

**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONAL ROLES
OF COLONIAL CHIEFS AMONG THE SOUTHERN NYANZA LUO OF HOMA
BAY COUNTY, KENYA (1890-1963)**

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MOI UNIVERSITY

2022

DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late parents, Stephen Odipo and Mary Adel Odipo, wife and children especially my last born child Cindy K'Odipo and grand daughter Samantha Harrel Amondi. My parents, while still a live, encouraged me to pursue education to the highest zenith saying there is no wealth greater than education. Because of this parental advice, it would have been an omission not to have dedicated this Ph.D thesis to them. My wife and children gave me a lot of encouragement as I went through the audacious task of thesis research and writing. Lastly, to my uncle Polycarp Opiyo Owuodho, thanks to his advise right from my time as an undergraduate student and staff at Moi University.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	African District Council
DC	District Commissioner
CRE	Christian Religious Education
DEB	District Education Board
DO	District Officer
EAP	East Africa Protectorate
GAS	Government African School
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KASU	Kenya African Study Union
KAU	Kenya African Union
KNA	Kenya National Archives
LAC	Local Advisory Council
LNC	Local Native Council
MHM	Mill Hill Missionaries
NKAR	North Kavirondo Annual Report
NZA	Nyanza
O.I.	Oral Interviewee
PC	Provincial Commissioner
S/O	Son of
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist Church
SKAR	South Kavirondo Annual Report
SKMIR	South Kavirondo Monthly Intelligence Report
SNAR	South Nyanza Annual Report
LEG'CO	Legislative Council

GLOSSARY FOR FOREIGN WORDS

Boma	homestead
Gwenge	Village Settlement
Walengwe	Agents of <i>Ruoth</i>
Ruoth	Luo chief
Jonanga	Uniformed government officials
e adhi apenj orindi mondi	Let me go and consult with the headrest.
Kisuma	Serching for food from relatives who have
Dhoot	Clan
Libamba	Descendant of a common ancestor
Mikayi	Senior wife
Nyachira	Second wife
Mlango	clan in Kiswahili language
Wasigu	People you don't have blood ties with
Reru	Third wife
Jogi (juogi)	Ancestral spirit
Nyasaye	God
Dala	Homestead
Mumboism	Movement of mumbo cult in South Kavirondo
Mbaris	Wealthy family group among the Agikuyu people
Muhoi	tenant farmers among the Akamba people
Utui	Homestead in Akamba language
Ogira	Traditional Luo sauce made of grain floor

ABSTRACT

This study was on “The Socio-Economic and Political Transformational Roles of Colonial Chiefs among the Southern Nyanza Luo of Homa Bay County, Kenya (1890-1963)”, was premised on the fact that the institution of the chief in the governance structure in Kenya brought peace, security, tranquillity and harmony among the communities living in the colonial and even post-colonial Kenya. They were not only the engines driving socio-economic transformations but also the enablers of the same. Their roles in communal development such as agriculture, education, labour organization and road infrastructure cannot be ignored. Homa Bay County is a vast area. Therefore, the study mainly highlighted the Socio-Economic transformational roles of chiefs in Gwasi, Kanyamua, Kanyada, Karachuonyo, Kochia, Gem and Kasipul- Kabondo in the present day Homa Bay County. Some notable colonial chiefs in today’s Homa Bay County, were: Gor Ogalo of Kanyamua, Paul Mboya of Karachuonyo, Kasuku Matunga of Gwassi and Gideon Magak of Kasipul-Kabondo. The objectives of the study were to: Analyse the nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in pre-colonial period; Examine colonial conquest and search for chiefs in Homa Bay County; Explain the role of chiefs in economic transformations in Homa Bay County; Assess the role of chiefs in the introduction and development of western education in Homa Bay County; Evaluate the role of chiefs in the development of Local Native Councils and the rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County. The study was anchored on the Bureaucratic Theory of Marx Weber which advocates for clear hierarchical command structure in an organization, which is also pyramidal in character. It utilized also the Marxist dependency theory for an indepth understanding of the colonial economy in which chiefs were involved through the collection of taxes. Taxation and appropriation of natural resources happened and benefited the metropole at the expense of the Africans. The research methodology was qualitative research and data was collected using interview schedule through purposive sampling. The findings of the research would help the state to reform the institution of the chief regarding the ever changing administrative framework for people at the grassroots. The role of chiefs as per the findings of this study was key in socio-economic transformations in Homa Bay County during the colonial period. Chiefs directed virtually the social, economic and political affairs in the communities. For example, the prime movers of the socio-economic activities in today’s Homa Bay County, whose economy largely relied on livestock, agriculture, fishing, pottery and weaving were the chiefs. With the establishment of Local Native Councils and later on the African District Councils, chiefs became the fulcrum around which these institutions of governance revolved. The study confirmed that the African chiefs in Homa Bay County played significant roles in socio-economic transformations of Homa Bay County during the colonial period. Indeed, Socio-economic transformations during colonial period portrayed chiefs as very important cogs in the wheel of development. Public administration in Homa bay relied on chiefs as the corner stone in service delivery. The introduction of the office of chief fulfilled the doctrine of indirect rule whose architect was Fredrick Lugard; a one time governor in Northern Nigeria and Uganda protectorate. Although the chiefs played key role in socio-economic development in Homa Bay County, there were some chiefs whose performances did not meet the expectations of both the people and the colonial administration. The vastness of the County did not in any way curtail the progress of this research.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	v
GLOSSARY FOR FOREIGN WORDS	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF MAPS	xiv
LIST OF PLATES	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Study.....	1
1.3 The Study Area	6
1.4. Statement of the Problem.....	13
1.5 Objectives of the Study	13
1.6 Research Questions	14
1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study	14
1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms	15
1.9 Justification of the Study	16
1.10 Review of Related Literature	17
1.10.1 Introduction.....	17
1.10.2 The Nature and Role of Leadership and Governance in Homa Bay County in Pre-Colonial Period.....	17
1.10.3 The Colonial Conquest and Search for Chiefs in Homa Bay County	19
1.10.4 Responsibilities of chiefs at a glance	31
1.10.5 Impact of First World War on Africans.....	34
1.10.6 The Role of Chiefs in Economic Transformations	38

1.10.7 The Role of Chiefs in the Introduction and Development of Western Education	44
1.10.8 The Role of Chiefs in the Development of Local Native Councils and the Rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County	49
1.10.9 Conclusion.....	59
1.11 Theoretical Framework.....	60
1.11.1 Bureaucratic Theory.....	61
1.11.2 Dependency Theory	64
1.12 Research Methodology and Design	68
1.12.1 Primary Sources.....	68
1.12.2 Secondary Sources	69
1.13 Sample Size and Procedures.....	70
1.14 Focus Group Discussion	72
1.15 Library Search.....	73
1.16 Interview Schedule	73
1.17.1 Data Collection	73
1.17.2 Data Analysis	74
1.18 Ethical Consideration	74
CHAPTER TWO	76
THE ROLE OF CHIEFS/LINEAGE HEADS IN THE PRE-COLONIAL LUO SOCIAL FORMATION	76
2.1 Overview	76
2.2 The Pre-Colonial Luo Environment	76
2.2.1 Physical environment.....	76
2.2.2 Luo belief system	78
2.2.3 Economy.....	79
2.2.4 Relations of production.....	80
2.2.5 Leaders. 842.3 The Role of the Kinship, Lineage Heads, and Ritual Leaders among the Pre- Colonial Luo	88
2.3.1 Kinship.....	88
2.3.2 Lineage.....	90

2.3.3 Ritual heads.....	91
2.3.4 SUMMARY	96
CHAPTER THREE	99
COLONIAL CONQUEST AND THE APPOINTMENT OF CHIEFS (1903-1939).....	99
3.1 Introduction	99
3.2 Integration of Homa Bay County in Conquest	100
3.4 Responsibilities of Chiefs Guided by Ordinances	118
3.5 Emergence of Mumboism.....	130
3.6 Implications of the Outbreak of the First World War.....	135
3.7 Requisition of Livestock, Crops for the War Purpose	139
3.8 Colonial Education System	141
3.9 Education in Homa Bay	145
3.10 The Catholic Church and Setting up of Educational Institutions (1903-1945)	149
3.11 Labour recruitment.....	155
3.12 Taxation.....	159
3.13 Colonial Administrator’s assessment of the Chiefs (1903-1945)	177
3.14 Changes in Transport and Entrepreneurship.....	179
3.2 Summary.....	183
CHAPTER FOUR.....	187
THE SECOND GENERATION OF CHIEFS AND ACCELERATED	187
SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS (1920-1939)	187
4.1 Overview	187
4.2 Stimulation of Commodity Production	187
4.3 Entrepreneurship.....	192
4.4 Appointment of the Second Generation of Chiefs	195
4.4.1 Gideon Magak.....	195
4.4.2.Paul Mboya	202
4.5 African Agriculture through Increased Commodity Production	203
4.6 Chiefs’ implementation of Produce Control.....	212
4.7 Anti-Soil Erosion Measures.....	218

4.8 The Role of LNCS in Developing Education Sector	221
4.9 The Resurgence of Mumbo Cult.....	223
4.10 The Role of Chiefs in Re-Establishing Normalcy (1912-1934).....	225
4.11 Infrastructures	228
4.12 Chiefs' Submissions at the 1932-33 Carter Land Commission (Carter Commission.....	229
Report 1934).....	229
4.13 Summary.....	230
CHAPTER FIVE	233
THE SECOND WORLD WAR, SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES AND THE RISE OF	233
NATIONALISM (1939-1963)	233
5.1 Introduction	233
5.2 Recruitment of African Pioneer Corps.....	233
5.3 Requisition of Livestock and Crops	246
5.4 Chiefs' Submissions at the 1943 Food Shortage Commission.....	250
5.5 Continued absence of Political Associations	252
5.6 The Rise of Nationalism and the Establishment of Locational Councils (LCs) and African District Councils (ADCs) and Chiefs' Responsibilities (1939-1963).....	253
5.7 Chiefs and Politicians.....	260
5.8 Summary.....	264
CHAPTER SIX.....	266
6.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	266
6.1. OBJECTIVE ONE.....	267
6.2 OBJECTIVE TWO.....	268
6.2.1 Elections of Chiefs in Homa Bay (1920-1930).....	273
6.3 OBJECTIVE THREE.....	275
6.3.1 The impact of The Second World War and changes in Chief's Responsibilities, 1939-1945	277
6.4 OBJECTIVE FOUR.....	281
6.5 OBJECTIVE FIVE	284
6.6 RECOMMENDATION	294
REFERENCES.....	295

ARCHIVAL SOURCES	295
PUBLISHED	298
THESES	305
UNPUBLISHED	307
JOURNALS	307
INTERNET SOURCES.....	309
NEWSPAPERS	310
SECONDARY SOURCES	310
APPENDIX	311
APPENDIX I: Interview Schedule.....	311

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Some Homa Bay Colonial Chiefs and the Locations they represented	129
TABLE 2: Taxation Trends in Kochia Location	174
TABLE 3: Taxation Trends in Rusinga Location	175
TABLE 4: Taxation Trends in Mfangano	176
TABLE 5: Trade Returns on crops for the Prosperity of the People.....	185

LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1: Homa Bay County & Sub-Counties 10
MAP 2: Topography of Homa Bay County 11

LIST OF PLATES

<u>PLATE 1</u>	12
<u>PLATE 2</u>	72
<u>PLATE: 3</u>	200
<u>PLATE: 4</u>	201

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study “The Socio-Economic and Political transformational roles of the Colonial Chiefs among the Southern Nyanza Luo of Homa Bay County, Kenya (1890-1963)”. The colonial system of governance which involved the African chiefs was the product of the Berlin Conference (1884-85) by the European colonial powers. This chapter explains the geographical area of Homa Bay County and presented the map of Homa Bay showing its divisions into sub-counties. The statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, operational definitions of terms and justifications of the study are all captured here. Also, the literature review, theoretical framework and research methodology are contained in this chapter.

1.2 Background to the Study

The European colonization of Africa can be traced back to the Berlin Conference (1884-85) which laid conditions for the partition of Africa continent into spheres of influence. It marked a new trajectory of governance characterized by chieftaincy at the lowest level of colonial hierarchy. The new governance system was alien to the Africans because most of African communities did not have the institution of chiefs in their governance structures.

After its establishment, the colonial state became the machinery of administrative domination established to facilitate effective control and exploitation of the colonized African states. In order to carry out their imperialistic mandate, the colonial authority involved Africans in their leadership structures for effective control of the newly acquired states; they based their leadership model on the existing traditional African structures.¹

This new governance mechanism in Africa, would later, fall directly on the shoulders of the African chiefs as co-actors, through the British colonial administrative policy of in-direct rule associated with Fredrick Lugard, the British administrator, in charge of northern Nigeria in the Sokoto Caliphate.

The main theoretician of it was Lord F. D. Lugard in his political memoranda, Report on the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria (1912-1919).The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa.

By design, these chiefs were meant to serve at the behest of the colonial authority with restricted powers which respected the chain of command right from the metropolitan. It can be argued that most African communities existed as decentralized entities except the Baganda, Toro, Akan and the Wanga Kingdom.The last were governed under the “Nabongo” within a centralized state system.The African chief was the main bridge between society and the colonial state. His duties made no difference whether he was being used “indirectly” or “directly”.²

¹ Integreting Traditional Leadership Structures with Contemporary Public Administration Machinery for Innovative Governance and Improved Service Delivery by Shikha Vyas-Doorgapersad and Lukambi-Muhiya.Tshombe, p.212

² Ogotu, Mathias Alwodo and Kenyanchui S: An introduction to African History: University of Nairobi Press. P.172

Their duties included; collection of taxes, recruitment of labor for public works like the building and maintenance of roads and bridges, recruitment of police and military conscripts, and legislation in the local native council. The British respected chiefs in areas where armed confrontation had been intense and where they were hereditary, as in the case of the Fulani of Northern Nigeria. Chiefs were also created in stateless societies such as the Agikuyu of Kenya and the Langi of Northern Uganda. Its important to note that the Luo of Homa Bay did not have the institution of chieftaincy but just like in other luo sub tribes they had the institution of *Ruoth*. The African chief was generally the most hated political agent. He was bossed and bullied by the colonial political officer and in the course of trying to be effective and successful, he abused his authority. Some chiefs even became the center of African resistance to colonialism. In some areas where “indirect rule” was used, the chiefs remained conservative. They were centers of “tribalism”. In general, the chiefs competed for privileges and promotions from the colonial political officers. Some of their children were the beneficiaries of formal education. It was the peasant who lost during colonial rule. He was a source of labor, capital and land. He was the ruled and therefore he had to keep law and order.³

The hollowness and absurdity of assimilation was evident in the role of Chiefs. The French consciousness had intentionally suppressed, destroyed and disrespected traditional Chiefs. The French recognized traditional authority but regarded the Chiefs as allies and agents. The chiefs assisted them with the collection of taxes from which the chiefs also benefited.

Jean Suret-Canale said:

³ Ogutu Mathias and Kenyanchui S. An introduction to African History 1991 (p.175).

The chiefs drew their income from feudal dues and from forced labour done by the peasants on village lands: These dues and forced labour were tolerated by the colonial administration, although they were theoretically forbidden by the law, officially the chiefs lived on their salaries as civil servants, and on a percentage of the taxes they collected for the government.⁴

The Kenyan chiefs were no different from the French African ones in that part of their core duties included the collection of taxes which obviously put them at cross purposes with their African subjects. Quite a number of chiefs in Kenya found themselves in the dilemma of choosing whom to serve. It was difficult serving the colonial master and at the same time remaining loyal to the course of the people. The chiefs were on the radar of the colonial state to ensure that the colonial interests were best served. Chief Muhoya of Tetu in Nyeri, Central Kenya was the best example of such chiefs who were torn between support for their people and allegiance to colonial rule.

The colonial authority ensured that everywhere their force was felt through the appointed chiefs. Scholars such as Odiyo have illuminated light on this colonial governance trajectory as the chieftaincy indeed was modelled on the existing leadership structures.

Odiyo, (1991) argued:

Structurally, the new colonial administration resembled the traditional political organization in many ways. It recognized territorial boundary of pre-colonial Alego state in so many ways. Moreover, the colonial government incorporated the various traditional leaders of *gwenge* (village settlements) and local assemblies or barazas into the new colonial system. This was inevitable because the underfunded and undermanned colonial administration could not afford to recruit white officials to manage all operations of the colonial government without the assistance of the “men-on-the spot”, traditional leaders.⁵

⁴ The Effects of Colonialism on African Society by JEAN SURET-CANALE, P.57

⁵ Odiyo, E. O: 1991 MA Thesis

He further argued that, “The Ruoth of the country acted as the custodian of the state’s unity. His primary task was to “lead” (not rule) the state in its “manifest destiny”.

The colonial state could not afford to have a “state within a state”. The colonial officials thus abolished this highest traditional political office and instead, appointed or confirmed the lesser Ruoth’s agents as *walenge*”. The latter were empowered to determine land policy in the “reserves” and to maintain law and order in their respective administrative jurisdictions.

Administrator in charge of Central Nyanza. By 1963 Chieftaincy remained a colonial legacy something which became difficult to abandon as it had taken a very deep root in the colonial governance structure.⁶

In his book *Not Yet Uhuru*, Odinga stated:

Colonial chiefs also played a role in ensuring that the people were vaccinated and treated for various ailments. One year there were instructions that we should go to the Chief’s Camp to be vaccinated against small pox. The District Commissioner was to be there that day and I was curious to see him, for though I had seen my first Whiteman in the person of Archdeacon Owen, it had been a fleeting encounter. A friend and I went towards the Chief’s Camp, hoping for a close-up view of the White Commissioner, but as we approached a headman caught us and took us by force to the vaccination center.The first time I saw a bicycle was the day we children were given baskets of sim-sim and maize to take to the Kadimo Indian shopping center, about twelve miles from our home. Chief Olulo Nyadenda in a white kanzu rode by on a bicycle, passing us so quickly that I was reminded of a snake.⁷

⁶ C.W. Hobley (1900) cited in Odiyo thesis, 1991

⁷ Odinga Odinga, an autobiography, *Not Yet Uhuru*: 1967, p.3

According to Odinga, services to the people were provided through the office of the locational chiefs which was subordinated to that of the District Commissioner who normally was a Whiteman. These chiefs were a privileged lot who the very few Africans were owning bicycles for transportation. There is evidence here that the colonial state transformed the social services to the people through their chiefs. However, despite these transformational efforts, this system appears to have been imposed upon the people. The chiefs were never appointed because they were loved by the white man but because it was difficult to deploy white men to be in charge of local administration at the grassroots.

The study shed light on the nature and role of leadership and governance among the Luo of Homa Bay in the pre-colonial period. The study was based on the assessment of the colonial conquest and how this affected the administrative system of the precolonial Luo. It discussed the introduction of western education among the Luo. It examined the Socio-Economic and Political Transformational Roles of Chiefs in Homa Bay County during the colonial period.

1.3 The Study Area

This research was carried out in Homa Bay County. Homa Bay County borders the counties of Kisumu, Siaya, Nyamira, Kisii, and Migori. It's largely inhabited by the Luo and the Abasuba people. In this part, a brief background of the people known as Jokarachuonyo, Jokasipul, Jokabondo, and Jogwasi was considered for an insightful understanding of the lives of the inhabitants of Homa Bay County. Karachuonyo was a large location bounded on the North by the Kavirondo Gulf, South by Kasipul, West by Kagan and Kochia on the East by Nyakach. The location on the whole was unfertile, the soil being very dry and sandy. It should be possible to irrigate from River 'Awach', in which case the District should produce large quantities of ground-nuts for export. There was a great deal of tsetse fly at Kanam and a little in Kogweno.

The 'natives' were on the whole quiet and amenable, but shy of Europeans and seem afraid to bring forward their grievances.⁸

The first is an arid coastal plain from about 3,608 to 3,936 feet (1,100 to 1,200 meters) in elevation with an erratic annual rainfall of 20-40 inches (50-100 centimeters) and savannah vegetation. The second is an intermediate savanna zone up to about 4,592 feet (1,400 meters) in elevation with more than 45 inches (115 centimeters) of annual rainfall. The third region is a foothill zone up to about 4,920 feet (1,500 meters) in elevation with 59 -69 inches (150-175 centimeters) of annual rainfall supporting a relatively lush vegetation. Periodic drought is common on the coastal plain, while the higher elevation zones generally receive enough precipitation during the "short rains" period to support a second cropping season.⁹

Two major landmarks in Homa Bay County are; Homa Hill and Wire Hill. Kodera forest is found in Kasipul. The Main River Sare, River Awach and River Sondu drain into Lake Victoria. The landscape of Homa Bay County is dominated by the distinctive Homa Mountain, an inselberg massif rearing 700 meters above the lake shore in the west. The soil varies from calcareous black cotton soil on the gulf shore to sandy loam and more lateritic soil further inland. On the littoral plain the soil tends to turn into swamp during the rains and into fine dust during the dry season. The major Luo groups in Homa Bay County include: Jokarachuonyo, Jokasipul, Jokabondo, Jokabuoch, Jokochia, Jokwabwai and Jogwasi.¹⁰ By the mid-eighteenth century, several Luo groups had spread over Homa Bay as well. This whole process involved sequential displacements of earlier Luo settlers and Bantu groups by later arrivals, as well as the assimilation of many Bantu groups. The nineteenth century witnessed the most aggressively

⁸ KNA-DC/KSI/5/5

⁹ <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>.

¹⁰ (ibid)

militaristic phase of expansion, especially into lands held by Bantu (Luyia) groups to the north. These ongoing population movements were halted by the imposition of British colonial control at the end of the nineteenth century when the territories of the various Luo subgroups at that moment were cartographically inscribed as the boundaries of the administrative sub-districts.¹¹

Geographical Location

Homa Bay was part of South Nyanza district. According to Onduru (2009) South Nyanza is located in the South Western Kenya along Lake Victoria. It covers an area of 7,778 square kilometres (5,714 sq. km land area and 2,046 sq. km water). It borders Nyamira, Kisii and Nyando districts to the east. To the south it borders Gucha and Kuria districts, and the republic of Tanzania. To the west it borders the republic of Uganda. South Nyanza was made up of five districts: Rachuonyo, Homa-Bay, Migori, Suba, and Rongo districts. During the colonial period Kisii and Nyamira were part of South Nyanza district. Rainfall varies from 700 to 800 mm near the lakeshore to 1,500 mm in the higher eastern areas of the region. During the “long rains” that occur between March and July, the region receives about 40% of the annual total rainfall and about 28% in the “short rains” that fall between October and December.⁴ During the long rains, large rivers such as Sondu (Miriu), Riana and Kuja burst their banks particularly in the lower regions near the lake causing flooding in the areas.

Soils

According to Onduru (2009) the region has a variety of soils, which are highly localised. The lakeshore lowlands, are characterised by comparatively dry conditions, and have rich alluvial deposits at the mouth of major rivers such as Kuja, Awach and Sondu. These pockets of black cotton soil offer prospects for cultivation of a wide variety of crops, the only limiting factor

¹¹ (Ibid)

being the irregularity of rain water supply. The slopes of hills in the plateau consist mostly of brown clay soil and pockets of greyzems and gleysols. In the upper savannah belt (inland plateau), where between 1000 and 1,300 of rainfall is received annually.¹² Ninety Planasols are dominant, especially on poorly drained areas. The well-drained upland region is dominated by brown clay soils.

Natural Resources

The most important natural resource in South Nyanza is its population. Currently the total population of South Nyanza is about three million. Out of its population, there is a total labour force of over one million. The second most crucial natural resource is agricultural land. The region, especially the middle and lower zones is still sparsely populated, thereby attracting a number of immigrants from the neighbouring regions. Another major natural resource is the large water mass of Lake Victoria with its abundant fish life, which the people of South Nyanza have relied on for fish supply. There are also numerous rivers in the region.¹³

¹² South Nyanza District Development Plan, 1989-1993, Ministry of Planning and National Development, Nairobi, Kenya, p.6; Ominde, S. H. Land and Population Movement, pp. 33-35.

¹³ (ibid)

MAP 1: Homa Bay County & Sub-Counties

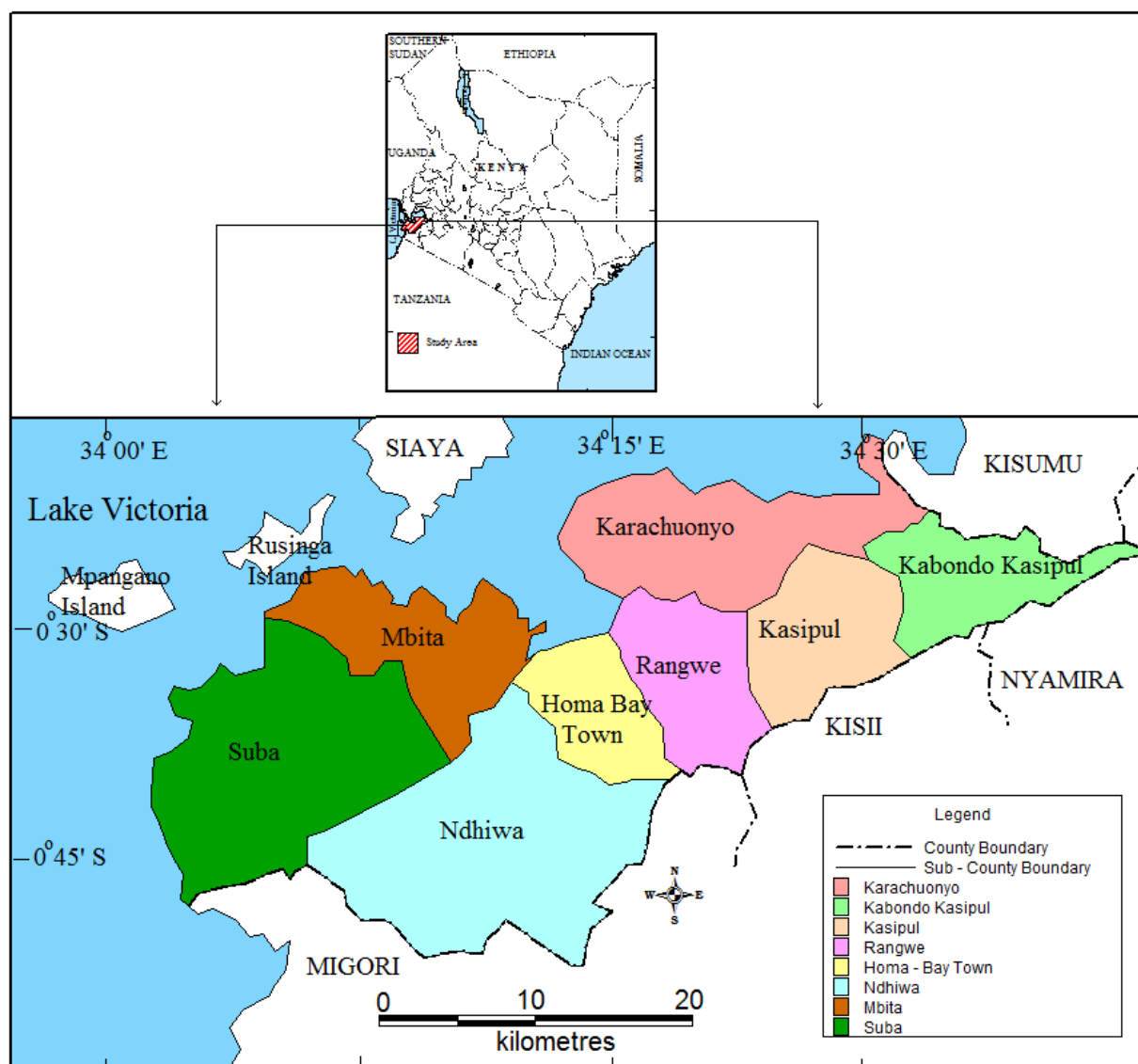


Figure 1: Map of Homa Bay County showing Sub – Counties

Source: Moi University Geography Department GIS Lab.

MAP 2: Topography of Homa Bay County

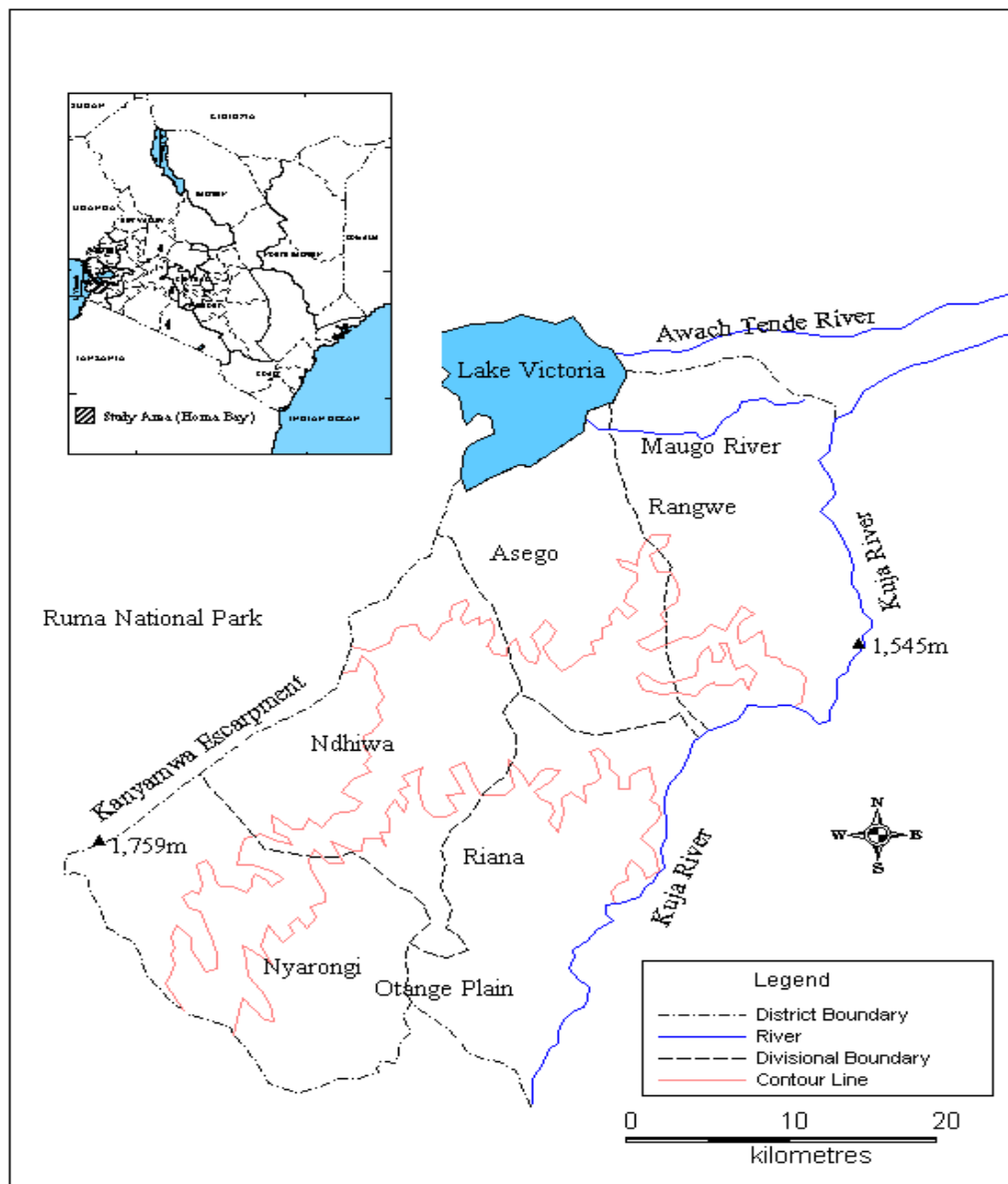


Figure 2: Topography and Rivers of Homa Bay District with its Divisions.

Source: Moi University Geography Department (GIS).

PLATE 1

Part of Homa Bay Town, the County's headquarters viewed from Makongeni Hill Estate. Part of Lake Victoria can be seen at the background. Fishing was an economic mainstay of the Homa Bay County residents during the colonial period.

Source: Researcher

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study was premised on the significance of the institution of chieftaincy in Kenya particularly in Homa Bay County during the colonial. Among the Luo, the institution of *Rwoth* became the prototype of chieftaincy in the colonial era. The great roles which chiefs played in the colonial administrative structure can not be gainsaid. Of note was that they faced dilemma in the course of their duties as they were torn between allegiance to their appointing authority, the colonial state, or the African people of whom they were their kith and kin. The Socio-Economic and Political transformational roles of colonial chiefs among the Luo of Homa Bay County, Kenya (1890-1963) became the main theme of the study. The gist of the study was therefore based on the following analysis: The nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in pre-colonial period; Colonial conquest and search for chiefs in Homa Bay County by 1920 ; The role of chiefs in economic transformations in Homa Bay from 1920 to 1945.; The role of chiefs in the introduction and development of western education in Homa Bay County from 1945 to 1963; The role of chiefs in the development of Local Native Councils and the rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County by 1963.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Analyse the nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in pre-colonial period.
2. Examine colonial conquest and search for chiefs in Homa Bay County by 1920.
3. Assess the role of Chiefs in economic transformations in Homa Bay from 1920 to 1945.
4. Analyse the role of Chiefs in the introduction and development of western education in Homa Bay County from 1945 to 1963.

5. Evaluate the role of Chiefs in the development of Local Native Councils and the rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County by 1963.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What was the nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in the pre-colonial period?
2. To what extent did the colonial conquest lead to the search for chiefs in Homa Bay County by 1920?
3. How were the Chiefs involved in economic transformations in Homa Bay County from 1920 to 1945?
4. What role did the Chiefs play in the introduction and development of western education in Homa Bay County from 1945 to 1963?
5. What was the role of Chiefs in the development of Local Native Councils and the rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County by 1963?

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study discussed the the roles of chief in socio-economic transformations in Homa Bay County which was part of South Kavirondo during the colonial period. South Kavirondo District was vast and covered the present day Kisii, Nyamira, Migori and Homa Bay counties.

The study commenced from 1890 shortlybefore Kenya became a British East African Protectorate, up to 1963 when Kenya attained her independence. The choice of 1890 as the commencement date of the study was in order to give preclude to the nature of chieftaincy in the pre-colonial period among the Southern Nyanza Luo in Homa Bay County. The study mainly assessed the nature of chieftaincy among the Homa Bay County Luo in pre-colonial and colonial

Homa Bay County that is, 1890-1963. The year 1963 marked the end of colonial period in Kenya after Kenya got her independence from Britain.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms

Chiefs - the person in charge of a group or organization, or the ruler of an ethnic group.

Economic Transformations - refers to the continuous process of moving labour and other resources from lower to higher productivity sectors and raising within sector productivity growth

Political transformation - refers to when the rulers in a country lose power when the type of governance in the country change.

Socio-economic - activities affecting social and economic lives of a people

Social Transformation - refers to the process of change in institutionalized relationships, norms, values, and hierarchies over time.

Transformational - to change completely the appearance or character of something or someone, especially so that they are improved.

In-direct rule - a rule by proxy in which case the British ruled through the appointed African chiefs.

Governance - to have a controlling influence on something.

Collaborators - to with with an enemy who has taken control of your country.

Metropole - refers to Britain in relation to her colonies abroad which were regarded as periphery.

Sphere of influence - areas in which Britain had greater say according to Berlin Conference terms.

Native - relating to or describing someone's country or place of birth or someone who was born in a particular country or place.

1.9 Justification of the Study

The study avers that although the concept of chief was largely British the benefits of the office to governance were immense. The study brought to attention the importance of chiefs in the mobilization of development at the grass root level. Without the chiefs it would have been very challenging for the colonial administration to offer services to the people. To researchers in public administration and history this study will help them to increase their efforts in the further understanding of Chiefs as important cogs in the structure of public administration in Kenya. In this era of devolution in Kenya, this study would help in the creation of synergy between the chiefs who are the representatives of the national government and the devolved units for effective service delivery to the people. This study was important as it would inform policy and help the government to restructure and reform chieftaincy for the better service delivery to not only the people of Homa Bay County but also to the people of Kenya as a whole cognisant of the fact that the office of chief in Kenya has been difficult to wish away.

1.10 Review of Related Literature

1.10.1 Introduction

Literatures exist on chiefs not only in Kenya but internationally in jurisdictions where they formed part of the national administrative structures. This section reviews some of the available literatures essential to this study. Most of the works on Kenya trace the establishment of chieftaincy from its traditional structure to when it was embedded, restructured and transformed to suit the requirements of the colonial state from 1895 to end of colonialism in Kenya in 1963. The work has been arranged thematically to cover; the nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in pre-colonial period; colonial conquest and search for chiefs in Homa Bay County; the role of chiefs in economic transformations in Homa Bay; the role of chiefs in the introduction and development of western education in Homa Bay County; the role of chiefs in the development of Local Native Councils and the rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County.

1.10.2 The Nature and Role of Leadership and Governance in Homa Bay County in Pre-Colonial Period

This part explains the origins of colonial system and the roles and existence of chiefs among some African communities like the Luo, before the coming of Europeans to Kenya. There were institution of chiefs in the pre-colonial period, and their authority was based on cultural and spiritual constructions. It is clear some African communities had Chiefs. For example, the Luo ethnic group in Kenya was ruled through the institution of '*Ruoth*', to which they owed total allegiance. They were under '*Ruoth*' chieftaincy in Sudan, and were under the same till their settlement in their present day homeland in Western Kenya, including the areas of Southern Nyanza district in the present day Homa Bay County. Even where the office of the Chief existed

in the traditional society, as among the Luo, Ochieng says that these leaders did not have coercive power and autocratic power as they later possessed during the colonial period. This system, which checked the Chief's authority, ensured that he could not be biased in his work. Regrettably, in the colonial situation such checks and balances never existed.

This was supported by Ogolla, who writing on Jopadhola Luo group argues that:

A significant complex and subtle relationship existed between kinship and politics in which elders managed their internal affairs with minimum supervision.¹⁴ The Jopadhola developed a kinship structure which seemed to have been influenced by the political culture in those areas they passed through during the time of migrations. Lamphear convincingly notes that migrations in Africa were largely a gradual process of cultural, political and linguistic interaction.¹⁵ It is as a result of this that the area of Padhola managed to develop with a shared custom, language and territory similar to those of other ethnic groups. Besides, they must have been influenced by environmental, social and material factors which determined the historical experience which was consolidated into a common goal.¹⁶ The researcher argues that what was true of Jopadhola kinship and lineage systems in particular were also true of the Southern Nyanza Luo in Homa Bay.

From the above point of view, it can be concluded that the people of Homa Bay County had chiefs in the form of *Ruoth* before the coming of the Europeans to Kenya just like the Jopadhola cousins had. Their functions were not totally at variance with the institution of chiefs that the colonial state would later on juxtapose on Africans. Some of the norms and traditional practices that were observed by the Luo almost naturally became subservient to the legal and administrative arrangements that would be put in place by the colonial state. They were used to the system of governance under *Ruothship*. In the new trajectory, the Luo in Homa Bay would, after the colonial conquest, come under the chiefs appointed by the colonial state. In a

¹⁴ Vaughan, 1986:177, Ogola thesis, p.7

¹⁵ Lamphear 1985:55

¹⁶ Karugire, 1980:2; Ogot, 1996

comparative analysis, I agree with Ochieng's assertion that the Luo were democratic and exhibited the kind of leadership that made the people to be at peace with them and themselves unlike the colonial chiefs who wielded their authority courtesy of the foreign doctrine of indirect rule. The decisions made by *Ruoth* in most cases took care of the interests of the community as they were made after thorough consultations with other members of the society at different levels.

Ochieng was supported by Peter Ogingo Kwasa,¹⁷ who argued that although Chiefs worked as *jonanga*, the former *rwothship* was more caring since there were no collection of taxes from the people. They were also democratic and presided over the cultural issues which supported the development of the Luo people. The new system of chieftaincy emphasized the needs of the colonial authority at the expense of the people.

1.10.3 The Colonial Conquest and Search for Chiefs in Homa Bay County

This part covered colonial conquest and search for chiefs in Homa Bay County. Kenya became a British East Africa protectorate in 1895. The colonial leadership was mainly through the institution of chief at local levels with authority to collect taxes on behalf of the metropole.

Borrowing from the work of Couma, it can be argued that even the government was no better prepared for the task of administration than had been the IBEACo. Since it lacked its own.¹⁸ This is what compelled Colonel Colville, to send his Valet, Fredrick Spire, to represent him and establish a British administration post in Mumias¹⁹; Dealing, 1974:308; Esese, 1990:191; Owino, 1993:147). Though only a Valet, his presence began the consolidation of British rule in Western

¹⁷ O.I. Peter Ogingo Kwasa, Kanyamwa, 24th, July, 2019

¹⁸ Mungeam, 1966:20. Low, 1982:5

¹⁹ Lonsdale, 1964:98 Ogot, 1967:232

Kenya with Mumias as its official administrative station. Spire's administration lasted for only half a year within which he had not established any meaningful contact with the Luo except for Kitoto of Kano²⁰ in February 1895; he was replaced by C.W. Hobley who remained there until 1903. Hobley's arrival in Mumias considerably increased the administrative presence of the British in the area. It was only a matter of time before effective colonial control was imposed on the Luo of Siaya. 57 It should be noted, however, that the British efforts in Nyanza up to about 1897 were largely limited to protecting communication links. The actual labour demands were light. Even the political aims were limited by the military resources. But with the mutiny of Sudanese troops in 1897, and rebellion in Uganda. The British position was first threatened and then strongly reinforced. New troops and supplies were rushed to the scene and this marked the beginning of a period of active domination of Nyanza. The result was increased need for porters (to supply the increased military establishment in Uganda) from a population that was unwilling to provide such labour. Indeed, the expedition against Alego (Siaya) in September, 1898 was one of the first ones to be carried out by Hobley's administration in specific response to a refusal to provide labour.²¹ And on this and most subsequent expeditions Hobley began to demand labour as a proof of submission.²² The view that the Luo of Central Kavirondo, offered no armed resistance to colonial intrusion.

On the issue of armed resistance,²³ informed the researcher that during the colonial conquest in Homa Bay, there was no physical resistance to the establishment of colonial administration in south Nyanza from the people. This was because the missionaries who were the frontrunners had pacified the people and so people were very peaceful. So there was no record of any

²⁰ Schiller, 1983:270-271; Jalang'o-Ndeda, 1991:84

²¹ Jalang'o-Ndeda. 1991:87

²² Stictcher, 1985: 12 Jalang'o-Ndeda, 1991:87

²³ O.I. Mzee Daniel Agutu Arogo Kodumo, Kabondo 14.7.2019

expeditions led by the British to confront the people and demand for their allegiance. During the recruitment of labour, chiefs assisted in the identification of the people who were ready to offer labour to the government and in the settler's farms. This occurred very peacefully.

Ewout Frankema (2010) has argued that the record of state failure in the late twentieth century is so impressive that it is hard to escape the idea that there is something specifically 'African' in the nature and history of African state formation. Scholars widely agree that the process of colonial state formation in Africa embodied some typical features, if only because African state boundaries were drawn on the European drawing table in almost complete neglect of the prevailing social, political, economic and cultural dividing lines.²⁴ But the question how colonial state institutions impacted on long run African state development remains contested. Acemoglu et al. (2001) have argued that without significant European settlement, colonial governments were not committed to the development of growth-promoting institutions. Instead, „near absolutist“ governments imposed „extractive institutions“ to facilitate the exploitation of indigenous labour and natural resources through trade, land appropriation, excessive taxation or outright plunder. Much of their story about extractive institutions is based on the African experience. Fiscal policy fulfils an important role in their argument as one of the main channels of revenue extraction. According to Crawford Young (1994) the revenue imperative“ of African colonial governments was a precondition for establishing European hegemony as it not only provided the necessary resources, but also symbolized the authority and legitimacy of the colonial state. Bush and Maltby (2004) have also stressed that colonial fiscal systems were functional in turning Africans into „governable people“. Taxation and Government Spending in

²⁴ Ayittey, 2005

British Africa, 1880-1940: Maximizing revenue or minimizing effort?²⁵ The governance of these regions by the colonial administration was through in-direct rule spearheaded by the colonial chiefs, as has been laid out in Lugard's influential work, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*.

Kenya and Nigeria were ruled through this method of indirect rule which was criticized by some scholars who expressed their misgivings about this alien system and saw it as something that undermined the Africa's leadership organization which were done through the Council of Elders in the a cephalous communities. Opinions were varied on the institution of chiefs in Africa. On this particular issue of indirect rule, Prime Minister Salisbury explained his position:

The condition of a protected dependency is more acceptable to the half civilized races, and more suitable for them than direct dominion. It is cheaper, simpler, less wounding to their self-esteem, gives them more career as public officials, and spares of unnecessary contact with white men.²⁶

This description of Africans by Salisbury was derogatory because issues of civilization are relative. And obviously the intention of the colonial ruler had nothing to do with African interest but for all purpose and intent was calculated for Africa's subjugation. The undertone of this statement was actually racism and establishment of the "white hegemony" across Africa. The African chief would be a man who would be at the strict service of the Metropolitan. British, among other European powers, colonized many parts of the world. They used different methods of colonial administration to carry out their plans such as direct rule, indirect rule, and assimilation among others.

²⁵ Ewout Frankema Utrecht University.p.1

²⁶ www.en.m.wikipedia.org

In order for the British to successfully govern the Kenyan colony as explained by Lange (2004), they used the system of indirect rule. This is because any attempt by the British to rule directly would result to failure in their governance. The indirect rule involved creation of the chief system, establishment of local native council and native tribunals.²⁷ Despite the fact that the ethnic communities were ruled by council of elders in the ancient period, the British had to appoint paramount chiefs whom they could manage and control.²⁸

Chiefs also were involved in prosecutions of migrant labour. According to Cocumu (2001) it should be noted that the British efforts in Nyanza upto about 1897 were largely limited to protecting communication links. The actual labour demands were light. Even the political aims were limited by the military resources. But with the mutiny of Sudanese troops in 1897, and rebellion in Uganda, the British position was first threatened and then strongly reinforced. New troops and supplies were rushed to the scene and this marked the beginning of a period of active domination of Nyanza. The result was increased need for porters from a population that was unwilling to provide labour.

The colonial Chiefs who comprised the chief system were to act in the interests of the British for economic, political and social development. The effective administration carried out by the colonial chiefs' who collaborated with the British, played an important role in enhancing the country's development. Other than collaboration, the colonial chiefs such as warrant chief

²⁷ (Ndege, 2009).

²⁸ Stephen Irungu (2019) The role of colonial chiefs in Kenya Their impact on Kenya's security standards, educational system and agricultural sector.

Okugo, Lenana Laibon who practiced resistance also contributed to development. These were as a result of organized strikes by the chiefs to protest their grievances against the British.²⁹ The multiple factors discussed below explains the contribution of Colonial chiefs towards the development of the country.³⁰

The back bone of the colonial administration was particularly the collection of taxes through the African chiefs. As argued by Cokumu, in 1910, the new Governor, Sir Percy Girouard issued an official memorandum outlining his own directions of policy, based on Lugardian theory of indirect rule. The memorandum, which was sent to all provincial commissioners in Kenya contained the following statement:

The fundamental principle and the only humane policy to be followed in dealing with peoples who have not reached a high standard of civilization is to develop on their own lines and in accordance with their own ideas and customs, purified in so far as necessary.....not only is it my wish, but it is the direct order of the secretary for the colonies, that we should support the authority of the chiefs, council of elders and Headmen in Native Reserves, and the prestige and influence of the chiefs can be held by letting the peasantry see that the Government itself treats them as an integral part of the machinery of administration. By upholding the authority of the chiefs and elders, I do not wish to imply that officers are to sit and enforce blindly all orders issued by these men who, after all, are only savages. The main object of administering the people through their chiefs is to prevent disintegration amongst the tribes, but active interests, supervision and guidance on the part of the officers of the administration are all necessary for the prevention of abuses.³¹

The colonial state was essentially concerned with security, for the maintenance of which, the administration would bank on colonial chiefs whose powers were to subordinate to those of British administrative officers.

²⁹ Ahluwali, 1996

³⁰ (ibid)

³¹ KNA/DC/CN/5/5

The intention of 1910 Ordinance was to tax a man in proportion to his wealth which was estimated by the number of wives he had. The argument was that although a man would be less well off after paying cattle for his wives, he was a potential producer of wealth in terms of the number of acreage he was able to put under cultivation and in the number of daughters, who in their turn, would be married off.³²

Qualitative studies that have been carried out, such as the research by Schmitt (2015) reveals that, one of the key factors towards the development of a certain place is availability of high standards of security. The role of the colonial chiefs such as Ogola Ayieke, to maintain law and order attributed to development as it eradicated crime crisis. Deflem, 1994 Land dispute which was the major dispute among communities was resolved by the chiefs who made binding orders and final decisions over the matter. Through the demarcation of land boundaries and creation of public meetings the chiefs advocated for peace and unity among conflicting parties. Other than land disputes, the chiefs also played a role in minimizing cattle raiding which also caused insecurity among the civilian population.

Awino argued that under Chief Magak, on the matter of demarcation of boundaries, an attempt had been made by the chief to move Kacien people of Kasipul to Kanyamkago following a request by Chief Pius Olima of Kanyamkago. Chief Olima wanted the people of Kachien to go

³² KNA-Memo.DC/CN/3/5

and occupy his area to help his people clear the bushes in order to control the tsesefly menance. The Kachien peole refused this overtures and for sometime there was bad blood between the Kachien people and the Konyango people because they believed that a proposal to move them out of Kachien was done inorder to allow the Konyango and Kokal people to take their land. So the plan was vehemently rejected by Kachien people. Luckily there was no military force that was deployed to move the people of Kachien to Kamkago.³³

Military units are of significant contribution for any political development as explained through the pioneered work of (Finer 2017). Recruitment of men into military units was another important role carried by the colonial chief that enhanced political development. The men were used to construct local administration and military centers thereby improving the domination by the colonial chiefs in the realm of politics.³⁴

Additionally, a number of works have been done on colonial African chiefs in Kenya and Africa. Those worth mentioning include: Richards and a government of Kenya booklet, *The Work of an African Chief in Kenya*.³⁵

Observes that:

Because of deficiency in administrative manpower, the British colonial state had to rely heavily on traditional African rulers, chiefs and religious authorities to

³³ O.I. Fredrick Otieno Awino, Kachien Location, 10th September 2020

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Geller (1987: 122-140) cited in Yokana Ogola, thesis (2015, p.16), *Chiefs and Local Government Administration in West Budama County in UGanda during the Colonial period, 1900-1962*

help in administration. In this way, the indirect rule system permitted traditional rulers and chiefs to take part in administration, but under the careful supervision of European authorities. This observation, however, does not clearly show how chiefs came into local administration and the challenges they experienced.

These have been provided in this study which carried out a rigorous investigation on how Chiefs were coopted into the system of local government administration. The chiefs with close proximity to the colonial authority were able to bring up their scions in positions of influence thereby becoming the first strata of the African elites.

Ogola has further argued that: It is pertinent to argue that Johnston, like other British administrators deployed elsewhere in other parts of colonial Africa, was determined to implement the Dual Mandate policy put forward by Lord Lugard in which Lugard proposed to rule Africa through the indigenous rulers or Native administrators.

The scheme also included establishing formal education to make the colonized people become literate, abolish slave trade and replace it with legitimate trade. The aim was to exploit Africans from within their localities and to use Christianity to prepare or pacify the ground for effective administration.³⁶

Much has been said about the negativity of the African chief also. There were also positive things about them. The fact that they were more inclined to listen to their appointing authority could not have been an act of ambivalence on their part as such. This has been supported by Bogonko who argued that: Of all the colonial administrators, African chiefs have perhaps been

³⁶ Ajayi and Espie, 1965:39

most misunderstood and their actions most misinterpreted by African historians especially those of nationalist bent. Whilst the positions and roles of the District officers (Dos), District Commissioners (DCs) and Provincial Commissioners (PCs) have been seen quite rightly as important parts of that chain of administrative machinery whose main duty was to establish colonialism in any one given colony, for some queer reasons, African colonial chiefs have been expected to have acted differently. African Chiefs ought to have supported the wishes of their kith and kin to the hilt, for instance, in their struggle for political freedom and socio economic emancipation. Because many chiefs did not do this they have been branded as clamorous collaborators with the European colonialists and as tyrants, self-seekers, conservatives, swindlers and terrorists of their own people. But the above cannot be all that chiefs were or did. They must have played important roles in their politics of and socio-economic development of their people in that period. Attempts were made to question why chiefs were expected to act all contrary to the dictates of their jobs. Did E.S. Atieno-Odhiambo, Semakula Kiwanuka and, to a lesser extent, William R. Ochieng', to name just a few, really understand the office of the African colonial chief played before they began writing. That office was not created to protect the African, but to see to the establishment and germination of colonialism in Africa. To think that the chief, because he was black, was different from the D.O., D.C. or PC who were pink is ridiculous, to say the least. The chief was the single most important link between his employers (the colonizers) and his kith and kin (the colonized). It was the chief in the final analysis who represented the government to the people. Naturally his loyalty was first to the government, his employer.³⁷

³⁷ Colonial chiefs and African development in Kenya with special reference to Secular Education, S.N. Bogonko
Transafrican journal of History Vol.14, 1985 1-20

It should be noted that, the executions of chief's duties were done through some ordinances during the colonial period. These ordinances did not have the input of the local people. In 1907, Courts Ordinance set up tribunals under headmen and chiefs to deal with tax defaulters and rebels against authority. The 1911 Tax defaulters Tribunal rules (TDTR) recognized the constitution of council of elders in accordance to traditional customs to administer justice. The 1921 Native Authority Ordinance (NAO) set guidelines to appoint headmen and chiefs over specific areas (locations) with ethnic boundaries drawn (later in 1926). These measures were taken to stem bogus or weak and unaccepted leaders and to get trusted loyal servants fairly at ease with their community.

