

ECONOMIC CHANGE IN KASIPUL AND KABONDO, 1800-1962

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF
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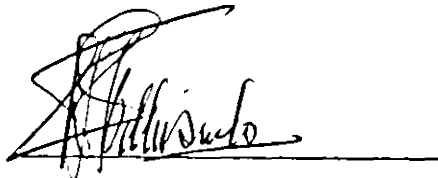
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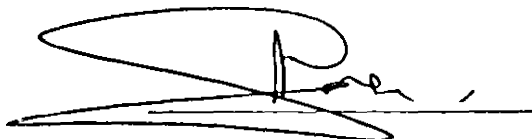
JULY, 1987.

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Odhiambo Ndege', written over a horizontal line.

PETER ODHIAMBO NDEGE

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my knowledge as University Supervisor:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Professor A.I. Salim', written over a horizontal line.

PROFESSOR A.I. SALIM

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A B S T R A C T

This is a study of economic change in Kasipul and Kabondo between 1800 and 1962. The study employs the concepts of mode of production and articulation as its theoretical framework. These concepts have only recently become popular in social studies in general, and historical analyses, in particular. They are relevant to the understanding of the dynamics of change because they help us pose questions about the relationship between the forces and relations of production, and about the way the material base and the superstructure interact. These are questions which are easily ignored or overlooked by approaches that are based on the theories of modernization and underdevelopment. The use of mode of production and articulation is based on the belief that history is a dialectical process in which change is a culmination of contradictions and internal tension within any given situation.

In pre-colonial Kasipul and Kabondo contradictions and tensions within the lineage mode of production led to the segmentation of large lineages, migrations and the setting up of new lineages. Changes in the environment that were consequent upon

the settlement of new areas, also led to the development of new technology and means of material existence and changes in political organization. These changes were exemplified by the transition from a predominantly pastoral economy, to which the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were accustomed in the eighteenth century, to a mixed economy in which crop cultivation was dominant, by the end of the nineteenth century.

During the colonial period, the colonial state played a major role in incorporating the Kasipul and Kabondo economy into world capitalism. It did this through political conquest and the establishment of a repressive administration. This led to the loss of political independence by the indigenous people. It also defined the political parameters within which the colonial capitalist economy was established and influenced the responses of the local people.

The colonial state also established a system of taxation which was aimed at the collection of revenue for financing general administration and also for drawing the local people into the capitalist economy. Useful in the socialization of the local people into the colonial world was Western education, established mainly by the Christian missi-

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The new system of education emphasized from 'traditional' culture, obedience to the colonial government, and work in the economy.

More direct assault on the indigenous economy of the colonial state was the introduction of commodity production and wage labour, and also, the extension of the market. To these and to serve the needs of capitalism the colonial state partially dissolved and restructured the indigenous economy.

The responses of the people of Kasipur and elsewhere were also crucial in the development of the economy. In their responses the local people considered the economic advantages of participating in the colonial economy. Within the colony they considered the advantages and disadvantages of participating in alternative activities: commodity production, wage labour, and trade. But all these considerations and choices were made within the contextual situation. They in the end, determined the extent of people's participation in, and development of, the colonial economy in the

The establishment and development of the colonial economy had a number of consequences in Kasipul and Kabondo. For instance, it brought about changes in forces of production as new crops, tools and techniques of production were introduced. It also led to changes in relations of production as it created new needs among the people, and established new relations of exploitation between individuals and between individual families and capital. Further, it resulted in a new process of socio-economic differentiation.

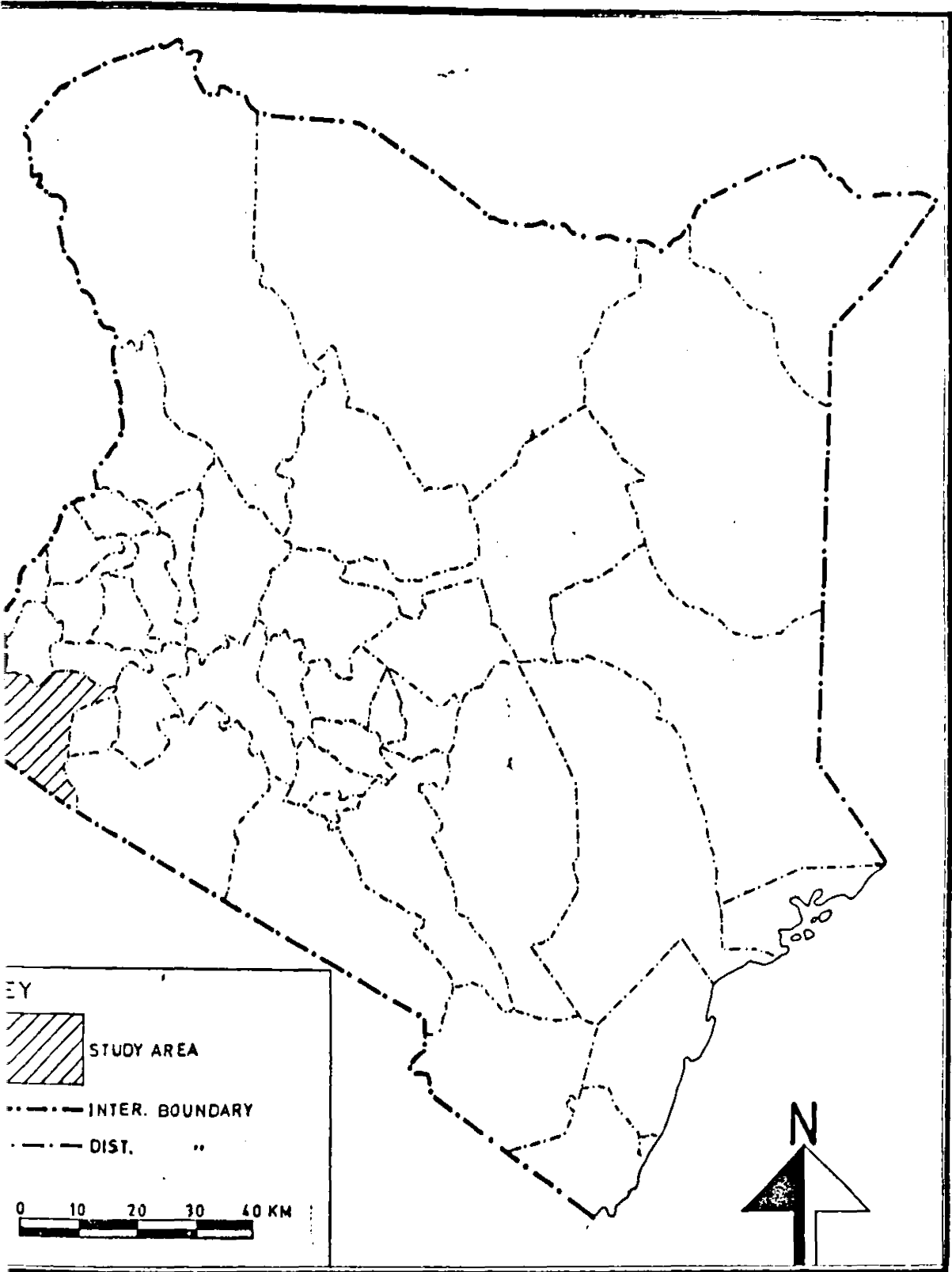
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Change is the essence of every human society and the primary object of historical inquiry. As man struggles to satisfy his needs for material existence through production, he interacts with nature and transforms it. Man's mode of economic existence is also transformed as he adapts himself and his institutions to the changed environment. Change is also brought about when one community, existing in a different environment and leading a different life, interacts with another. This is what happened when different African communities came into contact with one another over the past centuries, and also, when they came into contact with Europeans during the colonial period. In both instances, some forms of production and aspects of life became transformed; others survived through selective adaptation. This study is, therefore, mainly concerned with economic changes which took place in Kasipul and Kabondo during the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century (up to 1962) when, as a result of the imposition of British colonialism, the people in the area were incorporated into the world capitalist economy.

