep-rooted historical and symbolic significance.²⁸ Cultural relativism also acknowledges that different cultures have their unique ways of expressing and preserving their cultural identities. In the same vein, bullfighting culture may be an essential aspect of the Abakakamega's cultural heritage, and respecting its uniqueness means allowing them to decide how to preserve and maintain their traditions. Nonetheless, cultural relativism also helps prevent ethnocentrism, which is the tendency to judge other cultures based on one's own cultural standards. Instead, it encourages open-mindedness and a willingness to learn from and appreciate cultural diversity.

Cultural relativism promotes dialogue and mutual understanding between different cultures. It encourages members of different cultural groups to engage in respectful discussions about their practices and beliefs, fostering empathy and empathy for each other's cultural perspectives.²⁹ Thus this concept guides the current study to

²⁸L.A. Kroeber, *et.al* (1943). *Franz Boas: 1858–1942*. Arlington, TX: American Anthropological Association, p. 36.

²⁹R. Lowie (1944). “Franz Boas (1858–1942).” In *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (223): 59–64.

investigate the role of the County Government of Kakamega and the National Government in including bullfighting among other cultural sports in Kenya.

While cultural relativism promotes understanding and respect for cultural practices, it does not mean that all practices are automatically deemed morally acceptable. It acknowledges that there can be ethical issues within cultural practices and encourages critical examination and discussions on potential areas of concern.³⁰ As cultures evolve and interact with each other, cultural relativism allows for the contextualization of change within a cultural framework. For example, if certain aspects of bullfighting culture face challenges or criticisms from within the Abakamega community, cultural relativism encourages open discussions about adaptation or preservation. It is essential to recognize that cultural relativism is not a one-size-fits-all approach and does not imply endorsement of every cultural practice.³¹ It is a philosophy that seeks to promote cultural understanding, respect, and the recognition of the inherent value of diverse cultural expressions.³² When addressing bullfighting culture among the Abakamega or any other cultural group, cultural relativism advocates for empathy, humility, and the willingness to listen and learn from the perspectives of the community involved.

1.10 Literature Review

This section provides literature in a comical perspective based on the three specific research objectives of the study. That is from the global perspective, Africa, Kenya

³⁰R. Lowie. (1947). "Franz Boas: 1858–1942." In *National Academy of Sciences*, Biographical Memoirs 24 (9): 303–20.

³¹A. Lesser.(1981). "Franz Boas." In *Totems and Teachers: Perspectives on the History of Anthropology*, edited by Sydel Silverman, 1–33. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 98-105

³²T. Patterson, (2001). *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States*. New York: Berg, pp. 22-44

and the Kakamega which is the area of study. Thereafter, a summary of the gaps that emerged are highlighted.

1.10.1 The Origin and Development of Bullfighting culture

A.Vega in his article titled, “Legal Framework of Bullfighting and Societal Context in Colombia”, asserts that the first bullfights in history took place in the Roman Colosseum.³³ The Romans brought animals of the *Urus* species³⁴ -consisting of large bulls with sharp horns- that has since become extinct. The breed was commonly known by Spaniards as angry bulls, from the Iberian Peninsula. These bulls were brought to fight against Roman prisoners who were forced to fight for entertainment. Roman Circuses with bullfighting were intended to keep the people entertained with barbaric and bloody shows during the Fall of Rome. Initially in the Colosseum³⁵, prisoners did not have great success fighting against lions, as was commonplace. Roman leaders concerned that onlookers would be displeased, began to bring the “angry bulls” to Rome for use in the Colosseum. The bulls provided a more entertaining show because fighters generally remained alive longer and would have a chance to fight back.³⁶ Therefore, based on the origin and historicity of bullfighting in Rome, this study focused on tracing the origin and culture of bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

Furthermore, A.Vega added that, while bullfighting was done in Rome as a form of entertainment, in Spain the Spaniards hunted bulls with the purpose of nourishment

³³A. Vega, (2018). Legal Framework of Bullfighting and Societal Context in Colombia. In *J. Animal & Nat. Resource L.*, 14, pp.103-130.

³⁴It is an extinct cattle species, considered to be the wild ancestor of modern domestic cattle. With a shoulder height of up to 180 centimetres in bulls and 155 centimetres in cows.

³⁵An amphitheater, stadium, large theater, or other special building for public meetings, sporting events, exhibitions, etc.

³⁶RIUS, (1990)., *Toros si, toreros no*, (1st ed.) Editorial Grijalbo S.A. de C.V. México

rather than for show.³⁷ Around the year 1400 A.D, the Spaniards began to create a show out of bull hunting, much like the Englishmen practiced with fox hunting while Germans and Italians did with deer and other animal hunting. In Spain, bulls were captured and placed in large corrals to be dramatically chased down and killed in a dramatic show.³⁸ In the 18th century, the Spanish noble class embraced bullfighting when the Arabs were expelled from Spain. Soldiers practiced and prepared for war by killing the bull while skillfully maneuvering on horseback. The noble class had servants to assist in practice by distracting bulls with a cape when the riders fell from their horses. These practice scenarios were very similar to the bullfights as we know them today.³⁹ Therefore, it is important to note that, bullfighting is still practiced to this day in several European and South American countries. The common aspect of this practice in European contexts is the pitying of human beings against animals (bulls). However, among the Abakakamega, it is a sport that involves two bulls locking of horns. From the preceding argument, this study still examines the relationship between the bull and human beings in the case of the Abakakamega version of the sport where only bulls lock horns.

The practice became so popular in Spain that special enclosures were built by the nobility. In 1701 A.D, Felipe V, the new anointed King of Spain, prohibited the activity, believing that such sport did not meet standards of the nobility. Indeed, the defining moment in the history of bullfighting is when King Felipe decreed that the practice be left in the hands of servants to take part. From then henceforth, bullfighting went from being considered a noble sport to becoming a vile plebeian spectacle to which the aristocracy attended for entertainment. Bullfighting evolved

³⁷A. Vega, (2018). *Op. Cit*, p.104

³⁸Ibid

³⁹Ibid

and gradually employed new weapons to kill the bull in a drawn-out fashion.⁴⁰ Today, the torero a professional bullfighter, especially a matador, is tasked to kill the bull and puts all his efforts into weakening the bull's neck muscles. This action is conducted with the purpose of forcing the bull to lower his head to give the torero an opportunity for a final sword thrust between the shoulder blades.⁴¹ Drawing comparisons with the Spanish practice, this study is interested in unravelling the place of bullfighting as a sport among the Abakakamega.

According to G. Marvin, in his research on bullfighting in Spain, a bullfight that is generally lethal to the bull, has deep roots in Mediterranean antiquity, though attempts to link or compare its contemporary manifestations with ancient ones should take account of the huge socio-cultural differences between the ages.⁴² Modern bullfighting is based on traditions that emerged during the last three or four centuries on the Iberian Peninsula, Marvin further argues. In Spain alone, C. B Douglass distinguished 16 different traditions⁴³ of "games with bulls".⁴⁴ The best known goes under the name running the bulls and includes two principal types: mounted bullfighting and bullfighting on foot.⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ Marvin further adds that on the Iberian Peninsula, mounted bullfighting by Spanish gentlemen or gallants-heroes has in the

⁴⁰A. McAleer. (2014). *Dueling: The cult of honor in fin-de-siecle Germany* (Vol. 283). Princeton University Press, p.34

⁴¹A. McAleer. (2014). *Op. Cit.*, p.35

⁴²G. Marvin, (1988). *Bullfight*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, p.13 and A. Shapland, (2013). Jumping to conclusions: Bull-leaping in Minoan Crete. *Society & Animals*, 21, pp.194–207.

⁴³The Carnival, Feria de Valdemorillo, Feria del Milagro, Feria del Toro de Olivenza, Feria Taurina de San Jose, Feria de la Magdalena, Feria Internacional del Toro de Coria, among others.

⁴⁴C.B. Douglass, (1997). *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

⁴⁵K. Thompson, (2010a). Binaries, boundaries and bullfighting: multiple alternative human-animal relations in the Spanish mounted bullfight. *Anthrozoos*, 23(4), 317–336, and K. Thompson, (2010b). Narratives of tradition: the invention of mounted bullfighting as "the newest also the oldest." *Social Science History*, 34(4), 523–561

past been practiced by members of the nobility, and is presently found in a few regions of Spain, such as Andalusia and in Portugal.⁴⁷ This is much relevant to this study as it helps to contextualize the role of political class in bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

Moreover, Marvin further asserts that bullfighting on foot by *toreros* is a tradition that began in the 17th Century and became increasingly dominant in Spain.⁴⁸ Thompson supports Marvin by postulating that this tradition is presently practiced in most popular bullfighting events in Spain, and corresponds to the tourists' idea of a "bullfight." Thompson puts it clear that bullfighting was an activity practiced by the nobility in countries such as Spain and Portugal. This study therefore focused on the ordinary population of Abakakamega and how bullfighting emerged and practiced as a tradition.

The bull is a symbol of Spain and a landmark of its countryside.⁴⁹ On the politics of bulls and bullfighting in contemporary Spain, Brandes asserts that bullfighting, specifically the bullfight, plays a significant, multifaceted, and controversial role in the tourism sector in Spain. It is controversial because of a range of concerns including animal welfare, funding, and religion.⁵⁰ This view point resonates deeply with this study in the assessment of the place of bulls among the Abakakamega. Bullfighting is big business, which has expanded considerably due to tourist demand. However, the interface of tourism and bull- fighting has not been thoroughly studied and this study opens this issue to a systematic examination. Brandes informs the

⁴⁷Ibid, p.525

⁴⁸K. Thompson. (2010). *Op. Cit.*, p.523

⁴⁹Ibid., p.781

⁵⁰S. Brandes. (2009). Torophiles and torophobes: The politics of bulls and bullfighting in contemporary Spain. *Anthro- pological Quarterly*, 82(3), pp.779–794.

audience on bullfighting in Spain as a tourism attraction. What he does not tell the audience is how it contributes to developments of a community. This is obviously a gap that this study unravels.

Douglass Carrie, contends that bullfighting was in the past performed primarily at fiestas. But from the 18th century onwards, it was taken up by the rising urban classes, and since then bullfighting came to be performed outside traditional fiestas,⁵¹ as an independent, commercialized activity, conducted by professional *toreros*, and oriented to a massive public composed of all the social classes.⁵² While not attached to any particular fiesta, it was proclaimed as Spain's *fiesta nacional* (National festival).⁵³ Wealands and Robson support Douglass view by observing that bullfighting has long been a national event in Spain though they don't specify the communities behind the success of bullfighting in Spain that has made it a national event. In this study, the place of Abakakamega in the success of bullfighting in Western Kenya and how it has impacted the economic, social and political lives of Abakakamega is deeply examined.

From the 17th century onward, special bullrings, named *plazas de toros*,⁵⁴ were built in major Spanish cities. According to Marvin, there were eight first-class *plazas de toros*⁵⁵ in Spain, the most famous being those of Madrid and Sevilla, but presently the biggest worldwide is the *plaza* of Mexico City.⁵⁶ Bullfighting was, and remains, popular in many smaller Spanish towns, though they may lack a specially constructed

⁵¹C.B. Douglass, (1997). *Op. Cit.*, p.23

⁵²Ibid, p.115

⁵³S. Wealands, & Robson, T. (1960). *The National Spanish Fiesta or the Art of Bullfighting*. Madrid: F. Vellasco Gil Publishers, p.17

⁵⁴A public square in a city or town featuring walk ways of bulls

⁵⁵The enclosed area where a bullfight takes place (bullring).

⁵⁶G. Marvin, (1988). *Bullfight*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, p.89

Bullring.⁵⁷ In Spain, bullfighting is a “big business,” a large-scale commercial venture.⁵⁸ Mitchell supports Marvin by arguing that the sport is a source of an important agribusiness, based on specialized bull-breeding ranches, which provide highly priced bulls for the bullfights⁵⁹. Do Marvin and Mitchell views apply to western Kenya in relation to bullfighting? This study certainly attempts to fill this gap by interrogating the benefits of bullfighting culture.

In Mexico, Cohen alludes that the purpose of bullfighting is for the bullfighter (matador) to “conquer and kill the bull with a swift clean kill by placing a sword in a coin-sized area between the bull’s shoulders.” Advocates of bullfighting argue that if the matador aims correctly, the animal dies in a matter of seconds.⁶⁰ This type of quick, clean death, however, is not the norm. In most cases, the matador misses the target, injuring the bull’s lungs and bronchial tubes, causing blood to flow and bubble through the animal’s mouth and nose. According to ex-matador D. Alvaro Munera, bullfighting is a cruel tradition, where the victim is innocent, savagely tortured and massacred, and as a tradition it is ethically inconceivable.”⁶¹ Zoologist Jordi Casamitjana agrees, stating that “all behavioral evidence shows that bulls and cows suffer in bullfights; yes, they do suffer in all types of bullfights, even in those that do not end with their deaths; and yes, all aspects of any bullfight, from the transport to the death, are in themselves causes of suffering.”

In Mexico, children as young as six years, may begin training for a career in this bloody “sport”. These findings from Mexico helped this study in interrogating the

⁵⁷Ibid, p.90

⁵⁸Ibid., p.80

⁵⁹T.J. Mitchell,(1986). Bullfighting: The ritual origin of scholarly myth. *Journal of American Folklore*, 99(394), pp.394–414.

⁶⁰E. Cohen. (2014). Bullfighting and tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(5), pp.545-556.

⁶¹D. Alvaro Munera (2011): Bullfighting (Fiesta Brava) in Mexico, *Humane Society International*, pp. 22-35

roles of different age groups in bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho communities such as teenagers, youth, medium age and old. However, Casamitjana, Schulz, Brook Bob, and Kocherga Angela do not explain the narrative behind the involvement of children in training as bullfighters.⁶² Unlike Mexico, where the fight is between the bull and human being, among the Abakakamega only bulls are engaged in fighting. Yet understanding the human role in such animal fights remains very important. For instance, while in Mexico, children aged six years were allowed to begin training as matadors, this study sought to ascertain the right age that the Abakakamega allowed individuals to get engaged in bullfighting either as bull owners, participants, and caretakers of bulls or fans.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina, bull wrestling is an ancient tradition that has long been part of festivities in villages all over the country.⁶³ In these fights, only bulls are compete between them, without matadors, and the duels do not result in the death of one of them. In the open field, bulls chase each other within the improvised ring.⁶⁴ What happens here is a sort of extension of fights for dominance that occur between many species in nature where animals fight in their natural way, with no man's interference. Eventually in such scenarios, one of the animals turns and leaves the ring, so no life is lost.

Even though very interesting, this topic is rarely caught on film. One of the exceptions is a movie called "Korida" (2016) that depicts Bosnian bull-on-bull fights in a very

⁶²B. Brook (2004.) *The Real Mexico. Mexico's Dance with death*. Mexico City, online access and A. Kocherga., (2008). *Child bullfighters face death in the ring*. Accessed July 16, 2008.

⁶³E. Sarajlic, (2011). The return of the consuls: Islamic networks and foreign policy perspectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 11(2), 173-190.

⁶⁴<https://www.itinari.com/bosnian-bullfights-in-a-nutshell-cuij>

credible way.⁶⁵ Until a couple of years ago, the fights between bulls in Bosnia & Herzegovina used to be bloodier, but still nowhere close to the Spanish counterpart. The bulls' horns in these fights were sharpened and in some instances steel extensions were added on to them. Furthermore, just before entering the arena, they were hit so hard so that they fight more forcefully.

Nowadays, since the new rules came into force, bull wrestling is more animal-friendly and very much resembling the fights that take place in the wild as alluded to by Sarajlic, on Islamic networks and foreign policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶⁶ Though predominantly associated with masculinity, in Bosnia some women are increasingly and successfully participating with their bulls.⁶⁷ Inspired by these kind of findings from Bosnia & Herzegovina this study goes ahead to analyze the situation of bullfighting as an event among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya and points out the role of women. The work of Sarajlic inspires the researcher to investigate similar and related issues such as doping, use of bhang, and sharpening of the horns of the bulls among the Abakakamega. As per new rules in Bosnia, the bulls are checked by veterinarians before they enter the ring, to make sure their horns are not too sharp, but also to ensure they have tested negative to any anti-doping screening.⁶⁸

In general, the fights are supposed to play out under the natural conditions such as a battle for male dominance in the wild where bulls fight by their own rules, with no brutal clashes or injuries happening.⁶⁹ When the beasts clash their heads, one of them

⁶⁵Ibid

⁶⁶D. A. Dyker, (1972). The Ethnic Muslims of Bosnia: Some basic socio-economic data. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 50, no. 119: 238–56.

⁶⁷E. Sarajlic, (2010). *The Bosnian triangle: Ethnicity, politics, citizenship*, CITSEE working paper, 2010/06, School of Law, University of Edinburgh, pp. 88-101

⁶⁸K. Gilles. (2002). *Jihad: The trail of political Islam*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 31

⁶⁹E. Sarajlic. (2009). Europe as a media myth: The Case of Bosnian Muslims. In *Mutual misunderstandings? Muslims and Islam in the European media, Europe in the media of Muslim*

has to give up eventually. Sometimes, the animals leave the arena without even trying to fight.⁷⁰ During the summer months, many bullfights are organized all around Bosnia & Herzegovina and every week there is an event somewhere in the villages, which attracts thousands of visitors. The most famous are “Grmecka korida” and “Cevljanovici korida” which is a traditional bullfight that takes place each year⁷¹. Often, just the names of bulls are the attractions unto themselves with some of them called Ronaldo, Messi, or Putin. The bullfights are perfect occasions for locals and tourists, to gather and have fun while eating, dancing, and singing. In a nutshell, the entertainment is what matters the most for people when it comes to Bosnia.⁷² With the new rules in Bosnia where bullfighting is not bloody, strict enforcement of anti-doping, no use of steel in bulls’ horns, and no sharpening of horns, this study also sought to do similar assessment on the nature and state of bulls that are set for fight among the Abakakamega.

Further afield in Asia, a lot of history is associated to bullfights in Taruka, Nepal. The tradition of bullfights in this region dates back to 1887 B.C when the practice was first introduced by the then Prince of Bajhang Jay Prithivi Bahadur Singh for the purpose of entertainment while visiting his maternal uncle's house. Since then, locals of the Taruka Village, esteemed the Bullfighting, and have carried on with the tradition over the years. However, no evidence of it has been found yet. Although there are no historical facts on the provenance of such festival, the tradition is regarded as old as 150 years. Elderly people say the bullfight was first organized by the maternal uncle

majority countries, ed. Kerem Oktem and Reem Abou-El-Fadl, 53–79. Oxford: European Studies Centre, St. Antony’s College

⁷⁰A. Alibasic, (2003). Traditional and reformist Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina. C-SIS Working Paper no. 2. Centre for International Studies, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, pp. 45-55

⁷¹Traditional bullfights that takes place each year, in the first week of August in the region of Grmec, far Western Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁷²D.A. Dyker, (1972). The Ethnic Muslims of Bosnia: Some basic socio-economic data. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 50, no. 119: 238–56.

of King Jay Prithvi Bahadur Singh of Bajhang to entertain him. Taruka was the home of King Jay Prithvi Bahadur's maternal uncle. Another historic event is associated with the victory of Nepalese in 1887 B. C over Tibet which initiated the annual celebration of bullfighting in Betrawati, where 10 pairs of bulls fought to mark the day. Taruka, on the other side, witnessed the fight between 20 pairs of bulls on the same day.

In Nepal, bullfighting is an important component of the cultural heritage and has remained untarnished over the centuries.⁷³ People bet small or large amounts of money on bulls based on how much cash they have in their wallets," Sanju Thapa, a spectator told Xinhua.⁷⁴ Every year, spectators flock to see the animals fight at the Maghe Sankranti festival which brings an end to the unlucky month of Poush when all religious ceremonies are forbidden, and also marks the coming of warmer weather.⁷⁵ Nepali style bullfighting is fairly different from the well- known Spanish version, as bulls and men work in tandem against other teams. In a match, bulls shove, butt and grunt against each other until one of them gives up or turns its back. Around fourteen bulls took part in the competition every year in a ring overlooking the stunning terraced hillsides of Nuwakot in front of a crowd of more than 5,000 on Wednesdays.⁷⁶ All these literature is useful to the current study as it gives a background of training bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. In addition, the type of bullfighting practiced in Nepal is related to the one taking place in the current place of study in Western esKenya. For example, bulls in Nepal are selected when they are calves and are trained to fight at the annual fiesta. This is a similar case

⁷³S. B. Ortner (1978). *Sherpas through their rituals*. Cambridge University Press, p. 16

⁷⁴<https://www.himalayanglacier.com/feature-nepalese-betting-on-bullfighting/>

⁷⁵J. McCormick (2000). *Bullfighting: Art, Technique and Spanish Society*. Routledge, 21-51

⁷⁶M Mauss.(1967). *The gift: Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison. New York: Norton, pp. 78-90

among the Abakakamega bullfighting tradition and therefore, this study has a lot to learn from the bullfighting knowledge from Nepal to examine its relevance to the Kenyan context.

In Colombia, written records exist of at least six bullfights in the first half of the 16th century. By the time of the colonization, bullfights took place to celebrate the arrival of the Crown and a Royal audience. In the first half of the 16th century, councils of cities and villages were in charge of organizing and promoting bullfights.⁷⁷ Furthermore, members of the councils selected townsfolk that were tasked to sponsor the construction of bullrings with balconies in the “*Plaza Mayor*.” At that time, permanent bullfighting stadiums did not exist.⁷⁸ Only the wooden balconies were meant to provide safety and comfort for the wealthy. The craftsmen were tasked to build a bullring in the Main Square or “*plaza principal*,” putting up a wooden fence to protect the public. However, this enclosure was no guarantee of safety, as bulls would occasionally run over the fence and scare people away. The celebration would conclude at night, with the torched bull spectacle.⁷⁹ This event entailed wrapping up a bull’s horns in oil-soaked rags that would be lit on fire. The pain would agitate the animal, making it to chase down drunken viewers that dared to enter the ring. Based on the Colombian experience, this study interrogates the idea and impacts of established stadia to bullfighting among Abakakamega. It also examines the contributions of colonial era to the bullfighting in Western Kenya.

⁷⁷A.Vega. (2018). *Op. Cit.*, p.104

⁷⁸available at <http://www.bdigital.unal.edu.co/1328/8/06CAPI05.pdf>

⁷⁹Ibid

In China there is a sport which mixes traditional martial arts with bullfighting and it's growing in popularity.⁸⁰ Unlike Spain's more famous sport, the Chinese variant of bullfighting involves no swords or gore but instead fuses the moves of wrestling with the skill and speed of kung fu to bring down beasts weighing up to 400 kg (882 lb).⁸¹ "Spanish bullfighting is more like a performance or a show," said Hua Yang, a 41-year-old enthusiast who watched a bullfight during a visit to Spain. "This (the Chinese variety) is truly a contest pitting a human's strength against a bull. There are a lot of skills involved and it can be dangerous. "According to Han Haihua, a former pro wrestler who coaches bullfighting at Haihua Kung Fu School in Jiaying, the physically demanding sport requires fighters to train intensively and typically have shortcoming⁸². In China, it's about measuring the strength of a human by use of bulls. In this study though, I assess the role of bullfighting in proving the strength of one community over the other through fighting of their bulls.

In South Korea, Han-woo fighting bulls live longer and are fed on a nutritious diet to help them build endurance and muscles while going through regular physical exercise to become super athletes.⁸³ Han-woo fighting bulls can typically enter the arena to fight from around age four. There are bulls who are more than 10 years old still competing in bullfights. The athleticism of the fighting bulls is evident in the circular arena, when the testosterone-rich bulls display dominant behaviors such as deep throbbing howls while kicking up sand before they charge at each other, butting heads with great force. A victorious bull often runs around the arena at great speed, just like

⁸⁰E. Cohen. (2014). *Op. Cit.*, p.548

⁸¹Ibid., p.550

⁸²Ibid

⁸³S.M. Lee, Kim, J. Y., & Kim, E. J. (2012). Effects of stocking density or group size on intake, growth, and meat quality of Hanwoo steers (*Bos taurus coreanae*). *Asian-Australasian Journal of Animal Sciences*, 25(11), 1553.

a speedy bison at the Yellowstone National Park in the United States of America which can run at a speed of up to 48 kilometers per hour.

Bloody heads often do not lead to a bull conceding the fight, but experienced older fighting bulls with multiple fights under their hides sometimes forfeit and choose not to fight at the onset of the battle.⁸⁴ The sheer unpredictability of bullfights makes for perfect “sports betting,” where spectators can bet anywhere from 100 to 10,000 won (\$0.07-\$7.85) on each fight, with varying degrees of possible odds.⁸⁵ The game lasts a total of 30 minutes with a maximum of six rounds, with each round lasting five minutes, during which the bulls fight continuously.

From the works of Cohen and Lee *et. al*, the current study benefitted in terms of content on interrogating bullfighting phenomenon among the Abakakamega. This is in terms of training the bulls, feeding the bulls and on how the bull owners bet before the fight. Another salient issue that the current study interrogated was the duration the fight can take before the winning bull is declared. The works on China and South Korea helped in examining the economic value of bullfighting among the Abakakamega people.

In Africa, especially in South Africa, among the Zulu, bullfighting concept originated from the act of killing a bull as a simple of power claimed by the King alone as early as 1574 B.C.⁸⁶ The Kings power was symbolized by the strength of a young warrior in subduing the bull. Such strength was assumed by the King and was symbolic of the

⁸⁴Ibid., p.1554

⁸⁵J.F. Croose. (2014). *The Practices of Carnival: Community, Culture and Place*. University of Exeter (United Kingdom), p. 71

⁸⁶Cf. The ancestors of the Zulu migrated from west Africa into southeastern Africa during the Bantu migrations from 2000 BC until the 15th century. The Zulu tribe expanded into a powerful kingdom, subdued surrounding groups, and settled in the region known as KwaZulu-Natal in present day South Africa.

power he reigned over the Zulu nation. Gradually the concept grew into the Zulu tradition of *Ukweshuama* an annual ceremony that celebrated new harvest.⁸⁷ On such a day of prayer when Zulu thanked their creator and their ancestors, a young warrior was dared to confront a bull to prove his courage and thus inherit the beast's strength, power as it expires. It is traditionally believed that this power is what was then transferred to the Zulu King.⁸⁸

According to Hemer, bull fighting on the Tanzanian island of Pemba Island is a test of skill and not a fight to the death. Clough adds that, on the same island, bull fighting as a traditional sport is practiced as part of cultural variety.⁸⁹ On this Island, bullfighting is more civilized and bloodless compared to what happens in Europe because no bull is hurt in the proceedings - in fact the animal is treated with respect and well taken care of by its owner.⁹⁰ The East Coast of Africa has seen the comings and goings of many sea-faring nations. Some of them just came to trade while others came to rule. The Portuguese made their claim in the 16th and 17th centuries and it is thought that bull fighting emerged from this period, due to the inter-mingling of cultures over decades.⁹¹ According to Hemer, indeed bullfighting emerged as a cultural activity during the Portuguese exploration in Africa. What Hemer did not record was the influence that the bullfighting brought towards cultural and political developments to the people at the Coast. This study attempts to fill such knowledge gaps by interrogating the impact of bullfighting on cultural development among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

⁸⁷P. Harries, (1993). Imagery, Symbolism and Tradition in a South African Bantustan: Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Inkatha, and Zulu History. *History and Theory*, pp.105-125.

⁸⁸Ibid., p.107

⁸⁹Clough, E. T. (Ed.). (1911). *Africa: An account of past and contemporary conditions and progress*. Bay View Reading Club.,

⁹⁰S. R. Hemer, & A. Dundon, (2016). *Emotions, Senses, Spaces: Ethnographic Engagements and Intersections*. University of Adelaide Press, p.56

⁹¹ Ibid, p.60

On his part, Donald Petterson posits that there is no particular time for bull fighting in Zanzibar Island. Although the hottest time of the year between August and February appears to be the favored season, a display may be put on at certain celebrations or when there is a national event happening. In certain cases, a private tour can also be arranged for a group booking.

On all occasions a bullfight is seen as a test of bravery for men who keep livestock.⁹²The toreros or bull fighters consider what they do as a form of art. Even though the bull is tethered with a long rope and does not have horns, the torero could easily be trampled or injured. The bull fighter must perform a variety of skillful moves at close range to avoid the charge of the bull at the last minute.⁹³ In Zanzibar, bullfighting takes place in a number of small villages such as Chuale and Kangagani or on Kojani Island. The event draws a big crowd which gathers around the pitch. Thereafter, the bulls are paraded around with pride while drummers and singers provide a festive atmosphere. The show often begins with a display of traditional stick fighting by local farmers then followed by the bull fighting. The toreros each have a turn to execute their particular maneuvers and entertain the enthusiastic crowd. At the end of the show the bulls are admired and praised.⁹⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reckons that bullfighting is a traditional display that actually gathers a big crowd in a society.⁹⁵ When the crowd comes together, they are entertained. What is not recorded in this volume is the

⁹²P. Donald. (2004). *Revolution in Zanzibar: An American's Cold War Tale*. Westview. pp. 253–290. . Retrieved 15 September, 2013.

⁹³Centre, UNESCO World Heritage. "France - UNESCO World Heritage Centre". Retrieved 21 January 2017.

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵J.F. Croose. (2014). *The Practices of Carnival: Community, Culture and Place*. University of Exeter (United Kingdom), pp. 70-73

influence of bullfighting on cultural-development in Kojani Island.⁹⁶ However, this study addresses a similar gap in relation to Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

Closer home in Uganda, bullfighting started in 1956 in Bududa-Mbale after the banning of wrestling by the colonial administrators. Long before 1956, bull fights became a fascination as locals were engaging in infamous pastimes. It is said that locals used to gather and watch men wrestle and pierce each other with spears.⁹⁷ From the mid 1950's to 1970's, the fights were not taken seriously since the practice was more of an occasional and casual pastime for local herdsmen especially in Namasho. In the course of grazing, herders would let their bulls engage in fights for fun and fights often broke out between the male bulls when the females were brought for mating. The owners of the bulls reportedly gave them intoxicating local herb leaves to spark fights. In Namasho village, everyone talks of an infamous bull called Kundu.⁹⁸ The bullfighting custom grew by leaps and bounds after Kundu's exploits. It reportedly bit off the ears of more than 25 other bulls after subduing them in fights. Namasho was eventually chosen by village committees as the place that would be hosting the fights.⁹⁹ Namasho already enjoyed a reputation for its stone-shaped salty underground water wells, which the locals believed made their cows produce more milk. From Makwaka's work, the current study is guided to trace bullfighting culture among the Isukha and Idakho communities. It also helps this research to dig deeper into the role of bullfighting pioneers among the Abakakamega. The current study

⁹⁶M. Hortons, *et.al.* (2019): *Preserving the Maritime Cultural Heritage on Pemba Island*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 7-12.

⁹⁷D. Levinson & Christensen, K. (Eds.). (1999). *Encyclopedia of world sport: from ancient times to the present*. Oxford University Press, USA, p. 33

⁹⁸G. Mwakikagile, (2014). *The people of Kenya and Uganda*. New Africa Press, p.76

⁹⁹D.D. Makwa, D. D. (2021). Musicking and dancing Imbalu at Namasho: Enacting indigenous education among the Bagisu, Uganda. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 53, 127-154.

situates the origins and development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega since 1850 to date.

Still on bullfighting in Namasho village in Uganda, it is said that bulls that were brought to drink the salty water could be instigated to fight over anything to show off their prowess, in the presence of females. Few days before the bull fights start, the bulls are kept in kraals and fed for 24 hours. Some bull owners keep their bulls in kraals for a year and only let them out when they are going to be slaughtered, sold or when they are going to engage in fights.¹⁰⁰ In the current study, Mwakikagile's work is useful in terms of analyzing the issue of bullfighting and the large crowds. It is necessary to establish why bullfighting attracts mammoth crowds comparable those seen at political rallies or Christian evangelical crusades. In the same vein, Mwakikagile's work is instrumental in understanding how femininity (femaleness) and cows are used to agitate one bull against the other and the presence of the female (the cow) caused fierce bull fights. In this study, it was also important to find out what makes the bulls wild, whether it is natural or some intoxication is necessary to realize a fierce bullfighting game.

In the Kenyan case, Egara Kabaji, observes that bullfighting among the Luhya of Western Kenya can be a big event pitting a village, or a collection of friendly villages against a competing village or collection of villages that are related, either as communities, or as a geographical region. At a smaller scale, the duel could be between "my" bull and "your" bull.¹⁰¹ Unlike the festival in Spain which involves a fight between a bull and a matador (a human fighter), the Kenyan bullfighting festival

¹⁰⁰D. Levinson, (1999). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 23-29

¹⁰¹E. Kabaji,(2008). "Masculinity and Ritual Violence: A Study of Bullfighting among the Luhya of Western Kenya", in Uchendu Egodi, ed, *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa*. CODESRIA., p.12

is a meeting between bulls. Human beings in this context only play to catalyze the bulls, to cheer and to celebrate the winning animals. Characteristic of the often well publicized festival is that before, during and after the actual bullfight, there is extensive singing and verbal exchanges between the “bull drivers” from the opposing sides. The very fanfare that accompanies this fete leaves one wondering what is really in it.¹⁰² Ultimately, this study is part of the corpus of research that highlights the events that accompany the activity of bullfighting.

Furthermore, Kabaji Egara while examining masculinity and ritual violence in bullfighting among the Kakamega Luhya alludes to the fact that although gender relations are constructed in terms of the relations of power and dominance between women and men, gender research in Africa has tended to focus mostly on women. This skewed attention has given rise to the popular perception that gender issues are synonymous with women's issues. In the article Kabaji demonstrates a shift in focus within gender studies to research on masculinity¹⁰³ and a critical analysis of the symbols of masculinity in bullfighting contests. He further contends that Luhya bullfighting is an animal-to-animal fight, where bulls are seen as symbolic male proxies. The work describes overt and covert features of the contests that indicate hidden masculine desires, values, ideals and aspirations.

Kabaji's study focusses on folklore generated and performed during bullfights and how this defines masculinity and gender relations in general.¹⁰⁴ Kabaji's work is helpful to this research with regard to in-depth understanding of masculinity and the

¹⁰²A. Shapland (2013). Bull leaping in Minoan Crete. *Society & Animal*, 21, pp. 101-105

¹⁰³E. Kabaji. (2008), Masculinity and Ritual Violence: A study of Bullfighting Among the Kakamega Luhya, Western Kenya, *A journal of the Institute of African Studies*, Vol. 9, pp 33- 46, University Catalogue

¹⁰⁴Ibid

role of women in bullfighting. The gap in Kabaji's work is the glaring lack of details on the origin of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. In addition, Kabaji did not look into the political and cultural development of bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho people. Furthermore, he only dwelt on Ikolomani sub-county. In this study I go further and investigate the origin of bullfighting and its influence on the development of Abakakamega.

1.10.2 Aspects Contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting

Colombia has become more progressive with its animal protection laws. In fact, several laws have been passed that establish duties toward animals and penalties for abuse. These laws are quite progressive and reflect that animal is sentient creatures.¹⁰⁵ However, several of these laws specifically exempt bullfighting from their reach. Therefore, the current study among the Abakakamega examines the love of bulls by these people, what it takes in the bringing up of the bulls, ensuring their safety during the game as well as their retirement. In addition, Colombia has laws that specifically regulate activities associated with bullfighting, particularly the National Taurine Statute or Ley 916 of 2004, and Ley 1272, 2009 that declared “*Corralejas*” (traditional bullfighting festivities that are celebrated every year in the Caribbean Coast of Colombia where the public participates in the bullfight) as cultural heritage of the nation.¹⁰⁶ This is a reflection of how the current study examined the role of bullfighting in ceremonial functions among the Abakakamega. To add to this seeming contradiction, in 2017, the Constitutional Court held bullfighting and all the other exceptions of the Statute of Animal Protection to be unconstitutional.

¹⁰⁵J. de Boo, & Knight, A. (2005). “Concepts in animal welfare”: a syllabus in animal welfare science and ethics for veterinary schools. *Journal of veterinary medical education*, 32(4), 451-453.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p.451

However, it postponed the effects of this decision, as the court considered that it was Congress's duty to rule in this matter, giving Congress a two-year period to do so. The country seems at odds, finding bullfighting cruel on a national level, but a local tradition that must be protected in certain local districts.¹⁰⁷ The studies by DeBoo and Knight have not spelt out the importance of bullfighting in a particular community but from the knowledge posited by the two authors, this study contends that, despite the view that bullfighting is a dangerous activity, it is also a tradition that cannot be separated from the Abakamega of the Luhyia community. Arising from the work of DeBoo, this research goes ahead to investigate on the various cultural laws and rituals that govern the bullfighting sport. Noteworthy is to find out the role of the constitution and the Veterinary Department-Ministry of livestock. The main issue for investigation is to find out its view on bullfighting among the Abakamega in terms of regulation measures by the department on bullfighting. In the event there are no regulations on bullfighting this study seeks to ascertain what the state is planning to do to control the cultural sport or include it among other sports in Kenya.

Not only do the exceptions to animal protection laws exempt bullfighting, but Colombia has laws that specifically enshrine the activity as a cultural tradition.¹⁰⁸ Congress has also made a few statutes that regulate activities where animals participate, more specifically bullfighting and corrales, disregarding the principle of animal protection. The most significant of these laws is Ley 916, 2004, the "National Taurine Statute," which regulates bullfighting, its preparation, requirements, organization, among other activities inherent to bullfighting. This statute applies to

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.453

¹⁰⁸G. Fiona. (2011). "Hemingway's seminal writings on bullfighting". *Daily Telegraph*. Retrieved 30 June 2020.

the entire country.¹⁰⁹ Everything that is established in this statute is to guarantee the rights and interests of the public and everyone who participates in this activity. However, there is no regulation concerning the treatment of bulls during, or after, the bullfights in Colombia.¹¹⁰ It is on this basis that this study examines the status of bulls during bullfighting and how they are taken care by the owners when injured by opponents in the arena.

The Taurine Statute discusses topics such as the characteristics of the bullring, the name of different areas in the ring, and their purposes.¹¹¹ It has an extensive glossary explaining the different methods utilized during the different phases of the bullfight, procedures to weaken and kill the bull, and the moves of the animal and the bullfighters. This statute defines the name of the weapons and how and when to use them.¹¹² It notes requirements such as the need for every bullring stadium to provide medical assistance for the participants, with at least four specialized doctors in every bullfight. While on-site medical care is outlined for the human participants, no veterinarian is required to be present during the execution of the bullfight.¹¹³ In addition to the Taurine Regulation, there are other laws that indirectly promote bullfighting in the country. Ley 1272, 2009 is the statute where Congress declares “la fiesta corralejas” celebrated every January 20th in Sincelejo, the capital of Sucre, as a cultural heritage of the Nation.¹¹⁴ This study gives out recommendations on characteristics of stadia to be built in Kenya, employment model in bullfighting that

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p.455

¹¹⁰Ibid., p.459

¹¹¹A.Vega.(2018). Legal Framework of Bullfighting and Societal Context in Colombia. *J. Animal & Nat. Resource L.*, 14, 103.

¹¹²Ibid., p.104

¹¹³P. Preston. (2013). *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain*, London, Harper Press, p. 150.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p.105

should be implemented to give bullfighting in Kakamega a national outlook since it is sporadically growing among the Abakakamega.

“Fiestas Corralejas” are traditional celebrations that take place every January in many towns along the Caribbean coast of Colombia.¹¹⁵ During these celebrations, specific types of bullfights take place and they are center of the local celebrations. These bullfights are different from the traditional style in which only trained bullfighters are allowed to participate.¹¹⁶ The bullfights that take place in these celebrations allow the public to actively participate. These regional bullfights are similar to the ones that took place before the advent of professional bullfighters from Spain during colonization. In these events, the public has direct interaction with the bull.¹¹⁷ They provoke the bull that becomes enraged and charges at spectators. These bullfights typically end with the lynching of the bull, which is beaten to death by the attendees.¹¹⁸ It is important to mention that many people are injured due to their drunkenness and careless interaction with the bulls during the celebrations as well. In Nepal, the bullfight has several transactional activities; therefore, it is difficult to fit oneself into a single one. Minority corresponds to the primary sector; to which bulls, cattle ranches and field work belongs, while the important part focuses on the tertiary sector (entrepreneurs, bullfighters, traders, markets and others).

The bullfight according to historical practices in Taruka is understood as an artistic, entertaining cultural product, which regulates the festival of bulls as cultural heritage. In this festival the bullfight appears to be a socio-cultural product because of the

¹¹⁵G. Orwell.(2000). *Homage to Catalonia*, London, Penguin, p. 14.

¹¹⁶Council of Europe. European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw_european_convention_protection_anim_als_en.pdf(accessed on 10 September 2017).

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.109

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.109

transactional activities based on their petty productions as producer of commodities and consumer of more and what they produced ultimately used to be shared in the festival historically but now it is changing. On this basis that the study discussed how bullfighting among the Abakakamega has contributed to socio-cultural development.¹¹⁹ The bullfight is a transactional activity that is used to measure the commodities exchanged in their locally available markets and it has monetary consequences at the local levels of a bullfight or a bullfighting spectacle. In order to have monetary consequence we must distinguish three types of economic effects: direct, indirect and induced. The sum of these three values represents the impact of bulls on their local economy through exchange of commodities they produced and they attract more tourists day by day.

Direct effects evaluate expenses made by cultural festival activities containing festival celebrations, food stalls, market stalls, and prizes.¹²⁰ The popular celebrations which are very important in this community have no actual information about the impacts of this popular cultural festival. Indirect effects in bullfighting is difficult to account, because it is very difficult to calculate the generated surplus, exchange of commodities, services that people are receiving one way or the other, calculate financial expenditures, managerial tensions, costs, remuneration of deployed human resources, technical support and organization that the public makes, when they attend a bullfight celebration.¹²¹ The expenditure begins with the viewers' expenses on transportation, accommodation and catering among others. Transactional impacts of

¹¹⁹ D. Wheeler (2021), 'The anti-pragmatist par excellence: in conversation with Diego Urdiales', *La Divisa*, pp. 8–13.

¹²⁰D. Felsenstein & Fleischer, A. (2003). Local festivals and tourism promotion: The role of public assistance and visitor expenditure. *Journal of Travel research*, 41(4), 385-392.

¹²¹Encyclopaedia-Britannica.(n.d.).*Bullfighting*. Retrieved January 16, 2014, from <http://global.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/84444/bullfighting> *Ethnologist* 11, no. 2 Vol. 80(81), pp. 81-96.

the bullfight celebrations cannot be limited only to the economic perspectives; how much is spent and how is generated.¹²² Therefore, the induced effects measure the impacts of the celebration in the Taruka world, acting as a multiplier effect. This viewpoint can be replicated in this study to find out how bullfighting among the Abakakamega defines the Kenyan's economy.

The bullfight cultural festival of Taruka is a kind of recreational type of cultural festival that attracts tourists, usually domestic, and it does not only generate income, it also helps socialization in Taruka world.¹²³ The bullfight in Taruka is a significant cultural festival which attracts domestic tourists and is the pride of Nuwakot district. Many domestic tourists are interested in knowing the culture of bullfights which is organized in Taruka as it offers social harmony, solidarity, and integration through the entertainment.¹²⁴ It also works as mechanism of conflict resolution in socio-cultural, religious, ecological, linguistic, caste, and ethnically diverse country like Nepal. Popular bullfight celebrations in Taruka work as an important economic engine for the municipalities that organize them, especially in Bagmati province, which is the pioneer of these kinds of festivities. This aspect of Taruka bullfight practice influences the current research's quest to unravel the place of the County government in Kakamega in accelerating bullfighting culture. Furthermore, the current study just as the way Taruka was vital in Nepal, lays a foundation of narrowing on bullfighting among the Abakakamega and how it can help in the process of conflict identification and resolution.

¹²²C. See & F. Flesher,(2020), *Democracy Reloaded: Inside Spain's Political Laboratory from 15-M to Podemos*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020, p. 62.

¹²³J.F. Ricker, (1977). *Yuraq Janka*. The Mountaineers Books, p.67

¹²⁴Ibid., p.68

There are various opportunities for locals; promotional opportunities for businesses, opportunities for growing services, high chances to harmonize the society, opportunities to provide social interactions among people, and cultural socialization through bullfights.¹²⁵ They are also using the opportunities to exchange the commodities they have produced with commodities they need and also the opportunities to talk about the issues of selection of bride or groom.¹²⁶ This is relevant to the current study's search to find out how people participating in this cultural sport can benefit economically rather than just for entertainment.

Finally, the bullfight in Taruka-Nepal is not a simple entity, it is a complex whole through which participants (signifier) and observers (signified) socio-cultural, political, religious, familial, emotional, recreational messages (messages of solidarity, transactions, cohesion, harmony and integrity) pass on to observers who then perceive such messages through entertainment at bullfights within and in between diverse generations, castes, ethnicity, economies, ecologies, families, kin's' or societies and cultures in a larger scale.¹²⁷ In summary, the bullfight in Taruka-Nepal is important from many aspects; economically, socially, and culturally. It stands as a main focus for the locals where domestic tourists from Taruka and nearby villages take part. If paid attention to the facilities like transportation, catering and hotels, a wider participation can be realized. Local, provincial and central government should pay attention to promote, organize and manage it in order to confirm its continuation in future. To prevent the bullfight from disappearing it needs to reinvent itself and adapt to new technologies so that it can address the needs of the audiences of the new generation. In the same argument, Rickers work helps this research to investigate

¹²⁵*La Divisa*, no. 61, 1985; <https://www.ctol.org/> (accessed 21 March 2022).

¹²⁶G. Marvin (1988). *Bullfighting*, Urbana; University of Illinois Press. pp. 17-21

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, p.70

various changes in bullfighting among the Abakakamega such as use of technology and breeding in making the cultural sport more entertaining.

In Spain, the bullfights are the second show after football. It is logical therefore that there are many related industries that support them¹²⁸including for example, cattle ranching bulls, transportation of bulls, the doctor, the maintenance of beef, tourism, business in the vicinity of the bullrings, the making of costumes for bullfighters, bullfighting schools, bullfighting magazines. In Spain, raising a bull is expensive. In fact, according to the president of the Union of Breeders of Spain, Carlos Miura, 90% of the farms have problems to obtain benefits.¹²⁹ Normally, bulls eat a lot, about seven kilos of feed every day, which means two euros per day according to Miura. "There is no better attended to species than the fighting bull. Its care is comparable to that of race horses "says Miura. Before selling a bull, which is often worth between 500 euros to 20,000, people need to take care of it for about five years, with about 5,000 euros in cost.¹³⁰ Furthermore, a large investment is required in land, time and capital. That is why José Luis Castro, member of the National Association of Shepherd Managers, revealed that the benefits are not always obtained. Drawing from this, the current study investigated what it costs the Abakakamega to raise a bull. In addition, the study had the privilege of finding out whether keeping bulls benefitted the owners or not. And if owners do not benefit, why then do they continue being attracted to this cultural sport instead of going for dairy animal keeping?

¹²⁸A. McFarland. (2007). Building a mass activity: Fandom, class and business in early Spanish football. *Soccer & Society*, 8(2-3), 205-220.

¹²⁹G. Marvin (1988). *Op. Cit.*, p.207

¹³⁰C. B. Douglass (1997). *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identity*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, pp 40-45

Miura further argues that, apart from food, the cost of labor also has to be taken into account.¹³¹ The average salary in Spain is around 1000 to 1200 euros. Meanwhile, the monthly salary of livestock employees is a little bit higher, which varies between 1200 and 1500 euros, because it is a profession without fixed office hour. A farm can rear a few hundred animals with between two and ten workers. In this case, the maintenance of the cattle costs 7000 euros per year.¹³² The price of a bull is, of course, more expensive than that of another bovine. The cheapest one's cost 1200 euros and the most expensive, 60000 or 100000 euros. Transportation of wild cattle is a very influential factor in the final performance. To move from the natural place of production to the bullring, trains are used to be the ideal choice due to the infrastructure development, but it has now been replaced with trucks.¹³³ As bulls are high-priced animals, it is necessary to pay more attention to their safety. Trucks charge about 90 cents per kilometer and the salary of the transporters depends on the time, the tradition and the way. These findings laid a background on investigating when and why Abakakamega started transporting bulls using trucks to bullfighting arenas and how this benefits bullfighting sport in general.

The busiest period is in the winter, when the bullfights are held frequently because the cold weather is favorable to bulls. As a traditional Chinese saying goes, the dress is worth a lot, both for the people and for the Buddha. The bullfighter's dress in the arena is called a suit of lights because of its illuminating effect when exposed to light. In the bullfighting world, the bullfighters capture the attention of the spectators through their posture, their ability, as well as their illuminating suit. Arising from this

¹³¹R. S. Hemer, and A. Dundon. (2016). *Emotions, Senses, Spaces: Ethnographic Engagements and Intersections*. University of Adelaide Press, p. 91

¹³²E-mail sent to the author on 21 September 2015.

¹³³G. Marvin (1988). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 209-212

background information this research was interested in answering the question on which seasons among the Abakakamega when bullfighting blossoms. In Buddha-China, bullfighting is an art in making costumes. The costumes, which are well made and complicated, cost quiet a lot. The costumes can be purchased in the local stores, and even online. However, because of the reduction of the bull runs, the trade faces great difficulty to continue. As mentioned earlier, bullfighting is the second most important show in Spain and a huge number of people head for the bullrings to witness it. It is said that bulls are the black leg ham in all cultural activities and nearby bars and restaurants receive the greatest number of visitors throughout the year, which is a boost in their economy.¹³⁴ As bullfighting among the Chinese increases in winter, the current study goes out of its way to unravel the best time for bullfighting among the Abakakamega. It also looked into the attires used by fans and bull owners during bullfighting culture in Kenya among the Isukha and Idakho communities. It also investigated the challenges facing bullfighting sport and possible solution to ensure the culture continues to grow.

The bull runs not only bring clients to restaurants, but also bring food material and meat. Because of its special character, bull meat is very different from the one they buy in street butchers.¹³⁵ In Spain they charge up to 12 euros for a succulent oxtail in a restaurant, although they sell to the markets of supplies with only 60 cents a kilo. It is the most ecological and best quality meat on the market, so it is usually sold in delicatessen or gourmet stores. In summary, many commercial opportunities are hidden behind the brave animal. Tradition needs support from different parts of

¹³⁴G. Steinmetz. (1999). Introduction: culture and the State. In: Steinmetz, George (ed.) *State/culture:*

state formation after the cultural turn, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, pp. 1–49.

¹³⁵N. Bassegoda. (1966). Bullfighting and tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(5), pp.545-556.

society. Through this spectacle, many people earn their bread.¹³⁶Bullfighting among the Abakakamega attracts multitudes of people. The question the minds of the investigator in the current study is how the Abakakamega can use this bullfighting opportunity to venture into business to improve their livelihoods and the Kenyan economy at large.

Willy Wanyenya in his work, *A collection of oral narratives from the Bamasaba Community in eastern Uganda*, observes that on a vast mountainous landscape in the eastern part of Uganda lies the district of Bududa in Mbale, the only place in Uganda where bullfighting happens.¹³⁷ The densely populated district is mainly occupied by farmers. In addition to the large quantities of bananas, cabbages, and maize grown, the farmers also keep a number of livestock ranging from cows, goats, pigs and poultry. Sitting on the slopes of Mount Elgon, Bududa is not a tourist attraction and its history of landslides does not help it. Yet it is the only place in Uganda where communities have bull fighting activities the world and Uganda know little about.¹³⁸ Every other Saturday evening, men and boys bring their bulls to a nearby field at 5pm. The strong ones are led to the football pitch engulfed in chants and cheers. At times, one can mistake the scene for that of a cultural circumcision, a rite of passage for the Gishu boys from the area. Wanyenya's work lays a background to the current study on the best time bullfighting happens among the Abakakamega. In addition, it helped to investigate the people who are concerned with taking bulls to the fighting arena among the Abakakameg. In Bududa, Uganda, bullfighting takes place on the Slopes of Mount Elgon. The current study focused on bullfighting among the

¹³⁶Ibid., p.213

¹³⁷W. Wanyenya. (2013). The general views of Bamasaba of Eastern Uganda about their oral narratives and cultural songs. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 4(8), 413-425.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.414

Abakakamega of Western Kenya and investigated the best location where this cultural sport takes place.

On bullfighting in Bududa, Mwakikagile reports that bulls walk to the grounds with that kind of self-assurance; slow, tough and firm on the ground.¹³⁹ This bull fits the description of a gentle giant, only that this one is on steroids and his interaction with humans has given him the license to brag. On this Saturday, this prize bull gets everyone running in the direction his gentle low is coming from; many locals literally worship him while others just want to touch his hard body.¹⁴⁰ More bulls are brought in and their owners lead them across the field to find their opponents. The younger and smaller bulls are made to fight with bulls their size, while the bigger ones are paired with their more muscular counterparts. This information helped the current study to interrogate how bullfighting is organized among the Abakakamega.

