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He has contributed many articles to academic journals on eco-design, eco-ethics, and construction and sustainability. Apart from this 6th volume, Dr.Maina has also authored course books on design materials and processes volume 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, Introduction to ergonomics- a learner's manual, Qualitative & Quantitative research methods simplified, How to Write a Good Proposal and communication skills for college and university students. Among other interests, Maina has researched on glass as design material, recycling of solid waste and human factors for interior ambience. He has also been involved in several consultancies and exhibitions individually and in collaborations.



Cyprian Kavita Kiswili

Born in Machakos, Kenya, Kiswili works predominantly in the medium of painting and digital illustration and aims to depict beauty and sophistication through a combination of colour, texture and shape. He works as a product designer in a reputable shoe production enterprise in Nairobi. Cyprian Kavita Kiswili, who is studying for a Master's Degree in Art and Design at the school of the Arts & Design, University of Nairobi, was among the young designers who competed in the Czech Republic at Bata Fashion Weekend 2019, held at Prague's historic Zofin Palace.

The winning design creates a striking balance between fun and seriousness, taking symbols and icons and expressing them in the form of fashion and is also heavily inspired by illustrations and cartoons. Kiswili winning shoe nicknamed 'Blossom' draws rich inspiration from the cheerfulness, playfulness and fullness of the bushy Savannah land.

HAIR THEN, HAIR NOW: AFRICAN STYLING BECOMING LEISURE FOR ALL

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Abstract

Background: *The idea of leisure connoting free time makes it synonymous with laziness and wastefulness which does not fit very well within African traditional thought. In the colonial era, the idea of leisure was seen as alien to the Africans and in the post-colonial era, some people associated it with idleness and irresponsibility. A deeper dig however in history, shows the African man and woman kept themselves entertained on specific occasions whenever they were not working. These pastime activities included dance, bull fighting, games, drawing and even hair styling. Problem: there exists a deep rooted misconception that African hairstyles are without local aesthetic content or value. From the western view, the African was thought to have no sense of leisure. Objective: the objective of this study was to establish the role and the reasons for varied hairstyles donned by Africans then and now. Design: the study used desktop and library research methods*

Setting: *the study was conducted in Nairobi Kenya under the auspices of the school of the arts and design of the University of Nairobi. Its scope however spanned Africa and the diasporic dispensations all over the world. Subjects: Prominent hairstylists were interviewed. Anthropologist gave their views while experts in*

fashion and fads were involved in a focus group discussion. Results: it emerged that African artistic expression through hair styling persists even in the era great neo-colonial influence from the west. Today, new styles have been infused with the old to forge new expressions away from the traditional ones of aesthetic, entertainment and rebellion. Notable are the Rasta and the hair extensions popular in the Americas among people from Africa and the ex-slave descendants. Conclusion: Several African scholars have explored the history of hair making from pre-colonial Africa to contemporary times (Byrd, 2001). Prior to the colonial times, Black hair denoted cultural and spiritual meanings for both men and women. While some of the hairstyles that were donned by Africans during this period are still worn today, including twists, braids, Zulu knots, Nubian knots, and dreadlocks, the manner and occasions in which they did this will always remain different from modern time's hair making. Standards of beauty have varied enormously according to time and place. Yet as long as people have ordered their social relations, hairdressing has had a role in the struggle for status and reproduction.

Keywords: *Hair making, Leisure, Styles, Plaiting, African comb*

INTRODUCTION

"To be able to feel leisure intelligently is the last form of civilization."