At independence, chiefs, who were first installed by the colonial government became a symbol of impunity, torture and absolute authority. The village chief was a god: He presided over kangaroo courts, passed guilty verdicts, fined culprits on the spot or took house hold items by force. When he spoke, people froze to listen. To understand their power, one has to look at how they came to be. Having subjugated the "natives" as its subjects, the British colonial government retained their system of governing through clan elders at the village level.³⁸

Between 1907 and 1912 the powers of the colonial chiefs were increased by further legal promulgations. The 1907 Courts Ordinance created Native Courts and recognized tribunals under

³⁸ Interview with Dr L. S. B. Leakey, 01 July 1970. 2 Political Record Books, Muranga District; K. N. A., Nairobi. 3 Secretariat, Southern Province, to Chief Secretary, 17 August 1923; CSO 26/I 09253/, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. 4 W. H. Cooke, Annual Report for Onitsha Province, 1920-21; CSO 21/5, I3, N.N.A., Ibadan 5 Machakos District Political Record Book, 1925-30; KNA/DC/MKS 4/8, 1927, K.N.A., Nairobi. 6 Quarterly Report, Ulu, Machakos, December 1909³⁸

the direct authority of the chief.³⁹ Later, in 1911, the Native Tribunal Rules recognized the constitution of the council of elders in accordance with traditional custom.⁴⁰ The Native Authority Ordinance enlarged the formerly relatively minor powers of the Chiefs and lay down that they were to be appointed over specific areas.

Mamdani (1996) notes that in the state's communities, colonial imposition could not resonate with any aspect of tradition. Often, ethnic groups were created on the basis of territorial integrity as villages were brought together under a single administrative authority. Chiefship was similarly manufactured, imposed and based on administrative appointment. Hence, the chief was liberated from all constraints from tradition and made a decentralized despot. This argument partly formed the basis of analysis in this study, especially when examining the recruitment and appointment of chiefs in Homa Bay County.

William Ochieng' wrote about the history of South Nyanza Luo but did not specifically account for the reigns of chiefs in Homa Bay in socio-economic and political transformations of their areas of jurisdiction. Ochieng has pointed out that the explanation for this state of affairs stems both from the role which they played in the big task of turning the wheel of development. On the one hand, they were supposed to support the wishes of their kith and kin in all ways, for example in the fight for emancipation. Yet, at the same time, they were supposed to clearly follow and implement policies of their masters.

³⁹ Ogot, 1963: 254 Middleton, 1968:351

⁴⁰ Ogot, 1963: 254 Middleton, 1968:351

Written materials on African Chiefs in Homa Bay County are still scarce. But some archival materials may be obtained about African chiefs in Homa Bay during the colonial period.

1.10.4 Responsibilities of chiefs at a glance

The British settlers coming to Kenya influenced the initiation of most of the ordinances which were laws mainly used to ensure the smooth operations for the White settlers. The study was about chiefs in Homa Bay but suffices to say that some literature touching on general British administration in colonial Kenya can not be ignored and are very useful to this study. The British colonial officials had their own attitudes towards the chiefs they had themselves appointed as discussed in this thesis.⁴¹

The British Government had occupied East Africa with no firm or clear purpose of Colonial development in mind, but mainly for strategic reasons in Egypt and on the Nile. For this purpose a railway was commenced. After Fashoda, the strategic necessity vanished, but there was now a financial need to find means of covering the cost of administration and making the railway pay. For lack of exportable products the white settlement was adopted, not without some backward glances. With settlement, came South African ideas of native policy and settlement brought white demands for security, for African land, and for African labour. The East African administrator, unlike his counterpart in West Africa or Uganda, was faced with the task of achieving cheap government through African acquiescence, and at the same time of meeting the growing demands of white settlers. These demands placed a heavy strain on the native agents

⁴¹ The history of European settlement in Kenya until 1915 has been fully dealt with by M. P. K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya*, London.

and collaborators, no less than on the administrator. And amidst all his dilemmas, central policy offered nought for his comfort, because it remained both ambiguous and inconsistent.⁴²

Cashmore's overriding interest is the character of early British colonial rule, both its policy-making 'mind' and its ground-level practice. The British, he argues, tried to govern according to general notions of 'native trusteeship', modified by the need to encourage the economic activity that would profit investors, generate a government revenue, and benefit, or at least not harm, 'native interests'. There were many, even 'pro-native', officials who thought white settlement could meet all the criteria provided that government regulated African labour conditions and ensured that African tax was spent to African benefit.⁴³

The Administrators were asked to reconcile opposites; white settlement and native interests. If they did not always see the problem in these terms, they too were products of the west; the agents of a white government who were the representatives of native society in its dealings with the Central Government. They were often inconsistent since they ignored or lost sight of the dilemma, convinced, as they were, of the efficacy of fair play and just dealing. Again the demands of the day were all engrossing. The official did not make policy; his role was to implement it. Yet where there was a hiatus in policy, he was forced to take decisions on his own.

In this, by function parochial, he reflected the parochial point of view. In all these, the colonial African chief remained to be the bridge between the colonial authority and the colonised

⁴² Cashmore T.H.R Studies in District Administration in the East Africa Protectorate (1895-1918) Jesus College, Cambridge November 1965, thesis, p.12

⁴³ John Lonsdale Trinity College, Cambridge issues invited differences of opinion. Kenya's early administration had a troubled conscience.

Africans.⁴⁴This thesis supports Cashmore's arguments by asserting that chiefs were indeed the face of the foreign interest in Homa Bay County and in Kenya as a whole. They were mere agents of white dominion who had the interests of the African folks at heart. They implemented policies in which they were never involved in their formulations without questioning anything and were therefore mere stooges of the King and Queen of England.

Irungu S. (2019) has argued that the implementation of British economic innovations by the colonial chiefs played an integral role towards the development of the country.⁴⁵ These were made possible as the chiefs recruited laborers to work in plantations and also to construct the industries for Kenyan raw materials. Agriculture has played an important role towards the development of Kenya. A large number of communities depended on land cultivation and livestock keeping for their livelihoods. According to Wolff (1970), the formation of legislations related to land such as Registered Land Act, Chiefs Authority Act, the Agricultural rules and the Agricultural act were created in order to control all land uses. The chiefs such as Waruhiu wa Kung'u, and Waiyaki wa Hinga were involved in many campaigns under the legislation, Chiefs Authority Act to enhance agricultural development.⁴⁶

Role of colonial chiefs to the development of Kenya, by Stephen Irungu Mbuthia,⁴⁷ during food shortages, the chief's requirement to allow persons to plant any specified crops for themselves and their families contributed to effective land usage. The chief's mandate to compulsory employ labor in case of a natural disaster or emergency and during land conservation measures played an

⁴⁴ Cashmore T.H.R Studies in District Administration in the East Africa Protectorate (1895-1918) Jesus College, Cambridge November 1965, thesis, p.38

⁴⁵ Irungu S (2019)

⁴⁶ Wolf (1970)

⁴⁷ Stephen Irungu (2019)

important role in the agricultural industry. The chiefs also prohibited grazing of animals in lands that have been planted fodder crops in order to encourage farming activities. Besides the Chief's Authority Act, the chiefs also implemented the use of land tenure systems in areas with fertile soils such as kikuyu lands. In relation to the Agricultural act, the chiefs also played a role by enforcing the rules and regulations associated with cash crop i.e. tea and coffee plantations. In addition to cash crops, the chiefs encouraged farmers particularly in Muranga to grow black wattle because it greatly impacted all aspects of development in their respective areas. In all their undertakings, the chief acted within various Ordinances in the discharge of their duties.

1.10.5 Impact of First World War on Africans

Author Cashmore examined officials' views on the relation between British force and the African consent without which little could get done. Force was inherent in any imperial rule imposed on peoples who normally ruled themselves under lightweight institutions, embodied in kinship and generation. The British justified their force as the birth-pangs of a new, supposedly more civilised, social order to which Africans would in due course assent. That their force might fail to elicit consent is best seen on Kenya's north-eastern frontier, the subject of chapter VII. But even pacification of an unruly frontier did not solve the problem.

How African self-interest could be satisfied under alien rule was always in question. In Cashmore's period this was most painfully true during the First World War, when the consent of Kenya's most populous and productive peoples was tested near to breaking point. But the Great War's demands were merely an extreme example of how colonial necessity could (but not inevitably) damage African wellbeing, principally by expropriating African labour from its productive household tasks.

Cashmore's case studies, all failures (page 85), give him more opportunity than British successes to show how the tensions and flash-points of alien rule could promote or frustrate the fortunes of both Africans and Britons. Few colonial careers flourished, more were blighted—along with the lives of many Africans—in the years in which Kenya was known as the East Africa Protectorate or EAP.

Recruits for both fighting and carrier service were raised by three methods. The first was on a purely volunteer basis where Africans offered their services freely without any outside pressure according to Cashmore. Thus, in the early stages of the war on the Palestine and Syrian fronts, large numbers of impoverished fallâhîn (peasants) in Egypt offered their services in return for what were comparatively attractive wages. There is no doubt that in most African countries there were volunteers for the army who knew exactly what enlistment entailed. The Senegalese citizens of the Four Communes of Senegal were quite prepared to accept the full obligations of compulsory military service exacted from Metropolitan Frenchmen if it would guarantee their own status as citizens. And to this end their Deputy, Blaise Diagne, secured the passage of a Law of 29 September 1916 which stated that 'the natives of the communes de plein exercice of Senegal are and remain French citizens as provided for by the law of 15 October 1915. In Madagascar all 45000 recruits into the French army were said to have been volunteers, but the great majority of African recruits went into the various armies against their will, either as forced 'volunteers' or as conscripts.⁴⁸

A great deal of recruitment was undertaken through chiefs who were expected to deliver up the numbers required of them by the political officers. In some areas they had no difficulty in

⁴⁸ (ibid)

obtaining genuine volunteers; in others, men were impressed by the chiefs and presented to the political officers as volunteers. Much of the unpopularity of chiefs in Northern Rhodesia after the war can be attributed to their role in recruitment of soldiers and carriers.⁴⁹

Kachien location produced one person who served during the first world war. This was Petro Koko Apaka. Because the First World War was fought when Chief Oyugi was ruling, it was obvious that he contributed to the recruitment of Koko Apaka in the career corps. Koko was so physically fit and people believed that it was due to the training he had received during his service in the First World War.⁵⁰

By 1913 Africans dominated the export of commodities like cotton, sisal and maize, which improved the revenue base of the protectorate. On the other hand, the settlers' contribution was minimal until after the First World War. This was due to the fact that by 1914 settler agriculture had not really established itself as the dominant export sector, and settler consumption was not yet large enough to raise their indirect tax payments above African direct payments. Thus, by and large, the sale of African commodities made a heavy contribution to the revenues of the state. These came in the form of railway tariffs, customs duties, fees and fines. This means that part of the cost of administration was borne by the Africans. According to John Overton, the cost of governing the protectorate by 1914 was being borne to the extent of 70 percent by African direct tax payments.⁵¹

⁴⁹ (ibid)

⁵⁰ O.I. Retired Assistant Chief Samson Osanya

⁵¹ John Overton, 'Spatial Differentiation in the Colonial Economy of Kenya: Africans, Settlers and the State, 1900-1920', PhD Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1983, p. 38. Quoted from Robert M. Maxon, 'The establishment of the Colonial Economy', in W. R. Ochieng' and R. M. Maxon eds.) An Economic History of Kenya (Nairobi, 1992), "p. 69.

The social consequences of the war for Africa varied considerably from territory to territory and depended on the extent of their involvement, in particular the degree of recruitment or military activity in them. Unfortunately, until recently relatively little attention has been given to the social impact of the war. This is somewhat surprising, since for some areas like eastern Africa, the First World War, as Ranger has put it, was 'the most awe-inspiring, destructive and capricious demonstration of European "absolute power" that eastern Africa ever experienced. The scale of the forces involved, the massiveness of the fire-power, the extent of devastation and disease, the number of African lives lost - all these dwarfed the original campaigns of colonial conquest, and even the suppression of the Maji Maji uprising.

Writing in the 1930s Dr H. R. A. Philip remarked that:

The 'experiences of the years from 1914 to 1918 were such as to effectively awaken the Kenya native from the sleep of the centuries'. Compared with the research conducted on the political consequences of the war for Africa, comparatively little has been undertaken on its social consequences. Yet its impact on soldiers, carriers and labourers who were uprooted from the circumscribed worlds of their villages and sent thousands of miles away and their impact on their societies on their return forms a major theme in colonial history.⁵²

The impact of the War on the Administration was cumulative. Recruitment of new officers dwindled. 5 Younger officers were called to the colours, or volunteered, without permission for service overseas. 6 Five officers died during the War years and 4 others were killed in action.7 Staff was overstretched and leave irregular. By early 1918 in an establishment of 141 officers, there were 22 vacancies, and, in addition, 24 officers were away on active service and 3 officers were on secondment. This left 93 officers, of whom 15 were on long leave and further 59 were overdue for leave. 8 In effect, 78 officers were available for administrative duties; nearly 50%

⁵² H.R.Philip (1930) <https://en.unesco.org/courier/news-views-online/first-world-war-and-its-consequences-africa>

below strength. The stresses of the War and shortages of staff, left the Administration in no condition to fight off the growing political challenge of the settlers.⁵³

For the settlers, the War brought the political initiative. Though migration was checked, settler politics were stimulated. In fighting the battles of the Empire, they staked out a claim for special treatment. In 1915 they gained a voice in the control of the local military effort by the establishment of a War Council, to which they sent elected representatives. In 1916, they were promised popular representation in Legislative Council, after the cessation of hostilities. Consideration was given to post-war European Settlement, and here again settler views were consulted.⁵⁴

1.10.6 The Role of Chiefs in Economic Transformations

After retrenchment during the 1930s Depression, and especially during the Second World War, colonial administrations found themselves (for a variety of reasons) entering the Post-War Era with a new public commitment to be seen to promote actively the development of the economies over which they presided. “Developmental” language was partly redeemed by greater spending. In principle this came partly from the metropolitan taxpayer. However, in the French case Patrick Manning (1998, 123-5) has calculated that the government continued to receive more in tax from Africa than it spent in Africa. In British West Africa the new statutory export marketing boards accrued substantial surpluses by keeping a large margin between the price paid to producers and the price that the boards received for the crop on the world market. The surpluses were kept in

⁵³ Cashmore T.H.R Studies in District Administration in the East Africa Protectorate (1895-1918) Jesus College, Cambridge November 1965, thesis,p.195-196

⁵⁴ (ibid)

London, in British government bonds, as forced savings from African farmers (Rimmer 1992, 41-2), which assisted the British metropolitan economy to recover from the post-war dollar shortage.⁵⁵

A feature of the theoretical and ideological debate about the history of economic development in Africa is that it is possible to reach rather similar conclusions from very different scholarly and political starting-points. Regarding the colonial impact, the case for the prosecution, which a generation ago was urged most strongly by dependency theorists and radical nationalists (Amin 1972; Rodney 1972), is now championed by “rational choice” growth economists. Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson (2001; 2002) have argued that Africa’s relative poverty at the end of the 20th century was primarily the result of the form taken by European colonialism on the continent: Europeans settling for extraction rather than settling themselves in overwhelming numbers and thereby introducing the kinds of institution (private property rights and systems of government that would support them) that, according to Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, was responsible for economic development in Europe and the colonies of European settlement in North America and Australasia.⁵⁶

Colonial extraction in Africa could be seen most decisively in the appropriation of land for European settlers or plantations, a strategy used not only to provide European investors and settlers with cheap and secure control of land, but also to oblige Africans to sell their labour to European farmers, planters or mine-owners (Palmer and Parsons 1977). Even in the “peasant”

⁵⁵ <https://journals.openedition.org/poldev/78>

⁵⁶ (ibid)

colonies, i.e. where the land remained overwhelmingly in African ownership, we will see that major parts of the services sector were effectively monopolised by Europeans. Then there was coercive recruitment of labour by colonial administrations, whether to work for the State or for European private enterprise (Fall 1993; Northrup 1988). Of potentially great long-term importance was the unwillingness of colonial governments to accept, still less promote, the emergence of markets in land rights on land occupied by Africans, whether in “settler” or “peasant” colonies (Phillips 1989). From the perspectives of both dependency theory and “rational choice” institutionalism, the original sin of colonialism in Africa was that it did not introduce a full-blooded capitalist system, based upon private property and thereby generating the pressures towards competition and accumulation necessary to drive self-sustained economic growth.⁵⁷

The actions of the Chiefs as colonial local functionaries became mere instruments of imperialism.....to be able to achieve their objectives, the colonial government badly needed to co-opt some local personnel who would be relied upon to mobilize populations in their respective areas to respond spontaneously to colonial policy. This view is much too simple, for it overlooks the important impact of Chiefs on local political life. In many cases chiefs not only acted as local agents of the colonial government but also used their new powers to dominate all traditional political and judicial institutions. Far from being overshadowed by the old structures, they exercised so much power that the authority of the old was greatly diminished.

No one has seriously studied colonial Chiefs in previously chiefless societies. Scholars and administrators often deplored their existence because they disrupted the political traditions of

⁵⁷ (ibid)

pre-colonial Africa. Others have contended that African communities simply disregarded these upstart chiefs and worked around them, settling disputes in the established ways. At best these chiefs have been regarded as little respected middlemen between the alien colonial government and local communities.

In evaluating their role in society, Moindi K. (1997), argues that scholars have given colonial functionaries varied treatment. Many historians, notably Muriuki, Atieno-Odhiambo and Kiwanuka have generally portrayed Colonial African Chiefs as mere instruments used by the British to reach the colonized. However much power the chiefs may have retained under colonial rule-and some retained a great deal-one fact was clear to them as to their subjects: Ultimate authority now lay with the white man. Moindi argues: assessment of the chiefs was only as agents of social change he does not view the chiefs as being collaborators. This was supported by Ondieki who wrote on the chiefs as agents of social change. It's important to note, however, that despite the criticisms against them by some scholars, African Chiefs played significant roles in the economic transformations of their people.⁵⁸

Chiefs were tasked with tax collection, maintenance of law and order and supply of cheap labor for public and settler requirements. Scholars have criticized the establishment of colonial rule in Kenya which they saw as meant to deprive people of their resources and fundamental rights. Actually people in Africa governed themselves well before the Europeans set their foot in

⁵⁸E.g. G. I. Jones, Report of the Position, Status, and Influence of Chiefs and Natural Rulers in the Eastern Region of Nigeria (Enugu, 1956), p. 5. 2 E.g. H. E. Lambert, 'The Use of Indigenous Authorities in Tribal Administration: studies of the Meru in Kenya Colony'; University of Capetown: Communications from the School of African Studies, 16

Kenya. Most Kenyans communities lived in decentralized states and were governed by council of elders chosen by consensus based on specific meritocracy.

See, for example, the letter from the District Commissioner, Nyeri, to the Provincial Commissioner, dated 4 April 1913, where G. A. S. Northcote states that the Kikuyu did not have 'hereditary, autocratic rulers such as...the Zulu chiefs';⁵⁹ For obvious reasons chiefs were very important as agents of colonialism in advancing economic development that included labour supply and marketing of products. In Homa Bay they urged the people to grow crops as well as supply labour to the European enterprises whenever they were required to do so.

Their roles certainly could not be diminished and this study has filled this gap. Homa Bay did not attract settler agriculture generally. But peasant farmers were slowly adopting modern agriculture especially cotton and groundnuts. The colonial Chiefs were again in the fore front in urging their people to grow these crops. The Indians acted as middlemen in the marketing of these market oriented crops. They continued to levy taxes on the people of Homa Bay that inherently bolstered the colonial coffers. These taxes were used by the colonial government in the manner they deemed fit without any guarantee to develop Homa Bay's fledgling Socio-Economic sector at the time. Some of the taxes according to some oral interviews only benefited the Chiefs themselves.

Gareth argues that: "After retrenchment during the 1930s Depression, and especially during the second world war, colonial administrations found themselves (for a variety of reasons) entering

⁵⁹ PC/CP/6/ /i, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

the post-war era with a new public commitment to be seen to promote actively the development of the economies over which they presided.⁶⁰

It can thus be argued that large amount of money was used on recurrent expenditure in the colony leaving important sectors such as education and agriculture with little percentages of budgetary allocations. We can then argue that these taxes were used to benefit the chiefs, their families and cronies at the expense of the people through the system of direct rule that created chiefs as rent seekers. The conduct of chiefs in collection of taxes and the opaque spending was corroborated by oral testimonies.

Given the relative scarcity of labour and the small markets, together with the comparative advantage in land-extensive primary production, it is not surprising that there was not much more manufacturing by the end of the colonial period. Where there were opportunities, colonial governments were rarely interested in upsetting the status quo in which colonial markets for manufactured goods were supplied largely by monopsonistic European merchants, selling goods disproportionately produced in the European metropolitan economy concerned.⁶¹ But given that, despite rising population, the factor endowments of even the larger African economies were not suited to industrialisation in 1960, the more important question is perhaps whether colonial rule, directly or indirectly, laid foundations on which Africa might later develop the conditions for a much larger growth of manufacturing.⁶²

⁶⁰ Gareth Austin (2010, p.17) African Economic Development and Colonial Legacies

⁶¹ Brett 1973, 266-82; Kilby 1975

⁶² <https://journals.openedition.org/poldev/78>

1.10.7 The Role of Chiefs in the Introduction and Development of Western Education

As the British colonialists were extending their tentacles into the Kavirondo another group of Europeans the Christian missionaries were also expanding into the area. They build schools and began to convert people to Christianity. Thus Homa Bay County had become a part of a large world, a colonial world based on political and economic system entirely different from that to which the local people were accustomed.⁶³

The development of western education in Homa Bay County was looked at from a general perspective of development of education in Kenya. It was not possible to look at it without having a wholistic picture of education in Kenya during the colonial period. As can be observed by Opondo et al Western education as established in Kenya can be traced back to the arrival of European Missionaries in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Soon after the Berlin Conference of the year 1884-85, European Missionaries desired to establish Mission stations in various parts in Africa with the aim of training converts. This endeavor was to be realized through the establishment of western education which was meant to act as the driving engine towards attaining the goal. The introduction of western education in Kenya came— in-hand to aid the Missionaries and the church to provide education in Kenya. Opondo, Kamahi and Kaluga, in their studies, report that the first Mission school was opened at Raba near Mombasa by Church Missionary Society (CMS) Missionaries; Dr. L. Kraft and Johann Redman in 1846. Basically the school engaged its students in skills of writing, reading and arithmetic's (3RS). In 1903 education took a new turn when Charles Eliot, the then Governor of the East African Protectorate, as Kenya was then known, encouraged the settlement of European farmers in the colony.

⁶³ Cokumu Ouma Pius (2001) The Colonial Transformation of Agriculture in Siaya, c.1894-1945

The district council later changed into the Native District Advisory Council (NDAC). The success of the NDAC became the motivation to the Native Authority (Amendment) Ordinance to establish the Local Native Council in 1924. These LNCs were upgraded NDACs. The LNCs were formally established in apparently a majority of districts in Kenya in 1925. They acted as the executive councils of the district commissioner up to 1950 when they were transformed into African District Councils (ADC). By the end of 1925 Twenty three (23) LNCs had been established in Kenya except in Northern Frontier District (NFD) and Turkana District. In 1934 a new influence upon the procedure for involving LNCs in the development of Africa education appeared with the government's creation of the District Education Boards (DEBs). The DEBs were created to bring the LNCs into the picture at the government's decision making level and improve the relations between LNCs and the government in the field of education. The DEBs were composed of representatives of LNCs appointed by the councilors and members appointed by the PCs six members nominated by the Missions and government officials. The chairman of the board was the DC who was made up of the DC (chair) and his district officers, chiefs, and members elected by Africans. The Local Native Councils had nominated members who were largely government chiefs and headmen. These chiefs and headmen were responsible in advising the DC and were mandated to be mouthpieces for the native African opinions and tools used to gauge the feelings of the African people. The LNCs also came in handy to bring together the newly articulated African politicians to be brought together with chiefs and headmen in a forum where the former would have to express their views before government officials. It was intended that such a public venue would help to trim likely extremism on the part of the African

politicians. It was initially conceptualized that LNC was going to act a mouth piece for African views and a sensing machine to detect African feelings.⁶⁴

The Christian missionaries had the upper hand in establishing financing and controlling formal education development before the emergence of government missionary cooperation at the turn of the twentieth century. The main education curriculum emphasized by the missionaries and supported by the colonial government educational policies was techno-religious. The Africans, with the inauguration of the Local Native Councils (LNCs) in 1925, worked through them to establish secular schools as Kakamega, Kagumo and Kisii. Again Ombati has left out key role of the chiefs in setting up of the educational institutions. If they were not directly involved, they were indirectly tangoed.⁶⁵

This new enthusiasm arose when the Gusii as did other people in South Kavirondo witnessed the new social economic advancement opportunities which had been brought about by the introduction of formal education. Hence, they subsequently flocked to mission schools in an endeavour to acquire the new skills which were rewarded with high pay in the employment markets: So Africans developed an interest in formal education when settlers began to pay relatively highly for reading and writing ability on the new farms. The Government began to look for clerks and employees who could obey instructions. The missions themselves helped to

⁶⁴ Establishing the role Played by the Local Native Council in the Development of Western Education in Nandi during the Inter-War Period (1923 –1938) International Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences (IJRESS)ISSN:2617-4804 2 (3) 13-39, July, 2019.

⁶⁵ According to Ombati (1994, Thesis p.12) Development of Secular Education in South Kavirondo District of Kenya: The case of Government African School Kisii (1934 - 1963)

encourage interest in schools by giving better educated Africans responsibilities and material benefits. While the missions saw education as a valuable arm of their work. One reason for the concentration on education especially during the second decade of the twentieth century was the increasing demand.

However, Ombati's thesis reveal that when Africans became dissatisfied with the type of education they were subjected to in the mission schools through the Local Native Councils which were inaugurated in 1925, they collected and voted money for the establishment of Government African School Kisii in 1934. With the establishment of this school, a new era of literary or secular education was ushered into the district. His thesis also shows that with the excellent academic and extra-curricular performance staged by the Government African School Kisii, the mission schools in South Kavirondo were in turn forced to improve their performance making them able to compete with Government African School Kisii.⁶⁶

At least Bogonko has acknowledged the importance of chiefs in the provision of education. Bogonko's main objective was to give an assessment of the role played by colonial chiefs in the spreading of western education in Kenya as a whole. Indeed, it would be logical to expect that societies which did not sanction chiefs would not be politically stable under men appointed by an outside power.

⁶⁶ (ibid)

This work did not consider development of education in Homa Bay County which was part of the South Kavirondo District. He stressed the role of Christian missionaries in secular education but ignored the important role chiefs played in development of education. Therefore, the researcher fills this gap by studying the contributions of chiefs in educational transformations in Homa Bay County. Missionary schools were built in Homa Bay County as well as government ones through the District Education Boards. And the African colonial chiefs such as Magak Odeka and Paulo Mboya played both secular and religious roles in the advancement of education in Homa Bay.

Schools and churches were key features of the impacts of missionary activities in the colonial Kenya. The schools were built for acquisition of knowledge for the African children. Churches were built for moral and spiritual nourishments of the converted ones.

When the missionaries came their goals were civilizing the Africans. They set up missions in Gendia (Karachuonyo) Wire Kabeka (Kasipul-Kabondo) Asumbi (GEM) Mirogi (Kanyamua). Some of the chiefs had received their early education in missionary schools. Other scholars have also explained the work of the colonial chiefs.⁶⁷ The construction of schools enhanced literacy among the children of the colonial subjects as they acquired knowledge, skills that enabled them to seek employment opportunities. This led to increase in numbers of Kenyan elites.

The tremendous efforts of colonial Chiefs such as Nyandusi, Nindo in promoting education by supplying children to mission schools enhanced their popularity. Donation of land for the

⁶⁷ Extensive research that has been carried out by researchers such as Owuor (2008), brings about the necessity of education for any sustainable development.

construction of learning institutions by colonial chiefs like Wambugu wa Mathangani, Njiiri clearly indicated their desire also in promoting education. In relation to land donation, Chief Ogola Ayieke donated land for the construction of Maseno University which is currently ranked among the best universities.⁶⁸

In an interview with Mzee Ezra Odondi, he believed that although the western education changed the way the Africans received education, it was a good thing to have ever happened. People now knew how to read and write and their minds were no longer covered in the thickness of ignorance arising from illiteracy. Colonialism led to the constructions of schools where different skills were learned and as a result the people were able to develop themselves in Homa Bay County.⁶⁹

Some others have placed the chiefs as custodians of security and sustainable development but failed to highlight specific cases in Homa Bay County, a gap which this thesis filled.

1.10.8 The Role of Chiefs in the Development of Local Native Councils and the Rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County

Earlier before the establishment of the LNCs, a district council was established in Nyeri by H.R. MacClure (The DC of Nyeri). The council was composed of 15 members; 8 of whom were nominated and 7 elected. Of the 8 nominated members, 6 were appointed directly by the DC and the rest by the Roman Catholic Mission and the Church of Scotland who proposed the names to the DC who in turn nominated them.

⁶⁸ The role of colonial chiefs in Kenya Their impact on Kenya`s security standards, educational system and agricultural sector, Research Paper (postgraduate), 2019

⁶⁹ O.I. Ezra Odondi Ayoma Kachien, Kasipul, 24.6.2020

The establishment of the LNCs was an upgrade of the NDAC. Other factors that contributed to the establishment of the LNC are first and foremost the significant developments within the African Community in terms of group organization and mass mobilization, and the rise of a new breed of leaders and articulators of the society's grievances. Some of these leaders were included in the councils who included missionized Africans, school teachers, clerks, drivers, interpreters and all those who took part in the administrative occupation. Following the passing of the Native Authority Ordinance (Amendment) in May 1924, administrative efforts turned towards the establishment of the Local Native Councils in Kenya. By the end of 1925, twenty three such councils had been established in different parts of Kenya, including Nandi District. The governor of Kenya then was Edward B. Denham. Local Native Councils had more auspicious beginnings in many areas in Kenya such as in Kikuyu, Ukambani and Nyanza. Nandi district fell under Nyanza province by then. In 1925 LNC's had been established in the three provinces.

The governor Mr. Edward B. Denham in his attempt to dramatize the importance of the councils in the eyes of the government formally opened and installed the LNCs of North and Central Kavirondo. DCs in Nyanza and Kikuyu provinces had strongly worked for the elaborate involvement of Africans in local administration. This was especially so because of the protests and petition politics that had featured most strongly in the provinces. They proposed to support the implementation of the Native Authority Ordinance 1924). The DCs in the two provinces were responding to the Chief Native Commissioner's circular that required definite recommendations on the following points: the number of councils each senior commissioner wished to have established in their provinces, the area in which each was to operate.

Establishment of Local Native Councils bore the hallmark of British administrative control. This has been aptly explained by Mueni in her thesis on Machakos Local Native Council. Omosule argues that the period between 1917 and 1924 constitutes the formative years in the evolution of the Kenya local government system. It was a period for searching for a formula to accommodate within the existing administrative structure, the political views of Africans. The government's concern was to divert Africans' discontent and dissatisfaction with the colonial system by containing political associations within the existing machinery of local administration. Thus, these LNCs provided political associations an opportunity to articulate their grievances without interfering with the British administration in Kenya. However, the election of members of the Kenya Central Association (KCA) as well as those of the Kavirondo taxpayers' Welfare Association (KTWA) led to a clash of interests.⁷⁰

This work also points out that the local government structure as established from 1924 contributed a lot to political development in the country up to 1963. Mueni's work does not show a seamless connection between the roles of the chiefs and that of the representatives at the Leg'co. Mueni's thesis has not come out clearly on the transformational roles of chiefs in local government. This is what the study exemplify. The issue of representations in the LNCs was not enough if chiefs were not roped in to augment the efforts of the elected leaders.

Nevertheless, I support her contention that it did not, however, it took long before the developmental significance of the LNCs manifested itself, as almost immediately, and

⁷⁰ M. Omosule, 'Political and Constitutional Aspects of the Origins and Development of Local Government in Kenya, 1895-1963', Syracuse University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1974, p.271. 27 M.R. Dilley, *British Policy in Kenya Colony*, Second Edition, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1966), p.28.

throughout the colonial period, the LNCs became the means by which meaningful social and economic development in the African areas became possible.

B.E. Kipkorir, *Descent from Cherang'any Hills: Memoirs of a Reluctant Academic*,⁷¹

As such LNCs did not allow the absorption of Africans into the colonial political economy through the agency of these LNCs. To the surprise of the colonial administration, the very first African representatives used the LNCs enthusiastically by voting in levies for education. Africans used the LNCs platform to resist absorption into the political economy of the colonial state.⁷²

Collection of taxes was a continual debate in some of these councils. Moreover, these councils became areas of rejecting colonial policy that was perceived as oppressive by the Africans.

Chiefs were tasked with the duty of stamping out mumboists in South Nyanza. Punitive expeditions led by the British into the remote highlands of Southwestern Kenya in early twentieth century generated a series of millennial responses among the pastoral-agricultural Gusii. The pan-ethnic cult of Mumbo (local name for God) or *Mumboism* became the object of a short, but excellent study by the sociologist.⁷³

She identified the political organization and cultural dislocation attendant upon colonialism, in addition to missionary (some Adventist) activity, as contributory factors in the emergence of *Mumboism* around 1914-15. Rejecting Christianity as “rotten” and all Europeans as “enemies” and defying traditional chiefs, the movement preached cataclysm transformation. Depending on

⁷¹ B.E. Korir, Nairobi: Macmillan Kenya Publishers, 2009, p. 173.

⁷² Stamp, ‘Local Government in Kenya’, pp. 23-24.

⁷³ Audrey Wipper (1970)

the various stories, water would be turned into blood and only *Mumboites* would have drinking water, all white people would disappear leaving only Africans as sole survivors, or the Germans would come and cut off the arms of those in clothes (i. e, Europeans and Westernized Africans).

⁷⁴ There were reports of people buying lamps in preparation for the end of the world that would be dark. The projected utopia would be a time of role reversal, healing, and plenty that could only be effected by traditional sacrifices and rituals. Different instantiations of the movement occurred over the next few years, particularly during times of calamity and economic depression.

In Homa Bay's neighboring Gusiiland, crackdown on *mumboism* went on. The administration regarded the movement as dangerous to the peace in Gussii land for this and other reasons. Besides the teachings that Sakawa would soon return and the British leave, three tenets of *Mumboism-Sakawatism* were regarded as particularly subversive. These were, first of all that the great snake(Mumbo) was coming to destroy all the chiefs, especially Chief Aoga of Kitutu, if only a sufficient number of people would be faithful; and, secondly, no one should pay more than a total of three shillings in tax and LNC rate combined. Lastly, the teaching that one of the leaders of the movement, Muchirongi of North Mugirango, was shortly going to be living in the DCs house was naturally looked upon as threatening by the British. The most prominent of leaders in the 1930s were Mosi Auma, a Luo, and Muchingori. Mosi had long been known as a leader of the sect, but Muchirongi's name appears in official records for the first time in 1933. The DC arrested these and several others as a result of events at the end of November 1933. At the district sports, 27 November, there were traditional dancers who performed in which *mumboists*, dancing with spears, played a considerable part. Their prominence and their obvious

⁷⁴ Wipper 1970, 397

disdain for the chiefs led the latter to express, the next day, their misgivings about the dancing with spears and swords.

The *Mumboists* were still holding what the DC considered a “dance” near Omwenga’s home on the edge of town on the twenty-eighth.⁷⁵ Therefore, on the advice of the chiefs, who were objects of the dancers’ special contempt, The DC ordered the arrest of those present. In December, the DC instituted an administrative inquiry into their conduct. Some 125 chiefs and tribal elders took part in this exercise, and recommended, not at all surprisingly, that nine of the ten should be deported for life. Strong action against *Mumboists* leaders once again served to check enthusiasm for the movement. The chief’s hostility, no doubt motivated by the very real dislike and disdain for them shown by the Mumbo leaders, and the Dc’s fears, caused by misconceptions of the movement’s influence in the past, brought about decisive action on the part of the colonial state.⁷⁶

In the Bureaucratic Theory of Max Weber there must be a clear chain of command in the execution of the mandate of any organization. The colonial officials were in charge of policy formulation and implementation. Therefore, Colonial governance through Chiefs’ councils, native tribunals and local native councils was therefore a mockery of democracy. Chaired by colonial district officers these institutions acted as legal and administrative devices that were intended to keep Africans in their subordinate place. The purpose they served included political

⁷⁵ Robert Maxon Conflict and Accommodation in Western Kenya: The Gusii and the British, 1907

⁷⁶ (Ibid)

expedience and imposition of administrative costs on Africans. Law and order was, therefore, maintained in the interest of British capitalist accumulation.

Acemaglu et al (2013:2), further draw our attention to the fact that indirect rule was a system where colonial powers used traditional rulers (chiefs) at the local level of government, employing them to tax, dispense law and maintain order. The LNCs were involved in the issue of the collection of taxes and representation.

According to Judith Butterman (1979), he was a prime mover in the Young Kavirondo Association and President of the South Nyanza branch of the Kavirondo Tax payers and Welfare Association. An early member of the Local Native Council, he became its Vice-President during the 1930s.⁷⁷

On nationalism, Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham, in their classic study of Kenya nationalism, talk about the recurrent theme of chiefs being deposed and locations being added to or subtracted from, bear vivid witness to the experimental character of the first period of British rule in Kikuyu land'. Never the less, the political record books in the Kenya National Archives reveal that between 1905, when records were first systematically compiled, and the late 1930s the average tenure of a chief in Kiambu District was 13 years. During this period of time, sixteen of them (or 38 per cent) were replaced by relatives, thus adding to the administrative continuity and stability. According to one observer the chiefs of Kiambu in the 1920s constituted an elite of talent - a veritable intelligentsia. No doubt this is an exaggeration, because the chiefs' 'character books',

⁷⁷ Butterman J. (1979): Economic History of two locations in South Western Kenya-Karachuonyo and Kanyamkago

kept by British officials, showed many to be lazy, inefficient, ill-educated, and drunkards. But, compared with chiefs from other Kenya districts, they were exceptionally able men.

Contrary to the dominant tendency in Western scholarship to suggest that nationalism developed in Africa with colonialism, African nationalism actually predated colonialism as it has always been there from time immemorial. In fact, it was Africans 'sense of shared historical heritage and identity that informed their resistance against European intruders who wanted to undermine their socio-cultural and political heritage.

There were earlier examples of resistance to colonial rule in Africa. In Kenya, Mau Mau would later on prosecute a rebellion against the colonial rule that would eventually lead to the end of colonialism. The Mau Mau were fighting to get rid of the Whiteman from their soil.

Robert L. Tignor argued that:

While I do not want to deny the validity of these views, I would like to suggest that contemporary analyses of African politics have not paid sufficient attention to pre-independence legacies - pre-colonial and especially colonial inheritances. The colonial system resulted in the implanting of political behaviour in local communities. It left a legacy of action and attitudes which has been hard to support. I propose to examine colonial political developments in four traditionally chiefless societies: the Kikuyu, Kamba, and Masai of Kenya, and the Ibo of Nigeria. The Kikuyu and Ibo will be the focus of this article, while the Kamba and Masai assist insight because of their variations.⁷⁸

Whereas the Luo political organization met the threshold of Tignor's literature on chiefless societies, he left a gap that this study has contributed to. He discussed only the cases of the Kikuyu, Kamba, and Masai of Kenya, and the Ibo of Nigeria leaving out geo-political region of Homa Bay County. This, however, is not to say he was obligated to include Homa Bay in his study.

⁷⁸ Colonial Chiefs in Chiefless Societies Author(s): Robert L. Tignor Source: The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Oct., 1971), pp. 339-359 Published by: Cambridge University Press.

In as much as the thesis was about chiefs in Homa Bay, elite political players also played significant roles especially in representations at Legco and agitations for Kenya's independence. There were individuals who were part of nationalist struggle from Homa Bay County. They were: Lawrence Oguda Samuel Onyango Ayodo and Tom Mboya. They played a big role in KANU's political mobilization for Homa Bay region towards independence period. Samwel Onyango Ayodo was the first Luo from Kenya to study in America, whereby he graduated with a distinction in Bachelor of Science in Education. After graduating, Ayodo entered books of records when he got a scholarship to Union College in Nebraska in US in 1952. In 1959, he joined politics from teaching and became the South Nyanza representative in Legco defeating Lawrence Oguda.⁷⁹ Tom Joseph Mboya was another influential nationalist from Homa Bay County, formerly part of South Nyanza district who served with distinction right from the time he was a trade unionist.

For a better understanding of the involvement of Homa Bay elites in nationalist politics, I have given Robert Maxon's work a positive look although his literature was on the Gusii people in South Nyanza. Maxon (1989) argued that: The lack of impetus to nationalist political activity notwithstanding, there was no absence of local political issues in the 1950s. There would be growing demands for greater opportunities to obtain positions that could facilitate greater access to local resources. No successor to the Kisii Union emerged in the Gusii highlands until the second half of the decade as the terms of a state of emergency declared in 1952 made organized

⁷⁹ www.google.com accessed on 22nd August 2020.

political activity by Africans illegal. The colonial state decided to allow African political organization on the district level in 1955, and this opened the way to the formation of such an organization in South Nyanza. Cooperation between the Gusii and Luo did not last long. A split developed in 1956, and a few Gusii who had been members of the organization joined others of the Gusii intelligentsia to form an exclusive Gusii political group. They made their primary aim the administrative separation of Gusiiland from the rest of South Nyanza. During elections to Legco, Oguda defeated Kebaso by a wide margin.

Despite his defeat, Kebaso eventually did enter the Legislative Council in March 1959. Perhaps as a result of his support for the colonial administration, he was nominated by the governor, but he took little part in the proceedings, speaking only twice before January 1960. Even by this date, the majority of Gusii were not interested in colony-wide politics and mass nationalism. Only a few were in tune with the climate of nationalistic politics. This was clearly illustrated in 1959 when Oguda was convicted of sedition and lost his seat in the Legislative Council. In the by election held to choose a replacement, A Luo teacher, Samuel Ayodo, was returned unopposed.⁸⁰ Nationalism in Kenya was no different from other parts of Africa. From the foregoing I would like to argue that nationalistic aspirations were concentrated in central Kenya than it did in Homa Bay.

However, One Ojijo Oteko of Kanjira in Karachuonyo led some resistance to colonialism whose face was the African chief through what he called *piny owacho*. Ojijo Oteko was an embodiment

⁸⁰ Robert Maxon: Development and continued Accommodation: The Gusii and the British, 1907-1963-pp.144-145

of struggle against oppression and subjugation in Homa Bay. Available literatures have escalated the role of Mau Mau over other efforts such as that by Ojijo Oteko of Karachuonyo Kanjira in resistance to colonialism.

By the end of the colonial era the sons of chiefs were members of an emergent petty-bourgeois class and had become increasingly differentiated from the peasant class of subsistence farmers and ordinary laborers by the overlapping advantages of export-crop production, small commerce, and government employment. They were beginning to challenge the European and Asian commercial and agricultural bourgeoisies for dominance over Kenyan society.

Some scholars have argued that:

But if we are to speak of “nationalism” in relation to Kenya, it would be meaningless unless we took the other races who have made the country their home, into account. If Kenya is to be truly a nation, there must not only be a recognition, by Europeans and Asians, of the political “rights” of Africans, but a recognition by Africans, that the immigrant races who came to Africa by sea instead of by land, have their “rights” also. What is needed is nothing less than a nationalism which will evoke from all the races who now inhabit Kenya the fullest contribution which each with their different talents, can make; a nationalism which will demand that the contributions shall be of high quality, a nationalism by which men come to see that they have more interests in common as human beings living in one region, more neighbourly obligations towards each other, than they have as Africans, as Asians, or as Europeans.⁸¹

1.10.9 Conclusion

The literature review posits that the Chiefs became an important cog in the delivery of services to the people although that does not discount the part played by the local government in Homa Bay and indeed the whole country in the colonial period’s public administrative structures.

⁸¹ Downloaded from <https://academic.oup.com/afraf/article/55/221/294/12940> by guest on 11 May 2021, 296
AFRICAN AFFAIRS-Nationalism in Kenya By REBECCA FANE

Writers like Bogonko have portrayed the important roles chiefs played in advancing the development agenda of their subjects.

The roles of missionaries in the provision of education were cardinal. Although the missionaries provided education, it was the chiefs who ensured that there was conducive environment for evangelization and propagation of the Christian faith through their key role of maintenance of law and order.

This thesis argues that: The chiefs used their influential positions to prepare their children as possible replacement of the colonial state bureaucracy ones Britain exited the Kenyan stage. It has taken cognizance of the fact that whereas the sons of Kikuyu chiefs formed part of political elites in Central Kenya by the time of independence as a colonial legacy, scions of chiefs in Homa Bay County were not visible on the national political fronts. Unlike the Kikuyu chiefs who had been accused of collaboration and were the target of nationalist movement like the Mau Mau who saw them as sellouts, chiefs in Homa Bay were never involved in betrayal of their people other than the strict enforcement of administrative policies for which they had no choice to refuse implementing. Neither were they collaborators but supporters of meaningful development initiated by the colonial administration in Homa Bay.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This part examines the theories which were used during this study, for the overall understanding of the roles played by the African chiefs in Homa Bay County before and during the colonial period. The study adopted Max weber's theory of leadership to explain the roles of chiefs in the

colonial structure of administration. The bureaucratic theory carries the hall mark of indirect rule in British colonial administration. The study also relied on the articulation of modes of production under the Marxist dependency theory to examine how the chiefs influenced Socio-Economic and political transformations in their jurisdictions. The economic productions by the Africans benefited the Metropolitan more than it did to the local economy in Homa Bay County.

1.11.1 Bureaucratic Theory

Max Weber, proposes the concept of Bureaucracy in a context in which he considers rationalization of society as inevitable.⁸²

Bureaucracy is the most typical example of legal domination. It is based on the following principles:

1. The existence of defined services, and therefore the competences strictly determined by laws or regulations, in such away the functions are clearly divided and distributed, as well as the decision making powers necessary for the accomplishment of the corresponding tasks;
2. The protection of the employees in the performance of their functions by virtue of a statute.
3. The hierarchy of functions which means that the administration is heavily structured in subordinated services and management positions.

The changing economic scene had important implications for government. Weber saw bureaucracy as a rational way for complex businesses and governments to organize. He did not see them as necessary evils, but as the best organizational response to a changing society. The

⁸² The Concept of Bureaucracy by Max Weber: Sandro SerpaCarlos Miguel Ferreira, International journal of social science studies vol7, No.2; March 2019, p.12

Weberian hierarchical authority can be well illustrated from the following opinion expressed by Lugard. According to Lugard, Britain held a dual responsibility in Africa's administration and economic benefits for the metropole, as well as the "native's" uplifting. His recommendations for Africa's governance revolved around three principles—decentralization, continuity, and cooperation. Decentralization at all levels of government, with a strong coordinating authority in the center allowed for greater efficiency. Continuity was vital because Africans trusted foreigners reluctantly. Therefore, effective British officers should retain their posts without undue interruptions.⁸³ The Chiefs, therefore, were not subordinates or inferiors to the officers but were agents who cooperated with them in the great civilizing mission.

Later, Donald Cameron, former colonial governor of Tanganyika and Nigeria, respectively (1872–1948), and a "Lugardian," that is, he subscribed to Frederick Lugard's indirect rule policy, explained that it was vital that African institutions, which the chiefs "have inherited, molded or modified as they may do on the advice of British officers," should "develop in a constitutional manner".⁸⁴

Max Weber has identified three types of authority namely: legitimate, charismatic and traditional authorities. Legitimate authority is mainly derived from the democratic principle that the laws of the land should be followed in choosing who is to lead. Charismatic authority, on its part is derived from the personal characteristics, attributes and uniqueness of an individual which makes the subjects submit to him. In traditional authority the rulers legitimize their powers from

⁸³ The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, by Frederick John Dealtry Lugard (1965) a review by Ogechukwu Ezekwem-<https://noteventpast.org>.

⁸⁴ Bello 1962, p.73 A passage in his Political Memoranda (1906) (Karugire 1980, p. 116) Karugire 1980, p. 116

established beliefs which immortalize them and hence make the subjects submit to them. In this last category, the rulers claim the right to rule from a well-defined heredity.

It can be argued from the above point that the chiefs of Homa Bay County (Southern Nyanza Luo) cannot be evaluated in the light of the first concept because there was no legalized system of succession. But some leaders were charismatic. The colonial state had a big role to play in appointing them and ensuring that they stayed in office at all costs.

The jurisdictions of Chiefs in the hierarchical sense of bureaucracy fell under the PC and the DC. A provincial commissioner in a 'Native' area was an officer charged rather with political rather than with strictly administrative functions, and the degree to which he may be called upon to act in the latter capacity would depend upon the influence and ability of the Chiefs and Elders in his province or indifferent parts of his province. It would be his endeavor generally, to rule through the Chiefs and Elders and to educate them in the duties of rulers according to a civilized standards; to convince them that oppression of the people was not sound policy, or to the eventual benefit of the rulers; to bring home to their intelligence, as far as may be, any evils which destroy individual responsibility, ambition, and development amongst their people; and to inculcate the unspeakable benefit of justice, free from bribery and open to all.⁸⁵ According to Memoranda for Provincial and District Commissioners, it was the duty of Provincial Commissioners to carry out loyally the policy of the Governor, and not to inaugurate policies of their own. The Governor was all times ready and anxious to hear, and to give full and careful consideration to, the views of Provincial Commissioners; but, when once a decision has been

⁸⁵ KNA/DC/KSI/5/5-EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

arrived at, he expected them to give effect to it in a thorough and loyal spirit and to inculcate the same spirit in their juniors.⁸⁶

1.11.2 Dependency Theory

Another theory that the study relied on was the articulation of mode of production under dependency theory. Dependency theory is the notion that resources flow from a “periphery” of poor and underdeveloped states to a “core” of wealthy states, enriching the latter at the expense of the former. The transformational roles of chiefs were seen from socio-economic perspectives which included: Education, agriculture, labour and infrastructures. Any particular mode of production was the result of the distinctive articulation of a system that involved specific relations of production and forces of production. The relations of production defined specific social relations predicated on the mode of appropriation of surplus labour and a specific institutionalized practice concerned with the distribution of the means of production.

Social relations were primarily defined in terms of social classes, which form the basis of the structural system that regulates human relationships. These relations became codified in law and in more general terms legitimated by the hegemonic ideology.

Forces of production define the labour process itself wherein raw materials are transformed into determinate products. Factors that affect the forces of production include raw materials, the personal activity of people (labour), and the instruments used to transform raw materials into products. Of particular note is assessing the level of development of the forces of production is the nature of the technologies, machines, and scientific advances being deployed in the productive process. www.encyclopedia.com

⁸⁶ (ibid)

Indirect rule was inspired by the belief that the European and the African were culturally distinct though not necessarily unequal and that the institutions of government most suited Africans were those that they devised by themselves.⁸⁷

One of Walter Rodney's arguments was that Africa was deliberately exploited and underdeveloped by European colonial regimes. Africa developed Europe at the same rate as Europe underdeveloped Africa. Rodney (1972) argues that a combination of power politics and economic exploitation of Africa by Europeans led to the poor state of African political and economic development evident in the late 20th century. Though, he did not intend "to remove the ultimate responsibility for development from the shoulders of Africans... (He believes that) every African has a responsibility to understand the (capitalist) system and work for its overthrow."⁸⁸ There was that tradition of colonial self-government on earstwhile colonies, the extensiveness, distant and scattered nature of the newly acquired empires; and the important factor of the cost and difficulty of extending enough British personnel to establish "direct" relations within the extensive empire.⁸⁹

On his part, Colin Leys (1979) in his book *Underdevelopment in Kenya - The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism*, has argued that far from bringing development the colonial situation clearly underdeveloped Kenya's economy as they represented the interest of bourgeoisie through multinationals who indeed were not interested in developing Kenya but by extracting resources through trade in raw materials and manufactured goods based on exchange. What the multinationals got from trade was larger than what Kenya got. Kenya's agriculture became

⁸⁷ Crowder (1968:168-69)

⁸⁸ en.m.wikipedia.org

⁸⁹ Perham, 1985: xxxix

export oriented at the expense of food production or indigineous interest. Large tea estates and coffee plantations were the face of these colonial extractions.

The colonial state operated at the behest of the metropole. Large tracts of land were taken from the indigenous people and given to the multinationals and according to Leys, this led to economic underdevelopment of African people.