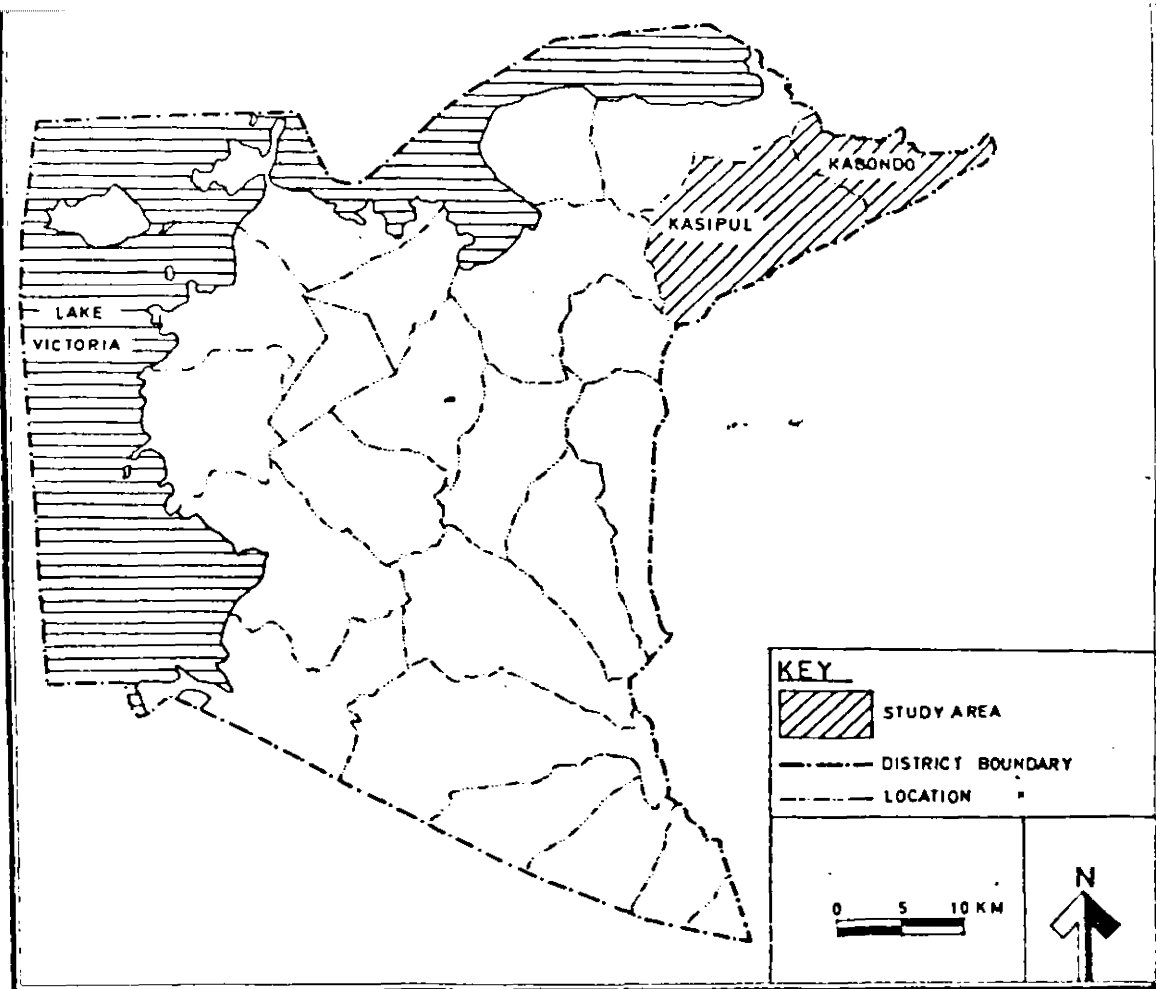
The Study Area

Kasipul and Kabondo are situated in Oyugis division of South Nyanza district, Kenya. The division occupies an area of 504 square kilometers and has a total population of 106,995 persons, living in 19,489 households.¹ In 1907 when colonial rule was established in the area, the colonial government divided it into two locations, Mumbo and Kabondo, which until 1908, were part of Central Nyanza district (the present Kisumu district), before being transferred to the then South Kavirondo district for administrative convenience. In 1941, the two locations were merged and called Kasipul under one colonial chief. This situation existed until 1956 when the two locations were again separated to form Kasipul and Kabondo, respectively. In 1948, South Kavirondo district was named South Nyanza district whose administration included the Luo, the Abagusii and the Abakuria. In 1961, the district was divided into two - South Nyanza and Kisii districts with administrative headquarters in Homa Bay and Kisii, respectively. The Luo and the Abakuria were in South Nyanza, and the Abagusii in Kisii. Today Kasipul has a total of 19 sub-locations and is divided into three locations: East, West and Central Kasipul. Kabondo has a total of seven sub-locations and is divided into East and West Kabondo locations. Together, the five locations form one



Map 1: South Nyanza District in Relation to other Districts in Kenya.

Source: Republic of Kenya: South Nyanza District Development Plan, 1984/88.



Map 2: Kasipul and Kabondo in Relation to Other Locations in South Nyanza District.

Source: Republic of Kenya: South Nyanza District Development Plan 1984/88.

first, because they approach history as a dialectical process, in which change flows largely from the contradictions and internal tensions within a given situation. Second, they focus on people as makers of their history. Finally, they provide us with questions and hypotheses, with a model, of the way in which history moves.⁸

Literature Review

A number of studies have been undertaken on the nature of pre-capitalist economies; the role of the colonial state in the incorporation of these economies into the world capitalist system; forms of capitalist articulation with indigenous modes through commodity production, wage labour and commodity marketing, and the consequences of all these on African communities. We will review each of these studies in turn.

Analyses of precapitalist African economies have been carried out by both economic anthropologists and historians. The first include Bohannan, Dalton, Nash, Fallers, Sahlins, Meillassoux, Godolier, Terray, Dupre and Rey.⁹ The second are represented by Hopkins.¹⁰ The first four anthropologists belong to the structural functionalist school. They regard, pre-colonial African economies and societies as primitive, static and characterised by primitive technology, multi-purposed productive units, lack of cost and benefit estimates, little differentiation of occupation

basis for improving the material welfare of the people, or did it block its own way for expansion and impoverished the people as a result?

Theoretical Framework

In history, as in the social sciences, inquiry into the past is made, and knowledge about it is produced, within a problematic 'whose components include both a set of concepts and a set of procedure which govern both the construction of the concepts and their employment in analysis.'⁴ The concepts which will be used in this study are modes of production and articulation.

Modes of production has two components: forces and relations of production. Elements in forces of production include ecological factors such as climate, soils, raw materials, and technology which comprises the tools used, and the strength, skill, knowledge and inventiveness of labour. Forces of production have, therefore, been defined as man's mode of appropriation of nature. Relations of production, on the other hand, are the way labour is organized and reproduced; the purpose for which what is produced is used; and how surplus is extracted and distributed. Forces and relations of production are linked in a dialectical relationship, as changes in one affect the other. Man also appropriates nature, extracts and distributes surplus produce within a given political, ideological

and religious institutional framework which forms the superstructure. The mode of production, the economic base, is also dialectically linked with the superstructure, the one determining the other.⁵ By focusing on forces and relations of production and changes that occur in them constantly, the concept of mode of production can be used fruitfully to explain change in society.

