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**AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE IMENTI OF MT. KENYA,
1800 - 1945.))**

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3rd August 1994
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(B.ED. ARTS)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

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AUGUST, 1994.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to delineate the economic history of the Imenti people from 1800 to 1945, based on the theory of Underdevelopment. A study of the evolution of the pre-colonial economy of the Imenti has been dealt with a view of showing how the environment dictated the choice of the economy. It has been realized that the cool moist and fertile soils of the north eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya were ideal for a diversity of economic pursuits. It has also been shown that the Imenti evolved a stable economy and that any shortfalls that existed were catered for by trade.

The era of the long distance trade in the second half of the nineteenth century began integrating the Imenti economy to the international trade for the first time. It was during this era that exploitation of the Imenti society began. The advent of colonialism in the first decade of twentieth century intensified the exploitation and dependency of the Imenti. Colonialism instituted economic policies such as taxation, labour recruitment and land alienation that were to be the features which undermined the sustenance of traditional economy.

It is submitted that the penetration of colonial capitalism led to the underdevelopment of the Imenti economy since the British exploited the Imenti by appropriating their economic resources. There was no heed paid to the development of the indigenous economy, hence the poverty of the peasantry.