Larigdon and Kaplinsky (1978) however held to the theory of underdevelopment through Neo-Marxist Revisionist theory. They used modes of production and articulation approach to argue that Kenya's economy must be looked at from a wider perspective. Post and precolonial period led to the emergence of indigeneous bourgouisie though they were not strong enough to reverse state policy from its colonial orientation. They continued to be dependent on the support of external bourgouisie and multinationals and continued to armtwist the indigeneous bourgouisie to adopt policies favourable to the multinationals. Kenya's economy continued to be characterised as perverse development.

Dependency theory was viewed as a possible way of explaining the persistent poverty of the poorer countries. The traditional neoclassical approach said virtually nothing on this question except to assert that the poorer countries were late in coming to solid economic practices and that as soon as they learned the techniques of modern economics, then the poverty would begin to subside. However, Marxists theorists viewed the persistent poverty as a consequence of capitalist exploitation. And a new body of thought, called the world systems approach, argued that the

poverty was a direct consequence of the evolution of the international political economy into a fairly rigid division of labour which favoured the rich and penalized the poor.⁹⁰

In summary, the bureaucratic theory was important in this study about the colonial chiefs who did not exercise powers of their own but were mere instruments used for the realization of the British colonial hegemony particularly in Kenya and Africa in general. The study relied on Marx Weber's theory with a view to understanding the extent to which African chiefs during the colonial period in Homa Bay were guided by the British administration in the execution of their delegated mandate. The Max Weber Bureaucratic Theory was important to the study because it enabled the local administration to have a systematic coordination between the people and their leaders in order to achieve a common goal of governance.

The Dependency Theory and the attendant articulation of modes of production was important because the socio-economic transformational roles of the chiefs entirely dealt with areas of wealth production for example in commodity production such as in agriculture.

The colonial conquest of Kenya by the British led to Africans depending on the British colonial state for their developments in a number of sectors. The colonial state mediated struggles among different interests, classes and sectoral development in Kenya. In this endeavor, they enlisted the services of the African chiefs. The colonial state was the agent of British government representing the metropolitan capitalist interests. A clear manifestation of this would be through contradictory roles and crisis of governance under the colonial African chiefs not only in Homa Bay County but in Kenya as a whole. Although the chiefs helped in the maintenance of law and order, some of them helped the colonial state in capital accumulation and development at the

⁹⁰ www.mtholyoke.edu

expense of their African subjects. The situation was further exacerbated by the Metropole not giving money for the colonies but rather the colonial state was expected to raise money through forced taxation in the form of hut tax, poll tax and forced labour.

Dependency Theory was important in this study because it analysed the internal dynamics of underdeveloped countries by relating their underdevelopment to their positions in the international economic system. As a matter of reality, Homa Bay County became part of the economic world system through colonialism.

1.12 Research Methodology and Design

This section discusses the methods that were used to achieve the objectives of the study. Sampling procedure and methods of data collection have been described. The research analysis was based on qualitative approach. This research relied on both primary and secondary sources. The methodology followed the qualitative research approach and therefore, the analysis was done through the coding of participant's responses in thematic manner before drawing conclusions which were drawn from the objectives of the study. The work relied on oral interviews to gather the required information from the participants.

1.12.1 Primary Sources

The archival sources were quite useful in this work as they provided reliable materials for referencing and evidence about propositions. The Kenya National archives in Nairobi were most useful. Relevant political records were consulted. The staff at the KNA assisted me a great deal in accessing information required for my research work.

Oral interviews were conducted for the purpose of obtaining information from the eye witness accounts. Oral tradition was important to the study because of its advantages. It enabled reliable

and actual information. It was easy to gather and through mythology it was helped to trace the migration of the Southern Nyanza Luo in Homa Bay County. It helped to understand their religious beliefs and cultural practices of the people in the study area. Mythology in the Oral Tradition helped the people to develop their morals, that is, customs and norms into law and order in their society.

Oral Tradition had some shortcomings. Oral Tradition may not have given the actual date of the events. Periodization therefore faced limitations as some participants could only estimate the time certain events took place. It can also be vague because there were distortions of information since some informers exaggerated the information in their possession and might have deliberately been dishonest. Some informers had fading memories because of their advanced age and therefore took their time to recall what the researcher asked them. Oral tradition may be difficult to carry over after a long period of time. In this study the researcher interviewed forty seven participants. This number was adequate for in terms of representation of the entire population of Homa Bay County. In quality research, this was a good sample population representative of the entire target population in Homa Bay County.

1.12.2 Secondary Sources

These are mainly written sources which provided documentary evidence for the research. Secondary sources were relevant in terms of being historical research tool. Most of these books were written by local and international authors conversant with the history of Kenya. Through the written sources the researcher was able to get the exact dating of some historical events in Homa Bay County. Some written materials were by foreign authors who might not have been deeply interested in the history of Kenya and therefore gave Euro-centric views, therefore, early written information had biases and full of racism. In the *Tripple Heritage*, Ali Mazrui argues that

the Euro-centric scholars referred to Africans as 'walking naked' which was quite demeaning to the character and persona of the African person. Some of the information contained in written sources may not be reliable because they were not based on eye witness accounts.

Some books were accessed at Moi University, Margaret Thatcher library (MTL). Newspapers on the research issues were obtained from the Periodical section of MTL. The study also used internet to access valuable data for the study. It was recognized that today internet and computers have become the most ever powerful tool for man throughout the world for storage and retrieval of information.

1.13 Sample Size and Procedures

Sampling of population was important because it made it possible to generalize the findings of the study to a wider population of Homa Bay County. Sampling is the selection of a sample number of cases from a wider population so that the results of the sample can be inferred back to the wider population. The study used purposive sampling procedure to identify participants for the interviews.

Interviews were conducted to key informants who were selected through purposive sampling and snowballing sampling. I identified the participants through purposive sampling of the study population. Snowball sampling was used during the interviews I conducted. This is where research participants recruited other participants for an interview with the researcher. It was necessary to use snowball where potential participants were difficult to find. Certainly, Snowball sampling is a sampling method used by researchers to generate a pool of participants for a research study through referrals made by individuals who share a particular characteristic of

research interest with the target population. It is also referred to as chain sampling or chain referral sampling.

Ethically, the study participants were not asked to identify other participants but rather they were asked to encourage others to come forward. Snowballing had advantages: It allowed for interview to take place where otherwise it might have been impossible to conduct interviews because of a lack of participants. Snowballing may help the researcher to discover information from a variety of participants. It also had disadvantages: It took other participants time to arrange for the recruitment of other participants to come and give responses to the researcher's questions.

Leaders in Homa Bay County such as the former chiefs, farmers, educationists, and elders were selected as participants as they had the institutional memories. Some residents of Homa Bay County were also purposely sampled taking into account their abilities to give the required information. The information was gathered from oral interviews conducted in locations and sub-locations in Homa Bay County. Because the research was within Homa Bay County, getting respondents was less difficult because I and the research assistant are residents of Homa Bay County.

The researcher interviewed at least 70 respondents in Gwasssi, Kanyada, Kanyamwaa, Gem, Kochia, Karachuonyo and Kasipul-Kabondo which in qualitative research will be adequate population for my study. It will be difficult carrying out interviews in all the locations of Homa Bay.

1.14 Focus Group Discussion

This involved gathering people from similar backgrounds or experiences together to discuss a specific topic of interest. It is a form of qualitative research where questions are asked about their perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, opinion or ideas. The focus group discussion offered an indepth understanding of the participants during the discussions. This enabled me as the researcher to uncover personal attitudes and beliefs that other research methods could not replicate which inturn meant more insightful results. The focus group discussion with participants was quite interactive. However, some participants were shy to give information they had in the presence of their colleagues and it took me time to convince them to speak up their minds on the research questions the researcher posed to them.

PLATE 2



The Researcher (left) and participants during focus group discussion in Kanyada, Homa Bay at the home of Colonial Chief Odoyo

Source: Researcher

1.15 Library Search

This was conducted in the Margaret Thatcher Library at Moi University especially in the National Collection section. To locate a book, I searched the library's catalogue. Once I had identified a book I used the call number to find the book. I also requested a librarian to assist me access the relevant books materials for my study area in the library.

1.16 Interview Schedule

In the process of data collection, we realized that some people were not educated but had knowledge about what our research was all about. This called for use of the interview schedule which was found most suitable for qualitative methods which involved thematic arrangement of data. This method provided greater degree of flexibility, greater depth and following the contextual structure of the interviews. We used *dholuo* to carry out the interviews. Tape recorders were used to record the proceedings of the interview which would later on be transcribed. We also used our smart phones to record the interviews through audio-visual technique.

1.17.1 Data Collection

Data collection commenced in July 2019. One field assistant was trained on methods of data collection and ethical consideration. The researcher's main task was to collect archival and oral data, with assistance of a research assistant.

1.17.2 Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed and coded using a grounded approach and then analyzed according to thematic areas. Periodic reviews of all collected data were carried out, followed by a summary construction and formulation of more questions to be answered. Peer groups were also consulted with those who were knowledgeable about research procedures to summarize the status of the research and to discuss emerging themes, concepts and interpretation.

1.18 Ethical Consideration

In carrying out research, the researcher should abide by the research ethics that govern the practice which I did as indicated here. A good research is a research that is carried out in an ethical manner, and this relates to both practical and moral issues around the research.

The study employed “codes of ethics” to address ethical issues in the study. These included; informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, and accuracy.

The researcher applied for research permit from National Council of science and technology (NACOSTI) in order to obtain research permit. The research permit was granted. It was stated that the research Licence would be valid for the research, location and specified period. The License and any rights thereunder were not transferable. The Licensee was expected to inform the County Governor before the commencement of the research which I did. The Licence ought not to give authority to transfer research materials.

Prior arrangements were made to enable the researcher to obtain informed consent from the respondents. Respondents were informed of their information confidentiality as purely for academic purposes only. Preliminary visits to areas of Homa Bay County, especially in Kanyamua, Gwasi, Kanyada, Gem, Kasipul-Kabondo and Karachuonyo were done to inform the

local administration of the intended research. A date to administer interview to the respondents was agreed upon so that they were not ambushed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF CHIEFS/LINEAGE HEADS IN THE PRE-COLONIAL LUO SOCIAL FORMATION

2.1 Overview

This thesis analyses the nature and role of leadership and governance in Homa Bay County in pre-colonial period on the following thematic areas; the physical environment as a determinant of early socio-economic transformations in Homa Bay County; kinship and lineage heads; appointment of the first generation of chiefs; relations of production; the recruitment of career corps; the requisition of livestock and crops for the war efforts; the emergence of *mumbo* cult and ransacking of Indian shops in Homa Bay; enterprenuership; the role of chiefs in the establishment of normalcy and the colonial administrators' assessment of the work of chiefs. The bureaucratic theory of Marx Weber would be important in the understanding of the discussions in this chapter. According to the bureaucratic theory power flows from the top to the periphery in a controlled manner. The chiefs were the links between the colonial state and the lkocal people of Homa Bay County. Dependency theory on the other hand creates reliance on the metropole on matters of economic importance. Resources are locally appropriated to benefit the metropole.

2.2 The Pre-Colonial Luo Environment

2.2.1 Physical environment

The earliest known inhabitants of Kenya lived by hunting and gathering. Over most of Eat Africa food production came about 3000 years ago. ¹ Food production was low and man had to

¹ Ochieng (1972: 190:23)

supplement it with hunting and gathering. With time man accumulated vast ecological knowledge. Most societies used fire, wood and stone for clearing the bushes for cultivation. Using environmental perception and cultural adaptation, man was able to use indicator trees and grasses to identify the quality of soil and its potential for crop production.²

Ogot (1967), states that the initial entry of the Luo was peaceful and they settled in areas adjacent to and probably suitable for use by the farmers in the area. As more waves arrived the Luo were forced to be more aggressive, given that the original settlers hated to leave their land. The Bantu groups were forced to abandon the lakeshore and the plains and moved to the higher and safer areas due to Luo invasion (e.g.Gusii). The Bantus moved north and south in search of new sites. In most cases, however, the Bantu families, which opted for peaceful coexistence, were assimilated. They became Luo because there is no trace of their languages and culture. The numerous clashes between the Luo and the Bantu did not interfere with cultural exchanges or intermarriages between them. The Luo language prevailed and became the language those absorbed.³

The Luo migration was political, social and economic ramifications for the localities they moved into. Their migratory patterns led to population growth in the East African region and possibly also led to population growth in the East Africa region and possibly led to the disintegration of some societies. Inter-clan struggles over land resulted in the emergence of securing final settlement in Nyanza province (present day Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay and Migori counties). Their migration might have led to the introduction of new crops like sorghum, groundnuts, and

² Samuel K. Mutiso (1995): International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)/Kenya Energy and Environment Organizations (KENGO) p.1

³ (Ibid)

simsim as products of an economic activity and in some parts of Uganda were also introduced to nomadic pastoralism.⁴

2.2.2 Luo belief system

According to Asenath Odaga, the Luo lived in homesteads housing several families who were often connected by kinship. A homestead was surrounded by a high euphorbia hedge and had a gate that was securely locked at night. The homestead, *pacho* or *dala* or *dipo*, therefore, formed the basis of their social life and the source of their beliefs such as beliefs in Nyasaye, Were: the 'Supreme Being', who controls people's lives and from whom all powers originate. Besides the 'Supreme Being', they contend that each individual has his or her own god, Nyasache, who in collaboration with the ancestors of that particular individual, is responsible for his or her; luck and well being. The Luo believe in the powers of magic and medicine. Those whom they know as being endowed with these mystic powers are referred to as *jornariiek* - the wise ones who are capable of making people die as they wish. They are feared to the extreme. They can work *bilo*, which is a potent herb mixture. According to the Luo, the dead and the living communicate. The ancestors are therefore considered to be alive and play an important part in the lives of the living who must appease them regularly with great gifts of sacrifices to be on the safe side. This partly explains why dead relatives are buried with care and pomp among the Luo. The relatives make sure that all rituals are performed correctly to avoid revenge in the form of misfortunes which would arise from the displeasure of the dead.⁵

⁴ (Malinwonski, as quoted in Anderson 1970:10)

⁵ Educational values of "Sigendini Luo" by Asenath Bole Odaga, thesis, 1980, p.22

2.2.3 Economy

Ndeda (1991) argues that it was possible that in Western Kenya there were small bands of hunter gatherers and the area was settled by Bantu speakers who practiced a mixed economy initially with an emphasis on cattle breeding.

However, with the increase in population, loss of cattle through disease or raids or pressure from the expanding Luo by the second half of the nineteenth century, agriculture was becoming a more important economic activity. The agricultural techniques had become more defined and advanced indicated by the notion of crop rotations and fallow periods. Different kinds of grains or different varieties of the same grain were sown together. Ash was used to fertilize the soil for cultivation.

Ogot states that:

Nineteenth century economy of this people was able to produce surplus. Among the Luo Nyanza it is likely that there was a complete transformation in the food production system during the second half of the nineteenth century. This transformation could have contributed to significant change in the social and political organization. In the Sudan their systems were dual determined by the environment conditions, which forced them to disperse to the hills during the floods and move to the permanent rivers in the dry season.⁶

⁶ Ogot (1985:14)

The Luo, Luhya and the Gusii shared much. Their economic systems were adapted to the same environments and their common words for domestic crops and tools indicate an intimate contact. Moreover between 1870 and 1900 they had fixed markets where all groups exchanged their products of different environments. These groups did not live in isolation from each other they had various levels of interaction thus practicing convergence and conversion. This paper has examined the movement, settlement and the construction of society to the east of Lake Victoria among the Bantu Gusii and the Luhya and the Nilotic Luo on the eve of colonial rule.⁷

Bole Odaga on the Luo belief system is supported by O.I. Hezron Obong'o Nyiego Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019 who informed us that when it came to spiritual matters, the Luo were very committed. In times of famine and drought the elders went to the hills in Got Wire or Wire Hill to make direct communication to God to bring rain. And he said sometimes the elders hardly descends down from the hill before a heavy down pour falls down. According to him, although the Luo in Homa Bay accepted Christianity, their prayers to *were nyakalaga*, how they referred to their God, worked well.

2.2.4 Relations of production

The major part of Luo production system was, of course, geared to food production. Their multifaceted food economy included agriculture, pastoralism, and fishing, hunting and gathering. Before and during the nineteenth century, the Luo clans that had arrived in Nyanza were mainly nomadic pastoralists. They kept large herds of cattle but practiced minimal agriculture. Due to numerous natural calamities, which affected their cattle, they were forced to change the balance between pastoralism and agriculture. By the arrival of the British, the first sector of food production was agriculture.⁸ The late nineteenth century was a dynamic period for the Luo

⁷ Population movement, settlement and the construction of society to the east of Lake Victoria in pre-colonial times: the western Kenyan case. Mildred A.J. Ndeda p. 83-108

⁸ Schiller 1982:33

economy with new options in agriculture, hunting and trade.⁹ Some of the former economic options were cut off by the rinder-pest epidemic. There were three major changes, namely the shifting balance between pastoralism and agriculture, changes in crop technology and growth of markets and trade networks.¹⁰ Many occurrences in the 1880s and 1890s combined to decrease the relative importance of pastoralism within the overall economy of the Luo.

Hay argues that the patterns of work in most of the small-scale societies of pre-colonial Kenya seem to have been very similar, and much like those in other parts of Africa. In the more sedentary societies in which pastoralism was combined with shifting cultivation, men were responsible for the initial clearing of forest or bush (which since cultivation was shifting, was a regularly recurring task), and for the initial turning of the earth so cleared. Groups of men usually built houses and other buildings. Married women planted, weeded and harvested the food crops on which everyone depended, and were assisted in this by their unmarried daughters. Small boys herded the cows, sheep and goats which were kept near the home stead, and both adult men and women milked them when this was required.¹¹

Unmarried youth were generally engaged in hunting stock raiding and in inter or intra-tribal fighting, and were directed in these activities by older unmarried males (generally all men up until their late thirties). Domestic work was invariably the preserve of married women assisted by their daughters; in pre-colonial Africa such work probably consisted mainly of the preparation, storage and cooking of food. Both men and women were engaged in trade, the

⁹ Hay 1975:93

¹⁰ Hay 1975:95

¹¹ (ibid)

women generally being restricted to those kinds which could be practiced near to the homestead, the barter of foodstuffs and of home-made beer being the two most common. Men seem to have monopolized the long-distance trade in both livestock and food-crops, largely because of the need for such trade to have military protection.¹²

The main crops in late nineteenth century according to Ndeda were sorghum-the red and white varieties. Sorghum was important as part of the meals and for beer and entertainment. According to Hay (1976), sorghum held a predominant position in the agricultural system of the Luo in the 1890s. They also had finger millet, which was not used for food but beer. They also had crops such as barley (*dongo*), sesame (*nyim*), pumpkins (*budho*), small red beans (*ngor*), green grams and small ears of maize could have been a later nineteenth century introduction because she states that Lord Lugard visited Nyanza in 1890 he saw little or no maize.¹³

With the increasing emphasis on agriculture, clear practices of land ownership and division of labour had to occur, Men cleared the fields. As population increased, a land tenure system emerged out of the belief that every person had an alienable right to a piece of farmland.

Whereas agricultural production was largely the domain of women, the major economic occupation of Luo men and boys was the herding and protection of cattle and other livestock, like goats and sheep. Pastoral training in the pre-colonial era included military exercise due to the hazardous nature of the area.¹⁴

¹² P. Marris and A. Somerset, *African businessmen: A study of Entrepreneurship and Development in Kenya*, Nairobi(1971), pp.30-43;R.M.A. Van Zwanenberg with Anne King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda 1800-1970* (London,1975),pp.147-59;J. Forbes Munro, *Colonial Rule and the Kamba*.

¹³ Hay 1976:69

¹⁴ Ochola-Ayayo 1980:38

Hay was supported by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga on the issue of Luo traditional agricultural practices who argued that:

In the village the authority of the elders was much respected, indeed it was never challenged. The elder gave the signal that the season for clearing the fields, planting, weeding or harvesting begun. The elder was the first man in the village to build granary, and the first wife of the head of the village was the woman who gave the signal to bring in and store the harvest. No villager would have dreamt of opening a season without the initiation of the work by the elder. No one was permitted even to taste the maize from the land or bring it for cooking before the Chief elder's wife had cooked her new season's maize and eaten it in her house. It was a bad omen and a breach of village discipline not to wait for the chief elder to act first, and the land elders-the 'jodong gweng'-regulated all activities connected with our land.¹⁵

Odinga pointed out that common ownership of land was accompanied by a system of communal cultivation. You had your own plot but you helped others dig, plant, and weed theirs and your turn to be helped came round in strict Rota. When the village worked your land you supplied food and water; when you helped others they fed you. The system was known as 'saga' farming. Communities of anything from two to five hundred people, headed by the elders, decided which 'shamba' would be farmed each season and then plot by plot, from those alongside the river to those extending to the hill tops, all would work side by side. Land was communally owned but individually worked or tilled.

Land was communally owned as supported by Mzee Dishon Olewe who confirmed that there were no fences erected for land ownership demarcations. Land was used for the common good of the community. He recalled how Chief Magak was very keen on development of agriculture in

¹⁵ Not Yet Uhuru pp.12-15

Kasipul-Kabondo. He went round urging people to double their efforts in food production and control of soil erosion through the erection of terraces.¹⁶

2.2.5 Leaders

Leadership in Africa was organized as either centralized or decentralized. In view of their diversity, it was useful to place African polities on a continuum along which they changed from a solidarity group based on a corporate kinship model—as in an acephalous society—to one based on an implicit contract between the rulers and the subjects as in kingdoms.¹⁷ The legitimacy of the African ruler rested upon the consent of the people to be ruled and was contingent upon the ruler's satisfactory performance of certain duties (an implicit contract). This consent or contract could be withdrawn for non performance. Failures were blamed on the ruler (scapegoat king), not on the ancestors, foreigners or imperial-ists, if the harvest was poor because the ancestors were “angry,” the ruler was faulted for failure to perform the necessary propitiating rituals. The ruler was seen as necessary for the social order and therefore desired by the people. But by embodying a power that, to be effective, had to be vast and unquestioned, he was also potentially dangerous. For, being unquestioned, the power was subject to abuse, and it could betray the expectations of those who conferred it. Accordingly, various mechanisms were devised to prevent this abuse of power: constitutional checks (Queen-Mothers, advisers, councilors, assembly of freemen, etc.), religious sanctions, spontaneous peasant revolts, etc. Their efficacy was, of course, debatable but not their existence.¹⁸

¹⁶ O.I. Mzee Dishon Olewe, Kachien, Kasipul, 13.7.2019

¹⁷ (Kopytoff 1989, 67)

¹⁸ https://brill.com/view/book/9789047440031/Bej.9781571053374.i-586_009.xml-Native System of Government: A summary and an Assessment

According to Asenath Odaga some of the most important leaders among the Luo were often rich men or medicine-men who supposedly possessed certain mystic powers. But elders in a homestead also saw to the every day running of social affairs. For example, before harvest or sowing time, an elder in the locality performed some ceremonies. These were important and nobody was expected to go out to harvest or to sow before such ceremonies were performed. The elders from several homesteads in a locality called *gweng* in Luo, met quite often. They met and held consultations with each other on matters of general importance regarding the people's welfare. On the whole, the leadership was carried out through consensus and was therefore democratic in nature.

Traditionally, the Luo women were not supposed to give their views openly on any important matters. But privately, they were consulted. Before, a man took an important decision which could affect the family, he might say, '*we adhi apenj orindi mondi*' wait, let me go to consult with the headrest before I give my view'. The headrest was in most cases a wife, frequently the first wife.

During the wet seasons the family was controlled by the household head, but in the dry season the leadership was held by the prominent families.¹⁹ The political system remained rudimentary. The Luo had closely linked economic and social systems that continued to evolve as they moved. It was difficult to separate one from the other. The Luo had homesteads, which housed several families often connected by kinship. The homestead formed the primary religious, social and economic unit. Each elementary family consisted of the father, his wife/wives, unmarried children, married sons, and sometimes servants (*wasumbini*). In some homesteads the head of the

¹⁹ (Ibid)

home (*wuon dala*) could invite his brothers and cousins to stay with him. The size of the Luo family depended on the number of wives a husband had. In certain cases the wealth of an individual could also swell the size of his family.²⁰

Polygamy was a desirable index of a man's worth and an indication man's wealth and enhanced his economic and political status. For a woman, however it was characterized by competition with co-wives.

This was corroborated by Mzee Olewe Nyamuthe (O.I. Kachien location) who confirmed that men were the heads of households whose economy of the clan depended upon. That men organized agriculture and were incharge of taking care of livestock. Of course women also played significant role in the production of food.

The analysis by Ndeda (1991) on the Luo Socio-Economic transformation in the pre-colonial period has been supported by other scholars. For many millennia the many communities in Kenya adjusted themselves to their ecological niches. Sheriff, 1985 as consequence communities such as the Agikuyu and the Miji Kenda developed agricultural economies. Others, including the Maasai and the Samburu practiced pastoralist forms of production. The majority such as the Luo and the Abagusii adapted themselves to a mixture of crop cultivation and livestock keeping. *ibid*

Agriculture in pre-colonial Homa Bay was basically subsistence in character. It was based on traditional hoe-culture. The people were involved in hunting and gathering for food security. Also livestock keeping was at the center of their economic activities.

According to Onduru (2009) the organization of crop production was aimed at providing food both at the homestead and communal levels. Each head of the homestead had own special

²⁰ Ogutu 1975

garden, 'mondo'. All the family members were supposed to cultivate, weed and harvest crops from this garden. Communal work or 'saga' was very popular. It was organized during occasions such as tilling land, weeding, or putting up a new home. There was no payment for those who participated in 'saga'. The only thing which was provided after the work was food.²¹

Onduru, writing about food gathering in Kano argues that food gathering was a common practice. There were numerous edible greens which were gathered. These included *Osuga* (*Solanum nigrum*), *atipa* (*Asystrasia Dchimperil*) and *dek* (*Gynandopis gynandra*). Other greens which were gathered were locally known as *apoth*, *ododo*, *odiello*, *ombok-alika*, and *awayo*. The people also gathered roots, fruits herbs and medicines. Mushrooms were also gathered; two common ones were known as *oruka* and *olando*. There were also some insects which were gathered; *sisi*, *agoro*, *onyoso* and *ngu'en*. These could be eaten raw or fried.²²

Some traditional rituals were performed at the stage of planting *golo kodhi*, weeding and harvesting. The man who was the head of the house was supposed to sleep in his first wife's house a head of planting day. Other wives could only plant their gardens after the first wife had done so. The leadership of Luo elders was instrumental in guiding the traditional agriculture especially the rituals associated with farming.

An oral interviewee Mzee Olewe Nyamuthe opined:

Before colonialism, individual hunting community in Homa Bay was not large since hunting and gathering did not involve all members of the community. There were farmers and pastoralists in Homa Bay. Those who participated in hunting and gathering were not quite held in high esteem. They were called *Jodwar*. Animals were kept and millet, sorghum planted, bushes were cleared to pave way for tilling of land for agriculture. The chiefs ensured that land was used in a manner that did not interfere with the quality of soils hence they encouraged people to practice shifting cultivation. The chiefs were democratic and did not

²¹ Onduru. T.A. Economic Change among the Southern Nyanza Luo p.37

²² *ibid*

force people but ensured that in the planting of seeds the Luo rituals associated with it were not violated.²³

The people of Homa Bay were able to trade surplus crops with the Abagusii neighbors who were Bantus and therefore made iron implements. The Luo had adopted the hoe culture from their Bantu neighbors. They became both agriculturalists and animal keepers. In all this effort, the chiefs ensured security for traders on both sides of the divide as they transacted their businesses.

2.3 The Role of the Kinship, Lineage Heads, and Ritual Leaders among the Pre-Colonial Luo

2.3.1 Kinship

According to Asenath Odaga, the Luo lived in homesteads housing several families who were often connected by kinship. A homestead was surrounded by a high euphorbia hedge and had a gate that was securely locked at night. The homestead, *pacho* or *dala* or *dipo*, therefore, forms the basis of their social life and the source of their beliefs such as beliefs in *Nyasaye*, Were: the 'Supreme Being', who controls people's lives and from whom all powers originate. Besides the 'Supreme Being', they contend that each individual has his or her own god, *Nyasache*, who in collaboration with the ancestors of that particular individual, is responsible for his or her; luck and well being. The Luo believe in the powers of magic and medicine. Those whom they know as being endowed with these mystic powers are referred to as *jornariiek* - the wise ones who are capable of making people die as they wish. They are feared to the extreme. They can work *bilo*, which was a potent herb mixture. According to the Luo, the dead and the living communicate. The ancestors are therefore considered to be alive and play an important part in the lives of the living who must appease them regularly with great gifts of sacrifices to be on the safe side. This partly explains why dead relatives are buried with care and pomp among the Luo. The relatives

²³ Mzee Olewe Nyamuthe O.I. Kachien Kasipul

make sure that all rituals are performed correctly to avoid revenge in the form of misfortunes which would arise from the displeasure of the dead.

The elementary social relationships were organized around the normative principle of patrilocality that cements the relationships between, father, mother and their children. This unit was known as *jokawuoro*, that is, people of the same father. In situations of polygamy, relationships then started from the matrifocal unit, *jokamiyo* that combines a mother, her sons and unmarried daughters as an independent set of people. The *jokamiyo* implied affiliation to the mother rather than to the father *per se*. In the monogamous situation, the position of the father was very strong, as there was no rivalry. In a polygamous situation, then, the position of the father was weakened substantially in favor of the mothers and grandmothers. Beyond the grandmother and grandfather line, at the third and to the fifth generation, the *keyo* appeared as the next organizational form. People descending from the same great-grandfather made up a *keyo*. The elders of the *keyo* acted as representatives in disputes between various *keyo*. They were also intermediaries between younger members and ancestors and therefore acted as foster father guardians. They formed the first organized council to arbitrate land and boundary disputes between members of their *keyo*. At this stage social control of the community was exercised partly through the authority of these elders and partly through the control of means of accumulation, which the leader of the group protected. Control and accumulation of resources was a basic requirement for subsistence and competition in Luo society.

On the subject of marriage,²⁴ shed light on this by affirming that in a polygamous situation, the first wife *mikayi* played significant role among her co-wives. She was in charge of the domestic itineraries and directed where the husband would be spending his night. Things were not done haphazardly. This ensured equity and fairness in family life.

²⁴ O.I. Mzee Hezron Obong'o Nyiego Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

When it came to marriage, kinship relations and the seniority principle were of primary importance. The marriage was arranged between families of different clans. The Luo custom was that the senior son of the senior wife should marry first. When he was of age, he was first given a cow and a young bull, which lineage members took to the bride's home stead. Daughters of the same mother also married in order of seniority.²⁵

In an oral interview with Mzee Busa, he recalled that:

In the pre-colonial period the Luo people were being ruled by the institution of chief known as *Ruoth*. The kinship and lineage systems played an important role. The institution of *Ruoth* was a kin to the institution of chieftaincy that came with the advent of colonialism in Kenya. The Luo people respected chieftaincy as a leadership institution. The chiefs were great people who earned a lot of respect from the community. Most of them were wealthy people and thus their greatness in leadership of the community. The chiefs were fully aware that nobody would listen to a poor Chief and thus wealth was paramount in the institution of chieftaincy not only among the Luo in Homa Bay but in the entire Luo-land, during the pre-colonial period. Because of their wealth they could intervene and organize for food for those in the community who were living in wants.²⁶

Most of the decisions taken in the community were done through *rwoth* and his council of elders. Spiritual matters were solely their work. The people were supposed to live harmoniously with one another. And in case of lack of food those with food were supposed to share with those who did not have through a system of *kisuma*.

2.3.2 Lineage

The next level in the lineage was *libamba*, which involved descendants of a common ancestor, usually from four to seven generations back. It was a maximal lineage of landholding co-

²⁵ Kinship relations among the Luo by Paul Hebinck and Nelson Mango: Kinship structures and enterprising actors. Anthropological essays on development, publisher: Wageningen University, Editors: J Anderson, M. Breuser, pp.37-57

²⁶ O.I. Mzee Busa, Kanyada

operating agnates and generally considered to be the backbone for settlement, household and family formation, and social reproduction. Pritchard 1965; Southhall 1952; Parkin 1978 Its members characteristically met often at the *keyo* level to discuss the distribution of land, land conflicts and other property disputes. The Luo economic structure could be studied most conveniently in terms of the operation of the *libamba* units, because these units defined maximal frameworks for economic, social and political competition. According to Ochola-Ayayo (1976:121) ‘the Luo sum up in the *libamba* all those forces of friction and competition, which weaken the solidarity of a lineage segment and lead to its further subdivision’. Thereafter, the next level was the clan (*dhoot*).

In the basic Luo polygamous homestead the house of the senior wife (*mikayi*) was at the center back. The second wife’s house was at the right hand side of *mikayi* and was called *nyachira*. Then came a third wife (*reru*) whose house was on the left hand side of *mikayi*. Women married after the third wife was called *nyi-udi*, which means the daughters of the house to which they were attached.

This was supported by O.I. Gati Sewe Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa 5.8.2019 who said that the lineage system was well structured and it governed all the ways of life of a Luo be it marriage or economic matters. For example, people were not allowed to marry within their clans or from *libamba* because of blood bonds. People were only allowed to marry from *wasigu* clans. *Wasigu* were those people that they did not have blood ties with.

2.3.3 Ritual heads

By 1890, the Luo had a tight-knit society with leadership from *Ruodhi* or regional chiefs. It was respect rather than loyalty that characterized the relationship between the chiefs and their subjects. The institution of *Ruoth* provided leadership to the community. They were the

guarantors of the community's peace and prosperity, as well as the custodians of the community's cultural matters. The major roles of the Luo chiefs during the pre-colonial period were for the mobilization of the community for agriculture and other economic activities besides presiding over the community's various rituals. *Ruothi* were found virtually among the major groups that made up the Luo community in East Africa. They were also a symbol of unity as the people rallied around them whenever important matters that required their attention emerged. It could be the matter of "a runaway wife" or accusation of witchcrafts leveled against any member of the community or even decision to go to war against another tribe.

At the apex of the community were the *ruothi* but this did not mean that the Luo were a centralized state. They were organized into clans, each with a common ancestry. The clans were organized into larger units (*Gwenge*) which were self-governing. Each *Gwenge* was administered by a council of Elders. The council administered justice and served as a final court of appeal. The council coordinated religious functions. They had a system of chieftainship *Ruoth* who administered with the help of Council of Elders. There were ritual experts such as diviners, medicine men and healers. There existed a class of warriors for the defense of the community standing army. They believed in the existence of One God *Nyasaye*. They prayed to God through priests. They even worshipped the ancestral spirits. They had sacred places set aside for worship. They practiced initiation rites E.g. removal of lower teeth / front teeth. They celebrated important occasions e.g. harvest, in a comparison of Luo kinship and the Acholi kinship revealed a lot of similarities. Colonialism weakened *rwot* among the Acholi and *ruoth* among the Luo. According to Leslie Whitmre in his thesis the importance of rituals, *jogi* (ancestor spirits), and

traditions greatly influenced the chiefdom building process, and thus helped to create the Acholi identity.²⁷

Before chiefdoms emerged, each village had its own *jok* or *jogi*, traditions, and rituals that the head of the chiefdom, or *rwot*, used as unifying factors for all lineages within the chiefdom. Traditionally, there were rituals and traditional symbols that legitimized the *rwot*'s position and the sovereignty of the chiefdom as a political entity. Therefore, the social more of the members the chiefdom directly influenced and legitimized the political nature of the chiefdom. Without acknowledging and incorporating the traditions, *jogi*, and rituals of his people, a *rwot* could not expect them to acknowledge him as their legitimate leader.

The rituals, symbols and religion of the Acholi shaped the traditions of chiefdoms. By honoring those aspects of chiefdom life, the *rwot* solidified his position as his chiefdom's traditional leader. During the colonial period, the British displayed a lack of regard for Acholi traditions in several significant ways. In addition to the colonial administration, the British established the Native Administration. By 1937, only three *rwodi* traditionally succeeded to the *rwotship*. Ritual heads and elders had no authority. Most *rwodi* were strangers to their chiefdoms or commoners. Traditional *rwodi* generally had no political authority. New *rwodi* were usually from the educated class. A division *rwot* told Girling they had to rule by fear. He thought that the colonial government style promoted progress, and it was his duty to produce at the desired level to achieve progress. A District Commissioner said fear was necessary for change. He hoped strides in education would eliminate the need for fear.

²⁷ Leslie Whitmre – thesis, The Creation and Evolution of the Acholi ethnic identity (2013) ,Clemson University

A typical Luo homestead (*dala*) consisted of a site where the monogamy or polygamous domestic groups built their houses, in the surroundings of which they had their fields. The smallest social unit in the homestead was the 'household'. A homestead was made up of at least two generations, that of the father and the mother(s), and that of their offspring. Occasionally, households of brothers of homestead's owner were also to be found there, as well as servants and 'strangers'. Several homesteads made up a *gweng* and resembled what we now recognize as villages or settlement. Residence in a village was based upon kinship but also upon alliances developed out of strategic considerations.²⁸

After looking at the kinship and lineage system among the Luo, the study argues that the Luo in Homa Bay County did not have chiefs as defined in colonial literature in their socio-economic and political dispensations. However, it was the function of *ruoth* that became synonymous with that of the African chiefs who would later on be the brainchild of the colonial administration in Africa. The distinction was that *ruoth* was a ritual leader while the colonial chief was the embodiment of the colonial administration's grip on the governance of their colony in Kenya.

In other places in Kenya the kiship system defined leadership of the community. For example, pre-colonial times chiefless maintained political order through differing institutions. The pastoral Masai were divided into two age groups, roughly of warriors and elders. The latter met in councils to resolve disputes and make policy. The warriors defended the community and raided for livestock and other forms of wealth. The agricultural Kikuyu, and the partly agricultural and partly pastoral Kamba, had similar age-grading structures with councils of elders meeting for judicial and policy matters. There were other cross-cutting political units. The Kikuyu had influential and wealthy family groups (*mbaris*), swollen into quasi-political and economic

²⁸ Southall 1952:27, Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo 1989:14

entities by the existence of tenant farmers (muhoi) and hangers on. The basic economic and political structure of the Kamba was the utui (homestead), composed of a small number of unrelated families linked together for economic co-operation. The Ibos were congregated in village groups, governed by councils of elders. All four societies were decentralised and fragmented into a number of autonomous communities administered by councils. They gave wide political influence to men of singular ability, but the influence of these men was not hereditary or authoritarian. Their positions depended on tendering good advice and having it accepted by their peers.²⁹

These pre-colonial institutions were disrupted by British colonialism.

During the pre-colonial period the Luo were being ruled by the institution of chief known as *Ruoth*. The Luo respected chieftaincy as a leadership institution. Chiefs earned a lot of respect from the community. Most of them were wealthy people and thus their greatness in leadership of the community. Chiefs were fully aware that nobody would listen to a poor chief and thus wealth was paramount in the institution of chieftaincy not only among the *Luo* in Homa Bay but in the entire Luo-land. Because of their wealth they could intervene and organize for food for those in the community who were living in wants.³⁰ The appointment of the chiefs before the establishment of colonial rule in Homa Bay was done and certain qualities were considered in a person before his appointment as a chief. The physical look of a person was very important therefore well-built persons stood a great chance of being appointed the chiefs. But it was not

²⁹ Standard works include: C. K. Meek, *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe* (London, 1937); Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya: the tribal life of the Kikuyu* (London, 1938); H. E. Lambert, *Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions* (London, 1956); Gerhard Lindblom, 'The Akamba: an ethnological monograph', in *Archives d'etudes orientales* (Uppsala), xvii, 1920; and Alan H. Jacobs, 'The Traditional Political Organization of the Pastoral Masai', D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1965.

³⁰ O.I. Joseph Achieng, *Kanyamw*

only the physical look, but this consideration was tempered with wisdom in that person. A polygamist was considered a frontrunner because his polygamous life was a manifestation of his ability to run the society. Monogamists were not held in high esteem to be tasked with duty of chieftaincy of the community.³¹

According to O.I. Samuel Aloo:

Some of the chiefs rose to their positions of leadership by the mere fact that their origins could be traced back to the clans which were associated with leadership of the community. This was explained by the assumption that because ones' father was a leader even their sons would also make good leaders. Some people actually believed that marrying from the family of the chief would lead to their children also becoming chiefs. That was the case with the ascendancy to chiefship by Matunga Kasuku.³²

The community also attached leadership values in the bravado of men who excelled in sports. They were considered energetic and therefore were ideal people to be chosen chiefs in case of vacancies occurring. The throne to Chieftaincy and even succession to it were done in amicable ways even in the face of disagreements. Violent take overs were totally disallowed by the community. One had only to convince the community that he was capable of leading them through good deeds.

2.3.4 SUMMARY

This thesis argues that Homa Bay County before colonialism did not have chiefs but were ruled through the institution of *Rwoth*. The nuclear family was headed by the father who in most cases was polygamous. Each wife was responsible for the care of her children. There was the division of labour that took into cognizance the gender roles. Women were drawers of water, collected

³¹ (Ibid)

³² O.I. Samuel Oloo Wiganda, Magunga 23.7.2019

firewood, cooked and weeded the farms with their daughters. The girls also assisted their mothers with other domestic chores. The boys looked after cattle while the adult men slashed the farm fields in readiness for cultivation and planting. The adult men also formed the warrior group for the territorial defense. The family was part of the clan which was an amalgamation of other relatives brought together through blood kinship.

Leadership among the Luo was not hereditary but was based on the leadership qualities one possessed including personal traits like good character, physique and exhibitions of courage and bravery.

The first chief to be appointed by the colonial state in Homa Bay County was Gor Ogalo who was a medicineman and had actually reluctantly accepted to be a chief in Kanyamwaa. He attached more more premium in his work as a ritual leader rather than as a colonial chief. The other chief to be appointed in the early years of colonialism in Homa Bay County was Chief Omune of Kanyada Location. The two chiefs were part of the first generation of African chiefs to be appointed by the colonial authority in Homa Bay County.

When the First World War broke out, the African Chiefs recruited young men to serve in the British army as career corps. One of the known people from Homa Bay to serve in the First World War was Gideon Magak Odeka of Kokal in Kasipul and Petro Koko Apaka Olielo of Kodumo in Kabondo.

The emergence of mumbo cult posed a serious threat to colonial authority in Homa Bay. Hence the chiefs were ordered to ensure that the carrying of spears and shields was banned and anybody going against the order would face legal consequences.

The frontier of entrepreneurship was not so much developed. However, Indians were already doing businesses in Marindi, Homa Bay and Oyugis. The African chiefs were expected to show total loyalty to the colonial state. Any chief who was expected to do the contrary was reprimanded.

Chapter three which follows examines the colonial conquest in Kenya and the processes of the appointment of colonial chiefs between 1903 and 1920 and issues of accelerated development in the subsequent years.

CHAPTER THREE

COLONIAL CONQUEST AND THE APPOINTMENT OF CHIEFS (1903-1939)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter thesis examines the colonial conquest in Kenya and the processes of the appointment of colonial chiefs between 1903 and 1939 examines the colonial conquest in Kenya and the processes of the appointment of colonial chiefs between 1903 and 1939. The colonial conquest was directly linked to the Berlin Conference (1884-85) in which the European powers divided the continental Africa into spheres of influence. It has been argued that the colonization of Kenya was by accident. The British were headed to Egypt to address the question of the Suez Canal when they stumbled upon this region and named it Kenya. In 1895 Kenya became a British protectorate. By default, the process of colonial conquest led to the integration of Homa Bay County into the colonial state.

The appointment of the first generation of chiefs and their responsibilities guided by the ordinances, emergence of Mumboism, implications of the out break of the First World War on governance of Homa Bay County became the hallmark of colonialism, requisition of livestock and crops for the war efforts, colonial education system and education in Homa Bay County in particular, the role of Catholic Church at Asumbi and SDA Church at Gendia in the provision of education, the recruitment of labour for colonial use, the role of chiefs in tax collection, colonial administrator's assessment of the chiefs work, and changes in transport and entrepreneurship all happened at the behest of the colonial administration.

3.2 Integration of Homa Bay County in Conquest

The integration of Homa Bay County after the colonial conquest was enabled by the first chiefs to be appointed. The first administrative structure was to find loyal acceptable leaders among the communities to serve the British government and assist to recruit laborers for tea, coffee and sisal plantations that were being established by the settlers and collect hut taxes to support railway-running cost. For this reason, Village Headmen Ordinance (VHO) was promulgated in 1902 to make the appointment of these leaders official and remunerable by the colonial government. For easy and effective control, the protectorates were put under colonial rule in 1905.

In 1907, Courts Ordinance set up tribunals under headmen and chiefs to deal with tax defaulters and rebels against authority. The 1911 Tax defaulters Tribunal rules (TDTR) recognized the constitution of council of elders in accordance to traditional customs to administer justice. The 1921 Native Authority Ordinance (NAO) set guidelines to appoint headmen and chiefs over specific areas (locations) with ethnic boundaries drawn (later in 1926). These measures were taken to stem bogus or weak and unaccepted leaders and to get trusted loyal servants fairly at ease with their community. By this time, Kenya consisted of many small social systems operating as independent political entities from each community. The colonial government later made Kenya a single political and economic system and it became one society, though deeply divided within itself. African administration was centrally controlled systematically, communities like the Luo, Luhya, Agikuyu, Abagusii and the Abasuba were first coerced to accept and follow this system because of: Labour supply; Payment of the hut taxes to force people to seek work in plantations; Efficient administration of justice; Control of population

movement; Easy flow of government orders downwards to the people from the British through headmen and chiefs.¹

However much power the chiefs may have retained under colonial rule-and some retained a great deal-one fact was clear to them as to their subjects: Ultimate authority now lay with the white man. Moindi (1997) argues: assessment of the chiefs was only as agents of social change he does not view the chiefs as being collaborators. Ondieki (1978) citing Bogonko, wrote on the chiefs as agents of social change. Bogonko's main objective was to give an assessment of the role played by colonial chiefs in the spreading of western education in Kenya as a whole. A number of works have been done on colonial African chiefs in Kenya and Africa. Those worth mentioning include: Richards and a government of Kenya booklet, *The Work of an African Chief in Kenya*.²

The governance of these regions by the colonial administration was through in-direct rule spearheaded by the colonial chiefs, as has been laid out in Lugard's influential work, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*.³

Chiefs must "actively maintain a spirit of loyalty to the British Crown and to inculcate the spirit in his; must maintain order, to prevent offences, to bring offenders to trial and to seize and detain property believed to have been stolen; to see lawful orders affecting them are obeyed by the African inhabitants of his location". The Kenyan population evolving from the colonial rule detested the Whiteman's oppressive and punitive laws designed to perpetuate the "Colour Bar" policy.⁴

¹ (Ibid)

² *The Work of an African Chief in Kenya*, Moindi 1997 (p.21) Crowder called the colonial administrators "white chiefs" (see his "The white chiefs of Tropical Africa")

³ Friedrich Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*

⁴ Joseph Karimi, *Standard Newspaper* Wednesday September 4th 2013

In colonial time chief-less people maintained political order through differing institutions. These pre-colonial institutions were disrupted by British colonialism. In Kenya, by 1914, they had collected enough information to realize that the Kikuyu, before collaboration, had no chiefs but had been governed through councils. None the less, administrative necessity persuaded the British to establish local chiefs and to rule through them.⁵

In order to understand the duties and functions of chiefs in Homa Bay County, it is important to first of all look at the roles of chiefs from a general perspective. According to Stephen Irungu), Colonial Chiefs in Kenya formed a strong part of the country's history as they were the ones who facilitated the operation of the colonial regime in the country.⁶ Though they have been criticized as collaborators by most of the existing historical studies, they were also credited in contributing towards the sustainable development of Kenya.⁷ Their role in governance played a significant role, particularly in maintenance of high security standards, promotion of education, growth of the agricultural sector among others. The British among other European powers, colonized many parts of the world. They used different methods of colonial administration to carry out their plans such as direct rule, indirect rule and assimilation among others. In order for the British to successfully govern the Kenyan colony they used the system of indirect rule as explained by Lange (2004). This is because any attempt by the British to rule directly would result to failure to their governance.

⁵ See, for example, the letter from the District Commissioner, Nyeri, to the Provincial Commissioner, dated 4, April 1931, where G.A.S. Northcote states that the Kikuyu did not have 'hereditary', autocratic rulers such as.....the Zulu chiefs; KNA/PC/CP/6/1/1, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁶ Irungu S. (2019) The Role of colonial chiefs in Kenya: Their impact on Kenya's Security Standards, educational system and Agricultural sector

⁷ (ibid)

The indirect rule involved creation of the chief system, establishment of local native council and native tribunals (Ndege, 2009). Despite the fact that the ethnic communities were ruled by council of elders in the ancient period, the British had to appoint chiefs whom they managed to control.

Such appointment of chiefs were made in Homa Bay during the colonial period, explained that one of the greatest chief in Gwassi was Chief Kasuku Matunga who had worked as a government inspector.⁸ During his reign, the people of Gwassi managed to develop their agriculture and fishing activities. They also traded with other communities like the Abagusii whom some came and settled in Gwassi hills. Ex-chief Okanga was reluctant to point out any weakness of chief kasuku Matunga arguing that he had been a chief although in the post-colonial time, therefore he could not be in a position to talk unfavourably about a former chief.

In areas under indirect rule, traditional authorities acted as intermediaries for the “despotic” colonial rule, while the colonial government acted as an advisor and only interfered in extreme circumstances. Often, with the support of the colonial authority, natives gained more power under indirect colonial rule than they had in the pre-colonial period. Mamdani points out that indirect rule was the dominant form of colonialism and therefore most who were colonized bore colonial rule that was delivered by their fellow “natives”.⁹

The purpose of indirect rule was to allow natives to govern their own affairs through “customary law.” In practice though, the native authority decided on and enforced its own unwritten rules with the support of the colonial government. Rather than following the rule of law, local chiefs enjoyed judicial, legislative, executive, and administrative power in addition to legal arbitrariness.

⁸ O.I. Ex-Chief Thomas Okanga Magunga, Gwassi 24.7.2019

⁹ Mamdani (1996) *Indirect Rule, Civil Society, and Ethnicity* Vol. 9, No. 3 (Oct., 1971), pp. 339-359 Published by: Cambridge University Press Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/159669> Accessed: 02-06-2020 17:06 UTC

Some communities in Africa had chiefs while others did not. It has been argued that no one has seriously studied colonial chiefs in previously chief less society.¹⁰

Tignor R.L. (1976) has argued that:

Scholars and administrators often deplored their existence because they disrupted the political traditions of pre-colonial Africa. Others have contended that African communities simply disregarded these upstart chiefs and worked around them, settling disputes in the established ways.¹¹

At best these chiefs have been regarded as little respected middlemen between the alien colonial government and local communities. This view is much too simple, for it overlooks the important impact of chiefs on local political life. In many cases chiefs not only acted as local agents of the colonial government but also used their new powers to dominate all traditional political and judicial institutions. Far from being overshadowed by the old structures they exercised so much power that the authority of the old was greatly diminished. For example many Kikuyu chiefs became the 'de-facto' law-givers and law-makers of local areas; people came to them to settle disputes, despite the fact judicial powers were supposed to reside in the 'kiamas', local councils, which had been judicial bodies before the colonial period. There were also significant variations between tribes, previously chief-less. Some, like the Kikuyu and Ibo, created strong collaborationist chiefs. Others did not. This development had far-reaching implications for the speed and pattern of social change and also for the politicization of local communities.

¹⁰ (ibid)

¹¹ (E. g. H. E. Lambert, 'The use of indigenous Authorities in Tribal Administration; studies of the Meru in Kenya Colony; University of Cape town; communications from the School of African studies, 16, april 1967).

The individual most responsible for securing such continuity in Kiambu was paramount chief Kinyanjui. As a young man of little means and no traditional standing he attached himself to the Imperial British East Africa Company in the early 1890s. He proved a willing and effective agent for the British, who increasingly came to rely on him. He was a man of enormous administrative talent, with a special gift for recruiting other capable administrators. Even some of the chiefs outside Kiambu owed their appointments to him.¹²

There were people who led their people before the advent of colonialism as ritual leaders of their clans in Homa Bay County. During colonial period, however, Chiefs were being appointed by the colonial government. It was more particularly the duty of District Commissioners in African areas to watch over the African administration and to guide and correct the procedure of native chiefs and councils of elders in their dealings with the people; to instill into the minds of the chiefs and headmen ideas of responsibility; to advise and encourage methods of economic development, road construction, irrigation. They must at all times be sympathetic in their treatment of and dealings with the “indigenous” populations; and, whilst being careful to uphold the prestige of the native rulers, they must so adapt their policy that the “natives”, one and all, understood that the Government was ever ready to check abuses when such exist.¹³

¹² Joseph Karimi, Standard Newspapers, 6th September 2013

¹³ East Africa Protectorate: KNA/DC/KSI/5/5Memoranda for Provincial and District Commissioners, Government Printer, 1910KNA/DC/KSI/6/1

The British colonial administration of South Nyanza effectively commenced in January 1903, when a parcel of Union Jacks was dispatched from Provincial headquarters, Kisumu, to the Karungu area to be raised in all villages in the vicinity to show that South Nyanza was under the British colonial administration. Karungu was then made the district headquarters. An acting District Commissioner, Boughton Knight, was posted to Karungu in August 1903, as the District Commissioner for South Kavirondo.¹⁴

The British bureaucracy immediately adopted chieftaincy in her structure and therefore we argue that the Chieftaincy in Homa Bay County was a colonial legacy. Their mandate was executed through the policy of indirect rule in the British colonies and through the policy of Assimilation in the French colonies in West Africa. The architecture of the indirect rule policy was Fredrick Lugard. The indirect rule theory worked more or less the same way as the system Theory. It was a system of colonial administration, mainly British, by which colonial powers ruled through local chiefs. To aid colonial administration, the British divided Kenya's Bantu-, Nilotic-, and Cushitic-speaking peoples into ethnic classifications based on linguistic variations and locality. Thus, specific ethnic subgroups, called "tribes," were created in a form that had not existed previously. The ethnic groups were assigned to live in separate areas of the colony. Within each subgroup, colonial administrators designated one "chief," who became responsible for collecting taxes levied by the colonial state.