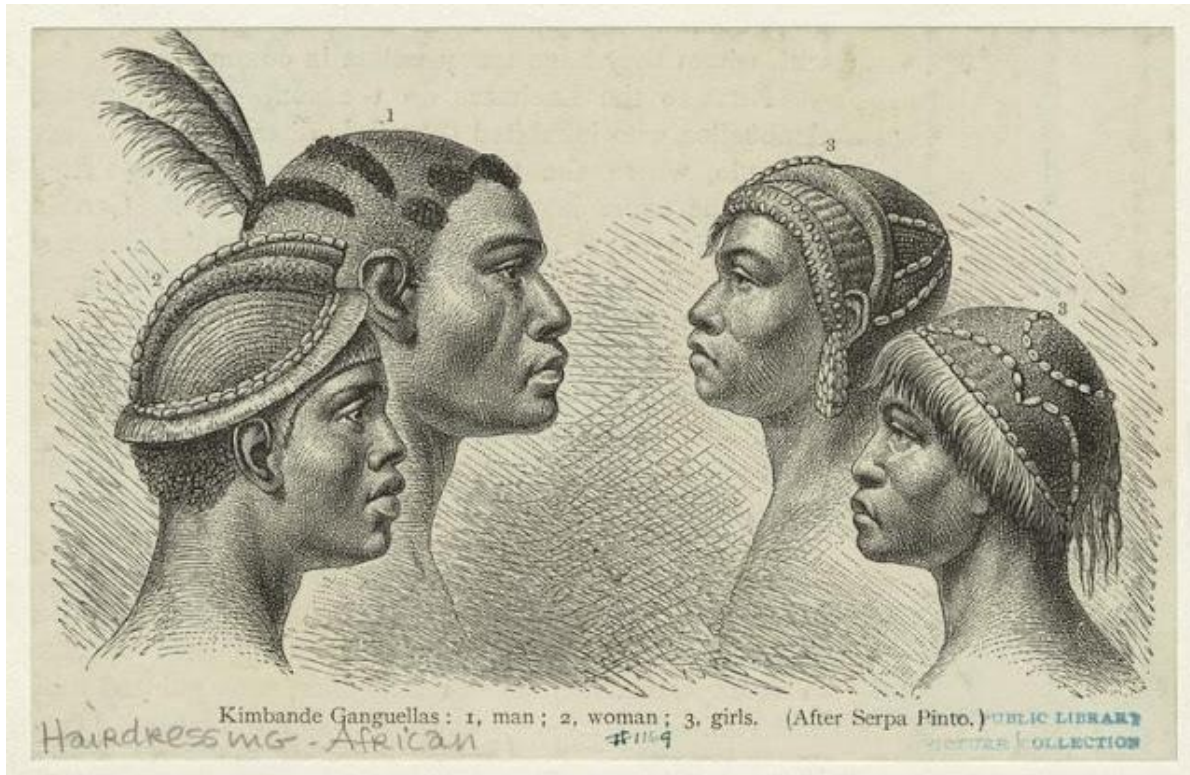
Ambani (2016) writes that historical perspective of leisure in Africa can be traced to the earliest kingdoms and states that were established where the kinship was to be entertained through songs and dances by the kinsmen. It also entailed the celebrations conducted during weddings, circumcision, and good harvest. Leisure time was also spent by indulging in

other social activities for example wrestling and hair styling. Some people viewed leisure as a period of time they called free or unobligated time. For others, leisure was related to recreational activities such as competitive sports, cooperative games, outdoor endeavors, and cultural pursuits and socializing. This paper looks at Hair styling and making as a leisure activity both in traditional and modern African society and the products used in the activity.

THEORY

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF LEISURE

The historical perspective of leisure in Africa can be traced to the earliest kingdoms and states that were established where the kinship was to be entertained through songs and dances by the kinsmen. It also entailed the celebrations conducted during weddings, circumcision, and good harvest. Leisure time was also spent by indulging in sporting activities for example wrestling (Jollah, 2013). In examining the historical perspective of leisure in general, the writer looks at Hair making as a past time.



**Figure 1 Serpa Pinto, Alexandre Alberto Da Rocha De, 1846-1900, artist
Source Title: *History of Mankind*, by Friedrich Ratzel, translated from the second German edition by A. J. Butler, with an introduction by E. B. Tylor, Publisher: New York: Macmillan, 1896-1898.**

Hairdressing in Africa (fig 2) was always the work of trusted friends or relatives. In addition to the amiable social aspects of the event, the hair, in the hands of an enemy, could become an ingredient in the production of a dangerous charm or "medicine" that would injure the owner. This then made hair making a very sacred and important leisure activity in traditional African societies.



Figure 2: Women hair making in Namibia - Photo dated: Anneliese Scherz, 1990's

HISTORICAL ROLE OF HAIR

To comprehend the real importance of hair and styling to African people one must do so through the eyes of an African worldview and cosmology, only then will the full scope of its importance be thoroughly understood (Nomonza, 2010). Throughout the ages, from the Ancient Nile Valley civilizations to the movement West and the establishment of Western African empires, hair has maintained a spiritual, social, cultural and aesthetic significance in the lives of African people. Historically, hair has held significant roles in traditional African societies, including being a part of the language and communication system. For instance, during

the 15th century, African people such as the Wolof (as seen in fig 3), Mende, Mandingo, and Yoruba used hairstyles as means to carry messages.

