



SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

Making tourism count to communities, ecosystems and businesses

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Orature and nature: Historical narratives on selected tourist sites in Luo Nyanza and Western Kenya

Literature, whether oral or written, is a reservoir for evidences of realities. Thus, Literature is a powerful tool for documenting social and historical- geographical landscapes. In this article landscapes are taken to mean natural structures that have been used as tourist sites. Perhaps the major use of literature therefore according to the understanding of this article is its potential for “revealing” the origin of the mentioned landscapes and landmarks, albeit in a fantastic manner to local and foreign tourists to such sites. To a literary scholar, this marks the symbiotic relationship between fact and fiction. It is factual because what is described is real and tangible and fictional too because the explanations often go beyond normal human understanding. Kenya is dotted with magnificent social and natural landscapes that have mapped out as tourist sites. . This article revisits the western regions of Kenya and the orature in which some of the landscapes found in these regions are to described innovatively either as contexts or texts. In the article we gather inspiration from explanatory tales that have been long narrated among the Luo and the Abaluhya, from generations to generations to archive the beliefs about the existence of these sites. We now ask ourselves; what are the artistic creations in relation to the landscapes in this region? Are there any stock characters or recurring features attached to these landscapes? To what extent can these narratives be used to market the sites? Thus, the purpose of this article is twofold to; 1) identify and carry out an eco-critical analysis of oral “texts” that are built on real landscapes in Western Kenya and 2) consider the extent to which this ecofriendly “texts” can be used to market the sites.