The concept was not new, as it stemmed from the fact that great African empires had been run this way too. The 'Asante' for instance ruled their conquered territories via local indigenous

¹⁴ KNA, Nyanza Province, PC/NZA, 1910-1911, p. 12; South Kavirondo District Annual Report, Kisii/Ugaya District: DC/KSI/1/1, 1908-1912.

chiefs. The Dutch absorbed native dynasties and ruled the Dutch East Indies using them. Some chiefs were loved and hated in equal measure by their subjects.¹⁵

In areas under indirect rule, traditional authorities acted as intermediaries for the “despotic” colonial rule, while the colonial government acted as an advisor and only interfered in extreme circumstances. Often, with the support of the colonial authority, natives gained more power under indirect colonial rule than they had in the pre-colonial period.¹⁶

Points out that indirect rule was the dominant form of colonialism and therefore most who were colonized bore colonial rule that was delivered by their fellow natives. The purpose of indirect rule was to allow natives to govern their own affairs through “customary law.” In practice though, the native authority decided on and enforced its own unwritten rules with the support of the colonial government. Rather than following the rule of law, local chiefs enjoyed judicial, legislative, executive, and administrative power in addition to legal arbitrariness. To him indirect rule was a “decentralized despotism”.

Some communities in Africa had chiefs while others did not. It has been argued that no one has seriously studied colonial chiefs in previously chief less society. Scholars and administrators often deplored their existence because they disrupted the political traditions of pre-colonial

¹⁵ (E. g. I. Jones, Report of the position, status and influence of chiefs and Natural Rulers in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, (Enugu1956), p.5).

¹⁶ Mamdani (1996): Indirect Rule, Civil Society, and Ethnicity: The African Dilemma (<https://www.jstor.org>)

Africa. Ibid others have contended that African communities simply disregarded these upstart chiefs and worked around them, settling disputes in the established ways.¹⁷

At best these chiefs have been regarded as little respected middlemen between the alien Colonial government and local communities. This view is much too simple, for it overlooks the important impact of chiefs on local political life. In many cases chiefs not only acted as local agents of the colonial government but also used their new powers to dominate all traditional political and judicial institutions. Far from being overshadowed by the old structures they exercised so much power that the authority of the old was greatly diminished. For example many Kikuyu chiefs became the ‘de-facto’ law-givers and law-makers of local areas; people came to them to settle disputes, despite the fact judicial powers were supposed to reside in the *kiamas*, local councils, which had been judicial bodies before the colonial period. There were also significant variations between tribes, previously chief-less. Some, like the Kikuyu and Ibo, created strong collaborationist chiefs. Others did not. This development had far-reaching implications for the speed and pattern of social change and also for the politicization of local communities.

Onduru (2009) writing on economic change among the south Nyanza Luo recalled that the establishment of the British colonial administration in Kenya after 1894 had little immediate impact on the people of South Nyanza.¹⁸ When a Protectorate was declared over Uganda in July 1894, the region to the east of Lake Victoria as far as Naivasha was formally brought under British colonial rule. The region became known as the Eastern Province of Uganda Protectorate, to which South Nyanza also belonged. The province was formally divided into four districts:

¹⁷ (E. g. H. E. Lambert, ‘The use of indigenous Authorities in Tribal Administration; studies of the Meru in Kenya Colony; University of Cape town; communications from the School of African studies,16,april 1967).

¹⁸ (Ibid)

Nandi, Mau, Baringo and Suk. South Nyanza fell within Nandi District. The district comprised three divisions: Nandi proper, South Kavirondo and Ugaya.¹⁹

Despite the existence on paper of the divisions, colonial administrators had little contact with the people of South Nyanza between 1894 and 1903.

The closest administrative station was the Provincial headquarters at Kisumu. As Matson (2004) observed, “little real administration had been undertaken in the face of the overriding necessity of keeping the Nyando Valley clear and the construction of the railway up to schedule”.²⁰

Gor Mahia of Kanyamwa and Nyakiti of Karachuonyo were the medicine men who led the Luo in Homa Bay before colonialism set foot in the area. Before their appointments, Luo relied on the traditional institution of *Ruoth* which provided guidance in social, economic and political affairs of the community.

In an interview with Mzee Thomas Okanga Asango, a retired Gwassi chief, he concurred with the changes in administration with penetration of colonialism in Homa Bay County that ended the *rwothship* system. He said chiefs in Gwassi during colonial period were virtually in charge of everything ranging from agriculture, irrigation, veterinary services to public works.²¹

¹⁹ Tignor, R. L. *The Colonial Transformation of Kenya*, pp. 64-65.

²⁰ Matson, A. T. ‘Uganda’s Old Eastern Province’, *Uganda Journal*, p. 46.

²¹ O.I. Ex-Chief Thomas Okanga Magunga, Gwassi 24.7.2019

The colonial administration established the Karungu station in order to check on German encroachment on South Nyanza.²²

The Germans had already colonised Tanganyika (now the republic of Tanzania), which shared borders with South Nyanza, an area that the British had not brought under their political control. Other parts of South Nyanza, particularly Karachuonyo, Kabondo and Mumbo (Kasipul) had been formally under colonial rule since 1900, but had no government representatives operating in the locations. The locations were part of Kisumu District until 1908 when the three locations were transferred to South Nyanza District.²³ The British colonial administration soon realised that for effective administration, Karungu was not strategically placed, since it was not centrally located. G.A.S. Northcote, assistant collector in charge of Karungu from October 1904 to September 1906 observed:

Karungu (then district headquarters for Ugaya) is extremely ill adapted for a trading centre; the reason for its position is its vicinity to the German border. Again it is difficult to work at the district from the station, more especially as that part (Kisii) which requires the most supervision is almost furthest removed.²⁴

The district headquarters was later transferred from Karungu to Kisii in 1907. Apart from being centrally placed, the British colonial administrators also wanted to be close to the Abagusii (the

²² KNA, South Kavirondo District Annual Report, Kisii/Ugaya District: DC/KSI/1/1, 1908-1912

²³ KNA, South Kavirondo District: DC/KSI/3/2: Histories and Customs of Kisii and Luo from 1911-1924.

²⁴ KNA, Report on the Province of Kisumu for the year 1903-1906, pp. 15-16; Maxon, R. M. Conflict and Accommodation in Western Kenya: The Gusii and the British, 1907-1963, Associated University Presses, Cranbury, London, Ontario, 1989, p. 30. KNA, South Kavirondo District: DC/KSI/3/2: Histories and Customs of Kisii and Luo from 1911-1924.

Kisii) who were still resisting British colonial rule in order to defeat them and effectively bring them under colonial administration like the rest of South Nyanza. The British colonial administration carried out the first military expedition against the Abagusii in September 1905.²⁵

3.3 Appointment of chiefs

Many studies have shown how the British used a hierarchy of appointed Africans to carry out day-to-day administration. The hierarchical nature of this administrative structure was perfectly in line with Fredrick Lugard's theory of indirect rule. African communities practised both the centralized and decentralized system of administration. The British colonial administration were actually convinced that it was not easy to administer their territories without involving the conquered Africans. It was therefore logical for them to resort to the use of the already existing African traditional structures. That is how Lugard managed to administer Northern Nigeria in the Sokoto Caliphate. In doing so the conquered Africans were conditioned to depend on the colonial masters in the governance of their areas. The tight control of the administrative system fulfilled the Bureaucratic nature of the British system in which power was exercised from the top to the bottom. As a matter of fact the Metropole had a tight control on the happenings in the colonies. Africans were reduced to the level of pertakers of the alien orders. At the beginning of colonialism they were never involved directly in decision making but the British rather found it appropriate to use their own traditional leaders to govern them. Early studies include Apter, 1961; Beattie, 1971; Burke, 1964; Denoon, 1968; Fallers, 1965; Low and Pratt, 1970; Richards, 1960.²⁶

²⁵ Maxon, a scholar of the Abagusii, has pointed out that the Abagusii were daily "raiding the Kavirondo (the Luo of South Nyanza) along their borders". Maxon, R. M. *Conflict and Accommodation in Western Kenya*, 1989, p. 30.

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The degree of continuity between this imposed colonial structure and precolonial political systems differed greatly from one part of the Protectorate to another, the disjunction being greatest where people had formerly organized their affairs without rulers. The present study focuses on British attitudes as revealed in two such areas of extreme disjunction. Other scholars have noted in passing that officials tended to assume that the wide powers wielded by these appointed chiefs were based on custom, even in formerly acephalous areas.

Pratt (1965: 489) refers to this assumption as “a happy and convenient fiction” while Tosh (1978: 246) speaks of self-deception and “the confusion which bedevilled the official mind.”

Research among retired officials who had served in the Protectorate administration revealed a widespread perception of these appointed chiefs as in some sense representative of the Africans they ruled.²⁷

Some of those interviewed maintained that representativity derived from continuity with precolonial chiefly roles involving mystical ties between chiefs and people. They believed that precolonial chiefs had ruled even in areas where research has found no such precolonial political roles.²⁸

²⁷ Gartrell, 1979

²⁸ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/african-studies-review/volume/756>, British Administrators, Colonial Chiefs, and the Comfort of Tradition: An Example from Ugandaonline by Cambridge University Press: 07 September 2016

This thesis observed that early chiefs were appointed by the colonial authority from among the influential Luo families in Homa Bay County in order to assist in the administration of the areas under their jurisdictions. Gor Ogalo was the first chief to be appointed by the colonial administration in Homa Bay. He was a medicine man believed to have had immense supernatural powers. Gor served as a paramount chief of the then Kanyamwa location (currently Kanyamwa Kologi and Kanyamwa Kosewe wards in Ndiwa constituency) during the colonial era. His home was at today's Sigama village, upper Kayambo Location.

According to an oral interview with Aluoch Alaka who had talked to one of Gor Ogalo's grandchildren Turfosa Nyang'aya Okeche, she recalled how unpredictable the legend was. He was a man of surprises. At times he entered a house without being noticed. People would only hear him calling somebody from a different room. The granddaughter would never forget the superpowers Gor had. Gor Mahia had powers to dry a water pan full of water. Whenever Gor Ogalo passed near a water pan owned by another clan, he would perform miracles that would make the pan dry up for more than four hours. He would only allow water to return to the pan after ascertaining that the residents had recognized his presence. At the height of his reign, Gor Mahia was a revered paramount chief. Besides ruling with iron fist, he also had supernatural powers that left the village in shock.²⁹

²⁹ O. I. Aluoch Alaka, Kanyamwa, June 3 2020

Gor, according to Mzee Charles Kaumo, who claimed to have seen the first aeroplane fly in the skies of Homa Bay County praised Chief Gor Ogalo for having been in front line in terms of introducing development in Kanyamwa.³⁰ That Gor supported agriculture and livestock development. Before the coming of *mzungu* people used hoes in tilling land but when Gor became chief, he assisted the people to embrace the tilling of land using a hoe pulled by oxen. This led to a fundamental change in the mode of food production. But he decried the situation in which Kanyamwa was now producing a lot of crops but no markets for the sale of surplus production.

Gor also assisted in the construction of a road known as *Opach Okombo* that traversed Mirogi to Kisii. He also encouraged proper virtues in his subjects. He assisted in the recruitment of people as *Ogirimiti* who were taken to work in sisal plantations. Mzee Odundu was one of the people who served in these plantations at one point in his life. He said they worked for six months before being returned to their villages.

A part from Gor Ogalo, the colonial trajectory that affected the traditional governance structure saw the coming to the fore of other people to the positions of chieftaincy in other parts of Homa Bay.

By 1907 to 1915 Kanyada location was under Chief Omune Otenda. He was described as a sensible man by the colonial administration in South Kavirondo who described him as a person who had a considerable influence over his people. According to archival records, Omune presided over a location which was fairly fertile except the areas adjacent to the lake.

³⁰ O.I Charles Kaumo Kanyamwa, 4.8.2019

Nevertheless, he ensured that the people of Kanyada were totally engaged in agriculture and fishing for those who resided closer to the lake.³¹

This was supported by Oral Interviewee Andrea Arot Owade who said that the coming to power by chief Omune helped in the development of Kanyada. Omune transformed agriculture and fishing in Kanyada through the help of the government. There was construction of road connecting Kanyamwa, Kwabwai and Karungu took place from 1907 to 1908. Ground nuts seeds were issued by the colonial government through chief Omune and sugar cane planting was introduced in swampy areas of Kanyada. Under his chieftaincy a cart road was made from Homa Bay to Kisii and a port was opened in Homa Bay in 1908. Indians opened businesses in Homa Bay because of the good security conditions under Chief Omune. Although these developments were initiated by the colonial government, Chief Omune was quite instrumental in their implementations.

Although the colonial government later on sacked him due to old age, Omune did quite a lot for the people of Kanyada during his reign. He was replaced with his son called Opiyo in a function presided over by the Provincial Commissioner.

Karachuonyo also experienced governance change which was as a result of the conquest of Homa Bay County. Of course When the Europeans came; they found Nyakiti as the traditional chief of the Karachuonyo people. The first colonial chief appointed by Europeans was Odondi from Kogweno sub-clan. Odondi was not in fact known before his appointment but an incident

³¹ KNA/DC/KSI/3/2

occurred in which some Kagan warriors invaded their home - (Kabolo Jakogweno) and killed his two brothers Ogwang and Ogembo. Therefore Odondi went to Kisumu to report the incident to the District Commissioner. He also requested the Commissioner to give him askaris (police) to come with him so that they could go and punish Kagan for their unlawful act. Odondi was given askaris and took them to Kagan.³²

Mzee Opiyo informed me that the news spread and reached Kagan of how the askaris were coming to give them a lesson for the murder of innocent individuals of Karachuonyo. So most of them escaped and left their homes empty. The askaris did not find anybody. On return Nyakiti who was still the chief told the D.C's representative on his mission to Kagan that he was a magician "*Jabilo*" and that he wanted to step down for Odondi so as to continue with his practice of (*bilo*) magic. The report was taken to the District Commissioner at Kisumu. Therefore Odondi was appointed the Chief of Karachuonyo. Odondi was succeeded by Orinda also from Kogweno sub-clan. Orinda is remembered as a former guitarist who used to accompany Odondi - as an entertainer for the crowd. By 1919 Orinda was dismissed by the District Commissioner.

The next chief who was appointed was Okoth. He was appointed in around 1912-1920. Okoth was from Kakwajuok sub-clan, he was in fact "*askari kanga*" (administrative police) serving at Kisii. Okoth is remembered as being the best chief who was very kind and rich too. In fact he was appointed twice. The first period he worked for ten years. Although he was a good chief there were power hungry people who did not want him. In fact they went as far as saying that he was from Agoro "*Kimirwa*" - which means he came with his mother as a boy and was not born

³² O.I. Owuodho Opiyo Kawadhgone

in Karachuonyo and could not rule them. This was in fact a complete propaganda from power thirsty individuals.³³

The coming to power by chiefs happened on different circumstances. Some Chiefs rose to position by deceit and some were chosen because they accepted to collaborate with the colonial authority. On the issue of ascendancy by deceit the case of Chief Orinda is worth reference. During the colonial period, Orinda represented both Kasipul and Lower Karachuonyo (Kaduong) as the senior chief. The first chief to be appointed in Kasipul was Oyugi. Oyugi had a son Bala who was a house servant to some Nubians in Kisumu. Bala got the news that a new chief was to be appointed in Kasipul to help the chief of Lower Karachuonyo.

So Bala came home and informed his father that the D.C. in Kisumu wanted to appoint another chief for Upper Karachuonyo.

He took his father to Kisumu to the D.C. but there were complication. Sangoro, a man from Kasipul had also informed the D.C. of a man to be appointed chief. But when Bala went with his father, Sangoro was not in. So Bala and others who went with him managed to convince the D.C. that Oyugi was not different from the other man Sangoro had mentioned. Therefore Oyugi was appointed the first Chief of Upper Karachuonyo - but he was under Orinda. It is understood however, that Oyugi was in bad terms with Orinda so he did not rule for a long time. He was eventually succeeded by Omiti. The chain of chieftainship in Upper Karachuonyo was not dynastic but in most cases individuals connived with the D.C. to become chiefs. Those who were appointed chiefs had in one way or another canvassed or collaborated with the D.C. for their

³³ Theodora Olunga Ayot South Nyanza Historical Texts Volume I University of Nairobi Department of History 1076-1978

appointments. They showed that they were loyalists to the crown of the Queen and their interests not very much in tandem with the aspirations of their subjects.³⁴

3.4 Responsibilities of Chiefs Guided by Ordinances

It was important for this study to put on record what some scholars have said about the African chiefs in the colonial era. Sorbea Bogonko has argued that of all the colonial administrators, African chiefs have perhaps been most misunderstood and their actions most misinterpreted by African historians especially those of nationalist bent. Whilst the positions and roles of the District Officers (Dos), District Commissioners (DCs) and Provincial Commissioners (PCs) have been seen quite rightly as important parts of that chain of administrative machinery whose main duty was to establish colonialism in any one given colony, for some queer reasons, African colonial chiefs have been expected to have acted differently. African chiefs ought to have supported the wishes of kith and kin to the hilt, for instance, in their struggle for political freedom and socio-economic emancipation. Because many chiefs did not do this they have been branded as clamorous collaborators with the European colonialists and as tyrants, self seekers, conservatives, swindlers and terrorists of their own people. Sorobea Nyachio Bogonko, Kenyatta University College, *Trans-African Journal of History* Vol 14, 1985 1-20.

This thesis considered how the colonial officials viewed the responsibilities of chiefs in Homa Bay County. I have used some examples contained in the Political Records from the Kenya National Archives. I argue that the institution of chiefs was the creation of colonialism and a tool for subjugation everywhere in Kenya including Homa Bay County. To them some chiefs were

³⁴ O. I. Hezron Obong'o Nyiego Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

good others were not in carrying out their delegated mandates. Chief Omune of Kanayada was derogatively referred to by the Ag. P. C. as being old and useless, and subsequently replaced with his son Opiyo.

The same colonial authority described Chief Ochola of Karungu as old and infirm, and Chief Ogwata of Kaksingiri was described as not particularly capable and had little influence over his people. Also under Chief Gor of Kanyamwa, Agwata was described as most unsatisfactory chief, and invariably seems to settle cases to everyone's satisfaction. Complaints had been made of oppression on his part, but he was too weak a character to do much in this respect. He was blamed for not directing people well in agriculture although at that time people in Kaksingiri were suffering from sleeping sickness. There had also been a great deal of sickness among livestock in recent years. Gwasssi was an arid land and failure of crops could not have been entirely due to the laziness of chief Ogwata alone. If they felt the chiefs were incapable why did they appoint them in the first place? Africans had their own mechanisms for providing leadership of the community and the setting up of colonial style of administration upon them was by and large an imposition.³⁵

The colonial authority described Chief Oguta of Rusinga as a sensible man with a good deal of power. And that Onyango did not wield much power and people under him were very few. Although he presided over a jurisdiction with barren land with very little rainfall and crops frequently were a failure. In August 1908 Chief Oguta ceased to be a chief at his own wish leaving brother Nyakeriga to be chief. Chief Orinda of Karachuonyo during this period was

³⁵ KNA/DC/KSI/3/3

found to be capable and willing, and rather more progressive than most of the Kavirondo chiefs.³⁶

From the above foregoing, the chiefs worked at the mercy of the colonial authority with some reports portaraying them in bad light despite the efforts they made to ensure active administration of their locations by the colonial state. The resignation of chief Oguta and his subsequent replacement with his brother meant that although the colonial report portrayed him as a capable chief, he had reservations about how the governance of his location was being done. Rather than continue clinging to power against his conscience, he chose resignation.

It is important to note that Chiefs ruled using the council of elders known as '*jokidhedhe*'. An example to suffice was the situation in Maragoli about the *milango* headmen. In 1926, the system of paid 'mlango' headmen was introduced by Government. These *milango* headmen, who, after consultation of local public opinion, were appointed by the location chiefs and confirmed by the District Commissioner, were, as a rule, people of youngish or middle age who could read and write were capable of discharging the various administrative duties connected with the execution of chiefs' orders. The idea being to create suitable administrative sub-units of approximately equal size and population, the new sub-locations that were placed under the control of a '*mlango*' headman corresponding only in a few cases to clan-territories which ranged from very large to rather small areas. Nevertheless, the principle of constituting these new headmanship on a clan-basis was not altogether ignored, neither in the fixing of boundaries, nor in the selecting of

³⁶ (Ibid)

headmen. Thus in 1935, the 32 clans (and sub-clans) in South Maragoli (cp. vol I, p.98) were represented by 16 milango headmen.³⁷

Although the study is about Homa Bay County, Chief Odera Akango' of Gem in Central Nyanza remains the best example of a hard working chief. When Odera Akang'o was appointed chief he recruited many armed soldiers, put them in uniform and used them largely to protect Gem borders against possible encroachment by the Wanga under their leader Mumia. He introduced major reforms such as road construction and afforestation. The provincial commissioner for Nyanza, Mr. John Ainsworth, supplied him with seedlings from the tree nursery at Kibos that he distributed to all his headmen to plant in their areas. His whole area of jurisdiction was soon covered with a network of roads-main and feeder roads that were constructed and maintained through communal effort.

Most of these roads were later incorporated into the colonial and post-colonial road network and it is amazing how few changes were effected on these routes, in spite of modern survey equipment. Odera Akang'o also initiated major reforms in agriculture. He introduced rice farming, sugarcane growing, new varieties of bananas and beans as well as Hickory-king maize to replace native variety. Most of the new seeds were supplied by the PC Ainsworth at Kisumu, from where they were collected by porters employed by Odera, with Mudhune, his cousin from Alara, acting as headman in charge of the caravans. It was during one of those journeys from Kisumu in 1911 that Mudhune called at Maseno, where the Rev. J. J. Willis had established a school for sons of chiefs in 1906.

³⁷ KNA-DC/KSI/5/5

In Gem the colonial government was not satisfied with the manner the chief carried out his duties especially the collection of taxes. The Gem people under Chief Ager Ganda faced the wrath of the colonial administration as early as 1903. The people were punished by the collector in 1903 for refusing to pay hut tax and for offering violence to the Native collectors. 800 heads of cattle were taken and several goats, hence livestock was somewhat depleted. The people were now quiet and amenable. They had also suffered considerably from thefts of cattle by the Kisii.³⁸

After the Second World War period, there was a company that was known as Roche Kanyamwa which introduced sugarcane growing in Kanyamwa. This led to the introduction of 'jaggary'. New breeds of cows were also introduced. Crops such as groundnuts, ngor (green grams) and nyim (simsim). There was also the production of siagi (ghee) in Kanyamwa.³⁹

The most fertile part was south, near Kanyamwa. Livestock was plentiful and people were quite, though occasionally fighting with each other. An excellent 'barrabarra' connected the district with Karungu, Kwabwai, Kanyamwaa locations etc but there was little trade which would change if a port was made on the lake in this locality. Quantity of ground nuts was issued to 'natives' for seed in 1907 and 1908, and some trade was expected. With local collaborations, these duties were fulfilled without delays.

When Gor Ogalo reigned, after his appointment as Chief in 1903, excellent crops of sim-sim were produced and the people obtained all the money they required from the sale of this product

³⁸ KNA-Safari Diary dated on 11th January 1945, Mr. Low the District officer insisted on early cultivation and the absolute necessity of soil.

³⁹ O.I. Paul Odoyo, Kanyamwaa, 24th July 2019
KNA/DC/KSI/6/1-sd/-R.W.H. March 1911 O.I.

in Kanyamwa. In the same year Gor was appointed Paramount Chief of all the Kavirondo location except Karachuonyo, Mumbo and Kabondo. The locations of Kanyada, Kamreri, Kasigunga, Maronda, and Usaki which were formally independent were placed directly under Gor and their chiefs were translated into Headmen. He sensitized people on socio-economic transformations through the organized meetings. Kanyamwa enjoyed adequate rains and crops were normally looking well except where weeding had been delayed. There was a fair acreage of cereal food crops, insufficient Sweet Potatoes, and practically no cassava. The acreage under groundnuts was unsatisfactory and unless an immediate effort was made little increase could be expected. The chiefs and agricultural officer were told to address the problem of agriculture within Kanyamwa location by Bwana D.O. Around this time; quite a number of 'shambas' were not planted. The chiefs' 'baraza' every Monday was mainly used to explain to the people the need to grow cash crop such as groundnuts and to sell them at good prices. The complaint against poor prices had been made by a vociferous minority in Kanyamwa. It was the chiefs who advised the people on the necessity of early planting because the area normally experienced the problem of short rains. Some pockets of Kanyamwa were already growing rice. Sweet Potatoes and Muhogo (cassava) were also grown.

Some tree nurseries were set up in Ndhiwa but they were not doing well. The trees were meant to improve the ecology of Kanyamwa for agricultural development. It was the chiefs who led people in afforestation programme. However the D.O. Mr. Low believed a lot of labour was spent on tree nurseries which were a waste of funds and he threatened to close them down.⁴⁰

In future I will not accept the lame excuse of someone not yet heard of soil control measures. The people of Kanyamwaa should desist from grass burning unless fire breaks were prepared to protect other 'shambas'.⁴¹

⁴⁰ (Ibid)

⁴¹ (Ibid)

According to an interview with Mzee Odundu, one of the respondents, he recalled that Gor played a lot of role in transforming agriculture and Livestock in Kanyamwa.⁴² Before that agriculture in Kanyamwaa was traditionally operationalized and food was plenty to the extent that the old stock of food in *dero* (granaries) would be removed and scattered to pave way for new stock of harvest. Crops which were grown under Gor's tenure as Kanaymwaa chief were: *Nyim* (sim sim), Ochiago (green grams) and groundnuts.⁴³ This was confirmed by another respondent Peter Kwasa. O. I. Peter Kwasa Kanyamwa location, 24th July 2019. He said that when Gor was the Chief of Kanyamwaa, he led a campaign for agriculture (pur). He ensured that the *Bwana* Dc supported the people through the distribution of seeds. He helped the people to market their agricultural produce to markets such as Ahero in Kisumu.

In Kanyamwa, Chief Ogutu was elected to succeed Gor in November 1922 but owing to his youth it was expressly intimated that he was not to be considered paramount like his father was. Ogutu was a very enlightened person and had during the last five years of his father's reign attained a sense of responsibility, his youth according to the DC was a great advantage for an appointment as suggested by the elders, as it increased his mobility. He certainly had a great deal of his father's influence and was popular and with a strong and influential native to support in his work, the Dc considered that he would be admirably suited to the billet.⁴⁴

Chiefs were appointed to these positions by the colonial authority for the single purpose of ensuring that the colonial administration met her governance objectives. Some of these chiefs

⁴² O.I. Mzee Charles Odundu, Kanyamwa 4.8.2019,

⁴³ O. I. Charles Odundu Aywaya, Kanyamwaa location, 24th July 2019.

⁴⁴ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1-N.R.R.Vidal, Ag. District Commissioner Kisii

were appointed and made paramount chiefs. For example, there was election of a paramount chief in South Nyanza in 1922 which was done in a well-attended ‘Baraza’ at Marindi in today’s Homa Bay county. This happened after the elders of *Joluo* and the *Wasuba* approached the District Commissioner with regard to the election of Chief Ogutu s/o Gor to be paramount over all ‘Jaluo’ and ‘Wasuba’ locations.⁴⁵

On 9th December 1919, the District commissioner reported that Mino s/o Mbaya had been appointed Chief of Gwasssi on 6 months’ probation because Mbaria retired at own request. If at the end of six months his work was satisfactory the Provincial Commissioner would be asked to approve and Gazette the appointment. Chief Mino was convicted of causing grievous hurt. Chief Mbariga s/o Mbaya was elected chief and Gazetted on 25-10-21. Chief Mbaria was convicted of rape and sentenced to 2 years. In April 1923, Mino was re-appointed. However, he was lazy and unsatisfactory. He appeared to have little personality. The location would probably be in a far worse state if it were not for the fact that interpreter Kasuku who belong to Gwasssi exercises considerable influence over the natives.⁴⁶

Chief Mbaria was described as a man of weak character of whom one sees or hears little. His influence was nill. Mbaria was indolent and had little influence. He was inclined to disregard Gor’s authority.⁴⁷ On his part W.F.G. Campbell reported that:

I found Mbaria reasonably energetic and he can do well when “punished”. Unfortunately Mbaria suffers from “Lake Lethargy” a disease confined to the male members of the community which appears to attack them in early life frequently-before the introduction of the medicine known as “Career Corps”-lasting throughout life.

⁴⁵ KNA-DC/KSI/3/1 January 1922

⁴⁶ KNA/DC/KSI/3/1 sd. S. O. V. Hodge, DC, January, 1927

⁴⁷ (Ibid)

Sore died in 1914 and Olueny was unanimously elected as his successor. This man has on the whole given satisfaction.⁴⁸

According to oral interviews with ex-chief, Chief Mbariga failed as chief and therefore was unable to lead his people to social-economic transformations. Chief Kasuku of Gwasi who succeeded him led his people to socio-economic transformations and did better in administration than his predecessor. When the colonial government appointed people like Mbariga as chiefs, did they carry out fact finding mission to establish whether the right person was being appointed to the right job or not?.⁴⁹

In order to realize the effects of chiefs on the ground, the system of headmen was considered by the colonial state. In 1926, the system of paid 'mlango' headmen was introduced by Government. Chiefs relied on this system of *mlango* in the execution of their duties. These *mlango* headmen, who, after consultation of local public opinion, were appointed by the location chiefs and confirmed by the District Commissioner, were, as a rule, people of youngish or middle age who could read and write were capable of discharging the various administrative duties connected with the execution of chiefs' orders.⁵⁰

For more assessment of chiefs in Homa Bay, a letter written on 7th November, 1922 by Senior Commissioner, Kisumu to the Chiefs and Headmen of the Luo 'Tribe' in South Kavirondo has given an insightful thought on the way the administrators regarded the African Chiefs.

⁴⁸ (Ibid)

⁴⁹ O.I. Ex-Chief Thomas Okanga Magunga, Gwassi 24.7.2019

⁵⁰ KNA/DC/KSI/5/5

In a letter to the African chiefs in Homa Bay by PC, he informed that Mr. Vidal, their District Commissioner, had written to him to complain of the neglect of certain people among them to carry out the orders of the Government. The District Commissioner informed him that he had noticed among them a deterioration of manners which amounted to disrespect and an inclination to passive resistance to the orders of the District Officers.

This bad behavior and disrespect to the authority of Government had been noticed by Missionaries and Europeans who do not work for Government and he was convinced that it was done by them with a hope to injure the prestige of Government and again to gain kudos for themselves.

One of the key factors towards the development of a certain place was the availability of high standards of security. The role of the colonial chiefs was to maintain law and order attributed to development as it eradicated crime crisis.⁵¹ Land dispute which was the major dispute among communities was resolved by the chiefs who made binding orders and final decisions over the matter. Through the demarcation of land boundaries and creation of public meetings the chiefs advocated for peace and unity among conflicting parties. Other than land disputes the chiefs also played a role in minimizing cattle raiding which also caused insecurity among the civilian population.

Chiefs led their people in the demarcation of locational boundaries in Homa Bay County. The demarcations took care of the social economic and political interests of the residents. For example, on 28th August 1926 Mr. Dobbs Senior commissioner held a *baraza* for Kochia and

⁵¹ Deflem, 1994

Kagan natives at the Kochia camp to settle the question as to whether Kagan and Kochia should be left under Kochia or once more made into a location of its own. Due to the importance attached to the boundary demarcation, Chief Obonyo came with a following of Kochia people and elders. Ex- headman Ongaro came with about 50 Kagan people. The senior Commissioner stated that it was undesirable to split up the District into small locations. He would not agree to the location being split up again. Both central and north Kavirondo had far fewer locations than the South Kavirondo which had too smaller ones as it was.⁵²

Chief Obonyo was one of the older chiefs who now found it hard to perform multifarious duties with which a modern chief was burdened like presiding over locational division which was quite an emotive affair. The District Commissioner was not having a lot of faith on Chief Obonyo owing to his advanced age. While his performance was wanting, it would be better to retire him and be replaced with a younger chief if possible. He had an Assistant Chief, Ongaro, who in effect ruled that part of Kochia which was formerly the location of Kagan. The amalgamation of these locations was made in 1921, but has never been a very happy marriage, both because the people belonged to different sections of the Luo tribe and because Obonyo had not the temperament to make it a success.⁵³

It can be argued that despite some reservations expressed about the institution of the chiefs in Homa Bay, it was a necessary evil. They led their people to socio-economic transformations from the pre-colonial system of articulations of mode of production to a new system which guaranteed peace and prosperity through a buraeaucratic structure of governance.

⁵² KNA/DC/KSI/6/1

⁵³ KNA/KSI/6/1

TABLE 1: Some Homa Bay Colonial Chiefs and the Locations they represented

Karachuonyo Kabondo Mumbo	Under Chief Ondiegi of Kabondo One Native Council The present chiefs of Karachuonyo and Mumbo to revert to headmen
Kagan Kochia Gem Kanyada	Under Chief Okelo of Gem or under Chief Obonyo of Kochia. One Native Council The present chiefs of Kagan, Kanyada to become Headmen only-also the chief of Gem or Kochia to revert to Headmen if he is not elected as chief.
Kamagambo Kabwoch Sakwa Kanyamkago and new area inhabited by emigrants from the Lake Shores	Under Chief Ongoro of Kabwoch. One Native Council. The present chiefs of Kamagambo, Sakwa and Kanyamkago to revert to Headmen and a headman to be elected for the new area.
Kanyamwaa Kanyidoto Kwabwai Kasigunga	Under Chief Ogalo of Kwabwai. One Native Council. The present chiefs of Kanyidoto and Kasigunga to revert to Headmen. A headman to be elected for Kanyamwaa
Gwassi Karungu Kaksingri Kadem Mohuru Rusinga Mfangano	Under a chief of Gwassi. One Native Council. The present chiefs of Karungu, Kaksingri, Kadem Mohuru, Rusinga and Mfangano to revert to Headmen.

Source: KNA-DC/KSI/3/1

Some administrative issues undermined socio-economic transformations in Kochia location in South Nyanza District, Homa Bay. During 1929 constant trouble occurred in Kochia location because of tactless handling of the Kagan section by Chief Obonyo and his Kochia elders. Eventually the P.C. agreed that it would be best for Kagan to have an Assistant Chief under Obonyo. They would however not be allowed a separate 'Baraza'. Accordingly Ongaro s/o Katho was appointed to the post as from January 1st 1930. Since Ongaro's appointment the friction between Kagan and Kochia appeared to have died down. Chief Obonyo and Ongaro got well along thereafter. They then embarked on transforming agriculture in their areas of jurisdiction. Cotton was grown in these locations for commercial purpose.

The elders were unanimously in favour of such an election and even proposed that the locations of Karachuonyo, Mumbo and Kabondo should come under the rule of Ogutu, although these locations were not included under Gor's regime.⁵⁴ Although this was proposed, but it was not going to be easy for the people from Karachuoyoyo and Kasipul to be governed by a paramount chief who was not one of their own.

3.5 Emergence of Mumboism

During the First World War period, Mumboism emerged from South Nyanza to neighbouring Abagusii locations, despite the violence meted against its followers by the colonial administration. Chief Onsongo of Getutu and his headmen feared that Mumboism was "assuming the most alarming proportions" and rounded up sixty eight Mumboists and took them to the District Commissioner W. F. G. Campbell, who interrogated them, burnt their cloaks and dispatched them to go and work outside the district. The activities of the Mumboists persisted

⁵⁴ (Ibid)

until 1934 when the District Commissioner W.F. G. Campbell, ordered Chiefs and assistant Chiefs of Getutu to arrest all known Mumbo follower in the location. About 2000 Mumbo followers were arrested and some of them put on trial and imprisoned, others were deported.⁵⁵

In a related study of millennial movements, Phimister (1988) in his *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890 to 1948* argues that once some black peasants began to identify the colonial state as the main source of their problems, most people's reaction to economic and social ills took the form of what Government officials described as 'religious hysteria'.

He points out that this ranged from uneven radicalisation of previously respectable denominations like the African Methodist Episcopal Church to the rapid spread of new cults and independent churches.⁵⁶

Phimister points out that other people, especially labour migrants, sought release 'from personal and social stress' by extending an enthusiastic welcome to the itinerant agents of the *mchape* cult whose fine red powder mixed with water promised to cleanse and defend believers from evil. He notes that many thousands more responded to the prophetic visions of the Vapostori and Amazioni churches. By the end of the decade, as Phimister remarks, both churches were established over large areas of Mashonaland, particularly amongst the 'uneducated, the poorest and most deprived, those least able to accommodate themselves to the pressures of change.'⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Shadle, B. L. 'Patronage, Millennialism and the Serpent god Mumbo', Africa, p. 33.

⁵⁶ Phimister, I. *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle* Longman, London, New York, 1988, pp. 196-197.

⁵⁷ (Ibid)

According to Mzee Adie Owuor, Kachien Kasipul Luos were not allowed to carry spears and shields because they were exposed and therefore were expected to obey law and order, unlike other indigenous communities during World War 1 and 11 periods. But he agreed that mumboists were quite in order to challenge the authority of the whiteman.

An order had been issued against the unnecessary carrying of shields and spears on the part of young men and their constant attendance at drinking bouts and meetings where bhang was smoked must stop as government wished such persons to leave off carrying the weapons of war, to drink less beer and to refrain from smoking bhang which was illegal and a penal offence.⁵⁸

He said Luos were not allowed because they had been exposed unlike the other indigenous communities during World War 1 and 11 periods.

The senior DC reiterated:

This is not a good report I hear of you, my people. I brought down the Governor to see you a few months ago and you welcomed him and promised obedience to Government orders and that your young men would not idle in the Reserves but work hard at home or abroad to earn money and so become better off. You must pay your taxes and obey at once the orders of Government or I shall have to punish the people who refuse to listen. The Governor who placed you in authority has power to set you down and he has no respect of persons. Whether you are big Chief or small headman you are under the authority of Government and liable to punishment for disobedience.⁵⁹

The emergence of Mumboism in North and South Kavirondo posed real challenge to the colonial administration in these two Kavirondos. Their teachings were based on traditional African

⁵⁸ O.I. Mzee Thomas Adie Owuor Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

⁵⁹ KNA/DC/KSI/3/1Office of the Senior Commissioner, Kisumu, 7th November, 1922

religion that did not recognize the presence of white men. Therefore a plan was quickly hatched by the colonial authority to tame them.

At sunrise and at sunset all Mumboites stand facing the sun with the first finger and thumb of each hand meeting to form a circle and held up to the eyes 'like binoculars. Having gazed at the sun intensely until they are completely dazzled, they stretch out their arms towards it and break into rapid and often unintelligible prayer. This is interesting in that the ancient Luo religion was and in places still is-that of sun worship. Occasionally when they feel like it they also pray thus to the Lake, and even, it is said, sacrifice cattle, throwing the meat into the Lake to the crocodiles.⁶⁰

In the the Cult of Mumbo in Central and South Kavirondo, some of these Groves were wooden idols, one of which has been presented to the Natural History Museum by Mr. C. M. Dobbs, late Provincial Commissioner for Nyanza Province. This practice of constructing sacred Groves to Mumbo and erecting idols is interesting since all the people who were questioned about this cult said definitely that such things had never been commanded by Mumbo himself. True, he had said that there were to be sacrifices made to him with dancing to the accompaniment of drums and bull-roarers (without musical accompaniment), but he meant them to take place in each *boma*. No instructions had been given for groves or idols.⁶¹

As was to be expected from a retrogressive religion which not only encouraged but ordained idleness and uncleanness, it was not long before its adherents, having nothing to do or to think about, began to indulge in unpleasant practices which the normal *Jaluo*, however uncivilized he might be, held in abhorrence. The communal enjoyment of women, including incest, bhang smoking, sodomy, and even bestiality, all made their appearance, though these practices seem to have been more common in South Kavirondo whither the cult had spread and had been received

⁶⁰ https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/39_13_1930_Nyangweso.pdf p.14-15

⁶¹ (ibid)

with enthusiasm. The priests started "schools" which they usually placed on hill-tops, and in the best proselytizing traditions, attracted potential adherents by giving feasts of their slaughtered cattle. They also built here and there what might be called groves or places for the worship of Mumbo where sacrifices were made to the accompaniment of many obscenities and dancing. It would seem then that Mumboism is a mixture of the old Luo religion of sun worship, and of an even older religion, long forgotten in the mists of time and now reappearing in a new guise.⁶²

O.I. Mzee Obong'o Nyiego concurred that when *mumboism* first appeared in Kasipul-Kabondo, most people didn't know about them. But he agreed that they offered an alternative to the Whiteman's religion which was very first gaining acceptance among the people. People feared associating themselves with mumboism for fear of punishment by the colonial authority.⁶³

I looked at the very subject of mumboism in Homa Bay County and realized that these were attention seekers who clutched onto some form of metaphysics in order to cause confusions among the African people in Homa Bay County. Their teachings were never based on realism but on the exploitation of ignorance of the masses in the guise that they would help them fight the Whiteman. Through the help of the chiefs, they were thoroughly dealt with and pushed to the periphery. Most of the informants believed that mumboists did not have the wherewithal to propagate their teachings to the people of Homa Bay County.

⁶² (Ibid)

⁶³ (Ibid)

3.6 Implications of the Outbreak of the First World War

The First World War was essentially a quarrel between European powers which involved Africa, both directly and indirectly, because at the outbreak of hostilities the greater part of it was ruled by the European belligerents. Campaigns were fought on African soil which though they only marginally affected the overall course of war had significant implications for Africa. More than a million African soldiers were involved in these campaigns or campaigns in Europe. Even more men, as well as women and children, were recruited, often forcibly, as carriers to support armies whose supplies could not be moved by conventional methods such as road, rail or pack animal. Over 150,000 soldiers and carriers lost their lives during the war. Many more were wounded and disabled. By the time the war ended, every country in Africa, with the exception of the small Spanish territories – which remained neutral – had been formally committed to one side or the other. Belgian, British, French, Italian and Portuguese administrations were allied – more or less actively – against German colonies.⁶⁴

There was no doubt that the war opened up new windows for many Africans, particularly the educated elite groups. Margery Perham has written that it is 'difficult to overestimate the effect upon Africans, who had been largely enclosed within a bilateral relationship with their European rulers, of looking outside this enclosure and seeing themselves as part of a continent and of a world'. In many parts of Africa the war gave a boost, if not always to nationalist activity, at least to the development of a more critical approach by the educated elites towards their colonial

⁶⁴ <https://en.unesco.org/courier/news-views-online/first-world-war-and-its-consequences-africa>

masters. Bethwell Ogot (1980) has suggested that the shared wartime experience of African and European soldiers had a similar effect for the less-educated:

The African soldier soon discovered the weaknesses and the strength of the European, who up to that time had been regarded by the majority of Africans as a superman. In fact, the warrant and noncommissioned African officers were instructing European volunteers in the technique of modern warfare. It was becoming evident that the European did not know everything. The returning porters and soldiers spread the new views of the white man; and much of the self-confidence and assertiveness that the Africans in Kenya displayed in the 1920s had a lot to do with this new knowledge.⁶⁵

He also points out that, significantly, several African political leaders in Kenya had either fought or served in the East African campaign. In Guinea the return of the anciens combattants heralded strikes, riots in the demobilization camps and attacks on the authority of chiefs.

If the war saw an end of attempts by Africans to regain the lost sovereignty of their pre-colonial polities, it also saw a rise in demands for participation in the process of government of the new polities imposed on them by the Europeans. These demands - inspired by President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points which were made in reaction to the Soviet proposals put forward in October 1917 for the immediate conclusion of peace without annexation or indemnity - even extended to the right to self-determination. In the case of the Arab countries of North Africa the joint announcement by Britain and France in November 1918 that the Allies were contemplating the enfranchisement of peoples oppressed by the Turks presented the spectacle of one group of

⁶⁵ Michael Crowder <https://en.unesco.org/courier/news-views-online/first-world-war-and-its-consequences-africa>

Arabs being offered independence, while another, ruled by those very powers who were offering freedom to the Turkish provinces, was denied it.

In short, the white settlers used the war to make major political advances vis-à-vis the colonial government. They secured the right of whites to elect representatives to the Legislative Council, where after 1918 they formed a majority. This, coupled with the Crown Lands Ordinance, which made racial segregation in the White Highlands possible, the Native Registration Ordinance, which introduced a pseudo-pass law for Africans, and the Soldier Settlement Scheme which allocated large portions of the Nandi reserve for settlement of white soldiers after the war, entrenched the white minority in a dominant position in Kenya up to the 1950s.

A major stimulus to Kenya nationalism was the reaction against such privileges gained by the white community, in particular with regard to land. Thus the Kikuyu Association, consisting mainly of chiefs, was founded in 1920 to defend Kikuyu land interests while Harry Thuku's Young Kikuyu Association, founded a year later, aimed at defence of both land and labour.⁶⁶ Homa Bay County had also been involved in the First World War. Geographically it was not far from Tanzania where Germany deployed troops for the East African campaign against the allied forces. A number of residents of Homa Bay residents had participated in the First World

⁶⁶ (Ibid)

War as career corps. Mzee Isaiah Owuodho confirmed this and said his own brother Modi Opiyo lost his life in this war in Tanzania and his body was never recovered.⁶⁷

But the settler economy did not have impacts on the economy of Homa Bay Directly. Mzee Opiyo mentioned to me that although *wazungu* were not directly involved in agriculture in Homa Bay, chiefs recruited people to go and work in the Whiteman's farm in *lumbwa*, Kericho. This was how the people of Homa Bay got involved in the migrant labour in the white farms. He appreciated that those who had gone to work in these farms were able to educate their children, paid their taxes promptly and transformed their social and economic lives.

Kachien locations produced veterans of the first and second world wars. Petro Apaka Koko Olielo fought in the First World War. Onjong'a Osala, Parasis Odhiambo Abuor and Amboka Ojwang' fought in the Second World War. Koko Apaka's son Fredrick Okora worked in Brookbond tea farm as a clerk in Jamji Tea Estates in Kericho and got income to educate his children some of whom worked in government as agricultural officers and in the military. Parasis Odhiambo benefited in the resettlement programme of former war veterans and the government allocated him land in Koderia, Kasipul where he settled his second wife. Amboka Ojwang' and Onjong'a Osala did not leave behind families because according to the local myths, their service in the military, kind of gave them bad omen and therefore they could not marry and have children of their own. Their clansmen blamed the chiefs who had assisted in their conscriptions to the pioneer corps in the Second World War.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ O.I. Owuodho Opiyo, Kawadhgone, Karachuonyo, 5.05.2019

⁶⁸ O.I.Thomas Adie Owuor Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

3.7 Requisition of Livestock, Crops for the War Purpose

The First World War was a very expensive undertaking by the European powers who were involved. During this time economies of Europeans involved in the prosecution of the war faced a nose dive yet the metropole expected their colonies abroad to help in spurring the growth of their economies at home. The need to better exploit the colonial economies to support the war effort caused major state interventions in many of the colonial economies. *Laissez-faire* economic policies that had dominated the British approach were abandoned during the war in favour of a stronger imperial direction and control. The Colonial Office asked the British colonial governments to apply policies of strict economy that led, among other things, to the curtailment of public works projects. Government requisitions of produce for the army, especially grains, foodstuffs and hides, became common.⁶⁹

The war was a true watershed in the economic history of Kenya, as it created a favourable situation for the white settlers, and at the same time caused a closer incorporation of African peasants into the colonial economy. The value of settlers' exports, especially coffee, sisal and flax, recovered in 1915 and 1916 compared to the declines experienced throughout 1913 and 1914. The settlers' success was based on pre-war investments, but also on the maximization of opportunities arising out of the war, especially the production of vegetables and meat to sustain the Allied forces. *ibid* African local production of foodstuff came under the control of the state, owing to the enormous demand for foodstuff for troops and porters engaged in the East African

⁶⁹Karin Pallaver, University of Bologna-https://encyclopedia.1914-1918online.net/article/organization_of_war_economies_africa

campaign. Thanks to this, the Maasai increased their wealth significantly during the war, since they sold cattle to the army, and, since mainly male and low grade cattle were sold, stock reserves could be maintained. Overall, during the war Africans had to pay more for their non-subsistence requirements, pay more taxes, and supply more labor and produce to the colonial government. At the same time, however, Africans received the same wages and were confronted with dramatically different market conditions.⁷⁰

It can be argued that the war was very devastating to Africans. It is believed that at least 2 million Africans who died across East Africa were involved in this war which started in 1914 and ended in 1918. They were involved as either soldiers fighting a war they were pushed into as King's African Rifles, or as porters carrying ammunition, food and other supplies for the fighters. The fundamental vulnerability and stuttering growth of white settlement before 1914 gave way to the gradual assertion of the settler economy over the African, with state support, during and after the war. But this assertion and growth founded upon abnormal economic circumstances: On cheap and available labour, insatiable markets and a preoccupied colonial state.

Chiefs in Homa Bay played an important role in the conscriptions of young men and the labour required in settler farms to feed the troops. Livestock were forcefully acquired from those who failed to pay taxes. The seizure of property from those who did not pay the tax was one example of punishment to the Africans. Distress of property in cases of default had been permitted under the 1910 amendment of the 1903 Ordinance and from then on cattle were regularly ceased in

⁷⁰ (Ibid)

payment of the tax. Van Zwannenberg notes that 'both the selling of stock and seizing it in lieu of payment were open to very considerable abuse, including extortion and blackmail'.⁷¹

O.I. Mzee Charles Odundu confirmed during the interviews with him that the chiefs did not only facilitate the recruitment of the young men during the first world war but they also helped in the seizing of Africans cattle because of failure to pay their taxes. To him Africans should have been allowed to continue with their lives uninterrupted. It was not fair that the colonial state could take their animals which was their source of livelihood because of failure to pay taxes. These were exploitation of African resources by the white man.

3.8 Colonial Education System

Colonial education came as an alternative to the traditional African education in Homa Bay County when colonialism set foot in Southern Nyanza. It was an attempt to replace Africans formal education system which was passed from one generation to another.

According to Asenath Odaga (1980) Cultivation and proper care of the land was part of the traditional education which a Luo child started to receive very early as he grew up. Land and what it yielded was regarded as great wealth and so were cattle which grazed on it. Education was for life – this was what the Luo believe. Man, they said, 'is taught until his death day' - *dhano ipuonjo nyaka tho*.⁷² Therefore, a child's education started from birth and continued throughout his life. Parents, grandparents, ayahs known as *iooidi*, siblings and later on peers were the first and immediate instructors and teachers. A child was taught through oral literature, through instructions as well as through practical means. The rank carried with Members of a baby's immediate family played a crucial role in its education and socialisation. Yet while this

⁷¹ (Van Zwanenberg, Colonial Capitalism, pp.92-95).

⁷² (Ibid)

was the case, the Luo also believed that a child belonged to everybody - (where everybody means all Luo); and as such, everyone even those who were not related to him had a right to protect him from any possible harm, to discipline and to direct him whenever need arose. In the early stages, a child learnt through observation and imitation as he copied those around him and also from the answers which they gave to his numerous questions.⁷³

At an early age both boys and girls were taught the basic rules by their mothers. A mother taught and helped a child with his first speech and sentences; and immediately he was able to understand stories she began to tell him about some of the taboos and beliefs which would form his code of conduct in the society "If you are eating", she would tell the child, 'and you rest one hand with the palm flat downward on the ground, then your mother would die'. "If you whistle at night, you are inviting a snake to your house." If you kill a frog, one of your mother's breasts will cut off. Therefore right from very early, a child received instructions through oral literature as well as through other means.

Education on conformity and stress laid on observation of taboos and folk beliefs continued throughout a child's life they helped their parents, but mostly their mothers with light duties in the home. They helped by minding the fire, looking after grain when it is put out on a mat to dry, keeping and looking after small sisters and brothers if there are any. As the children grew older, their interests and duties were changed and directed into relevant areas according to their sex and duties relegated to them by the community. A little boy's interests were reverted towards jobs

⁷³ Educational values of "Sigendini Luo" Kenya Luo Oral Narratives by Asenath Bole Okungu Odanga. p.27

and duties mending of fences, making granaries, milking cows and goats slaughtering and skinning the animals and even helping animals to deliver young ones. He began to accompany his father or older children to the field to graze the animals.