The concept of articulation, on the other hand, has been defined as 'the linkage between two societies whose modes of production are dominated by a different developmental dynamic or internal logic'⁶ as happened during the incorporation of pre-capitalist societies into the capitalist system. As a result of such linkage, and depending on the dynamism of each mode, change will occur again, depending on the manner in which the two modes are articulated with each other. Berman⁷ has argued that the articulation of the capitalist mode of production with African modes during the colonial period was a process of struggle and uncertainty in which the latter were partially transformed and preserved in the interests of capitalism. This, he adds, undermined the ability of domestic forms of production to reproduce themselves. This explains the underdeveloped nature of the colonial economy in Kenya.

Both concepts of mode of production and articulation are of useful analytical/theoretical value,

first, because they approach history as a dialectical process, in which change flows largely from the contradictions and internal tensions within a given situation. Second, they focus on people as makers of their history. Finally, they provide us with questions and hypotheses, with a model, of the way in which history moves.⁸

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from domestic activities, little specialization, dominance of the economy by political structures, multicentricity of the economy, absence of market exchange, etc. They see colonialism as having effected a modernizing influence on African societies through the introduction of western institutions and roles.

The other economic anthropologists belong to the school of Marxist anthropology. Their works present a more realistic picture of the African past. Starting from the premise that it is the productive activity of man that influences superstructural institutions, these writers have argued that African communities resolved contradictions between themselves and nature by developing forces of production and labour power by better skills. Land was transformed from an object of production to a factor of production. The development of forces of production led to division of labour which further resulted in new economic responsibilities and relationships. Meillassoux, in particular, has argued that African lineage communities were organised in lineages within which relations of production were perceived as relations of personal dependence between elders and juniors, that the economy was self-sustaining because it was based on the direct exploitation of the environment; and that goods circulated through the network of kinship, affinity and clientage, prestation, redistribution of gift and exchange.¹¹

Godolier, like Meillassoux, has also emphasized the role of kinship relations in pre-capitalist social formations. According to him, kinship relations functioned simultaneously as infrastructure and superstructure. In effect, they controlled access of groups and individuals to the conditions of production and resources, regulated marriages, provided the social framework of politico-ritual activity, and functioned as ideology.¹²

Dupre and Rey have argued that classes and exploitation existed in pre-colonial economies. They point out that elders exploited juniors and women although they did not actually exercise a class function because of the cyclical nature of the political system that was based on kinship. Elders monopolised the product of the labour of juniors and presided over the redistribution of surplus and also over juniors' marriage. Elders, apart from occupying positions of power, also had clients whose labour they exploited. The pre-capitalist social formations were able to cope with the contradictions inherent in this incipient class formation by the use of the ideology of kinship and the myth of origin to which elders referred to legitimise their authority.

The historian A.G. Hopkins has argued that pre-colonial economies in West Africa were varied and included manufacture as well as agricultural products

whose output targets were geared not only to subsistence but also to trade. He, however, sees internal constraints to the growth of these economies as having been brought about by pressures towards self-sufficiency, limited internal markets, underpopulation, high transport costs and underutilization of labour.¹³

These features also characterised pre-colonial Kenyan economies.

Analyses of the nature of the colonial state, the role it played in the articulation of pre-capitalist modes of production with world capitalism and the impact of this on African social formations have been undertaken by a number of writers. Starting from the premise that the primary purpose of colonial administrative systems was the establishment of law and order to create an atmosphere that was conducive to economic exploitation, E.A. Brett has argued that the institutions created by the colonial state did not bring about development.¹⁴ He adds that the administrative structures, namely the chiefs, native councils and courts remained dependent structures as they were required to change in favour of new demands only up to the point required for purposes of the colonial economy. Defining development as 'a change process characterised by increasing productivity, equalization in the distribution of the social product and the emergence of indigenous institutions whose relations with the outside world are characterised by equality rather than dependence or subordination',

and underdevelopment as 'relating to a condition of dependence one in which the activities of a given society are subjected to an overriding control of an external power over which it can exert little influence', Brett, therefore, explains the impact of colonialism in terms of underdevelopment rather than development. According to him, the structure and size of economic production in East Africa remained small, the distribution of the social product was unequal, and the control over the social processes was dominated by expatriate interests.¹⁵ Brett's arguments about colonial underdevelopment have been criticised for concentrating on structures and not concerning themselves with the internal dynamics of colonial production and accumulation and the responses of indigenous people to capitalism.¹⁶

Viewing the colonial state as a variant of a capitalist state, Lonsdale and Berman have argued that it represented capitalist interests and coopted indigenous rulers to suppress those whom it exploited.¹⁷ In doing so the colonial state in Kenya found itself in a contradictory position. As the ultimate unit of both economic reproduction or accumulation and of political reproduction or social control, the colonial state had to act as an agent of restructuration of indigenous social formations, supervising continuity and preserving change, all at the same time. Berman, further, explains this contradiction as follows:

'the colonial state provided conditions for external capitalist penetration but placed limits on its operation; it partially destroyed and restructured indigenous forms but also moved to prop up and sustain them; it encouraged internal accumulation and a transition to capitalism but also blocked its development and consolidation.'¹⁸

Godfrey Kay¹⁹ has dealt with the problems of development and underdevelopment on a wider scale, basing his arguments on the analysis of forms and internal dynamics of capitalism. He argues that by the nineteenth century industrial capital had become the dominant form of capital in Britain, subjecting other forms of capital to its requirement, for instance commercial capital. According to him, commercial capital purchased raw materials from non-capitalist countries/colonies and sold them to productive/industrial capital in Britain. The raw materials were then used to manufacture commodities, some of which merchant capital purchased for sale back to the colonies. To engage in this form of exchange, continues Kay, it was necessary for merchant capital, the form of capital that articulated itself with indigenous pre-capitalist economies, to encourage the production of primary commodities in the colonies. But because it mainly operated at the level of exchange/circulation, it was not necessary for it to establish a fully-fledged capitalist mode

of production in the colonies to be able to extract surplus value. It therefore, stimulated and suppressed the development of forces of production in these areas. It was as a consequence of this that capital accumulation by the metropole precluded development in the colonies.

Other studies have mainly concerned themselves with specific forms of capitalist penetration of indigenous economies, for example, through commodity production, wage-labour and trade. In his work on West Africa, A.G. Hopkins has argued that through the establishment of commodity production, transport system, the distributive system - markets and trade, money and banking-colonialism removed the constraints which hindered the development of the export sector of West African economies.²⁰ But he also recognises the fact that the colonial economy was itself strained by such factors as the limited size of the market and the social composition of those who were involved in exchange activities, a point which seems to contradict his argument. Perhaps his more positive contribution to our understanding of the colonial economy is his emphasis on the influence of the responsiveness of African societies which, he believes, was of critical significance in shaping West African economies.

Concentrating on labour and agricultural production in Kenya R.M.A. Van Zwanenberg²¹ has introduced a new element in the study of the colonial economy in Kenya by his use of the concept 'primitive accumulation'

which he defines as 'the generation of capital by the extraction of surplus from the product of African labour.' He sees primitive accumulation as having been carried out in Kenya by the colonial state through the use of taxation, coercion, labour recruitment, retainment of wages at constant levels, and the use of the Kipande system. He has also argued that settler agriculture in Kenya developed at the expense of peasant agriculture.

Although his major concern is to explain how economic factors operated in Kenya to influence colonization of land and the determination of crops in colonial Kenya, Richard Wolff²² has also shown how colonialism led to the emergence of a wage-earning class and suppressed African peasant agriculture. Kitching²³ has, on the other hand, argued that labour was underutilized in pre-colonial Kenya in quantitative and qualitative terms and that through the introduction of commodity production and wage labour, the colonial government brought about the redistribution and intensification of labour power, and also, the quantitative expansion of labour-time. These in turn led to agricultural development and rural differentiation. The areas he is most concerned with are Central and Nyanza Provinces of Kenya.