In Kenya, among the Abakakamega, bulls are highly honored as they play a greater role in the cultural life of the community members.¹⁴¹ Among the Isukha and Idakho people, famous for the bullfighting, the elders are accorded a befitting send off, in cases of death.¹⁴² To show respect, bulls are made to fight on the man's grave overturning the red soil because it is believed that in doing so the deceased's spirit will rest in peace and if this custom is not adhered to, the deceased's soul will haunt the family and friends he associated with. Bull fighting is a cultural practice that has become famous in western Kenya. It is majorly practiced by the residents of Kakamega County specifically in Shinyalu and Ikolomani sub-counties. In Ikolomani,

¹³⁹G.Mwakikagile. (2014). *The people of Kenya and Uganda*. New Africa Press, p. 78

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p.416

¹⁴¹S. E. Karani (2017). *continuity and change in the funeral rites of Abatirichi of Western Kenya c. 1850-1960*, (A Masters thesis) University of Nairobi, p.108

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p.108

the fights happen in Malinya Stadium, where thousands of spectators gather to watch. The event happens on some Saturdays and public holidays.

Bull fighting has been the pillar of fostering peace among the communities of the Luhya tribe.¹⁴³ Unlike the Spanish *corrida de toros* where man fights bull, the Kakamega bull-fighting involves bulls fighting each other. All bulls used for the fights are well prepared in advance and also subjected to a balanced diet. A balanced diet for a bull typically consists of a combination of forages, grains, and supplements to meet their nutritional requirements. The specific composition of the diet may vary depending on the age, breed, size, and intended use of the bull. The Abakamega bullfighting involves a series of rituals in which, a special person is selected objectively to sing war songs to the beast on the eve of the fight. The person talks to the bull, preparing it for the fight.¹⁴⁴ All bulls are made to live in isolation from other animals as a way of keeping them wild. Young bulls are trained for battle and are paired with their peers during training. Some of them are fed with *busaa*, a local home-made brew that is believed to make them charged, while some bulls are subjected to puffs of marijuana introduced hours before the fight.¹⁴⁵ The bulls undergo sacred practices and are exposed to traditional drugs and sorceries to avoid bewitching from the opposing community. A vow that remains concealed between the bull owner and the beast itself is administered and the beast is only fed by a specific person who maintains a single set piece of clothing; besides bright colors are not allowed. The litany of rituals is shocking. For instance, women in their menstrual

¹⁴³S. Wealands, & T. Robson. (1960). *The National Spanish festival or the art of bullfighting*. Madrid: Vellasco Gil Publishers, p. 23

¹⁴⁴<https://www.mozzartsport.co.ke/other-sports/news/the-fighting-bulls-of-western-kenya/25185>

¹⁴⁵Sometimes described as a tragedy in three parts, a *corrida* consists of picadors, *banderilleros* and the matador's killing of the bull.

cycle are forbidden from getting near the bull. This also applies to drunkards, as it is believed their presence will turn the beast wild and dreadful.¹⁴⁶

1.10.3 Influence of Bullfighting to Development

Tourism and events featuring animals have traditionally been a feature in different countries and civilizations¹⁴⁷, and the bull an emblematic animal in many regions of Europe has a history of association with national tourism spanning many decades.¹⁴⁸ In Europe, the well-known bull culture was venerated by predecessors, and many examples of it can be found, mainly in the early Mediterranean cultures.¹⁴⁹ All around the world, we can find tourist shows involving oxen or bulls; for example, various festivals in Thailand and China include rituals with these animals.¹⁵⁰ In Thailand, the Royal Ploughing Ceremony is held every year before the rice planting to predict the amount of rainfall and the yield. In this ceremony, the ox is used in a peaceful way, quite unlike the violence meted out to the bull in bullfights. It is on this basis that this study explained the contributions of bullfighting towards economic growth among the Abakakamega people.

However, it is worth noting an increase in Chinese bullfight spectators. 23rd October 2004 will go down in bullfighting history as the day on which a bullfight was held for the first time in China (Shanghai), albeit with some specifically Chinese features, since the death of the animals in the ring was eliminated from the spectacle.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶<https://www.citizen.digital/sports/bullfighting-how-to-nurture-a-bull-for-the-fight-and-what-the-sport-entails-takes-from-kakamega-n316930>

¹⁴⁷D. Getz. (2022). Event management. In *Encyclopedia of Tourism Management and Marketing* (pp. 144-147). Edward Elgar Publishing.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p.144

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p.144

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p.145

¹⁵¹W. Babb.(1976). *Ritual Paradoxes in Nepal: Comparative Perspectives On Tamang Religion*, Vikas Publisher, Mihigan. Pp. 121-125.

Furthermore, Babb and Ward report on some festivals in Nepal involving the intersection of religion and animals, such as the Gadhimai Festival. Held every five years, it includes the most controversial animal sacrifice in the world (about 200,000 animals were slaughtered in 2014).¹⁵² Approximately four million people take part in this festival and participants believe that animal sacrifices to the Hindu goddess Gadhimai will put an end to evil and bring prosperity. After the festival, the meat, bones and skins of the animals are sold to companies in India and Nepal.

Ishii studies acculturation and bulls in Japan, pointing out that platforms are being created to boost this type of tourism in the country. A notable spectacle in Japan is bull sumo: unlike the man-versus-beast bullfights, this is a kinder version similar to sumo wrestling, in which two bulls, accompanied by their coaches, take each other on.¹⁵³ Bull sumo has been a popular form of entertainment since the 12th century, a test of strength in which the animals try to twist the head of their rival and which ends when a bull surrenders before the force of its opponent. The event continues to this day in many places in Japanese locations of Uruma in Okinawa, which holds about 200 fights a year, including a tournament to choose the strongest bulls.¹⁵⁴ From the aforementioned history in China and Japan, this study discussed how, when and why bullfighting is organized in Kakamega.

Bull-related events can also be found in South Asia¹⁵⁵, such as the Jallikattu, which is a sport that involves subduing bulls, practiced in Tamil Nadu, India. It is one of the most ancient celebrations in India. The challenge is to try to grab the large hump on

¹⁵²S.Ward. (1984). *Bullfight Festival, Socialization and Entertainment in Taruka-Nepal*, Patan Multiple, Dhoka University, p. 33

¹⁵³Ibid., p.146

¹⁵⁴D.Getz. (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 202

¹⁵⁵R. Ponnuru. (1984). Bull-Fight, a Folk Sport in Tamilnadu, depicts Traditional Heroism or Valour of Man before Marriage. *Folklore Calcutta*, 25(293), 197-200.

the back of a bull set loose in a crowd, and cling on as the bull tries to break free.¹⁵⁶ Participants hold on to the bull as long as possible, trying to stop it and remove the flags from its horns. The activity does not lead to the death of the bull. Moreover, one of the rules of the Jallikattu is that participants must not hit or hurt the bull in any way.¹⁵⁷

Until the late 1980s, there were bullfights in Zanzibar and on the neighboring island of Pemba (Tanzania).¹⁵⁸ There were no bullrings in either place, and the animals were not killed, nor were they specially-bred bulls like the Spanish or Portuguese fighting breeds. A sub-species of cattle called Zebu were used. This was an animal of Asian origin with a large hump. Participants fought and played with these bulls, rather like the Portuguese *forçados*.¹⁵⁹ The custom was introduced to these two Indian Ocean islands centuries ago by Portuguese settlers, as the Portugal extended its territories along the coast and the archipelagos of Tanzania (they were Portuguese colonies between 1505 and 1629).

Countries with a bullfighting tradition view the event as a contest with the bull that some authors regard as brutal or comic.¹⁶⁰ Others interpret it as an invisible show with an eye-catching stage facing the gallery but with a backstage that offers much to analyze, after reducing it to fighting skills in the ring between man and animal. Some authors take the view that without bullfights, the survival of an animal species would be called into question.¹⁶¹ Other authors also focus on festivals without which various species of animals would be lost if they were not used for these shows: For example

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.198

¹⁵⁷M. Jallikattu (2017), Notification dated 21/01/2017 – *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Conduct of Jallikattu) Rules*

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.199

¹⁵⁹J. J. Aiden (1998): Bullfighting in Pemba, *Periodical Article*. 2, pp. 18-21.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p.199

¹⁶¹G. Marvin. (1988). *Bullfighting*, Urbana; University of Illinois Press, p. 16

gamecocks in cockfighting, beetles, elephants, tigers and lions as well as fights between bulls in Iran and the Persian Gulf and China.¹⁶² However, in all these areas, as discussed by Ponnu, there is no clear dividing line between entertainment and tourism, to the extent that the use of animals for tourism purposes can be justified without examining the ethical principles. That's why this study dwelt on examining the principles attached to bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

When it comes to changing the rules, it is believed that every culture has weightier traditions than others¹⁶³ which influence the perception of bullfights. There are differences between the sexes in terms of the perceptions of these traditions, which could perhaps be explained by man's history as a hunter.¹⁶⁴ Certainly, if we think about the history of humanity, we have to apply anthropological and philosophical theories to the observation of human behavior. These philosophical and anthropological aspects may be biased according to modern contextual interests.¹⁶⁵ Thus, from the point of view of the bullfighter he loves the animal as its brave adversary even though he wants to kill it to experience a mystical, sublime, existential, and mysterious feeling by sacrificing the bull in the bullring. However, there are exceptions like Portugal, where the bull does not meet its death at the hands of the bullfighter. This study elaborated on the instances in which the bull can be killed or when it can meet its death in a cultural way among the Abakakamega.

It is difficult to classify bullfighting within the categories of tourism and culture. Many authors would categorize it as folklore and spectacle according to Douglas or

¹⁶²Ibid., p.200

¹⁶³F.Rahman, (1982). *Islam and modernity: Transformation of an intellectual tradition* (Vol. 15). University of Chicago Press., p.74

¹⁶⁴G. Orwell (2000) *Homage to Catalonia*, London, Penguin, p. 14.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p.20

even sport. Most authors oppose the sports classification and do not see it as a fair fight between two opponents, alleging a clear ignorance of the matter as there is no sport or competition as alluded by Sophie. Others see it as a dance.¹⁶⁶ The colorful banderillas (sharp, barbed sticks) and the *traje de luces* (literally “suit of lights”, the traditional clothing of bullfighters) - glint in the setting sun. Everything is tightly controlled and produced for connoisseurs of the drama, where businessmen have set the contract for the bull’s end, with a president who bears witness to the outcome, and with the main actors-the bullfighter, the entourage, the lancers and the banderilleros - until the bull stumbles in a dance of death to its anticipated end as noted by Marvin. Some authors see bullfights as an outrageous and bloody spectacle. The perception also depends on the point of view in question-whether a bullfighting enthusiast, family members, or the bullfighter himself although it may be strongly biased and depends on how spectators and various variables are analyzed. The origin of the spectators also plays a role: if they are foreigners, they have a substantially different understanding of the event from local or national spectators, which is a variable that should be taken in to account in any analysis.¹⁶⁷ Bassegoda Nonell notes that ignorance of the rules and the different times of the ritual makes it more difficult to understand the spectacle, and makes the death of the animal surrounded by hundreds of people cheering more incomprehensible.¹⁶⁸ Is this the case among the Abakakamega? This study attempts to answer this question.

¹⁶⁶C.B. Douglass.,(1997). *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish Identities*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, p. 78.

¹⁶⁷G.Marvin.(1988). *Bullfighting*, Urbana; University of Illinois Press, p.64

¹⁶⁸N. Bassegoda. (1966). Bullfighting and tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(5), pp.545-556.

Lewine offers an understanding of bullfighting by detailing technical aspects, such as the different varieties of banderillas and other elements.¹⁶⁹ Other authors claim that having some basic knowledge puts us almost at the level of experts, as if it were a work of modern art, about which your amateur opinion can be compared to that of an expert.¹⁷⁰ Lewine also refers to the number of spectators who attend without really knowing how bullfighting works or many of the rules.¹⁷¹ Abella notes that these people, despite their ignorance, see it as something sublime, comparable to music or other arts.¹⁷² Over the centuries, romantic writers have portrayed bullfighting as an art. In his travels around Spain, Hemingway declared that bullfighting is the only art in which the artist is in danger of losing his life.¹⁷³ This prompted waves of Americans to seek out the said art and to risk their lives by visiting Pamplona and running in front of the bulls during the festival of San Fermín. Other authors consider the bull as a kind of totem that is sacrificed and venerated by the masses. The current study investigated bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega in the context of cultural sport, social-economic and a political influence. The study also answered the question on whether bullfighting among the Abakakamega is a profession or an art.

It is also important to analyze the people in Spain who are really interested in bulls, as some authors argue that they are already a minority given the change in tastes towards other hobbies such as videogames or football.¹⁷⁴ There also seems to be a declining trend because there has been no generational handover in terms of attendance at these

¹⁶⁹E. Lewine. (2006). *Death and the Sun: A Matador's Season in the Heart of Spain*. Random House, p.78

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p.78

¹⁷¹D. Sec. (2012). Wheeler, 'Bullfighting in southern France: a dispatch from Arles', *French Politics, Culture, and Society*, in press.

¹⁷²Ibid., p.80

¹⁷³G. Tremlett, *The International Brigades: Fascism, Freedom and the Spanish Civil War*, London, Bloomsbury, 2020, p. 172.

¹⁷⁴J.M.C., Lopez, *et.al*, (2022). Perception of and motivation for attending bullfights: A comparative analysis of tourists and residents, In *Cuadernos de Turismo*, (50), 333-353.

shows, although there are no quantitative indicators that suggest a genuine crisis, regarding attendance. There are various activities related to fighting bulls and their classification as a spectacle depends on the author in question. Douglass reports that there are up to 16 different bull-related traditions in Spain. Since the 17th Century, the “*toreo a pie*” (the practice of fighting bulls on foot rather than horseback) has stood out among these traditions.¹⁷⁵ It has almost always been considered a recreational activity, but can often be viewed as an independent, for-profit, mass-oriented sector, appreciated by all social classes. This major business offers many opportunities and the agricultural and livestock sector are very comfortable with the activity.¹⁷⁶ Some writers see in the suffering of the bull when it goes out into the ring a poetic contrast between darkness and light the clash between upholding tradition so as not to diminish the national identity and ensuring that centuries of cultural heritage continue to prevail despite modern trends.¹⁷⁷ Douglass work helped the current study to investigate the role of the Kenyan Government in making bullfighting culture a national festival during events. This study therefore focused on bullfighting as a tradition, an economic activity and a political developmental instrument among the Abakakamega.

In Nepal, political leaders are chosen to be the chief guests of the inauguration sessions of the festivals.¹⁷⁸ One of the speakers described the importance of bullfight saying, "it generates economy, it has become the hub of exchanging agro-products, cultures and our social feelings culturally". He underscored the need to preserve such unique cultural events to attract more tourists. Many political leaders from the district,

¹⁷⁵G. P., Mansour. (1997). Review of Douglass: Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities, In *Arizona Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 1(1), pp.214–215.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p.337

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p.339

¹⁷⁸G. W. Allport (1929), Composition of political attitudes. *Am. J. Sociol.* 35(2), pp.220–238.

vicinity and even the capital city visit Taruka to observe the bullfights. "Giving continuity to such tradition is the only objective, the event is organized every year", said Rajesh Dhungel, chairman of the fare management committee. He expressed happiness over the growing numbers of audience every year. To add more fun, several troupes of singers also perform on the sidelines during the event. This relates well on bullfighting among the Abakakamega where politicians associate themselves with bulls. Therefore, this work helped to guide the current study to connect politicians to bullfighting well.

In Kenya, Masingu Kennedy, investigated the influence of cultural activities on living standards of rural dwellers of Ikolomani South division of Kakamega south sub-county, Kenya. He denoted that culture has become a sensitive issue and has remained a burning aspect almost in all developing countries of the world leading to low standards of living. Cultural practices play a vital role in influencing people's lives.¹⁷⁹ He investigated how socio-cultural practices influence the living standards of people of Ikolomani south of Kakamega County. He highlighted some of these socio-cultural practices such as funerals, bullfighting and patriarchy as influencers of living standards. He concluded that funerals and bullfighting are uniting factors of Abakakamega.¹⁸⁰ Kennedy's work has a bearing to the current study as it adopted the theory and methods he used. His ideas on how socio-cultural practices can improve the living standards of Ikolomani, guided the current study to situate the origin of bullfighting and its influence on the development of Abakakamega as a whole.

¹⁷⁹K Masingu. (2013). Influence of Cultural Activities of Living Standards of Rural dwellers of Ikolomani: South Division of Kakamega South Sub County, Kenya, Master Thesis of Arts in Degree in Project Planning and Management, University of Nairobi, p. 63.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

The current study focused on bullfighting in Shinyalu and Ikolomani (Abakakamega). However, Masingu did not look at the origins of bullfighting. This study traced the origins and development of this bullfighting culture since 1850. The current study also dwells on social-cultural, economic and political development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

1.11.0 Theoretical framework

This study adopted three theories: Political culture theory, functional theory and articulation of Modes of Production theory. A combination of these three theories adequately assisted in handling in an adequate manner the data at researcher's disposal. They were intertwined for the purpose of complimentary and supplementary purposes. In this case, where one theory failed to explain some ideas or concepts, the other theory was vital in handling the same. This provided some guarantee against assumption that a particular theory was the valid one. In the case, bullfighting phenomena is complex; tracing its origins and development, navigating through its influence of bullfighting culture to the development of Abakakamega socio-culturally, socio-economically and politically needed a variety of theories to unravel this. Therefore, in examining the role of bullfighting culture on the political development, political culture theory served the purpose. Articulation of modes of production theory underscored the change of bullfighting culture from just being a cultural sport to entertain to more of economic influence such as through commercialization.

1.11.1 Political Culture theory

Political culture theory has passed through several periods of intensive development and high interest from both social and political science research.¹⁸¹ Its success has been based on the explanatory power of its arguments regarding the intermediate role culture plays in the relation between the citizens and the dynamics of the polity structure, organization and operation. It has also known long periods of criticism and harsh denials of its very explanatory power, philosophical backgrounds, and methodological means.¹⁸²

One such critical aspect is that political culture theory does not actually provide for an ontology and epistemology of its own, it just suggests dimensions of comparative analysis without having fundamentally specified what it is and how it works.¹⁸³ Moreover, it employs attitude measurements and evaluations of attitudes' impact on political behavior or action deliberation without actually having provided for attitude operationalization. Thus, it aided this study to address the issues of bullfighting with political developments. Attitude research has ever since developed an impressive conceptual and methodological endeavor for achieving an operational form of the attitude structure as it has been defined by Allport.¹⁸⁴ . Allport also comes to support this idea.¹⁸⁵ The spectacular historical development in attitude fundamental and methodological research has not been closely followed by similar efforts in political culture theory and methodological research. Another critical aspect is that political culture theory has not integrated culture and state studies in a unified conceptual and

¹⁸¹M.A. Seligson, (2002). The renaissance of political culture or the renaissance of the ecological fallacy? *Comp. Polit.* 34(3), 273–292

¹⁸²S. Welch. (2013). *The Political Culture Theory*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 41

¹⁸³M. Douglas. (1986). *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, p. 13

¹⁸⁴G.W., Allport. (1929). Composition of political attitudes. *Am. J. Social.* 35(2), pp.220–238

¹⁸⁵G.W., Allport. (1935), Attitudes. In: Murchison, C. (ed.) *Handbook of Social Psychology*, pp. 798–844. Clark University Press, Worcester

operational framework.¹⁸⁶ Therefore, this study employed this theory due to the following reasons; it made the researcher to integrate the bullfighting sporting event with practical activities in the society. The theory also enhanced the study to evaluate the attitudes of the Abakakamega population with regards to the use of bullfighting as a source of unity and as well as an avenue of cultural and political developments in the society.

The limits of a particular political culture are based on subjective identity. The most common form of such identity today is the national identity, and hence nation states set the typical limits of political cultures.¹⁸⁷ The socio-cultural system, in turn, gives meaning to a political culture through shared symbols and rituals (such as a national independence day) which reflect common values.¹⁸⁸ This may develop into a civil religion. The values themselves can be more hierarchical or egalitarian and will set the limits to political participation, thereby creating a basis for legitimacy.¹⁸⁹ They are transmitted through socialization, and shaped by shared historical experiences which form the collective or national memory.¹⁹⁰ Scholars will continue to interpret the political culture through political discourse in the public sphere.¹⁹¹ Indeed, elite political culture is more consequential than mass-level.¹⁹² This theory enabled the study to examine the social values that enhance cultural developments in the society. Further, through it, it made the study to properly interpret the political culture that

¹⁸⁶G. Steinmetz. (1999). *Op. Cit*, p.25

¹⁸⁷L. Morlino, (2017). *Political science: A global Perspective*. Berg-Schlusser, Dirk., Badie, Bertrand. London, England, pp. 64–74.

¹⁸⁸Ibid, p.64

¹⁸⁹L Dittmer, (1997). Political culture and political symbolism: toward a theoretical synthesis. *World Polit.* 29(4), pp. 552–583

¹⁹⁰Ibid, p.67

¹⁹¹R.J. Dalton, and H.D. Klingemann, (2007). Citizens and political behavior, introduction, In: Dalton, R.,J., Klingemann, H.-D. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, Oxford University Press,pp. 43-49

¹⁹²R. Hague, (2017). *Political science: a comparative introduction*. pp. 200–214. ISBN 978-1-137-60123-0. OCLC 970345358.

facilitated a unifying political discourse among the Abakakamega of western Kenya since c.1850.

The theory's main tenet is that it would investigate the cultural importance of bullfighting in the Abakakamega community, recognize what principles or ideals it represents and how it relates to their historical traditions. The theory helps look into whether bullfighting in the Abakakamega society has any political symbolism or serves as a metaphor for social order, leadership, or power relationships. The study examines the Abakakamega people's perspectives on bullfighting to determine whether it is widely supported or whether there are sizable populations that are opposed to it, as well as the justifications for their position. There is need to analyze whether bullfighting influences Abakakamega society's political choices, either directly through involvement in politics or indirectly through social influences on decision-makers. The theory is useful in examining the role that bullfighting plays in the development of the Abakakamega people's collective identity and social cohesiveness. The theory connected the issue of governance. The structuring and organizing of bullfighting among the Abakakamega was interpreted using this theory. In addition, the role played by local administrators such chiefs, sub-chiefs in bullfighting in the area of study, was investigated by the guidance of political theory. For a culture to survive, there must be rules or laws governing it. These rules and laws are supposed to be constructed by individuals or groups taking part in this culture. Therefore, these issues were guided by political culture theory.

Another tenet that was useful to this study was about the role of politicians in bullfighting culture. Among the Abakakamega, politicians are much involved in bullfighting culture. Therefore, this study investigated their role in developing the

culture. It was also vital in connecting the county government to this culture and explain the reason for developing stadia in Shinyalu and Ikolomani sub-counties.¹⁹³

This theory has been used by Richard and Michael when looking at culture matters which explores the role of political culture studies as one of the major investigative fields in contemporary political science.¹⁹⁴ Cultural theory was the focal point of the late Aaron Wildavsky's teaching and research for the last decade of his life, a life that profoundly affected many fields of political science, from the study of the presidency to public budgeting. In this volume, original essays prepared in Wildavsky's honor examine the areas of rational choice, institutions, theories of change, political risk, the environment, and practical politics.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, Michael employed this theory in one of his works where he was analyzing modern democracy in the view of the theory and practice of political morality. He looks at different weak political moralities in detail and against other competent ones that good states are founded on.¹⁹⁶

Political culture theory helped the researcher to understand the historical context in which bullfighting emerged among the Abakakamega community. It involves examining the political and social factors that might have influenced the adoption or development of this cultural practice. Through political culture theory, the researcher investigated the beliefs, values, and norms within the Abakakamega community that might have contributed to the establishment and continuation of bullfighting. Understanding the cultural significance and symbolic meanings associated with the

¹⁹³J. Haidt. (2012). *The righteous mind*. Pantheon Books, New York, pp. 17-31

¹⁹⁴H. Eckstein (1988). A culturalist theory of political change. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* **82**, 789–804

¹⁹⁵J. Richard and T. Michael, eds (1997). *Culture Matters: Essays in Honor of Aaron Wildavsky*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 252 pp. 121-130

¹⁹⁶G. Michael. (1997). *Ethics and Activism: The Theory and Practice of Political Morality*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 305

practice helped to shade light on its origin. Political culture theory allows the examination of power dynamics within the community and how bullfighting might be related to notions of authority, leadership, or social hierarchies.

Political culture theory has the following strengths and why it was employed by this study. It takes a holistic view of politics, considering not only formal institutions but also the informal norms and beliefs that influence political behavior.¹⁹⁷ This comprehensive approach allows for a deeper understanding of the political landscape. The theory emphasizes the persistence and stability of political culture over time, providing insights into the enduring aspects of a society's political attitudes and practices.¹⁹⁸ Political culture theory enables researchers to compare the political cultures of different societies, facilitating cross-cultural understanding and identifying patterns and variations in political behaviors. The theory recognizes that political behavior cannot be understood in isolation from the broader societal context, taking into account historical, cultural, and social factors that influence political values.

However the weaknesses of Political Culture Theory are as follows: Critics argue that political culture theory may sometimes overgeneralize the attitudes and values of a population, leading to stereotyping and overlooking internal diversity within a society.¹⁹⁹ While political culture can offer insights into political behavior, it does not always provide a clear causal relationship between culture and political outcomes, making it challenging to predict specific policy outcomes or political changes. Some critics argue that political culture theory overlooks the influence of structural factors

¹⁹⁷M. Weber. (1949). *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. In: Shils, E.A., Finch, H.A. (eds.) (E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch, Trans.). Free Press, New York, pp. 12-31

¹⁹⁸T. D. Wilson. (1992). S. D. Hodges: Attitudes as temporary constructions. In: Martin, L.L., Tesser, A. (eds.) *The Construction of Social Judgments*, pp. 37–65. Erlbaum, Hillsdale

¹⁹⁹C. Tilly. (1999). *Epilogue: now where?* In: Steinmetz, George (ed.) *State/Culture: State-Formation After the Cultural Turn*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, p. 410.

(e.g., economic inequalities, institutional arrangements) on political behavior, leading to an incomplete understanding of the political dynamics.²⁰⁰

Nonetheless the researcher did overcome many challenges by employing the use of qualitative method to capture nuances in political attitudes and behaviors. By integrating other theoretical perspectives, such as institutional analysis or social theories, the researcher gained a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between political culture and structural factors.²⁰¹ Long-term, longitudinal studies helped to establish causal relationships and identify changes in political culture over time, offering a more nuanced view of its impact on political outcomes. The investigator was cautious not to essentialise or stereotype Abakamega's political culture and instead focused on the diversity of perspectives such social-economic and social cultural issues among the Isukha and Idakho communities.

1.11.2 Functionalism theory

This study also employed Functionalism theory by a renowned sociologist called Emille Durkheim (1858-1917). The theory based on the premise that all aspects of a society such as, institutions, roles, norms and others serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long-term survival of the society. The approach gained prominence in the works of 19th-century sociologists, particularly those who viewed societies as organisms. The French sociologist Émille Durkheim argued that it was necessary to understand the “needs” of the social organism to which social phenomena correspond. Other writers have used the concept of function to mean the

²⁰⁰C. Tilly, (2001): Mechanisms in political processes. *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 4, 21–41

²⁰¹C. F. Voinea, (2016): *Political Attitudes: Computational and Simulation Modelling*. Wiley, Chichester, pp. 16-31

interrelationships of parts within a system, the adaptive aspect of a phenomenon, or its observable consequences.²⁰²

Durkheim Emile in his theory, views social system as assumed to have a functional unity in which all parts of the system work together with some degree of internal consistency. Functionalism also postulates that all cultural or social phenomena have a positive function and that all are indispensable.²⁰³ Distinctions have been made between manifest functions, those consequences intended and recognized by participants in the system, and latent functions, which are neither intended nor recognized. This study, which focuses on situating bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega who have been practicing this cultural sport for over one hundred and seventy years is ideally suited to the ideas of Durkheim Emile in this theory. The ideas connect bullfighting culture with Abakakamega and can help examine the reason why the Isukha and Idakho communities are much attached to the sport.

Kizito Muchanga in his PhD work supports this theory in his work by noting that, the concept of functionalism examines the society as a whole in terms of how its institutions, norms, habits and traditions work.²⁰⁴ He adds that societal equilibrium is emphasized by functionalism. Society must adapt in order to reach a stable state whenever something happens to disturb the harmony and smooth operation of the system. A system of interconnected parts, society cannot function without any of its component.²⁰⁵ These concepts aligned well with the current study in many ways. For

²⁰²E. Durkheim.(1994). "Social facts" in Martin Michael; McIntyre, Lee C. *Reading in the Philosophy of Social Science*. Boston, PhD: MIT. Press, pp. 433-440.

²⁰³R. F. Bales, & T. Parsons, (2014). *Family: Socialization and interaction process*. Routledge, pp. 27-29

²⁰⁴K. Muchanga. (2022). *Evangelization Paradigms in the Development of the Catholic Diocese of Kakamega, Kenya since 1904*. PhD. Thesis, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, p.180

²⁰⁵D. J. Elazar.(1970). *Cities of the Prairie: The Metropolitan Frontier and American Politics*. Basic Books, New York, pp. 13-19

bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega to have developed to where it is currently, there are different people (of different ages such as old, mature men approaching the old age, youth of different roles such as politicians, administrators) who have been taking part in this cultural sport. The study therefore used this theory to assess their roles in the development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. The study also applied this theory to understand the norms, beliefs, rituals that exists in Isukha and Idakho, binding these people together as they embrace their cultural sport since pre-colonial period to date.

Durkheim Emile explored theoretical implications of functionalism as a relationship between a social institution and the “necessary conditions of existence” of a social system. He saw the function of a unit as the contribution it makes to the maintenance of a social structure, for example, the set of relationships among social units.²⁰⁶ This therefore guided the researcher to examine the relationship between bullfighting and Abakakamega as a form of cultural development.

In an attempt to develop a more dynamic analysis of social systems, the American sociologist Talcott Parsons introduced a structural functional approach that employs the concept of function as a link between relatively stable structural categories.²⁰⁷ Any process or set of conditions that does not contribute to the maintenance or development of the system is said to be dysfunctional. In particular, there is a focus on the conditions of stability, integration, and effectiveness of the system.²⁰⁸ This dynamic analysis was very pertinent to the historical development of bullfighting

²⁰⁶D. C. Hurst and A. Z. Kondra, (2009). Institutional Processes of Organizational, In *Culture in the culture and Organizations*, 15(1): Alberta: Athabasca University, pp,39-58.

²⁰⁷D.J Elkins, R. E. B. Simeon. (1979). A cause in search of its effect, or what does political culture explain? *Comp. Polit.* 11(2), pp. 127–145.

²⁰⁸E. Cumming, & W. E. Henry (1961). *Growing old, the process of disengagement*. Basic books, p. 22

among the Abakakamega that has continued to grow and change. These ideas were much helpful to account for a shift in bullfighting from how the cultural sport was being viewed during pre-colonial and colonial period against the kind of bullfighting being practiced in the post-colonial period.

Functionalism theory offered explanations for both change and stability as this is where its strengths are. Through the work and ideas of Durkheim, this study was able to look at how bullfighting culture has changed over time and how the changes have come about and how they have impacted community as a whole. Furthermore, the ideas also helped to give a clear picture on how this change has brought about stability among the Abakakamega in form of social-cultural, social-economic and political developments.

For bullfighting to have existed for this long, an understanding of the roles played by different stakeholders in this community was needed. Some of these stakeholders include local leaders, farmers, county government among others.²⁰⁹ Which role did each one of them have as far as bullfighting is concerned? How have they been viewing this culture since its origin among the Abakakamega? To answer all these questions in the minds of the investigator to this study, Durkheim in functionalism theory was paramount as he takes a holistic approach to understanding society, looking at the different parts of society and how they work together to create stability and balance.²¹⁰

The major tenet in this theory as employed by the current study was that social system is assumed to have a functional unity in which all parts of the system work together

²⁰⁹P. De Nardis. (2007). Function. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, London: Routledge, p.2.

²¹⁰E. Durkheim, (1994). *Op. Cit.*, pp 437

with some degree of internal consistency. It postulates that all cultural or social phenomena have a positive function and that all are indispensable.²¹¹ For this matter, the tenet helped to understand the role played by bullfighting culture to the people of Isukha and Idakho communities. Another tenet that the study banked on was the role different stakeholders such as farmers, bull owners, local administrators, veterinary staff, women, youth, elders, community administrators play in ensuring bullfighting culture is what it is to date. This theory has been used successfully by scholars such as Kizito Muchanga in his PhD thesis of 2022.²¹² Schulz Andrew also used the same theory when looking at Moors and Bullfighting, History and National Identity.²¹³

Functionalism helped the researcher comprehend the cultural importance of bullfighting within the society where it is practiced. It allowed the study to explore how bullfighting contributes to the cultural identity, traditions, and values of the community. Bullfighting, as a shared cultural practice, can foster a sense of belonging and social cohesion among the people who participate in or spectate the events. Functionalism helped in understanding how such collective experiences strengthen social bonds. Functionalism highlighted the potential symbolic significance of bullfighting, uncovering its role as a ritual with deeper meanings beyond its surface performance. It served as a representation of power, bravery, or other cultural ideals. Functionalism theory supported the analysis of how bullfighting contributes to the local economy and employment, considering its impact on businesses and the hospitality industry among the Abakakamega.

²¹¹R.F.Bales, & Parsons, T. (2014). *Family: Socialization and interaction process*, London: Routledge, p. 17-23

²¹²K. Muchanga, (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p.180

²¹³A. Schulz (2008). Moors and Bullfight: History and National Identity in Goya's Tauromaquia. *The Art Bulletin*, 90(2): pp. 195-127.

One of the criticisms of functionalism applied to bullfighting is that at some point it overlooked ethical issues related to animal rights and cruelty.²¹⁴ This perspective fully addressed the ethical debates surrounding the practice. Functionalism may unintentionally promote cultural relativity, suggesting that all cultural practices are equally valid and acceptable without adequately considering potential harms or negative consequences. The researcher anticipated that, functionalism could downplay the power dynamics involved in sustaining bullfighting as a cultural practice, such as the interests of influential individuals or groups who benefit from its continuation. Functionalism may not adequately address the gender roles and norms perpetuated by bullfighting, which often portrays a traditional view of masculinity and femininity.²¹⁵

The researcher while using functionalism to analyze bullfighting among the Abakakamega, engaged with ethical perspectives and considered the broader implications of cultural practices, including the treatment of animals and potential harm to human participants. To avoid promoting cultural relativity, the investigator in this study complemented functionalism with cultural analysis that seeks to understand the historical, social, and political contexts that shape bullfighting and its impact on society.²¹⁶ To address power dynamics and gender roles, the researcher incorporated perspectives from other sociological theories, such as conflict theory or feminist theory, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these issues. Engaging with diverse perspectives, including those of local communities and animal rights

²¹⁴S. Thomas & F. Cornelia Frank (2020): Mental representation and Cognitive Architecture of Skilled Action. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology* 12 (3):527-546.

²¹⁵R. L. Juan. (2021): Functionalism and the Emotions. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*:2(4), 1-34

²¹⁶G. V. Miguel Garcia-Valdecasas (2022). On the Naturalisation of Teleology: Self-organisation, autopoiesis and teleodynamics: *Adaptive Behavior* 30 (2): pp.103-117.

advocates, who enriched the analysis and provided a more balanced understanding of bullfighting's impact on society.

Functionalism theory helped in assessing various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega community by providing a comprehensive framework to understand how this cultural practice serves specific functions within their society. The theory highlighted the cultural significance of bullfighting, its role in fostering social cohesion and community bonding, and the symbolic meanings attached to the practice. Additionally, functionalism allowed for an examination of the economic implications of bullfighting, its historical continuity, and its integration with cultural norms and values. While applying functionalism, the researcher gained valuable insights into the factors contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega and how this traditional activity contributes to the broader social fabric of their community.

1.11.3 Articulation of Mode of Production Theory

Articulation is the process of creating and maintaining consensus of coordination interests. As developed by Stuart Hall, articulation theory is a cultural theory and methodology that aims to account for the powerful material consequences of the ideas, principles and beliefs that makes up ideologies. The concept of articulation is perhaps one of the most generative concepts in contemporary cultural studies. It is critical for understanding how cultural theorists conceptualize the world, analyze it and participate in shaping it. That's why this study finds it to be very pertinent, hence

it provides room to address issues of cultural activities like bullfighting, among the Abakakamega people.²¹⁷

For some, articulation has achieved the status of theory, as in ‘the theory of articulation’. Articulation can be understood as a way of characterizing a social formation without falling into the twin traps of reductionism and essentialism. It can be seen as transforming ‘cultural studies from a model of communication (production-text consumption; encoding-decoding) to a theory of contexts.’²¹⁸ However, articulation can also be thought of as a method used in cultural analysis. On the one hand, articulation suggests a methodological framework for understanding what a cultural study does. On the other hand, it provides strategies for undertaking a cultural study, a way of ‘contextualizing’ the object of one’s analysis. Thus, articulation works at additional levels: at the levels of the epistemological, the political and the strategic.²¹⁹ On this basis, the theory has been used in the current study to help the researcher understand what bullfighting culture is as an influence to development.

Epistemologically, articulation is a way of thinking about the structures of what we know, as a play of correspondences, non-correspondences and contradictions, as fragments in the constitution of what it takes to be unities. Politically, articulation is a way of foregrounding the structure and play of power that entail in relations of dominance and subordination. Strategically, articulation provides a mechanism for shaping intervention within a particular social formation, conjuncture or context. Hence the application of this theory in this study suits well in situating bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega.

²¹⁷H. Gates. (1996). *China’s Motor: a thousand years of petty capitalism*. Cornell University Press, p. 47

²¹⁸L.Grossberg. (1992). ‘Cultural studies and/in new worlds’, in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10, 1–22.

²¹⁹Ibid., p.10

Articulation can appear deceptively to be a simple concept especially when one level or aspect of its work is taken in isolation. For example, it seems manageable if one is limited to treatment of articulation to its operation as either a theory or method of cultural studies.²²⁰ But when theory and method are understood as they have been in cultural studies as developing in relation to changing epistemological positions and political conditions as well as providing guidance for strategic intervention, it becomes impossible to parse out a neatly packaged theory or a clearly delineated method. It seems timely to labor this point, precisely because the popularity and institutionalization of cultural studies has been accompanied by a widening interest in finding out and often finding out quickly how to ‘do’ a cultural study and what it means to be a cultural theorist.²²¹

The risk comes in that it has become a bit too easy to separate out articulation as the theory or method of cultural studies; to isolate it as having formal, eminently transferable properties. This has taken the form of scholars interested in utilizing articulation in the service of research who’s theoretical, methodological, epistemological, political and strategic commitments are rather dramatically different from those of cultural theorists.²²² Although the boundaries of cultural studies are certainly indistinct and changing, they do sometimes get unquestionably crossed. Consequently, a certain care is in order when using the designations theory and method. However useful it may be to think of articulation in terms of theoretical and methodological valences, to do so is to take the risk that theory and method will be taken too formally as it creates impact in this study.²²³ The theory was taken as a

²²⁰R.F. Bales & Parsons, T. (2014). *Family: Socialization and interaction process*. Routledge, p 46

²²¹Ibid., p.48

²²²J. Derrida. (1982) *Margins of Philosophy*, Brighton: Harvester Press, p. 231

²²³Ibid., p.13

theoretical and methodological valence in connecting bullfighting culture to bull owners and other participants with regard to changing it to a business entity.

Stuart Hall recognized this in 1980 when he acknowledged that ‘articulation contains the danger of a high formalism’.²²⁴ While he wrote this at the height of the Althusserian structuralism moment in cultural studies, the threat of formalism was paramount and needed to be put into account. ‘Theory’ is a term that often connotes an objective, formal tool, or even a ‘value-free’ heuristic device. Cultural studies resists thinking in terms of the ‘application’ of theory in this sense, where theory is used to ‘let you off the hook, providing answers which are always known in advance or endlessly deferring any answer into the field of its endless reflections and reflexivity’.²²⁵ In place of that conception of theory, cultural studies works with the notion of theory as a ‘detour’ to help ground in the engagement with what newly confronts us and to let that engagement provide the ground for theorizing. Theory is thus a practice in a double sense: it is a formal conceptual tool as well as a practicing or ‘trying out’ of a way of theorizing. In joining these two senses of practice, we commit to working with momentarily, temporarily ‘objectified’ theories, moments of ‘arbitrary closure’, recognizing that in the ongoing analysis of the concrete, theory must be challenged and revised. ‘The only theory worth having,’ Hall maintains, ‘is that which you have to fight off, not that which you speak with profound fluency’.²²⁶

Successful theorizing is not measured by exact theoretical fit but by the ability to work with our always inadequate theories to help us move understanding ‘a little further on down the road’. A commitment to ‘the process of theorizing’ is

²²⁴S. Hall. (1980a). ‘*Cultural studies: two paradigms*’, in *Media, Culture and Society* 2 (1), pp.57–72.

²²⁵L. Grossberg.(1992). *Op. Cit.*, p.19

²²⁶S. Hall.(1980a). *Op. Cit.*, p. 280

characteristic of the project of cultural studies; it is ‘the sign of a living body of thought, capable still of engaging and grasping something of the truth about new historical realities.’²²⁷ ‘Method’ similarly can suggest rigid templates or practical techniques to orchestrate research. But again, cultural studies work with a conception of method as ‘practice’, which suggests both techniques to be used as resources as well as the activity of practicing or ‘trying out’. In this double sense, techniques are borrowed and combined, worked with and thoroughly and reworked. Again, the commitment is always to be able to adapt our methods as the new historical realities we engage keep also moving on down the road.²²⁸ Thinking of the theory and method of articulation as practice also highlights an important political aspect of cultural studies: the recognition that the work of cultural studies involves at a variety of levels a politics within a broadly understood Marxist framework. With and through articulation, we engage the concrete in order to change it, that is, to re-articulate it. To understand theory and method in this way shifts perspective from the acquisition or application of an epistemology to the creative process of articulating, of thinking relations and connections as how we come to know and as creating what we know.²²⁹ The theory was pertinent to the current study in assessing the development bullfighting culture has undergone since pre-colonial period to date.

Articulation of modes of production is, then, not just a thing (not just a connection) but a process of creating connections, much in the same way that hegemony is not domination but the process of creating and maintaining consensus or of co-ordinating interests. Working with that understanding of theory and method in

²²⁷S.Hall. (1983). ‘*The problem of ideology: marxism without guarantees*’ in B. Matthews (ed.) *Marx 100 Years On*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 57–85.

²²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 58

²²⁹B. Iyvbjerg. (2001). *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How it Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), pp 111-116

interrogating the role of articulation in cultural studies requires keeping in mind two general insights. First, articulation was not ‘born’ whole nor has it ever achieved that status. It has never been, nor should it be, delineated or used as a completely ‘sewn-up’ theory or method.²³⁰ Rather, it is a complex, unfinished phenomenon that has emerged and continues to emerge genealogically. Second, articulation has never been configured as simply one thing. The ways in which articulation has been developed, discussed and used tend to foreground and background certain theoretical, methodological, epistemological, political and strategic forces, interests and issues. As theory and method, articulation has developed unevenly within a changing configuration of those forces.²³¹ It carries with it ‘traces’ of those forces in which it has been constituted and which it has constituted. To understand the role of articulation in cultural studies is thus to map that play of forces, in other words, to track its development genealogically. It is surely not a genealogy but an attempt to map some particularly profound forces and moments that contribute to a genealogical understanding of articulation.²³²

Stuart Hall’s contributions to the development of articulation have been significant for at least four reasons. First, he resists the temptation of reduction to class, mode of production, structure, as well as to culturalism’s tendency to reduce culture to ‘experience’. Second, he elevates the importance of articulating discourse to other social forces, without going ‘over the brink’ of turning everything into discourse.²³³ Third, Hall’s commitment to the strategic feature of articulation has foregrounded

²³⁰Ibid., p.59

²³¹H. Dreyfus.(1986), ‘Why Studies of Human Capacities Modelled on Ideal Natural Science Can Never Achieve Their Goal’, in J. Margolis, M. Krausz, and R. M. Burian (eds),In *Rationality, Relativism and the Human Sciences* (Dordrecht, Martinus Nijhoff).

²³²Ibid., p.68

²³³B.Flyvbjerg. (2001). *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), pp160-170

cultural studies' interventionist commitments. And fourth, Hall's treatment of articulation has been the most sustained and accessible. His willingness to engage different philosophical and political traditions in theorizing articulation has meant that his influence is quite widespread; and the generous manner in which he engages people and arguments provides an exceptional exemplar of articulation at work.²³⁴ When Hall 'reigns in discourse' or 'tames ideology', he does so by insisting on the Althusserian recognition that no practice exists outside of discourse without reducing everything else to it. In a frequently cited quotation, he claims that it does not follow that because all practices are in ideology, or inscribed by ideology, all practices are nothing but ideology.²³⁵ Therefore, his ideas and development on articulation theory helped in describing the ideology of bullfighting among the Abakamega of Western Kenya.

There is specificity to those practices whose principal object is to produce ideological representations. They are different from those practices which meaningfully, intelligibly produce other commodities. Those people who work in the media are producing, reproducing and transforming the field of ideological representation itself. They stand in a different relationship to ideology in general from others who are producing and reproducing the world of material commodities which are, nevertheless, also inscribed by ideology.²³⁶ By insisting on the specificity of practices in different kinds of relations to discourse, Hall contests the move that Laclau and other post-Althusserians have taken positing the absolute, rather than relative, autonomy of practices that is implied by the position that all practices are nothing but

²³⁴Ibid., p.70

²³⁵M. Foucault, (1977). *Discipline and Punish* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books), pp. 125-130

²³⁶S. Hall, (1985). 'Signification, representation, ideology: Althusser and the poststructuralist debates', In *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2(2), 91-114.

ideology.²³⁷ Hall pulls articulation back from the extreme, theoretically-driven logic of ‘necessary non-correspondence’ (what he called the ‘excesses’ of theory) to insist on thinking and theorizing practices within which unities often relatively stable unities are also constituted.

For Hall, articulation has the considerable advantage of enabling us to think of how specific practices articulated around contradictions which do not all arise in the same way, at the same point, in the same moment, can nevertheless be thought together. The structuralist paradigm thus does if properly developed enable us to begin really to conceptualize the specificity of different practices, without losing its grip on the ensemble which they constitute.²³⁸ Thinking articulation thus becomes a practice of thinking ‘unity and difference’, of ‘difference in complex unity, without becoming a hostage to the privileging of difference as such’.²³⁹ On this basis for the investigator to connect different ideas of individuals on how bullfighting became an economic opportunity for livelihood of Abakakamega, the articulation ideas by Hall were embraced here.

Hall’s model of strategic intervention is not then limited to a kind of theoretically-driven Derridian deconstruction of difference and the construction of discursive possibility, but a theoretically-informed practice of re-articulating relations among the social forces that constitute articulated structures in specific historical conjunctures.²⁴⁰ He maintains that the aim of a theoretically-informed political practice must surely be to bring about or construct the articulation between social or economic forces and those forms of politics and ideology which might lead them in practice to intervene in

²³⁷S. Hall, (1980a). *Op. Cit.*, p.68

²³⁸M. Foucault, (1985) *The Use of Pleasure* (New York, Pantheon).

²³⁹S. Hall. (1985). *Op. Cit.*, p.93

²⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p.94

history in a progressive way; an articulation which has to be constructed through practice precisely because it is not guaranteed by how those forces are constituted in the first place.²⁴¹

In practice, this has opened the way for cultural theorists to consider the role of a range of other social forces both in their specificity and in discourse, interrogating the ways in which they are complexly articulated in structures of domination and subordination and considering ways that they might be re-articulated.²⁴² Therefore the articulation theory helped to understand and account for the consequences of bullfighting to Abakakamega. To be specific, it helped the researcher to understand how bullfighting has influenced the development of Abakakamega through the introduction of commercialization in this cultural sport by connecting the social, cultural and economic. For a long time-since pre-colonial and through colonial period, bullfighting was viewed as a cultural sport to entertain, as a way of enhancing friendship among others. However, as from 1980s, there was a shift in bullfighting where, this at one point was turned into business, need for money was seen. An understanding of how and why in this study was simplified using articulation theory.

Major tenets in this theory align well in the means of production, also called the forces of production, and the knowledge and materials used in production besides human labor. These means can change over time with the evolving scientific and technical knowledge of a society. Relations of production are the limited sets of roles that people find themselves in, and which they must take on, when they participate in production. These roles are strategic, defining each other by their associated rights

²⁴¹M. Foucault. (1991) 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', in G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. H. Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect* London, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 34-39

²⁴²A.Giddens. (1976). *New Rules of Sociological Method*, London, Hutchinson, pp. 13-19

and duties. This therefore guided the current study to understand the role of different groups and people in bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega.

In Marxism, the relations of production represent the ways in which capitalists and workers interact with each other, on a group level rather than an individual level. For example, the working class reacts to the conditions of work which the employers impose on them generally. According to Marxism, the relations between workers and non-workers are essentially antagonistic. Anthropologists who carry out Marxian analysis use relations of production as the fundamental unit that they observe in examining societies. The domestic, or kin-ordered, mode of production most often describes the lives of foragers and small-scale subsistence farmers. These people have social structures that are more egalitarian than those characterizing the other modes of production even if these structures are still shaped by age- and gender-based forms of inequality.²⁴³ The kinship mode of production links people who are alike, even if not necessarily genetically. On a technical level, kinship systems continually place people, born and recruited, into social relations which permit some people to organize other peoples' labor to do what has to be done for nature to stay alive generation after generation.²⁴⁴ Among the Abakakamega, bullfighting is not an individual practice, it involves the whole family, clan and even the community. This theory therefore helped the researcher to investigate this narrative.²⁴⁵

²⁴³A. Jaworski and N. Coupland, (eds) (1999). *The Discourse Reader*, London, Routledge, p. 98

²⁴⁴R. Jessop. (1990). Mode of production. *In Marxian economics*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, p. 289.

²⁴⁵K. Marx, Cohen, J., & E. J. Hobsbawm, (1966). *Pre-capitalist economic formations. Science and Society*, International publishers, the University of California, p. 123

In the domestic mode of production, labor is organized on the basis of how people are related to each other: kinship.²⁴⁶ Subsistence farmers produce food for their family's own consumption, rather than to sell. In this family-based production system, one group like the men may clear the fields while the entire family works together to plant seeds. Children may protect the crops and men may weed and harvest the crops before the women work to dry and store the corn. The mothers and daughters may then grind the corn and use it to create food that the family consumes at each meal.²⁴⁷ Similarly, foraging societies are characterized by the collective ownership of the primary means of production the resources used to produce goods, lower rates of social domination, and sharing. For example, in the Namibian Dobe Ju society, people live in small groups consisting of siblings and their spouses and children. Is this the case among the Isukha and Idakho communities? This tenet helped to answer this question as far as bullfighting among the Abakakamega is concerned²⁴⁸

Typically, women in this society forage for plants while men hunt. The resources are then pooled between family groups and distributed to other members as necessary. The term mode of production describes the social relations through which human labor is used to transform their surroundings and resources into products using methods such as tools and knowledge. Eric Wolf, the originator of the term, believed that there were distinct periods in human history dominated by certain modes of production. Nonetheless, there are different societies today that show different production modes. Wolf posited three modes of production: kinship production,

²⁴⁶T. Kuhn, (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn (Chicago, Chicago University Press, pp. 11-19

²⁴⁷A. Danto, (1965) *Nietzsche as Philosopher*, London, Macmillan, pp.170-189

²⁴⁸H. Gates, (1996). *China's Motor: a thousand years of petty capitalism*. Cornell University Press, pp. 29-45

Habermas, J. (1987) *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* Cambridge, Polity, pp. 37-31

tributary production, and capitalism. Later scholars added additional modes, such as petty capitalism and socialism. Kinship production is characterized by labor that is carried out primarily for subsistence and organized according to close, often familial, social relations. Tributary production, meanwhile, consists of a ruling class and a producing class where the producing class gives the ruling class some percentage of their goods. The ruler class generally did not reinvest these goods beyond their ranks, and the level of organization of tributary production systems varied greatly.²⁴⁹ Capitalist production is characterized by employers and employees.²⁵⁰ Unlike the kinship or tributary modes of production, those producing goods neither own the means, or things that they use to carry out production, nor do they keep the value of the goods they produce. Modes of production are differentiated from means of production in that modes of production refer to the specific organization of economic production in a given society and include the means of production used by a given society.²⁵¹ Among the Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya, everyone is defined by bullfighting culture. This is done by the role each plays in making this culture be what it is today.

This theory has been used by several scholars including Archie Mafeje who uses it in his article to reconstruct theorization of development in the Third World Countries in general with emphasis arising out of the Manchester Conference on Anthropology and History in Southern Africa in September 1980.²⁵² McIntosh and Marrie used the same

²⁴⁹D. Howarth, (1997) 'Complexities of Identity/Difference: The Ideology of Black Consciousness in South Africa', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 2 (1), pp. 51–78.

²⁵⁰R.Cox, (1981) 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders', *Millennium*, 10 (2), pp. 126–55.

²⁵¹F. Engels (1974). *The German ideology, Part One: with selections from Parts Two and Three, together with Marx's "Introduction to a critique of political economy"*. Lawrence & Wishart, Cornell University Press, pp. 92-106

²⁵²A. Mafeje.(2007); *Review of Articulation of Mode of Production*, Vol. 8, No. 1., Special Issue on Anthropology and History (October., 1981), pp.123-138, Taylor and Francis, Ltd publisher.

theory while investigating the issue of women and the mode of production- Feminism Materialism.²⁵³

In this study articulation theory offered a framework to explore how bullfighting among the Abakakamega has been shaped by various social factors, such as cultural traditions, power dynamics, gender roles, and economic implications. Applying articulation theory in this study, also provided insights into how power operates within the context of bullfighting among the Abakakamega, allowing for an examination of who holds authority, benefits from the practice, and how power relations influence its growth and continuation.