There was shift, though gradual, in the type of education when Kenya got connected to the international world through colonialism. The British were prepared to allow missionary schools to open as many schools as they could. The colonial authority found it essential to satisfy the best of missionary schools by providing grants in aid rather than open a large number of government schools. Most education was left to the missionaries even when it was provided by the government. But the government also had its own maintained schools. British education system was straight conversions to make the pupils in the words of an early report “English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellects”. It consisted of the 3Rs viz Reading, Writing and Arithmetic but with elements of grammar, geography and straight emphasis on Christian Religious Education (C.R.E).

Education in Kenya during its colonization was racially stratified, with varying curricula and facilities for Europeans, Asians and Africans. Sentiment in the colony was strongly in favor of such segregation. For example, Europeans in Kenya were "almost unanimously opposed to any infiltration of non-Europeans into European schools".⁷⁴ Thus, up until Kenya gained its independence in 1963 and subsequently discarded the British system in the 1980s, educational opportunities for students in Kenya was determined almost entirely by race.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Richard Frost stated in *Race against Time* that (1978).

⁷⁵ KenyaWeb, 2002 (<http://www.lotsofessays.com>).

The education system as applied to black Kenyans was really a means to control Africans and inculcate within them "a sense of inferiority" that would keep them permanently in a secondary position. Martin Carnoy (1974) and Donald Schilling (1984), Natsoulas, 1998) Christian missionaries established the first formal schooling program for native Kenyans. In addition, by 1924, ninety percent of all schools in tropical Africa were mission schools.⁷⁶

Each intermediate school where land was available, there were school farms worked by student laborite was on the lines of a planned small holding and included stock. The value of these small holdings was open to doubt as after graduating the students tended to regard manual labour as degrading and do not return to the land although they were suitable material for further Agricultural Education and becoming instructors.⁷⁷ Each primary School had a series of small plots, the number varying from seven to twenty three depending on the availability of land which were worked by the school boys and in a simple fashion demonstrated rotation, use of manure, line planting, seed selection, clean weeding, correct spacing, and time of planting.⁷⁸

In addition, weekly classes were held in Agriculture and in some cases instruction in class was given by Divisional Officer or Senior Instructor. The basic educational policy was being that all school boys should be made to realize that the prosperity or otherwise of Kenya was wholly dependent on Agriculture and that the standards at the time of agriculture left great scope for improvement. In the reserve the economics were omitted and the theory was practically applied

⁷⁶ Knighton, (2002) (<http://www.lotsofessays.com>)

⁷⁷ KNA/DC/KSI/5/5- South Nyanza Gazzetteer p. 2

⁷⁸ (ibid)

by means of propaganda, frequent inspections, loans, advice, and practical demonstration and assistance.⁷⁹

When critically examined, the colonial education was meant to create skills among the Africans so as to involve them in the white man's modes of production. Their apprenticeship gave them limited knowledge that was used for the development of the colonial economy for the benefit of metropole.

3.9 Education in Homa Bay

With the coming of colonialism, the missionaries were the frontrunners in the formal educational provision. Their objectives were to civilize and evangelize the Africans. They would later work with the appointed Chiefs to carry the noble duty of education. The light of gospel and that of education would then shine on the Africans who accepted the gospel and education. The main religious education who spearheaded education in Homa Bay County was the Roman Catholics and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The first beneficiaries of colonial education were the sons of chiefs. Reporting on the progress in education, Dobbs observed that:

Very little has been done in this direction. So far one or two have been for some time at Maseno Mission but they seem to regard it as very far away. A few are under instruction at the SDA Mission at Kendu and Wire Hill. Father Brandasma of the Mill Hill Mission induced about 5 or 6 of the Kisii chiefs and headmen to allow their sons and nephews to go to the Kakamega station of that Mission. It is reported that the boys are getting on very well there but it is impossible as yet to judge how far the efforts of the various Missions have been attended with success owing to the short time they have been working.⁸⁰

Education was controlled by the government and missionaries in Homa Bay. The SDA church Mission in Gendia was ran by the white missionaries. The SDA involvement in education started

⁷⁹ (Ibid)

⁸⁰ (Ibid)

in America in 1871 when they set up an education center which became the present day St. Andrew University.⁸¹

Therefore when in 1903 the general conference of SDA decided to send missionaries to Africa; they were extending their education services to the Africans who were illiterate at that time. The Seventh Day Adventist Church started its work in Africa in Zimbabwe where it also started its first college at Solusi for training pastors and other personnel. The pioneer Seventh Day Adventist missionary sent to Kenya was Arthur Grandville Carscallen. Carscallen was a Canadian born in 1879. He received his college education at the Adventist Newbold College in England from 1904 – 1906.

It was during his last year in college that he received the Adventist missionary call to come to Kenya. During this time Pastor Carscallen and his wife together with Pastor Peter Nyambo were sent by the SDA general Conference to Africa as the first missionaries. Pastor Nyambo was the first SDA black African pastor. Pastor Nyambo was a Malawian citizen who had gone to Britain for studies shortly after the Adventist work had begun in his home country in 1902. As a teacher he was sent by general conference of SDA to accompany Carscallen to Kenya to start missionary work. Peter Nyambo reached Mombasa in 1905 and found that the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) had a center at the coast and Islam religion was dominant.⁸² When they reached Mombasa they found that Muslims had already settled there. Dr. Johann Krapf of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) had reached Kenya in 1884 when the Adventist movement was being formed in America. He set up his first mission at Rabai near Mombasa in 1946. The

⁸¹ Mayer, 1961

⁸² (Okeyo, 1989)

Catholic Church reached earlier, they never established schools. It was therefore the Adventists who were the first to establish formal education in Nyanza. The SDA settled in South Nyanza-Kavirondo in 1906 and started Gendia Mission, opening their first school there. The SDA Church also established several secondary schools. Some of these are Kamagambo High School, Chenbwai SDA Secondary, Nyanchwa, Nyabola, Ranen, Segero and Wang'apala SDA secondary schools among others.⁸³ The Christian missionaries of the Seventh Day Adventist were the first ones to arrive in South Kavirondo district, but they were overtaken by the Mill Hill Fathers in starting missionary work in Kisii. Prior to their establishment in Kisiiland, the SDA Christian missionaries under Pastors E. Philip, A. Watson, J. H. Sparks and A.A. Carscallen had opened mission stations at Karungu (1912), the Isle of Rusinga (1912), Kanyadoto (1913) and Kamagambo (1913).⁸⁴

The completion of the Uganda Railway in 1901 enabled various Christian missions to penetrate into the interior with considerable ease, from the coastal areas. The CMS was able to open a station among the Kikuyu at Kihuruko (1901), Waithaga (1903), Kihuhia (1906), Mahiga (1908) and Embu in 1910. The Church of Scotland Mission opened a second station at Tumutumu in 1908.

The United Methodist Mission (UMM) worked among the Meru people. The Consolata Mission from Italy opened a station at Kiambu (1902), Limuru (1903) and Mangu (1906).⁸⁵

⁸³ Amayo, 1973

⁸⁴ Ombati Victor Fredrick Obwocha (1994): Development of Secular Education in South Kavirondo District of Kenya: The case of Government African School Kisii (1934 - 1963)

⁸⁵ (Ibid)

The main purpose of missionary education was to enable the local people to be literate so that they could be able to spread the gospel. Okeyo (1989) states that nobody was allowed to become a Christian before mastering the art of reading and writing for this was the best way to spread the gospel according to early missionaries. The Adventist church hence intended to offer a true wholistic education-an education that can harmoniously develop all the faculties of a person.

There was a general feeling that the government ought to have played a role in the sector. Hence, by the outbreak of World War I, missionary work was still far from taking root among the Gusii, despite the fact that missionaries had a misconception of Kisiiland being a favourable place for the success of Christianity. During the war, Kisii town was invaded by German troops forcing Fr. Wall and others to flee Nyabururu to take refuge in Kisumu. When the news spread among the Gusii that Nyabururu had been deserted, the Gusii rushed there and destroyed whatever they could find.⁸⁶

This thesis examined the spread of education in Homa Bay by the missionaries. The Catholic Church at Kasarwa in Homa Bay was run by the Catholics missionaries. Mzee Mordechai Kiche Abuor recalled:

By these early years, the residents had not yet received enough education. There was no much that was learnt in this system of education. It did not consider the interest of Africa in entirety but that of the colonial master. The education given was shallow meant only for reading bible and basic arithmetic.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ (Ibid)

⁸⁷ O.I. Mordechai Kiche Abuor, Kodumo, Kabondo 13.7.2019

Education in Homa Bay although foreign created social and economic change in the lives of the people. The society became literate and acquired knowledge in changing agricultural practices for more food production. Although the education given was not advanced, it laid the foundation for future development of modern education in Africa.

Gendia, Kasarwa, Asumbi and Mirogi missions epitomized the role that the missionaries played in the propagation of faith and education. Families which accepted Christianity were the same ones that acquired education and therefore entered the colonial public administration service in the early years.⁸⁸

3.10 The Catholic Church and Setting up of Educational Institutions (1903-1945)

This took place at Asumbi in Rangwe. Efforts were made by the missionaries in education of the people of Gem. Every Sunday the bell at St Teresa's Asumbi Catholic Church in Homa Bay County rings repeatedly calling the faithful to worship. The ringing could be heard from many kilometers away.⁸⁹ Every Sunday, hundreds of believers from Asumbi Town walk into the brownish church with colorful windows. They pass the graveyard where Catholic priests and nuns who served the church rest in peace, with crosses bearing their identity placed a top their final resting places. At the gate were messages of hope that inspired the faithful to live pious lives. A picture of the first missionary at the church is painted on the gate and captioned:

“Father Philip Scheffer Odero, the founding father of the church”. Another message reads: “My God, you know that the only thing we ever wanted is to love you. I have no ambition for any glory except that”. Next to the message is a picture of Mary, Mother of Jesus.

⁸⁸ O.I.Mzee Busaa of Kanyada location in Homa Bay County 4.9.2020.

⁸⁹ A report in Daily Nation p.2, Tuesday October 22, 2019 by George Odiwuor

Father Scheffer, later named Odero Wuon Got, sailed across Lake Victoria from Ojola Catholic Station currently in Homa Bay County to set up the church in 1922. On the way Fr Scheffer, accompanied by Fr Hotsman, passed through Kendu Bay, Homa Bay and Mbita towns next to the lake. They travelled across the land to Gem in Homa Bay.⁹⁰

They met paramount chief Okello Moraganga, who directed them to build a church at Nyahobe. The place was full of wild animals and magicians who kept snakes, for witchcraft, in small pots called *Asumbi*. The area was later renamed Asumbi. The missionaries built a grass thatched church in 1915, which non-believers burned down in 1917. Ironically, the fire did not burn the tabernacle, which motivated the missionaries to build another grass thatched church.

Fr Hotsman travelled to Europe in 1919 with samples of red soil from Asumbi for tests on whether it could be used to make bricks. With the help of the local believers, the missionaries made thousands of bricks between 1922 and 1923. Asumbi Catholic Church was completed in 1928 and served people from as far afield as Suba, Mbita and Karungu. After completion of the Church, the Franciscan Sisters of St Joseph set up Asumbi Teachers Training College. Denis Oketho, 94, was among the first tutors at the College, which was initially only for men. “The principal, Sister Gertrude Mary, was a tall strict English woman. She was assisted by Philip Obar, one of the smartest and cleanest teachers”, Oketho said.⁹¹

Teachers at the college planted trees in the church compound, which had fully grown to provide shades to the faithful. After the church came other institutions, including Asumbi Girls School,

⁹⁰ (Ibid)

⁹¹ (Ibid)

St Marks' Asumbi Primary School, Asumbi Technical Training Institute, Asumbi Mission Hospital, and Father Scheffer Primary School.

Some chiefs tried as much as possible to see education succeed in their areas, there were challenges. Colonial education was biased towards Africans. The colonial authority recommended for more agricultural and technical schooling but genuine technical education was ruled out; because the fundamental purpose of colonial economy didn't allow the development of industries and skills in African areas. Agriculture was not carried out in a scientific method as was the case in Europe where the whites were farming on an intensive capitalist basis. The teacher received no agricultural education and therefore couldn't teach anything scientific. Pupils were made to work on school farms as a way of punishment.

The various ordinances and chiefs act gave the colonial chiefs a lot of power in the discharge of their duties. They were the people who promoted agriculture through mechanisms such the construction of terraces to reduce soil erosion. However, there were some challenges associated with the growing of exotic crops that were just being promoted in South Nyanza, Homa bay.

For example, around this period, according to Ndege P.O.(2020), Many people in Nyanza were initially reluctant to grow groundnuts when the crop was first introduced in 1908, because this was the same time that venereal diseases were rampant. In South Nyanza, in particular, they were quick to establish causal relations between the two. Others elsewhere preferred maize and sim –

sim. But soon after the World War 1 (1914-1919), many people warmed up to groundnuts because of their many uses as food.⁹²

They could either be eaten raw, roasted, cooked on their own or with maize, or ground and mixed with fermented milk, particularly among the Luo, to make *ogira* to be eaten with sweet potatoes or ugali. In the US and Europe, groundnuts were used for a variety of purposes: its oil as a lubricant, as margarine for cooking and also as a feed for livestock.⁹³

In Gwassi, Ochola Gaa has pointed out that education among the Gwassi people so vividly. He says on promotion of education:

Chiefs worked with the local authority and Christian missions operating in their areas of jurisdiction to construct schools, their efforts bore fruit and initially each location had at least three primary schools. At this stage, construction of secondary schools was beyond the location's domain.⁹⁴

In Mfangano schools like Soklo which was Roman Catholic (RC) sponsored, Wakula, sponsored by SDA and Kakiimba a District Education Board (DEB) were built. Kaksingri had Sindo DEB, Rowo (SDA) and Rowo (RC) while Gwassi had Kiabuya SDA and Wiga, Miramba and Tonga all RC. Rusinga had Kaswanga SDA, Kamasengre DEB and Kakrigu RC. These primary schools worked cohesively not only to promote social interaction and sports but also produce future leaders who in turn created and spread Subaism in Kenya. Annual sindo sports gave the Abasuba social recognition as an entity capable of organizing big events like theis

⁹² Peter Odhiambo Ndege, Saturday Nation, May, 2, 2020, p.25

⁹³ O.I. Mzee Onyango, Gem Rangwe

⁹⁴ Silvery Ochola Gaa, in search of Abasuba Identity, pp40-41

within the district prompting the government to take note of Suba presence.⁹⁵ When illustrious sons of Suba such as Thomas Joseph Mboya took to national politics during decolonization of Kenya, Subaism cut a niche higher and through the Tom Mboya airlifts of the 1960s from John Kennedy scholarships many Abasuba went abroad for higher education with most of the beneficiaries coming back to work as government officers while some becoming politicians.⁹⁶

The chiefs were in charge of everything including education. Chief Gordon Okore helped with the construction of Wiga, Miramba and Kiabuya primary schools. When Chief Seko took over from Chief Okore he helped in the construction of Tonga intermediate school. When Chief Romanus Omuto Onjula came to be the chief of Gwasssi people, he also supported the development of education in Gwasssi which made them transformative Chiefs.⁹⁷

Although SDA and Roman Catholic were the prime movers in entrenching education in Homa Bay the LNCs played key role in the development of education in Homa Bay County.

Immediately the Local Native Councils were inaugurated in 1925, Africans started to utilise them to enhance their educational needs and wants. The LNCs were, therefore, seen as the best forum through which Africans were at long last able to air their views to the government especially as to what type of education their people wanted. In North, Central and South Kavirondo districts of Nyanza Province and those of Kiambu, Murang'a and Nyeri districts of Central Province, Africans in these areas strongly demanded through the LNCs the establishment of government schools outside missionary control. The LNCs in these districts contributed

⁹⁵ (Ibid)

⁹⁶ (Ibid)

⁹⁷ (Ibid)

money through self-imposed cess for the establishment of their own schools, a sign which demonstrated that in no uncertain terms did they wish to be educated in institutions under the Christian missionaries.

According to Schilling (1976), the line between education and politics was often blurred or non-existent in Colonial Kenya. Under a political system dominated by white settlers and administrators, policy makers were required to create an educational structure for the indigenous people in harmony with the political realities of the day. For colonial officials education, if properly regulated, provided a useful mechanism for social and political control. As a result, educational development and policy formation were political processes with significant implications for the roles of whites and blacks in Kenya.⁹⁸

Ndege Peter (1987) discussed this subject of education in South Nyanza. Thus, obedience of the colonial government, became a spiritual calling and a moral obligation. Missionary converts became both servants of God and of European masters. From 1914, the MHF and SDA in South Nyanza responded positively to requests by the Colonial Administration at Kisii to supply it with people who had been taught to read and write for employment as clerks, interpreters and chiefs. In the 1940s and 1950s, it was mainly mission products who occupied subordinate administrative service in the district. Apart from literacy, their other qualification was obedience both of which were the outcome of their mission education. Service in the colonial administration as clerks, chiefs, interpreters, and in mission schools, as teachers, differentiated educated people

⁹⁸ Local Native Councils and the politics of education in Kenya, 1925-1935, Donald G. Schilling, p.218

economically from the rest of the people. In times of crisis the missionaries used propaganda and verses from the Bible to create calm. 'Since the outbreak of the War', wrote a District Commissioner in 1939, 'they (the missionaries) have done most valuable work, disseminating authentic views and news among the population of the district. They explained why it was right to help the British fight against the Germans and Italians. Propaganda was later used by the missionaries to dissuade people from sympathising with the Mau Mau movement and generally from participating in the struggle for independence in the 1950s. But missionaries did not completely succeed in keeping people obedient for ever. As happened in other parts of Kenya, protest against colonialism was led by rebellious mission adherents like Mariam Ragot from Kabondo, who founded her own independent Church, Dini Ya Mariam Ragot and independent school in 1954. It was also the products of Mission Schools, like Samuel Onyango Ayodo from Kabondo who joined the bandwagon of Kenyan nationalism in the late 1950s.⁹⁹

3.11 Labour recruitment

Between 1896 and 1901, some 32,000 indentured labourers were recruited from India to construct the Uganda railway. Once the railway was completed, some of these labourers voluntarily settled in the Protectorate and brought family from India. The railway opened interior to trade, and many soon began migrating away from the coastal cities. Asian settlers were soon joined by European farmers, who from 1902 onward were given large tracts of land in the White Highlands. Asian exclusion from these favourable lands caused friction between Asians and Europeans which would last for decades. Many Asians instead settled in the new town of Nairobi

⁹⁹ Ndege P. O. Economic Change in Kasipul and Kabondo, 1800-1962, MA Thesis July 1987 University of Nairobi p. 104-105

which from 1905 became the capital of the British protectorate. One of the most significant early pioneers was A. M. Jevanjee.¹⁰⁰

In 1890 his company A. M. Jevanjee of Karachi was awarded the contract to supply labour for the building of the Uganda railway, and he subsequently went on to establish himself as the pre-eminent Asian businessman in the colony. He established Kenya's first newspaper now known as The Standard in 1901 and was the first non-white to be elected to the Legislative council in 1910. By the early 1920s, there was a sizable Asian population who demanded a greater role in the developing political life of what became Kenya Colony.

Some Africans were employed in Indian shops as dukawallas. Indian merchants who sold groundnuts and millet in Homa Bay employed them. Grains from Homa Bay were transported to Kisumu by road. The town was a fishing zone from the beginning and fish of various types sold to Karachuonyo, Gem, Kochia, Kabuoch and Kanyada people. People trekked from North Nyanza through Kamito in Asembo, through Lake Victoria, to reach Homa Bay. Trade flourished between North and South Nyanza. The trade attracted a number of people including Indians who traded in hides and skins and they connected with other Indians at Kamito. Homa Bay became a good commercial center because it was the nearest and ideal point of entry to south Nyanza region.

Indian traders were virtually found in many towns across Kenya. When Homa Bay was established in 1920 as a trading center the Indian presence was attracted to it and henceforth dominated trade within the town.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ (Ibid)

¹⁰¹ Adundo James Henry O.I, Central Business District, 28th May 2020

Europeans came to Homa bay as administrators in 1920s and 1930s. No alienation or compulsory acquisition of land took place for the setting up of commercial sites in Homa Bay but rather the council officials negotiated with the owners.¹⁰²

Uyoma and Karachuonyo people came to trade here in fish and livestock and to exchange these with agricultural products from Asego and Kabuoch areas (O. I. Mzee Busa). Villagers congregated there and they brought baskets, pepper (grew wildly), spices and fish which were ferried across to Kisumu by Indians and white men, They constructed small mud houses where East African trading commodities were sold through wholesalers and retailers to local businessmen.¹⁰³

Onduru (2009) citing Cooper in his work Africa since 1940 has argued that in parts of Africa, colonisation drove rural dwellers into deepening poverty, sometimes as a deliberate policy to create “labour reserves” where people had little alternative to selling their labour cheaply, sometimes as a result of actions which made difficult ecosystems worse. Studies on Nyanza such as those of Hay, Butterman and Nyong’o have shown that the region supplied labour to the rest of the country. As this study shows, South Nyanza and Nyanza in general never developed a cash crop upon which households could rely as a major source of income. Consequently, the establishment of colonial rule in South Nyanza was marked by the development of a new economic activity, migrant wage labour. The new economic activity saw young men of South

¹⁰² Janet Ayugi, O.I. Pedagogy Center, CBD 2020, in Walter K’Odipo MA Thesis

¹⁰³ Florence Matete O.I., Central Business District 2020, in Walter K’Odipo MA Thesis

Nyanza temporarily leave their rural homes to seek wage employment within and without the district. The British colonial government in Kenya wanted to create a “white man’s country”.

The European administrators as well as the European settlers were convinced that voluntary labour would not be forthcoming from the African reserves. Specifically, after 1908, the development of labour-intensive plantation agriculture in the highlands, road and railway construction, and the increasing number of sportsmen who needed porters, led to increased demands for labour. In order to obtain such a labour supply, the European settlers demanded a reduction of the land available for African agriculture, increased taxation for Africans, contract labour with penalties for infringement, and government support for a policy of forcing Africans to engage in wage labour. Studies on Kenya during the First World War such as those by Hay, Butterman, Stichter and Maxon have observed that the demand for African soldiers and porters during World War 1 brought the labour crisis to a head.¹⁰⁴

This thesis supports Onduru’s argument and add that when labour was procured from the people of Homa Bay, the area was disrupted in terms of local labour use because the able bodied had been taken away to supply labour in the white farms. Otherwise this labour would have been utilized locally to develop the people of Homa Bay’s economy. Without being given an opportunity to weigh their options the people of Homa Bay were dragged into wage economy as a consequence of imposition of colonial rule in Homa Bay.

Ndege (1987) on his part argued that: Migratory wage labour led to the extraction of surplus value from Kasipul and Kabondo locations for the capitalisation of settler estates and also to loss

¹⁰⁴ Timothy Ayieko Onduru, PhD Thesis, Economic Change in South Nyanza, Kenya, 1880 to 1945 p.225

of manpower. Although the percentage of able-bodied adult males who went out to work over the years has been estimated at at the highest, this group of people were away from their homes during the seasons when their labour was most needed there.¹⁰⁵ Their absence from the locations meant that most of the productive work was done by women and children who were themselves not capable of clearing new areas for cultivation and as a result concentrated in gardens which were already used. This led to overcropping and soil erosion which upset the delicate ecological balance balance and reduced the productive capacity of land.¹⁰⁶

3.12 Taxation

This thesis examined the issue of taxation in the wider colonial African context and came to the conclusion that collection of taxes was made easy when the African chiefs were involved in its collection.¹⁰⁷

Chiefs were in a better position to collect the taxes because they knew who their subjects were in their areas. It would have been very difficult for the DC himself to come down to the villages to collect taxes. Mzee Lang'o informed the researcher that those who were unable to pay their taxes were strongly reprimanded and even their livestock could forcefully be taken.

Some authors have given candid discussion on this very subject of taxation especially in the context of colonial Africa as a whole. Birnberg and Resnick (1975) have argued that the waves of revenue expansion and contraction of European colonies were closely related to international trade development. Only if colonial governments were capable of promoting export development they created conditions for colonial state expansion. Increasing colonial trade raised government

¹⁰⁵ (Ibid)

¹⁰⁶ Peter Odhiambo Ndege, PhD Thesis July 1987, Economic Change in Kasipul and Kabondo, 1800-1962, p. 211

¹⁰⁷ O.I. Fanuel Obondo Lang'o Oindo, Kanjira 26.6.2020

budgets both directly, via increasing custom duties, and indirectly, via the extraction of growing domestic economic surpluses. The Gold Coast economy offers a good example of such a virtuous cycle between export expansion and government revenue, as a result of the booming cocoa sector in the first three decades of the twentieth century (Austin, 2005). The per capita value of international trade in the Gold Coast reached a peak of £4,61 in 1927, which was four times as large as in Sierra Leone, where the virtuous cycle of exports and public revenue came to a halt around First World War.¹⁰⁸

Kenya's rapid increase of the government budget was in part caused by the influx of British and Indian settlers responding to agricultural and commercial business opportunities. Kenya's state budget drew almost half of total revenue from non-fiscal sources, with a large share from railway revenues. The greater extent of economic dynamics as a result of foreign investments did not imply a lower tax burden for the indigenous population, however, as direct taxes for foreign residents were kept to a minimum to encourage European settlement (Bowden and Mosley, 2009).¹⁰⁹

Taxation was central to imperial ambitions to engineer disciplined African subjects. Its failure on this score resulted not only from the limitations of the colonial state, but from a fundamental inability to establish the legitimacy of its fiscal regime. The extent of evasion reflected Africans'

¹⁰⁸ Colonial Taxation and Government Spending in British Africa, 1880-1940: Maximizing revenue or minimizing effort? Ewout Frankema, Faculty of Humanities, Utrecht University, Drift 10, 3512 BS, Utrecht, The Netherlands, e-mail: e.frankema@uu.nl, tel. +31 +30 253 6460

¹⁰⁹ (ibid)

rejection of colonial arguments for taxation that emphasised its supposedly civilising role in promoting socio-economic and political development in local societies.¹¹⁰

The colonial administration needed the chiefs to help in collection of taxes for the running of their colonial protectorate in Kenya. According to Sigei Kiptarus Isaac in his thesis (2014): *A History of the Direct Taxation of the African People of Kenya, 1895-1973*. When the colonial government officially introduced African taxation in 1901, it had several reasons for doing so. But of immediate concern was to pay salaries, house and transport the new administrators. Most of the administrators were former employees of the IBEAC who had remained behind to form a nucleus of the new administration. Hardinge specifically relied on John Ainsworth, Francis Hall and Charles Hopley to establish the semblance of an early administrative structure. Their task was to maintain peace and conquer recalcitrant African people who resisted British rule. Indeed, wars of conquest took up most of the resources of the nascent administration.¹¹¹

According to Richard Wolff, military expeditions took up to 30 percent of the total expenditures in 1897-98, which came in as grants-in-aid but fell to 7 percent in 1910. As Bruce Berman has shown, during the first nine years, military expenditure swallowed up nearly one-third of the protectorate's budget. These costs of conquest far exceeded local revenues and were largely to

¹¹⁰ Andrew Burton 'The Eye of Authority': 'Native' Taxation, Colonial Governance and Resistance in Inter-war Tanganyika Pages 74-94, published online: 31 Jan 2008

¹¹¹ Wolff, *Britain and Kenya*, p .50. For more information on the wars of conquest, see H .H. Moyses-Barlett, *The Kings African Rifles: A Study in the Military History of East and Central Africa, 1890-1945* (London, 1956).

blame for the tripling of the annual imperial subsidy in the five years from 1896.¹¹² In 1905, only £600 000 was spent on military conquests.¹¹³

Notwithstanding this discrepancy in figures, the fact is that most of the colonial expenses during this initial stage went to the control of Africans. However, by 1913 the figure had fallen down to 6 percent, a sign that most of the African resistance had been broken. Such a huge expenditure before 1913 did not go well with the imperial government, hence the introduction of hut and, poll taxes to supplement the grants-in-aid and customs duties.

Other reasons for the introduction of taxes were paternalistic and altruistic. For instance between 1913-18 Lord Lugard had argued that taxation promoted an intimate touch between the British staff and the African people.¹¹⁴

This was partially true because it was at the level of tax collection that any meaningful interaction between the colonial state and the peasants took place. Secondly, Lugard argued that taxation was of moral benefit to the people as it stimulated industry and production. On the other hand, after the arrival of the settlers, their power of lobby became quite strong as 'they had grandiose ideas about the level of services appropriate for a community of white gentlemen who they felt were bringing civilization to darkest Africa'.¹¹⁵

Taxation to them was therefore founded on the principle that Africans should pay the taxes, while the Europeans received the services. For as Lord Lugard loftily stated; colonial taxation,

¹¹² Berman, *Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya*, p.55.

¹¹³ Lonsdale and Berman, *Unhappy Valley*, p.18.

¹¹⁴ Fredrick Lugard, *Political Memoranda: Revision-of, Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects of Chiefly Political and Administrative* (London, 1968); p. 168

¹¹⁵ (Ibid)

'will fail to exact it from those who refuse to pay, and will seize an excess from among from those unable to resist'.¹¹⁶

With this therefore was associated the perpetual problem of 'ways and means' of raising the revenue from Africans. During the initial stages, Africans paid their taxes in kind. But concerted attempts were made right from the start of taxation to introduce a form of currency that was to be used for the payment of taxes: By 1888: the IBEAC had introduced the use of silver coins as its form of currency; which circulated in tandem with the Indian rupee. At that time the Indian rupee was widely used along the Coast because of the fact that trade between the Kenyan Coast and the Indian continent had been active since the eighteenth century.

The colonial budget became part of the reasons for African taxation. Balancing the protectorate's budget was regarded as the primary objective of the nascent administration. Thus, once the British had declared a protectorate over what was to become Kenya in 1895, they set out to make it pay for its governance. It was important to establish firm and efficient administrative system in order to facilitate the exploitation of the natural and human resources of the new territory. This required the establishment of administrative and commercial centres to serve the railway and transport networks. To effectively do all these things, the colonial administration required a definite source of revenue. The chiefs were instrumental in the collection of hut taxes on behalf of the metropolitan. This was a double edged sword since it served the colonial authority well as they were able to get money for the running of the colony. The Africans who were made to pay taxes had to look for jobs away from their homes in order to raise these taxes.

¹¹⁶ Diana Ellis, 'The Nandi Protest of 1923 in the Context of African Resistance to Colonial Rule in Kenya', *Journal of African History*, 18, 4, 1976, pp. 555-575.

Taxation of Africans led to the production of cheap manual labour other than conferring benefits to them. It was argued that taxation of Europeans reduced their incentive to produce while the same on Africans forced them to engage in modern economic pursuits which would have otherwise not interested them. Thus, there was the exploitation of African resources through low wages and high taxes leading Africans to question the benefit reaped by them from the taxes they paid to the colonial government. The actual contribution to African services returned to them from their large contribution to revenue during these years was very small. Conditions in the African Reserves were notoriously bad. The only kind of return to the Africans was administrative officers, the machinery of control which consisted government appointed chiefs and tribal police whose authority rested on no sort of traditional sanction. There was thus the need to establish LNCs to cater for development in African areas.

According to Jonathan Okwirry, the first chairman, the idea of *piny owacho* was conceived and implemented by teachers at Maseno School: “It is the teachers at Maseno School, who held secret meetings and organized the resistance. The emerging elite however did not view *piny owacho* as a mass resistance movement.”¹¹⁷

I took the initiative to establish the meeting and drove the matter to the fore. I had more contact with the newspaper reports and therefore was more acquainted with the developments taking place.¹¹⁸ Okwirry argued that the main reason for summoning people was to inform them of the new developments in the country. Kenya was being turned into a British colony, and there was

¹¹⁷ Awino Onyango (2018) Gender and development: A History of Women’s Education in Kenya Langham publishers (<https://books.google.co.ke>)

¹¹⁸ (Ibid)

an imposed system of administration. One of the major issues raised at the meeting had to do with leadership. The Luo were raising issues about centralized administration and the lack of authority by the African leaders. People also felt that their leaders lacked dignity and status. The leadership structure also excluded elders.¹¹⁹

However, there was a difference of opinion between the general population and the emerging elite, but with a paramount chief to chair the meetings. Their major concern was the scornful attitude towards African leaders:

Traditional African leaders, namely the chiefs and the customary advisors were no longer consulted. They were deprived of authority and influence. This was transferred to colonial lackeys whose basic merit was unquestioning loyalty, obedience and submission. The newly appointed leaders had no confidence with the people. They were figureheads and instruments of colonial rule. Chiefs were simply used as messengers and overseers to supervise forced labour. They were mere puppets, hence the need for representative leadership.¹²⁰

The traditional leadership style that the Luo were asking for would have been inclusive of women. However, the emerging elite proposed a system that would divert power both from the colonial administrations and traditional leaders. At a meeting with Governor Northey, at Nyahera in 1922, they proposed a president for Nyanza. This would be a leader of an autonomous government in Luoland: "Direct administration was the chief cause of the evils which beset the Luo community. There was need for a president of the entire Luo community as opposed to the paramount chief. We need a president of a semi-independent Nyanza as opposed to a fragmentary system of rule based on chieftainship."¹²¹

¹¹⁹ (Ibid)

¹²⁰ (Ibid)

¹²¹ (Ibid)

The emerging elites cited the example of an outstanding Luo leader, by the name of Odera Ulalo, who had controlled the whole of Nyanza, plus a good part of what is currently the Rift Valley. They also wanted a block title deed for the whole Nyanza. This was to be granted to the president, who would in turn distribute the land. *ibid* This would take away decision-making over land distribution from both the elders and the colonial government. The elite felt that the chiefs, due to their polygamous status would demand more land and more wealth. The chiefs, in their submission to the Carter Land Commission, however, demanded individual land tenure on lease-hold basis.¹²²

Jonathan Okwirry reiterated they were looking for a president in anticipation of a possible republic built along the same lines as Anko, Toro, or Baganda kingdoms. The emerging elites only put forward the idea of a paramount chief, when the colonial administration insisted that they could grant only this and not a president. In a memorandum to the Chief Secretary, the Kavirondo Tax-payers Welfare Association (KTWA), put forward the following request: "We are young educated people. Our method of thinking is based on books and white man's ideas and influence by several years of government service. We would like your Excellency to arrange for three educated impartial natives to be appointed as paramount Chiefs in three Kavirondo Districts of Nyanza Province, whose work would be checking on native development".¹²³

It was only in 1945 when Sir Philip Mitchell, the governor, outlined the government policy that the demands for a paramount chief and president were put to rest. The governor held a big baraza or meeting in Kisumu and stated that:

¹²² (*Ibid*)

¹²³ (*Ibid*)

For years Africans have been clamoring for paramount chiefs and administrative chiefs. Such appointments had no place in the planned future. The intention is to strengthen the local government until it became largely responsible for administration in reserves. The government is going to introduce the position of administrative assistants. They would function as junior administrative officers. The Local Native Councils would also appoint African secretaries in the near future.¹²⁴

In 1924, in response to the demands of the emerging elite, the colonial government introduced Local Native Councils (LNC). The aim of the LNC was to capture the voice of the Africans and co-opt the emerging elite in running the country. Most of the people who could occupy administrative positions had to have education. The mission-educated group therefore produced the first political leaders and administrators. Among the first people co-opted to the LNC were Rev Simeon Nyende, Rev Ezekiel Apindi, Rev Ruben Omullo, Rev George S. Okoth, Jonathan Okwirry, Mathayo Otieno, Benjamin Owuor and Joel Omino.

The LNCs had become more independent and more progressive as compared to other institutions of the same level in the East African region. These councils however remained a reflection of the DCs office for a long time and actually only served the purpose of providing staff and funds for government operations in technical departments. On sources of revenue for the LNCs Hailey observes that apart from the local rate, the LNCs also got income from court fees, maize cess and revenue from property such as land in urban establishments. Expenditures were mainly administration costs, provision of education and health in dispensaries and the construction and maintenance of markets. It seems the central government was unable to trust the LNCs with any agricultural or veterinary services in the reserves because the central government had attached a lot of importance to the same after the Second World War and the increasing grievances and

¹²⁴ (Ibid)

political awareness in the reserves due to land degradation. There is, however, no detailed discussions to what extent these funds were or not sufficient for the various functions of the LNCs. Brett argues that the doctrine of “paramount”, as practised in the Kenyan situation, demanded that Africans should be made to pay and Europeans to receive.¹²⁵

Indian traders paid taxes. However at times they were at loggerheads with the locals. The problem that the Asians faced in Homa Bay was not a unique one. Gordon Onyango Omenya (2016) argued that:

On the consumer side, the activities of the Kavirondo Tax Payers Welfare Association (KTWA), the first African political organization in Nyanza in the 1920s, among other things, stimulated co-operative self-help schemes, particularly in grain milling by water power thus competing with the Asians in the processing of the local produce. The formation of KTWA thus informed the African protest and resistance to bad trade practices which emerged between the Asians and the Africans. Conflicts of interest between established Asian businesses and those of new African entrepreneurs also arose.

“The East African Review: A Global History of Asian’s presence in Kisumu District of Kenya’s Nyanza”, This period also witnessed the expansion of African cash-crop production and the emergence of African small traders in the rural areas. Chiefs were the guides for socio-economic change in Homa Bay County. They have made some mistakes which led to them being reprimanded by the colonial government for whom they worked. The shortcomings in the manner in which chiefs in Homa Bay performed their work were evident in a letter from the senior commissioner, Kisumu to the chief and headmen of the Luo. This was following the complaint from Mr. Vidal the acting District Commissioner that of the neglect of certain people among chiefs to carry out the orders

¹²⁵ E.A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change, 1919-1939*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.191.

of the government. He had noticed among some chiefs a deterioration of the manners which amounted to disrespect and an inclination to passive resistance to the orders of the District Officers. The bad behaviour and disrespect to the authority of government had been noticed by Missionaries and Europeans who did not work for government and the Senior DC was convinced that it was done by chiefs and headmen with the hope to injure the prestige of government and gain for the chiefs to gain kudos for themselves.¹²⁶ The tax had not been well paid in the Luo locations of South Kavirondo and the young men delayed going to work. Consequently many were away and could not pay their taxes. The importance of LNCs in South Kavirondo was underscored by Ndege P. O. (1987).¹²⁷

Although European settlers had demanded and achieved representation in the Legislative Council African interests were supposed to be dealt with by the Native Authority System. It was not until the upsurge of the Piny Owacho movement among the Luo and the Young Kikuyu Association among the Kikuyu in 1922 that the colonial administration considered African representation. After the 1914-1919 War, there was also the added need to establish local bodies and give them increased responsibility in financing agricultural development roads, schools and other social services. The 1924 and 1933 Amendments of the Native Authority Ordinance, therefore provided for the setting up of local councils in all the districts of Kenya.¹²⁸

Chief Native Commissioner, 'should go far towards counteracting any mischievous tendencies which might develop in native political societies. Although it was intended that these bodies

¹²⁶ (Ibid)

¹²⁷ *Economic Change in Kasipul and Kabondo, 1800-1962*, MA Thesis, University of Nairobi. Ndege P. O. (July 1987). *Economic Change in Kasipul and Kabondo, 1800-1962*, MA Thesis, University of Nairobi.

¹²⁸ See Middleton, J. 'Kenya: Administration and Changes in African Life' op .cit. p. 352.

would give Africans a bigger voice in the running of their own affairs and bringing about better cooperation and coordination between Africans and the administration, their major function was to shelve, not deal with grievances, and therefore were a means for greater control.¹²⁹

South Nyanza was the only district in the Colony to have two Local Native Council established in 1926. One was for the Luo and the Abasuba; the other for the Abagusii and Abakuria. They held separate meetings. The reason why this happened, from the administration's point of view, was that close association between the Luo and the other communities would infect them with agitative Luo politics which was already manifesting itself in the Young Kavirondo Association, later the Kavirondo Tax Payers and Welfare Association. The immediate and long term effect of this was to make the communities in South Nyanza District conscious of belonging to different ethnic groups. This influenced local politics throughout the colonial period. The 1926, Education Department Annual Report States:

The Local Native Councils in various districts have raised a voluntary cess for the establishment of the government schools which it is hoped to start in 1928. It was as a result of this strong demand for education from the LNCs that the government finally accepted to allow Africans to establish their own schools.¹³⁰

With the passing of 1910s, the desire of having that proposed school had died out. However, as from 1925, there was a strong demand by the peoples of South Kavirondo District for a government school, in reciprocation for the taxes they paid to the government. The area District Commissioner M.F.G. Campbell, supported the idea and in In December 1925, he raised the following concern:

¹²⁹ Butterman, J.M. op.cit. p. 185, See Middleton J. op.cit. p. 350 for a different view.

¹³⁰ Ombati Victor Fredrick Obwocha (1994): Development of Secular Education in South Kavirondo District of Kenya: The case of Government African School Kisii (1934 - 1963)

I believe that the government will soon or later be placed in a position of some embarrassment, if the policy of laissez - faire at present adopted be persisted. That a district populated by 274,133 and paying willingly a sum of Shs. 1,158,168/= should not possess one Government school, is to my mind, a staggering situation, deserving everything unfavourable which can be said or thought.¹³¹

The DC further warned the government that, the youth in South Kavirondo if not given a chance for education then, they were bound to be disloyal, inefficient, dangerous and discounted mob that would not assist it. As the demand for a government school hotted up, the two Local Native Councils of South Kavirondo: the Kisii-Bukuria, and Luo-Basuba decided to take the lead in this plight. They collected money from self-imposed taxation which they voted to the project. By 1926, the Luo-Basuba had earmarked a sum of Shs. 20,000 for the establishment of the school.

The issue of a government school among the Kisii-Bukuria Council first came up during the meeting which was held in August 8, 1927. During the meeting, the president of the Kisii-Bukuria LNC who was the DC of South Kavirondo tabled a circular letter from the Chief Secretary concerning the government agreement towards the establishment of a government school by the LNC. The Council deliberated on the letter and reached a common agreement that such a school was both necessary and desirable. They, therefore, decided on an annual sum to be raised until a sufficient amount would be realised for the construction of the school.

By the end of 1927 the Kisii-Bukuria had netted Shs. 25,000 for the construction and maintenance of the proposed school, while the Luo- Bakuria's vote was Shs. 20,000/ In the 1929 and 1930 estimates, the two LNCs had realised Shs. 53,000/= and Shs.100, 000/= respectively for the purpose of building and equipping the intended school. It is remarked that almost all

¹³¹ (Ibid)

the chiefs were very vocal in their support of the intended school. Chiefs Onsongo of Bogetutu, Aoga Angwenyi his successor, Direre of Bassi and Musa Nyandusi of Nyaribari were strong supporters of establishing a government school in Kisii, except Chief Martinus Maina of North Mugirango, a Roman Catholic by faith.

Although the chiefs were rallying round an LNC sponsored school, soon rivalry broke out as to the site and location of the school. In the Kisii-Bukuria LNC meeting held on March 21st 1930, the president of the LNCs informed the meeting that the Luo-Busuba who had contributed towards the establishment of the intended school, wanted it established at Vala.¹³²

However, the Kisii-Bakuria considered it inadvisable for their children to learn at Jala in the Luo country, due to tribal differences and that the Kisii invariably felt sick when living in Luo country. On that account, the Kisii and Bakuria no longer wished to participate in the Luo-Basuba Scheme and were determined to go it alone. Consequently, they decided to vote funds towards the establishment of a Kisii-Bukuria school in their country. By 1931 they had voted shs 13,500/= for the school.

By 1932, a sum of Shs. 66,500/= had been set aside by the Kisii-Bakuria Council towards the construction of the school. The Council selected a Sub-Committee consisting of chiefs Musa Nyandusi, Kereu Abaga, and Nyakichanga Tendeka. Aoga Angwenyi, Wambura Munanka

¹³² (Ibid)

The purpose of the committee was to present the Kisii-Bakuria grievances on the proposed school to the colonial administration and to select a suitable site where the school was to be constructed. With the help of chiefs Musa Nyandusi and Aoga Angwenyi, the Abagusero clan donated 532 acres of land. The Debate on the Nature of Government African School Kisii Although the District Commissioner of South Kavirondo had seen his solidarity with the Kisii-Bukuria LNC over the establishment of the school, it was not plain sailing.

The LNC had a lot of problems to contend with nature of the proposed school. The greatest obstacle was the attitude of the Christian missionaries especially the Roman Catholics who were opposed to the establishment of the school in Kisii for once the Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists, not usually known for their friendly relations, found themselves on the same side of the fence, fighting for total monopoly and control of African education.¹³³

They argued that, since Kisii land was well-catered by mission schools - the government had no business of establishing a school in that area. The missionaries reasoned that, since they had European staff, buildings and native teachers to organise for necessary education, in Kisii, the government was only to support them by giving them the cost of education instead of allowing the establishment of the school which would not only be a heavier drain on government resources but also duplicating what the mission schools were already doing.

¹³³ (Ibid)

In 1928, following a commission of enquiry, the colonial government established the post of Commissioner for Local Government (District Councils) Ordinance, forerunner to the county councils, in the areas settled by European farmers, and four more municipalities were created.

TABLE 2: Taxation Trends in Kochia Location

Year	Huts Counted	Rs.paid	Increase	Decrease	P.C.
1905-6		1647			
1906-7		5283	3636		
1907-8	1916	5544	261		96.45%
1908-9	1815	5361		183	98.46%
1909-10	1920	5745	384		99.73%
1910-11	1978	5934	189		100%
1911-12					
1912-13					
1913-14					
1914-15					
1915-16					
1916-17					
1917-18					
1918-19					
1919-20					

SOURCE: KNA/DC/KSI/3/3

During the earlier period, hut tax collection was on an upward spiral in Kochia location, Homa Bay County according to the table above. This was due to the efforts of chief Obonyo and his successor Chief Anayo. Anayo actually became chief owing to the influence of Mbarikiwa, a former Swahili tax collector who trained him on the art of tax collection for the colonial administration. His only weakness according to the government was failure to report the death of a man during a fight with Karachuonyo people in 1911. Otherwise on the collection of hut tax he did perfectly well. However, looking at the table, from 1911 to 1920, there was no record of hut

tax collection. The attention of the colonial authority must have been to deal with the First World War which took place from 1914 to 1918.

TABLE 3: Taxation Trends in Rusinga Location

year	Huts Counted	Rs.paid	Increase	Decrease	P.C.
1905-6		2055			
1906-7	915	2625	570		95.6%
1907-8	1032	2832	207		91.47%
1908-9	849	1398		1434	54.89%
1909-10	895	2679	1281		99.77%
1910-11	841	2523		156	100%
1911-12					
1912-13					
1913-14					
1914-15					
1915-16					
1916-17					
1917-18					
1918-19					
1919-20					

SOURCE: KNA/DC/KSI/3/3

As was the case with Kochia location, there was exponential growth in the collection of hut tax except the war time period. The colonial authority had confidence in chief Oguta of Rusinga location. Although the area was barren with very little rain and crops frequently, he was able to galvanize the people of Rusinga to pay their hut tax. Despite his hard working, he decided to resign in 1908 leaving his brother Nyakeriga to be the chief.

TABLE 4: Taxation Trends in Mfangano

year	Huts Counted	Rs.paid	Increase	Decrease	P.C.
1905-6		2391			
1906-7	960	2703	312		93.85%
1907-8	869	2535		168	86.54%
1908-9	571	1479		1056	97.24%
1909-10	602	1800	321		99.66%
1910-11	519	1557		243	100%
1911-12					
1912-13					
1913-14					
1914-15					
1915-16					
1916-17					
1917-18					
1918-19					
1919-20					

SOURCE: KNA/DC/KSI/3/3

Mfangano location also had increase in hut tax collection in the preceding years before the outbreak of the First World War. The area was under Chiefs Oyugi and Lungungu. The people of Mfangano also paid their hut tax well according to the above statistics and like Kochia and Rusinga there was no record of tax paid during the war time period. Mfangano was a mountainous island covered with scrub, very barren and consequently little cultivation went on. Most foods were obtained from Kaksingri in exchange for fish and livestock. Despite the environmental limitations in Mfangano, people were still able to pay their taxes. They were lucky to have escaped rinderpest although some livestock died from poor pastures. The people however suffered from sleeping sickness.

3.13 Colonial Administrator's assessment of the Chiefs (1903-1945)

From the archival political Record Books, the colonial administrators seemed to have had no kind words for African chiefs they had reservations about their performance of duties in Homa Bay County. This thesis has picked some selected cases of chiefs who had been quarreled and dismissed from service by the colonial administrators in Homa Bay County.

This was manifested in two cases of Chief Omune and Chief Ogoma for our illustration on the assessment of chief's performance by administrators. Chief Omune had not improved and there had been several complaints against him of oppression. He has also allowed himself to become very slack in carrying out government orders and frequent reminders are necessary to get things done. D.R. Crampton, D. C. March 1911. In 1921 he reported that Omune was now carrying out his duties satisfactorily particularly with regard to government orders. No further complaints of oppression. Omune was quite unscrupulous and he and his people did extremely badly at the time of the evacuation of Homa Bay by the Indians in 1914 looting, burning and robbing all the shops. This location was punished in 1914. Lately Omune had done rather better but he was quite untrustworthy. W. F. G. Campbel, D.C.

Chief Ogoma came through a trying period with fair credit to himself. His people suffered most from locusts and drought with a resultant shortage of food. His authority was also being undermined by some very shady work from Asumbi whence some ex teacher derived support in bringing slanderous charges against him. Apparently Isaac Ogoma and his neighbor Chief Ongang of Gem were not liked at Asumbi so that charges brought against them by anyone with a calendar saints name should be carefully investigated.

Chief Isaac Ogoma of Kanyada was before me today and he was informed of the following complaints that I have received against him. He was warned that during my 2^{1/2} years in this district I have frequently received complaints against him, and that I find it necessary to place on record that unless he improves I may find it necessary to require him to resign.¹³⁴

The following were the specific complaints in this instance from the District Commissioner:-

- a) That he employed witches, and imported them from Central Kavirondo.
- b) That he used two elders of his importation from Central Kavirondo as his councilors to the annoyance of his own elders these were Mathayo and Mikael.
- c) That he levies market dues to his own benefit.
- d) That he seized fish from fishermen without pay or food.
- e) That he allowed his 'Mlango' to take bribes in connection with tax exemptions.

The colonial authority in Homa Bay was persuaded beyond doubt that Chief Ogoma was not only useless but actually obstructive to the war effort. The P.C. allowed him to resign and at a 'baraza' held in Kanyada on 29.6.42 Samuel Odoyo was appointed chief. Samuel started off well. He was wise according to colonial authority in changing his clerk as Isaac's clerk Charles was one of the worst stiffs in the District. Within an astonishingly short time, Samuel who was an Ex-Tribal Policeman had effected very considerable improvements in his location but later he got appendicitis and was operated in Kisii Hospital. It so happened that just before this an attempt had been made to bewitch him and amongst other things a sheep's head was found buried in the doorway of Samuel's new 'baraza' hall. Ex-chief Isaac was suspected of having

¹³⁴ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1 Note for insertion in Political Record Book regarding Chief Isaac Ogoma, Kanyada, 2nd November 1937

had a hand in this and after Samuel's recovery a case was taken against Isaac and three others under section. 9 (1) of the witchcraft Ordinance and they were deported to Mfanagano Island. Ice then Samuel had been able to get on with his work in peace and he showed promise of making an excellent chief. Before that, serious frivolous allegations had been made on the person of Chief Ogoma as confirmed in District Commissioner's report:

There is a small but formerly vocal opposition to Chief Isaac. This has been in abeyance since 1938 when the ringleader was proved to have brought a false charge against Chief Isaac and sent to prison for a short time. It will probably revive again. When not worried by *fitina* Chief Isaac can run his location with a fair degree of efficiency.¹³⁵

In the midst of these myriad complaints from the colonial authority, it increasingly became difficult for Chief Ogoma to perform his duties well.¹³⁶

3.14 Changes in Transport and Entrepreneurship

The role of transport and entrepreneurship in development are intertwined. Ndege (1987) avered that: Economic change can not be adequately analysed without a study of exchange relations which is actually the study of the market in its socio-economic and physical forms.¹³⁷

This is because it is at the level of exchange or market relations that products possess exchange value whether in money form or in kind. It is also at this level that producers and non-producers are brought together; that surplus value is appropriated from the former by the latter. During the colonial period the market, whether for labour or agricultural and livestock products, made

¹³⁵ (Ibid)

¹³⁶ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1 Note for insertion in Political Record Book regarding Chief Isaac Ogoma, Kanyada, 2nd November 1937

¹³⁷ The controversy over the meaning of markets and whether they existed in pre-colonial Africa has been resolved by G.N. Uzoigwe in his article, 'Precolonial Markets in Bunyoro-Kitara', in Ogot, B.A. (ed.) *Hadith 5. Economic and Social History of East Africa*, East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1975 pp. 24-65.

possible capital accumulation by the colonial state, expatriate firms and indigenous entrepreneurs. Finally exchange or market relations influenced the manner in which individual families reproduced themselves.