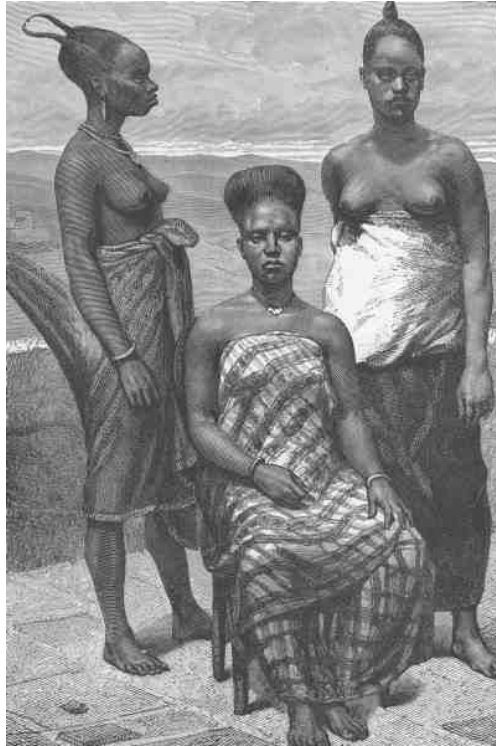


Figure 3 Fante women of Elmina (Edina) in Gold coast (Ghana) with their hairstyle - a wooden engraved drawing (1800-1895).

One of the unique features of African textured hair is its ability to be sculpted and molded into various shapes and forms. Hence, while hair may play an important role in the lives of people of all races, for people of African descent, this role is amplified due to the unique nature and texture of Black hair. Since antiquity, Black hairstyles have been known for their complexity and multifaceted nature, a notion that remains true today (Bellinza, 1992).

SYMBOLISM

According to Mozinba, (2000), hair was and continues to be

used as a marker of various cultural indications. In Africa hair was used to denote age, religion, social rank, and marital status as well as other status symbols (fig 4). For example, during the Medieval African period (12th/13th century), a young Wolof girl would partially shave her head to point out that she was not of marrying age. The extent of social messages in hairstyle choices did not end on the continent of Africa.



Figure 4: historically, hairstyles symbolized certain things. Girl with traditional hairstyle and tribal scarring, Sirigu

As late as the 1980's, Black men wore a style known as the high top fade (fig 3), a hairstyle where the sides of the head are shaved with the top portion growing upwards and as high as possible. The style conveyed various cultural and political messages such as images of

Africa, corporate logos, partner's names, and other symbols were etched into the hair or onto the scalp.



Figure 5: The late 80's black hair High top fade (Kane, circa 1980s. Al Pereira/Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

The high top fade was a modern day method of illustrating the multifaceted symbolism of Black hair—a thing that can be used as the message itself or to state a particular message. Additionally, true to African epistemology, spirituality has played and continues to play an essential role in Black culture. Consequently, because of its integral function, hair has been and continues to be used to increase the potency of medicines and indigenous healing potions. It is an understatement to suggest that hair is merely part of African cultural identity, as hair and identity are inseparable. For both African men and women hair is intricately connected to cultural identity, spirituality, character make up, and notions of beauty.

Of particular importance to this leisure activity that was conducted mostly in the afternoons after long hours in the fields, the tools used such as the comb. The comb had cultural meaning that indicated one's particular group and other spiritual symbolism, personal history, and class status long before Europeans engaged in the mass enslavement of Africans in the 17th century. Men carved these symbols and spiritual demarcations into their combs that were specifically designed with long teeth and rounded tips to untangle African textured hair. These iconic combs are known today as the Afro combs.