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega is specifically contextualized in terms of culture, history, and society, and articulation theory expects the investigator to be privy of these parameters in order to gain a deeper understanding of its significance and place in their community. The theory recognizes the mutability and dependent nature of identities and practices, opening up the possibility of investigating how bullfighting might evolve over time within the Abakakamega community. The lack of specific literature or empirical data on "articulation theory in bullfighting among the Abakakamega" limited the direct application of the theory to this specific context. Articulation theory's emphasis on complexity and multiple connections could make it challenging to pinpoint precise causal relationships or outcomes related to bullfighting among the Abakakamega. While the theory may provide a framework for analyzing interconnectedness, it might not directly address ethical concerns surrounding

²⁵³K. McIntosh and A. Marrie (1979); *Women and Modes of Production: Feminism and Materialism*, Routledge publisher, United Kingdom, pp. 31-45.

bullfighting, such as animal welfare or cultural sensitivity.²⁵⁴ Articulation theory may not offer immediate, practical solutions or recommendations for addressing potential issues related to bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

Articulation theory also offers a comprehensive framework to explore how bullfighting culture intersects with various social, cultural, and historical factors in the development of the Abakakamega community since 1850. Researchers would consider how the practice interacts with other cultural traditions, economic activities, gender roles, power dynamics, and political changes over time.²⁵⁵ Applying articulation theory helps in understanding the power relations involved in the growth and continuation of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. Researchers would analyze the roles of different stakeholders, such as political leaders, local elites, cultural institutions, and external influences, in shaping the significance and prominence of bullfighting within the community.²⁵⁶ Articulation theory encourages researchers to examine the historical context of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega since 1850. They would consider how social, political, and economic changes during this period influenced the practice and its role in shaping the community's identity and development.

The theory provides insights into how bullfighting culture contributes to the Abakakamega's sense of cultural identity and heritage. Researchers would explore how the practice is perceived and valued by community members and how it influences their collective memory, traditions, and social cohesion. Articulation

²⁵⁴J. D. Slack and L.A. Whitt, (1992) 'Ethics and cultural studies', in *L.Grossberg, C.Nelson and P.Treichler (eds) Cultural Studies*, New York and London: Routledge, 571–91.

²⁵⁵G. Turner. (1990) *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Boston, London, Sydney and Wellington: Unwin Hyman, pp. 21.31

²⁵⁶J. Storey. (1993) *An Introductory Guide to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, pp. 30-51

theory helps in analyzing the economic implications of bullfighting culture on the development of the Abakakamega. Researchers would consider its impact on local livelihoods, trade, tourism, and how economic factors interact with cultural elements to influence the community's development.

1.11.4 Relationship between Political Culture, Articulation and Functionalism Theories

In this research, the three theories were so imperative to analysis of bullfighting. First, political culture theory was useful in its explanatory power of its arguments regarding the intermediate role culture plays in the relation between the citizens and the dynamics of the political structure, organization and operation.²⁵⁷ One critical aspect is that political culture theory does not actually provide for an ontology and epistemology of its own, it just suggests dimensions of comparative analysis without having fundamentally specified what it is and how it works.²⁵⁸ Moreover, it employs attitude measurements and evaluations of attitudes' impact on political behavior or action deliberation without actually having provided for attitude operationalization.²⁵⁹ This is because, as political culture theory consists of attitudes, values and skills which are current in entire population and those propensity and pattern which may be found in separate parts of the society, it cannot address how societies can use their culture which called for articulation and functional theories. However, it helped the researcher with a good background on how a culture and political developments are connected among the Abakakamega.

²⁵⁷S. Welch, (2013). *The Political Culture Theory*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.118-121

²⁵⁸Ibid. p. 122

²⁵⁹D. Howarth (2005) 'Hegemony, Subjectivity and Radical Democracy', in S. Critchley and O. Marchant (eds), *Laclau: A Critical Reader* London, Routledge, pp. 51-60

Articulation theory which accounts for the powerful material consequences of the ideas, principles, and beliefs that make up ideologies was used in this study to connect bullfighting culture and commercialization (socialism) among the Abakakamega. This guided the researcher to understand how Abakakamega have turned bullfighting culture from being just a cultural sport to a source of accumulating wealth. Furthermore, this theory fits in this study because from 1980 there was a shift in how bullfighting was practiced. It was also prudent to look at bullfighting holistically as a tool of developing or benefiting Abakakamega. This is to mean, not only looking at it in one angle but rather from different perspectives. Therefore, for this to be accomplished, functionalism theory was vital to help the researcher in explanation of this among the Isukha and Idakho communities. To be specific, the researcher needed a better understanding of why Abakakamega have stuck to this culture for such long. Functionalism theory helped the researcher in answering questions like, how does bullfighting help to fulfill the needs of the society? How is social life possible? What keeps society in equilibrium/order? Functionalists find the solutions of these questions. However, they cannot interpret the symbols of the culture, hence the need to intertwine the three theories.

Political culture theory was used to answer question on objective one and two of this study namely; tracing the origins and development of bullfighting and assessing the aspects contributing to growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. It helped in examining the political and social factors that influenced the adoption and development culture among the Abakakamega. The theory was also important in the investigation of political factors contributing to growth of bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho communities. Functionalism theory was pertinent in assessing the origins and development of bullfighting, influence of bullfighting to the people of

Isukha and Idakho. Certainly it answered the question on what benefits this culture has to Abakakamega. In summary, the combination of political culture theory, functionalism and articulation theories helped the researcher meet the desired results in situating bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850.

1.12 Summary of the Gaps identified in Literature Review

According to Kirrilly Thompson in his work titled “*Narratives of Tradition: the invention of mounted bullfighting as the newest also the oldest*” in *Social Science History* asserts that bullfighting on foot by *toreros* as a tradition started in the 17th Century and increasingly became dominant in Spain.²⁶⁰ He added that, this tradition spread sporadically in Spain and it became a major tourist attraction. Furthermore, Thompson clearly notes that bullfighting was an activity practiced by the nobility in countries such as Spain and Portugal. This study focused on the ordinary people like peasants, politicians and leaders of Abakakamega and how they practice it as a tradition.

According Douglass Carrie in his work, *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities*, bullfights in the past were performed primarily at fiestas. But from the 18th century onwards it was taken up by the rising urban classes, and was performed outside traditional fiestas.²⁶¹ The same observation was made by Santiago Wealands and Tapia Robson in their work *The national Spanish festival or the art of bullfighting*.²⁶² The duo add that bullfighting was a national event in Spain. However the gap in their work is that they have not specified the communities behind the success of

²⁶⁰K. Thompson, (2010). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 11-38.

²⁶¹C. B. Douglass, (1997). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 18-38.

²⁶²S. wealands and T. Robson, (1960). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 12-41.

bullfighting in Spain. This study discusses the place of Abakakamega in the success of bullfighting in Western Kenya.

Marvin Garrie, in his work- *Bullfighting, Urbana*; narrates the place of bullfighting in Mexico and how it is highly ordered, structurally and tightly controlled as a formalized event.²⁶³ He goes ahead to explain the place of the president in it. What Marvin doesn't inform his audience is the role of bullfighting events in political development? Therefore, he leaves this idea open and unanswered. For this reason, the study unravels the place of bullfighting in political developments among the Abakakamega of western Kenya.

Michael Kimmelman: *Bullfighting is dead! Long live bullfighting* and Sophie: *Bullfighting as a bloody tradition*, both agree that bullfighting is not a sport.²⁶⁴ This is because, a sport implies a fair fight between willing opponents. This is absent in the bullfight. Traditionalists though classify it as an art. Hence, there is no competition involved. Moreover, Sophie does not give a view of bullfighting as a cultural activity that unifies the community. It is on this basis that this study attempts to classify bullfighting as cultural sport and a political influencer.

Allen Joseph while investigating *Hemingway's Spanish sensibility*, gives out an overview of cultural activities that revolve around bullfighting in Spain during the event.²⁶⁵ He addresses religious issues and ideologies of individuals involved in the event. He also gives a clue of events that accompany the entire process and what exactly is done. This study examines specifically the cultural events surrounding bullfighting in Abakakamega of western Kenya.

²⁶³G. Marvin, (1998). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 6-22.

²⁶⁴M. Kimmelman , (2008) . *Op. Cit.*, pp 16-18.

²⁶⁵A. Joseph, (1996). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 22-40

Luis Silva in his discussion on *National identity on the Portuguese-Spanish frontier*, explained the seasons in which bullfighting takes place in Portugal.²⁶⁶ He does not explain the place of other seasons in bull fighting. This gap is what this study addresses by assessing the seasons in which bullfighting occurs or is done in western Kenya among the Abakakamega. Silva further narrates the view of bullfighting as a national culture and identity. He also discusses its economic value in Portugal. He did not check on its influence on political developments. However, this study discusses how bullfighting has influenced political development in Abakakamega of western Kenya.

1.13.0 Research Methodology

In this section, the following have been addressed: research approach, research design, target population, sample population or sample size, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures, ethical considerations and data analysis procedures.

The research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study. It involves procedures of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena so as to solve a problem. It is the ‘how’; the process of the techniques of conducting research.²⁶⁷ A methodology does not set out to provide solutions but offers the theoretical underpinnings for understanding which procedures or set of procedures can be applied to a specific case.

²⁶⁶L. Silvian , (2018). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 19-31.

²⁶⁷J. Creswell. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (2nd Ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, p.126

1.13.1 Qualitative Research Approach

This study employed qualitative research approach. This is because; this approach involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data such as texts, video or audio to understand concepts, opinions or experiences. This approach helps to gather in-depth insight into a problem or generate new ideas from research.²⁶⁸ Therefore for interrogating the bullfighting phenomena in Kakamega, this approach was found fitting because most of the information collected was basically non-numerical data. This gives few advantages of qualitative approach to authenticate for choice and provide the sources.

1.13.2 Research design

Research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to compare relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.²⁶⁹ Strydom, Fouche, and Delport define a research design as a specification of the adequate operations to be performed to test a specific hypothesis under a given condition. According to Babbie and Mouton, a research design is a plan followed during the study to answer the research question.²⁷⁰ The researcher must choose the best research approach and then implement the study design in two parts. The researcher must first choose precisely what they wish to explore, and then they must select the most effective strategy for doing so. Jackson S. L. argues that this is an arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that is aimed at combining relevant to the research purpose with economy in procedure.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸E.Babbie and J.Mouton.(2002),*The Practice of Social Research*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, p.71

²⁶⁹C.R.Kothari.(2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, New Age International, New Delhi, p.31

²⁷⁰E. Babbie and J. Mouton, (2002), *Op. Cit.*, p. 72.

²⁷¹S. L Jackson. (2009). *Research Methods and Statistics: Acritical Thinking Approach*, Iowa: Sherrif, L. Books, p. 28.

The study used the descriptive and historical research design. Descriptive survey research design gives accurate information. It is a method that has been used by educators to collect original data for describing a population that is too large to be observed directly. On the other hand, the purpose of historical research design in this study is to gather, verify, and integrate data from the past to gain an understanding of the events and defend or refute a hypothesis given about the time period. Therefore, both designs were used to help bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850.

1.13.3 Target population

According to Ogula, target population refers to a group of interest from which the individual participants or objects from whom measurement is taken. It is, therefore, the entire population to whom the results of the study would be generalized²⁷² Usually this definition consists of description to suit a certain specialization which a researcher is studying. Kizito Muchanga refers to target population as the desired population from which the sample size is produced. He adds that the study's target population is the entire study area's population.²⁷³ According to the National 2019 Census, Shinyalu Constituency has a population of 159475 persons while Ikolomani Constituency's population stood at 111743 residents. The whole population for the two sub-counties represented the study's population. There were 271218 persons in total.²⁷⁴ From the Bullfighting Association, which includes all the leadership of bull owners among the Abakakamega, Bonny Khalwale being the patron, they estimated the population of bull owners and people affected directly with bullfighting to be at

²⁷²P.A. Ogula.(2005) *Research Methods*, CUEA publication, Nairobi, p.76

²⁷³K. Muchanga (2022). Evangelization paradigms in the development of the catholic Diocese of Kakamega, Kenya since 1904, a Doctoral Thesis, MMUST-Kakamega, P.227.

²⁷⁴KBNS. (2019), Kenya Population and Housing Census Volume 1: Population by county and Sub-County.

70% (189853 persons) of the entire population. The remaining 30 % include those affected indirectly and those that do not believe in this culture. They anticipated this number to improve and grow in the next 5 years because the interest towards this cultural event is increasing steadily over time.

It is worth noting that, the two sub-counties in question were once under one constituency with one Member of Parliament in National Assembly during colonial period with the headquarters at Ikolomani, near Sigalagala National Polytechnic. At this central point, there was a court, police post, and it is renowned as a point for registration of national identification cards among other activities.

1.13.4 Sample size and sampling technique

Sampling is the process of selection of appropriate number of subjects from a defined population.²⁷⁵ According to Mugenda and Mugenda, 30% sample can be used to give generalization about the target population.²⁷⁶ The researcher used both purposive and snowballing sampling technique to select the stakeholders. The study had the sub-groups of, bull owners, spectators, business men and Leaders. Also, according to Ogula, factors influencing sample size are not limited to population size, research methods and analysis methods.²⁷⁷ The target population comprised elders aged 60 years and above who were more informed about culture. Their in-depth knowledge helped in tracing the origins and developments of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega.

²⁷⁵C.R Konthari, *Op. Cit*, p.29

²⁷⁶O.M. Mugenda and A.G. (1999). Mugenda, *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, Acts Press, Nairobi, p.42

²⁷⁷P.A. Ogulla, *Op. Cit.*,p.77

The researcher also interviewed politicians, provincial administrators, and leaders which helped him relate this study to political development since pre-colonial period to date. Leaders in this case were local leaders such as sub-chiefs, chiefs and administrators within the community. Bull owners were also interviewed by the researcher to give a better understanding of what it takes to look after these precious animals among the Abakakamega, benefits associated to rearing bulls, taboos, rituals and beliefs associated to them among other issues. To better understand any role played by women or the importance and voice of women in bullfighting, they were also interviewed. Because of the important role youths play in the development of the society, this study interviewed several of them from Shinyalu and Ikolomani sub-counties. This helped the researcher to clearly understand the roles they play in bullfighting and how this impacts on culture.

For equal representation by every sub-county and wards, the researcher interviewed individuals from each ward (youths, bull owners, women, elders, politicians, and leaders). Shinyalu sub-county has 6 wards which included: Isukha North, Murhanda, Isukha Central, Isukha South, Isukha East and Isukha West while Ikolomani has four (4) Wards: Idakho South, Idakho East, Idakho North, and Idakho Central.

The table 1 below shows how the sampled respondents were spread out:

Table 1: A table showing sampled respondents per category.

S/NO.	Category	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
1	Politicians	20	Purposive
2	Community Leaders, administrators, local leaders	70	Purposive
3	Bull owners	112	Snowballing and Purposive
4	Elders	70	Snowballing
5	Youth	62	Purposive
6	Women	50	Snowballing
	Total	384	

Source: Researcher 2022

1.13.5 Research instruments

The instruments of this research were both primary and secondary data developed by researchers. They were administered to Ikolomani and Shinyalu Sub-counties.

Therefore, the sample size for this study was 384 because the target population of the Abakakamega was 271,218 which was is over 75,000 and below 1,000,000 as shown in the table below by Krejcie and Morgan.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸R. V. Krejcie & D. W. Morgan (1970). *Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement.*

Table 2: Showing Krejcie and Morgan way of getting sample size

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Generalization of the findings also helped the researcher to reach this sample size due to saturation.²⁷⁹ Sampling was done among household politicians, bull owners, youth, women and local leaders as shown in the table below:

1.13.5.1 Primary Data

Oral and Key Information Interviews

These tools were prepared to obtain the most relevant information from individual farmers, leaders and politicians within Isukha and Idakho communities who had relevant information as far as bullfighting culture is concerned. The qualitative

²⁷⁹ W. W. Daniel. (1999). *Biostatistics: A Foundation for Analysis in the Health Sciences*. 7th Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 28.38

information collected from the key informants was used to confirm and enhance that which was gathered from the respondents. The study interviewed elders among the Abakakamega who had enough information concerning bullfighting origins during the pre-colonial period. Bull owners were also interviewed to help the researcher get an insight on how bullfighting culture among the Isukha and Idakho is organized.

Local and community leaders were interviewed to help connect political dynamics and bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850. Youth under of 35 years and below were also interrogated on what role they play in bullfighting and how the culture is helping them. Youth and elders helped the investigator to assess the development bullfighting has undergone since pre-colonial period. The researcher was also interested understanding what role women play in bullfighting and how they perceive the culture. Ultimately, the researcher succeeded in interviewing women in Shinyalu and Ikolomani. In total, the researcher interviewed 41 respondents upon reaching saturation. Among these, 3 youth between 18-22 years were interviewed to help in tracing the inheritance aspect of bullfighting culture amongb the Abakakamega. Those aged between 25-39 years helped the researcher to understand issues such as the role of bull owners, caring of the bull, feeding, the paradigm shift that has been realized in bullfighting as during post colonial period to date. The 10 elders aged between 60 and above that were interviewed helped in tracing the origins of bullfighting.

1.13.5.1.1 Questionnaire

The main research instrument that was used in this study is the questionnaire. This questionnaire involved both closed-ended and open-ended questions that were distributed to the respondents in Shinyalu and Ikolomani, regardless of their status.

This allowed the study to be informed by a wide cross-sectional representation of respondents. The questionnaire sought to determine attitudes and beliefs in bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. According to Sallant and Dillman, attitudes and beliefs is what people say they want or what they think is true.²⁸⁰

Interview questions for bull owners, youth local leaders and women were structured. The researcher used a similar questionnaire for all the categories of respondents to help create a room for robust analysis and comparison of data to reach an objective conclusion. The questionnaire had questions according to each objective, to help the researcher to interrogate bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1850. Questionnaires were much useful as they helped the researcher in the current study in making conclusions on how bullfighting originated, aspects for growth of this culture over time and how it has influenced the development of Abakakamega.

1.11.5.1.2 Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussions were held in Isukha and Idakho which were main clusters of this study. The tools had probing questions to address each major themes corresponding to the variables under study. According to B. Philip, Focus Group Discussions capitalize on group dynamics and allows a small group of respondents to be guided by a skilled moderator (researcher) into increasing levels of focus and depth on the key issues of the topic. Focus Group Discussions ensure group interaction between respondent's generally stimulating richer responses and allowing new and valuable thought to emerge. Also, in the Focus Group Discussions, the researcher

²⁸⁰P. Sallant and Dillman, D. A (1994), *How to conduct your own survey*, New York: John Willey and son inc, p.78

observes the discussion and obtains first hand insights into the respondents' behavior, attitudes, language and including body language and feeling.²⁸¹

The number of participants in the Focus Group Discussions should be determined according to a number of researchers' diverse explanations. The following stands have emerged. That a definitive solution to the drawn-out debate over how many people should participate in focus group discussions has not yet been found.²⁸² These are the difficulties in choosing the right sample size for a research study.

Based on the ideas from various scholars, the composition of FGD need to be between 8 and 12.²⁸³ Numerous variables, such as the breadth and depth of the study, the relevance of the themes, and the social dynamics of the participants, among others, have an impact on this numerosity. Based on these discussions, the study opted for focus group discussions of 10 participants from each constituency-Shinyalu and Ikolomani among the Abakakamega. In addition, the researcher formed another focused group of local and community leaders which composed of chiefs, sub-chiefs and leaders in different community functions and activities who got their positions as a result of bullfighting. These groups gave an insight on the role bullfighting plays in the political development among the Abakakamega.

Focus group discussions in this research offered a comprehensive and participant-centered approach to understanding the complexities, perceptions, and social dynamics surrounding this bullfighting cultural practice. The method's interactive nature and emphasis on participant input made it a valuable tool for gathering qualitative data and generating rich insights into the place of bullfighting within

²⁸¹B. Philip, (1975), *Social Research: Strategy and Tactics*, New York: Macmillan, P.34

²⁸²K. Muchanga (2022). Evangelization paradigms in the development of the catholic Diocese of Kakamega, Kenya since 1904, a Doctoral Thesis, MMUST-Kakamega, p.240

²⁸³D. L. Morgan.(1988). *Focus Group as qualitative research*. Sage, UK, pp. 9-23

Isukha and Idakho. However, bullfighting is a traditional cultural practice, and discussing it in a focus group setting may evoke strong emotions and cultural sensitivities among participants. Some participants may be hesitant to express their opinions openly due to fear of judgment or conflicts with cultural norms. The participants selected for the focus group fully represented the diverse perspectives and experiences within the Abakakamega community regarding bullfighting. Different age groups, social classes, or gender roles had distinct views, and a focus group could not capture all these variations adequately.²⁸⁴

The researcher approached the topic of bullfighting with cultural sensitivity, respecting the traditions and beliefs of the Abakakamega community. Before conducting focus groups, the researcher obtained informed consent from participants and explained the purpose and confidentiality of the discussions. The researcher aimed for diverse participant representation by including individuals from different age groups, genders, social classes, and other relevant demographics within the Abakakamega community. This ensured a broader range of perspectives on bullfighting.

The investigator had two groups of bull owners from each sub-county; Shinyalu and Ikolomani. The participants in the two groups were well-informed with enough experience in bullfighting culture in terms of origins and development of bullfighting, organization of this cultural practice and aspects contributing to growth and influence of this culture to Abakakamega. These groups of bull owners were used in all the three specific objectives of the study. The researcher had two other groups for community leaders who helped the study to unravel the issue of political development

²⁸⁴ R. A. Krueger. (1988). *Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Sage, pp. 25-39

among the Abakakamega. They were useful to the study as they helped the researcher to understand the role bullfighting has served since precolonial periods in terms of origin and development of bullfighting, aspects contributing to growth of this culture and how it has led to development of Isukha and Idakho people. Therefore, the last two FGDs were used in all the three specific objectives. The researcher desired for some strength from these FGDs and therefore expected participants to agree or disagree with each other in order to provide an insight into how a group thinks about bullfighting, on a range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists among the Abakakamega in terms of beliefs and their experiences and practices. The researcher had 4 FGD in total.

Morey has noted that, the most crucial element of FGD is the facilitation.²⁸⁵ This can pose a challenge to the investigator according to Stewart.²⁸⁶ However, to curb this anticipated challenge, the researcher ensured even participation, careful wording of the key questions, maintaining a neutral attitude and appearance, and summarizing the session to reflect the opinions evenly and fairly. The investigator prepared a detailed report after finishing every session. Any observations during the session was noted and included in the report.

1.14.5.1.3 Observation

This research also employed observational methods of data collection. Here the researcher was able to obtain information without direct questioning. According to Philip, observations become a scientific tool and method of data collection when it

²⁸⁵N. C. Morey and F. Luthans.(1984) "An Emic Perspective and Ethnoscience Methods for Organizational Research," *Academy of Management Review* (9:1), pp. 27-36.

²⁸⁶D. W. Stewart and P. N. Shamdasani (1990). *Focus Groups: Theory and Practices*. Sage, UK, pp. 13-44

serves a formulated purpose and is systematically planned and recorded.²⁸⁷ The method was subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability.²⁸⁸ The researcher and the assistant, visited bullfighting arenas and homes of bull owners to make the observations. The researcher then used the information obtained from observation to verify and confirm information that was obtained during questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions.

The investigator was able to observe how bulls are fed among the Abakakamega and the preparation of these bulls before they are taken out to fight. Furthermore, on the bullfighting day, the researcher attended bullfighting matches on some Saturdays to see how culture is portrayed through songs, dances communication with bulls and use of attires on the arena. The investigator then used such opportunities to make observations. The researcher in this study used observations in objective one-tracing the origins and development of bullfighting- which looked into how bullfighting is organized in terms of feeding the bulls, preparation for a fight and performance of rituals.

1.13.5.1.4 Archival Sources

The study also utilized the existence of archival sources from the Kenya National Archives, county archives, and Ikolomani office (former headquarters for Ikolomani and Shinyalu during the colonial period) which was used in correlating the information from key informants from the field and making conclusions to this study. Archival sources were important as they provided evidence of activities and informed the researcher more about individuals such as sub-headmen, colonial administrators

²⁸⁷B. Philip (1975). *Social Research: Strategy and Tactics*, New-York: Macmillan, p.39

²⁸⁸J. P. Deslauriers.(1991). *Recherche qualitative: Guide pratique*, Montréal: Mc Graw Hill, pp. 101-120

and institutions during the colonial period that shaped this study.²⁸⁹This information helped the researcher in making conclusions by correlating them with the information from respondents.

The researcher's visit to archives helped in accessing important information over some of the local administrators during the colonial period such as Maliolo Akala, Patrick Shivachi, Abwanga Likala and Peter Khayiya. The archival sources also outlined the roles of these local administrators in relation to bullfighting among the Abakakamega.²⁹⁰ To add on that, the archival sources were pertinent in shading light on how political and general leadership structure is connected to bullfighting culture. To add on that, it is from the archival sources that the researcher got informed of colonial masters' role in bullfighting culture.²⁹¹

1.13.5.2 Secondary Data

The secondary data was obtained from journals, articles, newspapers, library, textbooks and magazines on issues concerning cultural political development among Abakakamega. Secondary sources described, analyzed, interpreted and helped in drawing conclusions from a primary source. The researcher took into consideration other events and placed a primary source in its historical context. Secondary sources are not evidence but rather commentary on and discussion of evidence.²⁹²

1.13.6 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher started by obtaining necessary permission and clearance to collect data for the study from the Directorate of Post Graduate Studies (DPS) in Masinde Muliro

²⁸⁹R. C. Jimerson, (2003). Archives and memory. OCLC Systems and Service: *International digital library perspectives*, 19(3), 89-95

²⁹⁰KNA/NN/23/2/1997: Characteristics of local chiefs.

²⁹¹KNA/DCKMG/1/1/25: Colony and Protectorate of Kenya.

²⁹²A. Strauss.(1987). *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 43-60.

university, NACOSTI and Sub-county administration in Shinyalu and Ikolomani. The questionnaires were circulated before the commencement of the study to the individuals anticipated to provide information. The questionnaires were collected after they had been filled. Interviews were scheduled with key informant respondents and also Focus group discussions were conducted. This was in order to get enough information that aided the enrichment of the study as far as situating bullfighting culture and its influence on the development of the Abakakamega. Primary data that was collected together with the secondary data during the literature review was then analyzed. Conclusions were made based on this analysis

1.13.7 Validity

To ensure validity in this study, research instruments were validated by the supervisors. The researcher and the supervisors went through the items in the tools formulated based on each objective and they were satisfied.

1.13.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to examining what has been collected in the research and making conclusions. The data was obtained from questionnaires and interviews as well as secondary sources. Being descriptive in nature, the analysis was done by use of themes and by use of content analysis. In order to apply triangulation, secondary and primary data from interviews and questionnaires had to be corroborated, and any deficiencies in the data had to be made up for by the strengths of other data. Historical analysis examined the various cause and effect interactions that were present in each situation, taking into account how people, significant ideas, and various mindsets interact and have an impact on one another.²⁹³This in turn helped the researcher in

²⁹³L. Lofland. (1971). *Analysing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis*, Belmont, CA, pp. 21-40

making conclusions on origins of bullfighting, aspects contributing to growth of bullfighting, and lastly influence of this culture to the development of Abakakamega. Notably, the data analysis process in qualitative research is manual.²⁹⁴ Lessard Hebert denotes that the researcher usually reads the available data and finds repetitive or commonly used words.²⁹⁵ In addition, the scrutiny-based technique is also one of the highly recommended text analysis methods used to identify a quality data pattern. Compare and contrast is the widely used method under this technique to differentiate how a specific text is similar or different from each other. Therefore, during the study, method was paramount in making conclusion on origins and development of bullfighting and how it influences the development of Abakakamega.

1.13.8 Ethical Considerations

In the process of carrying out the research, the following ethical considerations were observed. First, the results were expected to be accurate and free from bias. Secondly, the responses to be gathered from the subjects were treated with extreme confidence to protect their privacy. It should be noted that the concept of anonymity is not included in historical research. Facts and sources of those facts needed to be known to prove clarity and accuracy. Honesty of both the respondents and the researcher also featured. There was accountability in capturing and representation of all the data and information. The researcher developed a set of precise and well-defined study questions. This made it easier to stay on track and keep the researcher from straying into areas where inadvertent biases could creep in.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴C. Ragin. (1987). *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, pp. 101-121.

²⁹⁵M. Lessard-Hebert, *et. al.*, (1990). *Recherche qualitative: fondements et pratiques*, Montréal: Agence d'ARC, pp. 13-32

²⁹⁶M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman (1984). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA, pp. 12-21

The researcher collected the data upon receiving permission from relevant research bodies such as NACOSTI, Directorate of Postgraduate Studies (DPS), and Kenya National Archives (KNA). The secondary data and archival data were paraphrased and focused on the study area to avoid plagiarism. Furthermore, acknowledgements of any materials used were considered. In the next chapter, the researcher traces the origins and developments of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

CHAPTER TWO

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BULLFIGHTING CULTURE AMONG THE ABAKAKAMEGA

2.0. Introduction

The following sub-themes of objective one in this study have been covered in this chapter: History of bullfighting and its growth, bullfighting as an inherited culture, the way bullfighting competitions are run among the Abakakamega, the rituals that are practiced before, during, and after in terms of bullfighting culture, and the naming of bulls. The chapter also looks at the Abakakamega's usage of herbs and spirit communication, as well as how bull owners interact with their animals. The chapter also examines the frequency and duration of bullfighting as well as the numerous rituals associated with it among the Isukha and Idakho populations of Western Kenya. Finally, the dialectic unraveling of the articulation theory was required in the analysis and reconstruction of this chapter.

2.1 Historicizing Bullfighting and its development

Bullfighting phenomenon in Kenya is portrayed as the pinnacle of manhood. When one is referred to as *ichilishi* (a bull) among the Abakakamega, it bears the connotation of a strong, virulent, and ferocious womanizer (what is regarded as a highly positive virtue).²⁹⁷ When an Abakakamega woman claims, "I am wed to a bull" (*Nabahila khu ichilishi*). It is a very flattering remark about the hubby. Politicians aspiring for leadership posts in the Isukha and Idakho communities struggle to choose a bull or any other masculine symbol as their emblem. A politician who is seen as a bull is respected and always given the chance to speak at events he

²⁹⁷S.G. Brown.(2019). *Hemingway, Trauma and Masculinity: In the garden of the uncanny*. Springer.

attends.²⁹⁸ A dying sick person will be told that "a bull dies with grass in its mouth." In order to demonstrate that illness has not feminized him, the sick man is asked to engage in sexual activity with his wife while still ill. When determining whether a sick man will survive, fellow men will inquire of his wife, "Does the bull ever taste porridge?" This is a euphemistic sexual allusion. Therefore, sexual activity has a role in this way of thinking about masculinity.

Abakakamega have reached a significant turning point culturally. Bullfighting was discovered to be an integral element of Abakakamega culture at the time of this study, according to reports. Bullfighting must be practiced as an amusing activity at several major events and festivals among the Isukha and Idakho groups, according to Absolom Shivanda, who briefed the researcher.²⁹⁹ When this occurs, it is typically structured in a variety of ways to meet the day's events, such as *shisiaho* (Memorial Ceremonies for Loved Ones), *shilembe* (Ceremonies to give befitting send off to old men among the Abakakamega using bulls), *malika* (funerals), *makumbusho* (memorial of great people) or sometimes organized for political reasons. This cultural sport, according to Kibigo, has roots in pre-colonial times, but it really took off in the late 1990s.³⁰⁰ As it can be traced back to ancient societies like the Greek and Romans, it has been performed in several communities since the beginnings of humanity.³⁰¹ According to one of the respondents, Geoffrey Anguba, the practice may have gained momentum after independence because the colonial overlords may not

²⁹⁸P. Bull & A. Fetzer. (2010). Face, facework and political discourse, In *Revue internationale de psychologie sociale*, 23(2), 155-185.

²⁹⁹Absolom Shivanda (73 years), Oral Interview at Shianyinya, on 05/12/2022

³⁰⁰M. L. Kibigo (2020). Language, History, Ideology and Power Relations used in Bullfighting Praise Poetry. A case Study of Kakakamega County, Kenya. In *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 2(1), pp. 171-182 <http://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.2.1.234>.

³⁰¹ Ibid

have been allowed enough freedom to work for them before.³⁰² The bulls used in bullfighting in Spain are known as "Toreros," and they are compared to the sponsored and publicized football players.

The Abakakamega bullfights are often conducted with great attention to prevent any injuries from occurring during the fight.³⁰³ According to Kabaji, bullfighting was first practiced by locals in France as a game in the 19th century.³⁰⁴ The game persisted and developed all the way to the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa. The Portuguese encouraged bullfighting in East Africa, particularly in Tanzania. Bullfighting is thought to have been taught to the inhabitants of Pemba and Unguja Islands by the Portuguese. The name of the game at the time was "*mchezo wa ng'ombe*," which translates to "the game of cows." This game is played by a bull and a bull utilizing their razor-sharp horns in Western Kenya. For instance, the Wanga people in Mumias play a game they refer to as "*Eshiremba*" after a hero has been buried. Bulls are brought to the tomb and engaged in a fight over it as they remove and discard the red soil.³⁰⁵ The hero must be a man who has performed a brave act, such as slaying a ferocious wild animal like a lion, cheetah, or python. Bullfighting is referred to as *Ekeremba* by the Maragoli and *Shilemba* by the Banyore.³⁰⁶ This implies that other communities, in addition to the Abakakamega, also engage in bullfighting. The Abakakamega just have a more sophisticated and elaborate sport because they emphasize it throughout several events like funerals and the ordination

³⁰²Geofrey Anguba (26 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shinyalu, on 6/12/2022

³⁰³ Ibid

³⁰⁴E. Kabaji (2008): Masculinity and ritual violence: a study of bullfighting among the Kakamega Luhya, western Kenya, In *a journal of the Institute of African Studies*. 9, pp. 33-46.

³⁰⁵Ibid

³⁰⁶Ibid

of leaders. This study also discovered that the Abakakamega are the pioneers of bullfighting cultural sport in Kenya.

From the findings on how bullfighting culture originated among the Abakakamega, one of the respondents informed this study that:

Literally it is believed to be Isukha and Idakho culture because of the existing myth that they are the pioneers of the event. The bullfighting activity is commonly practiced among the inter-clans of Abakakamega.³⁰⁷

From archival sources, Abakakamega people were known for farming, where rearing animals was one of the activities as early as 1850.³⁰⁸ Therefore, while the study was interested in tracing the origin and development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega, a respondent, Wilson added that, animal keeping among the Abakakamega community dates back to the period of migration of the Bantu from the Congo forest.³⁰⁹ Among the Abakakamega, animals especially cattle keeping was one of their agricultural activities as they started settling around this area in the 1850s. As their population expanded, there was also an increase in the number of cattle hence competition for grazing fields together with farming fields was seen. To enhance unity among them, there was a need to have separate fields for grazing.³¹⁰

Bonface Munanga noted that, there were other fields which were left virgin as the owners were not ready to put them into cultivation. These are locations also referred to as *mubwayilu* (a place where Abakakamega were taking their animal for pasture) where people could take their animals-cattle, goats, sheep for grazing as a clan or as a

³⁰⁷Wilson Liposhe (50 Years), Oral Interview at his home in Sigalagala

³⁰⁸KNA/DC/KMG/1/2/1: Associations, Societies and Other Public Bodies (Natives), pp. 28-21

³⁰⁹Ibid

³¹⁰Boniface Munanga (48 years)- oral interview, at his home- Khayega, on 27/11/2022

village or as families. Animals from different families could meet here for grazing. Some of these grazing fields such as Mulwanugu in Shinyalu, Kimingini hills and areas around Sabane and Shiveye in Idakho grew a type of grass referred to as *Ikhabuuse* that could survive even during the dry season. Therefore, people could take their animals to *mukhabuuse* to graze on such pastures. In addition, Kakamega forest served as a major grazing field among the Abakakamega especially for people around Shinyalu-Ileho who were close to it. Among the Abakakamega during this time, people who had the responsibility of taking animals to grazing fields were men of medium age, young men and mature men nearing old age. These were people who had undergone circumcision which is a form of rite among the Abakakamega.³¹¹ Some of the grazing fields included; *Munyenyi* within Shinyalu constituency, *Wambuni* along River Yala in Shinyalu-Museno sublocation, *Mubilemo* in Shirulu sub-location within Shinyalu, *Kimingini* hills in Sabane sub-location in Ikolomani, and Mukuhu which even had a point for salty water called "*isukura*" within Ikolomani among many others.³¹² These grazing fields were used by the Abakakamega as early as 1900. Muchanga also notes that pasture was readily available for the livestock found on the fringes of Kakamega forest, in the fields, along the rivers and the bushes. Some lands could be set aside for communal grazing.³¹³

In the coming together of these cattle, some could start fighting, either a bull to a bull or a bull and a cow or a cow with another cow. This attracted the attention of the people around and it continued until it became something for fun to these people.

³¹¹Circumcision and Initiation in Western Kenya and Eastern Uganda: Historical Reconstruction and Ethnographic Evidence. In *Journal of Anthropology and Linguistic*. Bd. 78, H. 3. 4. (1983), pp. 369-410

³¹²A. Vega, (2018). *Op. Cit.*, p.120.

³¹³K.L muchanga, (1998): Impact of Economic Activities on the Ecology of Isukha anf Idakho Areas of Western Kenya C.1850, (Master's) thesis, Kenyatta University

Some could fight to an extent of stopping and frightening the rest of the animals. Everything could come to a standstill due to the animal fights. The owner of the winning animal could be celebrated.³¹⁴ This became a common activity for these people and their animals at grazing fields. At some point they could separate some bulls from the rest of the herds to give them time to graze and when there was need to fight, they could bring them together.³¹⁵ This continued until time was set for grazing, and time for setting some small bullfights just for fun and enjoyment. It was also reported that, the fighting of these animals was for various reasons, a way of identifying the king or strongest bulls that will dominate the rest. On other occasions some bulls would fight over a cow (female) on heat. This also made them identify strong bulls for fighting and it also motivated them to start nurturing other young bulls to be used for fighting during the set time just for fun. Through such pastimes, bullfighting had become a common activity which expanded among the Abakakamega and it started attracting not only those in the grazing fields but the rest of the community. This moved out of grazing fields to the community.³¹⁶

Cedric Shibuyanga informed this study that bullfighting originated from wrestling as it was narrated to him by his grandfather He explained that wrestling which was their favorite sport was banned by the colonial master hence forced to replace it with bullfighting. Two families could organize wrestling and whoever wins was celebrated and respected. This in turn represented different communities, clans and families, for example, Batirichi and Bayokha, Barimbuli and Basakala.³¹⁷ This later on grew to what is today witnessed in bullfighting, where the two bulls fighting is a

³¹⁴Boniface Munanga (48 years), oral interview, at his home- Khayega, on 27/11/2022

³¹⁵Ibid

³¹⁶A. Vega, (2018). *Op. Cit.*, p.120.

³¹⁷Cedric Shibuyanga,(40 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilesi, on 29/12/22

representation of community, clan or families.³¹⁸ He also confirmed that his father was just a farmer who kept animals just for other purposes and not for bullfighting. However, bullfighting that he is now practicing was inherited from his maternal place. His maternal grandfather who was born in early 1900 and later died in early 1980s participated in wrestling. Cedric Shibuyanga informed this study that the grandfather was born when wrestling was already taking place.³¹⁹ From this information, it can be argued that wrestling may have started in late 1850s as they settled and established their agriculture in the current locations. Abakakamega men could come meet together in the evenings in nearby fields to fight to confirm who was stronger than the other. Among the Abakakamega wrestling was a martial art and combat sport that involves grappling with an opponent and striving to obtain a position of advantage through different throws or techniques, within a given ruleset while bullfighting was and is still a physical contest that involves two bulls with a goal of one subduing the other. For Abakakamega, both sports were meant to entertain them as one bull or a wrestler represented a village, clan, or a community.

Musa Nasoro added that this was also a way of showing that Abakakamega were great farmers and through bullfighting and wrestling those that were strong could win. The winner could be named as the village or community soldier, one that could be trusted to protect the rest from their enemies.³²⁰ Furthermore, they could be given an opportunity to lead others and earned them respect. This was also another way of entertainment more so after long working day. Examples of places where wrestling was taking place were around Lubao-Isukha area, Kaptek in Idakho and Malimili areas in Isukha. This sport later became dangerous when injuries were realized

³¹⁸Ibid

³¹⁹ Ibid

³²⁰Musa Nasoro (51 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shivagala, on 11/12/2022

leading to war between two groups or clans. Cedrick Shibuyanga elaborated that one could be injured intentionally due to underlying grudge between some individuals' families or communities.³²¹ Due to these issues, colonial leaders came in and stopped this sport hence a need to find another sport that could entertain people. Mathew Carotenuto explores the decline of indigenous forms of wrestling under colonial rule in Kenya as well as contemporary attempts to revive the sport. In highlighting the role, the colonial and post-colonial state played in marginalizing traditional sports he reveals a long history of hierarchical control of sport in Kenya.³²² Based on this turn of events, Abakakamega thought of another option which was bullfighting. The option involved bringing two bulls together to lock horns as they in turn enjoyed the game.³²³ Every farmer came with a bull to fight another one as a way of showing which bull was stronger. The winning bull represented the family or clan which was also a symbol of power, strength and an indicator of ability to do farming in terms of feeding animals. From reliable oral accounts, it is estimated that at around 1905-1910, bullfighting had spread to almost all the villages and families among the Abakakamega.

Meshack Luchendo from Shing'odo in Shinyalu, a bull owner and a politician retorted that *Walukongo* (local administrators during colonial period) were well known individuals for farming and more so rearing of cattle was one way to show wealth which was much associated to leaders. They kept many animals; bulls, cows, goats, sheep among others. During the discussion with a Focused Group Discussion of local and community leaders, the study found out that during marriage, these leaders'

³²¹Cedric Shibuyanga,(40 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilesi, on 29/12/22

³²²Grappling with the Past: Wrestling and Permativity Identity in Kenya, In *International Journal of the History of Sports*, 30(16) pp.1889-1902

³²³<https://www.barkerbrettell.co.uk/the-story-of-two-bulls-locking-horns/>

daughters were much admired as many people wanted to get connected to royal families by marriage.³²⁴ The only way one could win *walukongo's* daughter, a royal family was determined by the number of cows one had. This was another factor that attributed to high number of animals that these local administrators possessed. They possessed wealth also known as *miandu* in terms of herds and harvests. These leaders could organize for small and big bullfights as a sign of showing the community that they were great farmers and leaders or a confirmation that they were fit to be in such positions.

The bullfighting practice by the nobility later moved to the ordinary population which led to bullfighting spreading to many villages among the Abakakamega in early 1900. Examples of these leaders who pioneered and championed the practice include Maliolo wa Akala from Sabane in Idakho, Abwanga Likala and Khayiya from Ibwitsende in Shinyalu, Ichibini from Ibukhombwa-Shinyalu among others. From Luchendo's point of view, it can be confirmed that *Walukongo* leaders among the Abakakamega contributed to the origin and growth of bullfighting as they had an opportunity of having so many animals hence paving way for bullfights.³²⁵ This idea was also supported by Peter Sakwa who said that; if it was not for the presence of livestock farmers, bullfighting could be nowhere today.³²⁶

Bullfighting as a sport, for entertaining people, moved into the villages and from there it became part of Abakakamega way of life. Each village could organize small sports after work for fun. According to Paul Mulama, the bullfighting culture was much expanded through markets. This was sparked by the virtue that the cattle owners

³²⁴FGD of Local and Community Leader at Khayega on 19/11/2022

³²⁵Meshack Luchendo (76 years), Oral interview, at his home- in Shinyalu on 27th/11/2022

³²⁶Peter Sakwa (83 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Sigalagala, on 30/11/22

brought bulls in order to sell. When bulls met, they fought each other and the idea of expanding and developing the activity got into their minds. Munanga observes that, from then on, an idea was developed that people started keeping bulls that were specifically meant for fighting.³²⁷ It was initially done as a form of entertainment. When a match was organized, the bull that won made the owner to be celebrated and through this, many got motivated to get a bull for this sport.³²⁸ Eventually, barter trade was practiced and when one clan saw that one had a good fighting bull, they could pursue and give him something else that was equal to the cost of the bullock.

To confirm the pioneers of bullfighting, among the Abakakamega, Munanga said that the issue is still debatable. According to him, the *Isukha* and *Idakho* are not yet in agreement on who between them pioneered it among the Abakakamega. From oral tradition, Munanga claims that the narratives give the Isukha people the upper hand to be the pioneers of bullfighting. This is due to the fact that by 1910, the Catholic Church in Mukumu under Fr. Arnold Witlox was using bullfighting to entice the community to attend church.³²⁹ Kizito Muchanga confirms that Fr. Arnold Witlox visited Mukumu Mission in 1908 and after researching the locals' circumstances; he noted that the Isukha people cherished their traditional celebrations, particularly the *isukuti* dance, *shilembe* (traditional ceremony to honor a slain hero among the Isukha and Idakho), the bullfighting sport, and the consumption of the regional local brew known as *busaa*.³³⁰ Bullfighting initially used to take place on Sunday. This was a strategy that was embraced by Fr. Arnold Witlox and the community embraced it. According to Paul Mulama, it reached a point that the event made people not to

³²⁷Paul Mulama (46 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Sabane on 27/11/22

³²⁸Ibid

³²⁹Paul Mulama (46 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Sabane on 27/11/22

³³⁰K. L. Muchanga.(2022). Evangelization Paradigm in the development of the Catholic Diocese of Kakamega, Kenya Since 1904, (PhD Thesis), Masinde Muliro University.

concentrate with the teachings of the church. Most of them could come with the bulls and sing to them. They ended up abandoning church service and instead waited for the priest outside, in Mukumu primary school field.

On observing this, the church changed the event to Saturday. This was decided so that, the serious Christians could attend service on Sunday without obstructions which has remained so to date.³³¹ This was accelerated by the fact that, on Sundays after church, the bulls could end up injuring people accidentally, it affected the church attendance and also people could come to church when drunk or having already taken some drugs in order to facilitate the bullfighting event. Also, the first bullfighting arenas-fields which are ordinarily occupied by the Isukha people make them be named as pioneers. They included Lubao, Murhanda, Shibuye and Khayega in early 1900. Also, most of the renowned elders who advanced bullfighting in the past were from the Isukha sub-tribe. The following are examples of such individuals reported in this study: Ikhulio, son of Ilabonga from Museno, who had a bull named *Yaasuli*, Khabochi, son of Shikalama, who fought in World War I from 1914-1918 and had his first bull named *Shinyosi* (barber) since 1900 and Likhanga the son to Muchesia from Munyenyi village who had a bull named *Libalu* (legion ant). There was also Ndande from Matioli whose second name could not be remembered by the respondent, who owned a bull named *Inyanza* (centipede). From the foregoing, it can be concluded that indeed, the Isukha have the upper hand in bullfighting and they also have deeper insights in naming bulls.³³²

Clement Shibutse from Museno informed this study that, among the Idakho, the only people who kept bulls for bullfighting were: Maliolo wa Akala from Sabane and

³³¹Paul Mulama (46 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Sabane on 27/11/22

³³²Boniface Munanga (48 years)- oral interview, at his home- Khayega on 27/11/2022

Mwinamo Shivachi within Masiyenze-Kimingini area in 1920s. These are said to be the first pioneers of Bullfighting in Idakho which later spread to other villages.³³³To support this information from the archival sources, the study found out that bullfighting is a cultural sport practiced by Isukha and Idakho people. The sport flourished because of availability of forests and uncultivated areas which was a source of pasture³³⁴. The researcher also learnt that Isukha indeed came out as the pioneers of bullfighting due to their proximity to Kakamega forest.

On how the bullfighting was planned and organized during the colonial period, the study found out that, the old men could meet in the evening at the *busaa* (local brew) locations and organize themselves on when, where and whose bulls could come together for a fight. After this agreement, this information could be spread to the community even through the head men who were also responsible to ensuring order, peace in the community. The bull owners could bring their bulls to the specified place on the material day and let them fight while the spectators enjoyed the game. Together with the bull owner and other associates, such as village residents, the winning bull may be congratulated. This demonstrates that the bull was not merely a tool for sparring, but rather a chance for the bull's owners, village residents, to gain notoriety as excellent farmers who could display their farming prowess.

Clement Shibusse further informed this study that, colonial masters also had a hand in bullfighting. Clement Shibusse confirmed those in early 1920 there was a colonialist at Kaimosi farm who had a bull. The white man whom he could not remember his name, was the first person in those days to own a crossbreed bull used in

³³³Clement Shibusse (79 years)- oral interview, at his home- Museno on 27/11/2022

³³⁴KNA/NN/23/2. 1930-1935: *Early History of the growth of Luhyia people.*

bullfighting.³³⁵ The white man used to carry his bull on a lorry to Ikolomani area where bullfighting used to take place. During those days, Ikolomani used to be like the central place and headquarters for the Abakakamega.³³⁶ This is where the first court was situated for Isukha and Idakho people.³³⁷ The white man's bull was huge, muscled and was believed to have weighed over 800 kilograms. Furthermore, Caroli Nziya added that the colonial masters could come to Kakamega forest at Rondo guest house and request to have bullfighting sport done before them for entertainment which was an indication that colonial masters supported this at some point. In addition, some could come to Muranda area, in Shinyalu where a bullfighting arena was situated at Bendera stadium (a field set aside by the community for this sport). Other fighting fields were at Khayega and Shibuye market where these white colonialists could come to enjoy the sport.³³⁸ In return, they could appreciate bull owners with tokens such as capes and clothes among others.³³⁹

The study was also interested to find out how culture was strengthened in bullfighting among the Abakakamega. First bullfighting was believed to be a sport and practice for only men of above 18 years as alluded by Paul Mukanzi³⁴⁰. Paul Mukanzi added that, women and children were not allowed to come where men were planning for this sport nor where the bullfighting was taking place. It was believed through meeting of these men at bullfighting, it provided an opportunity for them to share issues pertaining the community hence women and children were not allowed. In addition, it was believed to be an opportunity for bringing peace as bullfighting could not take

³³⁵Alex Shiuma (72 years), Oral Interview at Kaimosi on 10/12/2022

³³⁶Caroli Nziya (48 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Shiveye on 25/12/2022

³³⁷KNA/PC/NZA/4/4/118/1926: Agriculture and Administration: Isukha and Idakho communities

³³⁸Paul Mukanzi (39 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Kimingini, on 27/12/22

³³⁹Ibid

³⁴⁰Caroli Nziya (48 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Shiveye on 25/12/2022

place between people with wrangles or conflicts. Elders had a role of ensuring the shaking of hands between the two individuals or groups owning the bulls to fight before the game could commence. Furthermore, their agreements were sealed through the drinking of *busaa* from the same pot using *tsiseshe* (straws). This symbolized that, whatever they had agreed upon was to be respected and honored. This served as a foundation of culture in bullfighting with the introduction of these beliefs and practices.

The majority people in this community accepted bullfighting after it was introduced as a sport. According to how it was initially set up, it became a routine that was followed almost every day in the evening. There was a desire to incorporate bullfighting into their celebrations after moving this to Saturday, particularly during the time of Fr. Arnold Witlox. People with a history of leadership who passed away at age sixty and older received a dignified send-off to calm their spirits. Furthermore, such befitting send-offs were given to renowned warriors and soldiers who entered the fray to defend the town from outside aggressions and perished during or subsequently. This respectable send-off was known as *shilembe*. Under *shilembe*, there were three types of celebration:³⁴¹

First is “*Shilembe shia Selebutswa*”. *Selebutswa* here refers to the absence of a fee. As it was done just to honor or grieve the hero, it was done for free. There was no need for the family to foot the bill.³⁴² However, for cultural reasons during those early years prior to the invention of money, a household could offer a hen to appease the populace or bull owners who agreed to bring their bulls, again to appease the

³⁴¹ Ibid

³⁴² Ibid

deceased.³⁴³ For '*selebutswa*' to occur, a person had to have been a great leader such as a chief, for example, or someone who was well connected to the community through leadership during his lifetime. It is also important to note that all the types of *Shilembe* are only done to men and not women. *Selebutswa* was a practice used to honor and acknowledge exceptional leadership. Articulation theory was anchored to understand why the aspect of *shilembe* is connected to men alone and not women.

The second type of *Shilembe* is called '*Sio*'. *Sio* means warrior. This was done in honor of the soldiers who fought in the first and second world wars. It was also done to those who died defending their community from invaders, such as the Luhyia who died fighting against the Kalenjins near the Chepsonoi border in the counties of Kakamega and Nandi.³⁴⁴ In order to gather for this festival, people were invited from all corners of the Isukha and Idakho communities.

The third and last kind of *shilembe* is "*Imaiyo*," which refers to work that was not completed perfectly or did not meet the requirements. In this instance, a dignified send-off was given to a person who passed away among the Abakakamega while taking part in community events, working to unite people, or who was a leader, a bull owner, or a serious bullfighter but whose age was under 60 years.³⁴⁵ It was done for bullfighting diehards. *Imaiyo* occurred immediately after the burial on the day of the funeral. In all the three types of *shilembe*, bullfighting around the grave, feasting, drinking *busaa* (local brew) and *chang'aa* (a molasses-based local alcoholic beverage), as well as cultural customs like speaking to the deceased's spirit on the grave and praising him for his achievements while he was still alive are all done.