Sharon Stichter has also written on African responses to migrant labour in Kenya. According to her,

the capitalist penetration of Kenya through wage labour entailed only partial dissolution and conservation of indigenous modes of production. The rationale behind this process of articulation was that it was economically cheap and politically convenient. According to Stichter 'migrant labour transferred a large share of its costs of reproducing and maintaining human labour power to the producer himself; that is, labour was paid less than the minimal cost of its reproduction' as 'labour costs above the day-to-day subsistence of the labourer on the job were transferred to the vestiges of the pre-capitalist economy'²⁴. Since the indigenous population was not separated from their land, the system reduced potential pressures of political discontent.²⁵

Other writers have stressed the importance of population increase and changes in ecological balance as factors which combined with expanding capitalism to bring about social and economic change. According to Esther Boserup,²⁶ population expansion was an agent of change in agriculture under subsistence production. In her formulation, as population increased, the intensity of land use also increased with shortened periods of fallow and frequency of cropping. Intensive techniques were adapted to support dense populations. Colonial policy of commodity production further accelerated the process. As a consequence, ecological catastrophe ensued.

Destruction of pre-existing ecological balance has also been a subject of study by Knight among the Nyiha of Mbozi area in Southern Tanzania, by Kjekshus, in Tanzania between 1850 and 1950 and by Vail, in Eastern Zambia during the colonial period.²⁷ No such studies have been carried out in Kenya.

Bernstein, Kongstad and Monsted have analysed the process of peasantization and the impact of colonial capitalism on individual households. Bernstein has argued that through commodity production, wage labour and trade, capital withdrew labour from use-value production. This undermined the material reproduction of the pre-capitalist economies. Some of the material elements of reproduction were monetised. As a consequence, domestic communities were decomposed into individual households in a process which left them to confront capital in direct relation, often resulting in the marginalization/immiseration of the peasantry.²⁸

Kongstad and Monsted have employed Bernstein's theoretical formulation to analyse the impact of trade on individual households in Western Kenya.²⁹ The following are seen as the economic consequences of trade: changes in the division of labour between men, women and children; intensification in the exploitation of family labour; disintegration of pre-existing communal labour relations and mutual arrangements between relatives; differential

commoditization of male and female products; and finally social differentiation.

There also exist other works on the agricultural history of Kenya, apart from those already cited. These include studies by Clayton, Wrigley, Brown, Cone and Lipscomb, and McWilliam.³⁰ In all these works, apart from the one by Clayton, settler agriculture has claimed a larger share of attention than peasant production. Their usefulness as secondary sources lies in the fact that they outline the stages of agricultural change and show how Kenya's economy was influenced by colonial policy and metropolitan requirements.

Other studies on aspects of economic and social change in specific communities include the works of Munro, on the Akamba; Tignor, on the Akamba, Kikuyu and Maasai; O'Leary on the Akamba, Fearn, Lonsdale and Whisson on Nyanza.³¹ Of greater importance to this study are the detailed micro-analyses of social and economic change on the Luo of Kowe by Hay and the Luo of Karachuonyo and Kanyamkago by Butterman.³²

Hypotheses.

As an outcome of the stated problem, theoretical framework and literature review, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- (a) Economic change was brought about by changes in forces and relations of production before and during the colonial period.
- (b) Colonial administration played a primary role in the incorporation of the indigenous economy into the world capitalist system.
- (c) The colonial capitalist system disturbed, partially destroyed and then restructured local production to suit its ends by encouraging commodity production, wage labour and trade.
- (d) The colonial economic system led to the marginalization of and socio-economic differentiation among the local peasantry.

Research Methodology and Limitations

This study has been based on archival research, oral interviews and the analysis of existing works on economic change.

Archival research was mainly done in the Kenya National Archives, Nairobi. The following documents were studied: South Kavirondo and South Nyanza Quarterly and Annual Reports, Intelligence Reports and Political Records, Safari Diaries by district officers, Minutes of the Local Native Councils and Correspondences on matters such as agriculture, labour, transport and

marketing. Information gleaned from these archival materials was useful in preparing topics for further discussion with my respondents in the field and determining the years when events took place.

One major limitation of the archival sources was that I failed to have access to certain materials, such as handing over reports, which are still classified because they have not existed for more than the stipulated thirty years and are therefore, still inaccessible to the public. Another limitation was that where statistical figures are given for quantities of marketed produce and labour returns, these mostly cover the whole district. I have, nevertheless, used them in the hope that they give a clue to what happened in the area under study.

Oral interviews were conducted during my field work between October 1985 and February 1986. A total of 66 respondents who live in all the 27 sub-locations of Kasipul and Kabondo were interviewed. I relied heavily on the information I got from each of the people I interviewed about who next was an 'expert' on what I was researching. In this way I built up my list of respondents which included men and women, wage labourers and traders during the colonial period; agricultural instructors, teachers, and church elders. My interviews were not based on any pre-formulated or structured questionnaire. I merely held informal

discussions with my respondents on themes such as the origins and migrations of the various clans of Kasipul and Kabondo, pre-colonial production and exchange, the establishment of colonial rule, and agricultural production, livestock-keeping, wage labour and trade during the colonial period. This technique gave me a wide latitude for posing searching questions as our discussions progressed. It also allowed my informants to delve into issues which I did not anticipate, but which turned out to be very important. I occasionally intervened to ensure that the respondents did not lose track of the major themes of discussion. I also asked my respondents questions about their own activities and experiences in production, wage labour and trade during the colonial period. This proved quite useful as I was later able to use my informants as sources of information and, some of them, as case studies. Further, I used my oral interviews to corroborate the information gleaned from the archival material. I used a cassette recorder for the interviews, each of which lasted between one and two hours. The interviews were conducted in the Luo language. Later, I translated each interview into English, transcribing and editing them at the same time. Before commencing the interviews, I always explained the object of my research and relied on friends and relatives who knew my respondents to allay their fears that I might be a "government spy".

The problems encountered in my field work included travelling costs and the task of transcribing oral information. Money and time were very scarce resources. Another limitation, as often happens with researches of this nature, was the likelihood of my having overlooked certain issues which may have been important.

Analyses of secondary sources (work already written on economic change) were useful in helping me outline the major research problems, formulating a theoretical framework and arranging the issues discussed in a logical sequence. My own world view was also an important factor in determining the outcome of this research.

Organization of the Study

The approach adopted in this study is thematic. The material is grouped around a succession of key themes, such as production, labour and exchange, which form the chapter headings. Within each chapter are subsections allowing for a balance between narration and analysis. At the end of each chapter the effects of events are analysed. Economic change in Kasipul and Kabondo is discussed within the context of the history of South Nyanza district, Kenya and the wider world.

This chapter, which is mainly introductory, has included a description of the study area, statement of

the research problem and objectives, theoretical framework, literature review, hypotheses and research methodology and limitations. Chapter 2 will analyse the features of the pre-colonial economy and society in Kasipul and Kabondo and will provide the background within which subsequent economic change during the colonial period took place. Chapter 3 discusses the colonial conquest of Kasipul and Kabondo, the administrative structure and the use of institution's such as chiefs, the council of elders, the local Native Council and the Locational Advisory Council and taxation and colonial education to exercise control over the people and to organize them for commodity production, labour and trade, for the transfer of surplus by the colonial state. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 discuss in detail the process and consequences of commoditization, wage labour and the establishment and extension of transport and markets and rural entrepreneurship respectively. Finally, Chapter 7 presents the conclusion and summary of economic change in Kasipul and Kabondo.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

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CHAPTER TWO

THE PRECOLONIAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Geographical Background