The study of exchange relations to determine what economic changes took place during the colonial period must be undertaken at two levels. At one level we need to concern ourselves with general changes which took place in exchange relations as a result of the establishment of new modes of transport, colonial market places or trading centres and the formulation of trade regulations. How did this influence the local people's agricultural production, their participation in trade and the flow of goods and ideas?

Ndege (1987) on transport argued thus:

The second level should focus on the development of entrepreneurship. The study of entrepreneurship as an approach to the analysis of economic change has been strongly recommended by Norman Long. This approach provides an insight into people's differential responses to change and should answer the following questions: who were the entrepreneurs and what social category did they constitute? What opportunities did the colonial system of exchange offer, i. e. what were the political, social and economic parameters within which the entrepreneurs operated and how did these influence their decision-making? What transactions did they undertake and what forms of capital did they accumulate? Where did the local entrepreneurs get their initial capital?

As an aid to this approach, Ndege has used case studies. The first bridle paths in the area and the rest of the district were made by forced communal labour mobilized by headmen and chiefs under instructions from the district officers. In 1909 the road from Kisii to Kendu Bay through Oyugis was completed, though without bridges. In 1911 the road from Kisii to Kisumu through Kasipul and Kabondo was made, and in 1912 Oyugis was connected with Rangwe, and shortly later, with Homa Bay. Throughout the rest of the Colonial period, it remained the responsibility of the local people to maintain the roads in good condition. This was done through extra taxation in the form of cash and labour. The Local Native Council and the Locational Councils, and later, the African District Council, levied the tax and recruited local labour for this purpose. This was in contrast to what happened in European settled areas, where roads were constructed, improved and maintained by financial grants from central revenues.

Other parts of Homa Bay did not have bridled paths or roads at all. In an interview with O.I. Mzee Paul Okombo Moth, of Gwassii roads were not constructed by the colonialists and people were just walking on foot paths to connect with other locations. It was common place to meet the wild animals on these foot paths.

The new system of transport linked Kasipul and Kabondo administratively and commercially with the rest of the district and Kenya. But the link was weak, intermittent and unreliable. Up to the 1920s donkeys and ox-carts, mainly owned by local Indian traders like Allidina Visram, and European traders, Richard Gethin and Max Klein, were the new means of transport, apart from traditional head portage. In 1911 there were between 40-50 ox-carts with about 200 bullocks in the whole district; in 1916 all the 86 donkeys and most of the carts and bulls were hired by the

administra- tion for military transport.¹³⁸ The existing means of transport could not cope with the volume of exports from the district. The only good road which connected Kisii and Kendu via Oyugis was not kept in good condition as it was impassable during the rainy seasons. The situation was slightly improved by the building of bridges over the Kisii-Kendu Bay road over Awach River and the Kisii-Kisumu road over Sondu (Miriu) river in 1920 and 1921 respectively.¹³⁹

It was shortly after this that motor transport was introduced on the roads. In 1926 there were six Lorries in the whole district, all belonging to the European traders.¹⁴⁰

Between 1926 and 1930, another development was the improvement of lake communication between the lake ports at HomaBay and Kendu Bay and the rail head at Kisumu. The initiative was not taken by the administration but by the two European businessmen who installed a motor boat and lighters in the Lake to carry goods from the ports to Kisumu. These were faster than the Indian dhows which had previously dominated the lake transport. They carried traffic goods and mails several times a week.

On the subject of trade Cokumu (2001) has argued that:

Within a community there were individuals who specialised in various skills and regularly exchanged their goods with other members of the community. These skills were often inherited and were secrets of the family members. The chief specialists were blacksmiths, leather workers, harpists, singers, basket makers, potters and teeth extractors. Most of these services were exchanged locally often in response to a request. Trade established links between communities beyond their clans and ethnicity. This gave rise to acculturation due to intermarriages

¹³⁸ KNA/DC/KSI/3/5-South Kavirondo Annual Reports 1911-1920, Political Record Book 1930-1940

¹³⁹ (Ibid)

¹⁴⁰ Gethin and Dawson.

between the people of Siaya and their neighbours. It provided an impetus for mass production of grains and industrial products as well as transfer of technological know-how. It led to socio-economic differentiation since it provided an impetus for the process of accumulation of wealth. Accumulation of wealth was in turn an important stepping stone to political influence and leadership. A wealthy man had the means to feast with elders, host meetings and in the final analysis attracted supporters and clients.¹⁴¹

The study found that in Homa Bay County there were indigenous industries dealing in ironsmith technology, weaving and basketry. These gave impetus to trade between the Southern Nyanza Luo in Homa Bay and their neighbouring communities such as the Abagusii and the Abakuria. To ensure security of the traders, the chiefs were in the front line spearheading the same.

3.2 Summary

The colonial conquest led to the integration of Homa Bay County into the colonial system of governance. The chain of the administrative command was bureaucratic in character. More chiefs were appointed in various locations of Homa Bay County to carry out their mandates on behalf of the colonial state and the metropole. The Chiefs assisted in the formulation and executions of policies, judicial functions, collection of taxes, custodian of lands, supported inter-communal trade and acted as lawmakers and signed treaties when called upon through various ordinances. The resurgence of *Mumboism* was brought down by the chiefs acting on orders of the colonial authority in Homa Bay County. When war broke out; there was the requisition of livestock and crops to feed the British troops.

¹⁴¹ Cokumu Ouma Pius (2201) MA Thesis. The Colonial Transformation of Agriculture in Siaya, c. 1894-1945 p.53

The colonial authority through the chiefs supported education. However, it was the missionaries who played significant roles. The Catholic Church at Asumbi established schools to educate the local people. The Seventh Day Adventist Church was not left behind in the provision of education to the local people in Homa Bay. Of importance to note was that through education, it was easy for the missionaries to carry out their duties of civilizing and evangelizing the Africans. There was labour recruitment through the chiefs in Homa Bay County. Those who were recruited were taken to work in tea plantations in Kericho and sisal plantations in Kilimambogo, Mwatate and Voi. Transport network was not well developed in Homa Bay County apart from a bitumen road from Isebania through Migori, Kisii to Kisumu via Ahero.

TABLE 5: Trade Returns on crops for the Prosperity of the People

Items	1908-09.	1909-10.	Homa Bay	Total	1901-11 Tons.cwt
	Karungu Rupees.	Karungu			
Bajree					
Chiroko	3862	3696	5733	9429	36 8
Chowla (mixed grain)					
Ghee	11686	9958	31		31 16
Ground nuts	383	239	1224	1463	2 7
Hides Ox	28494	54284	30132	84416	27 11
Hides Goat	13793	14728			
Hides Sheep	276	1359	16127	32214	
Maize			435	435	
Mtama	1558	24	812	836	
Sim-sim	4515	13680	51340	65020	89 13
Tobacco(Country)					
Wheat		60	60		4
Wimbi	1035	418	1138	1556	1 13
TOTAL	65602	98446	106941	205387	190 11

Source: KNA/DC/3/3

In 909-10, there was a large increase of export in hides due to mortality among cattle from Gastro Enteritis. The next chapter, chapter four, concerns itself with appointment of the second generation of chiefs and accelerated socio-economic transformations through the chiefs.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SECOND GENERATION OF CHIEFS AND ACCELERATED

SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS (1920-1939)

4.1 Overview

This thesis chapter assesses roles of the second generation of chiefs and the accelerated socio-economic transformations in Homa Bay County during the period of economic depression (1920-1939). The stimulation of commodity production during the same period, entrepreneurship, appointment of the second generation of chiefs, contributions of Chief Magak Odeka and Paul Mboya to socio-economic transformations are highlighted in this chapter. Development of African agriculture through increased commodity production, chiefs implementation of produce control, anti-soil erosion measures, the role of LNCs in developing education sector, the resurgence of *mumbo* cult, the role of chiefs in establishing normalcy, development of infrastructures, chiefs submission at the 1932-33 Carter Land Commission (Carter Commission Report, 1934) are all captured in this chapter.

4.2 Stimulation of Commodity Production

The Great Depression began after the stock market crash of October 1929, which sent Wall Street into panic and wiped out millions of investors. Over the next several years, consumer spending and investment dropped, causing steep declines in industrial output and employment as failing companies laid off workers. It was the greatest and longest economic recession in modern world history. It began with the U.S. Stock Market crash of 1929 and did not end until 1946 after

World War II. Economists and historians often cite the great depression as the most catastrophic economic event of the 20th century. ¹

The effects of Great Depression were felt even in Kenya. According to Ndege P.O. (2020) politics of groundnut farming and sale during colonial times.² Ndege has created a strong link between the prices of crops in Kenya such as groundnuts with the events of the Great Depression. Groundnut production and exports grew rapidly during the great depression (1929-1939) though most commodity prices, including those of the produce, seriously plummeted. But it was during this period that the colonial government in Kenya appreciated the necessity of stimulating commodity production in African Reserves alongside European settler agriculture. So it pushed the production of groundnuts and cotton in Nyanza. Faced with the obligation of paying taxes and purchase imported goods, including farm implements such as *jembes* and ploughs, and household goods like sauce pans and knives, and of course clothing, peasant families had to either grow the crops or seek employment, which was quite limited at the time.

To illustrate this increase the colonialists in 1932 exported only 24 tons of groundnuts, valued at 1200 sterling pounds but by 1936, the quantity of exports increased to 2,503 tones valued at sterling pound 32,875. South Nyanza produced the bulk of the exports as lot of what was produced was also sold and consumed locally. Pests and diseases, low prices, competition from cotton and the colonial commodity marketing system were some of the challenges farmers grappled with. The disease included rosette, leaf spot and rust while the pests were aphids, beetle, ants, and bears and rodents. With time the soil could not take groundnuts anymore because of lack of crop rotation while diseases became more ravaging.

¹ www.investopedia.com

² www.nation.co.ke

The Indian merchants dominated trade in agriculture during the Great Depression period. Indian's domination of groundnuts marketing led to the emergence of African petty bourgeois traders. In Nyanza Province, the individuals formed the Kavirondo Native Chamber of commerce whose leaders included John Paul Olola and Zabulon Aduwo Nyandonje from central Nyanza, Daniel Ojijo Koteko and William Odidi from South Nyanza and Habil Ndagalo of Vihiga and Pasacal Nabwana of Bungoma.³

Tarus Isaac Kipsang (Ph.D Thesis) argues: that the effects of depression were well captured by one of Kenya's liberal settler farmers at the time, Sir Michael Blundel who states that: The Wall Street crash of 1929, with the collapse of commodity prices changed the face of farming in Kenya. In that year alone coffee prices were halved and subsequently, fell to fifth of the pre-cash level. Much the same happened to all other crops; a two hundred pound bag of maize flour could be bought for five shillings, a pint of milk for the same price. For the equivalent of a penny, butter at less than a shilling a pound, a chicken for not more than one shilling and bananas and one hundred for the same price. African wages dropped disastrously and half the coffee farms in the country went out of production, with hundreds of farms elsewhere being abandoned or taken over by banks.⁴

1933 selected Africans farmers had been permitted to plant coffee something that they had not been allowed ever since. Many others took to the cultivation of other crops like maize, beans,

³(Ibid)

⁴ Michael Blundel, *A Love Affair with the sun: A Memoir of Seventy years in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1994), p.24 Blundel was a politician, farmer, soldier, businessman, botanist and an accomplished musician. He played a critical role during Kenya's struggle of independence due to his liberal political views that were anathema to mainstream colonials.

wattle, potatoes, pyrethrum and cotton. Maize, however, was the most popular African crop at that time and was faced with marketing and price problem.⁵

In Nyanza where maize had become a staple food for consumption, and a major cash crop, the impact of the depression was immense. The DC stated in his 1930 report that ‘maize has been unsaleable’, owing to the general trade depression.⁶

By 1934 the collection of taxes in Nyanza was described as depressing. The PC in a circular letter to all the DCs stated that, ‘owing to the state of the colony’s finances it was imperative that the fullest collection possible be made before the end of the year.....And to the chiefs, the directive was more severe in that circular demanded that, “all outstanding taxes must be paid before the end of the year and that no salaries can be paid out until this was done and that any neglect or dilatoriness in respect of tax collection may entail dismissal.”⁷

District Commissioners in Nyanza Province were consistently under pressure by their Provincial Commissioner to vitalize the collection of taxes so as to bring in more revenue. The DCs countered by maintaining that the people were not in a position to pay taxes due to various reasons. Among the reasons mentioned were infirmity, old age, emigrations, poverty and the impact of the economic depression. For instance, many people were reported to have fled to Tanganyika to avoid the payment of taxes. Many others were in detention while others were old for detention and not old enough for exemptions from taxation.⁸

⁵ (Ibid)

⁶ (Ibid)

⁷ KNA/PC/NA/1/19/149/, Taxation file, Nyanza province.

⁸ KNA/PC/NA/FIN/1/1 Departmental circulars to District revenue collectors, 1933.

The majority of the people of Nyanza were not in a position to pay their taxes due to famine and locusts that had destroyed most of their livestock. Secondly, the collection of so many tax arrears in 1933 had by 1934 impoverished many 'natives' who normally found it difficult to obtain their tax money. Finally, thousands of livestock had died due to rinderpest and lack of veterinary services. All these setbacks were compounded by low prices of cash crops and livestock as a result of the depression and low wages. Consequently, this made it difficult for the people to raise tax money. Nyanza province had the earliest and most organized system of taxation as a result of the activities of John Ainsworth. Nyanza at that time had witnessed general increased wealth following increased production of cash crops.

During the depression, cotton was groundnut's major competitor. It so happened that the colonial state, as a result of pressure from Cotton Growing Association in Britain to increase supplies to British industries, pushed farmers in western Kenya to grow the crop. This coincided with the opening of the cotton ginneries in Kendu Bay and Homa Bay. Greater concentration on cotton led to the decrease in acreages under groundnuts, particularly after 1937.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, they articulated African grievances, petitioning the government, and even sending memoranda to the colonial secretary in Britain, regarding the low prices of African-grown commodities, including groundnuts and the licensing system, which was skewed in Indian traders' favour. This commercial consciousness that fed into struggles for political independence.

4.3 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is normally about trade which Ndege seriously studied in his work *Economic Change in Kasipul and Kabondo, 1800-1962*, MA Thesis University of Nairobi July 1987. When famine occurred, caused by drought and/or locust invasion, people either relied on help from fortunate relatives or engaged in local trade or went out to work. The first option was based on traditional reciprocal redistribution of surplus produce. But this increasingly became less common than it used to be in the nineteenth century. In local trade, which was mainly based on barter, the people of Kasipul and Kabondo exchanged their cattle for grain from their neighbours, the Abagusii and the Kipsigis who were relatively less affected by drought and famine. Grain from these people was then transported to the lakeshore locations and exchanged for fish. This type of trade had been carried out in the nineteenth century.

A bigger number of 205 people, however, were forced into wage labour during periods of famine. They not only went to the Tea Estates in Kericho, but also worked for the Kipsigis who gave them grain through a system of hired labour, locally/ Otong'o. This particularly happened during/called the famines of the 1940s. The Table below shows the periods when famine hit South Nyanza District, forcing people to resort to sale of their labour. Such famines became more frequent and serious during the colonial period than before. During the colonial period government economic policy were additional causes of famines, apart from the natural ones.⁹

Little trade existed during this period of colonialism in Homa Bay County. I would use the illustration from the cases of the twin Islands of Kaksingri and Mfangano and Gwasi on the entrepreneurship at the time. No much trade existed at the time in these locations. In Kaksingri

⁹ (Ibid)

Chief Ogwata was described as keen in trade. A considerable trade in salt was carried out, most with *Waganda* traders and later with the *Kisii*. Mfangano under Chief Oyugi was a mountainous island covered with scrub, very barren and consequently little cultivation, most food was brought at Kaksingiri and Gwasi in exchange for fish and livestock. People until that time were wild and superstitious. Cattle were very plenty owing to the fact that this island escaped rinderpest but many died from poorest of the pastures.¹⁰

Onduru stated that : Kitching, in his study of economic change in Kenya, has pointed out that African-owned enterprises such as shops, water-powered maize mills, carts and lorries owned by Africans became increasingly abundant from the 1930s to 1940s. He notes for instance, in Kikuyuland, administrative reports were full of remarks such as “the number of native dukas (shops) continued of course to multiply.” He observed further that even in a district like South Kavirondo (South Nyanza), where the sort of development which in Central and North Kavirondo had taken place in the late 1920s were more typical of the 1930s, the District Officer could contend himself with the observation that “small native dukas are springing up all over the reserves.”¹¹

The period from the 1930s to 1945 was characterised by the most rapid increase in African engagement in trade to have occurred since the start of the colonial rule. As was noted earlier, Asians dominated trade in South Nyanza (for this study, Homa Bay County) and Nyanza more

¹⁰ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1

¹¹ Kitching, G. *Class and Economic Change in Kenya*, pp. 169-170

generally from the beginning of the colonial era.¹² This marked the first time that Africans started to play a major role in trade since they received trading licenses from the Local Native Councils. The pre-1930s trading centres in South Nyanza were mostly reserved for Asian traders. But from the 1930s, newly established produce markets were allocated to African traders. Most of these produce markets were located in the rural areas, far away from the gazetted trading centres. The 1935 Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance for Nyanza Province made provision for the quality control of produce and also fixed physical distances between trading centres and produce markets.¹³

According to Onduru T.O. (2009), the Second World War had various effects. The people of South Nyanza were called upon to increase food production to feed the troops. In spite of the large number of men recruited to serve in the war, production of agricultural produce still increased. For instance, the Nyanza Province Annual Report for 1942 noted that the export of cereals from August, when the crops began to come to the market, to the end of the year was approximately 40,000 bags, a record figure.¹⁴ In South Nyanza, the District Annual Report for 1943 recorded an increased acreage under cultivation, but that adverse weather conditions had culminated in the failure of the short rains for the second year in succession.¹⁵

On the matter of trade, O.I. Dalmas Achinga Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa 5.8.2019 reported that trade was actually not done in a large scale in Homa Bay County during the colonial period. People used just to exchange goods through barded trade. Those with things like weaved

¹² Buttermann, J. M. 'Luo Social Formation in Change', p. 184.

¹³ Fearn, H. *An African Economy*, pp. 156-159

¹⁴ Hay, J. M. 'Economic Change in Luoland', p. 193

¹⁵ KNA, South Nyanza District Annual Report, DC/KSI/1/5, 1943, p. 8.

baskets known as *atonga* exchanged with iron implements made by their Kisii neighbours. There were no local people who were engaged in large scale trade. But by the time of independence, a few people were involved in whole sale trade while still quite a few number were involved in retail trade.

4.4 Appointment of the Second Generation of Chiefs

On the appointment of chiefs, some chiefs were appointed because of their physical fitness and better education by the standards of that time. For example, Magak Odeka was a well-built man who had served in the career corps during the World War I and these characteristics were considered during his appointment. The second generation of chiefs represents those whose appointment came after that of earlier chiefs to be appointed immediately the colonial authority was established in Homa Bay, Southern Nyanza region.

4.4.1 Gideon Magak

On the issue of education in Kasipul-Kabondo, Chief Magak was the front-runner. He was an example of a chief who supported education in his area. The Chief, who was a huge and strongly built tall man, embarked on draconian rule to enforce the colonial rule. People found smoking bhang in groups were rounded up and sent to jail. The same was the case with idlers who were found drinking native beers in the villages. His emphasis was on education and discipline. He forced children to attend schools.¹⁶ Although reputed for having ruled his location with an iron fist, Chief Magak was also credited for having left a legacy of hard work and massive development of public institutions, such as Oyugis District sub-Hospital, Ramula Opanga Health Centre, Ober Health Centre, schools and other socio-economic projects.¹⁷

¹⁶ O.I.Mzee Nathaniel Ochako O.I. Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul-29th November 2019

¹⁷ (Ibid)

He served his people between 1927 and 1954, though with an iron fist, he is still being remembered for having introduced forced education of both boys and girls. The chief, was known to have paid school fees for students from his location using his own money, and consigned to jails big headed parents who refused to educate their children. Against resistance from religions and churches, Magak initiated the District Education Board Schools, such as Agoro Sare High School, Oriang Girl's Secondary School, Ober Secondary School, Saye Secondary School, Nyang'ielia Secondary School, and many others, which are today serving as some of the best educational facilities in the region.

But the residents of the region have refused to have any of its schools named after him. There is not even one primary school in the region named after the man to serve as his legacy. Is this the case of jealousy?¹⁸

In an interview with ex-chief of Kachien Location, Samson Osanya, he opined:

Witchdoctors fled, and the few who remained were hunted down like antelopes, and when caught, were canned, and their tools of trade and paraphernalia set ablaze. Bhang plants were uprooted from gardens, and growers sent to jails. Cattle rustlers also fled the location.¹⁹

Education became compulsory exercise for children of all sexes, and by early 1940s, Chief Gideon Magak had earned a nickname as "*Magak Odeka Popi Wuod Oyata Nyar Kabonyo*". Chief Magak collaborated well with early missionaries of the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) and Roman Catholic Church. This contributed greatly towards the establishment of many

¹⁸ (Ibid)

¹⁹ O.I. Samson Osanya, retired chief, Kachien Location 18.7.2020

primary schools in the villages throughout the then very expansive location in the region. This witnessed the birth of schools like Oriang', Wang'apala, Ober, Saye, Agoro-Sare, Nyangiela and Karabok. These schools are today some of the best government aided secondary schools in the region.²⁰

And so the story goes that Chief Gideon Magak was the only administrator who frequented Kisii Secondary School. As frequently as possible, he would visit, while pressing the Principal of the institution with a request, to be allowed to have close door meetings with students from his location. When such permission was granted, he would hold private talks with the young students, encouraging them to work hard and excel in their exams, so that they could go back home and work as teachers and agronomists. He would take out of his trousers pockets, and give each student a token of 3/- or occasionally 5/-. He would drive male and female students from his location to places like Siriba Agricultural College and Sigalagala College, and other training institutions, and apply for training opportunities on their behalf. He would follow up this with a frequent visit, to inspect their academic progress from time to time, as sign of encouragement.²¹

The schools that were constructed were grass thatched and mud walled. The labor for the construction of schools was supplied by the community. We were confined to receiving very basic education in apprentice and just enough to read our bibles. Women were taught how to knit clothes and cookery, hygiene. The missionaries educated Africans on other issues such as abandoning some aspects of culture such as wife inheritance and polygamy.²²

²⁰ (ibid)

²¹ O.I.Agotu Arogo, Kodumo Kabondo 14.7.2019

²²(Ibid)

Chief Magak ensured that every home had a traditional hoe as evidence that agriculture was being taken seriously. Every man and in his home was supposed to have *mondo mar bel* (granary for sorghum) and *dech apum* (A small granary) for storage of groundnuts. Women also had to have their own *dero*.²³

Magak's resilience in supporting agriculture was given eminence by Mzee Nathaniel Ochako of Kotieno Kokech in Kasipul who recalled:

Magak through the clan elders ensured that the people of Kasipul eradicated 'kayongo' (weeds) and if 'kayongo' was found in anybody's farm that would automatically attract punishment or admonishment. Contour farming was a must. He established 'store pamba' (cotton ginnery).²⁴

Mzee Ochako's observations were supported by another research participant Obong'o Nyiego who said: "Chief Magak introduced cotton growing under strict supervision. He also introduced sisal growing which was processed using mechanized shredder and traditional sisal linter (*Dina Aywa*) for 'ogidho' production. Chief Zacharia Aseda who replaced Chief Magak used force on people in production of maize at Miranga".²⁵

According to the archival report, Magak did well in propagating Robusta coffee in his location which was processed for market at Ayoro.²⁶ The first Robusta coffee nursery was started at Mumbo in 1935 and the first planting took place in 1936,200 Africans having agreed to plant

²³ O. I. Retired Assistant chief Dishon Olewe, Kachien Location, Kasipul, 23rd July 2019.

²⁴ Nathaniel Ochako Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul 6.3.2020

²⁵ O.I. Mzee Obong'o Nyiego, Kachien location, Kasipul, 13th July 2019

²⁶ KNA/DC/KSI/3/1 District Commissioner Kisii, 13.1137

Robusta, each man being allowed 16 trees only.²⁷ Planting was confined to Kasipul and Gem locations. Planting took place again in 1937 when there was altogether approximately 50 acres planted in Kasipul and 26 acres in Gem.

Robusta did not prove popular because it was reported owing to it being slow in coming into bearing and many deaths attributed to bad planting mainly because of planting in a hole filled with fresh manure and covered with soil.^{ibid} The question of growing Robusta was discussed by the S.N.L.A.C. when it was decided to abandon Robusta growing and all except for three trees in the Oyugis area under Chief Magak were uprooted.^{ibid} Another Robust nursery was set up in 1954 from seed imported from Uganda which failed to germinate and from seed collected from the three Oyugis trees which germinated well and was planted out in trials in 1955.

²⁷ KNA-DC/KSI/5/5, South Nyanza Gazzeteer

PLATE: 3

The Mausoleum of Chief Gideon Magak Odeka. Beside the mausoleum lies the grave of his wife, Dorsila Magak who died on 10 August 1998. Magak was one of the famous chiefs of Homa Bay County during colonial period.

Source: The researcher

PLATE: 4

The Grave of Chief Gideon Magak Odeka of Kasipul-Kabondo inside his mausoleum with his framed photo mounted on a buffalo's horn to signify his strength and courage.

Source: The researcher

4.4.2 Paul Mboya

Paul Mboya was one of the prominent chiefs of Karachuonyo during the colonial period. He was appointed through Government Notice No.236 of 1935. The colonial authority at the time respected him because of his administrative competency. Mboya was an ordained pastor of Seventh Day Adventist Church prior to his appointment. He was an outstanding man and an example of what was almost ideal in an African chief, certainly as ideal as we may expect within the next few decades. His virtues were many so suffice it to say that I have no single fault to record against him during my sojourn.²⁸

He was behind most of the events surrounding the growth and development of Homa Bay before and after independence. He was among the first people in Karachuonyo to embrace Seventh Day Adventist church. He was a shrewd ADC secretary of South Nyanza County Council who later on became a Ker (The head of Luo Community in East Africa). During his tenure as African District Council Secretary, he made things difficult even for the renowned Abagusii Chief Musa Nyandusi. He was powerful and arrogant that he insisted, the Abagusii chiefs had to speak to him in fluent Dholuo.²⁹

The headquarters was originally meant for Kendu-Bay but Mbuya felt that Karachuonyo people were going to lose their land hence ordered it taken to Homa Bay. The seventh Day Adventist Mission had two stations in the District, 5 acres at Gendia, and 5 acres at Wire Hill. A large number of children attended the Mission schools and were taught reading and writing.³⁰

²⁸KNA KSI/3//DC/ 3.

²⁹ O.I.Peter Amuka, Kanyada

³⁰ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1 South Kavirondo District-progress and influence of Missionary Societies, R.W. Hemsted, Dc1st April 2018

Owing to his high standards of efficiency and integrity Chief Paul Mbuya was now the most influential chief in the District, if not in the province. He had recently been awarded King's Medal (in silver).³¹

The medal had not yet been presented. A suitable opportunity for the presentation was awaited. The post of Assistant Chief in Karachuonyo had been abolished. I endorse the two preceding comments. The medal was presented by H.E. the Governor in February 1942. Paul Mboya has been tried out by me working in the office, hearing 'shauris' which would normally be dealt with by a D.O. He was a complete success and I can only say that here we have an exceptionally outstanding man who is far ahead of his generation.³²

4.5 African Agriculture through Increased Commodity Production

The major crops grown included Coffee, Cotton, Maize; Groundnuts, and Sim Sim. Coffee growing started in the Kisii neighbourhood. The coffee growing in Homa Bay, had a correlation with coffee growing in Kisii. The standard of cultivation seriously deteriorated during the war years and until about 1949 when the staff position improved and good husbandry in all plantations insisted on Planting of Blue Mountain continued with a big increase in acreage in 1953 onwards. In 1956 the rust resistant variety K.7 was planted on a commercial scale in the Kuja Division for the first time. The first of the larger engine driven factories was built at Kenyoro in 1953.³³

³¹ (Ibid)

³² KNA KSI/3//DC/ 3.

³³ KNA/DC/ Nyanza KSI/1/21-South Annual Report 1960

In most of Homa Bay County, coffee was not grown by the people either because the colonial administration did not invest in time or the soil types did not support growing of coffee. However in Kasipul Kabondo there was some coffee farming at Ayoro. In places such as Gwassihills and Gem the soils were arable and could support coffee farming.

In Kasipul, Chief Magak was very instrumental in promoting agriculture. Under him at the Kabondo end of the location, there was a large acreage under cultivation some of which were about to be dug over for the second time, and everywhere there were preliminary soil control measures, mostly earth banks. Chief Magak and agricultural staff in Kasipul-Kabondo saw the necessity for increasing the size of land under cultivation, of putting in stops every five yards or so along the contour channel and of stopping boundary furrows at close intervals. What had been done was a refreshing change from the attitude of the location during the previous three years preceding 1944.³⁴

In the interest of promoting agriculture in his jurisdiction, Chief Magak held barazas. At Pala, Kabondo, in 1945 he advised his subjects on early planting; increase of groundnuts and sweet potatoes. During this time, grass burning had been restricted. Magak during 'barazas' insisted that the ban was still on since some 'wazee' were trying to devise means of avoiding restrictions on grass burning. He explained to the 'baraza' the kind of powers chiefs had but said that he was certain that no general permission would be given; chief Magak agreed and told the 'baraza' that the restrictions were the result of an A.D.C. resolution passed by the representatives of the people themselves for the good of their own country. The chief reported that in the Mumbo end of the location there was a moderate acreage under cultivation on the 'red luala soils' with a few

³⁴ (Ibid)

people starting to put in soil control; on the granite 'kwoyo' soils no ploughing had yet been done although the January rains made a certain amount possible. The acreage under sweet potatoes was enough to provide planting material for an increase, but except in the Kokwanyo sub-location there was no muhogo (cassava). At a baraza in Oyugis, Chief Magak ordered for soil control; and early planting of all food crops; groundnut and cotton planting; increase of sweet potatoes and Muhogo and also tree planting.³⁵

The very small acreage in Western Mumbo had a very small acreage of early crops but is now doing well but will be insufficient to affect food situation, and it may be taken that no food crops were planted before the 25th April 1945 practically no cotton seed has yet been taken from the stores and only an occasional shamba planted, ostensibly for this crop. Attempts at soil control are now general but quality is very poor and very little attention is being paid to the stopping of boundary furrows, while ploughing up and down the hill is much too common in practice. Sweet potatoes have not yet been increased but there is enough planting material available for a moderate extension; at present the people cannot see beyond the weeding of the Mtama crop.³⁶ Magak held a baraza at Ober and Oyugis, impromptu, to order for soil control, increase of sweet potatoes; tree and cotton planting. The people complained at having to put in soil control lines; of the weather; and a general atmosphere of hopelessness and helplessness.³⁷

In one of his efforts for improving agriculture, the chief toured Wire SDA School and found that there were two plots of maize and groundnuts. The chief was unimpressed because the crops were not healthy and three of the plots were not planted. However a plot at Oyugis was in good

³⁵ (ibid)

³⁶ KNA /DC/KSI/7/1-Safari Diary dated 16th and 17th May 1945

³⁷ (ibid)

order, planted with Soya Beans and the process of tidying up the contour banks was on course. The chief also observed that from the camp to the Karachuonyo border, crops were late and soil control poor both in Kabondo and the north-eastern part of Mumbo. Very few sweet potatoes and practically no land ready for cotton, no seed taken from the store.

In order to ensure that people concentrated on their farms, Chief Magak ordered that they would not bring the produce to the dukas before 10 O'clock. He was on foot with Assistant chief S. A. I. Apinde and Instructors via Kabondo. They gave many demonstrations. From a point of vantage, designated areas were to be taken over by inspectors Absai Ndiawa and Samson Olite together with the work at the 'dukas'.³⁸

Chief Magak ensured that every home had a traditional hoe as evidence that agriculture was being taken seriously. Every man and in his home was supposed to have mondo mar bel (granary for sorghum) and dech apum (A small granary) for storage of groundnuts. Women also had to have their own dero.³⁹

Magak's resilience in supporting agriculture was given eminence by Mzee Nathaniel Ochako of Kotieno Kokech in Kasipul who recalled: "Magak through the clan elders ensured that the people of Kasipul eradicated 'kayongo' (weeds) and if 'kayongo' was found in anybody's farm that would automatically attract punishment or admonishment. Contour farming was a must. He established 'store pamba' (cotton ginnery)".

³⁸ (Ibid)

³⁹ O. I. Retired Assistant chief Dishon Olewe, Kachien Location, Kasipul, 23rd July 2019.

Mzee Ochako's observations were supported by another research participant Obong'o Nyiego who said:

Chief Magak introduced cotton growing under strict supervision. He also introduced sisal growing which was processed using mechanized shredder and traditional sisal linter (Dina Away) for 'ogidho' production. Chief Zacharia Aseda who replaced Chief Magak used force on people in production of maize at Miranga.⁴⁰

According to the archival report, Magak did well in propagating Robusta coffee in his location which was processed for market at Ayoro.⁴¹ The first Robusta coffee nursery was started at Mumbo in 1935 and the first planting took place in 1936, 200 Africans having agreed to plant Robusta, each man being allowed 16 trees only.⁴² Planting was confined to Kasipul and Gem locations. Planting took place again in 1937 when there was altogether approximately 50 acres planted in Kasipul and 26 acres in Gem.

Robusta did not prove popular because it was reported owing to it being slow in coming into bearing and many deaths attributed to bad planting mainly because of planting in a hole filled with fresh manure and covered with soil.⁴³ The question of growing Robusta was discussed by the S.N.L.A.C. when it was decided to abandon Robusta growing and all except for three trees in the Oyugis area under Chief Magak were uprooted.⁴⁴

Another Robust nursery was set up in 1954 from seed imported from Uganda which failed to germinate and from seed collected from the three Oyugis trees which germinated well and was

⁴⁰ Mzee Obong'o Nyiego, O.I. Kachien location, Kasipul, 13th July 2019

⁴¹ District Commissioner Kisii, 13.1137

⁴² KNA-DC/KSI/5/5-South Nyanza Gazzeteer

⁴³ (Ibid)

⁴⁴ KNA-Safari Diary dated 16th and 17th May 1945

planted out in trials in 1955.⁴⁵ There was coffee in Kasipul, while Karachuonyo did not have. The Chiefs orders were manifested in their quest to ensure that the Karachuonyo people were secure from lack of food. The chiefs encouraged them not to grow food for subsistence but also for commercial use through sustainable use of the arable lands.

It was recorded that there was a great increase in cultivation since the 11th February 1944 in Karachuonyo except between Pala Cotton Store and the Homalime Co's turn off from the Pala-Kauma road. Here the people had made very little attempt. In a few localities in E. Karachuonyo where rain had fallen some planting had been made. Reserves of Cassava were negligible and the acreage of Sweet potatoes along the lake shore was very disappointing. Soil control was negligible. In West Karachuonyo a number of villages were visited in order to get an impression of the food situation, only one had no visible supplies of Mtama and the average indicated that apart from imports by head and donkey load; and other food supplies such as fish, meat, and root crops, that there was at least a month's food on full rations. Not more than ten women carrying head loads into the location were seen during 6 hours spent in the area. The onus was on the Karachuonyo chiefs to ensure that agriculture was supported to lead people to socio-economic transformations.

There was insufficient cotton to support both these ginneries and in 1949-50 Messrs. Small & Company, owners of the Kendu Bay Ginnery bought out Mr. Riddoch and closed down the Kendu Ginnery, ginning all cotton at the Homa Bay Ginnery. Until 1951, N17 variety was grown, UK48 being introduced in 1952. Since 1953 all seed has been treated with Perenox before planting as a control against Blackarm.

⁴⁵ (Ibid).

In Gem location two chiefs led to development of agriculture through contradictions. Chief Stephan Obiga was a quiet and efficient Chief who sometimes gave the impression of being stupid but this was not so. He had done excellent work during the past two years in increasing production of crops for export in Gem location. Young men were unruly, and Chief Ongang Obiga's predecessor had advised against growing cotton saying that cotton killed cattle because in the dense cotton areas of Uganda, he had seen no cattle, so this must be so.⁴⁶ Chief Obonyo of Kagan and Kochia had a good record as a Chief for many years and although an old man was capable and real, though quite enthusiasm over a progressive policy. Cotton growing and better house building might owe a great deal to his example and influence. He was certainly one of the shrewdest of observers and nearly always had a point of view worth considering in connection with the aspiration of mission educated natives. He had built himself a fine house of which he was justly proud. In 1933 he did excellent work on cotton. He was a heavy drinker but it did not appear to affect his work.⁴⁷

Kanyada bordered Kochia location and shared a lot in common. Agriculture in Kanyada and other locations in Homa Bay were well documented in the colonial reports. In 1944, in the company of the local chief the D.O. walked around on foot and visited cotton and groundnut shambas before returning to Marindi by car. It was duties of the D.O. and the chiefs in ensuring the agricultural transformation in Kanyada. As a matter of fact, the agricultural methods which existed before colonialism in Kanyada were considered archaic. In one of the reports, the D.O. asked the people to grow rice in shambas adjacent to the lake since during his inspections of

⁴⁶ KNA/DC/ KSI/4/44

⁴⁷ (Ibid)

agricultural work in Kanyada, he found people only concentrating on growing of vegetables and sweet potatoes. This could not make economic sense.

Proper irrigation and drainage needed to be undertaken or else all work would be undone by the floods from the lake. His suggestion was that the people should build a wall along the lake to prevent flooding of their 'shambas' and to keep hippopotamus at bay. The people had no problem with that as long as the chief would support them in that endeavor.

Schools in Kanyada were involved in agricultural development. Therefore, some agricultural gardens were found in Lala School (SDA), Seru School (R.C.), Ogande School (A. A. C.). At Lala School, there were garden layout but not quite completed, this and the 'Ojuok' hedge should be finished and contour lines put in. Each two adjoining compost pits should be made into one larger one. Preparation of the land had been done well and all plots were ordered planted in accordance with the revised crop rotation as soon as rain falls. On Seru School, six very small plots were ready for planting. Apparently no permanent site for the gardens had been agreed on and this should be done as soon as possible and a surrounding hedge planted. The gardens needed to be twice as large as at present and preferably nearer to the school buildings. On Ogande School a very stony piece of ground but the most should be made of it by collecting as much of the stone as possible and using it for contour lines; anthills should be dug and spread and holes filled up. An 'Ojuok' hedge is needed. The D.O. and the chief ordered that Manuring was urgently required and should be done on a plot at a time.⁴⁸ There were good crops of Mtama throughout Kanyada location and food supplies were assured; groundnuts were in need of rain,

⁴⁸ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1 S.OV.Hodge, D.C.1927

the small acreage of early planted cotton is looking very well, later plantings need weeding, prospects still doubtful.⁴⁹

However some chiefs in Kanyada left a bad legacy in so far as agricultural transformation were concerned. Chief Samuel Ogoma of Kanyada had a very controversial tenure. At initial stages the chief led his people in cotton growing believing this was going to change their lives. As confirmed in political record thus: The DC acknowledged that the old vendetta had been quiescent for more than a year. During this period Isaac Ogoma under Mr. Carver's guidance, had three successful enterprises to his credit: a) the organization or rather cooperation in organizing two regattas at Homa Bay b) the part he took in the initial phase of the elephant drive and c) the cotton planting campaign. Probably the Kanyada cotton will prove to have been the most successful planting.⁵⁰

Paradoxically, he was later accused by the colonial authority in South Nyanza that he was undermining the cotton growing in Kanyada; he was swiftly arrested and forced to Chula Oyamo to be detained alongside members of Mau. Some people who did not like him were engaged in malicious propaganda against him by pouring cotton harvest meant for the ginnery, and alleged that it was Ogoma who ordered them to do that, hence his detention. His arrest was also said to be "a frame" by the people that he had murdered someone.⁵¹

⁴⁹ (ibid).

⁵⁰ (ibid).

⁵¹ K'Odipo: 2013, thesis p. 53

Chief Odoyo of Kanyada location had been accused of land grabbing. He failed to lead his people of Kanyada in socio-economic transformations. The grabbing of land from the people undermined the development of agriculture in Kanyada during the colonial period.⁵²

Gwasi natives were probably the most progressive of all those along Lake shore. Possibly due to fact that they were gingered up by Kasuku, Government interpreter. The elders appear intelligent but hampered by their chief and Wanyapara who are slack. This location had a more prosperous time of it during 1927 than the other Lake Locations.⁵³

Gwasi generally speaking, is an unfertile area bound on the north by 'Kaksingiri', South by 'Karungu', East by 'Kwabwai', and West by Victoria Nyanza. The lake shore part is barren and there is very little cultivation. Cattle are fairly plentiful. There are a few cases of sleeping sickness. Upper Gwasi suffers from a very poor water supply and want of rain generally. The people are however very good and energetic cultivators and frequently produce excellent crops. A few wells are badly needed.⁵⁴

4.6 Chiefs' implementation of Produce Control

One of the reasons for such representations was that all producers of maize, European and native alike, should be compelled to share pro rata in the disadvantages of low-priced exports of maize as well as enjoying the advantages of the higher priced internal market. This would be achieved by the compulsory co-operation of producers of maize which would have the effect of pooling all the maize grown in the Colony. This system is concisely and clearly set out in paragraph 190 of the Report of the Economic Development Committee, 1935, as follows:

⁵² O.I.Mzee Andrea Arot Owade, Arujo Kanyada 4.9.2020

⁵³ KNA/DC/KSI/6/1-sd.S.O.V.Hodge, 1927

⁵⁴ (Ibid).

Under this system the Central Board which would have to be set up would undertake to buy maize through its agents at certain named centres at a price fixed from time to time. Its agents and other merchants would buy from the producers at prices based on the knowledge of the price obtainable at those places. All sales to local consumers would be at prices subject to maxima fixed by the Central Board from time to time within the limits set by legislation and the Central Board would also determine the quantities of maize to be exported.

Within the limits set by legislation, the price fixed for local sales would vary with the quantity exported and the price obtainable on export so as to maintain an average price fair to all maize growers," As will be seen from the above extract the problem with regard to maize was very largely one of export. 156. In 1935 the Maize Inquiry Committee discussed the question of a scheme for controlling the marketing of maize and gave consideration to a pooling scheme. They appreciated the difficulties of the consuming interests, mainly the coffee and sisal industries, but at the same time pointed out the value of the maize industry to the Colony.

That Committee took into consideration that a pool system would have a stabilizing effect by insuring large consumers of maize against violent price fluctuations due to temporary shortages, and pointed out that such fluctuations were sometimes severe owing to the cost of ocean freight and the long haul of imported maize from the coast to upcountry markets. Eventually a sub-committee of the Maize Inquiry Committee was appointed to give further consideration to the matter, and as a result of its deliberations another scheme was embodied in a Maize Control Bill published for criticism in the Official Gazette of the 24th March, 1936, as Government Notice No.'189. That Bill embodied a scheme based on a maize export quota applicable alike to European- and native-grown maize. The Bill does not appear to have been proceeded with and we only wish to refer briefly to the provisions of Clause 6 thereof. 'Under that clause the Director of Agriculture, between the 1st October and the 30th November in each year, had the duty, inter

alia, of : (a) estimating the total quantity of maize coming on to the market in the next twelve months succeeding the 30th November: And, 14:65 (b) estimating the quantity of maize which would be required for consumption in the Colony for the same twelve months; (c) estimating the amount of maize which would be available for export during the same period. We merely comment that with the experience of the last twelve months, which has shown the unfortunate effect of the lack of adequate statistics, especially those of the consumption of maize in the Colony, the Director of Agriculture, if that Bill had been proceeded with, would have had an impossible task. 157.

In 1941 the question of Maize Control was again raised by the K.F.A. and they have supplied us with a copy of their memorandum dated the 9th January, 1941. They advocated a pooling scheme and state in their memorandum. On broad lines it is proposed that the production of maize will be controlled, with the view of providing the internal requirements of these territories." (This means the East African territories.) "Allocations will be made to Europeans and, natives to cover the anticipated internal consumption and a price fixed for this maize which will be pooled. All maize produced in excess of the allocations will be pooled separately and the participants of this pool will receive the export price for the maize they contribute." in the same memorandum, at the twelfth line from the bottom of page "There are two producers for the local market; the European and the 'native'; and a definite quota must be allocated to each group." 'Giving evidence on that memorandum the Chairman said: "The main point about that memorandum was that it did away with the idea of producing maize for export. That had been the crux of the situation in the past that consumers, such as coffee and sisal, were entirely opposed to subsidizing maize for export."

During the early years of colonial rule Indian traders from Oyugis often accompanied administrative officers on safari with imported goods such as hoes utensils, salt and clothes. These they displayed and exchanged with the local people for both agricultural produce and livestock products. The traders also employed local agents to whom they advanced imported goods to peddle in homes in exchange for local produce. With the introduction and acceptance of rupees, and later coins, Indian traders loaned money to their local agents for buying local produce. Occasionally, the Indian traders bought crops on the ground. Soon the local people themselves carried their produce to Indian shops.⁵⁵

While the Nyanza Province Senior Agricultural Officer agreed that local African traders should be given a chance to participate in trade, he considered that it would be a great mistake to withhold licences from foreign firms'.⁵⁶

In October 1937, the Senior Agricultural Officer stated the principles he worked under. They included, among others: limiting the number of traders, mostly Africans, to an economic amount for the produce available; keeping native traders out of trading centres unless they entered on equal terms with Indians; and, making the native trader play his part as the bulker of produce at small centres, to be transported to the larger markets for sale.⁵⁷

He further stated that although he agreed that Africans should be encouraged and trained on the right lines, the administration should in the meantime be careful not to allow too many of them

⁵⁵ KNA/PC/NZA/3/28/30-Letter by K.L. Hunter, D.C. South Kavirondo to P.C. Nyanza Province dated 3rd November 1937, Markets and Marketing of Native Produce

⁵⁶ (ibid)

⁵⁷ KNA/PC/NZA/3/28/58-Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance, Siting of Markets in Nyanza, Native Markets Ordinance 1938-1940

as time would no doubt come when they would be big merchants.⁵⁸ As a consequence, a situation emerged in Kasipul and Kabondo, as was the case in the rest of the district, whereby African traders were confined to small-scale business in small trading centres. Oyugis and other major trading centres remained the preserve of Indian traders.

This situation persisted into the late 1940s. In their small trading centres like Rawinji, Kadongo, Ober and Chabera, African traders established temporary or semi-permanent buildings which housed butcheries, tea shops, retail shops and beer halls. Those who owned sewing machines made clothes on verandahs of retail shops. Within these trading centres there were open air markets in which women sold agricultural produce and bought household requirements, peddled by hawkers. Local African traders, therefore, occupied the lowest link in the marketing chain between Indian middlemen and the Kenya Farmers Association and the Maize and Produce Board, which had the monopoly over purchases of all cereals and legumes. As a result, they did not get a fair share of the profits finally realized by Indian traders and big exporting firms. In their middleman position, Indian traders often collaborated to depress prices they paid to African retail traders who were also primary producers. Although there were rules which provided for the display of prices and the type of weights and measures, Indian traders usually cheated African producers who took produce to them for sale. Prices varied from day to day, and even hourly within a single day. The following case recorded in 1937 by the D.C., K.L. Hunter, about what happened in Kendu Bay is illustrative of what usually took place in most trading centres:

To Kendu Bay trading centre inspecting groundnut buying, Ndege found that 61 cents per pound was the price on boards and on enquiring from wholesale buyers. He was told that they were

⁵⁸ (Ibid).

paying 2/40 per frasila on the pier, without bags. At this rate the price per pound after allowing for small expenses, permitted a profit to the actual buyer of 22 cents. I brought with me a steel arm Avery scale and set about weighing produce and recording on the seller's inspection ticket the amount he should receive. The first reaction was that the traders paid more than I recorded, I suppose, in an attempt to persuade the people that my scale was wrong, and that they should not use it. No doubt, had they succeeded in this attempt they would have monkeyed with the price later. However, sellers continued to weigh in, and after an hour the traders put up the price by 1/4 cent paying therefore 61 cents, and at this stage he left having trained a person to weigh and give the amount to a ready reckoner. It is difficult to understand why the price was raised when correct weights were recorded, but the people naturally were jubilant, saying that myscale had put it up.⁵⁹ Such cases of cheating also occurred in sales of maize, cotton and other products. Indian traders took advantage of the fact that those who took produce to them, who consisted mostly of women, were illiterate.

Cases of bribery and extortion were also common among local chiefs and employees of the Local Native Council who were responsible for keeping order and collecting market dues in trading centres. When reports of these cases reached the provincial administration who demanded explanation, the D.C. of Soyth Nyanza, P.M. Gordon, replied in 1946 as follows: In a situation where bribery and extortion are to my mind almost necessary adjuncts of the exercise of native authority by reason of the inadequate salaries and staff supplied to chiefs by Government, this system appears to be almost laudible. The market courts perform a useful function and are an

⁵⁹ KNA/PC/NZA/3/1/39-Safari Diary, K.L. Hunter, 15th-17th September 1937, Safari Diary, 1935-1938

indigenous growth. The tribute is perfectly open and recognized and cannot be described as bribery.⁶⁰

Ndege argues that, although Per Kongstad and Mette Monsted discussed this effect of capitalism on the families of Western Kenya in the context of the post-independence period, its roots can be traced to the colonial period.⁶¹

4.7 Anti-Soil Erosion Measures

The agricultural policy in South Nyanza was primarily based on soil conservation and the obvious reason that without soil conservation there would be no agriculture. Trash lines had been found to be very effective in the Kisii Highlands, rapidly building up to benches, and were now in almost universal use.⁶²

The remaining erosion was all gully erosion and in almost every case was caused by cattle tracking down the hillsides to water. In the remaining of the district 5' -6' grass strips were used with varying degrees of success, partially protected by a line of aloes along each border, but with dry season fodder shortage that strips were almost invariably grazed bare. In order to eliminate this it was proposed to plant down the whole strip to aloes or sisal.⁶³ The grass strip coverage was not yet complete but again the bulk of the erosion occurring was gully and was a result of

⁶⁰ Letter from DC South Kavirondo to P.C. Kisumu dated 3rd December 1946, Markets and Marketing of Native Produce 1946-1951 KNA/PC/NZA/3/28/29. South Kavirondo District Annual Report 1946. South Kavirondo District Annual Report 1947. J Long, N. An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural Development op, cit. p. 104. See the definition of Capitalist given by Stephen Ilymer in, 'Capital and Capitalist, ' an article which is a foreward to Polly Hill's, Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa, op.cit, , p. XX.

⁶¹ For a detailed discussion of this subject see, Kongstad, P. and Monsted, M. Family, Labour and Trade in Western Kenya, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1980, I pp 77-99 and 172-177.

⁶² KNA/PC/NZA/1/22. (Nyanza Annual Report 1932: 11)

⁶³ (KNA/ DC/KSI/5/3 -South Nyanza Gazetteer)

cattle trekking (up to seven miles) to water.⁶⁴ The ultimate answer, and aim, would be individual water supplies although this was as yet far distant on expense grounds. In the meantime bore holes were being sunk and dams constructed to shorten the trek to water and thus alleviate the erosion.

Following stabilized soil was consolidation when the individual holdings were of not less than an economic acreage. There was little serious fragmentation in the district with the exceptions of Karachuonyo and to a lesser extent Kasipul. In the former, particularly, political feelings on land consolidation were rife and it was considered unwise to press hard for the agrarian revolution necessary to bring about consolidation.

Consolidation logically led to enclosure which in turn led to farming planning. In order to reduce the risk of planned farms being altered by boundary disputes resulting in resurveying and re-planning, a policy was being adhered to of boundary hedges or fences being in existence at least six months as a condition of consideration for farm planning. Great strides were being made in the Kisii Highlands and to a lesser extent in the Suba/Kuria and Luo areas.

The policy was to use the Kisii highlands and Suba/Kuria as epicenters and to gradually expand through the Luo areas, eventually converging on Karachuonyo and East Kasipul. Some Luo, the number exceeding expectations, were requesting farm planning and provided they satisfied certain conditions including having an economic acreage fenced or hedged for at least six months, and were being given priority in order that they may act as foci.

The size of holding, layout, crops and rotations were based upon Provincial Policy which in turn was based upon the land potential divided into three main divisions of ecological zones, and in

⁶⁴ (ibid)

theory would provide the family with subsistence plus a cash income of 100 sterling pounds per annum, although this ideal in the main awaited improved livestock and livestock management.