³⁴³Richard Amisi(52 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Mailimili on 27/11/22

³⁴⁴A. Ager, & A. Strang. (2008). Understanding integration: A conceptual framework. In *Journal of refugee studies*, 21(2), pp.166-191.

³⁴⁵Ibid

To understand what *shilembe shia Sio* for warriors is, Richard Amisi (AK-Chief) a name that is well known on the ground, explained that a day before *shilembe* is done, that is on the day of the funeral, an uncircumcised young man is asked to bring a little cooking pot called a *yambobo* that was being used by the deceased. The young man had to be an uncle to the family, uncircumcised (*mutsumi*), and under 18 but above 12 years old. He was to approach the grave's entrance from the gate, sobbing over the death of his grandfather. He then throws the pot there. For the ceremony to be effective, the pot had to totally shatter into fragments (*khubunzulukha*). It was thought that the young man would even pass away if it did not break entirely at that point. Additionally, the ceremony might not go smoothly since the ghost might follow the family and cause miscommunication that could even escalate to hostilities between the invited groups and family members. It was thought that after tossing the pot, the boy had to leave without looking back, go away forever, and never return there again for the rest of his life.³⁴⁶

Before the bullfight began on the material day, other heroes who took part and defeated adversaries were allowed to enter in descending order by the number of spears they had, which signified the number of victims they had killed. One entered and pierced the ground with his spear before the grave, uttering the following words of adoration:

I participated in the tribal or world war of (year) I killed (number of people killed). I am the strongest warrior. If there is anyone more than me, let him step forward....³⁴⁷

³⁴⁶Richard Abugwi (45 years)-oral interview, at his home- Khayega on 27/11/2022

³⁴⁷Ibid

Then another one enters, and he leaves. When the other person arrives, he takes the former's spears off, discards them, and pierces his spears while saying the same thing. The Abakakamega's history is marked at the conclusion when the person with the highest number of spears is identified, honored, and made known as such. Depending on how many enemies they had taken out, the heroes were granted spears. One's collection of spears corresponded to the number of victims he claimed. The elderly folks in the neighborhood gave these spears to the soldiers. Before presenting him with the spears, the older guys perform rites for him. As a result, one could not lie because the outcome may be death.

Richard Abugwi further explained to this research that once the heroes had completed their ritual of spear piercing, it was time for the bullfighters to take the stage. If the late man's family owned a bull, that bull was the first to be transported onto the grave's crimson dirt. If the late did not own a bull, a bull had to be obtained from within the family, not from the outside. According to folklore, if a bull enters the house from the outside, the ghosts may harm (*khumala*) the household to the point of death. The invitees (other clans) were then invited to bring their bulls to fight the one on the grave one by one with the aim of overthrowing it after the late or family's bull was placed on the grave. Additionally, it was thought that the family bull could become possessed by the family spirits and could battle for a very long time without being defeated. The spirits are poised to give the family victory. The bull may be little, yet it has the strength to combat and defeat larger, more powerful bulls. Amazingly, no matter how big the opponent is, no matter how small the family bull is, it cannot be easily defeated while seated on the grave.

The invited clans came in singing traditional songs with *isukuti* praising the deceased hero. The bulls fought over the grave, overturning the red soil and leveling the grave.³⁴⁸ The family invited many clans, and at the conclusion, they could be appreciated by receiving *busaa*, *chang'aa*, or chickens as a token of thanks or to appease the deceased. Once Kenyan currency was introduced in 1967, these persons could later get some cents or coins in appreciation.³⁴⁹

Here is an example of a song sung by clans on arrival at *shilembe*:

Bamusali bene naboo tsingoi...haaa nukhutsi tsingoi.
Bayokha bene naboo tsingoi...haaa nukhutsi
tsingoi" Bamusali bene nabalulukoi...haaa nukhutsi
tsingoi...

Bamusali are the leopard.... yees we are the leopards.
Bamusali are tough people...yees we are tough...

In this song, Bamusali, and Bayokha are some of the clans among the Abakakamega that are being praised. What do leopards symbolize? Among the Abakakamega cultures, leopards are a sign of royalty. They are considered to be bringers of death and destruction. In most cases, however, leopards symbolize strength, power, courage, and determination. In this case, the dead hero is being praised for destroying the enemies.³⁵⁰ They are said to have strength, power, courage and determination. Another community comes in and the same continues. As this was being done, the time keeper was present controlling time for every clan. When one clan was done, they were guided to go to a central place or a junction away from the function to give way to another clan. The going clan was to wait at the said place until the function came to an end. At this waiting point, these clans coming together either for the first

³⁴⁸Absolom Shibanda (73 years), Oral Interview, at Shinyalu, on 05/12/2022

³⁴⁹A. Haya. (2022). *Kenya Shillings, (KES): Overview, History, Jerusalem*, Hebrew University, pp. 11-21

³⁵⁰Clement Shibusse (79 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno on 4/12/2022

time or for the second time could start some other bullfights with the coming together of the bulls. This was done to keep them busy and for fun as they waited for the function to come to an end. At the end of day, owners with the strongest bulls could connect for a better organized bullfight at another time. Friendship was strengthened and culture could move from one generation to another.

Shilembe ceremonies had grown by 1914 as a result of the participation of Kenyan soldiers in the First World War.³⁵¹ Due to the fact that more people could gather to see the placing of the spears on the grave, the arrival of these warriors enhanced attendance on the burial day.³⁵² *Shilembe* grew even more as a new group of warriors who fought in the Second World War from 1939 to 1945 came back. Compared to other warriors who used traditional weapons, these gun-wielding combatants recorded a higher number of war fatalities.³⁵³ Their coming increased *Shilembe* celebrations as they impacted it greatly due to the high number of spears they had. From this information, it can be concluded that bullfighting culture developed from burial ceremonies where heroes and great men in the community were given befitting send-off through *shilembe* making it a sport and a cultural practice among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

In his life, Musingu resident Richard Abukwi owned about six bulls, according to this study. He claimed that when he was still very young, in the 1950s, his father had bulls as well. Furthermore, at a young age he stated that he witnessed his grandfather, who had a long history of bull raring, with bulls in his old age in the 1970s. Richard told

³⁵¹Ibid

³⁵²J. Stuart, "Overseas Mission, Voluntary Service and Aid to Africa: Max Warren, the Church Missionary Society and Kenya, 1945–63." In *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 36.3 (2008): 527–543.

³⁵³O. Meshack. (2004). 'For your tomorrow, we gave our today': A history of Kenya African soldiers in the Second World War (Doctor of Philosophy thesis). Rice University.

this research that because this is a family tradition, he cannot live without a bull. His life includes bull raising and bullfighting. At the age of five, he developed a fascination with bulls. Richard added that he has four sons, all of them involved in bullfighting in some way, two of them are dedicated to the sport, one owns a bull, and the fourth helps the other three take care of their respective bulls. This is something in their blood, according to his justification. He claims that it is actually inherited. He also told the study that he couldn't miss bullfighting events.³⁵⁴ In fact, when he misses the bullfighting, he becomes sick. Based on this information, the study found out that bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is inherited and is part of their lives.

Throughout the findings of this study, in this sub-theme, functionalism theory aided in tracing the complex connections between historical events, cultural traditions, socio-economic structures and how they define the lifestyle of Abakakamega of Western Kenya. The theory helps situate bullfighting within specific historical and socio-cultural contexts, considering factors such as economic structures, and cultural exchanges. This theory further has assisted in analyzing the narratives, symbols, and meanings attributed to bullfighting in different historical periods and cultural contexts, examining how meaning is constructed and contested with the need to make the culture better for its survival and development.

By employing articulation theory, the researcher has gained a comprehensive understanding of bullfighting's historical development, the interplay of various factors, and the discourses and power dynamics that have shaped its existence which has played a crucial role in addressing the connection between bullfighting and political power and symbolic meanings associated with bullfighting. Political culture

³⁵⁴Ibid

theory in this study helped in acknowledging the role of power relations in shaping bullfighting, examining the involvement of elites, the influence of institutions, and the social hierarchies associated with the practice, power relations, and colonial influences just to mention but a few. The theory was vital in making the researcher to understand how the culture became a tool that the Isukha and Idakho people are working hard to ensure it remains beneficial to them.

2.2 Bullfighting as an inherited culture

The researcher was also interested in finding out whether bullfighting among the Abakakamega is inherited or acquired. To do this, a number of respondents had some ideas worth pursuing for this study. Richard Amisi, one of the key informants interviewed by this study, has butchery at Khayegha and is also a bull owner. Amisi revealed to the investigator that he is a circumciser and further claims that the culture of bullfighting is ingrained in people just like the practice of circumcision. He clarified that being a circumciser is not a skill that is naturally acquired or learned. One morning, the person experiences this *musambwa* (spirit), which causes his hand to turn crimson and resemble "blood."³⁵⁵ For this *musambwa* to happen in one's life, it means there must have been a circumciser in the family on either maternal or paternal side. He similarly connected this hereditary circumcision culture with bullfighting. Bullfighting, according to him, runs in the Abakakamega people's veins. There must have been a bull in the family for someone to own a bull that can lead to multiple victories. Amisi clarified that he had inherited bullfighting from his ancestors to support this. In reality, he was given a *lirimo* (sword) as a memento to demonstrate that he has inherited the culture. He pointed that with this *lirimo* he can stand before

³⁵⁵Richard Amisi(52 years)- Oral Interview, at his home- Malimili on 06/05/2023

people and be recognized as someone bestowed with or blessed by the great-grandparents.³⁵⁶

According to Richard Amisi, some recent bullfighting deaths, in which bulls turn violent against the owner or one of the diehards, involve people who have never owned a bull before or who have no family history of bullfighting but still force themselves to be around the bull. There were beliefs that one needed to have a bull in the family in order to be near them, take precautions, and command victory.³⁵⁷ Furthermore, he opines that for any bull owner, caretakers or those in charge of the bull going to fight, to be able to talk to the bull, they ought to mention their fore-fathers when talking to this bull. This is called say “*khwilaha*” which involves mentioning ancestral spirits in one’s lineage asking them to bless the bull or asking for victory among others. Richard Amisi clarified that this can only happen if there is history of bull raring and bullfighting in one’s family for him to talk to the ancestral spirits.

At the age of 17, Cedrick Shibuyanga claims, he began raising a bull, but due to his age and financial situation at the time, he was unable to continue. But after completing form four in 1982 and taking part in the election under President Moi's administration, he received his first bull. Cedrick Shibuyanga purchased another bull with the money he received. He stated to this study that apart from bullfighting, his father only kept cattle for purposes wealth, milk, and meat. However, he acquired his want or desire to own a bull for bullfighting from his mother's side. His maternal grandfather had several bulls used for bullfighting. He confirmed that, through this inherited power of bullfighting, he has owned the strongest and toughest bull in

³⁵⁶Ibid

³⁵⁷Ibid

Isukha called BBI (after the BBI in Kenya) that gave him a number of victories. He asserted that bullfighting culture is an inborn practice that is inherited.³⁵⁸

A bullfighter named Silver Muhanji told this researcher that he had come to the bullring to watch Ringo and Mbappe's game for entertainment. While he was there to watch bullfighting he continued by saying that he has to recharge after school, especially on weekends, and that he achieves this by watching bullfights every Saturday. He also hinted that he had been watching bullfights since he was just 15 years old. He disclosed to this study that he had no prior experience with bullfighting and that his interest in it was pure enjoyment. But as he observed the bullfighting, he was particularly curious about the care the bull owners gave their animals to enable them to reach such weights.³⁵⁹

Bullfighting culture, according to Calvin Tsinganga of Mutao village in Musoli-Idakho, goes beyond just being a sport for pleasure. He told this research that he first became interested in bulls when he was 10 years old, but because he was still a minor, he was only permitted to approach extremely young bulls in the family. He implied that despite his young age, he had been able to watch his father raise four bulls for fighting in the previous nine years. His father had been a bull owner and bullfighter since he was 20 years old, according to oral tradition. It was reported to him that the grandfather was a serious bullfighter in Idakho and Calvin stated that his father recently gave him a bull to take care of. In the future, he hopes to possess a bull of his

³⁵⁸Cedric Shibyanga,(40 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilesi, on 29/12/22

³⁵⁹Silver Muhanji(22 Years), Oral Interview, At Malinya Stadium, On 13/05/2023

own. The youngster is in charge of providing for the young bull as instructed by his father, feeding it, and bringing it to the bullring among other things.³⁶⁰

The study was also interested in determining when members of the Abakakamega community begin to exhibit indicators that their ancestral bullfighting culture had set in. Brandon Shikutwa, from Wambuni in Museno- Shinyalu Constituency, was the study's youngest interviewee. He had also traveled a considerable distance, roughly 16 kilometers to Malinya to see bulls locking horns. He told this study that he became interested in bullfighting around the age of ten (10) but was unable to pinpoint the source of his fascination. He made a veiled reference to his father, a farmer with all kinds of animals but none for bullfighting. However, he has heard rumors that his grandfather had a bull for bullfighting. From the preceding accounts, this study found out that bullfighting is an undisputable practice among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. The culture and Abakakamega are inseparable. Bullfighting is an 'inborn' practice since it is an inherited or passed to the next generation to specific individuals (sons) in a family. It is a practice that is meant to situate the royalty of the forefathers and maintain the strength of certain clans that began the bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Secondly, the inherited culture can be seen in boy at the age of seven years through their interest to participate in bullfighting. In empowering them towards this culture, they are delegated some duties such as looking after some young bulls by feeding them. Thirdly, this is a practiced meant for men just from its origin. Moreover, from these respondents, bullfighting has made them unique amidst those communities that own animals. For instance, despite having a vast herd of cattle, the Maasai do not participate in bullfighting. The same is true of other sub-luyia

³⁶⁰Calvin Tsinganga (18 Years), Oral Interview, At Malinya Stadium, On 13/05/2023

communities, including the Bukusu and Teso, who raise bulls but do not have a tradition of bullfighting like the Abakakamega.

The preceding findings are in conformation with functionalism theory which has connected the role of bullfighting to the Isukha and Idakho people. The theory has aided in exploring the interconnectedness between generations, family traditions, regional practices, and societal norms in the context of bullfighting inheritance. The theory has also assisted in focusing on the processes of cultural reproduction that sustain bullfighting as an inherited culture, including socialization, education, and transmission of knowledge and practices. Furthermore, it recognizes the influence of power dynamics in shaping bullfighting inheritance, examining the role of social elites, institutions, and cultural gatekeepers in determining access and participation.

In addition, it has helped in investigating how bullfighting inheritance contributes to individuals' sense of identity and belonging, examining the intersection with other aspects of personal and social identity. It thus recognizes that inherited cultures, including bullfighting, can be contested, renegotiated, and transformed over time, considering to fulfil the Abakakamega desires. With its development and interesting nature, some other Luyia sub-tribes have also been drawn to this great sporting activity.³⁶¹ Munanga informed this study that, in the recent past, especially from 2004, the people of Kabras, Batsotso, Wanga, Bunyore and Maragoli have also joined the traditional sub-tribes in the activity. They take part in the tournaments and own bulls as well. As the communities merge, they are embracing this tradition, but only as a sport for the benefit of the neighborhood's amusement. Particularly the *shilembe*, they are not embracing the cultural component of it. This has also started to link these

³⁶¹Ibid

communities together. On comparing the modern bullfighting to the ancient, James Shilaka posits that, the ancient bullfighting was purely on friendship. Unfortunately, today it is fully a commercialized event.³⁶²

This act has been converted to a business enterprise. The owners of the bulls end up getting money from the sport, hence enabling them to generate wealth. This change aligns well with the articulation theory used in the research. From the beginning in the pre-colonial period, Abakakamega owned bullfighting culture as a sport to bringing them together as a factor for entertainment and unifying them. In addition, Munanga affirms that, even in the cases of appreciating the winning bull and the owner, it was not a way of paying them for the work done but instead, it was done as a form of celebrating the winners for the efforts done.

Articulation modes of production theory helped the researcher account for this change, where Abakakamega realized they could earn a living from bullfighting. Furthermore, there is a big change on the type of Bullocks used today. In ancient times, Borana and Zebus traditional bulls were used. Their maintenance was very easy. They could feed normally and whenever they get sick, they were treated by use of traditional herbs such as *Mwarubaine* (Neem tree). In the modern era, due to inbreeding, the bulls used are Jersey, Fresian among others. The intention of crossbreeding was to initiate growth of big and strong animals. That's why, Jersey and Fresian are very strong and heavy compared to the traditional Zebus and Borana.³⁶³ Their maintenance cost is high since they are mostly put on zero grazing. They are also prone to diseases; hence they are administered to modern drugs for boosting immunity. Modern feeds and also, they need modern feeds and also, they

³⁶²James Shilaka(40 years), Oral Interview, at Irobo in Shinyalu, on 08/12/2022

³⁶³Andrew Salambo(73 years), at his home in Museno, on 27/11/2022

need modern structures for them to be effective to the activity ahead. In this case, it is also worth to note that, the indigenous bulls could walk to the fighting arena and still could get there with a lot of energy. Unlike the modern bulls, they must be transported to the fighting arena so as it becomes effective. This makes it expensive compared to the indigenous one.

Furthermore, use of technology today in mobilization of fans to bullfighting arena by use of phone calls and messages, updating members through Face book and WhatsApps, passing of information from one generation to another through video and audio recordings has made things easier and faster.

Furthermore, *shilembe* culture is being weakened due to Christianity. *Shilembe* involves cultural practices such as appeasing of the spirits, beliefs, taboos which are against the biblical teachings hence a clash between the church and those that believe in cultural practice. Richard Amisi alluded that, there has been so many heroes and prominent men who die but because of their salvation, they are not allowed to perform *shilembe* as traditions demand. At some places, due to pressure from fan forcing them to perform *shilembe*, there have been incidences of conflicts with the church or the affected family who are against such culture.

Justus Isalambo, from Shinyalu, informed this study thus bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya can be a big event pitting a village, or a collection of friendly villages against a competing village or collection of villages that are related, either as communities, or as a geographical region. Justus further alluded that, at a smaller scale, the duel could be between “my” bull and “your” bull.³⁶⁴

³⁶⁴Justus Isalamabo (29 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Ikolomani, on 30th/11/2022

From Justus Isalambo’s argument, this study found out that, unlike the festival in Spain which involves a fight between a bull and a matador (a human fighter), the Kenyan bullfighting festival is a meeting between bulls as shown in the figure below. Human beings in this context only play the role of catalyzing the bulls, to cheer and to celebrate the winning animal. Furthermore, it's not about two bulls coming to fight but rather two different villages or clans or even communities coming to measure their strength, bravery and skills. Additionally, Ambeyi adds that, the characteristic of the often well publicized festival is that before, during and after the actual bullfight, there is extensive singing and verbal exchanges between the “bull drivers” from the opposing sides. The very fanfare that accompanies this fete leaves one wondering what is really in it as shown in the plate below. It shows how bull locks horns among the Isukha and Idakho people.³⁶⁵



Plate 1: Showing how bulls locking horn among the Abakamega

³⁶⁵Ibid

The study was further informed on issues that sparked bullfighting today and even in the past. They include death, betting, politics and marketing of goods and events. In Kakamega, bullfighting as a sporting activity has been converted into a betting entity. The owners and even diehards have in the recent past taken to betting in favor of bull A to bull B. Unknown to many is that the betting on bulls is different from the football betting.³⁶⁶ In football, one can comfortably predict the outcome in reference to the form and strength of the team. Bulls can be affected by weather on the fighting day, can tense or even get an accident on the fight by falling into a ditch. Therefore, the betting is not reliable to a greater percentage. Despite all this risks on the bulls, it has not prevented the bulls' diehard fans to organize matches.³⁶⁷

Another avenue that makes bullfighting to take place is politics. This is very prevalent in Kakamega during campaign periods. For instance, the western politics finds it easy to get a large multitude of people and thereafter, you sell your agenda. One of the most renowned politicians who use bullfighting to campaign is Boniface Khalwale.³⁶⁸ He is even branded 'Bullfighter'. To him, politics goes hand in hand with bullfighting. This makes the community benefit twice. One, they get entertained two, they get paid especially the bull owners and thirdly, they get to preserve their culture. Lastly, they through it, it paves way for interaction with their leaders hence an opportunity to air their grievances. In the year 2022 campaigns, Munanga informed this study that even the current Governor of Kakamega, Fernandes Barasa had to ask the bullfighting association in Kakamega to organize a competition that he personally funded in Malinya.³⁶⁹ He used this opportunity to address those who attended hence selling his

³⁶⁶Amukanga Michael-KII, at his home in Lirhanda-Shinyalu, on 29th/11/2022

³⁶⁷Ibid

³⁶⁸Ibid

³⁶⁹Boniface Munanga-KII, at his home- Khayega on 27th/11/2022

agenda to the people. This later convinced the residents to elect him as the Governor. The Kakamega politics has really advanced bullfighting in Kakamega. The politicians have made it more famous, nationally and internationally.³⁷⁰

Another issue sparking bullfighting is marketing. Various companies including the entertainment industry, Kenya Power, and Unga Ajab in the recent past have joined the fray. This creates awareness to the community on the quality of goods/products. It explains how good they are and when to use them. Thus, bullfighting is an event that creates masses and enables the product owners sell their goods to the people.³⁷¹ According to Arthur Muchela, bullfighting was initially an affair practiced by the Isukha and Idakho but currently, it has expanded in the Western region. The Maragoli and Banyore of Vihiga County and Wanga people have all embraced bullfighting fully. Therefore, this has really made bullfighting to almost be declared a western region affair. On this note, currently, the main suppliers of bullocks are the Kabras sub-community. This is because they have animals and enough space that has allowed them to rear animals due to availability of pasture in the forests and proximity to the Kalenjins.³⁷²

2.3.0 How bullfighting is organized among the Abakakamega

The researcher was interested in understanding how bullfighting is organized among the Abakakamega in precolonial, colonial, post-colonial periods to date. The researcher was informed on how bullfighting bulls were fed and natured, prepared for fights, how the events were organized, activities that take place on the fighting arena, duration of fighting, beliefs, rituals and use of herbs.

³⁷⁰Ibid

³⁷¹Mourice Mlinya (78 years), Oral Interview, at Isolio grounds, on 31/11/2022

³⁷²Arthur Muchela (50 years), Oral Interview, at Isulu market, on 30/11/2022

2.3.1 Organization of Bullfighting during Pre-colonial and Colonial periods

The study sort to examine and on how bullfighting culture is organized. It interrogated the senior elders among the Abakakamega who were believed to have full information about bullfighting in pre-colonial and colonial periods. One of the informants interviewed was Philip Shitsukane who informed this study vividly that among the Isukha and Idakho of Kakamega, the activity has become a predictable occurrence and very popular, which draws the interest of prominent people in the society including the political class.³⁷³ Most of the prominent politicians in Abakakamega are associated to bullfighting in one way or another.

During the pre-colonial and colonial period, it was reported by Shitsukane that bullfighting was organized by men, mostly mature and old between 40-80 years. Young men aged below 40 years were not allowed in this activity. It was believed to be for mature aged men because it was believed to be an avenue for them to meet and discuss what pertains the community, clan and families. Certain issues were not to be shared to children, youth or women. Some of the issues discussed include marriage, land boundary issues and even disciplinary sessions where need arises. Phillip also added that, bullfighting was not done frequently as seen today. It depended on planned functions and ceremonies in the community, clan or family which in turn could make the old men to meet and plan for a bullfight. Bullfighting was more of a locals' form of entertainment during this time. It was a chance to unite people in merriment to celebrate the owner and the winning bull while fostering friendships. It was purely for functions and ceremonies such as *shilembe*, ordination of *baaami* among other occasions.

³⁷³Philip Shitsukane (45 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ileho, on 28/11/2022

Abakakamega had a special way of dressing and applying body painting on the bullfighting day during the pre-colonial and even until colonial period. Painting is a colorful art used by various African cultures to celebrate, protect, and mourn. Traditionally, body paint was mixed from natural ingredients and smoothed on the skin with fingers, sticks, or grasses. Oil, clay, and chalk were the most common paint ingredients, but the Isukha and Idakho communities used mud-red, cattle dung, and urine to make their face paint.³⁷⁴ In commemoration of the bullfighting activities, the men of this era also had a decorative plant known as *malande* that they wore around their necks. *Lilande* is a plant among the Abakakamega which symbolizes leadership and also as a way of appreciating and recognizing their culture. In this case it is used in ordaining leaders and servants among the Abakakamega such as sub-chiefs, chiefs and priests. This was well elaborated through a Focused Group Discussion at Malinya for local and community leaders.³⁷⁵ Therefore, by using *malande* in bullfighting, it was a confirmation of owning their culture and a way of recognizing bull owners more so with the winning bulls. Bullfighting during this period was also endowed with a series of rituals in which, a special person was selected objectively to sing war songs to the beast on the eve of the fight. The bulls are believed to respond to the songs by stroking their fore feet sending dirt flying backwards, and over the back with heads lowered, shoulders hunched and neck curved to the side.³⁷⁶

Young men could be dispatched to contact other bull owners or leaders in a different village, tribe, or community in order to accept their request to hold a game (*mubayo*), or bullfight, in response to the mobilization of bullfighting attendance. Since there

³⁷⁴<https://www.encyclopedia.com/fashion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/body-decorations-african-cultures>

³⁷⁵FGD for Local and Community Leaders at Malinya on 26/11/2022

³⁷⁶Ibid

were no transportation options as there are today, these young men could travel on foot to convey the message. Danston a respondent revealed to this study that during the colonial period, some of the duties and responsibilities of village elders were to mobilize people towards social development activities. Often, the best people to support this were men who were found in the grazing fields. Village elders visited them in these fields and could have meetings with them and the only starting point was bullfighting. They were made to encourage and support bullfighting to help initiate their agenda.

This therefore served as a boost to spark off bullfighting among the Abakakamega.³⁷⁷ People could meet in the evening at free time, discuss on when and where the match could take place. Danstone further averred that, a bullfight could not happen without informing these local leaders. In addition, some of them were used to inform people in their area on when and where these bullfights were to take place. To affirm this statement, he added that many of the functions such as *makumbusho*, *bilembe* and ordination of local leaders such as chiefs and sub-chiefs, were overseen by local administrators of that time. Danstone also noted that after the bullfight, these local administrators could the opportunity to make important announcements or discuss important issues pertaining the clan or community. From Danstone's views and the study findings, this research applied Functionalism theory by a known sociologist called Emile Durkheim to interpret the role a bullfight event played to connect the local administrator and the community. The theory also enabled the researcher to understand how bullfighting among the Abakakamega is not a practice for few individuals but for many hence its great importance to the people.

³⁷⁷KNA/PC/NZA/4/4/118/1947: Agriculture and administration. 31-33

The findings made herein were also aligned with of political culture theory to understand the role played by culture in the development of the community. Abakakamega with the support of their leaders like the local administrators, worked to unite and share ideas during and after bullfighting ceremonies. This is fundamental to the growth and development of a community socially, economically and even politically.

As bullfighting continued developing roots among the Abakakamega, competition on who had the strongest bull emerged among the Isukha and Idakho communities.³⁷⁸ However, this was based on indigenous type of bulls where breeds such as Borana and Zebus were used. In addition, a bull going to fight was accompanied by a cow to the battlefield as way of the bull owning the cow to provoke another bull (opponent). This was a way of triggering a fight which in turn became a game to entertain the Abakakamega. Furthermore, on motivating the bull and blessing it to fight, the bull owners' wives were tasked to do this by striking *shipondo* (drawer) at the forehead of the bull uttering words of blessing to the bull and wishing it well. Additionally, some bulls grew accustomed to the fragrance of the *shipondo* and knew it was time to fight whenever they smelled it. This motivated the Abakakamega to be walking with the *shipondo* on their way to bullfighting arena as a way of motivating the bull to get ready to fight. It later became embarrassing to walk with *shipondo* before people, which forced them to start using cows to accompany bulls to fighting battles. Accompanying cows with bulls also posed a challenge as it was interfering with the

³⁷⁸Aggrey Wangula (37 years), Oral Interview, at Ileho on 02/12/2022

continuity of the game. It is on this basis that Abakakamega started isolating bulls for bullfight after identifying them from the rest of the herd.³⁷⁹

All bulls are made to live in isolation from other animals as a way of keeping them wild, avoid bull infection, for easy feeding and care and to avoid mating as it leads to loss of weight and strength among bulls. Young bulls (*bihunwa*) are trained for battle and are paired with their peers during training.³⁸⁰ It is on this basis that isolation of bulls meant for bullfighting has remained so up to date among the Abakakamega.

During the pre-colonial period, bulls were introduced to the game as their owners led them across the big field to find an opponent. The younger and smaller bulls were paired with same sized bulls while bigger ones paired with more muscular bulls that could weigh between 500 to 800 kilograms. Owners could beat their bulls to force them to go towards the direction they ought to be. It was the owner's mission to find the perfect fighting partner for his bull. The bulls were pitted in battle against each other for 5-15minutes, depending on how aggressive, agile and tough they were.

Once the bull was led to its competitor, they slowly approached each other. They later provoked one another in a locking horns dance while pushing each other around. After a few minutes of obstinate locked horns, the bull attacked each other with even more strength, fighting more vigorously, pushing each other away. It was easy to see which bull could lose as it tried to withdraw from the battle. Running backwards, the bull was stopped by its owner who hit it with sticks to force it back to the fight despite its opponent being stronger. The fight ended when the defeated bull finally run

³⁷⁹Musa Machoni (36 years), Oral Interview at his home in Isolio, on 02/12/2022

³⁸⁰Ibid

backwards away from the arena, for good.³⁸¹ In the course of the grueling fights, the bulls were not given leeway to rest or catch a breather. To make bulls summon the courage and strength to fight even harder the owner constantly lashes it or taunts it to fight harder. Once the bull got lashed it became exasperated and that was when the fight intensified.

2.3.2 Continuity of Bullfighting in post-colonial period to date

When the study interrogated Philip Shitsukane, on how a bull is treated and trained for a fight during this period, he informed this study thus;

For a bull to fight it is identified early and is then continually prepared through special feeding, that has sometimes seen a bull for the fighting weigh up to around eight hundred kilograms, a massive animal indeed. It will also have its horns sharpened using a hot object. Many prominent homes that rear cattle will most probably keep a prized bull for this purpose. A bull could represent an individual, a home, or the entire village. Indeed, when the animals fight the real situation depicted is like the owners are also fighting.³⁸²

Stephen Mukabwa supported this idea of balanced diet by averring that bulls used for the fights are well prepared in advance and also subjected to a balanced diet. To understand what it takes for a balanced diet to a bull, he explained that the dietary needs of bulls depend on various factors such as their age, size, activity level, and purpose (e.g., breeding, beef production, or work).³⁸³ The foundation of a bull's diet should be high-quality forage, such as pasture grass, hay, or silage. This provides essential fiber and nutrients. Access to grazing or ample amounts of good-quality hay is crucial. Bulls may require concentrates to meet their energy and nutrient needs,

³⁸¹Stephen Mukabwa (31 years), Oral Interview at his home in Malimili, on 03/12/2022

³⁸²Philip Shitsukane (45 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ileho, on 28/11/2022

³⁸³Stephen Mukabwa (31 years), Oral Interview at his home in Malimili on 03/12/2022

especially if they have high activity levels or are being used for breeding. Commercially available concentrates or grain mixes formulated for bulls could be used. These often include ingredients like corn, oats, barley, or soybean meal. The amount and type of concentrate should be determined based on the bull's specific requirements and the advice of a veterinarian or animal nutritionist.

Emmanuel Isalambo further added that, bulls need an adequate amount of protein for muscle development and overall health. Good sources of protein include legumes (such as alfalfa or clover) and protein-rich concentrates. The protein requirements may vary depending on the bull's age and purpose, so it's essential to consult a professional for specific recommendations. Bulls require a balanced supply of minerals and vitamins to support their growth and overall well-being. Commonly supplemented minerals include calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, and trace minerals like copper, zinc, and selenium. Vitamin supplements may be necessary if the bull's diet lacks certain vitamins.³⁸⁴

Naphtal Shivachi explained that a nutritionist or veterinarian can help determine the appropriate supplementation based on the bull's diet and needs. Access to clean and fresh water is essential for bulls at all times. Make sure they have access to a reliable water source and check it regularly to ensure it's clean and free from contaminants. He also posited that the specific dietary requirements of bulls could vary based on their individual needs and circumstances. Consulting with an experienced veterinarian or animal nutritionist could be recommended to create a diet plan tailored to the bull's requirements.³⁸⁵ Naphtal Shivachi further added that, ideally, the bull for this purpose could be isolated from the rest of the cattle, as a way of training it to be hostile

³⁸⁴Emmanuel Isalambo (33 years), Oral Interview, at Lirhanda Stadium on 23/11/2022

³⁸⁵Naphtal Shivachi (56 years), Oral Interview at his place in Shianderema, on 29/11/2022

towards other animals. The bull was prepared by being fed well and by being isolated from the rest so that they can turn wild. Meanwhile the bull is denied any opportunity to mate as this is believed to diminish its power to fight, preserve the bull's virility. Its isolation is also meant to drive the bull wild at the sight of its rival.³⁸⁶ About three days before the fight, in addition to choose foliage, the owner starts to feed his bull on *liseshe*, the millet residue from the beer brewing process. Peter Khayati averred that it is common practice to feed cannabis to the bulls or make them inhale the smoke on the morning of the fight to make them more aggressive.³⁸⁷

Danstan Siema informed this study that, in the current lifestyle of the Abakakamega, there is no survival without bullfighting.³⁸⁸ Danstan confirmed bullfighting is still part of the cultural events that must be practiced. Moreover, one of the greatest catalysts of unity among the Abakakamega is bullfighting.³⁸⁹ On this note, it can be deduced that, bullfighting is one way of living among the sub-clans of Isukha and Idakho practicing it. Another reason why it should continue is that it is a source of entertainment to the community. The coming together of bulls for a fight among the Abakakamega, provides them an opportunity to enjoy the game. In addition, people enjoy the music soloed during the event and after the match.³⁹⁰ Bullfighting unites people, and by adhering to the taboos, rituals, customs, and traditions associated with this cultural activity, Abakakamega are able to spark their development.

According to Cedrick Shibuyanga, who provided information for this study, bullfighting grew throughout time. He added that both the number of organizers and

³⁸⁶Ibid

³⁸⁷Ibid

³⁸⁸Danstan Siema, Oral Interview, 1st/12/2022

³⁸⁹Ibid

³⁹⁰Ibid

achievements in the organization of bullfighting was growing. Cedrick hinted that bullfighting was more popular and that young men rather than older ones were now in charge of the sport. At this point, task delegation started to take place in order to increase the entertainment value of the cultural sport. He claimed that the caretaker who does this feeds the bull well on *maseshe* (residues from a local brew called *busaa*) a week prior to the bullfight.³⁹¹

Among the Abakakamega, some bulls are fed on *busaa* residues-a local homemade brew believed to make them charged, while some with a few puffs of *inzaka* (marijuana) introduced hours before the fight. To prevent bewitching from the opposite village (opponent), the bulls are also exposed to *tsinyasi* (traditional herbs), yet this ritual is greatly revered as sacrosanct. A secret pledge is made between the bull's owner and the animal itself. The bull can only be fed by a certain person who wears a single uniform; bright colors are also forbidden, which makes it easier for the bull to get to know these people. The bull must be fed as the caretaker converses with it in terms of culture. Example of words spoken to the bull before a fight:

Luyia: Rail, Khutsitsa khulwana Covid-19 chumamosi litukhu yili (date). Nuyanza Ukhatukhayo wakuha tsisoni. Khuhetsa Liseshe, Khuhetsa shikulia ulii unyole tsingulu. Ukhulevela likuva.

English: (bull name) we are going for a fight on (date & place). Please do not embarrass us. I am giving you this busaa residue and this pasture you eat to get energized. Bring us victory.³⁹²

Some of the preparations before the fight include sharpening the horns of the bull to a point with a file. The bulls' horns are often sharpened by files and machetes ahead of each fight in a bid to give them an advantage over their rivals.

³⁹¹Cedric Shibyanga,(40 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilesi, on 29/12/22

³⁹² Alfred Munala(68 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, on 30/11/2022

On the night before the fight, the owner collects fodder and chops it finely inside the manger just after midnight. The bull owner and his minder keep vigil the rest of the night feeding it until they are satisfied that it is well fed. If feeding is overlooked and the bull faces an opponent the following day on an empty stomach it will end up getting tossed badly around inside or outside the ring.³⁹³

Those who take the bull out should be people who are always close to the bull. When they arrive on the material day, because of their frequency with the bull, it senses. Some always have a uniform to help the bull to identify them. Some on arrival come while talking or uttering some words to help make the bull know they have arrived and it is time to fight. Their arrival in a specific uniform or words spoken or using a whistle makes the bull get ready for the activity ahead. The bull starts kicking, butting, walking the fence and making various body postures. They get close to the bull, and talk to it in the following words:

(Bull name) Khutushi, khwenya khutsia mulihe. Ure tsingulu halala. Lihe yili liali lia bakuka beru. Lihe yili numwima kweru. Bakuka numuhulilanga, khwenya khurula, mure mu (Bull name) murima kukhulwana, alere likura.

(Bull name) we have arrived (diehards) and we want to go to war. Put energy together. This war was for our grandparents. This is our culture. Our grandparents if you are hearing us, we are leaving please make (bull name) strong with enough energy to fight to bring victory....³⁹⁴

These diehards in fact go to the home where the bull is and spend a night with the bull owner supporting the caretaker in giving some herbs, bhang to the bull as they speak to it. They also drink *busaa*, *chang'aa*, eat food all through the night. Normally, these

³⁹³Ibid

³⁹⁴Benard Lichoti (47 years), Oral Interview at Khayega Stadium on 19/11/2022

diehards are not less than five individuals. They are the closest people to the bull especially before and during the fight. They are in the order of one in front, one on each side, and 1 or 2 behind. This is to show the bull that it is protected to be strong. It is also a way of motivating the bull to fight. Again, this is to prevent anyone else from approaching the bull or touching it if they have a terrible omen. Additionally, they make sure the bull is not harmed and is not injured, especially when there is a battle between two parties, as Igantius Khayumbi said.³⁹⁵

As bullfighting continued to grow, the use of *inzaka* (bhang) and some herbs from the forest increased more and more to help bring victory. Competition from the village level to highest level (different clans) among the Abakakamega was realized. Andrea Isalambo informed this study that by the 1970s, bullfighting culture and a sport was much different from the one experienced in 1910 during Fr. Arnold Witlox, whereby, the 1970s had grown more in terms of sizes of the bull with the rearing of modern animals, feeding had been intensified and more specialists had emerged unlike 1910, which was only known to be for specific clans.³⁹⁶The desire of bull owners coming up victoriously increased.³⁹⁷

As the research progressed, the issue of feeding the bulls with *inzaka* had continued to be concern with the researcher on how it is related to bull fighting. While conducting a focused group discussion with some veteran bull owners, from Khayega location, they seemed to make this narrative a proverbial phenomenon.³⁹⁸ After a robust discussion and inquiries about cannabis and other fundamental issues that might rise during the fight from the researcher, they soon revealed that it is common practice to

³⁹⁵Igantius Khayumbi(29 years), Oral interview, at his place in Ilala on 15/02/23

³⁹⁶Andrea Isalambo(73 years), Oral Interview, from Museno, on 27/11/22

³⁹⁷Ibid

³⁹⁸Focused group discussion of bull owners, held Khayega on 11th/12/2022

feed cannabis to the bulls or make them inhale the smoke on the morning of the fight to make them more aggressive.

On organizing of the bullfighting event, Andrea Isalambo lauded the fact that, first the owners of the bulls to fight must become friends which is a must creation since it is believed that it will make bulls not injure each other, and also not injure or harm those who are attending to witness the event. This is an observation that is maintained to date. Secondly, documentation is done through the officials of the bullfighting association. Initially, before the sporadic use of technology, it was handwritten upon verbally agreeing.³⁹⁹ Today, a brochure is made even a month before the set date. On this brochure, the plate of the bulls to fight is put, also the venue, date, names of bulls and the prize of the winner is captured as seen in the plate 2. Finally, a rubber stamp is put to seal the agreement of the parties involved. This makes it official then the

³⁹⁹ Bonface Munanaga(48 years), Oral Interview, at his home, on 27/11/22

chairman announces it to the public.

ATTENTION

TO : OSCAR (SENJE INGOI)
FROM : SITA (IKHWALE)
RE: **BULLFIGHTING MATCH BETWEEN IKHWALE AND SENJE**

Greetings, **13/05/2023**

I write to invite you to a bullfighting match between my bull **IKHWALE** and yours **SENJE** at **LIRHANDA GROUNDS** on Saturday **03/06/2023** starting 7.30am at a cost of ksh. 10,000 (PESA TASLIM KENYAN MONEY)

Thank you.



IKHWALE

Mbele mbolekhu.....
Volaaaaa
#schipangalia

SENJE INGOI

Plate 2: Showing invitation to bullfighting event

From Bonface Munanga's idea, the study further interrogated him to know more about the leadership of bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho people. He explained that by the year 2010 bullfighting head spread to other communities and among the Abakakamega, bullfighting activities had expanded tremendously. This therefore called for a better way of managing bullfighting operations not just among the Abakakamega, but across the county where bullfighting culture had expanded to. Godfrey Angulshi asserted that, with the patronage of Bonny Khalwale who is the current senator, the need to form an association was reached upon in the year 2010.

2.3.3 Kakamega Bullfighting Association

The association was then given a name; Kakamega Bullfighting Association (KBA). On how its leadership structure was arranged, Godfrey reported that, this association was led by Bonface Khalwale from Ikolomani-Patron, Meshack Luchendo from Shinyalu-Chairman, Mbaya Peter from Buyangu-Organizing Secretary though he later died and Benard Makumba from Bushiangala in Ikolomani-Secretary.⁴⁰⁰ Godfrey Angalushi further stated that, the association further had branches in several areas such as Ikolomani, Shinyalu, Khayega, Shibuye, Kabras, Maragoli, Lurambi, Bunyore, Wanga just to mention. It was further noted that, each branch had a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and organizing secretary.⁴⁰¹

According to one of the FGDs of bull owners in Khayega, the association was founded for the reasons listed below: First, it sought to bring Abakakamega together by promoting peace and unity via bullfighting.⁴⁰² Secondly, the association was also created to consider the welfare of its members. This welfare problem dealt with member bereavements and provided support for one whose bull passed away on the bullring as a result of injuries. The association was accountable for promoting donations to help the bull owner purchase a replacement. The Kakamega Bullfighting Association was in charge of planning and approving the contest, as well as informing the public, before any bullfight among the Abakakamega could take place. The impending *shilembe* was a prime example. This group was responsible for choosing which bulls to attend and why. Thirdly, the organization was also in charge of handling new member registration. The fact that enrollment was free for the year 2010–2011 but required payment of Ksh.200 starting in January 2012 was

⁴⁰⁰Godfrey Angalushi (58 years), Oral Interview at Munyenyi on 22/11/2022

⁴⁰¹Ibid

⁴⁰²FDG of bull owners in Shinyalu at Khayega on 19/11/2022

emphasized. Fourthly, the association was mandated to engage with other stakeholders such as County Government of Kakamega (CGk), National Government, Departments of livestock and tourism in ensuring development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Fifth, it was to manage wrangles amongst the members. Last but not least, the leadership for this association support bull owners by equipping them with trainings. This was done through welcoming veterinarians to their meetings with a goal of delivering trainings such as; bull feeding-diet management, disease management, to bull owners. Lastly, the association was responsible for keeping all the records and managing any finance for example- bereavements, merry go round.⁴⁰³

Mourice Mlinya elaborated that, Kakamega Bullfighting Association is registered as per the 2010 Kenyan constitution with a bank account at equity where any contribution done is saved. In addition, for this association to disseminate all the responsibilities named above, it uses the leadership at branch levels.⁴⁰⁴ Furthermore, Gabriel Litala revealed to this study that, the association is also facing some challenges such as lack of funds to facilitate its activities, wrangles over positions within the association, political divides just to mention but a few. Currently, the mentioned individuals above are still the office bearers apart from Peter Mbaya's position that is yet to be replaced. Bonface Munanga from Khayega was added to the group as the director for organizing and approving matches among the Abakakamega and beyond. ⁴⁰⁵

In accordance with the respondents' references, the researcher had the following to record regarding the establishment and operations of this association: As can be seen

⁴⁰³Ibid

⁴⁰⁴Mourice Mlinya (78 years), Oral Interview at Isolio on 13/12/2022

⁴⁰⁵Gabriel Litala (49 years), Oral Interview at Mugomari market on, 13/12/2022

from its branches, bullfighting among the Abakakamega is a culture that many people have embraced. Additionally, the culture had advanced to the point where it was associated with uniting the minds of Abakakamega. Additionally, the leadership of Abakakamega uses bullfighting as a way to promote peace, as evidenced by one of the motivations for the organization's founding. The research also revealed that the Bullfighting Association works with other stakeholders to ensure its growth. Abakakamega so expects that bullfighting culture would eventually be recognized as one of the National Cultural Sports for Tourism. The Association also revealed that bullfighting is a cultural sport for bullfighting's pioneers, Isukha and Idakho.

The management of the Kakamega Bullfighting Association made this very plain. Meshack Luchendo, Bonface Khalwale, Mbaya Peter, Benard Makumba and Bonface Munanga who was added recently come from Isukha and Ikolomani. None of them come from the communities outside Abakakamega despite the fact that bullfighting had spread to Bunyore, Maragoli, Kabarasi, Wangari by the time this association was being formed. Finally, political class has a role in bullfighting because, the leadership has a politician being given a role to patronize the association among the Abakakamega. Secondly, some of the challenges affecting the association include political divides from within. The study found out that, during 2022 campaigns, there were people who were supporting Bonface Khalwale while others were behind Fernandes Barasa which resulted in political wrangles. The negative side of this wrangle is that, bullfighting functions and matches have been suspended from using Khayegga stadium since January 2022.

Occasionally, the organization maybe interrupted. This maybe culminated by the death of one of the owners before the set fighting date or the bull may have been sick

or injured. It thus makes the event be postponed to pave way for the mourning (*kwikhula*) by the fans and bullfighting organizers. Instead, the event is rescheduled to honor him immediately after burial. Friends and diehards of the sport organizes for this even free of charge. They bring their bulls as they honor and mourn their colleague. These friends are those who may have fought their bulls with the one who is dead or those who know him in depth. The family may opt out of their will to acknowledge these friends by rewarding them with Ksh. 100, 200 or by a word of mouth and allows the family compound to be a bullfighting arena for that day.⁴⁰⁶

As the sun rises, a shrill horn blows piercing the Abakakamega community making everyone in the tiny village of Khayega alert.⁴⁰⁷ Traditional war songs and *isukuti* chanting, takes over the afternoon creating excitement in the village. Incarnations, to invoke the ancestral spirits are done before the bull is let out of the homestead. As the bull owner leads the ‘beast’ out, singing war songs to fire up the ‘beast’, trumpets are blown penetrating the village and sending signals of what is about to begin. The beats of the famous and most celebrated *isukuti* drums raises the crescendos turning the whole stadium into frenzy. The drumbeats are a clear message that the contender is being escorted into the stadium. Elders swing the ritual rod referred to as *tsindoboshi*, *tsisiola* in the air as the bull drivers matched to the stadium. The swing rod cannot be held by anyone but only an elder.⁴⁰⁸The plate below shows how the community really embraces bullfighting. The black bull is called Lwanda (rock) which comes from Murhanda and the other is called Shisiliboti from Malimili. The two were at Khayega for a match.

⁴⁰⁶Ibid

⁴⁰⁷Stephen Mukabwa(31 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Malimili, on 3/12/2022

⁴⁰⁸Ibid



Plate 3: Showing how the community embraces bullfighting

On the bullfighting day, there are three items that are seen: *Isukuti*, *shisiliba* (whistle) and African ritual rods. The rods used during bullfighting include: *Lusui*, *lisibwa* and *Lutari* (African traditional rods believed to have cultural purposes).⁴⁰⁹ In this case, *lusui* is dioecious⁴¹⁰ where the male one is the one used in bullfighting and specifically for men, while the female one can be used for other purposes such as grazing animals etc. The *lusui* and *lusibwa* are used by the people around the bull. Herbs are put on them to protect the bull, bring victory, and block bad omens. The

⁴⁰⁹Paul Okwaro (41 years), Oral Interview at Kakamega Airstrip ground, on 12/12/2022

⁴¹⁰Is of a plant having the male and female reproductive organs in separate individuals

lutari rod is used by the rest of the population. *Lusui* is a medium sized stick just for guiding the bull and not beating or harming it. It is believed by using it to touch the bull it brings victory, sweeps away bad omen and again, it informs the bull that everything is okay or asking the bull to calm down. These may also be used to separate the two bulls. It can also be used to control the bull in case it turns violent. These sticks are put at the same place a week before the fight where herbs are applied on by an old man or a man who has not married (*musumbaa*).⁴¹¹

In order to ensure that bulls become accustomed to them, some bull owners may choose to have rods of the same color. When the bull sees them, it gets ready for fight, knowing it is protected. But when *lusibwa* is raised, the bull knows its heading to a wrong direction or is being asked to cool down. The bull owner has two rods during the bullfighting day: *lusibwa* and *lusui*. But in most cases because they have other people supporting to guide and control bull, they only use *lusui* as shown in the plate below;

⁴¹¹Josephat Matekwa (50 years), Oral Interview at Malinya stadium on 26/11/2022



Plate 4: A photo showing bullfighters carrying traditional rods during an event

On the battle field, African beliefs in the use of herbs and communication with spirits are key in bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Peter Sakwa added that, when a bull is arriving on the field, African traditional songs and *isukuti* beats are heard which is the entertainment needed both to the bulls and participants. He also reported that bulls must be given time to rest and regain more energy after long distances of traveling; more so if it is an away match and the bull has travelled either by walking or by use of lorry. For the bull on the home ground, it still needs time to rest and get prepared for the game ahead. In the process the people close to the bull continuously psyche and speak to the bull with some words of informing it that the time has come.⁴¹²

Peter Sakwa alluded to this ritual of speaking to bulls when he says this;

⁴¹²Geoffrey Ayisi (49 years), Oral Interview at Masiyenze on 26/12/2022.

When I arrive on the battle field, I must go around the field speaking to the bull and connecting it to the spirits. At this time, I should have taken some herbs (*lisambu*) to be able to communicate with my bull and my forefathers. If it's a home game, there are specific words spoken to the bull or when moving around the field. Again, if it is an away game, there is also another way we speak or communicate with our spirits. The essence of moving around the field is to sanctify the field to make sure no bad omen that can make them lose or harm the bull. Furthermore, it is a way of welcoming the spirits of the forefathers to take control of the field and give them victory.⁴¹³

Example of the words spoken while at the home ground:

Messi, khutushi khushikuri shieru. Yuku numusambwa kwali kwa bakuka beru. Mundu yitsa khurulitsa khushikuri shieru.

Ambulosio(Ambrose), Yakhama, Mukabwa (names of the forefathers who died believed to be living as spirits) *Messi yeru ikuri lihe yili, ikhakurwakhu tawe.*

English: Messi (bull name) this is our own ground. This a culture of our forefathers. No one should defeat you on our own battle ground. *Ambulosio*, Yakhama, Mukabwa (names of forefathers who died and believed to be living as spirits), Messi our bull should give us victory during the game, it should not be defeated.⁴¹⁴

While the bull owner coming from the opponent's side, and is fighting away from home will say:

Mundu mwisukha, khurula Ishinyalu, nakhatukha khushikuri shiabadakho, shikuri nishieru taa, ishi nishikuri shia bamusali, khwitsi khulombe bulina, nukhukuri milembe chibeho, nimukuri kuhetsane milembe, buyanzi bubeho. Yuku numusambwa kweru kubulina.

English: I have arrived on Idakho ground, I am an Isukha person from Shinyalu. This is not our field, this field belongs to Bamusali (a clan among the Idakho people), we have come to make friendship, if you win

⁴¹³Peter Isabwa, (83), Oral Interview at him in Sigalagala, on 30/11/22

⁴¹⁴Ibid

let there be peace and if we lose let's shake hands and happiness to prevail. This is our culture of friendship.

For such a game, it is thought that the bull at the home field must be the first one to arrive on the ground and wait for the guest or invitee to arrive, just like in football. Raphael Atsiaya said that the bull owners (the two gathering groups, villages, and communities) must meet and come to an agreement before the game begins when the second bull comes as the bull is given time to relax. If they had agreed on certain amounts in their agreements, then the money is given first. Second, they decide to stay friends regardless of whether they win or lose.⁴¹⁵ Musa Nasoro further added that, the current bullfights have been commercialized as compared to the bullfights of the old ages which were just for friendship.⁴¹⁶ It was only a matter of shaking hands as a form of blessing the bulls as they fight. Today, the first discussion after shaking of hands is about money. After the meeting between bull owners then bulls are now allowed to lock horns. To prevent meetings before the agreement, bulls are surrounded by fans and caregivers throughout this period. Bulls are now enraged and ready to fight because they believe they have arrived on the battlefield.⁴¹⁷

Everyone is happy and doing their best to display their culture on the battlefield. As seen in plate 5 below, the researcher came across Geoffrey Mkanyageni from Imusali who was carrying *shihanga* (the skull of a dead bull known as Messi) -cause a mess to

⁴¹⁵Raphael Atsiaya (27 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shianyinya.