HAIRSTYLING TOOLS

A primary tool for shaping and teasing the hair is, of course, the comb. (Schmidt, 1926) notes that "the comb is found among every people of the world, and appears in numerous forms," and that "treating the hair with butter or vegetable oils is a widespread practice, and so is rubbing with earth or lime". To dress the hair, African people used oils and agents such as camwood, clay, and ochers, and devices such as extensions of human hair (from spouses or relatives), vegetable fiber, sinew (Fig. 6), and, more recently, locally spun or imported mercerized cotton



Figure 6: Two women whose braids have been lengthened to their ankles through the use of sinew (eefipa) extensions, Mbalantu of Wambo group, Namibia, Africa Photo: M.Schettler, 1940's

THE AFRO COMB

The Afro comb has long been the product that is used to create eye-catching and cultural relevant hairstyles for men and women of African descent. The Afro comb serves as a status symbol in many African societies and has for centuries. The comb has also come to denote affiliation with certain groups or tribes and can signify one's religious beliefs or rituals. In ancient society and in modern times, the handles of the combs are adorned with objects that artistically showcase a person's status. These include human figure, motifs and pictures of elements in nature. Spiritual artwork is often depicted on Afro combs as well as can be seen in (fig 7).



Figure 7: These four combs were intended as love gifts. Clockwise, upper left: Fante or Asante male artist, Ghana, late 19th or early 20th century. Gift of Henry H. Hawley III. Public domain. Upper right: Akan male artist, Ghana, early 20th century Gift of Dr. Nii and Martina Y. Lower right: Akan male artist, Ghana, late 19th or early 20th century. Lower left: Asante male artist, Ghana, late 19th or early 20th century. Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Willi Riese to the Jennie Simpson Educational Collection of African Art.

There are also archaeological burial records that indicate that some variation of the Afro comb has been around for thousands of years. Studies show that the comb is around 6000 years and originated in Africa before re-emerging in Britain, the Americas and the Caribbean. (H., 1996)



Figure 8: Antique East African Swahili Carved Ebony Hair Comb

SOCIAL HAIR STYLING SIGNIFICANCE

“In the early fifteenth century, hair served as a carrier of messages in most African societies” (K. Anjyo, 1992) These Africans--citizens from the Mende, Wolof, Yoruba, and Mandingo—were all transported to the “New World” on slave ships. Within these communities, hair often communicated age, marital status, ethnic identity, religion, wealth, and rank in the community.

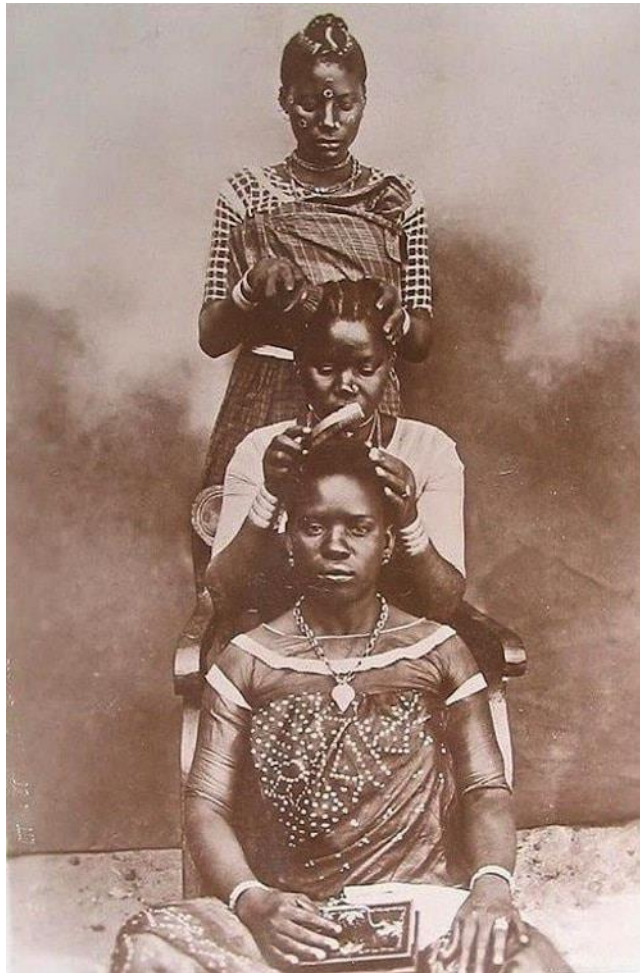


Figure 9: Women plaiting and braiding during their leisure time – Simon Knurenza Archives

Hairstyles could also be used to identify a geographic region. For example, in the Wolof culture of Senegal, young girls partially shaved their hair as an outward symbol that they were not courting. (H., 1996) “And the Karamo people of Nigeria, for example, were recognized for their unique coiffure—a shaved head with a single tuft of hair left on top” (Fig 10). Likewise, widowed women would stop attending to their hair during their period of mourning so they wouldn’t look attractive to other men. And as far as community leaders were concerned, they donned elaborate hairstyles. And the royalty would often wear a hat or headpiece, as a

symbol of their stature (Kwekudee, September, 2012).