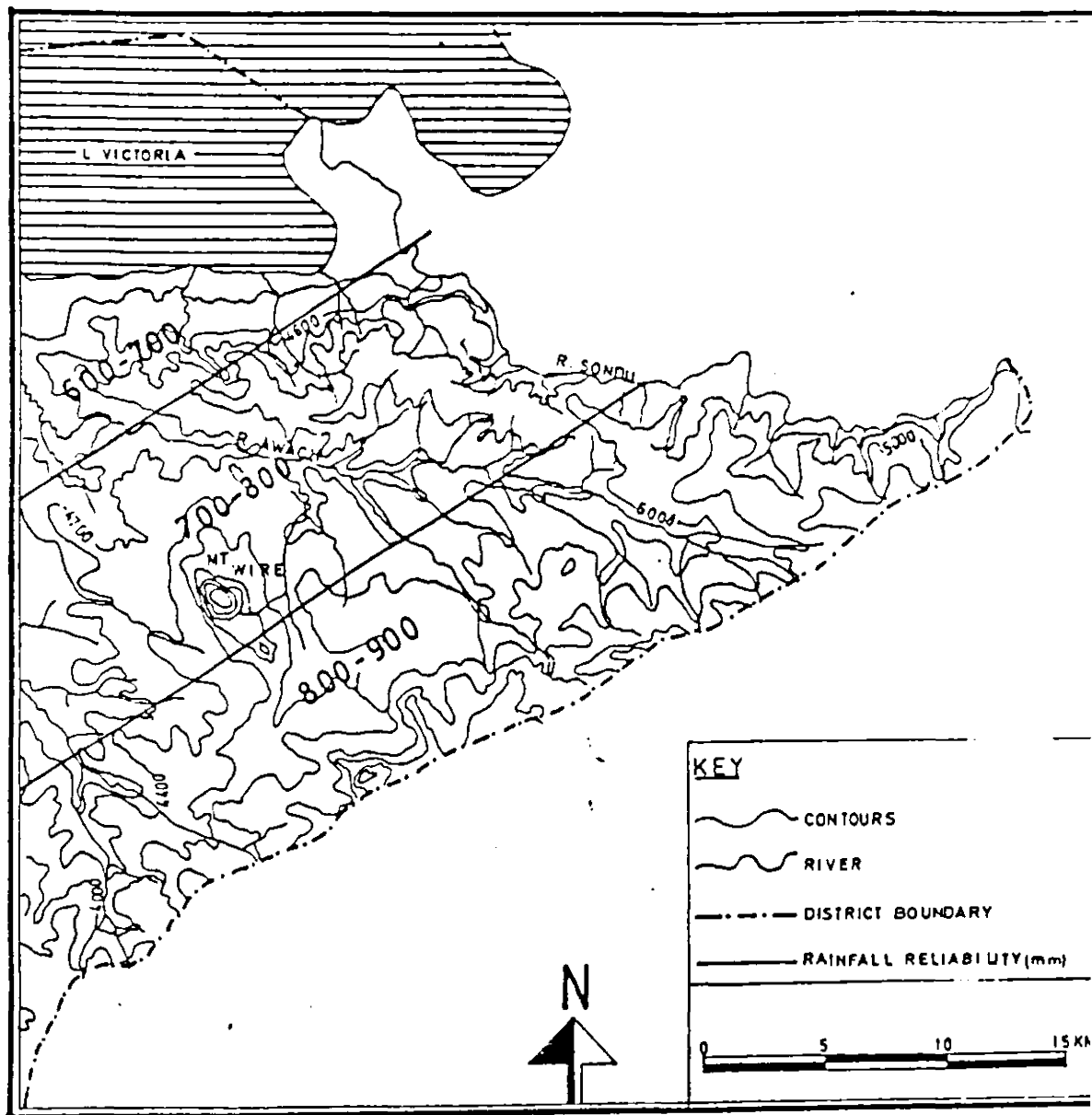
The locations of Kasipul and Kabondo are situated in the north-eastern part of South Nyanza District. Like the rest of the district, the physiographic features of the area are relatively diverse. The general topographical tilt is towards Lake Victoria. The altitude of the area ranges from 1700m in the areas close to the boundary with Kisii District to 1300m. lakewards along the border with Karachuonyo.¹ Thousands of years of denudation and earth movements have resulted in hillocks like Wire, Okombo, Ougo and Agai, and also valleys occupied by rivers like Miriu (Sondu) and Awach and other smaller streams which empty their waters in Lake Victoria. There are also gentle slopes and a few flat tablelands.

Rainfall averages and temperatures have been influenced by relief. In the areas of high relief, annual average rainfall ranges from 1600mm to 1800mm, while the lower regions have 1300mm to 1700mm of rainfall. Rainfall is bi-modal. The long rains start towards the end of February and end of May while the short rains fall in August through to December. Mean annual temperatures range from 19.3 degrees centigrade

to about 21 degrees centigrade in areas of high and low altitudes, respectively.²

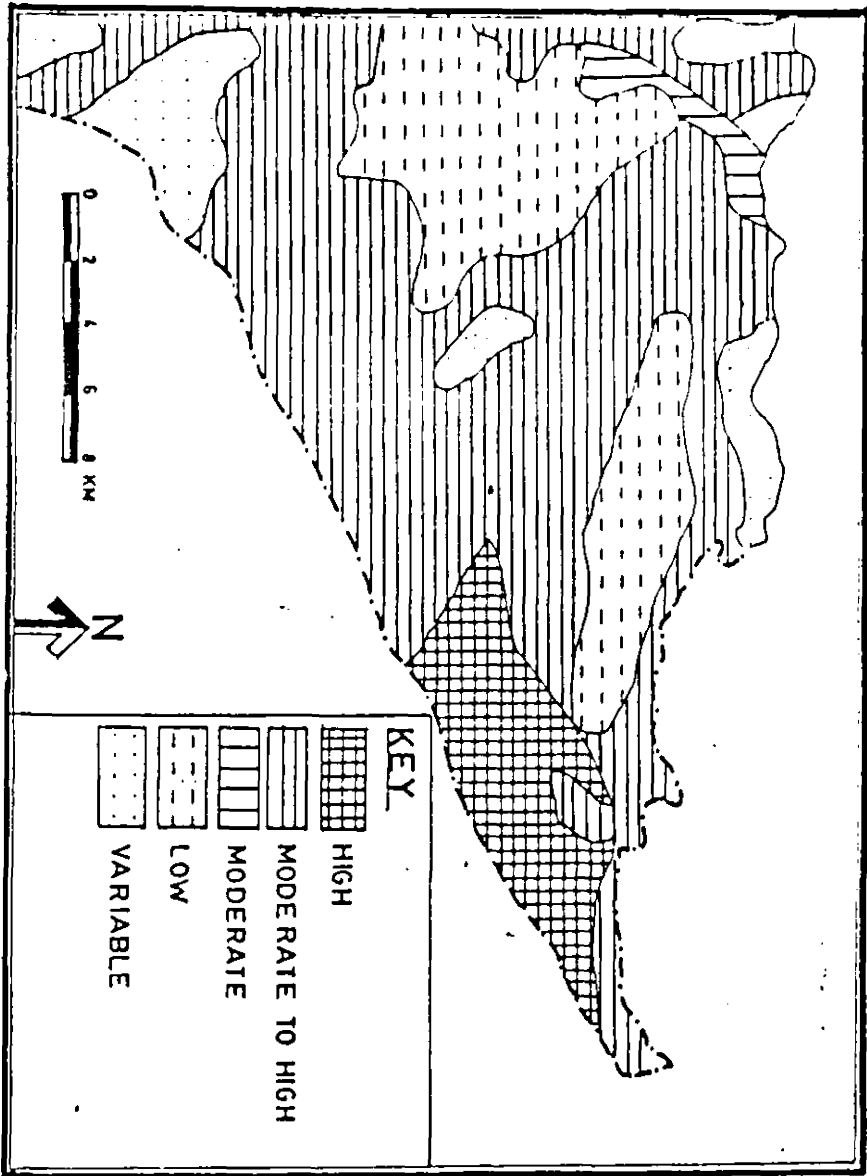
The types of soils found in the area have been influenced by relief, drainage and rock types. They include those of high, moderate and low fertility. Highly fertile soils have developed on basic igneous rocks like basalt. They are well drained deep and red and dark-grey in colour and are found in the eastern parts of Kasipul and Kabondo. Soils of moderate fertility developed on undifferentiated basement system rocks, predominantly gneisses and acid igneous rocks. These soils are well drained, shallow, dark red to brown in colour and range from sandy to clay. In places they are acidic. They are found in the middle parts of the area. To the west, in the lower parts of the locations are found soils of low fertility which developed on granites. These comprise clay and sandy soils which are poorly drained shallow and brown to dark brown in colour. Some of these soils, particularly in marshes along river valleys, in areas close to the border with Kisii District, have small quantities of iron.