⁴¹⁶Musa Nasoro (Oral Interview), at his home in Shibuye on 11/11/2022.

⁴¹⁷Ibid

the

opponent;



Plate 5: Showing a name of a bull that died

On a wood in form of a cross written on " REVENGE for MESSI MBAPPE please" on inquiry on what it meant, Geoffrey informed this study that it was an expression of culture in representation of two bulls (one that died and another one that was alive, and took up the war of the one that died). In this case, Messi (Named after a prominent footballer) died and Mbappe (Named after another prominent footballer) came in to take over from where Messi had left the high-level competition with several victories.⁴¹⁸

He further narrated that Messi was a strong bull from Idakho, in Shisasari village that fought and came out victorious for so many times. It was referred to as the hero of Idakho land and brought fame to that community. As part of the final contest in 2021 to determine which bull would represent the Abakakamega in that year, Messi lost

⁴¹⁸Geoffrey Mkanyageni(27 Years). Oral Interview,at Malinya Stadium, on 13/05/23

against a bull from Shinyalu by the name of Avena and suffered major injuries that prevented it from taking part in any more games. George added that, the owner of Messi was not happy and he decided to sell the bull to Musingu High School to be as *tsigutsa* (as beef with ugali).⁴¹⁹ The bull owner asked to be given the skull for Messi which he went and kept for remembrance of the victory and fame given to him by that bull. The money he got, some was used to buy another bull which he named it *Mbappe* to replace *Messi* during bullfighting games. Therefore, during the any bullfighting day where *Mbappe* could get out to take part in the fight, the skull (which was taken to the grave of forefathers (*Mwilindwa*-words spoken and herbs applied on it) was a must to be on the battle ground. In fact, when *Mbappe* leaves home for a battle the skull must be in front with a belief that in doing so, will awaken the strength that *Messi* had to be disperse into *Mbappe* to lead to triumph. In addition, the statement "revenge" implied that it was now the turn of *Mbappe* to revenge what *Messi* went through by losing the last battle and come with victory.⁴²⁰

When a bull bellows and starts pacing up and down while stomping the ground like it's possessed, that's when you know it's ready for a battle. The march to the arena is deemed to be in order. It is often to the accompaniment of drums (particularly *Isukuti* drums).⁴²¹ Additionally, to psyche the bull, supporters dance after the bull while chanting war and circumcision songs. Emmanuel Mamba continued by saying that at that time, the bull would have covered every square inch of the ground and is truly seeming ferocious and frightening.⁴²²On the type of attire of those accompanying it, Emmanuel Mamba informed this study;

⁴¹⁹ Ibid

⁴²⁰ Ibid

⁴²¹ Ibid

⁴²² Emmanuel Mamba (52 years), Oral Interview at Sigalagal. On 21/11/2022

When recognizing well-known soccer players, they sometimes need to be outfitted in military garb. They can also be seen holding twigs, which may be used to increase the fanfare but also appear to be used to conceal their warrior bull so that it cannot be spotted beforehand.⁴²³

The study was also to be informed as to why the bull is normally taken to the fighting arena early in the morning, Gabriel Litala postulated that;

There is believe that if the bull is sighted before it enters the arena of the match, one with an evil eye (perhaps working for the opposing side) could cast a spell on the animal thereby diminishing its power and bravery. Of course, stories abound of ferocious bulls which turn to run away at the mere sight of the opponent without even as much as waiting to 'lock the first horns. This could be really disappointing for the trainer who will have invested heavily in the bull, both financially and emotionally.⁴²⁴

In addition, Gabriel Litala continued to elaborate to this study that, in the recent past, the event starts early in the morning to avoid bad omen on the route and the hot sun. Around five in the morning, people awaken, and they begin the journey to the fighting area from every village, escorting the enormous bulls to Malinya Stadium, the largest bullfighting venue in Kakamega. With *Isukuti*, the spectators march to the stadium while chanting traditional songs and everything comes to a standstill until when the top bull is proclaimed.⁴²⁵ The plate below shows how bull is being transported to the field very early in the morning:

⁴²³Japheth Shikoli (55 years), Oral Interview, at Iguhu on 11/12/2022

⁴²⁴Gabriel Litala (49 years), Oral Interview at Mugomari, on 31/12/2022

⁴²⁵Ibid



Plate 6: *Showing bull being transported to the fighting field*

Upon arriving at the stadium, the organizers set the bulls in different corners ready to fight as planned depending on the size of each animal. Unlike other formal sports where supporters have their designated areas to watch from; among the Abakakamega, the cheering crowd shares the pitch with the fighting bulls. Face to face, the bulls seize each other up before launching into each other.⁴²⁶ A bull will only be declared the winner when it defeats its opponent by chasing it away. The *isukuti* dance will break out again to symbolize victory by the residents from where the champion bull comes from. All the villagers will surround the winning bull as they escort him back home amid celebrations and song.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁶Stanley Shihafu(38 Years), Oral interview, at his home in Malimili, on 31st/11/2022

⁴²⁷Wilson Liposhe (50 years), Oral Interview, at Sigalalagala, on 07/12/2022

On how the sporting game kicks off in the recent past, Wilson Liposhe, a key informant to the study, retorted that; the fight begins with a sharp command from the referee.⁴²⁸ The bulls charge amidst a cloud of dust and loud cheer and jeer. He added that, the bulls lock horns and the battle has started. The spectators, some of who may have placed bets on the animals are by then beside themselves with anxiety and with huge expectation. The swordfight may take a few minutes in the instance of unbalanced matching of bulls. Nevertheless, it could go on for a long time where the bulls are well matched. Sometimes the referee may provide time for a break when the animals are momentarily stopped for recuperation before locking horns again. In this case, anticipation and apprehension are at their peak. This is then replaced by cheer, jeer, laughter, lament and celebration as the less resilient bull ‘breaks the horns’ and turns to run away followed by its mulling opponent.

James Shilaka pointed out that, this is known to be a dangerous moment as the retreating animal flees for dear life. The desperate bull could trample on anyone who stands on its way. Perhaps to avoid being driven back into the fight, the retreating animal could run with its eyes closed. Sometimes the animal will run towards its trainer, presumably for protection, but the latter who may not want to risk at those moments will run away, or patch on a nearby tree.⁴²⁹ What then follows is celebrating the winner through song and dance as the loser’s trade blame for the loss. The loss may be blamed on poor, or biased officiating, foul play resulting from witchcraft, or poor training of the bull.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸Ibid

⁴²⁹James Shilaka (40 years), Oral Interview, at Irobo in Shinyalu, on 10/12/2022

⁴³⁰Andrea Isalambo, (73 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno on 27/11/22

To this study, it clearly emerged that the thrill of the sport is in the savagery exhibited in the arena by the fighting bulls, the sight of a 500-kilo bull pawing the ground, grunting deeply as it sizes up its opponent before hunching its massive shoulders, lowering its head and launching into the charge, slamming headfirst into its equally massive opponent.⁴³¹ It is the height of virility that is on display as the beasts grapple with each other, muscles rippling, coats shiny with sweat, mirroring the law of the African savanna, where the strongest male emerges as the ruler of the herd, driving the vanquished off his turf. It is this sexual undertone that is at the heart of the sport, and which the fans celebrate after victory as if to say to the opposing village that they are the more virile, and as it happens in the wilds of the savanna, there is always the threat of danger, both to the contestants and the spectators

2.3.4 Duration/Length of Bullfighting

Absalom Shibanda, explained that, a bull has no specific age limit that is scheduled for it to fight. It always depends on how firm it is.⁴³² Its state of fight is equated to that of a football player. There is a time in pick and it then slowly loses its strength. Therefore, in the case of a bull, when it loses maybe four times consistently, the owner and the management decide that it is barred or stopped from taking part in bullfighting.⁴³³ This is said that the bull officially is retired from the league. However, for this bull to be disposed, sometimes it is difficult for the owner, more so if it is more adorable. He does it unofficially through his son.⁴³⁴ He asks a person/buyer to come for it and when the time arrives, he delegates the issue to his son. This portrays his unwillingness to release the bull. He goes away and only comes back when he is

⁴³¹Ibid

⁴³²Absalom Shibanda (73 years), in Shinyalu, on 05/12/2022

⁴³³Ibid

⁴³⁴Paul Mulama (46 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Sabane, on 11/12/2022

sure that it has been taken. This is deliberate absentia to indicate it is not his wish to dispose.⁴³⁵

While the study interrogated Andrea Isalambo on the type and character of people who usually accompany the bull to the fighting arena, he postulated that;

On the night to the fight, most of the bull fight spectators stay up in the good part of the night drinking traditional *busaa* beer in anticipation of the fight. As they do so, they sing songs that are meant to encourage the bull and arouse its esteem and morale higher.⁴³⁶

This study discovered that folks who are typically in the forefront do not behave normally on this topic. The majority of them are typically inebriated from alcohol that has also been given to the bull. Additionally, some people even use drugs that make them feel more confident during the fight. It is unpleasant to note that some viewers even go as far as consuming cannabis which is not advisable in order to engage in the sport of bull fighting. Moreover, the study slowly by slowly almost related the bullfighting to the Isukha and Idakho tribes. Andrea Isalambo key informant, agreed to the observation made by the researcher by confirming that:

Bullfighting is a sport that is almost as old as the Luhya tribe, specifically the Idakho and Isukha sub-tribes who neighbor each other. The bulls are revered by these communities, and their owners are held in very high regard. He further alluded that the owners actually speak to their bulls, and the bulls understand them.⁴³⁷

On this discourse, the researcher got informed that bullfighting is a sport that is almost as old as the Isukha and Idakho tribes.

⁴³⁵Ibid

⁴³⁶Derrick Khamasi (51 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Mukumu on 15/12/2022

⁴³⁷Ibid

2.3.5 Rituals and Taboos involved in Bullfighting among the Abakakamega

Mitchell looks at how rituals are important in bullfighting and affirms that they define what a culture is. He adds that the progressive sequence of events, actions, thoughts, or prayers leads you into ritual itself.⁴³⁸ In addition, Stephen Akaranga alludes to the fact that Luhya community believed in rituals and taboo but was diluted by the coming of the missionaries. In his work he looks at this as a situation of conflict, the indigenous versus modern values and ways of life. The indigenous African outlook towards morality and life was affected by European, North American missionaries and colonialists. These people introduced Christianity and formal education to the Africans. In this way, the Logooli some of the Luhya people, abandoned in part some of their beliefs and practices which were an aspect of their integral communal life in favor of the Western oriented values.⁴³⁹

There taboos associated with the bulls, some of which are revealed to this study, though from the looks that are exchanged during the oral interview, the researcher can tell that some others myths are being withheld, but as per Peter Khayati, it is taboo for an owner to engage in sex the night before a fight. Just like those that believes in the Bible when approaching important functions or activities do not allow sex until they are done. The leading argument against engaging in sex on Sabbath is based on Isaiah: “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day
“Since sex is pleasurable, scriptural injunction against engaging in intercourse on Sabbath is seen as obvious.⁴⁴⁰ Another significant argument against sex on Sabbath is that it is

⁴³⁸T.J, Mitchell. (1986). Bullfighting: The Ritual Origin of Scholarly Myth. *Journal of American Folklore*, 99(394), pp. 394-414.

⁴³⁹S. Akaranga. (1996). A Study of Logooli Moral Values: With particular reference to Taboos, Culture and Oaths, PhD Thesis, University of Nairobi, p. 80

⁴⁴⁰ Isaiah 58:13

distracting. For this reason, some ministers boast that they sleep in separate beds from their spouse on Friday nights.

Therefore, Abakakamega in the same way do value bullfighting culture hence do not allow sex while preparing for it. Bull owners believe that if this taboo is broken the consequences on the day of the fight can be grave. The bull could run berserk and plow into the crowd or even turn its deadly horns on the owner. He added that, others claim that breaking this taboo can also cause the bull to lose focus and end up gored to death by its rival.⁴⁴¹

Peter also pointed out that; a week before bullfight, bull owner and anyone who may be around the bull do not eat *murele* (jute mallow) an African type of vegetable known for its unusual appearance and texture, it's believed things may behave the same on the bullfighting ground hence losing the battle. They also do not touch or use any soaps as it is believed it may make herbs not to work. It's believed the soap may wash off the herbs.⁴⁴²

It was revealed to the study that they all agree that when such a disaster befalls an otherwise well-bred bull, there must be an underlying reason. The other cause for disaster in the arena is if two bull owners who carry a grudge against each other, a past disagreement over a business matter or a long-running family feud agree to a fight. It is believed that this affects the performance of the bull, since it shares the feelings of the owner and can communicate with him through a form of telepathy.⁴⁴³

An owner who agrees to such a bout is signing the death warrant of one of the bulls. It

⁴⁴¹Peter Khayati (68 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, on 29/11/22

⁴⁴²Cedtric Shibuyanga, Oral Interview, at his home in Ilesi, on 29/11/22

⁴⁴³Ibid

is extremely important for the rivals to have a clean heart when they shake hands on a deal. “It is not really a duel”, explains Peter Khayati. He further retorted that:

You see, if I own a bull that you feel can square off with yours, what happens is that you approach me as a friend and we talk over the matter maybe over a pot of beer. When we are in agreement that our bulls can face off, we then agree on a date and a figure for the winning bull, say ten thousand or above. Our friends can either chip in or place wagers. Sometimes a wealthy patron will come in and place a good sum on the winning bull. The fans are also important because they have to agree to the contest, otherwise it will have to be called off. If there is the slightest doubt in the mind of either owner the contest must similarly be called off. That is because if it proceeds against the wishes of one party then it will result in disaster.⁴⁴⁴

Both sides having agreed we then shake hands and go off to prepare the bulls for the big day. Depending on the popularity of the bulls, word will often spread very quickly and everyone in the neighboring villages starts to anticipate the big day. They look at it as a gentleman’s agreement, and not really a contest as such and the money is only a motivator and not really the main aim; often the winning owner will spend most of the prize money entertaining his friends and village mates after the victory. It is something we do because of the love, and not really a business where you expect to make money”. Preparing a bull for the fight is a craft shrouded in mystery, averred by Geoffrey Anguba.⁴⁴⁵

As for respondent, Vincent Seta, on the eve of the fight, he prepares a special concoction called *lunyasi* (traditional herbs), wraps it in a maize leaf and asks a favorite son or someone from the family to feed it to the bull at dawn. On the content of the *lunyasi*, Peter Khayati retorted that: “Everyone has special herbs in their family

⁴⁴⁴Ibid

⁴⁴⁵Geoffrey Anguba (26 years), Oral Interview, at Shinyalu, on 06/12/2022

or clan that they have traditionally used to prepare the bulls”, is my entire host will divulge.⁴⁴⁶

Aggrey Wangula noted that, when one of the bulls has been badly gored it is usually led off the arena straight to the abattoir. If the wounds are less severe then it will be led back to its pen to undergo treatment at the hands of traditional herbalists. Sometimes the owner donates the meat to the festivities that are to follow as he comes to terms with his loss. As for the victorious bull, regardless of its injuries, it will still have to be paraded through the villages on the way home to the accompaniment of thunderous singing and dancing.⁴⁴⁷

According to focused group discussion of bull owners, this study was informed that before the bull goes out to a contest, it is important for the wife of the owner to strike it on the back with her *leso* (wrap skirt), uttering the words, “Go and fight bravely and bring back victory”, so that when the bull faces its opponent, it will remain steadfast as it has received the backing and blessings of its owner and the fans accompanying it to the fight.⁴⁴⁸ “If you are successful it is very important to share the prize money with the fans”, said one of the veteran bull owner in the focus group discussion. You have to make them know that you appreciate the support they gave you. He continued by saying that;

Also, when you return home after the victory you have to hand over a portion of the prize money to your wife and tell her this is what our bull brought us. As the person responsible for cleaning the cow pens every morning, she also needs to share in the success.

⁴⁴⁶Vincent Seta (29 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Malinya, on 01/12/2022.

⁴⁴⁷Aggrey Wangula (31 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Ileho on 02/12/2022

⁴⁴⁸Focus Group Discussion, Bull owners in Khayega, on 11/12/2022

Otherwise, if you spend the money alone, next time you take out the bull to another contest you will lose.⁴⁴⁹

On the day of the fight the fans assemble in the homestead early in the morning, sing and dance *isukuti* rhythms around while the bull is still tethered in its pen. The singing is mostly in praise of the bull and also to encourage it to be victorious. Thereafter the owner untethers the bull and they head out in a dancing procession.⁴⁵⁰

Alfred Munala, also gives the negative side of the bull fighting. He reiterates that in the recent past, the bulls have killed many people, especially in Khayega and Malinya areas.⁴⁵¹ On this matter, he posits loudly that;

Usually, the deaths happen after a fight. At that time a bull is wild, and the fans are supposed to give it space and keep to a distance. Usually, the vanquished bull will be running away from the fury of the opponent's horns. At that time if a spectator happens to be in the way it will gore him and toss him in the air. There are some that will simply single out one of the spectators and go for him. Sometimes this is caused by the herbs that will have been fed to the bull before the fight. There's a famous herb here in Idakho called *msala kwi isimbwa* (herbal treatment for dogs). If you give that to a bull it can even turn on the owner, becoming wild and unmanageable. There are also some that can be given cannabis, and others not, depending on how they react to it. There are those that you will give bhang and they become stupefied instead of wild. And others will do the opposite. It all depends on how you have conditioned your bull and how you treat it.⁴⁵²

Alfred Munala informed the researcher that if a bull were to trample a spectator to death, it would be immediately killed in the arena and its meat would be distributed to the spectators. This was an action that could not be entertained by both the bull owner and the spectators in the fighting arena.

⁴⁴⁹Ibid

⁴⁵⁰Ibid

⁴⁵¹ Alfred Munala (63 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, on 20/12/2022

⁴⁵²Ibid

Another stunning revelation from Alfred Lunala was on the taboos and customs associated with bullfighting among the Abakakamega people. For example, women who are going through their period are not allowed to approach the bull because they are considered filthy. It is thought to be a terrible omen that could portend defeat. This also applies to intoxicated people because the bulls might become dangerously irrational.⁴⁵³ This taboo is not just for traditionalist but even the some believers discourage women undergoing menstruation not to partake into church activities as they are termed unclean. The part of the Mosaic Law that pertains to a woman's menstrual cycle is Leviticus which says, "When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period will last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening. Anything she lies on during her period will be unclean, and anything she sits on will be unclean. Anyone who touches her bed will be unclean; they must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening. Anyone who touches anything she sits on will be unclean; they must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening."⁴⁵⁴

The same chapter in Leviticus also designates other conditions as "unclean" a man who has an emission of semen and a man or a woman who has an unusual bodily discharge. It's good to remember that being "clean" or "unclean" was a ceremonial designation governing the rituals of worship. None of the laws concerning bodily discharges concerned morality, and being "unclean" did not brand one a sinner.⁴⁵⁵

Another concern that emerged during the oral interview schedules was at whether the bull fighting sport was only to remain the Abakakamega activity. On this matter, there

⁴⁵³ Alfred Munala (63 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, on 20/12/2022

⁴⁵⁴ Leviticus 15:19–23

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid

was a positive reaction to show that there was indeed a plan to expand the game outside Kakamega. It had even been tried earlier on in the recent past under the patronage of the current senator of Kakamega, Boni Khalwale. Antone Luvembe while interrogated by the study postulated that:

In 2008 there was a spirited campaign by a section of parliamentarians from western Kenya to bring the sport to Nairobi. Fronted by the then Kakamega County senator, Dr. Boni Khalwale, an ardent supporter and a regular participant in the sport, they argued that it had the potential to attract cultural tourists to the western Kenya region and generate revenue. But their attempt to bring the bulls to face it out at Nyayo National Stadium in the heart of the capital faced stiff opposition from local animal rights groups and activists.⁴⁵⁶

Some of the opposing legislators termed it a barbaric sport that should not be encouraged in this modern age. Some of the villagers in Western Kenya were also against taking the sport out of the region where it is traditionally held and the plans were eventually dropped. Although the revenues that could be generated by the sport have never been quantified, there is no doubt that bullfighting has a huge following.

This study realized that, the debate had highlighted the potential of the sport as a cultural heritage and social function in the western Kenya region. It is on this ground that succeeded in attracting funding to the tune of 12.5 million shillings from the county government to develop Malinya Stadium in Ikolomani Constituency for bullfighting.⁴⁵⁷ This study notes that slight achievement and development of developing bullfighting in Kakamega remains to be seen whether subsequent governments will support the full development of this traditional sport to attract the

⁴⁵⁶Antone Luvembe (55 years), Oral Interview, at Musoli, on 29/12/2022

⁴⁵⁷S. Gazemba, (2020). Unleash the Bulls! at: <https://www.theelephant.info/culture/2020/03/02/unleash-the-bulls/>

much needed tourism revenue to the country and conserve this age-old culture of the Abakakamega people.

The study further was interested to know the cost of a fighting bull. Derrick Amaita informed this study that indeed quality fighting bulls do not come cheap, averaging anywhere between 100,000 and 200,000 shillings at the local livestock market depending on how well-built they are. He added that some people opt to acquire a fighting bull from the cattle market and then groom it for the contest. According to this respondent, he finds this is a huge gamble. The old hands like himself prefer to buy a young bull that they have observed fighting in the ring, and then fatten it themselves for a bigger contest in the future. That way you do not risk placing your money on a loser.⁴⁵⁸ He further posits that while on the process of acquiring or selling a fighting bull, it is also important to consult the fans when the owner wants to sell his fighting bull.⁴⁵⁹ James Shilaka cited a recent case where the owner of a popular fighting bull from the village nicknamed Nasa was sold off by the owner without the consent of the fans. The fans were so enraged they burned the special uniforms that they wear on the day of the fight.⁴⁶⁰ James Shilaka also enabled the study to know the prizes that are normally placed during the fight. He says that, the lowest wager that can be placed on a good fighting bull is 7,000 shillings but those in the top league command anywhere between 20,000 and 30,000 shillings. It was interesting to note that, even bull fighting is in different cadres of the sport compared to football, rugby, basketball among other notable games in the world. This money is handed over to the

⁴⁵⁸Derrick Amaita (40 years), Oral Interview at Iguhu, on 27/12/2022

⁴⁵⁹Ibid

⁴⁶⁰James Shilaka (40 years), Oral Interview, at Iobo in Shinyalu, on 10/12/2022

minder of the bull before the fight. It is only if his bull emerges victorious that the owner will take the money and decide how to share it out amongst his team.⁴⁶¹

Does the bullfighting sport in Abakakamega have some economic implications to both the owner and the society at large? This question crisscrossed the mind of the researcher frequently. Again, when the same inquiry was made to Alfred Munala, alluded that:

This sport can bring in a lot of money; the problem is with the people who organize contests. Often, they are dishonest, and want to exploit the contest to make more money than that given to the owners of the fighting bulls. When that happens, we pull out our bulls and tell them to take their contest elsewhere.⁴⁶²

In the post-colonial era to date, the most associated politician with bullfighting is Boniface Khalwale, the senator of Kakamega (2013-2017, 2022-2027). Philip Shitsukhane further averred that, the escalation of bullfighting has not only attracted the attention of Bonface Khalwale, but also the county government.⁴⁶³ Initially, bullfighting was just done in any open field that the organizers could decide. Today, the county government has made an effort to support the sport by a stadium. Indeed, this study found that, in Kakamega, a stadium committed to bullfighting has been erected. This stadium is located in Malinya in Ikolomani constituency. It was built under the support of the government of Kenya which contributed 12.5 million Kenya shillings, as recognition of the bullfighting activity. Furthermore, there are other smaller arenas for smaller fights that exists in many different locations such as Murhanda, Ilesi, Musoli, Malimili and Iguhu that host bullfights on weekly or monthly basis awaiting the annual festival, held at Malinya stadium that is a really big

⁴⁶¹Ibid

⁴⁶²Alfred Munala (63 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, on 20/12/2022

⁴⁶³Phillip Shitsukhane (45 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Khayega, on 28/11/2022

event.⁴⁶⁴ Furthermore, this study found that; indeed, Khayega town also often serves to host the activity which is now taken as a sport.

Bullfighting became an attraction not only for the ordinary people, but also politicians who used this sport to attract multitudes of people in order to sell their agendas and get votes. A good example of political leaders to embrace bullfighting as a strategy in people mobilization in late 20th century was Boniface Khalwale, from Ikolomani.⁴⁶⁵ He went ahead to mobilize for funds to build a stadium at Malinya which one of the modern bullfighting arenas in Kenya. To support this, Seligson averred that bullfighting is not only a benefit to bull owners but for the nation at large. Therefore, the Government's support is vital⁴⁶⁶

Political culture theory was applicable in explaining and accounting for the role of politicians to bullfighting among the Abakakamega. The researcher was able to align the role bullfighting plays in connecting bullfighting attendances to politicians. Therefore, politicians among the Abakakamega who are interested in votes, bank on this culture by attending and addressing them in order to sell their agendas and win votes at the end of the day.⁴⁶⁷

In addition, though this political culture theory, the study found out that, bullfighting has further attracted the attention of the County Government of Kakamega in building of Stadia in these sub-counties. The investigator using this theory was able to conclude that the major reason for this is to make bullfighters happy and help encourage people among the Abakakamega to support County Government functions

⁴⁶⁴Ibid

⁴⁶⁵Bonface Munanga (48 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Khayega, on 27/11/22

⁴⁶⁶M.A. Seligson. (2002). The Renaissance of Political Culture or The Renaissance of the Ecological Fallacy? *Comp. Polit.* 34(3), pp.273–292.

⁴⁶⁷S. Welch. (2013). *The Political Culture Theory*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, pp. 48-71

in return. This is a political move that was able to be explained by political culture theory.

2.3.6 How bullfighting competition is organized among the Abakakamega

Among the Abakakamega, bullfighting competitions are organized as vibrant events that showcase the strength, skill, and cultural significance of bullfighting. Linus Abung'ana notes that each bull represents a particular village within the county as well as the village it comes from.

Linus Abung'ana attested that bull owners carefully select and groom their bulls for the competition. Bulls are chosen based on their size, strength, agility, and fighting ability. Owners invest time and resources in training and preparing their bulls for the competition, ensuring they are in prime condition.⁴⁶⁸ According to him, bullfighting competitions are usually scheduled as part of larger cultural festivals or events. The local community, in collaboration with the organizers, determines the venue, date, and logistics of the event. This includes setting up the arena, ensuring appropriate seating arrangements.⁴⁶⁹

Josephat Matekwa added that bullfighting competitions often embody historical rivalries between different clans within the Abakakamega community.⁴⁷⁰ Bulls from different clans face off against each other, representing the pride and strength of their respective clans. The competition fosters a sense of identity, community bonding, and friendly rivalry between clans.

This study found that, Linus Abung'ana and Josephat Matekwa were in agreement that, bullfighting competitions typically involve multiple rounds or bouts. Bulls

⁴⁶⁸Linus Abungana, (48 Years) Oral Interview, at his home in Shisasari, on 1/12/2022

⁴⁶⁹Ibid

⁴⁷⁰Josphat Matekwa, (50 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilala, on 9/12/2022

compete against each other, with winners progressing to the next round. The competition follows a ranking system and the overall winner may be crowned as the champion bull. The ranking system helps determine the most successful and dominant bulls, adding a competitive element to the event. The competition starts from the village to clan levels, sub-location levels, Location levels, Ward level and finally community or constituency levels. In this, the winning bull is announced at every level in each category as they progress to another level for completion. These ideas were aligned well with Schulz, Andrew denoted in his work that bullfighting is a culture that when well organized attracts multitude of fans and competition cannot be stopped. He added that bullfighting suits well when bullfighting completion is hierarchical.⁴⁷¹As it continues to grow, it will even attract County level competition such as Vihiga and Kakamega. Bullfighting in Vihiga is also growing as well as Bungoma, towards Busia.

In addition, Matekwa reported that, bullfighting competitions draw a large crowd of enthusiastic spectators. Community members actively engage by cheering for their preferred bulls or clans, creating an electric atmosphere. Spectators may place bets on the outcome of the fights, adding excitement and a sense of involvement to the competition.⁴⁷² Bullfighting competitions are celebrated as an integral part of the Abakakamega cultural heritage. They serve as occasions for cultural celebration, community bonding, and the preservation of traditions.⁴⁷³ These events often feature music, dance, traditional attire, and other cultural performances, enriching the overall experience for participants and spectators.

⁴⁷¹A. Schulz. (2008). "Moors and the Bullfight: History and National Identity in Goya's "Tauromaquia"". *The Art Bulletin*. 90 (2): pp.195–217.

⁴⁷²Linus Abung'ana, (48 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shisasari, on 01/12/2022

⁴⁷³Josphat Matekwa, (50 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ilala, on 9/12/2022

it is important to note that the organization of bullfighting competitions among the Abakakamega may vary in specific details and practices. The summary above provides a general overview of how bullfighting competitions are typically organized, emphasizing the cultural significance, community involvement, and competitive spirit that characterize these events.

Articulation theory has been of great help in formulation of these findings. This is because, the theory analyzes the interconnectedness between different actors, institutions, and cultural practices involved in organizing bullfighting events among the Abakakamega community. Furthermore, it sheds light on the power dynamics within the bullfighting industry and how economic interests, political elites, and cultural authorities influence its organization.⁴⁷⁴ It examines the discourses and narratives that shape the organization of bullfighting, including how it is framed, discussed, and represented in society. It situates bullfighting within its social context, considering legal regulations, public opinion, economic interests, tourism, and social norms that influence its organization. It acknowledges that the organization of bullfighting is subject to change and examines historical developments, social transformations, and cultural shifts that have influenced its organization over time.

By employing articulation theory, the researcher has gained a comprehensive understanding of how bullfighting is organized within society among the Abakakamega considering the interplay of interconnections, power dynamics, cultural discourses, social context, and historical factors.

⁴⁷⁴B. Flyvbjerg, (2001). *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), p.160

2.3.7 The use of *isukuti* in bullfighting

During the research, the use of *isukuti* in bullfighting emerged. Aggrey Wangula acknowledged that, in any bullfight, *isukuti* dance breaks the silence. Aggrey explained that *isukuti* dance is a traditional celebrating performance practiced by the Isukha and Idakho communities, which takes the form of a fast-paced, energetic and passionate dance accompanied by drumming and singing.⁴⁷⁵

Hannington Atsali informed the study that among the Abakakamega, *isukuti* dance is involved in community opportunities such as wedding, funerals, commemorations, inauguration and even in bullfighting culture to express the excitement of the participants through dancing.⁴⁷⁶ Therefore, on this background the researcher found out that *isukuti* dance helps the bullfighters, fans and all the participants during the cultural practice at large to express their happiness and feeling through dancing and singing. In addition, the songs involved during this *isukuti* dance are used to give praise to the bull owners, the families, clans and communities behind the bull. The study also noted through Godfrey Anguba that, the bulls among the Abakakamega are introduced to *isukuti* beats at a tender age which make them get used to it. For this case, it serves as an indicator to the bull that it is time to; fight, it is being celebrated, just to mention.

2.4 Naming of Bulls among the Abakakamega

This study further was interested in knowing how bulls are identified. It had realized that they possess names. The point of interest was how they earn those names.

Another Key informant, Gabriel Ambani, retorted that;

The bull is given dangerously sounding names such as Thunderbolt, Simba (Kiswahili for lion), or

⁴⁷⁵ Aggrey Wangula (37 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ileho, on 2/12/2022

⁴⁷⁶ Hannington Atsali (58 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Sigalagala, on 04/11/2022

internationally dreaded names of individuals such as Osama (of the infamous Al Qaeda). Of course, other names may be chosen of well-known soccer players, or film actors, or famed leaders, all to attract the support of the spectators. The fight itself could be dubbed a match between Arsenal and Manchester United soccer teams in the English premier League, or Barcelona versus Real Madrid in the Spanish La Liga. Hours before the fight, the ‘candidates for the fight’ (as the animals identified for the match are referred to), are sometimes fed on traditional liquor, or made to smell blood, or exposed to a whiff or two of marijuana (referred to as ‘weed’), all in the effort to make it more brave and more savage.⁴⁷⁷

Giving bulls names like Osama Bin Laden, Saddam, Amin, or Gaddafi, according to Gabriel Ambani, reflected their personalities. It served as proof that the bull could harm an adversary just like the aforementioned person did. Among the traits Osama displayed were exploitative, fearless, domineering or commanding, and conscientious, obedient traits. He was dreaded by powerful nations since he was known to have killed and injured people. Similar to this, a bull's name implies that it has the potential to cause harm and should therefore be feared. Great football players from elite teams like Manchester United, Chelsea, and Arsenal are also honored with the names of the bulls. Great football players from elite teams like Manchester United, Chelsea, and Arsenal are also honored with the names of the bulls. These players are well renowned for being excellent strikers who score frequently. Similar to how a bull bearing their names is thought to represent the same traits and abilities.⁴⁷⁸

This study found that, the trainer at this point begins to fret in pre-bout rituals. He sprays it with different concoctions. Furthermore, Gabriel Ambani added that, the bull trainer goes ahead to speak to the animal as if it were a human being, heaping all the clan praises on it. The clan’s ancestral spirits are invoked to protect it, not necessarily

⁴⁷⁷Gabriel Ambani, (72 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Museno, 29/11/2022

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid

from harm but from defeat.⁴⁷⁹ The animal in fact gets excited, begins to pace and snort as the fans who have gathered to assist in the preparations cheer.⁴⁸⁰

According to Arthur Muchela, bulls were initially named after prominent people or heroes globally.⁴⁸¹ It is not only limited to the heroes of the Abakakamega. It is important to note that, in modern days, bulls are named after society's leaders.⁴⁸² For instance, among the bulls that are found in Kakamega today include; Mandela, Raila, Ruto, Moi, Kenyatta among others. On top of this, naming of these bulls is symbolic in that they portray the characters of the person named. They are named after various natural happenings, for example, Corona, Covid, Earthquake, Tsunami, which makes the bullfighting as an event be part of the global and its activities.⁴⁸³ Apart from naming of the bulls, during the fight, there are some key things that are observed. For instance, the arena should be totally safe. No holes, trenches and stones that can easily harm the Bullock during the fight. Moreover, the size of the bull, age and weight is considered for the two bulls to fight. This is done to ensure that ethics of bullfighting competition ethics are observed. Also, the distance travelled by the bull to the arena and its history is another big consideration that is put in place.⁴⁸⁴ Due to these bulls' weight, some cannot travel longer distance. They are therefore forced to be transported to the fighting arena to avoid fatigue. This is mostly done for those bulls going for away game of more than ten kilometers. In addition, on arrival, these bulls are given time to rest for some minutes before fighting in order to regain energy.

⁴⁷⁹Ibid

⁴⁸⁰Ibid

⁴⁸¹Arthur Muchela (50 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Isulu, on 31/11/2022

⁴⁸²T.J. Mitchell.(1986). *Op. Cit.*, p.395.

⁴⁸³Peter Khayati (72 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Sigalagala, on 31/11/2022

⁴⁸⁴Ibid

2.5 Beliefs in the use of herbs and communication with spirits among the Abakakamega

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega is a sport that cannot be separated from social practices, beliefs, rituals and involvement of spirits since time immemorial. Folk knowledge may be interpreted to mean that which has been harvested after hard labor and the result of which is usually guardedly kept in store to alleviate current and future human problems and food security.⁴⁸⁵ Wisdom is related to experience, skill, self-control, and understanding of the community's goods, depending on age. That is why the custodians of this wisdom were old people from whom it was disseminated to the new generations during the normal socialization processes and apprenticeship.⁴⁸⁶ Ecological knowledge existed among the Bisukha and the Bidakho but under various descriptions. They referred to it as "Knowledge of the world" *Bucheli bwi shibala* or man's knowledge that was not common.⁴⁸⁷

According to them, their knowledge comprised witchcraft, healing, rainmaking, communication with spirits and identification of good soils, animals to be hunted, the best grass, identification of totem animals, and the like. It was vested in the traditional leaders-cum elders, who guarded and transmitted the socio-economic and political values system. It was also vested in the old people because they had interacted with the environment longer, hence had accumulated experience. Some of this knowledge was believed to be inspired by the ancestral spirits-*Misambwa*, making some people talented in mysteries of the environment. Others simply inherited it from their

⁴⁸⁵K. J. Olupona. (2014). 'Gods, ancestors, and spirit beings', *African Religions: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions. New York; online edn, Oxford Academic, pp. 34-44.

⁴⁸⁶S. R., Hemer & A. Dundon. (2016). *Op. Cit.*, p.56

⁴⁸⁷K. Muchanga. (1998). *Op. Cit.*, p. 74

grandparents.⁴⁸⁸ Sakwa Peter supported this idea by adding that the elders were much respected in the community.⁴⁸⁹

Through apprenticeship, the young were taught various skills in healing diseases and performing various functions. The practice of herbal treatment was 'sacred'. It was an art for specific family groups, and a terrible disaster to attempt such art without the prerequisite training and coronation rituals. This was to prevent the misuse of such skills in society. For this reason, the plants identified as medicinal, more so for bulls or all the animals were preserved through an appropriate taboo system, as explained above.⁴⁹⁰ In the apprenticeship process, the candidates were thoroughly trained through testing, obedience, endurance, and willingness to work hard. Norms related to each knowledge were taught, and a token of appreciation like a hen, goat, or sheep could be given in return".⁴⁹¹ Peter Khumwa Isabwa, a bull owner and a herbalist, commented that traditional laws relating to use of herbs in bullfighting were administered by the elders as posited by Muchanga above.⁴⁹² Isabwa's statement supports Kizito Muchanga's ideas. For example, the elders could curse or force one to drink a poisonous substance from *indalandalwa* (*Datura stramonium*), locally known as *Shilulu*, in case of misuse of this knowledge. This would be administered to deviants in society, especially those who had done great harm. Therefore, traditional ecological knowledge among the Bisukha and the Bidakho was holistic. It

⁴⁸⁸Ibid

⁴⁸⁹Peter Isabwa (83), Oral Interview, at his home, at Sigalagala, on 27/12/22

⁴⁹⁰Ibid

⁴⁹¹Ibid

⁴⁹²Peter Isabwa,(83), Oral Interview, at his home,at Sigalagala,on 27/12/22

encompassed all elements of matter which were viewed as interconnected and could not be understood in isolation.⁴⁹³

Isabwa informed this study that bullfighting culture and use of herbs works together. For bulls to be strong enough to fight, to make them have a good appetite to feed, to make those harmful to humans be friendly, for one to be able to speak to a bull like a human being, herbs must be used.⁴⁹⁴ He claimed that, during the precolonial period, these herbs were found in the forest. However, today due to scarcity of lands, some of these herbs are grown within the compounds of bull owners or old men within the community. Isabwa further alluded that, for bull keeping to be manageable, bull owners must be conversant with these herbs.⁴⁹⁵ Isabwa, informed this study that he is a herbalist, a skill he inherited from his forefathers. According to him, bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is beyond bulls' just locking heads but a practice of what they inherited from their ancestors. In this case, he alluded that bullfighting culture is associated with families with such history and most of them also have a history of herbalism. For those families with bullfighting but lack such history, this bullfighting culture does not last in their families.⁴⁹⁶

Abakakamega also have beliefs in the traditional religion. They practice animism where they believe in a supernatural power that organizes and animates the material universe. Additionally, they practice Spiritism where they believe in the survival of spirits after the death of the body, and primarily in the possibility of communicating with them, either casually or deliberately through evocations or spontaneously. Up to now many of the Abakakamega still continue to give honor to the ancestral spirits but

⁴⁹³K. Muchanga.(1998). *Op. Cit.*, p. 74-80

⁴⁹⁴Peter Isabwa,(83), Oral Interview, at his home,at Sigalagala,on 27/12/22

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid

there has been a strong Christian witness in the recent past. Yet many mix Christianity with traditional religion such as worshipping of ancestral spirits. The Ancestral cult among the Abakakamega existed even before the arrival and spread of Christian missions in Western Kenya. The belief in existence of ancestral spirits occupied the core of indigenous culture among Abaluyia sub-groups.⁴⁹⁷

During pre-colonial period, the concept of ancestor worship and Supreme Being were so closely related that it became difficult to identify the object of worship among the Abaluyia sub-groups. Religiously, there seemed to be some degree of heterogeneity for most of the Bantu of Kenya having ancestor cult related with the belief in the Supreme Being.⁴⁹⁸ Sakwa, a key informant to this study, submitted that the coming of Bantu into Western Kenya introduced a cult based on ancestor veneration with fixed abodes and shrines. Therefore, the ancestral cult was the stronghold among the Abakakamega. For a man among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya to be able to talk to bulls, one should have a connection or ability to communicate with the ancestral spirits

The ancestral cult among Abakakamega involved the worship of the spirits of dead agnostic-a person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God. Members of the family lineage and renowned clan leaders.⁴⁹⁹ Belief in ancestor veneration was based on the pneumatological consciousness which posits that the spirits of the departed had a continuous influence over the daily welfare of the living. The people who were assigned the responsibility of communicating with ancestors were people of old age who were believed to have

⁴⁹⁷KNA/NN/22/1:1926: Clans and sub-tribes of Abaluyia.

⁴⁹⁸I. A. Clarke, (2000). *Worship and Identity: Ritual, Interpretation, and Social Normalization in the Malaysian Chinese Community Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol.37(2), pp.201-403

⁴⁹⁹K. Muchanga. (1998). *Op. Cit.*, p.90

experience and an understanding of such activities. Ancestors were believed not to cause bad happenings but if angered they would withdraw, letting the calamity strike the community. Throughout pre-colonial period, the Abakakamega worshiped agnatic deceased *baakuka* (forefathers), at the homestead ancestral shrine.⁵⁰⁰

A bull owner among the Abakakamega can be seen talking to the bull as if it were a human being. Before the bull gets out going and fighting, the bull owner or an old man within the family must come to the bull and talk to it to bring victory. The sacred altars were dedicated to the worship of ancestors and the Supreme Being among the Abakakamega. This transformation was an outcome of the contact between Abaluhya and the Kalenjin.

Ancestral spirits, *misambwa* (spirits), were people who died long ago and were considered to be the living dead for a period of about four to five generations and qualified to be considered as spirits. These ancestors were believed to reincarnate in the personalities of the offspring.⁵⁰¹ Their benevolence function was to guide, protect and enhance the realization of the fullness of life of a person, and in this case, they make the bull get possessed, hence able to communicate with the living, possess power and strength in return to respond with victory. Hierarchically, ancestors followed the Supreme Being and deities. They jealousy-maintained discipline in the families and would inflict serious punishment on those members whose behavior threatened the existence and progress of the entire family. Among the Abakakamega,

⁵⁰⁰KNA/NN/23/2:1930-1935: Early history of origin and growth of Luhya people

⁵⁰¹I. A., Clarke. (2000). Worship and Identity: Ritual, Interpretation, and Social Normalization in the Malaysian Chinese Community *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol.15(2), pp.273-295

when ancestors were not happy, they could cause loss and to some extent make the bull violence, leading to death.⁵⁰²

From Ian Clarke's ideas, the study found out that belief in supernatural powers permeated most spheres of indigenous lifestyle of the Abakakamega with events attributed to mystical forces, magic, witchcraft, curses, spirits and sorcery. Ancestral cult was the main strength of indigenous religion among the Abakakamega, with the dead revered much more than the living, and believed to wield both positive and negative powers.⁵⁰³ This was a belief that underpinned various sacrificial offerings to appease ancestral spirits, *misambwa*. *Misambwa* were believed to take part in the activities of the community in the world of the living. Offerings were therefore made to appease the ancestors.

Abakakamega performed rituals with the purpose of preserving natural harmony among themselves and their ancestors.⁵⁰⁴ Throughout the pre-colonial period, the Abaluyia's main object of veneration at both family and clan level ancestors. The ancestors were venerated at the homestead, ancestral shrine and at clan level on the clan ritual fire. In relation to bullfighting, bulls are taken to such places, spoken to by old men, and herbs given to them. Ancestral worship took a more definitive form and purpose at the family level. Family members supplicated by addressing *misambwa* of the renowned members of the extended family. Ancestor veneration promoted good health as well as the welfare of the family and clan at large. While performing various

⁵⁰² Ibid

⁵⁰³ I. A., Clarke. (2000). Worship and Identity: Ritual, Interpretation, and Social Normalization in the Malaysian Chinese Community *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol.15(2), pp.273-295

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid

sacrifices, Abamarama prayed to Were, God, as Khakaba, the giver of life and all things.⁵⁰⁵

The deceased persons, who transformed into *misambwa*, lived at places known as, *mmalindwa*. *Misambwa* also domiciled inside the grave, around the hut especially at the kingpost, in leaves, in caves, on big trees, within the homestead and in thick forests. Therefore, anytime Abakakamega wanted to perform any activity such as bullfighting, they went to these places to pray to these spirits. These spirits transformed themselves into elements they wished. They communicated through dreams, appeared as apparitions, talked strange language, laughed, shouted and cried. Spirits that caused calamities appeared in the form of ghosts- *bishiemo*, distinguished as cats, snakes, dogs, owls, hawks, making human sounds. They were hurt when people talked bad of them and felt pain if anyone manhandled the cadaver in which they resided. They felt hungry and thirsty, a fact that led to libations.⁵⁰⁶

Being done immediately the dead was buried. By the end of nineteenth century, the Abakakamega still respected the ancestors due to their power and ability to make and destroy lives of people. They were believed to bring prosperity among the living especially when they were given offerings according to their desires. They were also believed to be older than the living and traditionally the younger people respected the older ones. These elders had power to extend curses and blessings to the younger people. Ancestors were also believed to be closer to God with respect to their ages. Ancestral veneration among the Abakakamega was demonstrated through various ways. From this view, the study found out that, Abakakamega bull owners are able to

⁵⁰⁵KNANN/22/1:1926: Clans and sub-tribes of Abaluhya, pp. 11-16

⁵⁰⁶I. A. Clarke.(2022). Worship and Identity: Ritual, Interpretation, and Social Normalization in the Malaysian Chinese Community *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol.37(3), pp. I-IV, 405-578

communicate well with bulls due to their belief in *misambwa* (spirits) and the used of African herbs.

As a result, the study came to the conclusion that Abakakamega are able to communicate with spirits or ancestors and call on them to participate in their bullfighting activities in order to bring about their success. They believe as well that the bulls' spirits enter them, making it possible for Abakakamega to speak to the bulls as if they were humans. The bulls then receive strength and power from the spirits, who then triumph. In return, after victory, Abakakamega appease the spirits through sacrifices, ensuring the fans goes away by appreciating them either by a hen, cents or shillings (depending on the period-pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial).

2.6 Communication with Bulls

From Francis Mwavishi, there is a unique way in which bulls are communicated to. First, when the bull is young, it is taken to a fighting arena and tethered away from the main fighting bulls.⁵⁰⁷ This makes it hear the songs sung during the event. This makes it slowly absorb it, get used to and witness what is going on.⁵⁰⁸ Then, when it is at its feeding place, it is introduced to the nature of bullfighting by beating drums and other relevant gadgets where necessary.⁵⁰⁹ This arouses it whenever it comes across this kind of songs/music hence accelerating its spirit to fight. This is because it is often trained to understand the songs. Also, the common songs are sung to enhance a condition reflex action whenever the bull hears it. When it is ripe, it is then trained to fight slowly by slowly with the bulls of its equal.⁵¹⁰ Francis clarified to this study that Isukha and Idakho people also connect this communication with the spirits as

⁵⁰⁷Francis Mwavishi (51 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shibuye, on 1/12/2022

⁵⁰⁸T.J. Mitchell. (1986). *Op. Cit.*, p.395.

⁵⁰⁹Ibid

⁵¹⁰Ibid

discussed in the above chapter on Abakakamega believing in the existence of spirits. They believe that when they call upon their forefathers to possess these bulls, then they are able to talk to them just like human beings. To add on that, they have traditional herbs they give to bulls believed to make them communicate like human beings too.⁵¹¹

Miller in his work informed this study that, bullfighting in Mexico is a “highly ordered structural and tightly controlled ritual drama”.⁵¹² His work helped this study to conclude that bullfighting among the Abakakamega is highly structured with different age groups attached to specific roles, taking care of the bull, preparation for a fight, during a fight and after a fight with rituals, taboos, beliefs attached to this cultural sport. Bullfighting among the Abakakamega is said to be a practice that is inherited from one generation to another, either from the patriarchal or matriarchal depending on which side is strongly involved in the bullfighting culture.

Articulation of modes of production theory assisted the researcher to unravel the assessment of the origin and development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. For instance, articulation theory has examined how different elements are interconnected within bullfighting cultural practice among the Abakakamega. In the case of the Isukha people, it has involved identifying and analyzing the interconnections between bullfighting and other cultural practices, traditions, social structures, and historical events within the community. This includes considering the relationships between bullfighting and aspects such as folklore, rituals, social organization, and economic activities.

⁵¹¹Francis Mwavishi (51 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Shibuye, on 1/12/2022

⁵¹²A.D, Miller. (1961). *Matadors of Mexico*. Globe, AZ: D. S. King, pp. 70-89

Articulation of modes of production theory has helped in recognizing the role of power relations in shaping cultural practices among the Abakakamega. It has helped in assessing how power dynamics influence the origin and development of bullfighting culture within the Isukha community. This involves exploring the influence of social elites, traditional authorities, and cultural gatekeepers in determining the significance, meanings, and practices associated with bullfighting. It also considers how power is exercised and negotiated among different stakeholders involved in the promotion and preservation of bullfighting culture.

Articulation modes of production theory also have helped in emphasizing situating cultural practices within their historical context in the Abakakamega community. When assessing the origin and development of bullfighting culture among the Isukha people, it has involved examining historical events, socio-cultural changes, and external influences like pressure from colonial masters to abandon wrestling that have contributed to the emergence and evolution of bullfighting. This includes considering factors such as cultural exchanges, colonial encounters, and interactions with neighboring communities.

In addition, the Articulation modes of production theory considered how cultural practices are reproduced over time. It has helped in assessing how bullfighting culture has been transmitted and sustained within the Isukha community. This involves exploring processes of socialization, education, and the transmission of knowledge and practices related to bullfighting across generations. It also considered the role of cultural institutions, family traditions, and community practices in perpetuating bullfighting culture.

Articulation theory has helped in examining the symbolic meanings and representations associated with bullfighting culture. In the context of the Isukha community, it helped in assessing the cultural significance and interpretations attached to bullfighting, including its symbolism, rituals, and relationship with identity and community cohesion. It also considered the discourses and narratives surrounding bullfighting within the community.

Through the application of articulation theory, the researcher has been able to assess the origin and development of bullfighting culture in the Isukha community by considering the interconnections, power dynamics, historical context, cultural reproduction, and symbolic meanings associated with bullfighting. This approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of how bullfighting has emerged, evolved, and been sustained within the cultural fabric of the Isukha people.

2.7 Animal Rights During Bullfighting among the Abakakamega

Bullfighting culture in Spain, Portugal, Mexico has remained to be an encounter between a human fighter and bull.⁵¹³ At the end, the bulls are killed where the crowd celebrates the *matador* to an extent of cutting the bull's tail and the ears as trophies to the *matador*.⁵¹⁴

International condemnation of this deadly spectacle continues to grow.⁵¹⁵ The Spanish region of Catalonia banned the so-called 'sport' after officials were presented with the signatures of 18000 residents demanding an end to the carnage. From 2008-2013,

⁵¹³G. Marvin, (1988). *Op. Cit.*, p.90

⁵¹⁴D. M. Alvaro. (2011). *Op. Cit.*, p.25

⁵¹⁵G. Marvin, (1988). *Op. Cit.*, p.91

attendance in Spanish arenas fell by 40%. In 2012, that figure dropped to fewer than 2000, and in 2013 it was estimated that fewer than 500 bullfighters were held.⁵¹⁶

However as this is continuing in the global countries, the issue of animal rights among the Abakakamega remains silent. As the researcher continued to interrogate with the respondents, bulls die on the bullfighting arenas, they injure each other as horns are sharpened. Under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act 1962, a breach of the anti-cruelty Provisions and the Prohibition on fighting or baiting animals is punishable with a fine and or imprisonment of up to six months.⁵¹⁷ Andrew Isalambo informed this study that, no one among the Abakakamega has been penalized under this Act. Further more, it was noted that even the local administrators take part in bullfighting.⁵¹⁸ From the findings in objective one of this study, bullfighting origins were around abakamega's homestead in the pre-colonial period. It is worth for this study to note that, the leadership of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega, the County government at large need to look into the issue of animal rights. This is noted that 84% of the bulls get injured, 12% of bulls have died, 50% have undergone excessive haemorrhage leading to deaths.⁵¹⁹ It is paradoxical that, despite these experiences noted above, 80% of the Abakakamega are aware of animal rights. 68% believe that nothing can happen even in the event the animal rights are broken. From the aforementioned, the study found out that, animal welfare personnel, social media and livestock officers are not doing much in creating awareness of the law against

⁵¹⁶Ibid., p.91

⁵¹⁷D. M. Alvaro. (2011). *Op. Cit.*, p.26

⁵¹⁸Andrew Isalambo (73 Years), at his home in Museno, on 5th January, 2023.