For the Himba tribe (Northern Namibia), hair indicated one's age, life stage, and marital status. The tribe lives in the northwestern region of Namibia.



Figure 10: The Karamo hairstyle - Photo: Herbert Lang Expedition

The ethnic group members used a mixture of ground ochre, goat hair, and butter to create their dreadlocks. They also included hair extensions when weaving their dreadlocks.

Teenage girls would wear braid strands or dreadlocked hair that hanged over their faces. Doing this symbolized that they'd entered into puberty (Babou, 2008). Married women and new mothers wore Erembe headdresses made from animal skin. Young women who were ready for marriage tied their dreadlocks to reveal their faces.

Bertoia (2002) advances that hair making and styling was not only common among women only but also men. In the Himba tribe for example, unmarried men wore a single braid to show their status. Once they got married, they covered their heads never to unveil them in public again. They removed their head covering at funerals only. Often men (Fig 11) shaved their heads bald or in a specific fashion as a symbol of masculinity and their caste or class. In Kemet (ancient Egypt), many men would butter their hair down with goat butter or oil until it hung down in a bob.



Figure 11: Men's hairdressing, Sango, Upper Mobangi River, Democratic Republic of Congo - Photo: The Minister of Colonies, Belgium, early 20th century.

DREADLOCKS

Dreadlocks (Fig 12) have often been perceived as a hairstyle associated with 20th century Jamaican and Rastafarian culture, but according to Dr. Bert Ashe's book, *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles*, one of the earliest known recordings of the style has been found in the Hindu Vedic scriptures.