Elsewhere, the system on agricultural production, as a result of a variety of incentives (agricultural instruction, taxation, the opening up of the District by roads and railways, the organization of marketing facilities for native produce, the creation of new wants that can only be satisfied with money, etc.) the natives no longer produced a mere subsistence but a steadily increasing margin of cash crops. In Maragoli, for example, these consisted chiefly of maize and, to a lesser extent, of beans and bananas as well as of various European fruits and vegetables for the European market (Kisumu, Kakamega gold fields). The production of these extra crops was made possible partly by increasing the acreage under cultivation (in 1932 estimated at 77.45% of all arable land in the southern locations (zone 1)) and partly by improving the quality of the produce and the yield per acre. The total value of native crops exported from the District had risen from Sterling pound 45,868 in 1932 to Sterling pound 134,443 in 1937.⁶⁵

The remainder of the District, the bulk of which was Suba/Kuria, would have to be based on a cattle economy, partially on account of distance from markets and partially the type of country being most suitable for ranching. An emphasis throughout the district but particularly in the southern half was being placed on tree planting, both on planned farms and in locational tree blocks. The proposed policy was to be self-supporting in fuel, building poles and sawn timber, the latter at that time being nearly all imported, whilst in some areas it had reached the stages of burning dried dung as fuel. The trees would have the added advantages of providing breaks

⁶⁵ KNA-DC/KSI/5/5.

against the strong winds prevalent in the Kisii Highlands and the hot dry winds which sweep off Maasai, and at the same time it was hoped that extensive afforestation would increase rainfall.

The policy regarding the development of cash crops was that, growing, collecting, processing, grading and marketing should be undertaken by co-operatives under a considerable degree of Government supervision in the first instant, but with authority being gradually devoluted to Society Committees as their grasp and efficiency increases, eventually resulting in self-reliant efficiently functioning bodies. As an example it was at the time proposed that coffee societies should take over the management of coffee nurseries in their areas in the near future with certain reservations as to quantity, variety and quality of seedlings produced.

To Summarize, the policy was aimed at producing a self-reliant class of peasant farmers with 100 sterling pounds minimum income per annum from mixed farming utilizing good agricultural practices and with stable converging upon the backward Luo areas.

4.8 The Role of LNCS in Developing Education Sector

Chiefs were members of LNCs where they played significant role in decision making on education matters. All the Luo locations had at least one member in the Local Native Council. The powers and deliberations of its members were limited by the fact that the council legally only possessed advisory powers. Its meetings were presided over by the District Commissioner who possessed veto powers. The Council levied rates which went towards the maintainance of roads, markets, schools and payment for emergency famine relief, the salaries of teachers, agricultural and veterinary officers and other administrative personnel. By the 1930s the Council was entrusted with the respon sibility of granting licences to traders.

The Council's legal limitations meant that it was unable to have things done. In 1940 the District Commissioner D. Storrs-Fox, had the following to report:

LNC meetings were held in February, July and August. A useful resolution containing draft market rules was passed at the First of these but none of its approval has been received up to the end of the year. Lack of approval rules, and consequent lack of legal powers to regulate matters pertaining to markets in reserves in having a decidedly adverse effect on progress.⁶⁶

Throughout the 1940 the South Nyanza Local Native Council slowly expanded its activities in the development of more local services. It used the rates it levied to expand its budget which enjoyed huge balances. But these were never put to any intensive or innovative purposes. Recurrent applications for private loans by its members to establish themselves in trade were routinely vetoed by the District Commissioners.⁶⁷

In 1950 the Local Native Council changed its name to the African District Council, which now included all the ethnic groups in South Nyanza. The ADC inherited all the problems which faced the LNC. In the 1950s, apart from performing its normal functions the ADC was also used as machinery for spreading propaganda against the Mau Mau movement through speeches to its members by the District Commissioners, and such nominated members of the Legislative Council as B.A. Ohanga and Kikuyu loyalists who were invited to attend its meetings.

In the LNC, the missions had some powerful allies especially among the Catholic members, who did everything possible to prevent the establishment of a government school in Kisii. For example, in March 22, 1932, the chairman of the school committee and the DC of Kisii, Major

⁶⁶ KNA/DC/KSI/1/4- South Kavirondo Annual Report 1940

⁶⁷ Butterman, J.M. op.cit. p. 185.

C.E.V. Buxton called a meeting to get views on the nature of curriculum the school was to offer. Fr. Doyle, a Roman Catholic priest at Nyabururu suggested that the intended school should be a medium one, teaching all trades and disciplines. He warned against the school offering elementary and primary education which the missions were successfully offering. In summary, he tried to save what could be saved by striking compromise between the government schools and the mission ones.⁶⁸

Contrary to the missionary views especially that of Fr. Doyle of Nyabururu the Kisii chiefs had mixed reactions. For example, Chief Musa Nyandusi in particular: wanted to see the school ready to provide the priceless commodity of educationas pleased at the prospects of a school being built and asked if the pupils might be taught English, since the knowledge was of growing value to the Africans who left their reserves to seek for work. Chief Nyandusi's views as well as those of other members of the school area committee were that the proposed school should run along non-denominational lines where all branches of knowledge could be offered. This could enable the pupils to learn better skills of agriculture, domestic science and how to conduct themselves with providence and generally how to raise the standard of life in the village reserves.

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4.9 The Resurgence of Mumbo Cult

Insecurity in Homa Bay was manifested through the resurgence of Mumboism and ransacking of Indian Shops in Homa Bay. It can be argued that, Homa Bay County was part of the South Kavirondo District in the colonial period. For this reason discussion concerning Mumboism in Homa Bay is best understood within the context of South Kavirondo District which included the

⁶⁸ (Ibid)

⁶⁹ (Ibid)

Gusii region. The challenge to the colonial administration in South Kavirondo District was ‘Mumboism’. ‘Mumboism’ caused a serious threat to the administration of chiefs in South Kavirondo region. That ‘Mumbo’ was patently and primarily anti-colonial has not been questioned by scholars: What has become the main point of contention is the nature of Mumbo as ‘religious’ or ‘political’. Several scholars have argued that ‘Mumbo’ was a purely political movement and that whatever spiritual or religious aura may have surrounded ‘Mumbo’ was consciously adopted as a cover for its political ends.⁷⁰

Placing ‘Mumbo’ in the context of local ideas of patronage and of power reveals it to be not simply a challenge to colonial (and Missionary) rule but an alternative and as attractive one at that. It is here that we grasp the meaning and importance of ‘Mumbo’.⁷¹ Even Campbel, the P.C. Nyanza contented in his report to the Chief Secretary, in which he recommended the use of ruthless methods to stump out the cult; that “Mumboism was politically dangerous and had therefore to be dealt with otherwise there is a possibility of the events which occurred in Blantyre, British Central Africa, being repeated here.⁷² People had solace in ‘Mumboism’ which in turn was totally against the ways of the white man. By incorporating Homa Bay in their governance structure through the appointments of chiefs, DOs and DCs in total disregard of the existing traditional structures that had enabled the people to live peacefully, the colonial authority were seeking to dilute the traditional authority that had served the people of Homa Bay well. It was the work of the locational chiefs to stump out mumboism in their midst.

⁷⁰ Maxon, 1989; Ochieng’, 1977; (Ogot and Ochieng’, 1972:167)

⁷¹ Pritchard: 1963; Fields: 1997

⁷² Ogot: 1963, 257

Mzee Chwanya argued that “all that the colonial government was condemning like drinking of alcohol and other immoralities, to them were the Luo way of life and that they were free to indulge. These activities did not in any way affect their concentration in crop production and other economic activities such as livestock keeping.”⁷³

4.10 The Role of Chiefs in Re-Establishing Normalcy (1912-1934)

Chiefs played significant role in restoring peace and order during the period of mumboism in the entire South Kavirondo.

The Karachuonyo men who were accused by the colonial administration of being members of Mumboism were forced by the colonial administration to provide labour on the Kendu-Homa Bay road, while others were sent on migrant wage labour at Magadi and in Mombasa.⁷⁴ Mumbo was perhaps even more subversive of the colonial project when it rejected the authority of colonial chiefs, the main pillars of indirect rule. The millennial followers treated chiefs with particular contempt. For instance, in South Nyanza at the District Sports Meeting, Mumboists in warriors' garb openly defied both the senior Gusii and an important Luo chief sent by the District Commissioner to stop their dancing. The District Commissioner E. R. S. Davis reported:

I believe that they all intrigued against the authority of the chiefs and headmen and deliberately hindered them from carrying out their duties by insult and threats, and claiming greater powers...When I arrested Muchirogo the day after the meeting of the Mumboists at Kisii, I heard him abusing the chiefs, some of them individually by name and all of them collectively in a way that showed me that such teaching was dangerous to peace and good order, and inciting enmity between his followers and government. He and those who thought like him were without doubt intriguing against constituted power and authority. Moreover, the chiefs were evidently afraid of it and realized that they are the special objects of hatred and scorn.⁷⁵

⁷³ O.I.Walter Chwanya, 24-08-2020, Arujo Village.

⁷⁴ KNA, Campbell, W. F. G. 'Mumbo in Karachounyo', Central Nyanza District NZA PRB, CN/43 (PRB 191).

⁷⁵ Wipper, A. Rural Rebels, p. 42.

As Wipper rightly points out, given the powerful position of chiefs, the authoritarian structure of Gusii society, and the fact that the order had come directly from the District Commissioner, this defiance was particularly bold.⁷⁶ She observes that the Mumboists conspicuous style, the men decked out in fighting attire (perhaps symbolising the former revolts) and participated in tribal dances (perhaps denoting loyalty to tribal values)- suggested premeditated action designed to antagonise as well as to convey a message.⁷⁷

In Karachuonyo where Mumboism established a strong presence in South Nyanza, chief Orinda remarked, 'the sect consists only of young men. There are no old men in the sect or practically none'.⁷⁸ In some areas the young men were preaching to the effect that it would only be a short time before white men go, that they (young men) will be having a free fight, and it will be a case of survival of the fittest. This as Wipper rightly asserts, sounds as if the young men were openly challenging the elders' authority.⁷⁹

The young men joined the movement because they were dissatisfied with the colonial system that had banned their pre-colonial occupation such as cattle raid and inter-ethnic fighting. The young men had relied on raids to acquire cattle needed for bridewealth. The young men now being unemployed were becoming increasingly restless. This provided them with the right incentive to join the movement.

⁷⁶ (Ibid).

⁷⁷ (Ibid).

⁷⁸ (Ibid).

⁷⁹ (Ibid).

Mumboism was a rejection of the pre-colonial traditional authority. At the centre of the traditional authority system were the ancestors and the elders. In death as well as in life, in the Luo traditional society, the ancestors were regarded as being intimately bound up with the welfare of the clan. It was only the elders, because of their lineage relationship to the ancestors that were at a position to ascertain the ancestors' will and, when necessary, make the required propitiations. As Wipper has noted, this gave them much power and permitted them to exercise strong social sanctions and bestowed on the elders the necessary attributes of authority.⁸⁰

But the rise of *Mumboism* witnessed the establishment of other criteria for leadership. As Wipper points out, in keeping with its reversal theme, youth and women, both of whom had occupied relatively low status in the traditional structure, figured prominently as the cult leaders. They now took over the role of the elders and mediated between the ancestors and members of the community. They made many decisions, which in the traditional society were the prerogative of the elders. Therefore, in rejecting age and sex, two major attributes of traditional leadership, and in introducing new norms and leadership roles, Mumbo in essence, rejected "tribal" authority.⁸¹

Most of these movements originated by secession from Christian missions, but some arose independently without any direct connection with a particular mission. Quite a large number of them did not last long. In most cases the general message of these movements contained old as well as new beliefs, religious, political and economic aspirations. Their approach varied from militant revolt to ritualistic prescriptions.⁸²

⁸⁰ (Ibid).

⁸¹ (Ibid).

⁸² (Ibid).

The chiefs assisted the colonial state in ensuring that people were not carrying shields and spears for the sake of ensuring security in their areas of jurisdictions. They also led in the crackdown of Mumboists in Homa Bay County.

4.11 Infrastructures

During the 1930s the only major work which was undertaken was that of maintaining the existing roads which were constantly damaged by rain and heavy Lorries. Only one new road was added - the one connecting Kendu Bay and Kabondo - between 1935 and 1937 to serve cotton interests.⁸³

Lack of adequate transport in South Nyanza led to the establishment of a system of produce-buying and transportation where by transporters only bought produce from specified markets in which their costs were subsidized. The Nyanza Provincial Commissioner felt that the system has a distinct advantage in that transporters are always sure of a full load when directed to a market.

The interests of local producers were not a matter of administrative concern. It was their own duty to transport their produce to the scheduled markets which were few and long distances from their homes. And often, they did so using head portorage along motor roads and traditional foot paths. The very few who possessed donkeys, bicycles and carts fared better. The problem created by the inadequacy of transport facilities persisted throughout the rest of the colonial period. In 1950 the district administration made belated arrangements for additional lorry transport within the district and for extra shipping from the ports. A few local people who had ventured in the

⁸³ Letter by Senior Agricultural Officer, Nyanza Province to Director of Agriculture, Nairobi 23-2-1946, Market and Marketing of Native Produce 1946-1951 KNA/PC/NZA/3/28/29 and South Kavirondo Annual Reports 1945-1947.

transport business also bought second-hand Lorries from local Indian traders. But all these did not adequately ameliorate the situation. The observation by the geographer, Ominde, that 'lack of adequate net work of communication is clearly one of the main causes of economic and social stagnation in South Nyanza district' aptly describes the situation which has its roots in the colonial period.

There was no rail road in Homa Bay and majority of the roads were murrum roads. Bitumen roads were uncommon. Perhaps the only one was the one linking Migori and Ahero was tarmacked.

4.12 Chiefs' Submissions at the 1932-33 Carter Land Commission (Carter Commission Report 1934)

This involved chiefs from the entire country. Senior chief Koinange wa Mbiu contrasted the situation, speaking the idiom of accumulation to the volatile Nairobi crowd of Luo, Akamba, and Gikuyu that oscillated between Kiburi House, headquarters of the Kenya African Union (KAU), and his Kiambaa seat and oathing outpost. "The muthungu (whiteman) was the well fed Fresian herd, leisurely ambling up the pasture ridge from the waterhole; the African was the thirsty *shenzi* cow stampeding down the cliff in search of water' (interview with Okola Owor, village of Liganua, 9 August 1997). The Koinange oath of unity was administered to all who could get to Kiambaa from late 1946 onward, and to trusted Africans in the quarries of Kariobangi outside Nairobi. The Kamba elite also formed a protest movement led by James Mutua and James

Mwanthi. The movement was comprised of mission-educated elite, who were the main critiques of chiefs.⁸⁴

They communicated effectively the feelings and discontent of the people, better than the chiefs. An example was the expulsion of Kamba cattle from Yatta Plateau grazing fields.⁸⁵ The marginalization of women from leadership came as a result of the rise of Young Kavirondo Association, also referred to as *Piny Owacho*, a mass resistance movement which was demanding more consensus and participation. This is seen even in the coining of the term *Piny Owacho*, translated ‘the public asserts’ or ‘the people’s will’ was a term coined by one of the clan elders Ogutu Ahalo from Rangala, Gem. He advocated the use of the title as an explanation to the authorities of the price name and object of the meeting held at Lundha, Gem. Lundha, which was chosen as the venue, was the traditional center for social and war time deliberations. The area was referred to as *Kar Buch Tong*, literally translated as “the place where people met with spears”. The meeting of several chiefs gave the meeting credibility with the Luo people, the administration, and the missions. Most of the people who attended the meeting felt that this was an opportunity to give back the leadership to the Luo traditional leaders.

4.13 Summary

There was economic depression that affected the world economy and Homa Bay County was not an exception. The effects of the depression were actually universal in character. The period, however, was marked by stimulation of commodity production among Africans in Homa Bay County. More chiefs were appointed and participated in the socio-economic and political transformations of their jurisdictions. Chief Gideon Magak Odeka and Chief Paul Mboya Akoko

⁸⁴ Emily Awino Onyango (2018) Gender and development: A History of Women’s Education in Kenya Langham publishers <https://books.google.co.ke>

⁸⁵ (Ibid)

led the Kasipul Kabondo and Karachuonyo people respectively in development of education and agriculture with resilience. It was the chiefs who were relied on in the implementation of produce control. They also were in frontline in anti-soil erosion measures by urging people to practice contour ploughing.

After the formation of LNC, the chiefs became responsible in the articulation of the needs of their people in LNCs. They became the eyes of the government in the provision of health services, building of schools and agricultural development. Huge tasks had been put on their shoulders. Furthermore they were obligated to stamp out Mumbo adherents from their areas. Mumboists were against the presence of white people and were keen on maintaining the African culture and ways of doing things. District Education Board (DEB) was formed to take care of education needs of the Homa Bay people. There were mission schools alongside the government sponsored ones.

A lot of development went on during the period of great depression in Homa Bay County. Reorganization of Administration and increase in chiefs' responsibilities. The recruitment of chiefs such as Isaac Ogoma, Obonyo of Kochia, Stephen Obiga, Paul Mboya, Gideon Magak took place these chiefs led their people in socio-economic development. Chiefs' submissions at the 1932-33 Carter Land Commission Carter Commission Report 1934 were mainly done by chiefs from central Kenya although the Homa Bay chiefs had also attended. Chiefs were given more powers to deal with Mumbo Cult with a view to its eradication. There was Stimulation of commodity production like cotton, maize, groundnuts, livestock, ghee spearheaded by the chiefs.

The next chapter, chapter five deals with impact of the Second World War, socio-economic changes and the rise of nationalism in Homa Bay County

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SECOND WORLD WAR, SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES AND THE RISE OF NATIONALISM (1939-1963)

5.1 Introduction

This thesis chapter evaluated the impact of the Second World War on socio-economic transformations and the rise of nationalism upto 1963. The Second World War led to the recruitment of African youths to serve alongside British troops against the Germans. While serving in the war, they learned about the essence of freedom fighting. The chapter also discussed; the recruitment of African Pioneer Corps, requisition of livestock and crops, chiefs submission at the 1943 Food Shortage Commission, continued absence of political associations, the rise of nationalism and the establishment of Locational Councils and African District Councils as bodies put in place by the colonial state to ensure development reached the grass roots under the supretendancy of the African chiefs.

5.2 Recruitment of African Pioneer Corps

The Second World War was fought between the German troops and the allies. Africans got involved in this war which was not theirs in the first place. The causes of the Second World War had nothing to do with the African man. The Japanese militarism and bellicose acts of Adolf Hitler excercerbated the Second World War. The treaty of Versailles had failed to stop the possibility for the occurrence of another war among the European powers. Indeed, Hitler effectively undermined the treaty of Versailles after becoming Chancellor in 1933 and he had the

support of Benito Mussolini of Italy in his aggressions. The British Prime Minister of the time Neville Chamberlain made efforts for peace which ended up being an act of futility. So many Africans soldiers fought in the war and lives were lost. They were sent to the frontline in Europe and many men from the British colonies served as bearers and in other non-combatant roles.

Before the fall of France a major African military contribution to the war effort was not envisaged. In March 1940 the War Cabinet decided that the main military contribution of British Africa excluding South Africa should be the provision of an African division for possible service in Africa and the Middle East, joining other imperial units from formations such as the Indian Army and the Australian Imperial Force. Pre-war plans envisaged the dispatch of two West African brigades to reinforce East Africa should Italy enter the war.

The recruitment of new combat units for service overseas was considered by the War Cabinet but rejected, and the idea of using Africans as Pioneer Corps labourers was also ruled out, for the time being at least. The need for large-scale African recruitment was not foreseen, and equipment shortages meant that it would be difficult to furnish new African fighting units with necessary weapons, vehicles and kit. Military mobilization in East Africa was greater than in any other part of the continent. Reflecting the South Africa-like attitudes of Kenya's settlers and their power.¹

Recruitment for the KAR in East and Central Africa had to overcome suspicions where KAR had a bad reputation. The memory of the dreaded Carrier Corps, a military labour and portage unit recruited for the fighting in East Africa during the First World War, meant that the military had a

¹ Ashley J.(2006) *The British Empire and the Second World War*, Hambledon Continuum, The Tower Building, London pp.186-187

sullied reputation amongst many people. It is a measure of how far colonial attitudes had progressed over the ensuing twenty years that the treatment received by Africans in the army in 1939-45 was incomparably better than in the previous world war. Throughout British Africa recruitment relied on the support of local chiefs, propaganda, the allure of military service and the financial rewards it could offer. As in Jamaica, it was also emphasized that African homes were at risk from German and Italian aggression and needed to be defended. Recruitment tours saw district commissioners, chiefs, army officers and smartly-turned out African servicemen visiting community gatherings. The unit's recruitment tours relied on prestige of these model soldiers and live-fire displays, demonstrations of gymnastics, mine detection, unarmed combat and ceremonial drill to tempt people away from the villages and into the training camps and the wide world beyond.²

Fazan and most of his District commissioners, under the aegis of the Nyanza Manpower sub-committee, enthusiastically supported the establishment of the military labour unit in Nyanza, and claimed that the populous Nyanza province would have no difficulty raising manpower for the unit. They framed their arguments within a long standing colonial discourse that often perceived Nyanza Province in Western Kenya as a labour reserve teeming with an inexhaustible supply of labour. They argued that Nyanza was inhabited by people who were suitable for this kind of labour unit. They identified the Luo as the most suitable communal group in Nyanza Province for the unit.

² Ashley J.(2006) *The British Empire and the Second World War*, Hambledon Continuum, The Tower Building, London pp.186-187

In singling out the Luo for recruitment into the proposed labour unit, Fazan and his colleagues, like most previous colonialists, were therefore falling into a familiar colonial trap of using ethnicity as a determinant for service in various categories of colonial and military institutions. Fazan and his commissioners therefore believed that Nyanza was endowed with enough manpower and the right kind of men for the proposed military labour unit. He in particular argued that Nyanza province would not have any problem sustaining the unit because even “in normal times Nyanza provided about half of the colony’s native labour. (And)...they also provided a large proportion of the police force and a considerable proportion of the KAR

Many African soldiers joined the military purely for economic reasons, that is, for wages and material rewards they expected to earn from the military for their service. For example some joined because certain retired soldiers in their villages owned beautiful things like beds, blankets, and curtains in their homes. Since the military offered the best wages to men without formal training and education in the colony, these soldiers believed that military service provided them with the best opportunity to save money with which to buy land, clothes, blankets, bicycles, and livestock to offer as dowry to families of their brides. Other men joined the military for social reasons. Such men saw military service as a good opportunity to demonstrate how courageous and masculine they were to their peers.³

Initially, a crisis had engulfed the newly formed Pioneer Corps at their various bases at Ahero, and Nairobi, Kenya. The main problem was the government's refusal to issue African members

³ KNA/PC/NZA/2/3/21Fazan, Nyanza Provincial Commissioner, memorandum entitled “Labor Corps”, The Pioneers, 1939-42, , Fazan, “East African Pioneer Corps: Memorandum on the Cost of training a Nucleus in peace Time”, The Pioneers, 1939-42.

of the Pioneer Corps with rifles for military service, among other grievances. Indignant at what they perceived as an affront to their masculinity, the pioneers in Nairobi demanded to know why the government was refusing to arm them with rifles as promised during recruitment.⁴

On 18 September, 1939, they confronted their officers, and reminded them that: "you told us that we are just as much askaris as the KAR (King's African Rifles) because the KAR cannot fight unless they have roads for Lorries to take their supplies to them. Surely then, if we have to make the roads, we shall be in front of the troops and be slaughtered like women unless we are armed." The situation deteriorated, and the pioneers, according to the government, went on "strike" over the lack of rifles.⁵ Initially, the government responded to the striking pioneers intransigently, and dismissed "a few malcontents." The pioneers were not cowed, however; the protests continued. Eventually, the government succumbed and the pioneers were assured by the government that their grievances would be looked into.⁶

The pioneers scored a major victory in their struggle for a respectable and dignified status in the military when the government specifically promised to arm 25 percent of them with rifles during combat. The pioneers were also promised by the government that all of them would be trained and taught how to use firearms during military service.⁷

Owino argues that:

⁴ Commissioner, memorandum entitled "Labor Corps", The Pioneers, 1939-42, Fazan, "East African Pioneer Corps: Memorandum on the Cost of training a Nucleus in peace Time", The Pioneers, 1939-42, University, History Department.

⁵ (Ibid)

⁶ (Ibid)

⁷ (Ibid)

Michael Blundell, the Commander of a battalion of the " Pioneer Company during World War, also wrote a memoir that briefly touches on the Pioneer Corps in World War I. However, while Blundell's memoir is very important for our understanding of some of the experiences of the pioneers in World War II, it largely focuses on his own personal experiences in colonial Kenya, and largely ignores the rank-and-file African view of the Pioneer Corps. This article therefore hopes to build on these studies that deal with the social experience of African soldiers during the colonial period by focusing on what Timothy Parsons calls "the rank-and-file African soldiers"-the African laborers who served in the Pioneer Corps during the World War II.⁸

Since the pioneers served in a labor unit during the war, it is important for them to be studied in their own right and their story told because they served just as much as soldiers in other units during the war, soldiers whose stories have already been told. Indeed, an examination of the pioneers is particularly urgent given that the four who survived are elderly and ailing, and are on the verge of disappearing with their knowledge of the Pioneer Corps, endangering our effort to tell their side of the story for the historical record. In 2001, Cpl Thomas Alfred Oluoch Odawa expressed the hope that the memory, honor, and sacrifice of the pioneers during the war were not in vain and would not be forgotten by historians.

The Pioneer Corps recruited would later become associated with the struggle for Kenya's independence. It played its part well during the war period (Second World War 1939-45) Kenya had become an important British military base for successful campaigns against Italy in the Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia. According to Owino (2015). The war brought money and an opportunity for military service for 98,000 men, called "askaris". The war stimulated African nationalism. After the war, African ex-servicemen sought to maintain the socio-economic gains

⁸ (Ibid)

they had accrued through service in the King's African Rifles (KAR). Looking for middle class employment and social privileges, they challenged the existing relationships within the colonial state. For the most part, veterans did not participate in national politics, believing that their aspirations could best be achieved within the confines of colonial society.⁹

The social and economic connotations of KRA service, combined with the massive wartime expansion of Kenyan defense forces, created a new class of modernized Africans with distinctive characteristics and interests. These socioeconomic perceptions proved powerful after the war.

Modernization was accelerated by the Second World War. Among the Luo the larger agricultural production unit was the patriarch's extended family, mainly divided into a special assignment team led by the patriarch, and the teams of his wives, who, together with their children, worked their own plots on a regular basis. This stage of development was no longer strictly traditional, but still largely self-sufficient with little contact with the broader market. Reassures of overpopulation and the prospects of cash crops, already in evidence by 1945, made the subsistence economic system increasingly obsolete and accelerated a movement to commercial agriculture and emigration to cities.¹⁰

As Kenya modernized after the war, the British religious missions changed their roles, despite the efforts of the leadership of the Church Missionary Society to maintain the traditional religious focus. However the social and educational needs were increasingly obvious, and the

⁹ en.m.wikipedia.org

¹⁰ (ibid)

threat of the Mau Mau uprisings pushed the missions to emphasize medical, humanitarian and especially educational programs. Fundraising efforts in Britain increasingly stressed the non-religious components. Furthermore, the imminent transfer of control to the local population became a high priority.¹¹

The Nyanza Province Annual Report for 1942 remarked that in 1942, approximately 14,000 head of cattle were sold to the colonial administration to feed the troops. The Report acknowledged that since the beginning of the war, 27,000 head of cattle had been sold.¹²

In South Nyanza, the Annual Report for 1943 noted that more cattle were demanded as the district was given the high quota of 11,000 head. By the end of the year, the Supply Board had bought 11,411 head of cattle. It was not likely that such a high figure could be maintained for long.¹²⁸ South Nyanza suffered the greatest drain of livestock of all the other four districts that constituted Nyanza Province.

For instance, it has been noted that from the beginning of the war up to the end of 1942, a total of 27,000 head of cattle had been sold to the Supply Board and out of that, South Nyanza alone supplied 11,411 head of cattle up to 1943. This meant that the other four districts had only supplied about 15,000 head of cattle, amounting to about 3,700 per district. Actually Kenya

¹¹ (ibid)

¹² KNA, Nyanza Province Annual Report, 1942, p. 3

went down in history having fought on the British side.¹³ Cattle were forcefully seized for the purpose of feeding the troops.¹⁴

According to Onduru (2009), the Second World War had various effects. The people of South Nyanza were called upon to increase food production to feed the troops. In spite of the large number of men recruited to serve in the war, production of agricultural produce still increased. For instance, the Nyanza Province Annual Report for 1942 noted that the export of cereals from August, when the crops began to come to the market, to the end of the year was approximately 40,000 bags, a record figure.¹⁵

In South Nyanza, the District Annual Report for 1943 recorded an increased acreage under cultivation, but that adverse weather conditions had culminated in the failure of the short rains for the second year in succession.¹⁶ During the war, agricultural production increased at the same time, the absence of men notwithstanding. This contradictory situation can only be explained from a gender perspective. As most men left the reserves to participate in the war, more agricultural work fell on women and the few men who remained at home. Women had to produce more food crops to meet war demands as well as domestic needs. The households in South Nyanza were also required to supply livestock to feed the troops.¹⁷

One interviewee recalled:

¹³ www.kenyabuzz.com

¹⁴ O.I. Daniel Agutu Arogo Kodumo, Kabondo, 14.7.2019

¹⁵ Hay, J. M. 'Economic Change in Luoland', p. 193., Onduru, T.A. Economic Change in South Nyanza, Kenya, 1880 to 1945, PhD Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and June 2009.

¹⁶ KNA, South Nyanza District Annual Report, DC/KSI/1/5, 1943, p. 8

¹⁷ KNA, South Kavirondo Political Record Book, 1930-1940, DC/KSI /3/5, 1939, p. 2.

The colonial administration confiscated livestock and food crops from the households and used to feed the troops. When jonanga (The colonial officials in the context used here) came to the village, the people just ran away. The officials then confiscated livestock and also entered granaries and took food crops.¹⁸

The Nyanza Province Annual Report for 1942 remarked that in 1942, approximately 14,000 head of cattle were sold to the colonial administration to feed the troops. The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 necessitated the buying and transportation of local produce in greater quantities than before. This resulted in untold damage of the roads which were not meant for heavy traffic. Lorries which were already old further depreciated through wear and tear. During the war the number of Lorries in the whole district increased to 21. Kendu-Bay and Homa Bay could not cope with the volume of produce exports as they had insufficient storage facilities. The rail head and harbor at Kisumu had insufficient lighterage and inadequate rolling stock and could, therefore, not also cope with large exports, even after the war. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, they articulated African grievances, petitioning the government, and even sending memoranda to the colonial secretary in Britain, regarding the low prices of African grown commodities, including groundnuts and the licensing system, which was skewed in Indian traders' favour. It was this commercial consciousness that fed into struggles for political independence, first through the Kanya African Union in the early 1960s.

During the war, agricultural production increased at the same time, the absence of men notwithstanding. This contradictory situation can only be explained from a gender perspective. As most men left the reserves to participate in the war, more agricultural work fell on women and the few men who remained at home. Women had to produce more food crops to meet war

¹⁸Onduru's Interviews With: Timothy Toro.

demands as well as domestic needs. The households in South Nyanza were also required to supply livestock to feed the troops.

Evidence from South Nyanza shows that by 1945 trade in agricultural and livestock products were in African hands.¹⁹

By 1944, one lorry was owned by an African trader.²⁰ The period from 1930 to 1945 was marked by a shift in the pattern of trade from Asian to African domination. Africans controlled trade at both the produce markets and trading centres in rural South Nyanza. Magak Odeka allowed people to trade in markets only after they were done with farming in Kabondo and Kasipul. His emphasis was on agriculture which to him took precedence over other activities.²¹

Little trade existed during this period of colonialism in Homa Bay County. I would use the illustration from the cases of the twin Islands of Kaksingri and Mfangano and Gwasi on the entrepreneurship at the time. No much trade existed at the time in these locations. In Kaksingri Chief Ogwata was described as keen in trade. A considerable trade in salt was carried out, most with Waganda traders and later with the Kisii. Mfangano under Chief Oyugi was a mountainous island covered with scrub, very barren and consequently little cultivation, most food was brought at Kaksingiri and Gwasi in exchange for fish and livestock. People until that time were wild and superstitious. Cattle were very plenty owing to the fact that this island escaped rinderpest but many died from poorest of the pastures.²²

¹⁹ KNA, South Kavirondo District Annual Report, DC/KSI/1/6, 1944, p. 6

²⁰ (Ibid)

²¹ O.I.retired chief, Samson Osanya, Kachien location in Kasipul

²² KNA/DC/KSI/6/1

Onduru (2009) stated that has pointed out that African-owned enterprises such as shops, water-powered maize mills, carts and lorries owned by Africans became increasingly abundant from the 1930s to 1940s. He notes for instance, in Kikuyuland, administrative reports were full of remarks such as “the number of native dukas (shops) continued of course to multiply.” He observed further that even in a district like South Kavirondo (South Nyanza), where the sort of development which in Central and North Kavirondo had taken place in the late 1920s were more typical of the 1930s, the District Officer could contend himself with the observation that “small native dukas are springing up all over the reserves.”²³

The period from the 1930s to 1945 was characterised by the most rapid increase in African engagement in trade to have occurred since the start of the colonial rule. As was noted earlier, Asians dominated trade in South Nyanza (for this study, Homa Bay County) and Nyanza more generally from the beginning of the colonial era. Then in 1925 Local Native Councils were granted powers to issue trading licenses in the markets and trading centres.²⁴ This marked the first time that Africans started to play a major role in trade since they received trading licenses from the Local Native Councils. The pre-1930s trading centres in South Nyanza were mostly reserved for Asian traders.

But from the 1930s, newly established produce markets were allocated to African traders. Most of these produce markets were located in the rural areas, far away from the gazetted trading centres. The 1935 Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance for Nyanza Province made provision for the quality control of produce and also fixed physical distances between trading centres and

²³Kitching, G. *Class and Economic Change in Kenya*, pp. 169-170

²⁴Butterman, J. M. ‘Luo Social Formation in Change’, p. 184.

produce markets.²⁵ Evidence from South Nyanza shows that by 1945 trade in agricultural and livestock products were in African hands.²⁶ But what is also evident is that the Asians still controlled the transportation of commodities to the control buyers. Even in the transport sector, however, Africans had already started showing signs of penetration. By 1944, one lorry was owned by an African trader.²⁷

Young men from our village were recruited to go and serve in the second war as career corps. Some of my close people were recruited to serve. They were not forced but the chief pleaded with them to go and serve and bring money and development home. Retired Assistant Chief Dishon Olewe, confirmed that the chiefs were used to recruit young men into the British army during the Second World War.²⁸ According to him, it was Chief Magak Odeka of Kasipul Kabondo who recruited Onjong'a Osala, Amboka Ojwang', Robert Kaki and Parasis Odhiambo Abuor who were later own regarded by the villagers as heroes or veterans of the Second World War. Amboka Ojwang' and Onjong'a Osala after the war were unable to start families. Local myths had it that they had killed so many people in the Second World War, and that was why they could not marry and have families. Another O.I. Mzee Isaya Owuodho Opiyo said he was himself almost recruited into the British army at Ahero but did not because he was still young and weighed less kilos required therefore he could not qualify as much as he wanted to serve as a Pioneer Corp. However, his cousin by the name Okombo Anyango was conscripted and served in the British army in Italy.

²⁵Fearn, H. An African Economy, pp. 156-159

²⁶KNA, South Kavirondo District Annual Report, DC/KSI/1/6, 1944, p. 6.

²⁷(ibid)

²⁸Dishon Olewe Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

Some of the people who had served in the Second World War like Mzee Okombo Anyango managed to get employed in tea farms in Kericho as *nyapara* (foreman) with Brook Bond Kenya Limited. Okombo was remembered for helping for saving the life of a man from Kachien known as Olung'o Ngeso from the wrath of an *Mzungu* manager. Olung'o was a tea plucker and when he was off duty on a Sunday he took a lot of liguor and bhang and due to intoxication, went straight to the company's office where he took files and trhough them out in the rain. When the matter got to the attention of the manager, he came to the scene and drew out his gun to shoot dead Olung'o Ngeso. Using his military experience, Mzee Okombo disarmed the manager and that was how Olung'os life was saved.²⁹

We argue that, using the example of Mzee Okombo Anyango, the Second World War preprepared the African veterans for other duties as *nyapara's* in the white farms. They served the colonial government as Pioneer Corps and as civilians within the wider objectives of the colonial state, to appropriate the resources in the colonies for the development of the metropole. The periphery was left with little development to talk about. The veterans became part and parcel of migrant labourers. Much of their incomes were used for payment of the taxes. Back in the vilages, chiefs went on collecting taxes from the homes of these veterans.

5.3 Requisition of Livestock and Crops

This was for the purpose of feeding troops in the Second World War (1939-1945) and it was the African chiefs who spearheaded the exercise on behalf of the colonial state. As Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale have eloquently argued, colonial conquest in Kenya was the work of force

²⁹ O.I. Mzee Owuotho Opiyo, Kawadhgone, Karachonyo 5.8.2019

such the British employed violence on a locally unprecedented scale, and with unprecedented singleness of mind.³⁰ The use of force and intimidation to ensure payment was viewed by the African people as a punitive measure to be resisted by all means.

In Kenya, this policy was most common before the outbreak of the First World War. The main policy concern of the colonial administration was to obtain capitulation to ease the collection of hut and poll tax. For without direct African taxation, the colonial state would be unable to function by solely relying on indirect taxation and grants-in-aid. Consequently, during the early days of colonialism, the introduction of taxes brought with it brutality and violence with whole villages being razed to the ground, granaries looted and livestock confiscated. More pressing for the white settlers in Kenya, was the call to use taxation as a way to compel labourers into wage labour. Africans were at first unwilling to offer their labour and to achieve that, the colonial administration first destroyed the self-sufficiency of the African economy. It did so by alienating some African land, confiscating some of their African livestock and imposing punitive taxation. Consequently, most of the revolts witnessed were actually violent responses to agrarian social changes brought about by colonialism, which disrupted the lives of Africans.³¹

Sigei argues:

A major drawback lay with the military purchasers who offered inordinately low prices for the reason that there was actually no shortage of livestock within the country. This glut of livestock was caused by the alienation of African land and the lumping together of the Africans, which led to congestion in the reserve and meant that livestock had to compete for pasture.

³⁰ Mungeam, *British Rule in Kenya, 1895-1912*, p. 30.

³¹ David Burton, 'Taxation of Africans: Transvaal 1902-1907'; in *Kleio*, xix, pp. 50-51. Burton has in addition given a stimulating overview of the rate, efficiency, wages earned, benefits received and the place of taxation in South African history

According to George Ndege, 'the situation was aggravated by the fact that the average male African wage labourer struggled to purchase and own livestock'.³² Despite the fact that people were reluctant to sell their livestock, coercion and intimidation were often used. Plains inhabited by the Tugen had 178 814 beef cattle and 387 708 sheep. This was considered quite a high figure, which gave the military an excuse to forcefully acquire livestock for the war effort and the money paid for, appropriated in the form of taxation.³³

The fact of excess livestock was discernible too among the Kamba. Recession had led to low prices for livestock and lack of a market for their hides and skins. Lack of employment opportunities and reduced wages combined with drought in 1921 to make the Kamba and other Kenyan people unable to raise the money for tax.³⁴

But the situation did not deter the administration from demanding that those taxpayers who defaulted offer sufficient stock to auction centers. These centers had been established, for example in Machakos among the Kamba, Dagoretti; among the Kikuyu, Tambach among the Keiyo and Kimilili in Kakamega among the Luhya.³⁵ At these monthly auctions, the colonial state was able to collect its taxes by placing the chiefs at strategic points. This was to become a common monthly feature among the pastoral people like the Maasai, the Kalenjin and the inhabitants of the NFD.

³² George Oduor Ndege 'History of Pastoralism in Kenya (1895-1980) Ochieng, an Economic History of Kenya, p. 98.

³³ KNA/BAR/1/2/7, Baringo District Annual Report, 1919-1925

³⁴ See David Anderson, 'Herder, Settler and Colonial rule; A 'History of the peoples of the Baringo plains Kenya, 1890-1914', PhD thesis, Cambridge University, 1983, pp.11-27.

³⁵ Ndege George, 'History of Pastoralism in Kenya', p.98.

According to Mzee Jumbo Oindo, confiscation of livestock also took place in Karachuonyo an action which was fiercely resisted by Ojijo Oteko. Chief Paulo Mboya assisted in confiscation of livestock in Karachuonyo and this brought him problems with Ojijo Koteko of piny Owacho fame. Mzee Joash was supported by another O.I. Hana Awino Opii, Oundo Kanjira, Karachuonyo.³⁶

Mzee Jumbo believed that Chief Paulo Mboya was behind all these problems of confiscations. Being a Luo himself he ought to have known the importance that the Luo attached to cattle. They use cattle for economic purposes, payment of dowry and agriculture as among other benefits of keeping cattle. So the chief should have known this and advised the white man on other ways of obtaining taxes from the people without confiscating their animals.

In essence, the colonial administration's policy towards African livestock keeping was riddled with contradiction. On one hand, they required adequate livestock to service the needs of the war effort, but on the other hand, the colonial policies that were put in place discriminated against the growth of that sector. During and after the war, cattle movements were put under veterinary quarantine. This inhibited the development of a vibrant cattle economy. Livestock could neither be driven to auctions for sale nor would they be taken for pasture, to watering points and to salt licks.

³⁶ Mzee Joash Opondo Jumbo Oindo, Kanjira 24.6.2020

5.4 Chiefs' Submissions at the 1943 Food Shortage Commission

From oral and archival evidence we know that there were, at least, four main colonial famines in Luo land in 1906-7, 1917-19, 1928-29 and in 1942-43. During the same period there several localized food shortages in various parts of Nyanza³⁷. According to O.I. Paul Okombo, the submission at the Food Shortage Commission was as a result of crop failures in the subsequent years. He was young but heard from the elders that Chief Kasuku Matunga had gone to Nairobi to present his views at the Carter Commission.³⁸

In Nyanza, evidence was given by several 'natives' that too many 'natives' had left the reserves to join the Armed Forces and to take up employment in industries, with the result that mostly old men and the womenfolk were left to carry on the cultivation and production of foodstuffs. In war time it is inevitable that a considerable number of the younger men should leave the native reserves to join the Army and also to work in essential industries. The Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza, gave evidence on this matter and assured us that the question of how many natives could be spared from the reserves in Nyanza for the Armed Forces and civilian employment had been very carefully gone into at the beginning of the war; that the numbers agreed on had not been exceeded; and that in his considered opinion the number of natives who left the reserves for both the Armed Forces and civilian employment had no material effect on production.

Under section 3 of the Native Foodstuffs Ordinance Cap. 135 of the Revised Edition the Governor in Council may, by Proclamation, prohibit the export, and the purchase for re-sale or export, of

³⁷ Colonial Famines in Luoland, Kenya, 1905-1945 by William Ochieng <https://www.jstor.org>

³⁸ According to O.I. Paul Okombo Magunga 24.7.2019

native food stuffs from any district or area which is suffering from, or threatened with, a food shortage. Proclamations covering the whole of the Colony, except the Northern" Frontier and Turkana districts, were gazetted on the 25th March, 1943, prohibiting the movement of native foodstuffs from districts, except with the permission of the District Commissioner. Particularly in Nyanza, the natives in their evidence complained that such prohibition had prevented them from taking food from districts which had not been seriously affected by the shortage to districts where the shortage was most acute.

The Acting Provincial Commissioner and the Senior Agricultural Officer, Nyanza, explained to us that the movement of maize between districts was which was promptly rectified, that the movement of foodstuffs from district to district had been completely stopped. We are satisfied that this prohibition on the movement of native foodstuffs between district and district was a wise step taken by Government in view of the food shortage and, but for such step, much more maize would have found its way on to the black market and they were sold at exorbitant prices.

The informants confirmed that famines used to occur in Homa Bay County. And even after the chiefs's presentation at the food commission food shortages did not come to an end. But the system of *kisuma* (visiting relatives for food support) ensured that those who were extremely affected by the food shortage were assisted by their extended relatives. They recalled that their economy had largely depended on pastoralism and agriculture. The cultivation of millet and shorgum was done on small scale basis and when there was a famine crisis, people really suffered. The famine led to deaths of cattle hence food insecurity.

5.5 Continued absence of Political Associations

Political associations in Homa Bay County were not active. The only organized assembly which bore a semblance of a political organization was Arch Deacon Walter Edwin Owen's South Kavirondo Tax Payer's Welfare Association. Active political groups were mute in Homa Bay County during the colonial administration period in Kenya. According to an oral interview with Mzee Obong'o Nyiego, he informed me that politics in Homa Bay was not active and even Chief Magak was really against politicking.³⁹ He was being accused of having collaborated with the colonial masters, and lured one of the early nationalists, who were spearheading protracted anti-colonial war, to his arrest. This was the late Walter Fanuel Odede, who had just succeeded Jomo Kenyatta, as the acting President of the defunct Kenya African Union (KAU), and was then a member of the colonial legislative Council.⁴⁰

However, in Central Kenya, political associations were taking roots. There was Kikuyu Central Association (KAU) and Kenya Association of Study Union (KASU)

Most respondents could not remember whether Homa Bay people had organized themselves in search of political parties. But the national politics would eventually percolate to the people of Homa Bay County. Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and other earlier nationalists were spreading the message of independence throughout Kenya and people were starting to gain political consciousness. Chiefs still held sway over the socio-economic affairs of the people. But then, people would get their issues discussed in LCs and ADCs where chiefs were their representatives.

³⁹ Mzee Hezron Obong'o Nyiego Kachien, Kasipul 13.7.2019

⁴⁰ Kasipul-Kabondo, a political profile for the agriculturally rich region in Luo-Nyanza, by Leo Odera Omolo in Oyugis, Sunday 20th December, 2009-blog.jaluo.com

By 1963, there were no active political Associations in Homa Bay County. But some people from South Nyanza, in today's Homa Bay County were already active politically such as Lawrence Oguda and Tom Joseph Mboya.

5.6 The Rise of Nationalism and the Establishment of Locational Councils (LCs) and African District Councils (ADCs) and Chiefs' Responsibilities (1939-1963)

The powerful central government's standing committee for ADCs had the responsibility of advising the Minister for Local Government on all matters relating to local government in African areas. These Committees also had the power to approve all ADC estimates. Complaints by the ADCs were forwarded to the concerned offices through the provincial administration (central government). These included the DC, the Provincial Local Government Officer and the Provincial Commissioner.

The central government took over traders' licences as well as African Court revenues. This was based on the proposals contained in the White Paper on financial relationships and spheres of provision of services between the central government and ADCs. The paper stated that health services, other than government hospitals, were to be administered by local authorities with a fifty per cent subsidy from the central government. Primary education also received a two thirds subsidy. ADCs continued to finance agricultural extension work and veterinary services in the African areas.⁴¹

In 1953, the 1950 ADC Ordinance was amended to empower any council, either alone or in conjunction with the government, to request for financial assistance for trading purposes to

⁴¹ T. Mulusa, *The Image of Local Councillors: A Partial Re-Interpretation of the Reasons for the Decline of Local Government in Kenya*, M.A. Political Science, University of Nairobi, 1972, p. 123.

individual Africans or African companies, African cooperative societies, or any other African cooperate body, by making or guaranteeing loans or credit. This amendment empowered the government, where the council was desirous of acting jointly with the government for the purpose of giving or guaranteeing loans, to form a joint board with the authority to administer any funds subscribed jointly by the council and the government.

There was still a strong feeling according to the British parliamentary democracy could not work in Kenya yet. This was a key step forward in the development of local government but African political leaders demanded for equality with the British in administration.⁴²

The major was the poll rate which was levied at a flat rate per head. The actual poll rate levied during the period ranged from two shillings to forty seven shillings per head in different areas. There were also cesses collected from various marketable agricultural and animal products. This cess was fixed at five per cent of the price of marketed produce paid by a producer. Other sources of revenue included traders' and bicycle licences, native liquor licences as well as ADC investments that accrued income.⁴³

According to Ndege (1987) in both within and outside the Local Native Councils, the District Commissioners exercised authoritarian control. The activities of one particular District Commissioner, D. Storrs-Fox, caused a lot of apprehensiveness among the Luo of South Nyanza, leading to the writing of an anonymous letter against him, to the Nyanza Provincial Commissioner on January 30 1941. In this letter, the writers complained against the DC that

⁴² B.A. Ogot 'Kenya under the British, 1895 to 1963', in B.A. Ogot and W.R. Ochieng' (eds), Kenya, pp. 289-290.

⁴³ D.A. Lury and A.A. Shah, 'Local Government in Kenya: Income and Expenditure, 1959-1961', East African Economic Review, Vol. 2, No. 1 1966, p.3.

when people, including chiefs and elders went to him for consultations he kicked and boxed and chased them away or forced them to do difficult work, like carrying heavy stones and cutting grass and threatened to draft them into the War. The writers demanded his transfer. The Provincial Commissioner responded to the allegations by stating that 'no notice is taken of anonymous letters.'

The District Commissioner himself did not deny the allegations. In a reply to the PC he defended himself thus:

Although it is possible that the writer has somewhat exaggerated my general unpopularity, I have no doubt that I give frequent offence to numerous persons in the ordinary course of duty, nor do I see how one can avoid doing so without a sacrifice of efficiency.⁴⁴

It was under these circumstances that Locational Advisory Councils were established in South Nyanza in 1946. After the Second World War, the Colonial State desired to exercise even greater administrative control over the locations and to increase their responsibility in the financing and management of their own activities. In 1946 the South Nyanza LNC proposed to institute LACs under the chairmanship of chiefs.⁴⁵

The LACs were to be subsidiary and play an advisory role to the LNC. They were also 'to provide expression of local opinion' a means whereby the administration could disseminate orders and propaganda', and 'an introduction of a more democratic element into the realm of locational administration, giving the younger and better educated elements a 94 place in local affairs and administration'. Like the LNCs, the LACs were required to provide a wide range of

⁴⁴ KNA/PC/NZA/ 3/1/444-Native Administration South Kavirondo

⁴⁵ KNA/DC/KSI/1/8-South Kavirondo Annual Report

services which included capital grants to primary schools, the establishment of baraza halls, maintenance of location roads, water supplies, dispensaries, community development, tree planting, and the promotion of better agriculture.⁴⁶

For these purposes they were allowed to levy locational rates varying from 3 to 10 shillings, on a Voluntary basis'. They were to exercise control over the expenditure of the funds they collected. In 1950 a new head called Locational Council Approved Schemes was included in the ADC Estimates. Under it the LACs were required to submit proposals for development with locational estimates to be submitted to the ADC Finance and General Purposes Committee for approval.⁴⁷ Locational chiefs became the ex-officio chairmen of the LACs. Members of the councils were in theory nominated from sizeable sub-locations by the District Commissioner for a term of three years. In practice it was the chiefs who recommended for approval by the DC the names of persons likely to support their will.⁴⁸

The LACs operated without legal status until 1959 when legislation was formulated to make them statutory authorities with wide powers but on the 98 extent of which no agreement was reached.⁴⁹ This position suited the Chiefs whose powers within their locations became more authoritarian. The District Commissioner, P.W. Low, justified this state of affairs by stating that it would not be 'a good move to introduce a really democratic system too quickly in South

⁴⁶ KNA/DC/KSI/1/21-South Nyanza Annual Report 1959

⁴⁷ KNA/DC/KSI/1/12-South Nyanza Annual Report 1950

⁴⁸ KNA/DC/KSI/1/16-South Nyanza Annual Report 1954

⁴⁹ (Ibid)

Nyanza District as a more autocratic system has still 99 the best chance of being understood and respected.⁵⁰

Members of the Kasipul LAC included Barnaba Ogot, Elijah Oigo and Francis Odada. When Kabondo once again became a separate location in 1955, its new chief, Francis Odada nominated his wife, Nahome Odada and his cousin, Lukio Nyambok, as members of his Council.⁵¹ One problem with the LAC's in Kasipul and Kabondo was that they were not democratically constituted. The chiefs who were their ex-officio chairmen exercised authoritarian powers, supported by members who owed their positions to them.

Another problem which faced the LACs was lack of experience among the Chiefs' clerks in matters relating to writing minutes and keeping cash and vote books. The wide range of the Councils activities demanded more time than was available to chiefs who had other responsibilities. Further, the low salaries offered by the councils, only attracted clerks who were unable to cope with the task their role entailed. Although courses were held for clerks by the District Revenue Officer at Kisii these did not accomplish their desired goal.

There was also the financial problem in relation to the way it was collected and the use to which it was put. That the LACs obtained revenue through voluntary collections was only in name. Often the chiefs used force to collect locational rates, much as they did in the collection of Poll

⁵⁰KNA/DC/KSI/1/16-South Nyanza Annual Report 1954

⁵¹ Ndege's Oral Interview with Robert Oguna.

Tax. In 1954 the LACs in South Nyanza had 158,380 shillings between them and spent almost as much.⁵²

In 1956 there 103 total expenditure amounted to 360,540 shillings. In 1960 the LACs had incomes ranging from 2,700 to 83,500 shillings for the poor and rich locations, respectively. KNA/DC/KSI/1/21-South Nyanza Annual Report 1960 given the wide range of the services the LACs were required to provide it is obvious they were grossly undercapitalised. In most cases, there fore they relied on unpaid communal labour to mainta in roads and build schools. There was also no clear-cut division between the services which were to the financed by the LACs and those which were the responsibility of the ADC. The political impact of the LACs was that they confined the people of Kasipul and Kabondo's perception of problems and politics to their own locations rather than to the district, province and the whole country.

