Migrants, Commuters, and Townsmen.

Aspects of Urbanization in a Small Town in Kenya.

Brian Lang.

Degree of Ph.D.
University of Edinburgh.
1974.
Summary

Machakos is a small town in east-central Kenya, an administrative and commercial centre which grew slowly but steadily after being founded as the first up-country European trading post in East Africa.

The African population is incorporated in the town in varying ways, ranging from those who were born in the town and are 'fully urbanized' (the core of this category being a community of Muslims) through circulatory migration between the town and the rural areas of Kenya, to a category of 'commuters', who work in town by day and return to homes in the immediate hinterland every evening. This thesis seeks to examine the nature of the African population and labour force in Machakos, people's motives for being in town and their attitudes to urban life and work. It also seeks to place the town in the wider context of the socio-economic system constituted by Kenya as a whole, and to provide a historical dimension to contemporary situations by seeking to understand these in terms of the emerging patterns of social stratification in Kenya.