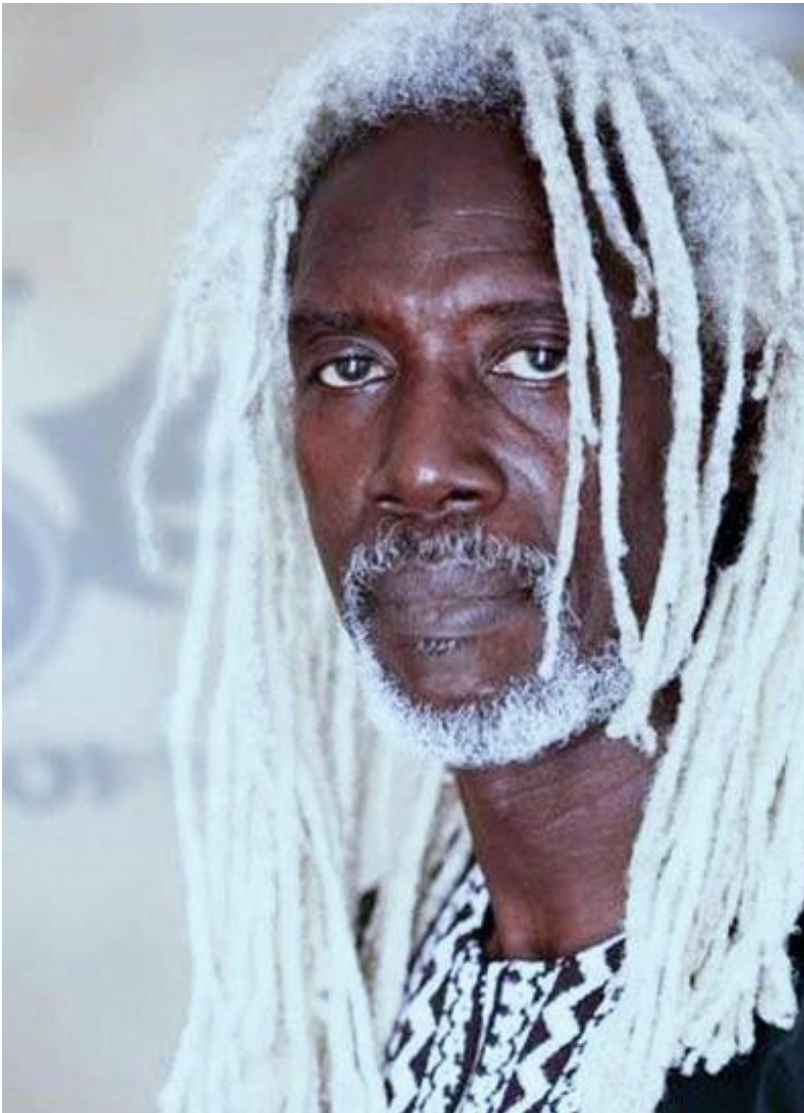


Figure 12: African man in dreadlocks Picture Library/Getty Image

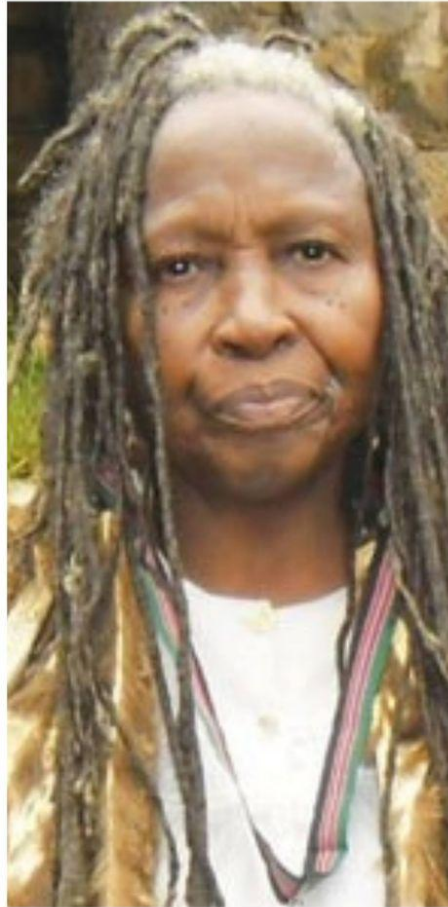
HAIR STYLE AS POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Mau Mau, militant African nationalist movement that originated in the 1950s among the Kikuyu people of Kenya.

The Mau Mau (origin of the name is uncertain) advocated violent resistance to British domination in Kenya; the movement was especially associated with the ritual oaths employed by leaders of the Kikuyu Central Association to promote unity in the independence movement.

In 1950 the Mau Mau were banned by British authorities, and in October 1952, after a campaign of sabotage and assassination attributed to Mau Mau terrorists, the British Kenya government declared a state of emergency and began four years of military operations against Kikuyu rebels. By the end of 1956, more than 11,000 rebels had been killed in the fighting, along with about 100 Europeans and 2,000 African loyalists. More than 20,000 other Kikuyu were put into detention camps, where intensive efforts were made to convert them to the political views of the government—i.e., to abandon their nationalist aspirations. Despite these government actions, Kikuyu resistance spearheaded the Kenya independence movement, and Jomo Kenyatta, who had been jailed as a Mau Mau leader in 1953, became prime minister of an independent Kenya 10 years later. In 2003 the ban on the Mau Mau was lifted by the Kenyan government.

Field Marshal Muthoni. She was the only woman field marshal in the Mau Mau. The Mau Mau had three field marshals 1. Field marshal Dedan Kimathi 2. Field marshal Musa mwariama 3. Field marshal Muthoni Below the field marshals, were generals like Baimungi, matejagwo, kahu itina etc



Field Marshal Muthoni wa Kirima at 20 years and later as an old woman

Muthoni wa Kirima was born in Central Province in 1931. Being born in the colonial era meant Muthoni, as a young girl, saw the injustices committed against native Africans by the colonialists. Having never had a formal education and with parents who worked in a European farms, Muthoni nursed the dream of Kenya becoming independent one day.

Muthoni, aged about 20, became a spy for the Mau Mau fighters who had camped in the forest in 1952. During the war, many women were used as spies by the fighters or supplied food to them. For Muthoni, spying and bringing food was not enough, she wanted to fight. She wanted to be right where the action was. Muthoni convinced Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi to allow her into the forest as a fighter. Muthoni proved a gallant soldier.

Fighting next to Dedan Kimathi and proving herself to be a valuable soldier, Muthoni was promoted to field marshal and became the only woman to have ever reached that status. Muthoni was injured on many occasions and at times looked death in the eye. She had two miscarriages which left her unable to bear more children but her fighting spirit never died. Sporting the signature dreadlocks worn by all the fighters, Muthoni stayed in the forest and fought for the freedom of her country.

One Mau Mau General calls himself Kahiu Itina literally meaning 'Knife in the arse', symbolizing what he does to the enemy.