Relief, rainfall, temperatures and soil types have influenced the area's vegetation. In the areas of high relief and ^{heavy} rainfall, there originally was moist submontane forest while the lowland areas are still covered with different varieties of shrubs and high grass. This vegetation was ideal for various types of wild game.



Map 4: Relief, Drainage and Rainfall Reliability.

Source: Ocharo, A.O. 'The Role of Transport Systems in Agricultural Development: A Case Study of South Nyanza District, Kenya'. M.A. Thesis, University of Nairobi, June 1977.



Map 5: Soil Fertility.

Source: Jaetzold, R. and Schmidt, H. Farm Management Handbook of Kenya Vol. II, Part A., West Kenya.

Several years of continuous land use by man and the deprivations of wild game have transformed the original vegetation.

It was this geographical setting, together with its ecological characteristics and diversity that were to influence the settlement and economic activities of the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo in the nineteenth century.

Origins and Lineage Formation of Jokasipul and Jokabondo

The peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo locations belong to the Jok cluster of Luo speakers. The story of their origins, migrations and settlement is bound up with that of Jokaruchuonyo. It dates back to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. According to the people's oral tradition,³ Jok had been invited to a beer party in a neighbouring home. So he required his sons, Rachuonyo, Nyasgenga, Rakwar and Omwa, to go and guard his gardens from the deprivations of wild game. Reluctant to go at first, the boys eventually heeded their father's request. Jok had decided to pass through the fields on his way back from the party. Mistaking him for an elephant, Nyasgenga threw his spear towards his father's direction and killed him instantly. The boys, could not withstand the patricide they had committed, so they fled in different directions. Nyasgenga became the founder of the Wanjare, one of the Abagusii clans.

Chwanya, who was found and cared for by the Waondo became the founder of Kanyamwa, Kadem, Karungu and Kabwoch. Omwa founded the Jok lineages in Kisumo.

Rachuonyo, on the other hand, had disappeared in papyrus along the lakeside where he lived by fishing and killing game which came to water. He was later found by Nyakwar, Ogelo and Chien. After staying alternately with Nyakwar and Chien he finally settled in the latter's homestead, with Omieri, Chien's last and childless wife. After Chien's death Rachuonyo inherited Omieri as his wife, as Chien himself had requested.

In Chien's homestead, Rachuonyo distinguished himself by his hunting prowess. He exchanged game and grain for cattle and became rich. He later married seven other wives, Owaga Nyaluo, Achieng Nyajuok, Auma Nya Agoro, Adwet from the Maragoli country, Nyipir Adero from Kalenjin country and Achieng Nyakila, after whom the Karachuonyo lineages are named.

With Omieri, his levirate wife, Rachuonyo had an only son, Sipul, the founder of the Kasipul and Kabondo lineages. Like his father, Sipul was a distinguished hunter. When he came of age, he married two wives, Adungu and Ogweno. He also inherited Achieng Nyakila, his father's youngest wife upon the father's death. With Adungu, Sipul had two sons, Omala and Owidi.

Omala married Adie, with whom he had a son, Bondo whose descendants became Jokabondo. Bondo married two wives, Ngutu and Awuor. With Ngutu he had three sons, but only one, Bula, survived. Bula married three wives, Abonyo, Bol and Jimbo. Mwagi, Ngutu's brother who had come to help his sister with homestead duties, stayed permanently in Bondo's homestead. The descendants of Bula and Mwagi formed the Kakangutu sub-clan in Kabondo. Awuor, Bondo's second wife, had two sons, Omwoyo and Odhoch, and a daughter, Owidi. Omwoyo married Oloo with whom he had a son, Adie. Adie married Asewe and Nyadumbu. With Asewe, he had four sons, - Nyandiko, Nyangwara, Ocharo and Aroko. Nyadumbu had three sons, Oyoo, Omala and Olal. Adie's descendants formed the Kasewe sub-clan in Kabondo. Odhoch, Bondo's other son married three wives, Njiri, Diju and Sasia whose descendants formed the Kodhoch sub-clan. Owidi, Bondo's only daughter had been married by Akumu in Wakeru. The couple later came to live among the Jokabondo. Their descendants form the Kowidi sub-clan.

Owidi, Sipul's second son, whose descendants retained Sipul's name as was required by Luo custom, thus becoming known as Jokasipul, had married four wives, Opondo, Anyango, Apiyo and Adera. Opondo had only daughters, so she brought her sister, Anyango, to be married by her husband, Owidi. Anyango bore two sons, Akumu and Apuoyo, whose descendants formed the Kanyango

sub-clan. Apiyo, Owidi's other wife, had previously lived with her sister, Anyango, helping her with domestic chores. With her, Owidi had a son, Okal whose descendants formed the Kokal sub-clan. With the other wife, Adera, Owidi had a son, Okoth, whose descendants today constituted the majority of Kasipul lineages. Okoth had three sons, Ogudi, Ojwach and Ndaya. Although Ogudi had many sons most of them died. The descendants of those who remained formed the Kogudi sub-clan. Ojwach married two wives, Were and Miyoro, whose descendants formed the Kojwach sub-clan. Ndaya married Atinda and Ojaro. With Atinda, Ndaya begat four sons, Onyango, Odera, Otieno and Dianga, whose descendants collectively formed Kandaya, consisting of Kanyango, Kodera, Kotieno and Kadianga sub-lineages.

Sipul never had children with his other wife, Ogweno, who was later married by Ogol, one of Rachuonyo's sons. Their descendants formed the Kobuya sub-clan in Karachuonyo. With Achieng Nyakila, Rachuonyo's last wife, whom Sipul inherited, Sipul had three sons, Abudj, Akeno and Dada. Nyakilo's sister, Menya, who had been married in Kokidi had come to stay in Nyakila's homestead. She had come with a son, Olondo. Shortly afterwards, Menya's step-son, Dumu, came to join her, as his own mother had died. He married Masanja, with whom he had a son, Oluoch. As he was a great hunter, Dumu accumulated many cattle. Because of his wealth he took care of Nyakila and Menya after Sipul's death.

His own descendants, and those of Nyakila and Menya, eventually became known as Jokodumo. The Kodumo lineages later settled among the Jokasipul, Jokabondo and Jokarachuonyo.

The process of lineage formation we have just described can be said to have taken place between about 1450 and 1700, when Jokasipul and Jokabondo still lived together with Jokarachuonyo across the lake in Siaya District. Even after this period, the process continued, leading to an increase in the population of the various lineages. Through a process of assimilation of outsiders the lineages continued to expand and sub-divide.

Migrations and Settlement in Kasipul and Kabondo.