⁵¹⁹Mercy Namarome Barasa, Eddy Mosoti Mogoa & Gilbert Kirui, (2016). Bullfighting in Western Kenya: A Case Study of a Persistent Practice Despite Existing Legislation on Animal Welfare, Kenya Veterinary Association
<https://www.kenyavetassociation.com> › 2016/04

cruelty to animals among the Isukha and Idakho communities. It emerged to the study that, bulls undergo mental suffering, physical injuries and even death during bullfights. However, access to health services following injuries remains a challenge among the Abakakamega vicinity. The study discovered that, despite knowledge of the law, proponents among the Abakakamega ignore and break the law with impunity-they know there will be no consequences.

2.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter has in depth traced origin of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. The history of bullfighting, from its inception to how it has evolved throughout the entire Abakakamega community, has been covered in detail. In this chapter also, the issue on how bullfighting has been well dealt with. It gave the basis in which this activity is organized and finally how it takes place in a chronological manner. This indicates that this organization has existed from the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras. Furthermore, the chapter shaded light on the rituals and taboos associated to bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya which are strictly adhered to by the participants of bullfighting. This study discovered that, despite of its entertaining nature, bullfighting has some strict rituals that must be observed, and if not observed, the culture of the community will be downgraded hence diluting the nature of the activity and disrespecting the rites that governs bullfighting. To add on this, the chapter also discussed on the naming of bulls. It emerged that, bulls are not just given names anyhow, but they are given according to the trending names, great names in the society and events of the time in the society. Communication with bulls is another thing that the study addressed in this chapter. It popped up that, not everybody can just communicate with bulls. There is a specific group of persons that are closely associated with the bull, who can only communicate

with the bull. Duration in which the bull is required to fight was another fundamental issue. It was noted that, bulls do not have a specific time limit that they should fight. It is until when its stamina has weakened that it stops fighting. Finally, the chapter checked on the future of bullfighting by addressing the continuity of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. This study found that the Abakakamega do not intend to detach themselves with the activity of bullfighting soon. This is because, bullfighting is part of their culture and it is highly in their blood. In the next chapter, the aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega is examined.

CHAPTER THREE
ASPECTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF BULLFIGHTING
AMONG THE ABAKAKAMEGA

3.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses subthemes that helped in handling the second specific objective of the study on aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. These subthemes included: social cultural activities, political mobilization, commercialization, support from local administration, development of taboos and the rituals concerning the dead. Also, the chapter examined responsibility of different ages in this sport, as well as the economic dimension in this culture. Lastly, the evolution of bullfighting from friendship to the use of herbs and the transition from grazing fields to the use of trucks to transport the bulls has been analyzed.

3.1 Social Cultural Activities contributing to growth of bullfighting

3.1.2 Bullfighting as an entertainment

As a social and geographical phenomenon, bullfighting is a form of entertainment based on the confrontation between men and bulls.⁵²⁰ As the study was in a mission to certify this, one of the respondents, Geoffrey Anyoba from Sabane posited that within the scope of contemporary forms of entertainment in Abakakamega, the origins of bullfighting lie in two different sociological realities.⁵²¹ On the one hand, bullfighting is a professional spectacle that takes place in a purpose-built venue for instance in Malinya, the bullring being the most widely-known form. On the other hand, it is a participatory practice that occupies a public space that may be prepared for the

⁵²⁰M. Jean-Baptiste, (2006). The Bull Marks His Territory (Bullfighting Festivities and Territorial Identities in Southwestern Europe and Latin America. In *Annales de géographie* Volume 650, Issue 4, pp. 361-387

⁵²¹Geoffrey Anyoba (26 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Sabane, on 06/12/2022

occasion to some extent. Professional bullfighting includes all those practices where a strict division exists between the specialized performers and the spectators, while in participatory bullfighting the performers and spectators are intermingled.⁵²² There is a strong correlation between the level of professionalism in bullfighting and the level of specialization of the venues where it occurs.⁵²³

3.1.3 Bullfighting and festival events

In the precolonial period among the Abakakamega, bulls are highly honored as they play a greater role in their cultural life. Among the Isukha and Idakho people, famous for the bull fighting, the elders are accorded a befitting send off in what is referred to as *shilembe*, in cases of death. To show respect, bulls are used to palmate a man's grave with soil. For it is believed that in doing so the deceased spirit will rest in peace and if this custom is not followed the deceased soul will haunt the family. However, it imperative to note that, bullfighting is a Kenyan practice and specifically among the Abakakamega of Western. This is well outlined in the Isukha location report of 1957 with multiple social practices that were noted by the colonialists and confirmed that they enhanced unity.

While the study was seeking views of the Abakakamega, one of the bullfighters Vincent Seta, retorted that:

Professional bullfights are a cross between two forms of modern spectacle: sporting event and artistic performance. The forms known as the course *shilembe*, *selebutswa*, *imayio* and *sio* may be seen as forms of sport. The seasons are structured around annual championships that are subdivided into local, regional

⁵²²J. de Boo, & A. Knight, (2005). *Op. Cit.*, p. 450.

⁵²³Ibid

and national competitions, linked by a scoring system that ranks the performance of participants each year.⁵²⁴

According to this respondent, the bullfight, meanwhile, is more like an artistic performance, since evaluation is far more dependent on subjective criteria of interpretation. Furthermore, there are no championships or official rankings run by any form of regulatory body. To remove any doubt about the impossibility of establishing a hierarchy between the performance and sporting aspects, it must be pointed out that spectators pay just as much attention if not more to the style of the performers as to the decisions of the jury. As such, these categories are permeable.

Amkanga Michael, another key respondent to this study, agreed with Douglass Barrie that bullfighting and festival defines a community.⁵²⁵ From Michael the study found out that the ceremonies of *selebutswa* and *sio*, are like “spectacles a caught between two contradictory tendencies, one that leads them to acquire the forms and values of a sport, and another that rejects these.”⁵²⁶ By contrast, participatory bullfighting-related activities hardly ever designate winners, even when their skill and courage is remarked upon, for the glory that may sometimes be accompanied by material rewards.⁵²⁷ There is a particularly strong connection between festivals and bullfighting. In regions with bullfighting-related activities, it is indeed rare for bullfighting not to be part of the festivities of the civil or religious calendars, to the extent that festivals and bulls tend to be assimilated.⁵²⁸

Another festivity that has contributed to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega was the return of the First and Second World War veterans. On their

⁵²⁴Vincent Seta (29 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Malinya, on 01/11/2022

⁵²⁵C.B. Douglass. (1997). *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, pp. 20-45

⁵²⁶Michael Amkanga (48Years), Oral Interview, at bullfighting grounds-Murhanda, on 2/12/2022

⁵²⁷Ibid

⁵²⁸C.B. Douglass. (1997). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 45-54

return, there was a lot of celebrations to receive them alive. Some came back decorated by the Queen and the King for their distinguished service in the King's African Rifles (KAR). Moreover, many of the returning soldiers of 1914-1918 war and 1939-1945 war had killed many people. Therefore, they were received with a lot of honor for their sacrifice, courage and heroism. It was reported that many of the returning soldiers also decided to own the bulls for prestige. Even songs praising them were composed and some of these songs have been incorporated in the bullfighting songs.

However, the turning point in bullfighting came when some of these Ex-World War soldiers began dying. Their burial was to be honored by *Shilembe* festival where bulls were brought for fighting. Those still alive came along with several spears to pierce the ground as they numerated the number of people they killed during the war. Thus, these global wars contributed immensely to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

Among the Abakakamega community, this relationship is reinforced by an extensive shared semantics.⁵²⁹ Many current usages taken from the culture of bulls refer to bullfighting itself and to the cultural universe of which it forms part. Therefore, individuals should recognize that it is not always easy to know if bullfighting is the cause or the consequence of the festival, as the logic of festivals intertwines them to the point that the object of the celebration disappears in favor of these multiple manifestations.⁵³⁰ This object, when it is possible to identify it behind the hype, may be central to some, marginal for others, and wholly absent for a third, without ever

⁵²⁹Musa Machon(36 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Isolio on 2/12/2022

⁵³⁰Ibid

challenging the law according to which festivities generate and attract more festivities among the Abakakamega.⁵³¹

3.1.4 Church events as a reason to bullfighting growth

Vincent Itebete, the former vice chairperson of the Mukumu catholic parish recalled that to revive reminiscence, the sport of Plokos (Fr. Arnold Witlox), bull fighting competition was organized by the parish on the celebration of her Centenary jubilee (100 years of exercise since 1906). Over 50 bulls turned up for the competition that was carried in the field opposite the main church (*Mlitanyi*). This jubilee was held in 2010 and during the bullfighting, the politicians, the businesses, the Christians and even the school going children turned to watch the great event.

From the preceding, it is clear that even church events have participated in the promotion of bullfighting culture more so, the Catholic Church among the Abakakamega. The Centenary event boosted bullfighting as the bull owners enjoyed being associated with the church. Earlier in 1910, it was reported that a catholic priest by the name Arnold Witlox used bullfighting, and Isukuti dance to bring the locals to the church. Although other missionaries associated bullfighting and Isukuti dance as evil, for him, he found it an avenue of penetrating the Abakakamega, a move that enhanced evangelization.⁵³²

Furthermore, when another priest died by the name Joseph Ortner, who was serving at Musoli Mission, Shilembe festival was performed. Bishop Emeritus Philip Sulumeti recalls that, when Joseph Ortner's will be opened, he had indicated that Shilembe should be stayed. Again, many bulls turned at Musoli for fighting and a token of

⁵³¹ FGD of bull owners at Khayega on 11/12/2022

⁵³²K. Muchanga. (2022) & H. Burgman. (1991)

appreciation was given to each of the bull owners. Therefore, it is adequately argued that the Catholic church in a tremendous way has contributed to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

3.1.5 How Death Sparks Bullfighting

Among the Abakakamega death sparks the coming together of people from different communities. In this case, it is meant to come to grief with the family.⁵³³ The Isukha and Idakho people mourn in different ways such as singing, dancing, drinking and eating. Among them, bullfighting also forms another form of mourning just to bereave with the family and as a good sendoff of the dead for appeasement.⁵³⁴ However, for bullfighting to be used as a form of bereave with the family, various factors are considered such as age of the dead, the role the dead played in the community, the association of the dead among others.⁵³⁵ Therefore through the involvement of bullfighting in burials, people get informed more about bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega hence attracting more bullfighters. Burials among the Isukha and Idakho attracts high number of mourners hence in case bullfighting on such days, many participate in this culture, sharing new ideas among themselves and rallying each other towards expanding bullfighting.

3.1.6.0 Bullfighting as a shared responsibility across different Ages and Sex

The study found out that bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho has continued to grow year after year as informed by Gerald Kutima.⁵³⁶ Gerald continued to explain that, bullfighting realized a change in its development since 1980 due to the

⁵³³Ibid

⁵³⁴Ibid

⁵³⁵A. McFarland. (2007). *Op. Cit*, p. 207

⁵³⁶Gerald Kutima (49 years), Oral Interview at his place in Itenyi, on 20/12/2022

involvement of different ages and sex-women were allowed to take part in bullfighting activities.⁵³⁷

3.1.6.1 Teenagers and Bullfighting

Richard Amisi informed this study since 20th century, the role of different ages in bullfighting has drastically changed due to the changing lifestyle on the globe and in bullfighting specifically.⁵³⁸ He stated that, initially, bullfighting culture was specifically a responsibility of men, not for children, neither for youth nor even for women. He posited that bullfighting was meant for men, where the old men could meet at *busaa* locations or at their homes where they planned and organized for bullfighting sport. Youth or men of medium age could only come in to watch. On comparison with the current bullfighting, he elaborated that the current bullfighting is managed by youth and men of medium age.⁵³⁹ He further added that even women have started participating in bullfighting which is against the ideas of the elders before.

From the FGD of bull owners, at Malinya bullfighting ground, it was worth to note that among the Abakakamega, there are different types of individuals in different brackets of ages involved in bullfighting. Bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is inherited and one can start getting interested in the culture as early as 6-12 years. One who is born from a family with bullfighting history grows together with young bulls as friends. However, the best age that can be documented in this research is 12 years because at this age, this young one can be assigned responsibilities and may accomplish them comfortably. This is because the study was interested to understand the correct age one can get involved in bullfighting.

⁵³⁷Ibid

⁵³⁸Richard Amisi(52 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Mailimili on 27/11/22

⁵³⁹McFarland, A. (2007). *Op. Cit*, p. 207

Therefore, young boys of around 12 to 22 years among the Abakakamega, play an important role as far as bullfighting culture is concerned. During an interaction with some of these young men who had travelled over 20 kilometers on foot to Malinya bullfighting stadium, the researcher was interested to what motivated these young boys to this sport.⁵⁴⁰

The researcher therefore found out that, young boys of the age between twelve-twenty-two (12-22) years are fit to get involved into bullfighting. They are assigned some responsibilities to play such as feeding the bulls, taking young bulls to bullfighting arenas to adapt them to such environment. They also engage young bulls within the village as a way of hardening them and preparing them for competitions. They also start learning some herbs that are given to bulls. To do these they closely observe what their parents or grandfathers do as they learn. To some extent, they are the best age to give herbs to bulls as it's believed people engaging in sexual activities should not be close to bulls.⁵⁴¹

3.1.6 .2 Youth and Bullfighting

Youth among the Abakakamega are also not left out as bullfighting culture is concerned. Centric Shibuyanga from Ilesi and Ignatius Khayumbi, key informants from Ilala in Shinyalu, both agree that, youth aged between 25-35 own bulls and many of them are independent. Further, Shibuyanga alludes that the youth in this bracket are strong and their hand in bullfighting counts. Ignatius adds that, with the types of breeds being used in bullfighting and the kind of feeding and treatment such as use of boosters, makes these bulls huge more than beasts hence difficult to be

⁵⁴⁰Focus Group Discussion, Bull owners, at Malinya Stadium, On 12/12/22

⁵⁴¹Stanley Shiafu (40 years), Oral Interview, at Murhanda stadium, on 19/11/2022

managed by the other age brackets (the young ones and old).⁵⁴² Khayumbi argues that, even the old can manage though with the use of herbs that makes the bull be manageable. The two comes to an agreement that on the bullfighting day, or some weeks before, use of *inzaka* (bhang) is which still needs energetic people to manage such bulls. Therefore, Ignatius and Centric conquer that the best age bracket to handle these bulls are youth of between 25-35 years.⁵⁴³

In addition, the study found out that, this age category plays a role in taking care of huge bulls ready to participate in bullfighting or those already participating in the sport. They take a major role in feeding, treating and taking them to the fighting arenas. Young age is not allowed at this point. They also take part in the use of herbs, and at this age as they prepare to join the old age, they are introduced to identifying best herbs used in bullfighting. They also get to forest to look for herbs as guided by the old people or herbalists among the Abakakamega.

According to Felistus Otunga, the role of the junior youth in bullfighting, age between 15-24 years is very pertinent in the growth and development of bullfighting in Abakakamega. In this case, one can be the son to the bull owner, grandson, a family member or just a village youth.⁵⁴⁴ These youth play a key role in bullfighting among the Abakakamega. First, they are used in the nurturing of the animals especially young bulls. They train the bulls with the support of their parents or bull owners. Their training includes ensuring the bull knows their names by calling them frequently as they feed them. They take part in the feeding of the bulls at young age

⁵⁴²Ignatius Khayumbi (29 Years), Oral Interview, At his home in Ilala, On 15/02/23

⁵⁴³Cedric Shibuyanaga (40 Years), Oral Interview, At his home in Ilesi, On 29/12/22

⁵⁴⁴Felistus Utunga(42Years), Oral Interview, At her home at Malimili, On 3/12/2022

and even at maturity.⁵⁴⁵ They are used to fetch for pasture. Supporting these sentiments, Boniface added, in case the bull falls sick, they are charged with the responsibility of looking after it and updating the bull owner. On the bullfighting day, young bulls are brought to the arena for the purpose of adapting battle field and as a way of introducing them to bullfighting. Some of them with the same age lock horns in preparation for future fights as they strengthen their muscles.

The people in charge are youth of around 15-24 years who are seen around with these young bulls.⁵⁴⁶ The plate 7 shows how young people get involved in training a bull to know how to fight by watching others do so from a distance. As stated earlier, they do this as delegated but also as a sign of inheriting the culture. Young boys among the Abakakamega begin to show the desire to start participating in this culture at a very early stage as seen in the photo hence a boost to growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1960s.

⁵⁴⁵Ibid

⁵⁴⁶Boniface Munanga (48 Years), Oral Interview at his home at Khayega, On 27/11/2022



Plate 7: a photo showing young boys training a bull on how to fight by watching others fighting

3.1.6 .3 Role of elders in bullfighting as a factor for its growth

The role of the old from what Raphael Atsiaya informed this study is to give herbs to the bulls. These are the people who have an experience of the use of herbs among the Abakakamega. Raphael Atsiaya alluded that, most of these old men among the Abakakamega, are herbalist or are born from families with history of use of herbs. This means, they have a better understanding of herbs. As mentioned earlier, use of herbs and bullfighting are inseparable among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since pre-colonial period.⁵⁴⁷ They also have an upper hand in communicating with the spirits of forefathers as bullfighting is concerned. A good example is where a bull has killed a human being or a bull had been killed at the bullfighting arena, they are the best people to perform rituals.⁵⁴⁸ Emmanuel Isalambo agrees with Raphael Atsiaya by adding that for one to perform such rituals or advise on the best herbs to be used, one

⁵⁴⁷Raphael A tsiaya (57 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Iloro, on 20/11/2022

⁵⁴⁸Ibid

should have been mandated this by the great-great old men in the community. He alluded that, it is a *musambwa* (a culture that is inherited from forefathers) that one should undergo rituals before senior men.⁵⁴⁹

Furthermore, Amisi alluded that the old had a role to ensure good morals are adhered to in the community as far as bullfighting is concerned. During pre-colonial and colonial periods, the study was informed that the old used this bullfighting as an avenue to meet and discuss matters pertaining the community, more so for the wellbeing.⁵⁵⁰ To this point, good morals was encouraged among the youth such as respect, hard work, responsibility, immorality, trustworthiness among others that were to be practiced by people especial the young, youth.

3.1.6.4 Women and Bullfighting

Since time immemorial, women were not allowed to take part in bullfighting. In Spain, since 1990, women association and involvement in bullfighting has taken a different direction. The popularity and success of contemporary women performers in bullfighting culture, has been framed by a discourse of 'traditionalist' masculinity. This examination of the changing situation of women in the bullfighting world is used to explore the ways in which gender is represented, enacted and negotiated in contemporary Spain.⁵⁵¹ The bullfight in the 1990s is in an ambiguous position: it is a 'traditional' performance in a changing consumer society. In order to survive, it needs to adapt itself to a wider social context and, in particular, to international media coverage. It is in this context that the current success of women performers is located. However, women performers are a contested phenomenon in the bullfighting world:

⁵⁴⁹Emmanuel Isalambo (33 years), Oral Interview, at his home in Ikolomani, on 18/11/2022

⁵⁵⁰Richard Amisi (52 Years), Oral Interview, At his home in Malinya, On 27/11/22

⁵⁵¹Animal Ethics. Bullfighting and Other Entertainment Using Bulls. Available online: <https://www.animal-ethics.org/animal-exploitation-section/animals-used-for-entertainment&-as-companions-introduction/bullfighting/>(accessed on 3 September 2020).

there is heated debate over their acceptability, much of which focuses on the body. Moreover, the entry of women into the bullfight questions existing definitions of the sport's ritual structure and of gender relations in Spain.⁵⁵²

Thoroughly researched and compelling to read, *Women and Bullfighting* addresses these issues and argues that existing traditionalist approaches to gender, bullfighting and ritual in Spain need to be revised in order to locate women bullfighters in the context of a richly varied culture which is increasingly affected by the media and contemporary patterns of consumption.⁵⁵³ In Kenya, according to Andrea Isalambo and Clement Shibusse who were among the key informants to this study agree that women are not directly involved in bullfighting culture. Their role before 1960s was to remain at home and prepare food for the people to come and feast. Due to their menstrual cycle, they were not allowed to come close to bulls or near bullfighting arenas. On arrival at home, especially after a successful match, old women who had reached menopause, were the ones allowed to come and pamper the bull with *leso* (large piece of light cloth with designs printed on it and worn by women around the lower body and legs or over the head and shoulders) one way of celebrating the bull. It was believed that by a woman appearing on the bullfighting, the bull could be defeated or could even be harmed to an extent of death.

Currently, Violet Isiji, argues that they support in feeding the bull in the absence of their husband or caretakers. However, they are limited to give herbs and moving closer to these bulls a week before bullfighting. The only women who can move

⁵⁵²L.Silva, (2018). National identity on the Portuguese-Spanish frontier. *Anthr. Today*, 34, pp.19–22.

⁵⁵³A. Josephs, (1996). Hemingway's Spanish sensibility. In S. Donaldson (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Ernst Hemingway* (pp. 221–242). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

closer at such time are those who have reached the menopause.⁵⁵⁴From the preceding ideas, the study found out that as from 1960, the Isukha and Idakho bullfighters realized the role of women in bullfighting and started including them into this sport though not fully done. However, it was noted that the women feel included hence part of this cultural sport which is a factor for growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

3.1.6.5 Men and bullfighting

As noted during our discussion on origins, bullfighting was a men affair during the pre-colonial and colonial period. Francis Lisulu informed this study that men play a key role in bullfighting culture among the Isukha and Idakho people.⁵⁵⁵It is until towards the end of colonial period that woman got involved in bullfighting culture. However, despite these women having an opportunity to participate in bullfighting men still play a key role. They are still responsibly of identifying the right bulls to be used for fighting, taking care of these bulls and training them for fights. In addition, men especially elders, play an important task in the bull treatment more so by use of African traditional herbs which cannot be done by women. Francis went ahead to allude that, even on the fighting day, women are not encouraged touching or being around the bull unless she is a widow and one who has been supporting to take care of the bull. This is the only woman who can even be allowed to bless the bull before going out for a fight. ⁵⁵⁶From Francis information, the study found out that, men have a lot to do as far as bullfighting is concerned among the Abakakamega

⁵⁵⁴Violet Isiji (68 Years), Oral Interview, at her home around Malaika Children Home, On 04/12/22

⁵⁵⁵Francis Lisulu (40 years), Oral Interview, at his home around Mukumu Boys, on 11/12/2022

⁵⁵⁶Ibid

3.1.7 Friendship as an aspect for growth of bullfighting culture

Francis Mwavisi a bull owner from Shinyalu asserted that bullfighting among the Abakakamega was founded on the background of friendship. It originated from wrestling that brought individuals, families, clans and communities together more so men.⁵⁵⁷ It was a practice that was not meant for children and neither for women during the pre-colonial period.

Among the Abakakamega, the aspect of friendship determined the future of individuals as it was a bonding aspect, interns of power, leadership among others. Men among the Isukha and Idakho communities believed in the coming together of families, friends to strengthen a bond of existence. Every evening, men could meet at one location, drink *busaa* as they discussed much that affected the community. Through these meetings, bullfighting discussions as a sport to uniting people could be discussed, bullfighting matches be organized, plans to expand it and challenges hindering this sport could also be looked into. In other words, regular meetings of Abakakamega men culminated in this sport. Meshack added that, with regular sporting and meeting, friendship was developed and enhanced

3.1.8 Availability of Herbs among the Isukha and Idakho communities

Availability of herbs among the Abakakamega was a boost to bullfighting. They depended on natural medication as opposed to current modern treatment of bulls. Japheth Shikoli stated that;

Without the African herb, bullfighting could not have been better as our bulls could not have been strong to fight during pre-colonial and colonial periods. The herbs were making our bulls stronger and healthy making as enjoy the game.

⁵⁵⁷Francis Mwavish (38 years), Oral Interview, from Shibuye, on 18/11/2022.

The people responsible for this service were old men, people with experience on which herb could work well. Secondly, there existed herbalists who were believed to be working with the spirits in the support and control of the community.

Among the Abakakamega, use of herbs was believed to be inherited-from one family to another. Ignatius Khayumbi , an avid follower of the bullfighting competition, says that when he was young, the bulls were treated with herbs, mixed with substances from buffaloes, which served as boosters, making the bulls bigger and stronger.⁵⁵⁸

“In the past, our grandparents used to go to the forest, in search of *Munyama* and *Lubungu* (herbs) and used to mix with some substances that had been extracted from the buffaloes and after burning and mixing, the ash was given to the bull,” he explained, adding that, “Nowadays they are given multivitamins and they eat well. They are also intoxicated with other substances that I cannot share at the moment,” he notes in the course of the interview. Culture and Abakakamega are inseparable. This is what had defined them since time immemorial. The birth to *shilembe* in bullfighting among the Abakakamega, provided an avenue for them to explore their beliefs and practices.

Therefore, the study found out that, herbs was vital in the survival of bulls during the precolonial and colonial periods before the coming of modern ways of medication such as boosters, use of vitamins. Abakakamega banked on these herbs to make their bulls better as they enjoyed the sport.

3.1.9 Availability of grazing fields among the Abakakamega

Linus Abung’ana explained to the researcher that the availability of grazing fields among the Abakakamega-in Isukha was much influential to bullfighting. Examples of

⁵⁵⁸Ignatius Khayumbi (62 years), Oral Interview, From Malinya, on 31/11/2022.

these grazing fields included the Kakamega forest which was very important. The investigator was able to understand and explain why people around Shinyalu had so many bulls. During the discussion with a Focused Group, the researcher found out that in the forest where there existed vast area, for grazing provided a good space for pasture and waters for their animals.⁵⁵⁹ Furthermore, during pre-colonial period, as people were settling in these locations, availability of lands that were not under cultivation were much available which grew *Ikhabuuse* (sweet type of grass that could survive during dry season). This gave Abakamega an upper hand in keeping bulls, feeding them for the purpose of bullfighting. It's believed bulls fed on such pastures were stronger and energetic fit for bullfighting.

These findings are in tandem with the ideas of functional theory. This is because bullfighting contributes to social integration by providing a shared experience and promoting a sense of belonging among individuals within a society. Bullfighting events often bring people together, fostering a sense of community and shared identity among spectators and participants. Functionalism emphasizes the importance of social order and stability in maintaining a well-functioning society.

In the case of bullfighting, this cultural activity provides a structured and regulated outlet for the expression of certain social norms, values, and traditions. It helps maintain social cohesion by reinforcing and perpetuating shared cultural practices. Bullfighting carries symbolic meaning for individuals and society. Functional theory highlights how cultural activities often serve as symbolic rituals that communicate and reinforce cultural values, beliefs, and identities. Bullfighting can be seen as a ritualized performance that symbolizes bravery, masculinity, and traditional cultural

⁵⁵⁹FGD of bull owners from Shinyalu on 11/12/2022.

heritage among the Abakakamega. In this case, the world war, the church and the bullfighting itself have a functionary contribution to the society. As seen, the church and the world wars contributed to the bullfighting.⁵⁶⁰ For example, Malinya stadium has expanded due to the input of the county government under the tenure of the former Governor-Wycliffe Oparanya and also the current governor-Fernandes Barasa supported the activity by building a stadium at Malinya.

3.2.0 Economic and Political Aspects of bullfighting among the Abakakamega

3.2.1 Economic Benefits from bullfighting

In Kakamega, according to Musa Machoni the economic developments' being realized as a result of this cultural sport is making it to grow by attracting more fans and bull owners. Bullfighting has to a greater extent contributed to the economic development of the area.⁵⁶¹ First, it has led to the emergence and development of markets. For example, Lubao, Shinyalu and Ishikulu wa Masimbwa came up as a result of bullfighting. They started due to barter trade during the ancient days. To date, in these markets, the county government has constructed house/tables and stalls that have enhanced growth.⁵⁶² Also, the county government has been able to generate revenue from these markets. Due to this fact, employment opportunities have been realized.⁵⁶³ Those individuals who maintain the cleanliness of the market are employed by the government. Also, those who collect revenue are also employed by the government.

During the match, the owner of the winning bull is paid. In the recent past, a winner may bag up to Kenyan shilling 300, 000 in a single match. This changes the life of

⁵⁶⁰D.Felsenstein, & A. Fleischer. (2003). *Op. Cit.*, p.386.

⁵⁶¹Musa Machoni (36 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Isolio, on 02/11/2022

⁵⁶²Aggry Wangula (37 years), Oral Interview at his home in Ileho, on 02/12/2022

⁵⁶³Ibid.

these people greatly. Some of the owners who only had bulls have been found buying a piece of land, uses the money to pay school fees, motorcycles of the diehard being fueled.⁵⁶⁴ This promotes economic growth of the community.

However, when the signing window opens, a bull can be sold for as much as Sh300,000 depending on weight and ability to win matches. Musa Machoni informed the researcher that a butcher had offered to give Bonny Khalwale Sh150,000 for Malinya Pogba (a bull named after a footballer) before it died. Khalwale's handler would take home Sh5,000 every month. According to Musa, the former senator spends Sh25,000 every month to feed and treat the bull.⁵⁶⁵ Khavele another bull is prized bull at the moment across Kakamega and Vihiga counties. Ben Mululu who works at Africa Safari Club paid Sh300,000 to get the coveted bull during the last signing window. Khavele the beast has become a scare to foes. Mululu and other owners of fighter bulls could make between Sh.10,000 and Sh.20,000 in a single fight certified by the association.⁵⁶⁶

A bull may have at least two fights in a month or more. Since 2002, we have been organizing a tournament where the bulls fight regularly. Sometimes, the bull owners would get up to Sh.50,000 with financial support from European Union.⁵⁶⁷

The climax on returns in bull fighting is when Deputy President William Ruto rewarded owners of the bulls with 20 calve pedigree heifers two years ago.

Although we lost two of them, the dairy heifers were a major boost with each costing between Sh.150, 000 and

⁵⁶⁴Musa Machoni (36 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Isolio, on 02/11/2022

⁵⁶⁵John Shilita, (2021). How Kakamega residents are minting money from bullfighting craze, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/entertainment/showbiz/2001399267/how-kakamega-residents-are-minting-money-from-bullfighting-craze>

⁵⁶⁶ Musa Machoni (36 years), Oral Interview, at his home at Isolio, on 02/11/2022

⁵⁶⁷Ibid

Sh.200,000. Most of those who received the heifers have embraced dairy farming, says Vincent Shimali.⁵⁶⁸

Vincent added that, Sportpesa betting firm approached the bull fighting association with intention of sponsoring the sport.⁵⁶⁹ “Initial talks had just kicked off. Unfortunately, there were cartels that deceived some of the bull owners to have their bulls exported to Nairobi where fights would be staged.”⁵⁷⁰

During an interview with Phillip Isalambo, he recalled a match that happened at Shitao grounds and denotes that a charged bull smashed into the opponent with shuddering force as hundreds of fans cheered them on, just a stone’s throw away from Kakamega Airstrip. The fans were in frenzy, vigorously dancing and chanting songs in praise of the two giant bulls racing one another down the field. Push (one of the bulls) comes to shove as Jeshi (another bull) charged hard, injuring his opponent ‘Corona the Beast’ with razor sharp horns and forcing it to scamper for safety, hollering uncontrollably. A section of fans suddenly went quiet; they were disappointed because ‘Corona the beast’ let them down. From phillip the researcher noted that the fans behind every bull are after winning in order to receive money from the politicians.⁵⁷¹

Phillip Isalambo continued to neither posit that, the crowd left no space for social distancing and there were no designated areas for hand washing, sanitizing nor face masks despite the Covid 19 restrictions that were there by that time.⁵⁷² From Phillip ideas among the Abakakamega, the allure to gamble and make quick money is far too enticing, regardless of the danger of infection. In fact, Kakamega was among those

⁵⁶⁸Vinent Shimali(45 Years), Oral Interview, At his home Ilulu, On 4/12/2022

⁵⁶⁹Ibid

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid

⁵⁷¹Phillip Isalambo (47 years), Oral Interview, at his business place at Ilala market, on 10/11/2022

⁵⁷²Ibid

that lost key personalities to Covid-19, including Matungu MP Justus Murunga Makokha, who died early December in 2020 and county chief of staff Robert Sumbi, who succumbed to the disease in October 2021. At one point, Governor Wycliffe Oparanya shut down county government offices following a spike in infections. County Health Executive Collins Matemba urged bullfighting enthusiasts and organizers to adhere to Covid-19 containment measures.

But for some, the stakes in the popular sport are high. They bet as much as Sh.20,000 while the youthful fans stake between Sh.500 and Sh.1,000, according to Vincent Shimali, a bullfighting gambler. Shimali says he has built a home with proceeds from the gambling business which he has been doing for the past six years.⁵⁷³ “Initially, I would just cheer on and leave after the matches. But then I discovered people were making good money through betting. All you need is to predict correctly who will win the bout between bull A and bull B,” he says. According to Wilson Liposhe, gamblers in bullfighting stand higher chances of making correct predictions because they are able to see the bulls and make judgment from an informed point as opposed to the football gamblers who just make wild predictions and rely on luck to win. Most fans earn between Sh.6,000 and Sh.10,000 from predicting the fights correctly.⁵⁷⁴

Patrick Kulecho, a bull fighting fan from Lurambi posited that he has always got his predictions right and received some money from it, sometimes he loses and although it pains when that happens, he let it go and focus on the next fixture. Sometimes, fans have to travel to far areas like Vihiga, Mumias and even Kakamega North to watch the bullfights live.⁵⁷⁵ The results can hardly be manipulated and money is handed to

⁵⁷³Vinent Shimali(45 Years), Oral Interview, At his home IIsulu, On 4/12/2022

⁵⁷⁴Wilson Liposhe (50 years), Oral Interview at his home at Ikolomani, on 07/12/2022

⁵⁷⁵ Patrick Kulecho (39 years), Oral Interview, at Kakamega Airstrip, on 07/12/2022

the winner in the presence of security agents hired specifically for that particular job. This kind of betting is not recognized by the Betting Control and Licensing Board (BCLB) under the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. Bullfighting is a popular game among several Luhya sub-tribes, including Batsototso, Waisukha, Kabras and Idakho and Maragoli. James Shikali reported that the sport has been passed from one generation to the other and jealously guarded.

We are appreciating what we inherited from our forefathers to preserve and promote our culture. We appreciate bullfighting and as a young generation, we will not disappoint by letting it die. This is our culture as Isukha and Idakho people.⁵⁷⁶

But far from the cultural aspect, bullfighting appears to be gradually transforming into a lucrative venture for both bull owners and even the fans.⁵⁷⁷ Donald Ndolia added that, the sport has capacity to earn Kenya foreign exchange, give the county governments in Western much needed revenue and even create jobs.⁵⁷⁸

3.2.2 Commercial Activity

In an interview with Josephat Muchiti, a key informant, this study found out that bullfighting among Abakakamega is not only a cultural activity but also a commercial entity.⁵⁷⁹ He stated that, the aspect of money in bullfighting has attracted many people into bullfighting. He further elaborated this by confirming to this study that many people want to own bulls with a goal of getting money at the end of the day either by selling it, or getting awards after winning. The political class has been seen supporting this sporting activity and end up awarding the champions.⁵⁸⁰ He added that, betting activity has been embraced to promote bullfighting, where many people

⁵⁷⁶James Shilaka (48 years), Oral Interview at his home in Irobo, on 10/12/2022

⁵⁷⁷Ibid

⁵⁷⁸Donald Ndolia (Oral Interview), at his home in Imachilifu, on 09/11/2022

⁵⁷⁹Josephat Muchiti (70 Yeras), Oral Interview, at Lubao Market, 4/12/2022

⁵⁸⁰D.Felsenstein & A. Fleischer.(2003). *Op. Cit.*, p.386.

take part and some end up winning huge amounts of money, whereas others lose. This is commercialization of bullfighting culture.⁵⁸¹ However, despite the bullfighting culture being a commercial activity, it has witnessed a sporadic growth since people have been highly motivated by the outcome of the bulls fighting since it's rare to get a draw at the end. What happens is that, there is always a winner after the locking of horns. These activities have indeed contributed to the growth of bullfighting in Kakamega County especially in the recent past.⁵⁸² In this context, functionalism theory becomes applicable in examining how bullfighting has been commercialized. This is because bullfighting, as a cultural activity, has economic implications within the communities where it is practiced. Functional theory acknowledges the role of economic functions in society, and bullfighting can generate economic benefits through tourism, ticket sales, employment, and related industries such as hospitality and local businesses.

From Josephat who was part of the FGD of bull owners in Ikolomani, the study recorded that bullfighting events attract visitors and tourists, which in turn stimulate commercial activities. Tourists attending bullfighting events spend money on transportation, accommodation, food, souvenirs, and other goods and services provided by local businesses at Khayega, Shinyalu, Lubao, Kakamega town, Iguhu, and Musoli.⁵⁸³ This has led to the growth of hotels, restaurants, handicraft shops, and other tourism-related enterprises in the area, generating income and employment opportunities for the Isukha community. For example, there is a relationship between handicraft and pottery at Ilesi, and the tourist who come to watch bullfighting event.

⁵⁸¹Ibid

⁵⁸²Ibid

⁵⁸³FGD, for bull owner in Malinya on 20/12/2022

Due to his arguments, this study also observed that indeed bullfighting events have often created opportunities for local vendors and traders to sell various products. These include traditional crafts, clothing, accessories, food and beverages, and other items related to bullfighting. The increased demand during bullfighting events has boosted the income of local vendors and stimulated their business activities among the Isukha and Idakho people.⁵⁸⁴

Japheth Shikoli, further informed this study that bullfighting events involve the setting up of marketplaces or temporary stalls where vendors can sell their products. These marketplaces become hubs of economic activity, attracting both locals and visitors. The presence of bullfighting events can encourage the establishment of regular markets or designated areas for vendors, providing a platform for them to engage in commercial exchanges and bolster local economic development.⁵⁸⁵

During one of the bullfighting events, this study observed that, the influx of visitors during bullfighting events creates a demand for hospitality services and sometimes accommodations services. Local hotels, guesthouses, lodges, and homestays can benefit from the increased number of tourists attending bullfighting events. Indeed, as a confirmation from Caroli Nziya, it was clear that this stimulates the growth of the hospitality sector and provides opportunities for entrepreneurs to establish and expand their businesses.⁵⁸⁶

Joseph Muchiti further explained that indeed, bullfighting events require transportation services for the movement of participants, equipment, and spectators. This has led to the growth of transportation businesses, such as taxis, bodabodas,

⁵⁸⁴Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵Ibid

⁵⁸⁶Caroli Nziya (48 years), Oral Interview, at Kakamega town, on 11/12/2022

buses, or car rentals. Additionally, logistical services, such as event planning, security, and infrastructure setup, has also experience an increase in demand during bullfighting events among the Abakakamega. Among the Isukha and Idakho communities, bullfighting is a day to pocket a lot of money for business people transport people. Jeseeph Muchiti added that as bullfighting continues to grow, it is a cultural sport that will be among the GDP determinants among the Abakakamega and Kenya at large.

This study therefore concludes that, it's important to note that the extent to which bullfighting promotes commercial activities among the Abakakamega people depends on various factors; the scale and popularity of the bullfighting events, local infrastructure, tourism support, and the overall economic conditions of the region. The success of commercial activities related to bullfighting also relies on effective marketing, collaboration among local businesses, and the provision of quality products and services to attract visitors and promote repeat visits.

The plate below shows how people use motorcycles to transport cheerers. This promotes the petroleum industry which gains a lot by selling petrol to them:



Plate 8: *Showing motorcycles used to ferry people attending bullfighting*

3.3.0 Political Aspects contributing to bullfighting growth

3.3.1 The colonial master and bullfighting

The white man was interested in unity which would in turn give him a humble time to deliver his goal. The white man encouraged this through the local leaders such as chiefs.⁵⁸⁷ Bullfighting was another kind of entertainment for the colonial rulers. Meshack Luchendo hinted that they may witness bullfighting at the Rondo Guest House in the Kakamega Forest, now known as Rondo Retreat, and the area around the Murhanda Local Stadium. Because these White men promoted bullfighting rather

⁵⁸⁷KNA/DC/KMG/2/1/165/1957: *Isukha Location* pp. 13-17

than outlawed it, their presence and involvement helped the sport flourish among the Isukha and Idakho tribes.⁵⁸⁸

3.3.2 The role of *Abaami* among the Abakakamega as a reason to bullfighting growth

Baami (the local leaders), were in charge of locations during the precolonial period notwithstanding their ages and wisdom, were to have slot of wealth which in pre-colonial period, Isukha and Idakho were measured in terms of huge granaries (*biachi*) full of grains and cereals. This was a conclusion that was reached upon by a Focused Group Discussion of local and community leaders in Ikolomani⁵⁸⁹ Their wealth could also be defined by one being a polygamous man with many children. Peter Khumwa Isabwa a key informed this study that these *baami* had so many animals; cow, bulls, sheep, goats, birds among others. This idea was reinforced and finalized by another Focused Group Discussion at Shinyalu that the superiority for *baami* was also measured in the number of animals one had in those days.⁵⁹⁰

They also owned bulls for bullfighting to entertain their families more so themselves and their sons, their communities as well as their fellow leaders. Peter further explains that, in doing this, *baami* were showing off their wealth to signify the power they possessed over their people, their ability to lead, and their farming skills in the community among others. He added that, *baami* of different locations could organize bullfighting matches and welcome people and at the end they could pass some important information to them. In addition, *baami* could define their wealth by being able to host and entertain many visitors regularly with *busaa* (local brews) and food together with sacrificial of animals to spirits. Therefore, they could invite the

⁵⁸⁸Meshach Luchendo (76 Years), Oral Interviews, at his home in Ibwitsende, on 27/12/22

⁵⁸⁹FGD of Local and Community leaders in Ikolomani on 26/11/2022

⁵⁹⁰FGD of Local and Community leaders in Shinyalu on 19/11/2022

community members and other administrators to eat drink and enjoy. From this, bullfighting culture expanded and it became a family and village practice. Furthermore, bullfighting skills moved across the community members hence sparking bullfighting to high levels among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. The study, therefore, noted that *abaami* had a role on bullfighting grown among the Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya.

This study found out that, during the colonial period, chiefs were much concerned with social activities that could bring people together and at the same time, live in peace as professionals in the society of Abakakamega. Some of these activities included sports, cultural practices, and beliefs among others.⁵⁹¹ During the chiefs' monthly reports of 1957 in Kisumu (the main Region by the time before coming in of Western Region), it is documented that bullfighting was one of the sports that was allowed to entertain people and unite them.⁵⁹² In one of these reports, it's well outlined on how communities participate in bullfighting by mentioning chiefs such as Mr. Shivachi of Bushimuli in Idakho and Milimu of Abamakhaya-Isukha. This is a confirmation that bullfighting was taking place as early as pre-colonial period among the Isukha and Idakho people.

3.3.3 Mobilization and County support

From the time of political freedom in Kenya, bullfighting in Kakamega has been used to play a very crucial role as a catalyst of building big masses in the political arena.⁵⁹³ The recent politicians that have been seen sing these strategies are Boniface Khalwale (current senator Kakamega) and Fernandes Baraza (current governor Kakamega). When they want to meet people across two or three sub counties, they organize for

⁵⁹¹KNA/DC/KSM/1/28/1996: *Chiefs' monthly reports*, pp. 110-113

⁵⁹²J. de Boo, & A. Knight. (2005). *Op. Cit.*, p. 450.

⁵⁹³Ibid

these competitions and award the winners.⁵⁹⁴ This becomes a great way to do grassroots mobilization without any form of straining at all. Due to these actions, bullfighting its growth accelerated hence it well develops in the County. Furthermore, during 2022 campaigns, Khalwale used bullfighting to support William Rutto attract votes in Ikolomani. The current president came to Ikolomani and managed to address a big crowd of bullfighters together with current senator Bonface Khalwale.

Furthermore, with the existence of county government, it has been witnessed that, bullfighting stadia have been constructed in order to support the activity fully as shown in the plate below;



Plate 9: *Showing fans in a bullfighting arena-Malinya*

3.3.4 Support from local administration

Derrick Khamasi, a key informant, posited that since the colonial period, through the post-colonial period, bullfighting has blossomed due to the support it has received from the local leadership among the Abakakamega.⁵⁹⁵ Chiefs have been encouraging the people to keep bulls and later on use it to meet their people in bullfighting

⁵⁹⁴Ibid

⁵⁹⁵Derrick Khamasi (55 years), Oral Interview, at Ileho Market on, 27th/11/2022

places.⁵⁹⁶ It has promoted unity since under normal circumstances; bullfighting is organized between two sub-locations or locations.⁵⁹⁷ The culture acts as an avenue where administrative leaders can easily pass their message to the community without struggle before bullfighting kicks off in the stadium. The commitment that was put in by the local administration has promoted growth and development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega to date.

From the preceding discussion, this study concludes that, support from the local administration play a significant role in promoting bullfighting among the Abakakamega people. The local administration invests in the development of appropriate infrastructure to facilitate bullfighting events. This includes the construction or improvement of arenas, seating arrangements, access roads, parking facilities, and other necessary amenities. Well-equipped and accessible venues enhance the experience for participants and spectators, encouraging greater engagement in bullfighting activities.

The local administration establishes clear permitting processes and regulations for organizing bullfighting events. By providing transparent guidelines, the administration ensures that events are conducted safely and in compliance with legal requirements. This promotes a sense of security and legitimacy, attracting participants, sponsors, and spectators to engage in bullfighting activities.

The local administration actively participates in promoting bullfighting events. This can involve collaborating with local tourism bodies, creating marketing campaigns, utilizing social media platforms, and distributing promotional materials. By raising

⁵⁹⁶D. Felsenstein, & A. Fleischer. (2003). *Op. Cit.*, p.386.

⁵⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p.387

awareness about bullfighting events, the local administration attracts a larger audience and encourages participation, both within the Abakakamega community and even beyond.

The local administrations also allocate funds or seek sponsorship opportunities to support bullfighting events. Financial support can be provided for event logistics, marketing efforts, prize funds, or infrastructure maintenance. Collaborations with local businesses, organizations, or sponsors further enhance the financial viability and sustainability of bullfighting activities.

Bullfighting holds cultural significance among the Isukha people, and the local administration can recognize and promote it as an important cultural heritage. By integrating bullfighting into broader cultural preservation and tourism development initiatives, the administration showcases the unique cultural traditions of the Isukha community to domestic and international visitors. These, in turn, contribute to the growth of tourism and generate economic opportunities for the local community.

The researcher therefore found out that, it is important for the local administration to engage in dialogue and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including bullfighting organizers, community leaders, and local residents, to ensure that the support provided aligns with the community's needs, values, and aspirations. Additionally, environmental sustainability, animal welfare considerations, and respect for ethical practices should be taken into account while promoting bullfighting as a cultural activity.

These findings are in agreement with the ideas of political culture theory which provides insights into how bullfighting culture intersects with politics and society.⁵⁹⁸ It recognizes that bullfighting is often deeply rooted in tradition and national identity, symbolizing historical narratives and ideals associated with a particular country. Bullfighting can carry political symbolism, representing power, authority, or resistance, and political leaders may associate themselves with it for political legitimacy. Governments may promote or protect bullfighting as part of cultural policies to preserve traditions and boost tourism, reflecting the larger political culture and public sentiment. Bullfighting can also be a divisive issue, leading to social divisions and political debates, with different groups taking contrasting positions. Public opinion and values within the political culture influence policy decisions regarding bullfighting, shaping the discourse and regulations surrounding it. In general, throughout this finding in this subtheme, political culture theory has offered a framework to understand the complex relationship between bullfighting culture, politics, and societal dynamics.

On this basis, the voices of political leaders in Kakamega are indeed a great contributing factor to bullfighting in the region. All this has been done to promote the growth of bullfighting in Kakamega.⁵⁹⁹ From the above plate 10 below, one can see how bullfighting attracts large crowds that fires politicians an avenue to address the voters. Bullfighting has the largest crowd compared to a crusade or a political rally. The politicians find it easy to organize a bullfight than spend money buying tents or hiring chairs for a rally.

⁵⁹⁸M. A., Seligson.(2002). The renaissance of political culture or the renaissance of the ecological fallacy? *Comp. Polit.* 34(3), 273–292.

⁵⁹⁹Ibid., p.275



Plate 10: *Showing people cheering bulls during a competition events at Malinya*

Notwithstanding the availability of the crowd founded by bullfighting the leaders among the Abakakamega have not utilized the crowds for the benefits of the entire society. Instead, they use it for their own selfish gains. Recently the Archbishop of Kisumu Maurice Mulatia lamented that the politicians are using bullfighting to give alcohol and bhang to the youth. He was presiding over a funeral of one who had died in the process of bullfighting. He retorted that bullfighting is essentially a good culture but some politicians and other local leaders are turning it into a retrogressive cultural event. He explored that any culture that does not foster development, education for the youth, enhancement of good morals and done in a dignified manner, has no place in the current global advancement. Thus, in as much as the politicians and politics as seen as a point of enhancing bullfighting, there is need to be critical about misuse of these crowds.

Josephat Khayinga highlighted that it is on record that western Kenya has a large population but many do not register as voters.⁶⁰⁰ Instead of the politicians and other stakeholders using bullfighting crowds as shown in plate 8 for voter registration, encouraging them to embrace education and to create harmony among them the

⁶⁰⁰Josephat Khayinga (60), Oral Interview at his home in Lubao, on 20/11/2022

politicians use the crowds only for their self-interests. Therefore, in as much as the politicians and other leaders have encouraged the bullfighting cultural event, they have not used the crowds as shown in the plate below for sensitization on education, health poverty, politics and the general holistic development of the Abakakamega. Instead, bullfighting is sometimes seen as an event of people treating poverty among them.

In summary, both political culture theory and functionalism theory has aided in writing this chapter. This is because; political culture theory perspective examines how shared beliefs, values, and attitudes influence political behavior within a society. In the context of bullfighting culture, it has helped the researcher to understand how bullfighting is deeply rooted in tradition and national identity. It recognizes that bullfighting can symbolize historical narratives, reflect political ideals, and contribute to a sense of national pride. It also explores how political leaders and institutions may associate themselves with bullfighting to enhance their legitimacy and project a particular image. On the other hand, functionalism theory as a sociological perspective focuses on the functions and roles of social institutions and cultural practices in society. When considering bullfighting culture, functionalism theory has highlighted how bullfighting serves various functions within a community. It can promote social integration by providing a shared experience and fostering a sense of community among spectators and participants. Bullfighting can also contribute to social order by providing a structured outlet for the expression of social norms, values, and traditions. Additionally, it may serve as a symbolic ritual that communicates and reinforces cultural values and identities.

3.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter delved into various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega which included social, economic and political aspects. It covered social and cultural events in general. It was discovered that bullfighting is a social and geographic phenomenon that is rooted on the conflict between bulls, which in turn sparks bullfighting growth by bringing Abakakamega together. The study also discovered that shilembe celebrations, which are sparked by death, spur bullfighting expansion. The fact that bullfighting became a shared obligation by diverse age groups and sexes, such as women, starting in the colonial period, was one of the other sociological reasons leading to the rise of bullfighting that was highlighted. Availability of herbs, and grazing areas also attributed to bullfight growth among the Isukha and Idakho communities.

The chapter then discussed the economic impacts of bullfighting among the Abakakamega as a factor in the expansion of bullfighting. Commercialization and the desire to profit from bullfighting events were cited as factors contributing to the growth of this culture.

Finally, the chapter examined the political factors fueling the expansion of bullfighting. The position of the abaamis in attracting a large number of people to bullfighting and the participation of colonial rulers in such festivities were both significant factors in this discussion. Additionally, the expansion of bullfighting was aided by the County Government of Kakamega's backing for the practice and the participation of politicians in it. The following is chapter four which has investigated the influence of bullfighting culture on the development of the Abakakamega of Western Kenya.

CHAPTER FOUR
INFLUENCE OF BULLFIGHTING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
ABAKAKAMEGA SINCE 1850

4.0 Introduction

This chapter unveils issues that are fundamental in this section as outlined by the third and final objective. The chapter addresses issues to do with social development of bullfighting, cultural developments of bullfighting and political developments of bullfighting. Moreover, the three theories; political culture and articulation theories were applied in this chapter.

4.1.0 Bullfighting and Social-economic Developments

This study was more interested in social influence of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. It emerged from one of the respondents, Joyce Minyikha, that the entire hierarchy of settlements is usually involved with bull-related entertainment, from the largest towns in Kakamega County to the smallest villages such as in Shinyalu, Khayega and Tea zone areas.⁶⁰¹ She further added that, indeed, the space of bullfighting functions as a hierarchical space where each venue for bullfighting activities, from the public stadia such as Bukhungu, Showground in Tea zone to the bullring in Malinya, is the heart of an extensive bullfighting hinterland.⁶⁰² It was discovered by this study that the function of bullrings is to distribute a highly specialized service of bullfighting entertainment, which is the core activity that emerged as this study was conducted.⁶⁰³

⁶⁰¹Joyce Minyikha, Oral Interview, 4th/12/2022

⁶⁰²Ibid

⁶⁰³D. Getz., (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 145

4.1.2 Direct effect

The direct effect evaluates the expense made by cultural activity. Organizers of the fair or celebration, entrepreneurs, highlighting the price paid by fans for entry, the cost of bulls, health services, appreciation of bullfighters and their corresponding gang and insurance are what it takes to make a bullfight. Adrian Chibole, posited that, the most important bullrings in the larger Kakamega are few and far between, and often host professional spectacles at the pinnacle of the hierarchy (usually grouped into ferias, as far as bullfights are concerned).⁶⁰⁴ These require a large threshold population and have a broad sphere of influence. The smaller bullrings, lower down the scale, are targeted at a smaller threshold population, a smaller sphere of influence and play host to cheaper entertainments: novilladas, regional bullfights, and participatory bullfights.⁶⁰⁵ He further added that a form of rank-size rule exists for bullfighting whereby the hierarchy of bullrings and bullfighting entertainments corresponds to the hierarchy of settlements.⁶⁰⁶ This organization is naturally subject to significant regional variation according to the relative importance of bullfighting culture. Therefore, from this perspective, this study records that bullfighting festivals clearly play the leading role where bullfighting is identified as the principal reason for the festival and the gathering, as its core or coalescing factor.