Field Marshal Kimathi himself has the code name 'Matemo', meaning 'the one who cuts'. This suggests that he is the keen cutting edge that keeps the colonialists on edge.

General Mathenge has the code name 'Kirema - thahu', meaning 'the one who cannot be touched by evil'. The fact that he is fighting on the side of justice suggests that no evil can harm him and that no matter the might of the colonial armies, he is indestructible.

Captain Vido is also known as Ndururi Gititika the latter name meaning 'one who pushes something burdensome'. The burden here is obviously the colonialists and Vido views himself as one who has the task of pushing them out of the black man's country.

Sergeant Kana Kehoti is one of the young forest fighters. His name means 'a child who is able to take care of himself' and therefore amply captures the fact that though he is very young that has not prevented him from volunteering for combat duty.

Brigadier Mai Maruru's name means 'bitter water', symbolizing the fact that metaphorically the enemy finds him very "bitter".

General Kirihinya's name on the other hand means one who is strong; symbolic of the fact that he is strong enough to contend with the enemy. **General Matenjagwo's** name means 'one who is not shaven', referring to the trademark Mau Mau dreadlocks.

From the foregoing, it is evident that hair gave the mau mau an identity of political resistance. Although it happened by accident due to lack of shaving facilities and the time for grooming, when it hit the international media, it was quickly adopted in Jamaica and the caribbean as a resistance style due to the romantic nature of the mau mau war. In that war, a

small tribe in Kenya had taken a superpower head on militarily. Every oppressed community identified with the Mau Mau gallantry. The following are some images depicting what became of hairstyles of resistance during the Mau Mau.



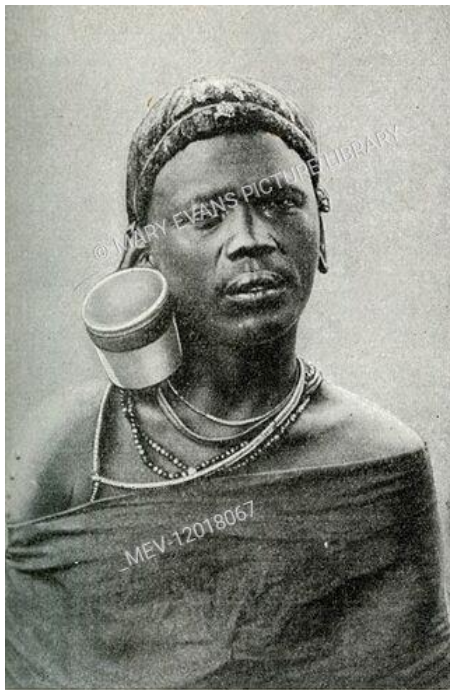
Field Marshall Musa Mwariama: His real name was M’Kiribua M’Muchir. He was the only Mau Mau top brass who was never captured, surrendered or killed and survived unscathed with his 2,000 strong fighters. **Field Marshal Musa Mwariama, EBS (1928–1989)** was a Kenyan revolutionary leader of the Mau Mau in Meru and the highest-ranking Mau Mau leader who survived the war without being killed or captured. Together with Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi, they comprised the core Mau Mau leadership. Mwariama was the highest ranking leader among the Meru side of the uprising.

By the time he left his bases in Mount Kenya and Nyambene Hills on the equator, he had about 2,000 fighters who had survived Operation Anvil in Kenya.

Styles that were influenced by the Mau Mau war



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/Access> 19/11/2020



The Kikuyu, natives of the Nairobi District, stretch their ear-lobes with weights and jampots



Buffalo headdress of Masai dandy whose hair has been arranged with fat and red mud



<https://www.agefotostock.com/Access 19/11/2020>

Stock Photo - Native fashions of Kenya (then a British colony), East Africa -- a Kikuyu man of the Nairobi district (top left) with a stretched earlobe; a Masai man (top right) with buffalo headdress and plaited hair; a Masai woman (bottom left) with heavy rings on her earlobes and round her neck, and bangles on her arms; and a Kikuyu warrior (bottom right) with a stretched earlobe

HAIR STYLING TODAY

With the world rapidly becoming a big global village, hairstyling today in Africa is done under many influences. In the 1980's hair making amongst both Men and women was not only a leisure activity but also a wave of popularism grew it to a key fashion statement. In the past, this leisure activity was done at home but at some point it became a community activity and particular people were given the role of hair making and styling. This later on grew to become a business venture for these talented people. Today, we have salons and barber shops where men and women go to have their hair done or cut. (Mercer, 1990)