According to Ogot and Herring,⁴ Jok, Rachuonyo's father and Sipul's grandfather, arrived in Western Kenya shortly before the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century, the Jok clusters which included JoNyakach, JoAlego, Jokarachuonyo, Jokasipul and Jokabondo lived in the Alego/Uyoma area. A combination of factors led to these people's migrations across the Lake Victoria gulf into South Nyanza. The arrival of other Luo groups, JokOwiny and JokOmolo in Siaya from 1680, led to warfare over land. Population increase among the Jokajok clusters was increasingly bringing about pressure on land. The situation was aggravated

by the severe drought which hit the area between 1780 and 1800. As a result, a number of people moved to South Nyanza which has been referred to by Ochieng as the 'America of the Luo'.⁵

Shortly before they migrated into South Nyanza, Jokasipul and Jokabondo, together with Jakarachuonyo, had itinerant trading contacts with the Bantu-speaking communities like the Waswa and Basi, who had already inhabited the area. The gulf was considerably narrow and shallow then. So, a few people ventured across it using papyrus rafts, Odeso. They exchanged grain for biema, a kind of ore from which iron was made by the Waswa. It was in the course of these trading expeditions that it was realized that there was larger land across the Gulf. Soon, led by people like Onyango Adhanja and Onyange, Rachuonyo's grandsons, and Ochando Adie, Odongo Alungi and Okwacho Nyangombe, Sipul's grandsons, the people trickled into South Nyanza. They first settled at Kanam, near the Homa mountains, where they built a fort at Amuono.⁶ Other groups who also came into South Nyanza included JoGem, JoKano, JoKochia and JoKanyada, whom the JoKarachuonyo, JoKasipul and JoKabondo fought and drove away, assimilating only a few. They had also forced the original inhabitants, the Waswa, Wakire and Kakseru, to move towards the Kisii Highlands and Tanzania. The settlement of Karachuonyo took place during the eighteenth century.

In the course of the eighteenth century, population pressure around the Homa Mountains led to conflict between the Jokarachuonyo and the JoKasipul and Joka-bondo. Considering themselves as the true descendants of Rachuonyo, JoKarachuonyo referred to JoKasipul and JoKabondo as strangers, since Sipul's mother, Omieri, was only Rachuonyo's levirate wife. Genealogical distance between the two groups of people was invoked to claim rights over land by JoKarachuonyo. This, together with the drought which hit Karachuonyo towards the end of the eighteenth century, led to the migration of JoKasipul and Jokabondo from Karachuonyo.

JoKasipul and Jokabondo migrated to the higher areas towards the Kisii Highlands. Their leaders, Oyugi Onywany and Rapemo Ogosa, had reconnoitred the area and found Mumbo to be extremely fertile. It had plenty of vegetables such as Osuga (*Solanum nigrum*), dek (*Gynandropis gynandra*), fruits, plenty of wild game and suitable grazing and farming land.⁷ The area was immediately settled. Kasipul and Kabondo lineages ^{individually} occupied their own land in the area. The Bantu speaking Waswa, the original inhabitants of the area, were forced to move away. A few were assimilated. ^{then} Jokasipul and Jokabondo settled to a more agriculturally - oriented economy. Because of its fertility, Mumbo came to be referred to as 'piny momewo minyiedho ka dhako', a rich country which is milked like a woman.

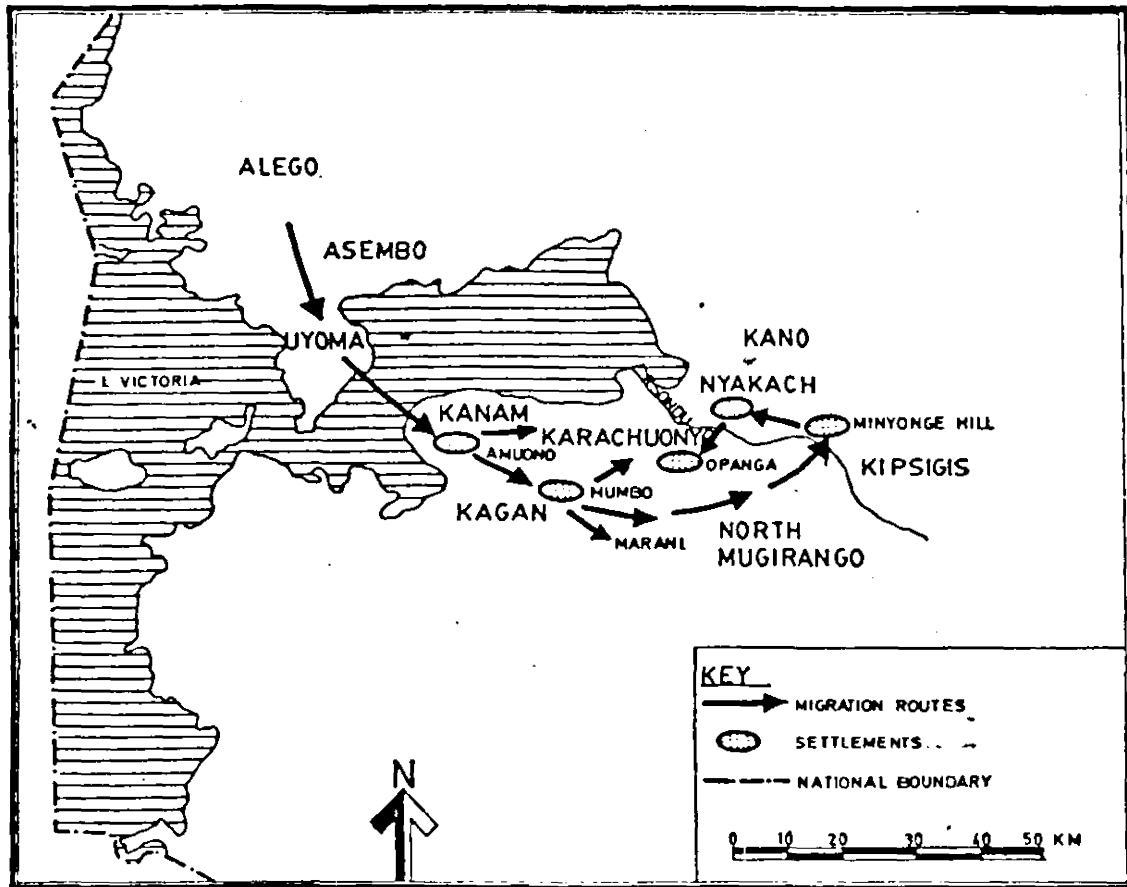
By the middle of the nineteenth century the settlement at Mumbo became overpopulated, leading to further dispersal of the Kasipul and Kabondo lineages. Conflicts over land soon manifested itself in the illtreatment of JoKabondo by the JoKasipul who had more lineages. JoKasipul referred to JoKabondo as Ongilo, strangers. To force them to move away, they resorted to incestuous relations, with their Kabondo girls, impregnating a number.⁸ The Kabondo lineages were eventually forced to look for new land. Together, they first went to Mirani, then crossing Miriu (Sondur) river, they proceeded to Minyonge hills in Kericho District. Here, wars with the Kipsigis forced them to disperse. The Kodumo, Kakangutu and Kodhoch subclans went to settle at Ngege, Nyabondo, Sango and Okano Wach in Nyakach, respectively.⁹ The settlements in these areas were temporary, for soon, in the 1880s, they were attacked and once again dispersed by JoNyakach, who were led by Owuor wuon Kere. Some JoKabondo went to live with their maternal relatives in Kano, others re-crossed river Miriu to live, once again, with JoKasipul and JoKarachuonyo.

It was under these circumstances that magicians like Njoga and Nyanbok Ogilo from the Kadumo sub-clan, and a woman, Anyoso nyar Kamatete and warriors like Obudho wuon Minene emerged to deploy magic for the purpose of enabling JoKabondo to find their own land for settlement.¹⁰ Njoga sought magical help from Nyakiti Ogutu from Karachuonyo. Nyakiti divined that

JoKabondo should establish their settlement at a place near Chagere river. With the help of a musician, Amolo, Joga and Nyambok summoned all the Kabondo sub-clans, wherever they were, to come and build a fort at their new settlement.¹¹ It was in the course of the construction of the fort that Europeans arrived in Kisumu, in 1896. The fort was appropriately named Opanga.¹² The various Kabondo lineages dispersed from their fort at Opanga to inhabit their present sub-locations during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The JoKasipul, who had remained at Mumbo, expanded their area of settlement between the second half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century. The various sub-clans occupied different parts of the area. They fought their neighbours such as JoKagan and the Abagusii of Kitutu over land. JoKasipul also faced cattle raids by the Kipsigis who were also a menace to the Abagusii. This prompted the JoKasipul to treat with the Abagusii in order to fight against their common enemy. The Kipsigis were finally defeated by the joint Kasipul-Kitutu forces. This war was fought by Kasipul warriors like Oindi and Muok Nyabinda. It was shortly after this war that the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo were colonized by the British.