This issue was noted by this study through political theory culture which was pertinent to this research. To align bullfighting rules, organize it well to fit the need of bullfighters, legislature and the entire community at large is well connected to political culture. Plate 11 below shows some youths with clothes written bull names.

This shows how attached they are to the bull.

⁶⁰⁴Adrian Chibole, Oral Interview 6th/12/2022

⁶⁰⁵D. Getz., (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 145

⁶⁰⁶Ibid



Plate 11: *Showing some youths with clothes written bull names*

According to Absolom Shibanda, the history of bullfighting, which for a long time was the prerogative of learned aficionados rather than professional historians, has generally favored an evolutionary approach to bullfighting festivals in Abakakamega.⁶⁰⁷ He further added that, in Kakamega, contemporary bullfights would thus be the final stage in a long process of transformation that stretches back to the first encounters between men and bulls.⁶⁰⁸ According to him, this version of history places a rather strong emphasis on the ancestry of bullfighting and the abundant legitimacy this grants the practice. Therefore, this study suggests that the persistence of a culture of bullfighting through the ages suffices to demonstrate the continuity of the practice.

⁶⁰⁷Abosolom Shibanda (79 Years), Oral Interview, at Shinyalu, 5/12/2022

⁶⁰⁸D. Getz., (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 145

The respondent went further to elaborate that it is not unusual to view bullfighting in Kakamega in the same light as prehistoric hunting.⁶⁰⁹ With reference to this, the study relates this stand with the works of Jean Baptiste, who recorded that the bull-related bestiaries of Paleolithic and Neolithic iconography and a hypothetical cult of the bull in the Mediterranean had migrated from the Fertile Crescent to Spain by way of Crete and Ancient Rome.⁶¹⁰ This heritage, now centered on the Iberian Peninsula, blossomed following the Reconquista in tournaments and royal festivities that celebrated the great events of the crown and the Church. Subsequently, with the arrival of the bullfighting in East Africa, through the East Africa Coast, it was taken over by the common people in the mainland, majorly the Abakakamega of Western Kenya, the then North Kavirondo.⁶¹¹ They elevated it to the status of national festival in the 19th century.

Another respondent Violet Isiji, while addressing the study on the development of bullfighting among the Abakakamega, alluded that; the *shilembe* among the Abakakamega is viewed as the archetype of the bullfight, which has successfully conserved the values of the ancestral relationship between man and bull, preserved the spirit of community excitement connected to the sense of honor, raised professional bullfighting to a major art form, and exported it worldwide.⁶¹²

From the preceding arguments, posted by the respondents, this study found out that, indeed, this version of history has been under fire since the 1980s from a movement in history and anthropology that focuses on the gaps in bullfighting records and insists

⁶⁰⁹Ibid

⁶¹⁰M. Jean-Baptiste, (2006). The Bull Marks His Territory (Bullfighting Festivities and Territorial Identities in Southwestern Europe and Latin America. In *Annales de géographie* Volume 650, Issue 4, pp. 361-387

⁶¹¹Violet Isiji, Oral Interview, 4th/12/2022

⁶¹²Violet Isiji, Oral Interview, 4th/12/2022

on the need to relativize the dominant model through a comparative approach to the different practices. In light of these response, it seems impossible to demonstrate a single origin for all bullfighting practices in Abakakamega. It is more feasible to consider that each of them has inherited, in varying proportions, aspects of livestock raising (cattle handling and slaughter), military practice (training and demonstrations of prestige by the nobility), religious practice (rituals and sacrifices) and aspects of games, whether of independent origin or derived from the foregoing.

Moreover, the study endeavored to establish the relationship that exists between the current form of bullfighting and that, which was practiced before 19th Century. It emerged from one of the respondents, Geoffrey Anyoba that, the innovations bullfighting has undergone are as much formal as socio-economic, transforming the bullfight into the modern spectacle known today.⁶¹³ Geoffrey further argued that it is a question of a change in the nature of bull-related entertainment that in 19th-century Spain became the mass spectacle par excellence, a far more tangible reality than its controversial denomination as national festival.⁶¹⁴ However, from the works of Jean-Baptiste, the sentiments of Geoffrey Anyoba are in tandem with his stand. Therefore, according to Jean-Baptiste historical rupture may be added a sociological rupture, since modern bullfighting is no longer viewed as a continuation of the horseback bullfighting practiced by the nobility but as the culmination of an independent, popular and urban form.⁶¹⁵ Therefore, from this study, it may be true that the bullfight is the first mass spectacle in the West, laying the ground for modern sporting events that evolved on a different scale altogether over the 20th century, and whose vast

⁶¹³Geoffrey Anyoba, Oral Interview 6th/12/2022, at Khayega Stadium on 19/12/2022

⁶¹⁴R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198-202

⁶¹⁵Ibid

stadium point established in Malinya among other parts to a new stage of development.

Bullfighting is a game and a source of income for many bull owners in Shinyalu and Ikolomani Sub Counties Kakamega County. The game which attracts a huge following wherever there is an event was adversely affected by the existence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Augustine Swaleh who is a bull owner, the pandemic made it impossible to organize bullfights thus leading to massive loss of income for many bull owners.⁶¹⁶

We've been adversely affected by Covid-19. Right now we cannot hold events. These events used to raise income for bull owners. Interested customers have shunned away from engaging in bull activities due to Covid-19. There comes a time that we have bull transfers. This is where people buy King bulls or those that are strong enough to engage in bullfights. This activity earns a lot of money but right now nobody wants to buy bulls because we do not know when coronavirus will end. Buying a bull now is a risk that very few people are willing to take.⁶¹⁷

Bullfight Kings are bulls that have won bullfight events. Currently, the king is called NASA (A bull named after a Coalition in Kenya that was led by Raila Odinga). Kings are highly respected within the region.⁶¹⁸ Their owners get the opportunity to make a lot of money through fights. They also attract foreign and local tourism which is another source of income.

When you own the reigning champion, you have a lot of income opportunities. You might want to sell it at a very high price to many interested customers or keep it and make regular incomes from other bull owners who would want to challenge your bull's authority.

⁶¹⁶Augustine Swaleh (52 years), Oral Interview, at Shitaho in Shinyalu on 12/12/2022.

⁶¹⁷Ibid

⁶¹⁸R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198

Sometimes King owners get the opportunity to make income through local and foreign tourism.⁶¹⁹

Swaleh asked the County Government of Kakamega to invest enough in the industry, affirming that there is a lot of income from the activity.⁶²⁰

Last year the County Government of Kakamega set aside money for culture but we never got anything. We want the County government to market us to attract more foreign and domestic tourism. Bullfighting is a big source of income if well marketed.⁶²¹

According to Douglass Ligame, some of the major fights scheduled after the ban on sports activities include Mbape from Malinya vs Imbirikinzi from Shinyalu, Stamina vs Imbomu, Ng'ata vs Nyota, Makacha vs Ruto, Stima vs Teargass just to mention. The events will be held at Malinya stadium, Musoli, and Khayega grounds Kakamega County.⁶²². This can be confirmed that bullfighting among the Abakakamega has direct impact on their social economic impacts as far as bullfighting culture is concerned.

4.1.3 The indirect effect on Bullfighting.

The indirect effect in bullfighting is difficult to account, because it implies estimating the expenditure that the public makes (foreign spectators) when they attend a bullfighting celebration. The expenditure begins with the purchase of the entrance, (already reflected in the direct expenditure), but in addition, viewers perform expenses in transport, accommodation and catering among others. The first thing which will allow to calculate the indirect effect, is going to be to make a distinction between the spectator's visitors (they go to the celebration and return to their house) and the local spectators.

⁶¹⁹Ibid

⁶²⁰Ibid

⁶²¹Ibid

⁶²²Douglass Ligami (58 years), Oral Interview, at Murhanda Stadium, on 20/11/2022

Finally, the study noted that the bullfight is no longer the only model against which to measure the authenticity of bullfighting and its variations. There are many forms of bullfighting practices that are more or less independent of one another, which take place in connection with distinct festivities, and whose unity can only be viewed through the processes of diffusion, acculturation, assimilation, transplantation, and rejection that govern their organization.

It is also pertinent to note that, during bullfighting there are different ways of economic activities that take place to benefit specific individuals or groups. *Bodaboda* people-this population gets so many customers who want to attend bullfighting which is far from them. People travel as far as Vihiga, Maragoli, Kabras to Isukha and Idakho to watch and enjoy this bullfighting culture. Many use bodaboda which in turn boost such business, giving a daily income to do many youths.⁶²³

Fuel purchase-some also have their own motorbikes which are fueled on such days. Davis Asutsa one of the bodaboda youth informed this study that "on this day fueling Station gets full on bullfighting day because people to fuel more so motorbike are always many. In fact, most of us prefer to fuel our motorcycle a day before in order to avoid jam on the material day as some fueling stations may delay us. Furthermore, we sometimes start travelling before 5am where sometimes stations open late."

From Davis, this shows that bullfighting also boosts other businesses. Selling of goods around the bullfighting arenas- Business people have found an opportunity to sell their goods to fans during bullfighting day.⁶²⁴ Example of these goods include-t-shirts for fans that have been printed with the name and photos of some Victorious

⁶²³Davis Asutsa, Oral Interview, at Isulu market on 5th/12/2022.

⁶²⁴Ibid

bulls in the community, selling of foods such as tea and *mandazi*, *chapati* etcetera, ice creams, airtime, some sell business ideas such as printing of ideas in collaboration with bull owners among others. Bullfighting has expanded business around Isukha and Idakho hence a greater economic impact to Abakakamega in general.

4.1.4 Induced effects

Hannington asserted that the economic impact of bullfighting celebrations among the Abakakamega cannot be limited to the number of tickets sold, and to the consumption of spectators (direct and indirect expenses. Therefore, the induced effects measure the impact of the celebration in the global economy, acting as a multiplier effect. How much it is economy is spent and how much economy is generated. Therefore, the induced effects measure the impacts of the celebration in Isukha and Idakho communities, acting as a multiplier effect.⁶²⁵

4.1.5 Bullfighting and Tourism among the Abakakamega

As bullfighting continues to grow among the Abakakamega, tourism section is also anticipated to develop in Kakamega County. Derrick Khamasi informed this study that they have continued to receive visitor during bullfights at Khayega, Malinya, Murhanda, Bhukhungu grounds. He further asserted that, these tourists: Domestic, inbound and outbound tourists. To expound on this, he explained that they receive tourists who are from within the country, outside the country who come to watch the bull game in turn impacting the Kenyan economy. From Derricks interview, the study found out that, the Kenya government receives tourists who move around the country with bullfighting being one of their important events to observe. In addition, the study

⁶²⁵Hannington Atsali (51 years), oral Interview, at Sigalagala, on 04/11/2022

found out with the building of bullfighting stadia, was one of the ways in which the county government was putting in place to continue attracting more visitors.⁶²⁶

Some of the question that kept running into the researcher's mind were: Why is it that bullfighting has not been banned in Kenya despite being a dangerous game where human beings are hurt? Secondly, why is bullfighting not ye a national event? Through the interaction with the respondents, the study found out that bullfighting is an economic influencer to Abakakamega. Kakamega county and the Kenyan government at large, hence cannot be banned. However, the Kenyan government is taking long to accept this as a national cultural event. This needs the relevant stakeholders to take this into account in making it a national cultural sport. This will help in having better bullfighting museums, organized ways of collecting revenue during bullfighting activities in Kenya which will in turn define the Kenyan economy.

Therefore, in this subsection, articulation theory has been used to emphasize the interconnectedness of different social practices, including cultural and economic activities. By applying this framework, the study has explored how bullfighting is linked to other economic sectors within the Isukha community, such as tourism, hospitality, transportation, or local industries. Understanding these interconnections can shed light on the economic impact of bullfighting and how it contributes to the overall social-economic development of the Isukha people.

Articulation Modes of production theory also has aided in highlighting the role of power relations and social hierarchies in shaping social and economic practices. Therefore, on this note, researchers can analyze how power dynamics within the Isukha community influence the organization and economic aspects of bullfighting.

⁶²⁶Derrick Khamasi (38 years), Oral Interview, at Murhanda near Kakamega Airstrip, on 11/12/2022

This could include examining the roles of different social actors, such as bullfighters, organizers, breeders, or spectators, and how their positions within the community's social structure affect the distribution of economic benefits related to bullfighting.

Bullfighting is often deeply rooted in cultural traditions and carries symbolic meanings within a community. Articulation theory has helped in exploring how bullfighting contributes to the construction of cultural identity among the Isukha people. Through articulation theory, studying the symbolic representations associated with bullfighting, researchers can gain insights into how it influences social cohesion, cultural pride, and the overall well-being of the Isukha community.

4.2.0 Bullfighting and the Cultural Development of Abakakamega

Bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega has influenced cultural development in several ways, just to mention; through entertainment and festivals as discussed below;

4.2.1 Bullfighting as a form of entertainment

According to Jean-Baptiste, anthropological approaches to bullfighting agree on the powerful identification between the protagonists of bullfighting entertainments and the societies that produce them.⁶²⁷ While the study was interested in the place of men and bulls among the Abakakamega, one respondent Wilson Liposhe asserted that, for sure, bulls and men alike are still celebrated in accordance with the values they embody at the heart of the Luhyia community especially the Abakakamega community.⁶²⁸ In this sense, bullfighting festivals are an influential vector of identity and a key moment in social reproduction.⁶²⁹ Furthermore, this respondent said; beyond this common denominator, there are a wide range of interpretations of

⁶²⁷M. Jean-Baptiste. (2006). *Op. Cit.*, p. 365

⁶²⁸Wilson Liposhe(50 years), Oral Interview,at Ikolomani, 7/12/2022

⁶²⁹R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198

bullfighting among the Luhya community of Abakakamega, not all of which are compatible: a rite of passage, a metaphor for gender roles, an archaic reference to a cult of the bull, a ritualized representation of herding and slaughtering cattle, a symbol of the structures of society.⁶³⁰ In light of these divergent interpretations, this study therefore records that, it is unclear whether it is possible to undertake a single, unifying reading of all bullfighting practices without making outrageous simplifications.⁶³¹

Carolyn Atamba informed this study that among the Abakakamega, the geographical diversity of bullfighting practices and their relative autonomy calls into question those interpretations that overvalue the continuity of the rituals of bullfighting festivals across time and space.⁶³² Furthermore, if bullfighting was treated as a ritual term that is questionable in itself it seems unlikely that such a ritualization should conceal a single, unchanging meaning of bullfighting festivals

Therefore, from the preceding argument, this study finds that for a very long period of time, since 1840, bullfight has remained a major leisure activity in western Kenya. The sport thought by many to be unpopular or a primitive activity that should have been discarded still attracts thousands of fans⁶³³ especially among the Butso, Kabras, Idakho and Isukha sub tribes of the Luhya community-these are sentiments of one of the respondents, Donald Ndolia interrogated by the study. Donald holds that, “bullfighting will never end, it is our culture”.⁶³⁴ The game attracts huge crowds most of them drunk while others are more possessed by the fanatic that goes with

⁶³⁰Ibid

⁶³¹Ibid

⁶³²Carolyn Atamba(46 Years), Oral Interview,at her home in Sigalagala, 7/12/2022

⁶³³F. Rahman, (1982). *Op. Cit*, p.67

⁶³⁴Donald Ndolia(51 Years), Oral Interview, qt Murhanda, on 8/12/2022

bullfighting.⁶³⁵ The fight occurs especially Saturday's, Sundays and public holidays. According to Mzee Masingu, Isukuti dancers are willing and ready to trek for as long as ten kilometers to the venue of the fight would then all escort their favored bull. On the eve of the event, the bulls are prepared for the fight with extortion which villagers strongly believe the bulls appreciate. According to him, a day to the fight, the fans have to entertain the bull throughout the night with *Isukuti* and it should not sleep.

Although bullfighting is entertaining, another respondent, Josphat Matekwa posited that bulls are not economic source of living for many owners but are kept just for prestige when you hear people ever talking about your bull you feel proud but there is nothing we are gaining much.⁶³⁶ They are however expensive to maintain as they are put on a special diet, and receive medical attention frequently. The owner may incur huge expenses especially after a nasty fight as he has to entertain the fans by buying for them local brew (*Busaa*) and sometimes give them some cash if the bull wins. Furthermore, another challenge facing the bull owners is that they cannot sell the bull because it makes them happy and to get another one is a hell, so they would prefer the bull to die but not selling it.⁶³⁷ From these it is realized that the government cannot afford to ignore bullfighting if it has full potential as a tourist attraction in the region just like Spain Mexico and South Korea.⁶³⁸ However, from the aforementioned discussion, this study reckons that bullfight can be transformed from a village affair to a booming business Development projects which can offer employment to the youths of Shinyalu Sub-County and bring revenue in the area. Dirty activities accompanied with these leisure activities like drinking, bhang smoking, and fighting against each

⁶³⁵Ibid

⁶³⁶Josphat Matekwa(51Years), Oral Interview, at murhanda,9/12/2022

⁶³⁷R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198

⁶³⁸F. Rahman, (1982). *Op. Cit.*, p.67

other should be done away with because they make bullfighting look like a dirty and an awkward activity that does not support good morals and values in the society.⁶³⁹

4.2.2 Bullfighting and Festivals among the Isukha and Idakho

In the view of Carolyne, it is more enlightening to show that the links between bullfighting and festivals are multiple, vary across regions and relate to an “invention of tradition” where the interests of identity and commerce merge.⁶⁴⁰ This tradition restores to bullfighting the image of a very ancient phenomenon that represents an authentic culture rooted in a specific territory that the simple presence of the bull seems to guarantee and demarcate.⁶⁴¹ It also vindicates an attachment to the land and to rural life that is brought to the fore by much bullfighting in the community. It is a myth to which the passion surrounding bullfighting at festival times lends itself, one that has all the marks of an essential discourse of identity in which the bull appears everywhere as the symbol of a people, the totem for a territory and sometimes even as a cult object. Therefore, from Carolyne Atamba, it is clear to this study that by taking a constructivist approach to bullfighting, it is interesting to recognize the efficacy of the social function of these myths, which have played an enormous part in the entrenchment of bullfighting traditions across time and space among the Abakakamega in Shinyalu, Ikolomani and Batsotso area.⁶⁴²

From social and cultural perspectives, this study found that indeed, bullfights are privileged moments for the affirmation of collective identities in a context of an increasing variety of leisure activities and increasingly urbanized lifestyles. Despite the distinction between professional bullfighting, based on the spectacle, and

⁶³⁹Ibid

⁶⁴⁰R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198

⁶⁴¹Carolyne Atamba (46 years), Oral Interview, at Malimili, on 16/12/2022

⁶⁴²Ibid

participatory bullfighting where the collective and inclusive aspect is clearly visible, bullfighting is experienced as a form of festivity that guarantees strong social and spatial cohesion. It has seen that the professionalization of bullfighting games at the crossroads of sports events and artistic performance and the ongoing reinvention of the connection between bulls and festivals may be interpreted as an adaptation of bullfighting to transformations in contemporary society.⁶⁴³

Everything indicates that bullfighting festivals function as a guarantee of the authenticity of territorial identity that reaffirms an ancestral rootedness and an idealized attachment to the rural world. These results in the assertion of a cultural region at the heart of which bullfighting practices acquire forms and meanings in relation to each other at different scales.⁶⁴⁴ From one end to the other of its geographical field, bullfighting appears as a common criterion of territorial reconciliation and differentiation, where the perception of a shared identity is defined through the experience of a neighboring or radical otherness. Bullfighting festivals thus constitute a powerful territorial marker.

The plate in the next page shows a bull owner in his traditional attire preparing to take his bull out for a fight;

⁶⁴³R. Ponnu, (1984). *Op. Cit.*, p.198

⁶⁴⁴Ibid



Plate 12: *Showing a bull owner and the researcher*

Comparatively, for rugby fanatics, Saturdays are meant for the rugby game. For the married ones, the weekend is a fun-filled family outing day, while for a number of Kakamega county residents; Saturdays are amazing, more so when it starts off with bullfighting contests.⁶⁴⁵ For these bullfighting lovers, they begin their day by flocking

⁶⁴⁵F. Rahman, (1982). *Op. Cit*, p.67

to different bullfighting venues, in groups, with bulls in tow, dancing to the reverberating sounds of isukuti. It has been a routine for decades and as much as other regions view the sport differently, for the locals, it has a contest that they value the most. Interestingly, in this part of the world, bullfighting is loved across all age groups.

It is not just the love of the sport that makes it special. Bullfighting adherents have invested their resources in the sport. Breeding a bull from a tender age, in preparation for the contests, is quite costly. It requires proper care, feeding and medication for a bull to be developed and meet the standards required for a fierce battle. Alternatively, other people prefer to buy bulls that have been properly bred for such fights, if one is to avoid the long rigorous route of nurturing one.

Emmanuel Muhanda , an avid follower of the bullfighting competition, posited that when he was young, the bulls were treated with herbs, mixed with substances from buffaloes, which served as boosters, making the bulls bigger and stronger.⁶⁴⁶ Emmanuel further stated that multivitamin boosters are now available to help animals grow bigger unlike in the past.

He however holds that the use of intoxication to make animals have the urge to fight still exists to date. In the past, their grandparents used to go to the forest, in search of *Munyama* and *Luvungu* (African traditional herbs) and used to mix with some substances that had been extracted from the buffaloes and after burning and mixing, the ash was given to the bull. From a Focused Group Discussion with bull owners in Shinyali, agreed that nowadays bulls are given multivitamins and they eat well.⁶⁴⁷ They are also intoxicated with other substances that I cannot share at the moment. The

⁶⁴⁶Emmanuel Muhanda (52 Years), Oral interview, at his home in Shinyalu, on 10/4/2023

⁶⁴⁷ FGD of bull owners at Khayega, on 11/12/2022

group further noted that it is not uncommon to see bulls being prepared for a fight in the larger Kakamega County. In fact, in Khayega, Malinya, Kakamega airstrip grounds, Kabarasa, and Muranda contests happen in the morning.⁶⁴⁸

Gilbert Matekwa informed this study that this is due to the fact that the bulls are fresh and have the energy for the contests. It is also believed that some bulls cannot sustain fights when the sun is up in the sky.

Most of the fights are always in the morning because the bulls still have enough energy. They do not battle in the afternoon,” he explained. For the fights to happen the owners of the bulls are notified in writing and they either agree or decline to participate.⁶⁴⁹

What are the benefits of bullfighting and do the owners gain anything, say, if one’s bull wins? Once the two parties agree to a contest on an agreed date and venue, just like with other sports, preparations start and hit fever pitch as the match day approaches. On the match day, the bulls are properly fed and given additives such as bhang to fire them up ahead of the impending battle. The bulls are also protected to ensure they stay away from people with ‘bad intentions. On the match day, they are led to the pitch amidst ululations, song and dance.

As soon as two bulls are on the pitch, the match is on. The winner is determined when the loser flees away. The duration of the contests is not fixed as some bulls’ scamper for safety in the opening seconds of the contest while, for some, the contest lasts much longer. After the contest, the winner is awarded depending on the agreement reached before the clash. When money is involved, they agree on the amount that will be the prize money. Whoever wins takes home the whole amount and he shares with those who helped him such as cheerleaders and his close people. They leave while

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ Gilbert Matekwa (41 years), Oral Interview, at Kakamega Airstrip grounds on 11/12/2022

singing and celebrations are extended to the alcohol dens.⁶⁵⁰

Political culture theory in this sub-section has been used to provide insights into the cultural aspects of bullfighting and its significance within the community.⁶⁵¹ It has examined the collective beliefs and values that shape political activities among the Abakakamega. Bullfighting, as a cultural practice, reflects the values, traditions, and beliefs of the Isukha community. By analyzing the political culture within the Isukha community, scholars can identify the underlying values and meanings associated with bullfighting. For example, bullfighting might be seen as a symbol of bravery, skill, or community pride, reflecting the Abakakamega community's cultural identity.

Political culture theory also has helped in looking at the ways in which cultural practices are preserved and sustained within the Abakakamega community. Bullfighting among the Isukha people may be seen as a cultural tradition that is valued and protected as part of their heritage. The political culture within the Isukha and the Idakho community, including the role of community leaders, cultural institutions, or customary laws, may play a significant role in the preservation and continuity of bullfighting as a cultural practice.⁶⁵²

Bullfighting often involves rituals, symbolism, and performance elements that have cultural and social significance. Political culture theory has helped in analyzing the symbolic meaning and ritualistic aspects of bullfighting within the Isukha community. It has explored how bullfighting is embedded in local customs, ceremonies, or social events, and how it contributes to social cohesion, identity formation, or community bonding among the Isukha and Idakho community or the Abakakamega.

⁶⁵⁰Matekwa John (43 Years), Oral interview at his home in Shinyalu, on 10/4/2023

⁶⁵¹J. Haidt. (2012). *The righteous mind*. Pantheon Books, New York, p. 17

⁶⁵²Ibid., p.18

Political culture theory has also assisted in examining the ways in which cultural practices and symbols are used for political mobilization and representation.⁶⁵³

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega community might be employed as a means of expressing political solidarity, rallying support for community causes, or representing collective aspirations. By using the political culture surrounding bullfighting, researchers can gain insights into how it intersects with broader political dynamics and processes within the Abakakamega community.

4.3.0 How bullfighting has influenced Politics among Abakakamega

Bullfighting and politics are much connected among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. The study found out that, this culture is attracting politicians both among the Isukha, Idakho communities and outside this territory.

4.3.1 Politicians and bullfighting among the Abakakamega

The Isukha and Idakho, Luhya sub-tribes of Kakamega County have a version of bullfighting that has propelled their senator Bony Khalwale to fame and made him stay in Parliament for over two decade.⁶⁵⁴ Away from home, the Spanish have their own kind which has seen many fighters gored to death by furious bulls that may not overcome those of Khalwale.⁶⁵⁵ This is a form of bullfighting that may not be so popular but is as scary as they come. It is a Columbian sport which involves acrobats jumping over a charging bull. The practice is an alternative to violent bullfights where men dress in their ceremonial outfits without using weapons like sword. The event sometimes happens at the close of every year and draws hundreds of tourists from

⁶⁵³J.E. Richard and Michael Thompson, eds (1997). *Culture Matters: Essays in Honor of Aaron Wildavsky.*, p.16

⁶⁵⁴Ibid

⁶⁵⁵Anil Bakari (Jan. 5, 2015). Bullfighting taken a notch higher, <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/entertainment/kenya/2000146759/bullfighting-taken-a-notch-higher>

different parts of the world.⁶⁵⁶Crowds holds their breaths as the acrobats known as recortadores risked being trampled as they fly over the huge black bulls.⁶⁵⁷ Perhaps this is the way to go for the Kakamega senator if he wants to spice his show to make his event a tourist attraction.

Bullfighting can be used by politicians during campaign period as a vote hunting tool. According to one of the owners of bulls, James Shilaka, he informed this study that in the recent past, 2017, Kakamega Senator Bonface Khalwale has sunk deep into the county's local areas in his vote hunt as he seeks to unseat Governor Wycliffe Oparanya in August.⁶⁵⁸ The senator embarked on campaigning in the governor's backyard, attracting locals and has proved to have substantive backing to face the incumbent through his one-on-one interaction with the people. He further eluded that, for instance, Khalwale in most rallies makes an entrance - being carried by a volunteering masculine supporter as they cut through cheering crowds as shown in the plate below.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁶Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷Sunday express newspaper, www.sundayexpress.com

⁶⁵⁸James Shilaka (49 Years), Oral Interview, at his home in Malinya, on 10th/12/2022

⁶⁵⁹Ibid



Plate 13: *Showing one of the politicians-Boni Khalwale on his entry to the bullfighting arena being carried by a volunteering muscular supporter.*

He has further moved to take his art of bullfighting even a notch higher, organizing a number of match-days in Ikolomani and Shinyalu constituencies. The residents of the two constituencies have steadfast love for the game despite criticism that the activity was not changing the lives of the locals.

When the study interrogated George Likami over Khalwale's critics, associating himself with bullfighting, he responded to this, by challenging them to visit Khalwale's dairy farm to see how he was practicing farming and argued that bullfighting is an activity for fun incorporated as his people's way of life.⁶⁶⁰ He further informed this study that through bullfighting activity, the Senator is able to consolidate and help deliver the registered votes from the Luhya nation and especially among the Abakakamega, however, some respondents' disputed this assertion. By doing so, he alleged that, this could easily make to unseat Oparanya who he had

⁶⁶⁰George Likami (55 Years), Oral Interview at Isulu market, on 10/12/2022

accused him of mismanaging the county's resources. He could not hide his support for senator Khalwale.⁶⁶¹

The act of using a cultural activity to sell political agenda has even been employed by other politicians from the county.⁶⁶² For instance, lately, candidates from different parties have switched their attention to bullfighting matches that are dominated by fanatical crowds in villages as they hope to win the support of voters 40 days before the August 9th General Election. From these discussions, it is emerging from this study that bullfighting is a popular cultural activity among the Idakho and Isukha communities in Kakamega County.⁶⁶³ But the popularity of the contests has spread to neighboring communities, including the Batsotso and the Kabras.

Apart from the campaign thrill and excitement, another respondent, Amukanga Simon said, bullfighters in the region have other ideas about the sport. For instance, he explained that officials of the Kakamega Bullfighters Association have decided to use the bullfighting contests to promote peaceful campaigns and minimize political antagonism ahead of the polls.⁶⁶⁴ The campaigns had electrified activities in villages, with owners of champion bulls grooming their animals, and preparing them for matches during political rallies.⁶⁶⁵ There are four reigning champion bulls in Kakamega currently -vena, Power, Ringo and Nandi. Avena is from Shisasari in Shinyalu, Power from Lirhembe, Ringo belongs to Idakho Central MCA Charles Imbali and Nandi is from Murhanda. Bonventure Munanga, the director of the Kakamega Bullfighting Association, said bullfighters from the region are hoping to

⁶⁶¹Ibid

⁶⁶²E. Lewine. (2006). *Op. Cit*, p.78

⁶⁶³Ibid

⁶⁶⁴Amukanga Michael (48 Years), Oral Interview, at Murhanda stadium, 12/12/2022

⁶⁶⁵E. Lewine, (2006). *Op. Cit*, p.78

reap big from political activities ahead of the polls as candidates are keen to organize matches to popularize their campaigns.⁶⁶⁶

Due to the high demand and the uniqueness of using bullfighting in political field, especially in campaigns, this study was interested in knowing the price of hiring a bull by politicians who do not own any. One of the respondents, Munanga retorted that:

For a politician hiring bulls to stage a fight and popularize his campaigns, it could cost them up to Sh350,000, including mobilization and other logistical charges. During ordinary bullfighting matches, bulls that participate in League A have higher charges that range between Sh15,000 and Sh20,000, while those in League B are charged between Sh8,000 and Sh10,000. For League C, the charges are between Sh4,000 and Sh6,000. During such contests, governorship candidates are charged Sh350,000 while parliamentary ones pay between Sh150,000 and Sh170,000. Candidates for ward representative have to part with Sh100,000 to host a bullfighting match. “But other than the money, we are more concerned about peaceful campaigns during the emotive electioneering period. Bullfighting is a popular activity that brings together large crowds and those in attendance do not see themselves as members of one political party or the other.⁶⁶⁷

The politicians and the residents of various localities where bullfighting is done just mingle and cheer as they enjoy the thrill of the bullfighting matches.

Munanga also added that, some senior politicians from the region such as United Democratic Party(UDP) leader Cyrus Jirongo, is among the latest politicians who cherish bullfighting. In fact, Munanga informed this study that, Jirongo recently agreed with the Bullfighters association to support plans to organize a major bullfighting contest to popularize campaigns of his party in the county. He was approached by the association leaders when then incumbent governor, Wycliffe Oparanya decided to block out bullfighting activity in Isolio grounds in Shinyalu.

⁶⁶⁶Ibid

⁶⁶⁷Munase John (33 Years), Oral Interview, At Lirhembe, on 15/12/2022

This decision had frustrated them and they had to look for assistance. Supported by his colleague, Munase John posited that:

We are not happy with the decision of the county government to lock out bullfighters from using the two grounds. Communities from around Khayega have been using the ground for various activities, including bullfighting matches.⁶⁶⁸

Despite the setback, bullfighters from Shinyalu, Ikolomani, Kabras, Ileho, Butso and Makunga have decided to use the contests as a platform to promote peaceful campaigns in the region. Stephen Mukabwa added that they have been approached by several candidates who are keen to organize bullfighting competitions to promote peaceful campaigns as they try to win the support of voters.⁶⁶⁹

From the preceding discussions a Focused Group Discussion of bull owners at Malinya confirmed that: In Kakamega County, bullfighting is a popular sport among the Isukha, Idakho, communities.⁶⁷⁰ This study acknowledges that the sport is practiced at important events and during the burial of elders and respected people in the community.⁶⁷¹ Despite this, it is paradoxical that the sport has been commercialized and owners of champion bulls have been cashing in on its popularity to make money. Moreover, the study reckons that the sport has evolved into competitive leagues across the county, exciting bullfighters in the region. In order to regulate the sport, the study is advising the Kakamega county government to come up with guidelines for contests.⁶⁷²

Together with the Bullfighters association leaders, they should jointly draft a policy to regulate bullfighting instead of banning it completely as some leaders from the

⁶⁶⁸Ibid

⁶⁶⁹Stephen Mukabwa (31 years), Oral Interview at Malimil market, on 14/12/2022

⁶⁷⁰ FGD of bull owners at Malinya on 20/12/2022

⁶⁷¹E. Lewine. (2006). *Op. Cit*, p.80

⁶⁷²J.M.C Lopez, *et. al.*, (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 335.

government want it to be like. The policy should be made so as it addresses other issues like safety, including making available ambulances and security guards during contests.⁶⁷³ This is meant to ensure that the community is satisfied that their heritage is preserved. Also, the policy should make the government introduce insurance covers for both the animals and spectators. This will ensure the sport is more official and will increase the number of participants taking part. Bullfighting and politics are two practices that are much connected among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. Bulls put one to fame and through this; one can be motivated to climb on political position in the community.

4.3.2 Bullfighting and community leadership

Bull owners whose bulls bring victory among the Abakakamega attracts friends and people from other different places. Bulls make them known and make them respected. For bulls to win several times on the bullfighting arenas among the Abakakamega, it's believed that there are some efforts one does in terms of feeding, treatment, general care such as boosting and training the bull to fight, to communicate among others. On this basis, people tend to respect these bull owners as a way of learning from them, as a sign to show they are great farmers. The rest of the population recognize them during functions, they are allowed to take leadership positions and authority.⁶⁷⁴ These bull owners use such opportunities to vie for elective positions such as Member of County Assembly, Member of Parliament, and Member of the Senate among others.

Justus Isalambo, a key informant to this study, pointed out that before 2017, Charles Imbaali was an individual who was not known to the Idakho community especially

⁶⁷³E.Lewine. (2006). *Op. Cit*, p.78

⁶⁷⁴J.M.L. Lopez. *et. al.*, (2022). *Op. Cit.*, p. 335.

around Malinya.⁶⁷⁵ Later he started keeping bulls for bullfighting and had a bull called *Ringo*. He took good care of this bull, introduced it to fighting and with time Ringo started fighting aggressively bringing victory to the community and people were happy more so when Ringo overthrew several bulls on away games such as in Isukha, Kabras and Maragoli. Ringo became famous as well as Charles Imbaali himself. People started respecting Imbaali and made him an advisor of other bull owners in Idakho. Later, Charles decided to use the same avenue to vie for the member of county Assembly in the year 2017. He won after overthrowing his competitors by a big margin and became the member of county Assembly. Justus further informed the study that, during the campaigns, they were referring to him as "Charles wa Ringo" to mean Charles the owner of Ringo. Unfortunately, Ringo started losing battles to his opponents and in the same way, by 2022, Charles also lost his position as a member of the county Assembly as Ringo had started letting the community down.

This subsection's findings were unraveled by political culture theory. It emerged that bullfighting, as a cultural practice, can be deeply tied to the cultural identity of the Isukha community. Political culture theory can help analyze how bullfighting is used as a symbol of identity and how it contributes to the formation of a collective political consciousness. Bullfighting may be associated with notions of bravery, strength, or cultural pride, and it can evoke a sense of shared identity among the Isukha people, potentially influencing their political engagement and behavior.

Political culture theory has assisted the researcher to examine power dynamics and political mobilization within the Isukha-Idakho community. Bullfighting among the Abakakamega community might serve as a platform for political mobilization and the

⁶⁷⁵Justus Anami (35 years), Oral Interview at Shihuli, on 13/11/2022

expression of power relationships. It can be used by political leaders or elites to gain legitimacy or rally support for their causes. Bullfighting events may also provide opportunities for community members to engage in political discourse, express grievances, or voice their concerns, thereby shaping the political landscape within the Abakakamega community.

Political culture theory has made the researcher to explore how traditional institutions and governance structures influence political behavior. Within the Isukha-Idakho community, bullfighting may be associated with specific customary or traditional practices, which can have implications for local governance. The organization and regulation of bullfighting events, the involvement of traditional leaders or councils, and the decision-making processes surrounding bullfighting can reflect the political dynamics within the community and the influence of traditional systems of governance.

Lastly, political culture theory also helped in examining how political socialization processes shape citizens' attitudes and behaviors. Bullfighting, as a cultural practice, can contribute to the political socialization of individuals within the Isukha and Idakho community, particularly the younger generation. Participation in bullfighting events, observing the rituals and traditions associated with it, and learning about the values and norms attached to bullfighting can shape individuals' political attitudes and their engagement in wider political activities.

4.3.3 Chapter Summary

The chapter examined the influence of bullfighting on the social cultural, economic and political development to the people of Abakakamega since 1850. It dwelt on the social developments of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. It was noted with

absolute greatness that the social growths of people in Abakakamega are more united by the events and culture of bullfighting. Without this, there can be a gap as far as social norms are concerned. The chapter also has addressed the cultural developments of bullfighting. It was averred that bulls and men are alike and they are still celebrated in accordance with the values they embody at the heart of the Luhyia community especially in the Abakakamega community.

The study discovered that there are three types of economic effects: direct effects, which assess the cost incurred by the cultural sport during festival events, and indirect effects, which are more difficult to account for because they imply the cost incurred by the general public when foreign spectators attend bullfighting events in Kenya. Finally, Induced effects, which gauge the effects of the holiday on the world economy and functions as a multiplier, were also considered. Bullfighting was mentioned as having an impact on the growth of the Isukha and Idakho communities through tourism, which Kenya has continued to welcome both domestically and internationally.

Another issue that was well addressed was the political developments as a result of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. This issue emanated to be carrying more weight in the bullfighting activities among the Abakakamega. The study found out that, most of the prominent politicians from the region use bullfighting events as an avenue for campaign. Led by Boniface Khalwale, other politicians such as Fernandes Barasa also are involved in the event in order to reach large group of persons. From the findings of this study, the chapter recorded that in Kakamega County, bullfighting is a popular sport among the Isukha, Idakho communities and other communities such as Batsotso, Wanga, Maragoli, Kabaras. This study acknowledges that the sport is

practiced at important events and during the burial of elders and respected people in the community. This chapter leads to summary, conclusion and recommendations, the subjects of chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the key findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the three specific objectives. In chapter one, the study explained the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions. It also attended to the significance of the study, limitation of the study, scope of the study and justification of the study. Furthermore, the chapter addressed the literature review related to the study, theoretical framework and provided a summary of the gaps. Finally, the chapter ended with the ingredients of research methodology that aided in the success of this study.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The key findings were summarized in the order of the listed objectives of the study. The study had three specific objectives. First was to trace the origins and development of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. The second specific objective was to assess the various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega and finally, the third objective sought to examine the influence of bullfighting to the development of the Abakakamega since 1850.

5.1.1 Assessment of the Origin and development of Bullfighting Culture

The findings of the first specific objective of the study: to assess the origins and development of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is found in chapter two of this thesis. The study recorded and assessed the data provided by both primary and secondary sources. Important to note is that, the interrogation of the objective was guided by the use of articulation theory in the assessment of the origin and development of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. The articulation theory

provided a framework of analyzing the interconnections between various social, cultural, and economic elements emerging on the topic of the study. Moreover, the use of this approach facilitated a comprehensive analysis of how bullfighting emerged, evolved, and continues to shape the cultural fabric of the Abakakamega community.

The findings are as follows. First, bullfighting among the Abakakamega has a long history and its origin dates back to when these people started settling in the area, estimated at c.1850. This means that bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega, originated from within. Secondly, the study established that the culture originated from the grazing fields where animals could start fighting and eventually it became something to entertain the herders. It later moved from the grazing fields into the community. Thirdly, some respondents opined that bullfighting originated from wrestling events. They explained that, after wrestling had become something dangerous because of people injuring others, the community resorted to bullfighting after the colonial masters banned it. Abakakamega sought to get another game that could bring them together for entertainment purposes just as wrestling did. They therefore opted to bring bulls together for fights instead of people wrestling and harming each other, thus replacing wrestling with bullfighting. Essentially, bullfighting originated from the local leaders' (*baami'*) homes because they had so many animals as part of their wealth (*miandu*).⁶⁷⁶ They used to organize for bullfights to entertain their people and as a way of showing off their wealth as a symbol of confirming their authority.

⁶⁷⁶K. Muchanga, (1998). Impact of Economic Activities of the Ecology of the Isukha and Idakho Areas of Western Kenya c. 1850-1945. M.A. Thesis, Kenyatta University.

Bullfighting culture later moved into the community and was embraced by the majority of the people. It was used to entertain mourners and appease the dead during burials of prominent persons in the community. In the same way, Thomson while looking at bullfighting in Spain asserts that the cultural sport performed on foot by *toresos*, was a tradition that emerged in the 17th century but later spread all over Spain and increasingly became dominant. Gradually, bullfighting grew and was embraced as a tradition which culminated fully into a cultural activity to date among the Abakakamega.⁶⁷⁷ This cultural sport has continued to develop over time and now entails new breeding methods, modern treatment and care of these animals, and the need to have stadia as arenas for the sport.

The study established that, bullfighting culture is majorly practiced by the Isukha and Idakho communities who are occupy Shinyalu and Ikolomani constituencies. However, it is also spreading to other communities in the Luhya nation, especially among the Kabras, Maragoli, Batsotso, Wanga and Banyore. The spread to other Luhya communities may be due to intermarriage, proximity in terms of geographical location or due to popularity of the bullfighting sport. Notwithstanding the spread of this sport, the intensity of its practices remains a domain of the Abakakamega (Isukha and Idakho).

The study also found out that, while in other countries such as Spain, Portugal, Mexico among others where bullfighting is between a bull and a matador (a human fighter), among the Abakakamega, it is about two bulls locking horns. Human beings only play the role of catalyzing the bulls to fight ferociously. The bulls that lock horns

⁶⁷⁷K. Thompson, (2010a). Binaries, boundaries and bullfighting: multiple alternative human-animal relations in the Spanish mounted bullfight. *Anthropos*, 23(4), pp.317–336.

are ensured to be of the same weight as well as stature. Considering the bulls' physique creates an entertaining spectacle during the fight. However, there is still a lot of comparison and learning that Abakakamega bullfight culture can get from elsewhere. For instance, the bullfighting in Portugal and Spain is more organized than the bullfighting among the Abakakamega. In Europe, the stadia or arenas are well guarded and the level or rate of injuries is limited compared to the bullfighting among the Abakakamega.

For Geertz, reading culture is like doing archaeology; culture is exposed and explained layer by layer until it gives a significant meaning (for example, interpretation understanding). By interpretative understanding of culture, Geertz also implies the context (situation, time, condition) of the symbols used.⁶⁷⁸ The interpretation of Balinese cockfight is a classic example of Symbolic Anthropology or interpretive approach. In the case of Abakakamega, the study found out that the bullfight is a symbolic event, which offers a window through which outsiders can peep into Abakakamega culture and find out what keeps this community together. There are two contradictory relationships within Abakakamega society. For instance, interpreting the event as a cultural "text" through which one attempts to understand the inner nature of Isukha and Idakho communities, is a way of acknowledging how the "bullfight" symbolizes and underscores the social relations (kin or village, community), conflicts, rivalries between different communities and the social solidarity within a single Abakakamega community.

Political culture theory was pertinent in making this finding. Betting at bullfights is also a way of expressing the villagers' and kin's "we-feeling" which also relates to the

⁶⁷⁸L. Geertz, (1992). 'Cultural studies and/in new worlds', in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10, pp.1-22.

existing mode of agriculture as a practice of economic and cultural cooperation between the members of the family, clan, community and as a society as guided by the mode of production in the articulation theory. It is not only the fight between two animals (bulls) but also between the owners of different villages or communities in the "game form" which serves as a function of uniting them as a community. This is a factor that Durkheim alluded to in the functional theory.⁶⁷⁹

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega is a major entertaining cultural sport done mostly on Saturdays, as well as on some national holidays. This day was adopted to allow many enthusiasts get an opportunity to attend it. Saturday is not an official working day for the civil servants and therefore the best day that favors every individual that wants to attend the game as Sunday is left for the church goers.

The study underscored that, bullfighting is a sport and cultural practice that is unifying the Abakakamega people because it is founded on a friendship basis. This is attained by virtue of it having the power of bringing together different families, clans and communities. It is notable that, a family cannot fight their own bulls as it may lead to conflict or misunderstanding between the members of the same family. Instead, it should be two different families. This has created an avenue for interaction, harmony, and sharing of ideas in terms of trade and other economic ideas. Therefore, based on the functionalism theory, the bullfighting plays the function of uniting and creating friendship and harmony among the families and clans among the Abakakamega.

This study also noted that bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is inherited. It works well within the families with history of bull keeping. An outsider cannot

⁶⁷⁹E. Durkheim (1994). *Op. Cit.*, pp. 437-439

manage to keep bulls and be allowed to participate in bullfighting activity. He cannot even be scheduled since this is considered a bad omen to the Abakakamega community. *Shilembe* is also a special ceremony done among the Abakakamega which is a way of giving a befitting sendoff to old men aged above 60 years who were leaders and heroes of great events like world wars. This has enhanced bullfighting culture among the Isukha and Idakho people. *Shilembe* is the most respected festival among the bullfighting community and to the Abakakamega at large since it is a great honour accorded to a few people. It is equivalent to a state burial for Abakakamega, and for it to be declared, a lot of scrutiny into the history of the dead is done to ascertain the authenticity of the deserved persons. Otherwise, it is believed the person can turn into an evil ghost to haunt the family. Also, Abakakamega believe that if *shilembe* is not performed to the rightful persons, the bulls can refuse to fight or if they fight, they can cause a lot of injuries to themselves and the crowds. This has seen bullfighting respected and tends to assure the community of its permanence among the Abakakamega.

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega, during pre-colonial period, was a man's affair where women and young men were not involved. It was an opportunity where mature old men could meet and discuss matters concerning the community. However, at the time of this study, it was established that even women are now allowed to own bulls and are given a platform to make them fight with the others whenever the sport is scheduled. Moreover, children, especially boys, who are at the age of circumcision but have not yet been circumcised, are the ones who are given the responsibility to feed the bulls. This is a paradigm shift in the bullfighting culture. The study further established that, there are rituals done before, during and after bullfighting which helps to frame this cultural sport as a unifying factor among the Abakakamega.

Examples of these rituals include a special way of communicating with bull like human beings. There is also a strong belief that when bull dies at the arena its meat cannot be sold but its rather shared among fans. Bull owners also believe in the spirits of forefathers and use of herbs to inspire bulls during fights.

There are also some taboos that govern bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho communities to ensure its authenticity and avoid its dilution. One is not allowed to engage in sex one week before bullfighting as it is believed the bull can lose the battle or it can turn violent against human beings. Additionally, women undergoing menstruation should not come closer to bulls when they are scheduled for the fight as it is believed they are unclean. It is also pertinent to note that bullfighting cannot be organized when one of the diehards is bereaved. If the fight schedule was done earlier, it is either postponed to a later date or it is canceled to avoid curses or breaking the taboos governing this culture. In addition, two brothers cannot be allowed to organize a bullfight of their own bulls. This is believed to be a sign of engaging the two in a fight and can easily break the family unity. Therefore, these taboos have played a big role in guiding Abakakamega's moral behavior and discipline. The taboos have also helped to outline their social relationship as they continue abiding by them. From oral tradition, the taboos were practiced by the Abakakamega's forefathers. This therefore confirms that by following these taboos, Isukha and Idakho communities are according respect to elders and leaders which is a reason for social cultural development among the Abakakamega. Furthermore, this also defines Abakakamega social-economic and political developments.

Other communities have also embraced bullfighting culture and the sport is still expanding to other far communities. By the time this study was being carried out,

bullfighting had expanded to Maragoli, Kabras, Wanga, Bunyore, and to the Iteso. Despite its spread, the Abakakamega still remain the bedrock and moguls of bullfighting.

Interestingly, the study unraveled that there is a special way of naming bulls. Bulls were initially named after prominent people or heroes globally. This is not the case today. Currently, bulls are also named after society's leaders like Mandela, Raila, Ruto and also natural happenings such as Corona or Covid-19

Abakakamega still believe in *misambwa* 'spirits' and use of herbs in strengthening the bulls. They are given some special herbs that make them grow and increase in size. There are some traditional activities that are done to the bulls so as to make them understand the language of the human beings when they are communicating them. This strengthens their relationship with human beings during the fight hence enhancing the human-bull relationship and attachment among the Isukha and Idakho communities.

Bullfighting has undergone developments and a paradigm shift since pre-colonial period. Example of these changes includes new breeds used in bullfighting such as Jersey, Friesian among others as compared to old breeds such as Borana and Zebu. The bull owners furthermore informed this study that a crossbreed bull performs better than a pure breed or Zebu or Boran. The cross breed has a combination of features that make it a good performer in fighting. Before social media came on the scene, the fans and people in general were informed or sensitized via the word of mouth or the sounding of the horn (*shisiliba*) or the *Isukuti* beating and whistling. Furthermore, use of technology such as Facebook, WhatsApp has been instrumental in mobilization and updating of fans over bullfighting activities. Transportation of

bulls to bullfighting arenas by use of lorries and involvement of, youth and women in bullfighting are among things that have change the outlook of bullfighting. The paradigm shift has therefore served as a link between the ancient bullfighting and the modern world hence a better way of accommodating the current and future generations in bullfighting culture.

5.1.2 Aspects contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting among the Abakakamega

The second objective of the study was to assess the various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. The data collected was interrogated within the framework of political culture theory as well as functionalism theory. The use of these two theories helped the researcher to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Political culture theory helped in highlighting the cultural and political dimensions, examining the shared beliefs and values that shape the bullfighting practice, while functionalism theory focused on the social functions served by bullfighting within the community. Combining these perspectives in this study provided an insight into how bullfighting functions as a cultural and social institution, contributing to the cultural identity, social cohesion, and overall growth of the Abakakamega community. The key findings in this objective are categorized in pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial period as follows,

5.1.2.1 Aspects contributing to the Growth of Bullfighting during Pre-colonial period

The study found out that during pre-colonial period, there were many grazing fields among the Abakakamega referred to as *mubwayilu*, *mukhabuuse*, *mulwenya* in the community and the Kakamega forest. This provided an opportunity to own bulls

hence a factor for bullfighting to flourish. The grazing fields allowed bulls to get plenty of pasture. It also provided an avenue for the bulls to start fighting each other thus allowing the animal owners realize their growth and capability to fight one another. In other words, the grass (pasture) was enough and the playing grounds available for the fights.

The study also found out that, *baami* (local administrators) who also got engaged in bullfighting served as catalysts as they encouraged and participated in this sport. They ensured that there were strategies and rules put into place to guide the community on the bullfighting activity. This created confidence among the animal owners and they decided to engage in the activity by investing in some muscular and strong bulls. It has been noted that to be a leader (*mwaami*), one had had to possess enough wealth (*miandu*), and animals especially bulls must be part of the wealth. The presence of the bull in a home was regarded as a symbol of power and virility.

Availability of herbs in the forest also served as a basis for growth of bullfighting. These herbs were found in the forest (Kakamega, Kimingini Hills) and sought by the old men who were tasked with medicinal responsibility among the Abakakamega. They used these herbs to treat their bulls, to increase bulls' appetite, and some acted like boosters. This provided confidence to the bull owners who did not fear engaging in the raring of bulls since their welfare as far as health is concerned was well observed and taken care of.

As already noted, bullfighting was founded on the basis of friendship. It was believed that by bulls coming together, the two parties involved strengthened their friendship. Therefore, the aspect of forming friendship in these periods encouraged more bullfighting which in turn led to the expansion of this cultural sport. The friendship

was established when the bull owners saw each other and they had to exchange some words of goodwill and success before the game and shaking of hands after the game. This strengthened friendship among the Abakakamega families, clans and relatives.