(Willet, 2000) writes that one of the key influences in recent times on hair styling was the 1980's introduction of Hip hop. This wave had a huge cultural influence on style especially on the Black people. One of the modern hairstyles today is known as the fade, popular mostly amongst men. Black Barber shops had perfected the fade but the '80s allowed them to blossom with more forms of creativity and expressionism. Afros were shaped up with the sides cut short for a hi-top fade, and cornrows were braided in with flairs of individuality.



Cornrow braids hairstyles [new styles]: women are more beautiful with braids - opera news



***Ponytail | Cornrow hairstyles, Cornrow ponytail, Cool braid hairstyles
pinterest.com***



***Trending 2019 Amazing African Braids Hairstyles – YouTube,
youtube.com***



***Cute Tapered Natural Hairstyles for Ladies | Jessy Styles - YouTube |
Natural hair styles, Hair styles, Tapered haircut black, pinterest.com***



On trend braided up pony #OnTrend #AvedaIbw | Braided hairstyles, Feed in braid, African braids hairstyles pinterest.com





Cornrows Hairstyles for Black Women. cornrows, cornrows braids, braids, tribal braids, braided hairstyles, bana... | Cornrow ponytail, Hair styles, Braided hairstyles, pinterest.com



Amazing Braids Styles: Latest Hairstyles You Simply Must Try - Zainey's Blog | Latest braided hairstyles, Braid styles, gr.pinterest.com



Small feed in ponytail | Small feed in braids, Braided ponytail black hair, Feed in braids ponytail, pinterest.com



AFRO COMBS TODAY

Around the 20th century, Afro combs started to take on a definite cultural and political meaning. For example, in America, the “black fist” was added to the bottom of many Afro combs, which is a reference to the Black Power salute that was made popular by the Black Panthers. The Black Fist comb was introduced in the 1969 by Samuel H. Bundles, Jr. and Henry M. Children (Tulloch). In addition to using it as a

styling tool, many black men and women wore the picks in their Afros as a way to express their cultural pride. The decade was also a time when more black women were deciding to wear their hair in its natural state, instead of pressing it and attempting to conform to a European standard of beauty. Another variation of the Afro comb, the folding comb, was introduced in 1970 and patented in 1971 (Byrd, 2001).

Today, Afro combs are often viewed as collector's items. However, many black men and women who wear their hair in its natural state used wide-tooth combs and Afro picks to detangle the hair and help it keep its shape. The combs are truly a work of art, and have recently been featured at several Museums all over the world.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a historical research that was seeking to investigate and explain a phenomenon that has already occurred. This study relied heavily on previously written and documented material. Books and articles inscribed by other researchers and professionals in this field of design availed a deeper understanding of hair styling as a leisure activity in Africa and the tools used in the practice. Key informants were interviewed while professional barbers were consulted on their most favoured hairstyles.

A focus group discussion was held in the school of the arts and design involving postgraduate students, lecturers and stakeholders in the field of fashion and beauty.

Discussion

From the study it emerged that the African tradition of hairstyling as leisure and beauty has never ceased. It was evident that the effect of colonialism and changing lifestyles has propelled the art into modernity not without consequences. Among them the commercialization of the art leading to segregation of access to desirable beauty encounters.

Apart from the internationalisation of the styles, African hairstyling is also borrowing heavily from the international arena. Hair styling has been used as a means of expression for various reasons, among them political agitation, religious expression, juvenile deviance and identity seeking behavior. The latter is evident in Jamaica where they believe for example that rasta hair style connects them to their African heritage despite being far from Africa itself.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, as observed in this paper, leisure was a major component of the socio-economic development of Africa. Women can be said to have been the greatest beneficiaries of these leisure activities which included hairstyling and hair making. This is evident even to date. Ask almost any black woman and she will probably tell you that her relationship with her hair is similar to a love affair. Whether it's the long hours spent waiting at the hair salon, the pain endured from pressing or braiding, or the amount of money spent—hair is truly an obsession and not only a leisure activity. Today, hair is extremely significant and often synonymous with identity. And many individuals, such as Don King, Bob Marley, and Angela Davis have used their hair to make a statement.

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