The concept of nationalism is one that derives its origin from the word nation that basically means bringing together of persons who have differences in ideas, culture, ethnicity, religion and race in order to carry out development projects in a country and co-existence purposes:

Nationalism was etymologically begun by the Greek people who at the ancient time lived in established city states that were referred to as polis; it is in these polis where the Greeks enhanced their development through carrying out trade and improving on its buildings.

It is from this idea that nationalism spread to the otherparts of the globe including Europe and Africa.In Africa and more so Kenya, the idea of nationalism came into being in an effort to eliminate the colonial rule and untold suffering that the Africans were being subjected to.

⁵² (Ibid)

That is the reason some scholars argue that the African nationalism in the country was a forced coalition purposed to fight against the colonial rule;

On attaining independence in 1963, the founding father of the nation President Jomo Kenyatta came up with a philosophy which he termed as 'Harambee' that could unite Kenyans to spur development in the country. Kenyans were very serious in the unity that they believed was going to usher in African government and overthrow colonialism.⁵³

Kenya as a nation was initially brought together through the spirit of nationalism to tame colonial rule and attain sovereignty. The existence of diverse backgrounds in terms of ideals, ethnicity, religion and political affiliations were causal factors for the fluctuations of the country's state of nationalism. The existence of poor governance, poor social services and lack of democracy have a direct correlation to the threat of the Kenyan nationalism.

Africans on the other hand were ready to use their blood to free themselves from many years of colonialism. Although Hola Camp Massacre 'signalled the moral end of the British Empire in Africa' (Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*), and was a hotly debated issue during the UK General Election (Oct 1959), it did not prevent the Conservative Party, under Macmillan, from taking office for the third term. However, in 1960, on his tour in Africa, Macmillan openly spoke of the 'wind of change', acknowledging the British rule was over and African people should have the right to govern themselves. This was in tandem with other

⁵³ A Focus on Kenya Nationalism and the Bottlenecks it has Faced since Independence to Date by David Sande Department of Sociology and Psychology, Moi University, Kenya Corresponding author: David Sande, Department of Sociology and Psychology, Moi University, Kenya, journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs, 2018, p. 2 Of 6

European colonial powers in Africa, who were also undergoing decolonisation. In late 1960, UN Resolution 1514 declared independence for all colonial countries. The final independence settlement involved the transfer of power to a group of middle-class land-owners (Kenyatta et al) with whom the British felt they had a good relationship. The issue of land alienation was not resolved (in place of white settlers was an African elite). And indeed, Kenya joins the Commonwealth and becomes a key Cold War ally of the British. Kenya was supposedly a West-leaning, capitalist economy (in contrast to the statist experiments in neighbouring Uganda and Tanzania).

Through divide and rule, the colonial authority undermined nationalism in Kenya during the colonial period. They caused divisions among Africans by dividing them in tribal enclaves. It took the courage, fighting spirit and resilience by our nationalists like Jomo Kenyatta to bring people into one nation called Kenya.

5.7 Chiefs and Politicians

The formalization of European imperialistic control over African territories saw the first encroachment on the nature and authority of the institution. Mahmood Mamdani, writing from a Marxist-inclined position in *Citizens and Subjects* noted that colonial rule brought with it European concepts of land ownership. In the process, the colonialists made land synonymous with chiefly authority by investing all lands into the native political institutions of the communities in rural Africa. Lands with no private claims were deemed royal lands, and later, government property, which was a deviation from African communal land ownership system.

The colonialists therefore succeeded in transforming the ritual function of the chief into a political one. This enhanced chiefly authority over land was an aberration from the custom and practices of the people. It became “the foundation of native rule,” according to historian Mahmood Mamdani. In a larger sense, Mamdani’s argument shows that this change enabled colonial powers to use chiefs as conduits to gaining concessions for the exploitation of resources for the good of the colonial metropole. He reflects that “chiefs were autonomous is not to say that they were independent.” Thus, land re-organization not only empowered chiefs, but colonial powers as well. The reorganized political system based on new land tenure systems involving the colonial administrators and the chiefs was therefore a symbiotic economic relationship in which colonialists and chiefs acted together for their own mutual economic benefit.⁵⁴

While giving chiefs landed authority, the colonialists deprived them of enormous judicial power. Instead, judicial authority transferred to colonial courts. Educated interpreters assumed relevance in the administration of justice. The cumulative impact of these actions concentrated power in the hands of the European administrators. New opportunities in labor, commerce and services provision also helped advance a new class of wealthy citizens

The chiefs under the British system were employed in organizing social services, implementing taxation, public work, and other exactions made by the colonial authorities.⁵⁵ This system of administrative imperialism, a carefully constructed setup of offices and officials to manage and run communities for the benefit of colonial or imperial powers, was known as Indirect Rule. For imperialists like Lugard, chiefs were administrative instruments carrying out a “civilizing

⁵⁴ The Colonial and Post-Colonial Transformation of African Chieftaincy: A Historiography Moses A. Awinsong, p.122

⁵⁵(Ibid)

mission” on behalf of the colonial administrators. They were not co-equal with the colonial administrators, but were conduits through whom the colonizers oversaw the daily lives of the people. Indirect rule therefore gave legitimacy to the chief in the eyes of his people; but enslaved them in the eyes of the colonial authority. In this way, the chief in the colonial British system in Africa carried out the dual mandate required by the colonial authorities and the active political and spiritual roles expected of them by their citizens.⁵⁶

The roles of chiefs touched all aspects of colonialism including providing of troops to fight in their wars. There were conscriptions in South Kavirondo in Nyanza province during the World War II period. And according to the colonial authority, the chiefs and headmen did excellent work in the years which brought a great increase in the variety and volume of their duties. A few were proved to be incapable of making the extra effort required of them and were replaced; the majority deserved credit for much hard work in connection with recruitment, military, civil, and increased production in addition to the usual routine duties.

The county councils provided an opportunity for elective posts but still chiefs were represented in these councils. In 1952 County Councils were established, with authority over district and urban (but not Municipal) Councils. In broad terms, whilst councils in the rural areas had the particular function of looking after roads, the different bodies (albeit with continuing assistance from central government) were variably responsible for such services as public health, hospitals, schools and the provision of water, sanitation and cleaning, street lighting, and other amenities.⁵⁷

⁵⁶(Ibid)

⁵⁷ Rodgers, 1996: 503

By 1958 the essential features of Kenyan Local Government were laid down and changes just prior to independence in 1963 completed the edifice. Kenya, 1957; Sharp and Jetha, 1970 District commissioners held public enquiries to obtain local opinion on the form local government should take. An order-in-council of 1963 (Kenya, 1963) carrying the status of an Act of parliament, created new local government regulations, which, in amended form, are still in force.

Appointed at the District level, and composed of the District Commissioner (DC), his assistant, chiefs and African nominees acceptable to the Provincial Commissioner (PC), they were responsible for such functions as the collection of Local Native Rates and other dues, the provision and maintenance of water supplies, forests, cattle dips, roads, bridges, markets, and with the implementation of measures concerning land use, public health and education.

By incorporating Homa Bay in their governance structure through the appointments of chiefs, DOs and DCs in total disregard of the existing traditional structures that had enabled the people to live peacefully, the colonial authority were seeking to dilute the traditional authority that had served the people of Homa Bay well. During the colonial time Homa Bay was homogenous and this made the colonial government to easily integrate it into its colonial governance structure. It was therefore very important for the colonial authority to have ensured that power transformation from local native leadership was not handled haphazardly. They therefore, disrespected the will of the people to decide who governs them and how best they should be governed.

There were councilors who resisted the colonial authority as they played important roles of defending their people. One of the prominent councilors remembered, as has already been

mentioned elsewhere in this study, was Otiyo Mwai who proved to be with the people who elected him as demonstrated when he bitterly opposed people being moved from Homa Bay to Lambwe in 1960s to pave way for the setting up of South Nyanza headquarters at Homa Bay. This led to criminal charges being preferred against him by the colonial authority, leading to his incarceration. The incident ended portraying him as a hero before his people.⁵⁸

5.8 Summary

It can be argued that the Second World War impacted on socio-economic transformations of the residents of Homa Bay just as it did to other Africans. After the war, Africans became conscious about their rights to political freedom. Those who served under the pioneer corps, after the war, came and advocated for the rights of Africans to freedom from colonial oppression.

Chiefs being aware that the livelihoods of their subjects depended upon visionary leadership submitted their people's needs before the 1943 Food Commission. Chiefs from Central Kenya like Koinange wa Mbiu were more vocal in the presentation of their views. There was no Chief from Homa Bay who participated in the 1943 Food Shortage Commission. However, they assisted the people in intensification of commodity production and trade. It can be noted here that there was no political association in Homa Bay County during this period. Elsewhere, for example, in Central Kenya, early political parties provided political education to the African communities.

The parties communicated the communities' feelings to the colonial government through publications, memorandum or speeches. They defended African culture against further erosion

⁵⁸ K'Odipo (2013) thesis interview with Peter Amuka, O.I. Homa Bay).

by European. They played the role of trade unions by fighting for the welfare of workers in the absence of trade unions. They publicized the African grievances to the international community, for example, Kenyatta. They helped to promote wider nationalism by forcing inter community relations in the struggle for freedom. They improved education and hygiene for members, Poll tax and hut tax were reduced.

The establishment of Locational Councils and African District Councils and chiefs' responsibilities were intertwined since they served the same colonial interest. During this period agricultural transformations were spearheaded by chiefs in Homa Bay County.

There was change from Local Native Council to African District Councils where councilors were elected to articulate the interests of their people. The socio-economic and political interplays which involved fundamentally the chiefs, continued on the same trajectory upto 1963 when Kenya became independent.

The next chapter, chapter offers the summary of this thesis based on each research objectives.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The summary of this thesis has been done according to each objectives of the study. This study underscored the functions of the African colonial chiefs in Homa Bay County and placed them, rightly so, as important cogs in the socio-economic and political transformations. The study found out that chiefs in Homa Bay County were the best example of indirect rule in the British colonies. Chiefs among the pre-colonial period among the southern Nyanza Luo in Homa Bay were known as *Ruoth*. Lineage system was a very important social organization for the Luo in many ways. During colonial time they were mainly used to minimize expenditures. They served in the African tribunals, acted as judicial officers, had their assistants and the village headmen, they were ranked, for example, paramount chiefs, senior chiefs, chiefs and headmen.

Chiefs resiliently improved socio-economic and political well being of the people. Gor Ogalo was the first paramount chief in Homa Bay before abdicating and was swiftly replaced by his son Chief Ogada. In theory the chiefs provided indigenous participation in foreign rule but practically they were a manifestation of colonial rule and hegemony. Through chiefs the colonial regime destroyed African political life. They were part of the centralized political life as they were answerable to DOs, DCs and the Governor. Their roles were at times difficult to identify as they administered, were judicial officers and tax collectors. Some were loved by their people while some were not. Chief Mbaria in South Nyanza was not loved by his people because he was a drunkard and therefore failed in the socio-economic and political transformations in his area of jurisdiction.

6.1. OBJECTIVE ONE

The Nature and Role of Leadership and Governance

This was discussed under the pre-colonial period from 1890. The system of Luo kinship and lineage worked well in Homa Bay in the pre-colonial period in which the head of the family unit was the father. A man's wives played significant roles depending on their position in marriage.

The role of the first wife was very critical in the running of the family affairs. During planting, it was the first wife's land that had to be planted first, followed by weeding and harvesting. She could not be bypassed in these by her co-wives. Everything followed a hierarchical structure. Luo leadership in Homa Bay County was patriachal in character. Men were the natural heads of their families although women were assigned the duties of guiding their daughters accordingly on how to handle themselves socially in their marriages.

The study also found out that the next tier of social structure was the clan. The clans were made up of close knit family members. Economically, the clans cooperated in food production. They mobilized themselves and worked in each other's farms rotationally. The Luo in Homa Bay also as the study found out put a lot of efforts in cattle keeping. Cattle products were very important to the clan, for example, meat milk and cow dungs which the women used for smearing their houses. Overallly, the institution of *ruoth* was very much revered. *Routh* was the ritual leader of the community. One got appointed to head the institution of *ruoth* by way of communal consensus and it was not hereditary. *Ruothi* were wealthy people most of whom were perfect moralists. Anybody with way ward behaviours could not be chosen a *ruoth* by the people. Most Luo chiefs were also polygamists with an aim of having many children because children were considered to be wealth in the Luo community of Homa Bay County. Women were never made chiefs and this means the community was male chauvinist.

The Luo system of *ruoth* was like the bureaucratic chieftaincy of colonial structure that was introduced in Kenya when Kenya became under the British colonial authority. Most of the pre-colonial *ruothi* (chiefs) who, when the colonial government arrived, co-operated with the new power, retained their positions in the new political dispensation. Such pre-colonial *ruothi* (chiefs) included Gor Ogalo of Kanyamwa in the present day Homa Bay County. Gor Ogalo had been a medicineman before his appointment to paramount Chief by the colonial government and was actually the only one to have been appointed chief in the whole of Homa Bay County with the establishment of colonial rule in Homa Bay County.

This thesis concludes that the coming of colonialism interfered with the structure of the Luo leadership under *ruothi*. Their leaders did not collect taxes from them but the community had their own ways of assisting themselves socially and economically. Ruothi guided people in the right direction for peace, security and prosperity of the community.

6.2 OBJECTIVE TWO

The Colonial Conquest and Search for Chiefs in Homa Bay County

This was mainly between 1903 and 1920. The present Homa Bay County is part of what was known as South Kavirondo District later renamed South Nyanza District, during the colonial period. The British colonial administration of South Nyanza effectively commenced in January 1903, when a parcel of Union Jacks was dispatched from Provincial headquarters, Kisumu, to the Karungu area to be raised in all villages in the vicinity to show that South Nyanza was under the British colonial administration. Karungu was then made the district headquarters. An acting

District Commissioner, Boughton Knight, was posted to Karungu in August 1903, as the District Commissioner for South Kavirondo.

The colonial administration established the Karungu station in order to check on German encroachment on South Nyanza. The Germans had already colonised Tanganyika (now the republic of Tanzania), which shared borders with South Nyanza, an area that the British had not brought under their political control. Other parts of South Nyanza, particularly Karachuonyo, Kabondo and Mumbo (Kasipul) had been formally under colonial rule since 1900, but had no government representatives operating in the locations. The locations were part of Kisumu District until 1908 when the three locations were transferred to South Nyanza District. British colonial administration soon realised that for effective Administration, Karungu was not strategically placed, since it was not centrally located.

Karungu, then district headquarters for Ugaya was not centrally situated and according to G.A.S. Northcote, assistant collector incharge of Karungu from October 1904 to September 1906, Karungu was extremely ill adapted for a trading center and also was too close to the German border. Karungu was also far from Kisii, the nerve center, for colonial administration in South Kavirondo.

Chiefs were relied on for the administration of Homa Bay County. They were the link between the African people and the colonial state. They were first appointed in Homa Bay in 1903. Their main tasks were the collection of taxes and the enforcement of ordinances for the effective administration of their areas of jurisdiction.

The chiefs represented the face of the colonialists locally. They were both good and bad to the Africans who were never used to this system of governance. An ugly face of chiefs was seen in an incident when people under chief Ager Ganda of Gem were punished for refusing to pay hut tax and instead resorting to violence in their bid to reject the payment of taxes. The colonial authority through Chief Ager took punitive measures against the people and consequently eight hundred heads of cattle were forcefully taken from them. Several hundreds of goats were also seized. This took place despite the fact that Gem people faced the menace of stocktheft from their Kisii neighbours.

However, it should be noted that some development in road infrastructure was already gaining traction during this early years of colonialism in Homa Bay County. This started from 1908 to 1909 when a Cart-road was done from Kisii through Gem to Homa Bay County. The road infrastructure actually aided the colonial administration in the perpetuation of their governance over the people of Homa Bay.

Other roles of the chiefs in Homa Bay was the procurement of labour for public works. People were forced by the circumstances to work in the colonial projects in order to get money for tax payments. As a matter of fact, those who could not pay taxes were punished under the Hut Tax and Poll Tax Ordinances. The primary role of these taxes was in dealing with those locals who were refractory in paying taxes. Before these Ordinances, the only means of enforcing payment was by the cumbrous method of civil suit which in many ways was quite difficult. The ordinances allowed property to be attached or the alternative was the imprisonment of tax defaulters. These penalties were clearly explained to the people by the chiefs. The chiefs ensured that the subjects fulfilled their tax obligations.

The colonial chiefs executed their work in the maintenance of Law and Order. *Collective Punishments Ordinance* was a strong weapon in the Government hands in dealing with undetected crimes or with such matters as riots on a large scale in which it would be difficult to bring any particular individual to book. It was at this time being put in force against the Kagan natives who took part in a fight against another location. The Kagan Chief was unable or unwilling to bring the offenders to justice. A collective punishment inflicted on the whole location was a deterrence to those particular natives or any other from engaging in similar affrays for the future.

There was also the *Witchcraft Ordinance* to be enforced by the chiefs. The severe penalties of the Witchcraft Ordinance had been explained to the natives in Homa Bay and might act as a deterrence to those who were credited with the possession of supernatural powers. It was however difficult to get evidence against so called witchdoctors. Chiefs were reluctant to name those who practiced witchcraft. If the Chief or Elders be asked they would deny hotly that witchcraft was common and would state that all cases would be brought to the notice of the authorities. However from occasional questions to the ordinary persons, witchcraft existed in somewhat crude form a fairly common example was the placing of certain medicine on a foot path so that the victim designate would step in it and so cause his death or sickness. This was a form frequently used when quarrel amongst members of a family arose but one did not hear of certain positions outside a hut was supposed to bring troubles upon the occupants and the use of poison was occasionally mentioned.

It had been mentioned previously that there was a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the Chief Matunga. Some of the reasons for this were petty misunderstandings but would seem that many of the people regarded him as a powerful witch-doctor and the reason for this was an unfortunate incidence. Matunga the father of Kasuku was murdered for suspected witchcraft making the area unfit to live in. The appointment of Kasuku later to chieftaincy of Gwassi coincided with the start of a four year's severe drought, and he was therefore suspected of following in his father's foot-steps. Chief Isaac Ogoma of Kanyada had also been accused of practicing witchcraft on his successor Chief Samwel Odoyo. The two were colonial chiefs in Kanyada.

The last Ordinance that chiefs were expected to enforce was the Game Ordinance. As applied to the native reserves, it allowed natives to kill game in the vicinity of their own villages or *shambas* but forbade them from organizing regular hunting parties in places where game could not possibly cause damage to the crops. The regulations allowing the natives to kill elephants and buffaloes etc. close to their villages and *shambas* made it almost impossible to punish any breach of the Ordinance owing to the difficulty of discovering where the killing actually took place. There were several points respecting the regulations dealing with buying old Ivory from natives which were in need of being more clearly defined.

Chiefs were also involved in the demarcation of boundaries. Chiefs led their people in the demarcation of locational boundaries in Homa Bay County. The demarcations took care of the social economic and political interests of the residents. For example, on 28th August 1926 Mr. Dobbs Senior commissioner held a *baraza* for Kochia and Kagan natives at the Kochia camp to settle the question as to whether Kagan and Kochia should be left under Kochia or once more made into a location of its own. Due to the importance attached to the boundary demarcation,

Chief Obonyo came with a following of Kochia people and elders. A headman by the name Ongaro came with about fifty Kagan people. It was the opinion of the Senior Commissioner that it was undesirable to split up the District into small locations. He would not agree to the location being split up again. Both central and north Kavirondo had far fewer locations than the South Kavirondo which had too smaller ones as it was.

The same demarcation issue faced Chief Obonyo with difficulties in presiding over locational division which was quite an emotive affair. The District Commissioner was not having a lot of faith on Chief Obonyo owing to his advanced age. He had an Assistant Chief, Ongaro, who in effect ruled that part of Kochia which was formerly the location of Kagan. The amalgamation of these locations was made in 1921, but was not a very happy marriage, both because the people belonged to different sections of the Luo tribe and because Obonyo had not the temperament to make it a success.

The first chiefs who served immediately after the establishment of the colonial rule were appointed directly by the colonial authority. People were not involved in their appointments. Nevertheless, their appointments ushered in a new trajectory of leadership who were directly controlled by the colonial state. The ordinances which were formulated were done arbitrarily without involving the African people. Collection of taxes was enhanced while the local infrastructures were nowhere in place.

6.2.1 Elections of Chiefs in Homa Bay (1920-1930)

Chiefs were normally elected by the people under the supervision of the local administrative officers. For example, in 1922 the District Commissioner led the election of a Paramount Chief

in the South Kavirondo District for the area of Kanyamwa location. The elders were unanimously in favour of such an election and even proposed that the locations of Karachuonyo, Mumbo and Kabondo should come under the rule of Ogutu, although these locations were not included under Gor's regime. Chief Ogutu was elected to succeed Gor in November 1916 but owing to his youth it was expressly intimated that he was not to be considered Paramount Chief like his father. Ogutu was a very enlightened native and had during the previous years attained a sense of responsibility, his youth, in the DCs opinion that was a great advantage for an appointment as suggested by the elders, as it increased his mobility. He certainly also had a great deal of his father's influence and was unanimously popular and with a strong and influential native to support him in his work, the DC considered he would be admirably suited to the billet.

From this particular example, chiefs during colonial period were elected by the people directly under the supervision of a District Commissioner. They considered the background of Gor who was their favorite because Gor had been a medicineman and therefore was perceived to have had a lot of influence over his people.

Of course the indirect rule policy by Fredrick Lugard was about aligning the administrative system on the existing traditional structures. The fact that the chiefs cooperated to this end meant that they were conformists to the European governance model which created dependency situation on the part of Africans on matters governance and even assisted them in the exploitation of their people in their jurisdictions.

Those who got elected were elected because they possessed certain positive qualities in their characters and sports. Some were elected because of their towering physique like was the case of Gideon Magak Odeka who was as well a veteran of the Second World War.

6.3 OBJECTIVE THREE

The Role of Chiefs in Economic Transformations in Homa Bay

This thesis analysed the period of depression in Homa Bay County by looking at some example of chiefs and how their leadership helped their subjects socially and economically. Again it was not easy to look at the transformational roles of the chiefs in Homa Bay County. A few examples would suffice.

An evidence was seen from the reports of government officials at the time about the performance of these chiefs. District Commissioner wrote about Chief Stephen Obiga who was a catholic citing improvements in Gem after Ongang had been gotten rid of. Chief Obiga took over a location that was very much out of hand from Ongang, who promptly drank himself to death within two months of being removed from office. It was most difficult to get taxes paid in this location in Ongang's time, young men were unruly, and Ongang' had advised against growing cotton saying that cotton killed cattle because in the dense cotton areas of Uganda, he had seen no cattle, so this must be so. During the time Stephan had been in power he had done so much to remedy these defects, and he promised to be a good man. The DC wrote that Obiga was a quite and efficient Chief who sometimes gave the impression of being stupid but this was not so. He did excellent work during his first two years in office by increasing production of crops for export.

Also, in 1933 Chief Obonyo of Kochia and Kagan did excellent work on cotton, despite his being a drunkard, and this did not affect his work. He had his people well in hand, and his orders were obeyed. He had a good turn out of voluntary unpaid labour on the *Imbo-Kendu* road which

the location chose to construct so that all available money could be spent on the Nyangwesso Bridge.

In terms of uniting the Kochia and Kagan people, Obonyo proved to have been very capable. Kochia location had absorbed that of Kagan a few years back, and in 1936 the Kagan made an effort to regain a chieftainship. Obonyo handled the position judiciously and the matter was settled with a minimum of trouble. Amicable relations had been re-established. Ongaro, his Assistant Chief of Kagan also behaved extremely well during the incident mentioned. In Gwassi Chief Kasuku had replaced Chief Mino who was accused of being lazy and unsatisfactory with little personality by the colonial administration.

The study found that during this period it was a dishertening period for Gwassi owing to lack of rain and failure of crops and the restriction of grazing owing to fly. Kasuku had tackled the bush clearing in the Lumbwa with intelligence and energy and had shown himself conspicuously fitted for the post of chief. One could only regret that his capacity as a chief was so restricted on account of lack of population and economic opportunity.

Kasuku Matunga was weak with his people and always squeeling for Tribal Police assistance. The DCs opinion was that he was thoroughly lazy, and drunk more often than not. That he had the Lumbwa Laibon in his location who had contributed towards his wealth of late, but they did not enhance his difficulties to any extent. He treaded on his past as interpreter, and also claimed the blood of past rulers of Uganda before the Suba migration.

Gideon Magak of Kasipul also helped his people in the development of agriculture. Gideon was full of good intentions which he always seems to just miss bringing to fruition but on the whole considering the past record of his location he ran it very well. He was not a “big” man and took

rather too much notice of chatter frequently seeking to run people for defamation of his character. He was doing well in propagating Robusta coffee in his location.

Locational boundaries' changes or movement of people in most cases were emotive not only in Kochia and Kagan but also in Kasipul-Kabondo. Through an Oral Interview with retired teacher Fredrick Otieno Awino, Kachien people had resisted an attempt by Chief Magak Odeka to move Kachien to West Kasipul. They always wanted to be left alone and possibly to have a location of their own. At one point Magak conspired with Headman James Siwo to move Kachien to Kamagambo whose chief was Pius Olima. Mzee Azaria Awino and Naphtaly Ogenga led the people of Kachien in resisting this attempt. It was said that Chief Olima wanted people from outside to go and clear bushes in his location which was infested with kalabugo (Tsetsefly).

6.3.1 The impact of The Second World War and changes in Chief's Responsibilities, 1939-1945

The second world took place between 1939 and 1945. The war was a foreign war but Africans found themselves embroiled in this war episode without understanding even why it broke out in the first place. What was apparent was that Kenya's position as a colony of Britain meant that they were obligated to contribute troops towards the Second World War efforts. The chiefs galvanized young men to fight alongside the British troops in this war.

The thesis utilizes examples of some chiefs in Homa Bay County to illustrate their roles in administration during the war period. I start with Gideon Magak Odeka of Kasipul Kabondo.

Magaka rose to chieftaincy after the resignation of Chief Obewa under a cloud as a result of a disorderly baraza. The situation in Mumbo when Chief Gideon was first put in as chairman of the location was extremely difficult. For along time Chief Obewa and Assistant Chief Elijah had

allowed their authority to be set at naught by their *baraza*, Mission Adherents and Mumboists. It was greatly to the credit of Gideon Magak that he managed to exert his authority and suppressed the disorderly influence in his location. He was an S.D.A. supporter and the Catholic element was probably not loyal to him. Chief Magak reigned over the amalgamation of Mumbo and Kabondo, named Kasipul.

At a baraza held on 24th January 1941 at Kabondo Camp the Provincial Commissioner Nyanza accepted the resignation of Chief Nyanjong of Mumbo and ordered the amalgamation of Mumbo and Kabondo into one location to be called Kasipul with Chief Gideon Magak of Mumbo as the Chief. He had shown himself an excellent chief second only to Paulo Mboya. He was prone to pester for an increase in pay, which he thought he should have now that Kabondo had fallen under his sway. But Magak was disappointed because the Provincial Commissioner decided that he should not have it. However, in a letter to the PC Nyanza by District Commissioner, Kisii, on 20th April 1944 Magak was praised as an excellent chief. Under his leadership Kasipul had done extremely well in its war effort. Gideon being an Ex-Sergeant. Of the KRA he took a keen interest in the affairs of serving soldiers.

It was a common sight in the 1940s to find Chief Gideon inspecting development in his location in the company of District Commissioner and Agricultural officers. In one of his tours of duty, they found people were ploughing for the long rains crops and a certain amount of contouring had been done, but many of the attempts at contouring were not exactly right. He gave numerous demonstrations for the benefit of the people but mainly for the benefit of the instructors as well. Enroute, the DC witnessed two very badly eroded areas near the Camp and the Chief agreed they should be closed for ploughing and also to grazing, and the shamba owners were ordered to

prepare contour lines immediately. The team insisted on: Immediate ploughing and in the proper direction; proper contouring; and recognition of closed areas.

In Magak, according to Odhiambo Ndege, the administration found the type of chief it wanted. Unlike Nyanjong who was illiterate, Magak had elementary education and previous long service with the Colonial Government as a Tribal Policeman and serviceman in the King's African Rifles between 1916 and 1935. Until his retirement in 1955 he had a good record as an efficient tax collector and initiator of various economic and social developments. He encouraged the people of Kasipul and Kabondo to grow cotton, maize, beans and groundnuts so as to be able to pay tax. He also ensured the proper sale of these crops to Indian traders in Oyugis and other local markets. Although he was 'prone to pester for an increase in pay now that he was chief of both Kasipul and Kabondo', the colonial administrative officers rated him second only to Chief Paulo Mboya of Karachuonyo. He was awarded certificate of honour in 1939. He set a standard which subsequent chiefs in the two locations tried hard to emulate.

Apart from Chief Magak, Chief Isaac Ogoma of Kanyada Location was also a person of interest in the socio-economic transformational roles of chiefs in Homa Bay County. Isaac Ogoma was the chief during the Second World War period and his rule was controversial. At one point he was required to resign by the DC on 2nd November 1937 because of the following reasons: That he employs witches, and imported them from Central Kavirondo; That he uses two elders of his importation from Central Kavirondo as his councilors to the annoyance of his own elders these are Mathayo and Mikael; That he levies market dues to his own benefit; That he has seized fish from fishermen without paying for them; That he detains men arrested in his boma and makes them work for him without pay or food; That he allows his Mlango to take bribes in connection with tax exemptions.

Chief Ogoma did not work harmoniously with the colonial administration who were the appointing authority. Despite the acrimony in the removal of Chief Ogoma, under Mr. Carver's guidance, he had three successful enterprises to his credit—the organization or rather cooperation in organizing two regattas at Homa Bay, the part he took in the initial phase of the elephant drive and the cotton planting campaign. Probably the Kanyada cotton would prove to have been the most successful planting. Chief Ogoma was disgraced as he performed his duties and forced out of work. This was different from the way the Chief of Karachuonyo Paulo Mboya was treated.

When Paulo Mboya was appointed chief of Karachuonyo, the expectations were high on the part of the colonial administration. From the oral sources, Paulo Mboya led his people to socio-economic transformations. He led them in advancing agricultural production in Karachuonyo and gave women recognition. Although Chief Mboya had won accolades from the colonial administration over his personal abilities in leadership of Karachuonyo, not everything was smooth in the location. There had been a great increase in cultivation since 1944 February, except between Pala Cotton store and the Homalime Co's turn off from the Pala Kauma road. Here the people had made very little attempt. In a few localities in East Karachuonyo where rain had fallen some planting had been made. Reserves of Cassava were negligible and the acreage of Sweet Potatoes along the lakeshore was very disappointing. Soil control was negligible. In West Karachuonyo a number of villages were visited in order to get an impression of the food situation, only one had no visible supplies of mtama and the vavarage indicated that a part from imports by head and donkey load; and other food supplies such as fish, meat and root crops, that there was at least a month's food on full rations. Not more than ten women carrying headloads into the location were seen during 6 hours spent in the area. The other problem which Chief

Mboya underwent was an altercation with Ojijo Oteko of the *piny owacho* (the people have said) *fame*.

The character of the three chiefs mentioned here represent the general feelings in Homa bay on chief's responsibilities. It was difficult to attempt to give examples using all chiefs in Homa bay County which was a vast area.

6.4 OBJECTIVE FOUR

The Role of Chiefs in the Introduction and Development of Western Education in Homa Bay County. (1901-1963)

The completion of the Uganda Railway in 1901 enabled various Christian missions to penetrate into the interior with considerable ease, from the coastal areas.

The SDA settled in South Nyanza-Kavirondo in 1906 and started Gendia Mission, opening their first first school there. The SDA Church also established several secondary schools. Some of these are Kamagambo High School, Chebwai SDA Secondary, Nyanchwa, Nyabola, Ranen, Segero and Wang'apala SDA secondary schools among others. The Christian missionaries of the Seventh Day Adventist were the first ones to arrive in South Kavirondo district, but they were overtaken by the Mill Hill Fathers in starting missionary work in Kisii. Prior to their establishment in Kisiiland, the SDA Christian missionaries under Pastors E. Philip, A. Watson, J. H. Sparks and A.A. Carscallen had opened mission stations at Karungu (1912), the Isle of Rusinga (1912), Kanyadoto (1913) and Kamagambo (1913). The Adventist church hence intended to offer a true wholistic education-an education that can harmoniously develop all the faculties of a person.

There were contradictions among Africans on the social roles by the missionaries. Some felt that the missionaries directing them on the number of wives they need to have, was a clear intrusion in their culture and way of life. “.....the missionaries’ contempt for African customs, religion and literature and their insistence that Christianity was the only true religion made the African ashamed of his past. He felt inferior, and hence unqualified to question the Whiteman’s ways”.

Chiefs played important roles in the western education in Homa Bay County. Approach to education would significantly change with the intrusion of colonialism. Education was seen as a tool for development and the colonial state knew this quite well. Presumably because it would be easier to govern an educated society than illiterate and ignorant ones provision of education took a center stage. Chief Musa Barage Nyandusi in the neighbouring Gusii land was an embodiment of Chiefs in South Kavirondo who participated eminently in the setting up of schools.

Chief Magak Odeka took the cue and ensured that schools were built in Kasipul-Kabondo. Although reputed for having ruled his location with an iron fist, Chief Magak was also credited for having left a legacy of hard work and massive development of public institutions, such as Oyugis District sub-Hospital, Ramula Opanga Health Centre, Ober Health Centre, schools and other socio-economic projects.

There occurred a number of education meetings in which involved South Kavirondo District Education Board. The inspector of schools through Circulars lettinstructed all mission Superintendents in South Kavirondo informing them of the procedure to be followed for the registration of Schools and churches were key features of the impacts of missionary activities in

the colonial Kenya. The schools were built for acquisition of knowledge for the African children. Churches were built for moral and spiritual nourishments of the converted ones.

In the frontier of education, Chiefs were doing well. For example, Chief Paulo Mbuya pushed for schools under the SDA churches in South Kavirondo. Paulo was a preacher in the SDA Church. As a chief, he promoted the education of the people of Karachuonyo through the SDA missions. When the missionaries came their goals were civilizing the Africans. They set up missions in Gendia (Karachuonyo) Wire Kabeka (Kasipul-Kabondo) Asumbi (GEM) Mirogi (Kanyamua). Some of the chiefs had received their early education in missionary schools.

In short, it is worth noting that in countries which were colonized in Africa, the metropole played a significant role in the type of education ideal for the Africans. The policies were mainly based on economic and social changes policy. There were informal education structures before the advent of colonialism. Sons of chiefs became the beneficiaries of education. Christianity played a significant role in spread of education people who were converted to Christianity were also the same ones who received early education. In primary schools religious as well as secular subjects were taught. There was also the teaching of crafts where basket weaving, pottery, masonry and furniture making were taught.

The British were prepared to allow missionary schools to open as many schools as they could. The colonial authority found it more satisfactory to satisfy the best of missionary schools by providing grants in aid rather than open a large number of government schools. Most education was left to the missionaries even when it was provided by the government. But the government

also had its own maintained schools. British education system was straight conversions to make the pupils in the words of an early report “English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellects”. It consisted of the 3Rs viz Reading, Writing and Arithmetic but with elements of grammar, geography and straight emphasis on C.R.E.

The African independent sects were also there during the colonial period in Homa Bay but there were no schools, according to this study, that was started in Homa Bay by these sects. The notable sect was *Mumboism*. The colonial administration was threatened by the anti-European message of *Mumboism*. The colonial government ultimately banned Mumboism in 1954. Much earlier in 1921, it had exiled Dundu and other Mumbo leaders to the holy Islamic island of Lamu in the Indian Ocean. A 1919 government report had listed important leaders of the movement, some of whom were openly opposed to the colonial government: Mosi Auma of Kabondo, Nyakundi of Kitutu, and Omwenga of Wanjare.

6.5 OBJECTIVE FIVE

The Role of Chiefs in the Development of Local Native Councils and the Rise of Nationalism in Homa Bay County.

The period between 1917 and 1924 constitutes the formative years in the evolution of the Kenya local government system. It was a period for searching for a formula to accommodate within the existing administrative structure, the political views of Africans. The government’s concern was to divert African’s discontent and dissatisfaction with the colonial system by containing political associations within the existing machinery of local administration. Thus, these LNCs provided political associations an opportunity to articulate their grievances without interfering with the

British administration in Kenya. However the election of members of the Kenya Central Association (KCA) as well as those of the Kenya Taxpayers' Welfare Association (KTWA) led to a clash of interests.

Odhiambo Ndege argued that although European settlers had demanded and achieved representation in the Legislative Council African interests were supposed to be dealt with by the Native Authority System. It was not until the upsurge of the Piny Owacho movement among the Luo and the Young Kikuyu Association among the Kikuyu in 1922 that the colonial administration considered African representation. After the 1914-1919 War, there was also the added need to establish local bodies and give them increased responsibility in financing agricultural development roads, schools and other social services. The 1924 and 1933 Amendments of the Native Authority Ordinance, therefore provided for the setting up of local councils in all the districts of Kenya. The establishment of these councils, argued the Chief Native Commissioner, 'should go far towards counteracting any mischievous tendencies which might develop in native political societies.' Although it was intended that these bodies would give Africans a bigger voice in the running of their own affairs and bringing about better cooperation and coordination between Africans and the administration, their major function was to shelve, not deal with grievances, and therefore were a means for greater control.

South Nyanza was the only district in the Colony to have two Local Native Council established in 1926. One was for the Luo and the Abasuba; the other for the Abagusii and Abakuria. They held separate meetings. The reason why this happened, from the administration's point of view, was that close association between the Luo and the other communities would infect them with

agitative Luo politics which was already manifesting itself in the Young Kavirondo Association, later the Kavirondo Tax Payers and Welfare Association. The immediate and long term effect of this was to make the communities in South Nyanza District conscious of belonging to different ethnic groups. This influenced local politics throughout the colonial period. All the Luo locations had at least one member in the Local Native Council. The powers and deliberations of its members were limited by the fact that the council legally only possessed advisory powers. Its meetings were presided over by the District Commissioner who possessed veto powers. The Council levied rates which went towards the maintenance of roads, markets, schools and payment for emergency famine relief, the salaries of teachers, agricultural and veterinary officers and other administrative personnel. By the 1930s the Council was entrusted with the responsibility of granting licences to traders.

The Council's legal limitations meant that it was unable to have things done. In 1940 the District Commissioner D. Storrs-Fox, had the following to report: LNC meetings were held in February, July and August. A useful resolution containing draft market rules was passed at the first of these but none of its approval has been received up to the end of the year. Lack of approval rules, and consequent lack of legal power to regulate matters pertaining to markets in reserves in having a decidedly adverse effect on progress. Throughout the 1940 the South Nyanza Local Native Council slowly expanded its activities in the development of more local services. It used the rates it levied to expand its budget which enjoyed huge balances. But these were never put to any intensive or innovative purposes. Recurrent applications for private loans by its members to establish themselves in trade were routinely vetoed by the District

Commissioners. In 1950 the Local Native Council changed its name to the African District Council, which now included all the ethnic groups in South Nyanza.

The ADC inherited all the problems which faced the LNC. In the 1950s, apart from performing its normal functions the ADC was also used as machinery for spreading propaganda against the Mau Mau movement through speeches to its members by the District Commissioners, and such nominated members of the Legislative Council as B.A. Ohanga and Kikuyu loyalists who were invited to attend its meetings. Locational Advisory Councils Both within and outside the Local Native Councils, the District Commissioners exercised authoritarian control. The activities of one particular District Commissioner, D. Storrs-Fox, caused a lot of apprehensiveness among the Luo of South Nyanza, leading to the writing of an anonymous letter against him, to the Nyanza Provincial Commissioner on January 30 1941. In this letter, the writers complained against the DC that when people, including chiefs and elders went to him for consultations he kicked and boxed and chased them away or forced them to do difficult work, like carrying heavy stones and cutting grass and threatened to draft them into the War. The writers demanded his transfer.

The Provincial Commissioner responded to the allegations by stating that 'no notice is taken of anonymous letters.' The District Commissioner himself did not deny the allegations. In a reply to the PC he defended himself thus: Although it is possible that the writer has somewhat exaggerated my general un-popularity, I have no doubt that I give frequent offence to numerous persons in the ordinary course of duty, nor do I see how one can avoid doing so without a sacrifice of efficiency. It was under these circumstances that Locational Advisory Councils were established in South Nyanza in 1946. After the Second World War, the Colonial State desired to

exercise even greater administrative control over the locations and to increase their responsibility in the financing and management of their own activities. In 1946 the South Nyanza LNC proposed to institute LACs under the chairmanship of chiefs.

The LACs were to be subsidiary and play an advisory role to the LNC. They were also 'to provide expression of local opinion' a means whereby the administration could disseminate orders and propaganda', and 'an introduction of a more democratic element into the realm of locational administration, giving the younger and better educated elements a place in local affairs and administration'. Like the LNCs, the LACs were required to provide a wide range of services which included capital grants to primary schools, the establishment of baraza halls, maintenance of location roads, water supplies, dispensaries, community development, tree planting, and the promotion of better agriculture.

For these purposes they were allowed to levy locational rates varying from 3 to 10 shillings, on a Voluntary basis'. They were to exercise control over the expenditure of the funds they collected. In 1950 a new head called Locational Council Approved Schemes was included in the ADC Estimates. Under it the LACs were required to submit proposals for development with locational estimates to be submitted to the ADC Finance and General Purposes Committee for approval. Locational chiefs became the ex-officio chairmen of the LACs. Members of the councils were in theory nominated from sizeable sub-locations by the District Commissioner for a term of three years. In practice it was the chiefs who recommended for approval by the DC the names of persons likely to support their will. The LACs operated without legal status until 1959 when

legislation was formulated to make them statutory authorities with wide powers but on the extent of which no agreement was reached.

This position suited the Chiefs whose powers within their locations became more authoritarian. The District Commissioner, P.W. Low, justified this state of affairs by stating that it would not be 'a good move to introduce a really democratic system too quickly in South Nyanza District as a more autocratic system has still the best chance of being understood and respected.'

Members of the Kasipul LAC included Barnaba Ogot, Elijah Oigo and Francis Odada. When Kabondo once again became a separate location in 1955, its new chief, Francis Odada nominated his wife, Nahome Odada and his cousin, Lukio Nyambok, as members of his Council. One problem with the LAC's in Kasipul and Kabondo was that they were not democratically constituted.

The chiefs who were their ex-officio chairmen exercised authoritarian powers, supported by members who owed their positions to them. Another problem which faced the LACs was lack of experience among the Chiefs' clerks in matters relating to writing minutes and keeping cash and votebooks. The wide range of the Councils activities demanded more time than was available to chiefs who had other responsibilities. Further, the low salaries offered by the councils, only attracted clerks who were unable to cope with the task their role entailed. Although courses were held for clerks by the District Revenue Officer at Kisii these did not accomplish their desired goal.

There was also the financial problem in relation to the way it was collected and the use to which it was put. That the LACs obtained revenue through voluntary collections was only in name. Often the chiefs used force to collect locational rates, much as they did in the collection of Poll Tax. In 1954 the LACs in South Nyanza had 158,380 shillings between them and spent almost as much. In 1956 their total expenditure amounted to 360,540 shillings. In 1960 the LACs had incomes ranging from 2,700 to 83,500 shillings for the poor and rich locations, respectively. Given the wide range of the services the LACs were required to provide it is obvious they were grossly under capitalised. In most cases, therefore they relied on unpaid communal labour to maintain roads and build schools. There was also no clear-cut division between the services which were to be financed by the LACs and those which were the responsibility of the ADC. The political impact of the LACs was that they confined the people of Kasipul and Kabondo's perception of problems and politics to their own locations rather than to the district, province and the whole country.

In Kasipul, Chief Magak was very instrumental in promoting agriculture under the LACs arrangement. Chief Magak and agricultural staff in Kasipul-Kabondo saw the necessity for increasing the size of land under cultivation, of putting in stops every five yards or so along the contour channel and of stopping boundary furrows at close intervals. What had been done was a refreshing change from the attitude of the location during the previous three years preceding 1944.

In the interest of promoting agriculture in his jurisdiction, Chief Magak held 'barazas'. At Pala in Kabondo, in 1945, he advised his subjects on early planting; increase of groundnuts and sweet

potatoes. During this time, grass burning had been restricted. Magak during 'barazas' insisted that the ban was still on since some 'wazee' were trying to devise means of avoiding restrictions on grass burning. He explained to the 'baraza' the kind of powers chiefs had but said that he was certain that no general permission would be given; chief Magak agreed and told the 'baraza' that the restrictions were the result of an L.N.C. resolution passed by the representatives of the people themselves for the good of their own country. The chief reported that in the Mumbo end of the location there was a moderate acreage under cultivation on the 'red luala soils' with a few people starting to put in soil control; on the granite 'kwoyo' soils no ploughing had yet been done although the January rains made a certain amount possible. The acreage under sweet potatoes was enough to provide planting material for an increase, but except in the Kokwanyo sub-location there was no muhogo (cassava). At a baraza in Oyugis, Chief Magak ordered for soil control; and early planting of all food crops; groundnut and cotton planting; increase of sweet potatoes and Muhogo and also tree planting.

Agriculture in Kanyada and other locations in Homa Bay were well documented in the colonial reports. In 1944, in the company of the local chief the D.O. walked around on foot and visited cotton and groundnut 'shambas' before returning to Marindi by car. It was duties of the D.O. and the chiefs in ensuring the agricultural transformation in Kanyada. As a matter of fact, the agricultural methods which existed before colonialism in Kanyada were considered archaic.

Some schools in Kanyada were involved in agricultural development. Therefore, some agricultural gardens were found in Lala School (SDA), Seru School (R.C.), Ogande School (A.A.C.). During this period Isaac Ogoma under Mr. Carver's guidance, had three successful enterprises to his credit a) the organization or rather cooperation in organizing two regattas at

Homa Bay b) the part he took in the initial phase of the elephant drive and c) the cotton planting campaign. Probably the Kanyada cotton would prove to have been the most successful planting.

Paradoxically, he was later accused by the colonial authority in South Nyanza that he was undermining the cotton growing in Kanyada; he was swiftly arrested and forced to Chula Oyamo to be detained alongside members of Mau. Some people who did not like him were engaged in malicious propaganda against him by pouring cotton harvest meant for the ginnery, and alleged that it was Ogoma who ordered them to do that, hence his detention. His arrest was also said to be “a frame” by the people that he had murdered someone.

Chief Odoyo of Kanyada location had been accused of land grabbing. He failed to lead his people of Kanyada in socio-economic transformations. The grabbing of land from the people undermined the development of agriculture in Kanyada during the colonial period.

The ever increasing migratory wage labour from Homa Bay to the European farms as well as public sector drained Homa Bay of its able-bodied labour force. As a large number of some of Homa Bay people went out on migratory wage labour, the people left behind could not effectively engage themselves in commodity production because they were mainly women, children and the aged. The greater burden of commodity production was now left to the women. This affected production due to the shortage of labour force. Children were unable to help in commodity production because they were in schools.

In Homa Bay, migratory wage labour caused changes in gender division of labour. As men went out on migratory wage labour, women were now forced by circumstances to perform duties which were formerly done by men. Such duties included herding, clearing gardens and other related home duties. This meant that women now shouldered domestic burden than ever before.

In as much as the thesis was about chiefs in Homa Bay, elite political players also played significant roles especially in representations at Legco and agitations for Kenya's independence. There were individuals who were part of nationalist struggle from Homa Bay County. They were: Lawrence Oguda, Samuel Onyango Ayodo and Tom Mboya. They played a big role in KANU's political mobilization for Homa Bay region towards independence period. Samuel Onyango Ayodo was the first Luo from Kenya to study in America, whereby he graduated with a distinction in Bachelor of Science in Education. After graduating, Ayodo entered books of records when he got a scholarship to Union College in Nebraska in US in 1952. In 1959, he joined politics from teaching and became the South Nyanza representative in Legco defeating Lawrence Oguda.

Tom Joseph Mboya was another influential nationalist from Homa Bay County, formerly part of South Nyanza district who served with distinction right from the time he was a trade unionist. Although much of his political life was in Nairobi, his upcountry home was in Rusinga Islands situated in Lake Victoria, Homa Bay County.

6.6 RECOMMENDATION

This study covered only the colonial period and a bit of pre-colonial period. It covered the socio-economic and political transformational roles of the Chiefs among the Southern Nyanza Luo, in Homa Bay County. The bureaucratic Theory of Marx Weber placed the chiefs actively with the colonial administrative structure. The Dependency theory Theory was used in respect to the exploitation of African resources and labour for the benefit of the metropolitan. The purposive sampling and snowballing approach in research methodology gave this work a critical ingredient the study required. Other scholars may research on the socio-economic and political transformations by chiefs in Homa Bay during the post-colonial period and be able to compare the different historical epoch concerning this important public administration position in Kenya at locational levels. The post independent period ushered in a new set of chiefs who would rule under a different political trajectory and it would indeed be interesting to study their roles in the socio-economic and political transformations of Homa bay County.

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The Standard, Nairobi

SECONDARY SOURCES: Books, journals, dissertations and seminar papers

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: Interview Schedule

The interviews will capture people's knowledge on pre-colonial chiefs among the Luo in Homa Bay County, character of colonial chiefs and how they led in socio-economic transformations pertaining to developments in schools, religious groups, agriculture, labour and road infrastructures.

Guiding Questions

- How were chiefs traditionally regarded?
- Their leadership style. Were they popular, democratic or authoritarian?
- How were their social lives?
- were they collaborators? Did they resist colonialism?
- If not, what did they do that made them become chiefs? Personal qualifications or family history?
- Their achievements and failure-what do the people remember him about?
- How did they direct education, agriculture and labour transformations. Did they succeed or not in these endeavors?
- Were chiefs involved in recruitment of migrant labour?
- Did they assist in setting up of schools in their jurisdictions?
- Which types of crops were grown? Were they cash crops or subsistence only?
- Were there marketing boards?
- Did they work according to the agricultural policies for South Nyanza?
- How pleasant were they to the colonial administration?
- How did they deal with Mumboism in South Nyanza?

-Did chiefs play any role in LNCs and ADCs?

-Are you aware of the carter commission?

ORAL INFORMANTS

NAME	PLACE	DATE
Hezron Obong'o Nyiego	Kachien, Kasipul	13.7.2019
Dishon Olewe	Kachien, Kasipul	13.7.2019
Thomas Owuor Adie	Kachien, Kasipul	13.7.2019
Mordechai Kiche	Kodumo, Kabondo	13.7.2019
Daniel Agutu Arogo	Kodumo, Kabondo	14.7.2019
Joseph Ochieng	Wiganda, Magunga	23.7.2019
Samuel Oloo	Wiganda, Magunga	23.7.2019
Raphael Ojwang	Magunga	23.7.2019
Ex-Chief Thomas Okanga	Magunga, Gwassi	24.7.2019
Paul Okombo	Magunga	24.7.2019
Paul Otieno	Yiembe, Kanyamwa	2.8.2019
Moses Onyango	Yiembe, Kanyamwa	2.8.2019
Peter Ogingo Kwasa	Yiembe, Kanyamwa	2.8.2019
Aluoch Alaka	Mirogi, Kanyamwa	2.8.2019
Charles Odundu	Kaumo, Kanyamwa	4.8.2019
Margaret Owino	Kaumo, Kanyamwa	4.8.2019
Alseba Opiyo	Kaumo, Kanyamwa	4.8.2019
Gati Sewe	Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa	5.8.2019
Mathews Oliech	Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa	5.8.2019

Dalmas achinga	Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa	5.8.2019
Samuel Buogi	Kabonyo Village, Kanyamwa	5.8.2019
Paul Odoyo	Kanyamwa East	7.8.2019
Nathaniel Ochako	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	6.3.2020
Julius Akama	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	6.3.2020
John Akama Onditi	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	6.3.2020
Lukas Ondiek	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	8.3.2020
Bolo Nyang'	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	8.3.2020
Samuel Mireri	Kotieno Kokech, Kasipul	8.3.2020
Musa Atuko	Kandaria, Koderia	11.3.2020
Ezra Odondi Ayoma	Kachien, Kasipul	24.6.2020
Joseph Gogo Ogal	Oindo, Kanjira	24.6.2020
Joash Opondo Jumbo	Oindo, Kanjira	24.6.2020
Daniel Nyibule Kabasa	Oindo, Kanjira	24.6.2020
Penina Owuw	Oindo, Kanjira	24.6.2020
Odoyo Owiti	Oindo Kanjira	26.6.2020
Zacharia Owiti	Oindo, Kanjira	26.6.2020
Fanuel Obondo Lang'o	Oindo, Kanjira	26.6.2020
Benjamin Awino	Oindo, Kanjira	26.6.2020
Hana Awino Opii	Oindo, Kanjira	27.6.2020
David Ajwang Ohondo	Oindo, Kanyamwa	27.6.2020
Joseph Opii Obondo	Oindo, Kanjira	27.6.2020

Andrea Arot Owade	Arujo, Kanyada	4.9.2020
Festus Otieno Auko	Arujo, Kanyada	4.9.2020
Pecila Odoyo	Arujo Kanyada	4.9.2020
Peres Odoyo	Arujo Kanyada	4.9.2020
Stela Odoyo	Arujo Kanyada	4.9.2020