5.1.2.2 Aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting during the Colonial period

During the colonial period, bullfighting as a cultural sport also attracted the colonialists who asked the locals to organize for them fights for entertainment. They gave owners of the winning bulls some tokens such as clothes, caps and goodies hence making bullfighting attractive to everyone. In addition, the participation of these colonialists in bullfighting culture attracted more people because many locals then wanted to see *musungu* (the white man). This in turn attracted more bull owners and ended up improving the livelihoods of the Abakakamega people.

To some extent, the Catholic Church has contributed to the growth of the bullfighting culture. According to Adrian Anyika, the moment people noticed that, the *musungu* priest loved bullfight and *isukuti* dance, they too embraced the culture wholeheartedly. They were highly encouraged to keep bulls and by doing so, the activity grew exponentially. For instance, Fr Joseph Ortiner in his last will had indicated that he be accorded *shilembe* ceremony. As the bulls turned up on his grave at Musoli Catholic Parish, it was to the surprise of other priests, but joy to the local people to honour, “the man of God”, who had appreciated the Abakakamega culture of bullfighting. The Joseph Ortiner *shilembe* had a lot of positive effect on the growth of bullfight among the Abakakamega.

5.1.2.3 Aspects that led to Growth of Bullfighting during Post-colonial period to date

Bullfighting is currently a sport for commercialization. It has become an economic attraction more so to bull owners. For bulls to meet, money is very key and important. Betting has also been introduced by fans. This is indeed a drastic change from what was done in precolonial period. With the advent of the post-colonial era, the modes and understanding of precolonial period have gradually been readjusted to fit in the capitalistic system of the world which is essentially the use of money.

Another factor that is making bullfighting to grow is the engagement of different age groups. This is encouraging sharing of responsibilities which is making bullfighting a community affair hence leading to its growth. Young men and youth learn more about bullfighting at an early stage. This has ensured and assured the future of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. The county government of Kakamega was also helped in building of stadiums such as Malinya bullfighting stadium and among others that are underway like Khayega and Isolio. This is encouraging bullfighting among the Isukha and Idakho communities. These stadia have also been used as market places and meeting places when there is a community issue that needs to be sensitized by the authorities. This means bullfighting as a sport has other spillover effects that boost the economy of the Abakakamega.

Support from local government; sub-chiefs, chiefs, sub-county commissioners, have never discouraged bullfighting. This has given the bullfighting community an upper hand and free will to continue practicing this culture. This has indeed strengthened the sporting activity among the Abakakamega community. Politicians have also played a bigger role in expanding bullfighting among the Abakakamega. A good example is

Bonny Khalwale the current senator of Kakamega County who has been using bullfighting to attract people to vote for him. As politicians get involved in bullfighting, they make the sport to grow. At the time of this study, other politicians such as the current governor of Kakamega, Fernandes Barasa and former Lugari legislator Cyrus Jirongo are among some of the politicians who have started using bullfighting to mobilize the masses for political gain.

The use of social media technology such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups, to attract high multitudes of people is very good to bullfighting growth among the Abakakamega. People get more attracted to bullfighting as they follow the updates on the social media. In addition, rituals, taboos and beliefs surrounding bullfighting culture bonds Abakakamega to these bulls hence ensuring continuation and growth of this sport. These traditional items are termed as the catalysts to the bullfighting activity. They are the ones which have continually been observed and ensured bullfighting grows day by day.

Death of leaders and heroes is also another issue sparking bullfighting among the Abakakamega. *Shilembe* is a cultural ceremony that brings and unites different people and communities in attendance. This is helping the culture to spread and expand. This tradition has seen great leaders among the Abakakamega highly respected. It has also seen the community upholding the tradition, year in, year out.

5.2.0 Examining the Influence of Bullfighting on the Development of the Abakakamega Since 1850

The third and last specific chapter of this study was to examine the influence of bullfighting culture to the development of the Abakakamega. This objective used both the political culture and articulation theory. By utilizing both theories, the researcher

gained comprehensive insights into the influence of bullfighting on the development of the Abakakamega community since 1850. These theories aided the researcher in providing the frameworks to analyze the political, social, cultural, and economic dimensions of bullfighting, allowing for a nuanced understanding of its impact on the community's development and dynamics. The findings of this objective were as follows:

5.2.1 Influence of Bullfighting on Social-cultural Development

On the social influence of bullfighting among the Abakakamega, it has emerged that people of all kinds of social hierarchies are usually involved with bull-related entertainment, from the largest towns in Kakamega County to the smallest villages such as in Shinyalu, Khayega and Tea zone areas. This means, bullfighting is a ubiquitous cultural activity and can be staged not only in the urban centers but also in the villages.

The *shilembe* is no longer the only model against which to measure the authenticity of bullfighting and its variations. There are many forms of bullfighting practices that are more or less independent of one another. Each of these events take place in connection with distinct festivities, but their sense of unity can only be viewed through the processes of diffusion, acculturation, assimilation, transplantation, and rejection that govern their organization.

Bulls and men alike are still celebrated in accordance with the values they embody at the heart of the Abakakamega community. In this sense, bullfighting festivals are an influential vehicle of identity and a key moment in social reproduction. Bullfighting as a cultural sport among the Abakakamega has served as a platform to bringing many families together and as a result, they have been united. This is as a result of taboos

and beliefs connected to bullfighting such as shaking of hands by bull owners before any fight and restriction against members of the same family fighting their bulls. Ceremonies and events that involve bullfighting such as *shilembe*, bullfighting competitions, are also other ways of bringing Abakakamega together which in turn helps them mingle, share ideas and build social relationships. This affirms unity among the Isukha and Idakho people. In addition, bullfighting as a social-cultural sport among the Abakakamega has given them an identity, not only in Kenya, but in the rest of the world. Isukha and Idakho people are well known for bullfighting in Kenya.

Bullfighting has been the main source of entertainment among the Abakakamega since pre-colonial period. It is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of an audience, or gives pleasure and delight. It's an idea, a task, activity and an event that has been developed over thousands of years specifically for the purpose of keeping audience's attention. Entertainment in this context includes a cultural element. Culture is for the continuity of Isukha and Idakho people who share a commonality, like festivals, ceremonies, race, religion, beliefs or geography. Entertainment has been important to them as it brings them together and has been a good way of bonding the entire family and society. Entertainment brings happiness, which is fundamental and powerful medicine that aids health and well-being. All festivals such as the three types of *shilembe* discussed in this study, among these people are cultural. They all serve the purpose of bringing happiness to people, and strengthen a sense of commonality, harmony, solidarity and sense of humor. Lastly is that, despite the setbacks, bullfighters from Shinyalu, Ikolomani and beyond, like in Kabras, Ileho, Butso and Makunga have decided to use the contests as a platform to promote peaceful campaigns in the region.

5.2.2 Influence of Bullfighting on Social-economic Development

The bullfight has several transactional activities; therefore, it is difficult to fit oneself into a single one. The bullfight as transactional activity that can be measured into three types of economic effects: direct, indirect and induced. The sum of these three values represents the impact of bulls on their local economy through exchange of commodities produced and they attract more local and external tourists' day by day. Direct effects evaluate expenses made by cultural sport's activities containing festival celebrations, fuel purchase for ferrying fans, use of *bodaboda*, prize awards to the owners of bulls that win, selling of the bulls among others. The popular celebrations done mostly on Saturday are very important in this community.

Indirect effects in bullfighting is difficult to account, because it is very difficult to calculate the generating surplus, exchange of commodities, services that people are receiving one way or the other, calculate financial expenditures, managerial tensions, costs, remuneration of deployed human resources in treating the bulls, caretakers, the organizers and the public makes, when they attend a bullfight tournament. The expenditure begins with the viewers' expenses on transportation, accommodation and catering among others. Transactional impacts of the bullfight celebrations cannot be limited only to the economic perspectives; how much in the economy is spent and how much economy is generated. Therefore, the induced effects measure the impacts of the bullfighting in the Abakakamega world, acting as a multiplier effect. The effect on the national income and product of an exogenous increase in demand. For example, when the investment demand increases by one, and when the national product has increased, it means that the national income has increased. Bullfighting is another avenue for Abakakamega to identify their leaders. Many politicians get attached to bullfighting in order to attract voters. Many bull owners among the

Abakakamega have been given leadership in the community and they are indeed opinion leaders who are respected and consulted.

5.2.3 Influence of Bullfighting on Political Development

Bullfighting among the Abakakamega has been used by politicians during campaign period as a vote hunting tool. The study found out that politicians use bullfighting crowds to deliver their agenda and encourage votes. Examples of politicians who have used bullfighting to attract votes include Cyrus Chirongo the leader for united Democratic Party (UDP), Wycliffe Oparanya the former Governor of Kakamega County, current senator Bonface Khalwale, Fernandez Barasa the current Governor of Kakamega and William Ruto the current president of Kenya. The study further found out that bullfighting creates a relationship between a community and its leaders among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. Bull owners whose bulls bring victory among the Abakakamega attracts friends and people from other different places. Bulls make them known and make them respected. For bulls to win several times on the bullfighting arenas among the Abakakamega, it's believed that there are some efforts one does in terms of feeding, treatment, general care such as boosting and training the bull to fight, and ability to communicate among others hence being seen as fit to lead Abakakamega.

5.3 Critics of Bullfighting

The findings above do not mean that all the Abakakamega embrace and love bullfighting. Right from the colonial period, some missionaries did not like the bullfighting event and the *isukuti* dancing. They even criticized Fr. Arnold Witlox for associating with shilembe and isukuti dances. The missionaries believed that one of

the hiding places for the devils in Africa was the African dances.⁶⁸⁰ That the Bisukha wriggling of their hips, swinging their bottoms and making their breasts tremble was immorality in its most blatant form.⁶⁸¹ That is why Fr. Witlox method of using bulls fighting and dancing *isukuti* was not taken over in any other missions except in Isukha and Idakho areas. However, notwithstanding the criticism, Fr. Witlox used the bullfighting and *isukuti* dances to bring many people among the Abakakamega to Christianity.

Also, critics from some Protestant churches have blamed the Catholics for their connection with bullfighting especially when Fr. Joseph Ortiner wrote in his last wills that he should be given *shilembe* send off. The Protestants also detest bullfighting and term it devilish paganism. Sometimes, they discourage *isukuti* dances and funerals having *shilembe* when one of their followers is dead.

Educationists and other critics have also singled out bullfights as an avenue of retrogression in education.⁶⁸² This is because, many young people, even the school going children are attracted to it more at the expense of education. Some respondents accused the organizers of bullfighting for giving the youth bhang, *chang'aa* and all sorts of drugs. They argue that the current *shilembe* or *isukuti* dances and bullfighting are not morally friendly to the young and women because they have become avenues and conduits of drug abuse, sexual misdemeanor and disrespect. These critics believe that unless the stakeholders and leaders in the bullfighting culture change tact, bullfighting is going to cause many school drop-outs, pregnancies, alcoholics and drug abuse. The research established that many of the politicians and the businessmen

⁶⁸⁰H. Burgaman, (1991), *Op. Cit.*, p.69

⁶⁸¹*Ibid.*, p.69

⁶⁸²<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/05/hundreds-of-thousands-oppose-plan-for-bullfighting-courses-in-spanish-schools>

do not have their children participating in bullfighting. Its claimed children of the rich go to school; some in boarding schools but it's the poor man's children being misused in the bullfighting and some of these young people end up dying painful deaths. Therefore, it behooves the government and the stakeholders to take quick measures and save the misused youth in Kakamega.

However as this is realized among the Isukha and Idakho communities, it is worth for this study to note that, even though bull rearing can bring in some income, it cannot be compared to the benefits of dairy animals. The economists argue that the rearing of bull for fight is in itself a perpetuation of poverty. They continue to explain that the bulls eat more pasture and the bull need special care. The bull has to be fed on expensive *chang'aa* (*kamachina*), drugs name it. Even after the fight, the token or honorarium, or payment given to the owner does not reach home to support livelihoods. Instead, any money given to the bull owner after the win, is shared among the many fans and fanatics of the sport. The owners of the bull have also to buy *chang'aa* for the close friends. Eventually the owner remains poor. The argument was that those with bulls and are rich are the likes of those who are employed or have other sources of income. However, if it is the bull alone, the owner wallows in abject poverty. Thus, it is better to have dairy animals than to rare bulls for fighting only for prestige. With all the history and publicity of this sport and the large crowds, it attracts the Abakakamega area in Kenya, the last report on poverty index for this area stood at 4.77%,⁶⁸³ hence the question “is bullfighting of any benefit to the economy of Abakakamega? This does not mean that it is only the bullfighting to be blamed for the abject poverty; there are other intervening factors that combine with this event such as

⁶⁸³Kenya Republic of Kenya, (2009). *Kakamega South District Development Plan 2008-2012*. Nairobi Government Printer.

unemployment, land holdings that are far too small to be economically viable, and high level of societal breakdown.⁶⁸⁴

5.4. Conclusions

This chapter provides conclusions as per the order of objectives addressed by this study. They are as follows. Objective one was about tracing the origins of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega. The concept of bullfighting among the Abakakamega has a long history dating back to 1850 when the Isukha and Isukha people started settling around their current location. Origins of bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega was from within. The study concluded that it originated from grazing fields, wrestling events and around *abaami's* homes where rearing of animals in large numbers was common among the Abakakamega people. The culture continued to grow overtime and was later embraced by the majority of the people in Isukha and Idakho who have made bullfighting culture to be what it is today. In addition, the study concluded that, the pioneers of bullfighting are the Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya. The culture is also inherited as it works well among people with bullfighting history. With regards to functional theory used in this work, it is based on the premise that all aspects of a society-institution, roles, norms, culture among others serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long-term survival of the society. This study therefore, concluded that bullfighting culture cannot be separated from them as it is what defines the Abakakamega are socially, economically and politically.

The second objective was about interrogating various aspects contributing to the growth of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. Based on this objective, this study

⁶⁸⁴ <https://www.povertist.com/factors-making-kakamega-the-poorest-county-in-kenya>

concluded that bullfighting growth was realized in three periods; pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods to date. The study further concluded that bullfighting culture was founded on the basis of friendship and entertainment in the pre-colonial period. The culture has undergone a paradigm shift during colonial, post-colonial periods and to date. The paradigm, just to mention, has led to women and youth getting space to participate in bullfighting, changing the culture into an economic venture that has necessitated its continuous growth among the Abakakamega.

The third objective examined the influence of bullfighting to the development of Abakakamega since 1850. The study concluded that bullfighting has defined the development of the Isukha and Idakho communities social-culturally, economically and politically. The innovation bullfighting has undergone is an evidence that the culture is and will continue to be embraced among the Abakakamega. Bulls among the Isukha and Idakho people are highly honored as they play a greater role in the cultural life of these people. This study also concludes that, it is unclear whether it is possible to undertake a single, unifying reading of all bullfighting practices without making outrageous simplifications. Furthermore, if the society treats bullfighting as a ritual that is defining them, it seems unlikely that such a ritualization should conceal a single, unchanging meaning of bullfighting activities. It is more enlightening to show that the links between bullfighting and these functions such as bullfighting tournaments, *shilembe* are multiple, relating to an “invention of tradition” where the interests of identity and commerce merge. This tradition restores to bullfighting the image of a very ancient phenomenon that represents an authentic culture rooted in Isukha and Idakho that the simple presence of the bull seems to guarantee and

demarcate.⁶⁸⁵ Carlos Contreras confirms that bullfighting is a lucrative business that has a significant impact on the economy.⁶⁸⁶ He further alludes that bullfighting generates millions of shillings per season. Again, financial gains are likely a reason why Congress and the Courts are reluctant to prohibit bullfighting in Colombia. Among the Abakakamega, bullfighting events contribute a lot to the financial flow of the Isukha and Idakho communities through business and tourist attraction. On this note, the study finally, concludes that bullfighting is a cultural sport for entertainment and a source of income for many people in Shinyalu and Ikolomani Sub- Counties in Kakamega County.

Ultimately, bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega is a practice that cannot be underestimated, instead, it should be valued. Durkheim Emile affirmed that all aspects of a society, institutions, roles, norms etcetera serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long term survival of the society.⁶⁸⁷ All along, the study concluded that bullfighting plays a great role in social-cultural, social-economic and social-political development among the Abakakamega of Western Kenya. Bullfighting culture has given the Isukha and Idakho people an identity not only in Kenya but globally as it one of the aspects that makes them known. It has also served as an avenue of uniting and connecting them through festival and tournament events. Bullfighting has further defined the political system among the Abakakamega where politicians and bull owners use the culture to climb to leadership positions in the community. The cultural sport has further shaped the economic development among these people through tourism and business activities. This therefore gives a better

⁶⁸⁵A. Vega. (2028). Legal Framework of Bullfighting and Societal Context in Colombia, Michigan State University College of Law, pp 12.21.

⁶⁸⁶C. Contreras, (2017). *Op. Cit.*, p.45

⁶⁸⁷E. Durkheim, E. (1994). *Op. Cit.*, pp.433-440

explanation as to why Abakakamega of Western Kenya have continued to embrace bullfighting since time immemorial. It is on this background that the study concludes by noting that bullfighting culture which originated from within the Isukha and Idakho of Western Kenya has led to the development of these communities since 1850.

5.5 Recommendations

The study's recommendations are based on the summary of the key findings and the conclusions drawn from the specific objectives of the research. Based on the first objective which was to trace origins and development of bullfighting, the study recommends that the church leadership among the Abakakamega should revisit the strategy that was adopted by Fr. Arnold Witlox on promotion of African culture and at the same time spreading the gospel to the people in an easy simple manner rather than visiting each person in their home. In this case, the issue of church community relationship should be strengthened through bullfighting among the Abakakamega. In addition, bull owners, bull caretakers, and fans are sometimes at risk as bulls turn violent against them. Some have died while others are left with injuries. Therefore, the study recommends that the bullfighting Association works with the county government to have insurance cover in case of such incidents. The study further recommend that, the existing laws on prevention of cruelty to animals should be implemented by bullfighting participants and better monitored by animal welfare personnel and livestock officers.

In the second objective which was to assess the various aspects contributing to growth of bullfighting, the study recommends that, the leadership of Bullfighting Association of Abakakamega should come up with a fixture that will see bullfighting taking place

the same way as football and rugby in Kenya. This will make it easier for the people from other communities and even the tourist to have a schedule that they can follow and visit the area to watch the game hence enhancing a source of income to the residents.

In the last objective which examined the influence of bullfighting culture to the development of Abakakamega of Western Kenya, the study recommends that, the county government of Kakamega in collaboration with the National government should fund the construction of good and modern bullrings as it is witnessed in countries such as Spain, Portugal and even Mexico where bullfighting has been professionalized. The current state of using open fields is not safe even for the persons who watch the locking of bulls. This will encourage even the physically challenged people in the community to attend the events. As for Kakamega bullfighting association they should adopt bloodless type of bullfighting practiced in Bosnia and Uganda to avoid animal torture and human deaths by bulls. Furthermore, all the cultural events should be inclusive of bullfighting among the Abakakamega. This will ensure that multitudes of persons will attend and it will end up being an avenue to teach the society about the Abakakamega culture as well as sensitization on other salient issues of the society. Furthermore, the taboos that are associated to bullfighting culture among the Abakakamega needs to be documented to make the world of academia be informed and maybe facilitate the inclusion of this sporting activity in the academic disciples of sport curriculum in institutions of higher learning.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

While the researcher was conducting the study, there were some areas that needed to be expounded more which were directly touching the likelihoods and co-existence of Abakakamega in regards to bullfighting culture. Therefore the study suggested the following areas that call for the attention of the future researchers as per the objectives;

In the first objective, the researcher should consider investigating the potential for discovering archaeological evidence of bullfighting or associated cultural practices; excavations at historic sites or rite-of-passage locations may turn up artifacts or constructions connected to bullfighting rituals.

In the second objective, the future scholars should examine how modernization and globalization have impacted Abakakamega bullfighting and further examine whether there are any efforts to preserve traditional practices in the face of external influences.

Lastly in the third objective, the upcoming scholars should look forward in writing about the instances of resistance or adaptation to bullfighting culture within the Abakakamega community and also investigate whether there have been any periods of decline, revival, or modifications in the practice and the reasons behind such changes.

REFERENCES

- Babb W. Wilkie 1976. *Ritual Paradoxes in Nepal: Comparative Perspectives on Tamang Religion*, Vikas Publisher, Michigan.
- Babbie Earl and Mouton James (2002). *The Practice of Social Research*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Bales Robert and Parsons Talio (2014) *Family: Socialization and interaction process*. Routledge.
- Brook Michael Billings (2004). *The Real Mexico. Mexico's Dance with death*. Mexico City, online access
- Centre, UNESCO World Heritage. "France - UNESCO World Heritage Centre". Retrieved 21 January 2017.
- Csikszentmihalyi Mihaly and Csikszentmihalyi Isabella Selega (1988). *Optimal experience: Psychological studies of flow in consciousness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Douglass Carrie (1997). *Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
- Douglass Carrie (1999). *Franz Boas: The Early Years, 1858–1906*. Seattle: Washington: University of Washington Press.
- Dundes Alan (1997). *From Game to War and Other Psychoanalytic Essays on Folklore*, Lexington: The university Press Kentucky.
- Elazar Daniel Judah (1970). *Cities of the Prairie: The Metropolitan Frontier and American Politics*. Basic Books, New York.
- Flyvbjerg Bent.(2001). *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- Foucault Michel (1977) *Discipline and Punish*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.

- Getz Donald (2022). Event management. In *Encyclopedia of Tourism Management and Marketing*, Edward Elgar Publishing
- Haidt Jonathan (2012). *The righteous mind*. Pantheon Books, New York.
- Hemer R. Susan and Dundon Alison (2016). *Emotions, Senses, Spaces: Ethnographic Engagements and Intersections*. University of Adelaide Press.
- Kennedy Alison Louis (2000). *Kennedy on Bullfighting*, New York: Yellom Jersey
- Kenya Republic of Kenya, (2009). *Kakamega South District Development Plan 2008-2012*. Nairobi Government Printer.
- Kerlinger Fred Nichols (2007). *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, Winston publication, New-York.
- Kibigo Mary Lukamika. (2019). *The Role of Language in Facilitating Culture: A Case Study of the Isukha Community, Kakamega County in Kenya*
- Kothari C. Ronald (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, New Delhi: New Age International,
- Lewine Edward (2005). *Death and the sun: A matador's season in the Heart of Spain*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Lijphart Arend (1980). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Liza Mugil (2008). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, California: SAGE Publishers.
- Marshall Hyatt (1990). *Franz Boas: Social Activist*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Marvin Gaye (1988). *Bullfighting*, Urbana; University of Illinois Press.
- Mauss Marcel (1967). *The gift: Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison. New York: Norton.

- McAleer A. Kevin (2014). *Dueling: The cult of honor in fin-de-siecle Germany (Vol. 283)*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- McCormick John, and Deleon John (2000). *Bullfighting art, technique and Spanish society*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publications.
- Michael Gross (2011). *Ethics and Activism: The Theory and Practice of Political Morality*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitchener A. James (1961). *Matadors of Mexico*. Globe, AZ: D. S. King.
- Morlino Leonardo. (2002). *Introduction to E. Hemingway's The Dangerous Summer*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Morlino Leonardo. (2017). *Political science: a global perspective*. Berg-Schlosser, Dirk, Badie, Bertrand. London, England.
- Muchanga Kizito Lusambili (2020). *Indigenous Ecological Knowledge of the Isukha and Idakho Peoples of Western Kenya, c.1850-1945*, Nairobi: Utafiti Foundation.
- Mugenda Olive Mugenda and Abel Gitau.(1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, Acts Press, Nairobi.
- Ogula A. Paul (2005). *Research Methods*, CUEA publication, Nairobi.
- Ortner B. Sherry (1978). *Sherpas through their rituals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Orwell George (2000). *Homage to Catalonia*, London: Penguin
- Patterson Thomas. (2001). *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States*. New York: Berg.
- Rahman Fazlur. (1982). *Islam and modernity: Transformation of an intellectual tradition (Vol. 15)*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Voinea Camelia Florela (2016). *Political Attitudes: Computational and Simulation Modelling*. Wiley: Chichester.

Voinea Camelia Florela. (2016): *Political Attitudes: Computational and Simulation Modelling*. Wiley, Chichester.

Ward Scott (1984). *Bullfight Festival, Socialization and Entertainment in Taruka-Nepal*, Patan Multiple: Dhoka University.

Wealand Santiago and Robson Tapia. (1960). *The national Spanish festival or the art of bullfighting*. Madrid: Vellasco Gil Publishers.

Welsh Stephen. (2013). *The Political Culture Theory*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Book Chapters

Allport Gordon Willard. (1935), Attitudes. In: Murchison, C. (ed.) *Handbook of Social Psychology*, pp. 798–844. Clark University Press, Worcester.

Creswell John (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (2nd Ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication.

Hadley E. Mac. (1992). *Endocrinology*, 3rd ed.; Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA.

Josephs Allen. (1996). Hemingway's Spanish sensibility. In S. Donaldson (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Ernst Hemingway* (pp. 221–242). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kabaji Egara. (2018). "Masculinity and Ritual Violence: A Study of Bullfighting among the Luhya of Western Kenya", in Uchendu Egodi, ed, *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa*. CODESRIA. ISBN: 978-2-86978-227-3

Lesser Alexander. (1981). "Franz Boas." In *Totems and Teachers: Perspectives on the History of Anthropology*, edited by Sydel Silverman, 1–33. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Richard J., Ellis and Michael Thompson, eds (1997). *Culture Matters: Essays in Honor of Aaron Wildavsky*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.
- Sarajlic Eldar. (2010). *The Bosnian triangle: Ethnicity, politics, citizenship*, CITSEE working paper, 2010/06, School of Law, University of Edinburgh.
- Snowdon (reporter), Kathryn (29 October 2015). "Bullfighting: European Parliament Votes to End EU Subsidies for Farmers Raising Bulls to Fight In Spain: Animal Rights Groups Are One Step Closer To Ending 'Barbaric' Bullfighting". *The Huffington Post*. UK. Retrieved 21 January 2017
- Steinmetz George. (1999). Introduction: culture and the State. In: Steinmetz, George (ed.) *State/culture: state-formation after the cultural turn*, pp. 1–49. Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
- Weber Max. (1949). *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. In Shils, E.A., Finch, H.A. (eds.) (E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch, Trans.). Free Press, New York, pp. 12-31
- Wilson D. Timothy, Sara D. Hodges. (1992): Attitudes as temporary constructions. In: Martin, L.L., Tesser, A. (eds.) *The Construction of Social Judgments*, pp. 37–65. Erlbaum, Hillsdale

Journal Articles, Reviews and Papers

- Al-Busafi Majid. (2012). Oman: An emergent sport nation, history and future directions. *International Journal of Sports Studies*, 2(5), pp.233–242.
- Allport Gordian Willand. (1929). Composition of political attitudes. *Am. J. Sociol.* 35(2), pp.220–238.
- Alvaro D. Montes. (2011). Bullfighting (Fiesta Brava) in Mexico, In *Humane Society International*, 7(87), pp. 54-78

- Bassegoda Nonell. (1966). Bullfighting and tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(5), pp.545-556.
- Beilin O. Katarzyna. (2012), Bullfighting and the war on terror: Debates on culture and torture in Spain, 2004–11. *Int. J. Iber. Stud.*, 25, pp.61–72.
- Ben Marn. (2015). "France cuts bullfighting from cultural heritage list". *The Local France*. Retrieved 6 June 2020.
- Brandes Stanley. (2009). Torophiles and torophobes: The politics of bulls and bullfighting in contemporary Spain. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 82(3), pp.779–794.
- Charles Tilly. (2001): Mechanisms in political processes. *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 4, 21–41
- Chigbu Uchendu Eugene. (2019). Visually hypothesizing in scientific paper writing: confirming and refuting qualitative research hypotheses using diagrams. *Publications*.7 (1):22, pp.78-96
- Cohen Erik. (2014). Bullfighting and tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 19(5), pp.545-556.
- Cordeiro R. Luz. (2015). Hidden and Unintended Racism and Speciesism in the Portuguese Animal Rights Movement: The Case of Bullfighting. *Theoria*.
- de Boo Jasmijn and Knight Andrew. (2005). "Concepts in animal welfare": a syllabus in animal welfare science and ethics for veterinary schools. *Journal of veterinary medical education*, 32(4), 451-453.
- del Moral Leandro, van der Werff Peter, Bakker Karen and Handmer John. (2003). Global trends and water policy in Spain. *Water International*, 28(3), pp.358-366.
- Dittmer Lester. (1977). Political culture and political symbolism: toward a theoretical synthesis. *World Polit.* 29(4), pp.552–583

- Donald Petterson (2004). *Revolution in Zanzibar: An American's Cold War Tale*. Westview. pp. 253–290. Retrieved 15 September, 2013.
- Douglas Carrie. (1984).” Toro Muertos, Vaca Es: An Interpretation of the Spanish Bullfight” *American*.
- Dyker A. David. (1972). The Ethnic Muslims of Bosnia: Some basic socio-economic data. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 50, no. 119: 238–56.
- Eckstein Harry. (1988). A culturalist theory of political change. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 82, 789–804
- Elkins D. James and Simeon E. B. Richard. (2010). A cause in search of its effect, or what does political culture explain? *Comp. Polit.* 11(2), pp.127–145.
- Gasparyan Armen Yuri, Ayvazyan Lilit, Mukanova Ulzhan, Yessirkepov Maelen, Kitas D. George. (2019). Scientific hypotheses: writing, promoting, and predicting implications. *J Korean Med Sci.* 34(45), pp.72-89
- Hague, Rodgers. (2017). *Political science: a comparative introduction*. In *Social Science History*, 34(4), pp.200–214.
- Hall Situart.(1985). ‘Signification, representation, ideology: Althusser and the poststructuralist debates’, in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2(2), 91–114.
- Jackman W. Robert and Miller A. Rose.(1996). The Poverty of Political Culture, Faculty Publications: *Political Science*. vol. 7(49), pp.95-110
- Jose, M. Galan. (1994). Bullfight Scene in Ancient Egyptian Tombs: *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 2(1), pp.3-12
- Krebsbach Susan and Jones Mark. (2018). Veterinary Report on Bullfighting a Behavioral Assessment of the Distress Experienced by Bulls in the Bullfighting Arena. In *Proceedings of the Animal Welfare Science Symposium*, Barcelona, Spain.

- Kroeber Louis , Alfred Louis, Benedict Ruther, Emeneau Murray, Herskovitz Melville, Reichard Gladys, Aiden J. Maison. (1943). *Franz Boas: 1858–1942*. Arlington, TX: *American Anthropological Association*, pp. 35-40.
- Lowie Robert. (1944). "Franz Boas (1858–1942)." *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (223): 59–64.
- Lowie Robert. (1947). "Franz Boas: 1858–1942." *National Academy of Sciences, Biographical Memoirs* 24 (9): 303–20.
- Mansour P. Gary. (1997). Review of Douglass: Bulls, bullfighting and Spanish identities. *Arizona Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 1(1), pp.214–215.
- Maria A. Gustavo, Mazas Beatriz, Zarza J. Francisco , de la Lama Genaro C. Miranda. (2017). Animal welfare, National Identity and social change: attitudes and opinions of Spanish citizens towards bullfighting. *J. Agric. Environ. Ethics*, 30, pp.809–826.
- Marijn Kruk. (2008). "Stierenvechten stuit op toenemend Frans verzet". *Trouw* (in Dutch). Retrieved 6 June 2020.
- Mitchell J. Tom. (1986). Bullfighting: The Ritual Origin of Scholarly Myth. *Journal of American Folklore*, 99(394), pp. 394-414.
- Pateman Carole. (1971). Political culture, political structure and political change. In *British Journal of Political Science*, 1(3), pp.291–305.
- Reisinger H. William. (1995). The renaissance of a rubric: political culture as concept and theory. *Int. J. Publ. Opin. Res.* 7(4), pp.328–352.
- Robert Lowies. (1944). "Franz Boas (1858-1942)." *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (223): 59-64.
- Sarajlic Eldar. (2011). The return of the consuls: Islamic networks and foreign policy perspectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 11(2), 173-190.
- Schuz Andrew. (2008). "Moors and the Bullfight: History and National Identity in Goya's "Tauromaquia"". *The Art Bulletin*. 90 (2): pp.195–217.

- Seligson Mitchell. (2002). The Renaissance of Political Culture or The Renaissance of the Ecological Fallacy? *Comp. Polit.* 34(3), pp.273–292.
- Seaplane Andrew. (2013). Jumping to conclusions: Bull-leaping in Minoan Crete. In *Society & Animals*, 21, pp.194–207.
- Silva Luis. (2018). National identity on the Portuguese-Spanish frontier. *Anthr. Today*, 34, pp.19–22.
- Steiner Carole., & Reisinger, Y. (2006). Understanding existential authenticity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(2), pp.299–318.
- Thompson Kennedy. (2010a). Binaries, boundaries and bullfighting: multiple alternative human-animal relations in the Spanish mounted bullfight. *Anthrozoos*, 23(4), pp.317–336.
- Thompson, K. (2010b). Narratives of tradition: the invention of mounted bullfighting as “the newest also the oldest.” *Social Science History*, 34(4), pp.523–561.

Online Sources

Animal Ethics. Bullfighting and Other Entertainment Using Bulls. Available online: <https://www.animal-ethics.org/animal-exploitation-section/animals-used-for-entertainment-and-as-companions-introduction/bullfighting/>(accessed on 3 September 2020)

Casamitjana, Jordi. ‘Suffering’ in bullfighting bulls; An ethologist’s perspective. http://www.ffw.ch/files/Bullfight%202008/eng_jordi_casamitjana.pdf.

Accessed July 14, 2008.

Council of Europe. European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming

Purposes. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw_european_convention_protection_animals_en.pdf(accessed on 10 September 2017).

Encyclopaedia Britannica. (n.d.). *Bullfighting*. Retrieved January 16, 2014, from <http://global.Britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/84444/bullfighting> *Ethnologist* 11, no. 2 Vol. 80(81), pp. 81-96.

Govan, Fiona (13 July 2011). "Hemingway's seminal writings on bullfighting". *Daily Telegraph*. Retrieved 30 June 2020.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese-style_bullfighting

<http://vendevous.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/bullfightinghallowed-tradition-or-animal-torture/.ke/other-sports/news/the-fighting-bulls-of-western-kenya/25185>

<https://boxscorenews.com/the-fighting-bulls-of-kakamega-p158724-272.htm>

<https://www.citizen.digital/sports/bullfighting-how-to-nurture-a-bull-for-the-fight-and-what-the-sport-entails-ales-from-kakamega-n316930>

<https://www.itinari.com/bosnian-bullfights-in-a-nutshell-cujp>

<https://www.pilotguides.com/articles/battle-death-mexican-bullfighting/> *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 25(1), pp. 61-72.

Kimmelman, M. (2008, June 1). Bullfighting is dead! Long live bullfighting! *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/01/sports/playmagazine/601bullfight.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

Kocherga A. (2008). *Child bullfighters face death in the ring*. Accessed July 16, 2008.

Portuguese American Journal. Available online: <https://portuguese-american-journal.com/parliament-portuguese-lawmakers-reject-a-bill-banning-bullfights-portugal/> (accessed on 20 October 2018).

Sometimes described as a tragedy in three parts, a *corrida* consists of picadors, *banderilleros* and the matador's killing of the bull/

Sophie. (2010). *Bullfighting as a bloody tradition*. Retrieved January 14, 2014, from <http://blog.hostelbookers.com/travel/bullfighting-tradition/>

Published and Unpublished Thesis

Almela, M. (2018). *The Social and Economic Impact of Bullfighting in the Tourism Sector*. Ph.D. Thesis, Universidad Jaume I, Castellon, Spain.

Kavulavu L. (2017), *The History and Culture of Idakho people of Western Kenya during the Pre-colonial Period*, Master's Thesis, Karatina University

Muchanga, K. (1998). *Impact of Economic Activities of the Ecology of the Isukha and Idakho Areas of Western Kenya c. 1850-1945*. M.A. Thesis, Kenyatta University.

Unpublished Works

Costa, M. (2016) Working Document: *Bullfighting in Portugal*. *Public Affairs*. Unpublished work.

Archival Sources

KNA/PC/NZA/4/4/118: *Agriculture and administration.*

KNA/DC/KMG/2/1/165: *Isukha Location.*

KNA/DC/KSM/1/28/96: *Chiefs' monthly reports.*

KNA/DC/KMG/1/2/1: *Associations, Societies and Other Public Bodies (Natives).*

KNA/DC/KAPT/1/24/15: *Administration, Kapsabet.*

KNA/DC/KMG/1/1/25: *Colony and Protectorate of Kenya.*

KNA/NN/23/2.1930-1935: *Early History of the growth of Luhyia people*

KNA/NN/22/1/1926: *Clans and Sub-tribes of Abaluyia*

KNA/NN/23/2/1927: *Characteristics of local chiefs.*

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaires

Dear..... I am a master's student of History from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, carrying research on *Situating Bullfighting Culture and its Influence on the Development of the Abakakamega of Western Kenya Since 1840*. I request you to assist me by answering this question to make this research successful.

A. ASSESSEMENT OF THE ORIGIN OF BULLFIGHTING CULTURE

1. How do you understand Bullfighting?
2. Where did Bullfighting originate from?
3. How did Bullfighting start in Kakamega?
4. Who were the pioneers of Bullfighting in Abakakamega?
5. How has Bullfighting developed in the modern era? Is there a paradigm shift from 1850?
6. From your opinion, is Bullfighting professionally practiced today? If yes, when did it began and why?
7. How is Bullfighting organized among the Abakakamega?
8. From your view, is bullfighting related to any cost? Are there charges to conduct the activity?
9. What are the implications (sparks) of bullfighting in Kakamega?
10. Is bullfighting in Kakamega only limited to Isukha and Idakho?

B. ASPECTS CONTRIBUTING TO GROWTH OF BULLFIGHTING AMONG THE ABAKAKAMEGA

11. What are the key issues that accelerate bullfighting in Abakakamega?
12. How important are these issues?

13. What are some factors that have facilitated the growth and development of Bullfighting among the Abakakamega?
14. Is there a relationship between the current versions of bullfighting to that practiced before 19th Century?
15. What are some cultural developments that have led to the development of Bullfighting?
16. How does the economic status of the Abakakamega related to Bullfighting?
17. What is the place of Kakamega county government in Bullfighting?
18. How has Bullfighting been affected by Kenyan politics in the recent past?
19. How much do politicians hire a bull for the fight? How does it influence Bullfighting?
20. From your own view, do you think Bullfighting should be maintained and ensured it continues? Why?

C. EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF BULLFIGHTING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABAKAKAMEGA

21. From your own opinion, does bullfighting have any outcome?
22. Discuss some of the social effects of bullfighting in Abakakamega.
23. How have these social effects in 22 above affected the people of Abakakamega?
24. Is bullfighting compared to a Premier league? Are there standings to the bulls?
25. What is the relationship between bullfighting in Abakakamega and the Luyia semantics?
26. What are some of the economic effects of bullfighting to the livelihoods of the Abakakamega?
27. How has Kenyan politics affected Bullfighting in Kakamega?

28. How long do bulls take in Bullfighting?
29. How has bullfighting promoted the culture of Abakakamega people?

Appendix II: List of Key Informants (Interview and Oral Interviews)

S/NO.	NAME	SEX	AGE	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW	PHONE NUMBER
1	Boniface Munanga-KII	M	48	Khayega	27 th /11/2022	0723 434 153
2	Andrew Salambo-KII	M	73	Khayega	27 th /11/2022	0720 953 092
3	Philip Shitsukhane-KII	M	45	Khayega	28 th /11/2022	0721 719 832
4	Amukanga Michael-KII	M	48	Lirhanda	29 th /11/2022	0727 098 074
5	Gabriel Ambani-KII	M	72	Museno	29 th /11/2022	0722 552 548
6	Peter Isabwa-KII	M	83	Sigalagala	30 th /11/2022	0710 160 764
7	Alfred Munala-KII	M	65	Museno	30 th /11/2022	0700 632 639
8	Donald Ambeyi	M	48	Shinyalu	30 th /11/2022	0722 562 545
9	Richard Amisi	M	52	Malimili	31 st /11/2022	0742 229 432
10	Ignatius Khayumbi	M	61	Malinya	31 st /11/2022	0704 803 118
11	Meshack Luchendo	M	76	Ibwitsende	01 st /12/2022	0722 561 233
11	Francis Mwavishi	M	29	Ilala	01 st /12/2022	0727 565 498
13	Vincent Seta	M	29	Malinya	01 st /12/2022	0728 175 611
14	David Ukunjo	M	30	Malinya	02 nd /12/2022	0727 592 135
15	Musa Machoni	M	36	Isolio	02 nd /12/2022	0722 358 004
16	Aggrey Wangula	M	37	Ileho	02 nd /12/2022	0721 795 158
17	Stephen Mukabwa	M	31	Malimili	03 rd /12/2022	0725 604 272
18	Felistus Utunga	F	42	Malimili	03 rd /12/2022	0702 816 328

19	Pamela Makomere	F	46	Bushitsiula	03 rd /12/2022	0711 280 319
20	Joyce Minyikha	F	36	Malaika	04 th /12/2022	0702 295 799
21	Silver Muhanji	M	22	Shianyinya	04 th /12/2022	0729 214 893
22	Calvin Tsinganga	M	18	Musoli	04 th /12/2022	0711 496 107
23	AbosolomShibanda	M	73	Shinyalu	05 th 12 2022	0728 100 623
24	Brandon Shikutwa	M	24	Malinya	06 th /12/2022	0725975294
25	Geofrey Anyoba	M	26	Shinyalu	06 th /12/2022	0726597075
26	Wilson Liposhe	M	50	Ikolomani	7 th /12/2022	0725287081
27	Carolyne Atamba	F	46	Sigalagala	7 th /12/2022	0710517792
28	Donald Ndolia	M	51	Museno	8 th /12/2022	0714317975
29	Josphat Matekwa	M	50	Ilala	9 th /12/2022	0720635698
30	James Shilaka	M	40	Irobo	10 th /12/2022	0707866036
31	Linus Abungana	M	48	Shisasari	01 st /12/2022	0785597587
32	Gabriel Litala	M	49	Mugomari	01 st /12/2022	0790624743
33	Antone Luvembe	M	55	Musoli	2 nd /12/2022	0727082323
34	Derrick Amaita	M	40	Igumu	2 nd /12/2022	0704682241
35	Naphtal Shivachi	M	56	Shanderema	2 nd /12/2022	0729357651
36	Mourice Mulinya	M	78	Isolio	3 rd /12/2022	0708909050
37	Godfrey Angalushi	M	58	Munyenye	3 rd /12/2022	0724764336
38	Arthur Muchela	M	50	Isulu	3 rd /12/2022	0717897430
39	Alex Shiuma	M	72	Kaimosi	3 rd /12/2022	0743727280
40	Musa Machoni	M	36	Isololio	4 th /12/2022	0710172090
41	Aggry Wangula	M	37	Ileho	4 th /12/2022	07167897890

Appendix III: FGD 1-Bull Owners from Shinyalu

S/NO.	NAME	SEX	AGE	VENUE	INTERVIEW DATE	OCCUPATION
1	Hassan Shikundi	M	38	FGD GROU P 1; Khaye ga	11 th /12/2022	Farmer
2	Derrick Khamasi	M	51		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
3	Caroli Nziya	M	48		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
4	Paul Mukanzi	M	39		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
5	Japheth Shikoli	M	55		11 th /12/2022	Businessman
6	Francis Lisulu	M	40		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
7	Sarah Inyangala	F	43		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
8	Paul Mulama	M	46		11 th /12/2022	Farmer
9	Elima Genge	F	36		11 th /12/2022	Businesswoman
10	Musa Nasoro	M	51			11 th /12/2022

Appendix IV: FGD 2-Bull Owners from Malinya

S/ N	NAME	SEX	AGE	VEN UE	INTERVIEW DATE	OCCUPATIO N
1	Alfred Munala	M	63	MA LIN YA MA RKE T	20/12/2022	Farmer
2	Stanley Shihafu	M	40		20/12/2022	Farmer
3	Francis Mwavishi	M	38		20/12/2022	Farmer
4	Vincent Seta	M	29		20/12/2022	Farmer
5	Clement Shibutse	M	72		20/12/2022	Farmer
6	Thomas Abukwi	M	48		20/12/2022	Farmer
7	Linus Abung'ana	M	39		20/12/2022	Farmer
8	Josephat Muchiti	M	60		20/12/2022	Farmer
9	Emmanuel Isalambo	M	33		20/12/2022	Farmer
10	Rapahel Atsiaya	M	27		20/12/2022	Farmer

Appendix IV: FGD 3: Local and Community Leaders from Shinyalu

S/NO.	NAME	SEX	AGE	VENUE	INTERVIEW DATE	OCCUPATION
1	Alfred Shivachi	M	54	Khayega Stadium	12/11/2022	Assistant chief
2	Colleta Khatenje	F	63	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer
3	Antone Luvembe	M	55	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Chief for Shirulu ward
4	Caroli Muchinya	M	70	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer
5	Gabriel Litala	M	49	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Former Chief
6	Clement Amutsa	M	60	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer
7	Lucy Luchitio	F	59	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Businessperson
8	Getrude Khamonya	F	54	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer
9	Derrick Amaita	M	40	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer
10	Samson Luvembe	M	38	Khayega Stadium	28/11/2022	Farmer

Appendix V: Local and Community Leaders from Ikolomani

S/NO	NAME	SEX	AGE	VENUE	INTERVIEW DATE	OCCUPATION
1	Raphael Lichoti	M	49	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Nyumba Kumi in Musoli
2	Naphtal Shivachi	M	56	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Chief-Sabane
3	Danstone Ingaya	M	60	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Sub-chief in Shiveye
4	Mourice Mlinya	M	78	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Former Chief in Isulu
5	Godfrey Angalushi	M	58	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Farmer
6	Arthur Muchela	M	50	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Farmer
7	Susan Khati	F	47	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Farmer
8	Irene Musonye	F	43	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Farmer
9	Margret Shitilo	F	28	Malinya Stadium	19/11/2022	Women leader- Ikolomani
10	Ali Musa	M	30	Malinya Stadium 297	19/11/2022	Businessman

Appendix VI: DPS –MMUST Approval Letter



MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

Tel: 056-30870
Fax: 056-30153
E-mail: sgs@mmust.ac.ke
Website: www.mmust.ac.ke

P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

Date: 26th September 2022

Larry Iswekha Chiteyi,
HIS/G/01-54511/2020
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Chiteyi,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your master's. Proposal entitled: *'Situating the Bullfighting Culture in the Development of the Abakamega of Western Kenya Since 1850'* and appointed the following as supervisors:

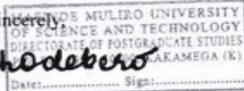
1. Fr. Dr. Kizito M. Lusambili - Department of Social Sciences- MMUST
2. Dr. Luke Ahaya - Department of Social Sciences- MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Education Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Social Sciences. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of two years from the date of registration to complete your master's thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix V: NACOSTI Letter



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION



Ref No: **909925**

Date

of Issue: **02/March/2023**

RESEARCH LICENSE

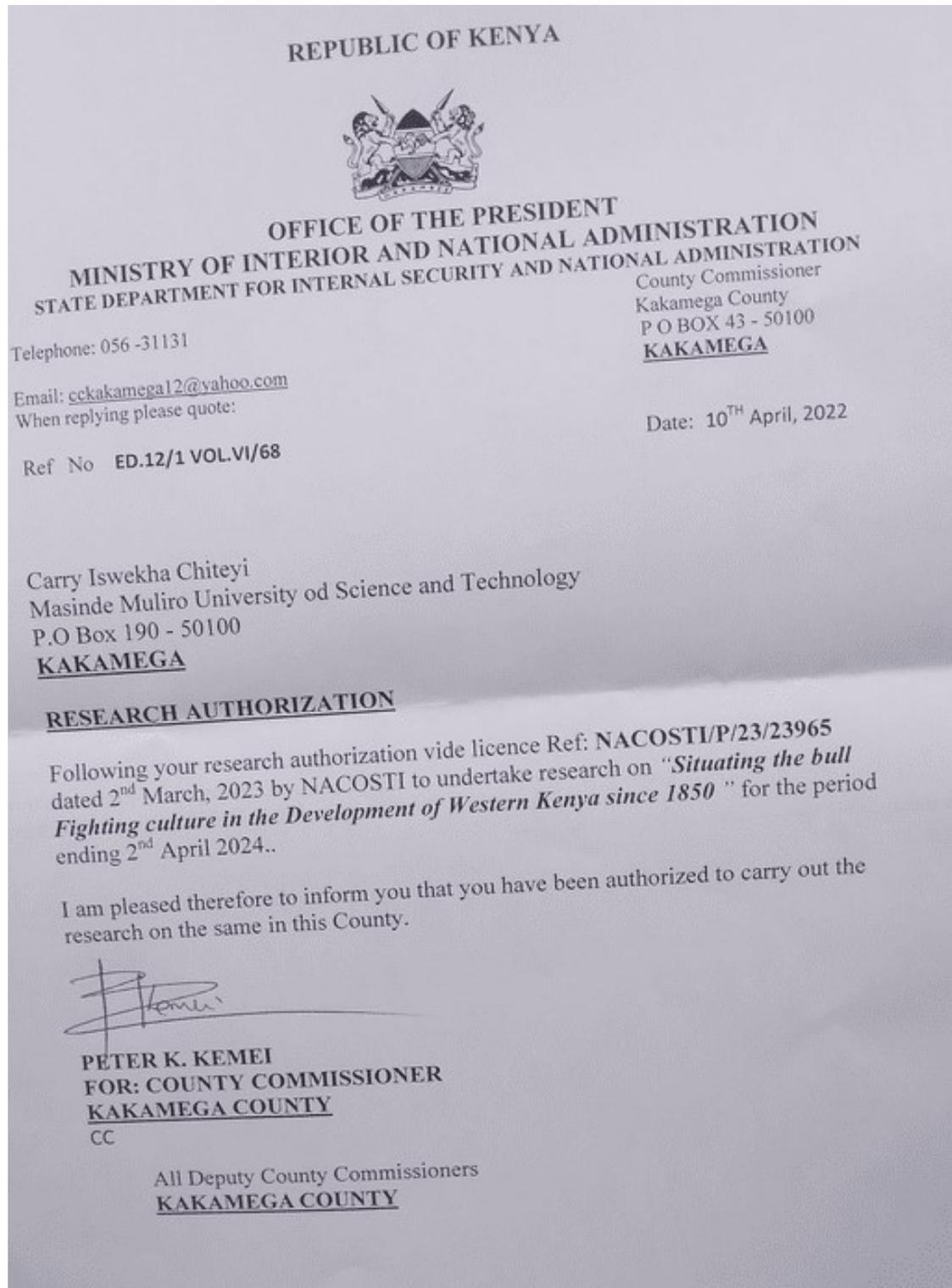


This is to Certify that Mr. LARRY ISWEKHA CHITEYI of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kakamega county on the topic: SITUATING BULLFIGHTING CULTURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABAKAKAMEGA OF WESTERN KENYA SINCE 1850 for the period ending: 02/March/2024



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION

Appendix VI: Research Approval letter from County Commissioner- Kakamega County



Appendix VII: TSC County Director of Education Authorization

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR BASIC EDUCATION

Telephone: 056 -30411
Fax: 056 – 31307
E-mail: rceducation2016@gmail.com
When replying please quote our Ref.

County Director of Education
Kakamega County
P. O. BOX 137 - 50100
KAKAMEGA

REF: KAKA/C/GA/29/17/VOL.VI/224

31st July, 2023

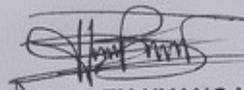
LARRY ISWEKHA CHITEYI
MMUST
KAKAMEGA

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Reference is made to a letter from NACOSTI Ref No: NACOSTI/P/23/23965 dated 2nd March, 2023 concerning subject matter.

This is to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out research on **'Situating bullfighting culture in the development of the Abakakamega of Western Kenya since 1859'**, for the period ending 17th March, 2024.

Please accord him/her any necessary assistance he/she may require.


..... FOR
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KAKAMEGA COUNTY
HELLEN NYANGAU
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KAKAMEGA COUNTY

Copy to:

The Regional Director of Education
WESTERN REGION

Appendix VIII: Letter of Information

Dear (Respondent Name)

My name is Larry Iswekha Chiteyi, A master student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. I am expected to undertake research on **“SITUATING BULLFIGHTING CULTURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ABAKAKAMEGA OF WESTERN KENYS SINCE 1850.”**

Your support in terms of giving me relevant information concerning this topic and your cooperation will give me an opportunity to complete this study. The information I will get from you shall strictly be used for the intended academic purpose and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you in advance

Yours faithfully

Larry Iswekha Chiteyi

..... (Date)

Appendix IX: Consent Form for Respondents

Note to the respondent: This is a Consent form to allow the use of your photographs and verbatim.

I am requesting for your permission to use your photo/s and verbatim in this academic study:

If Yes

I..... (Respondent Name) allow the use of my photograph/s (in case of more than one) and verbatim in this academic research on this day..... (Day) at..... (Time).

If No,

I..... (Respondent Name) **DO NOT** allow the use of my photograph/s (in case of more than one) and verbatim in this academic research on this day..... (Day) at..... (Time)

Signature of the respondent.....

Thank you very much for your acceptance to use your photographs and verbatim in my academic research.