In the course of their migration and settlement, JoKasipul and JoKabondo assimilated a number of other



Map 6: Migrations of JoKasipul and JoKabondo.

Luo and Bantu-speakers. The Luo groups who were incorporated included the JoKachien, Nyakach, Kano, Kamine, Kowak, Kabwoch, Kanyada and Kanyimach. While Bantu peoples included Wasweta, Matabore, Wanjare, Masamaro, Basi, Otondo, Oyengwe and Mikirya. The process of assimilation of the stranger clans occurred through intermarriage. Women who were married by JoKasipul and JoKabondo from these areas invited their brothers. Since they also helped in fighting enemies over land, they gradually possessed occupation rights as much as the JoKasipul and JoKabondo.

Economic Organization in the Nineteenth Century

The economic activities of the people and the way these were organized were influenced by ecological factors, level of technology and the principle of kinship. From what has been said about lineage formation and the migrations and settlement of JoKasipul and JoKabondo, it can be discerned that the people practised a mixed economy which included cattle-keeping, hunting, fishing and crop cultivation, apart from manufacturing and trade. It was these economic activities, together with considerations of the favourability of ecological factors to their continued practice, which determined whether or not a particular area was occupied. We have already seen how those who led the people in their migrations, Oyugi Onywanj and

Rapemo Ogosa, first 'tested' the land in Mumbo. This does not mean that the new areas of settlement had to be complete ecological replications of previous habitations. Kasipul and Kabondo, were obviously different from Karachuonyo, the former areas being more fertile and possessing higher amounts of rainfall. What was of more significance was that due to the ecological difference between their new area of settlement and the previous one, agriculture increasingly gained predominance over pastoralism, hunting and fishing among JoKasipul and JoKabondo during the nineteenth century.¹³ This was also as a result of improvements in the technology the people used for cultivation. Iron implements like hoes and machets were either locally-made from ferrous soils that were easily available, or obtained from Gusiiland. Furthermore, the new settlement placed the people in the position of middlemen between the JoKarachuonyo and the Abagusii, thus enabling them to engage in trade. There was now the need to produce surplus grain for exchange with JoKarachuonyo. All these factors led to economic change in the nineteenth century.

Kinship Relations as Infrastructure and Superstructure

The role of kinship ties in pre-capitalist societies has been approached differently by anthropologists. According to Terray, kinship defines the form of social relations and the arrangement of individuals within

the productive process.¹⁴ Terray's approach has been criticised for specifying the relations of production by the labour process alone. Meillassoux, on the other hand, has argued that kinship structures form the superstructure of relations of production; that the superstructural function may be juridical or political; and therefore that, in the political case, kinship and lineage structures represent the ideological and political form of a relation of exploitation between elders and youths.¹⁵ The criticism that has been levelled against Meillassoux's approach is that it isolates relations of production as such from kinship relations. Another writer, Godelier, adopts an approach that incorporates the views of Terry and Meillassoux. According to him, kinship has a multifunctional role, having a specifically economic infrastructural function as well as other functions. He has argued thus:

Kinship relations that function simultaneously as infrastructure and superstructure, in effect control the access of groups and individuals to the conditions of production and to resources, they regulate marriages (when demographic conditions permit), they provide the social framework of politico-ritual activity but they also function as an ideology, as a symbolic code for expressing relations between men and between men and nature.¹⁶

One would tend to favour Godelier's formulation since it facilitates our understanding of the importance of non-economic relations in non-capitalist societies such as we are dealing with here. For the moment we will concentrate on the role of kinship ties in the economic activities and organisation of the JoKasipul and JoKabondo.

We have already seen the role of kinship relations in lineage formation, migrations and settlement. Polygamous marriage was a method of ensuring that one had many descendants. A man who died without descendants was not valued; it was just as if he never lived.¹⁷ Women played an important role in the reproduction of lineage members and to underline this role most Kasipul and Kabondo clans and sub-clans were named after them. The numerical strengths of lineages was important for production and defence purposes.

Kinship also determined one's residence and rights to land ownership at the minimal and maximal levels. Minimal lineages consisted of uterine brothers, Jokamiyo and those who shared the same father, Jokawuoro and the same grandfather, Jokakwaro. Each of these groups had their own land. Jealousy and competition to increase their own wealth existed among co-wives and sons, and also among Jokakwaro, ultimately leading to divisions. The maximal lineage, on the other hand,

was 'the most exclusive agnatic descent group based on an accepted and putatively continuous genealogy which coincided with clans'.¹⁸ Members of the maximal lineage had permanent and inheritable right to land only within the area held by the clan. Outsiders who had been incorporated within the clan shared similar rights. Jealousy and competition existed among the various sub-clans which constituted the group-leading, at particular points in time, to segmentation of the original clan. This would suggest that the effectiveness of kinship relations in economic organization was determined by the genealogical distance between the various sub-clans and their original founder.

We now turn to a detailed analysis of the peoples various economic activities and how they were organised.

Agriculture:

In agricultural production, JoKasipul and JoKabondo grew a variety of crops to satisfy their needs for food. These included grain crops, such as red and white sorghum and finger millet, both of which were used as food in the form of flour, and for making beer. The people also grew speckled maize which was either roasted on the cob or boiled. Sorghum, a drought-resistant crop, was cultivated all over the area. Finger millet was grown in areas of 500mm

of rain and above. Root crops, such as sweet potatoes and yams, were also widely grown. Other crops included pulses, like beans and peas, and an oil-seed simsim. According to oral tradition, the Luo had grown these crops in varying quantities for many years.¹⁹ The crops were of balanced nutritional value since they provided starch, minerals, protein and oil.

The implements which were used for clearing land were matchets, (miyolo and ojalo) while those for cultivation were wooden hoes (lihaya) which were made from a type of strong wood (Ruga) and iron hoes which were imported from Yimbo through Karachuonyo and from Gusiland, and later also made locally by iron smiths.²⁰

Land was occupied on clan basis. Clan elders divided land among individual families. Within each family, the family head allotted land to individual households. The family head had his own land (mondo) which he cultivated with the help of his family members. Members of individual households also cultivated their own land. Farm work was sometimes organized on a cooperative basis (saga), among individual households within the family and also among the people of the same grandfather, Jokakwaro. Food was prepared for those who came to work. Wealthy people also possessed servants (wasumbini) who worked for them. As payment, the wealthy men provided them with food

and also helped them pay dowry to secure wives. A wealthy man possessed two such servants or more.²¹ Since there was plenty of land, the size of the fields brought under cultivation depended on the size of labour a family was able to mobilize and also on its members' subsistence requirements. The abundance of land, relative to population, made shifting cultivation possible. This allowed used land to regain fertility.

Labour was divided on the basis of age and sex. Men performed the more difficult tasks such as clearing land for cultivation, herding cattle and repairing houses and granaries. Although both men and women cultivated, men worked for shorter hours. They went out to the fields first. Women then brought them food and took over. Men were then free to attend to other duties. They did not fully participate in farm work because they were also expected to be ready for war. In fact in areas along the border with the Abagusii, men occasionally stood by women to guard against possible attacks by the Abagusii.²² Women also did the harvesting together with young boys and girls. Young boys herded sheep and goats while young girls helped their mothers perform domestic chores. Every one who was old enough possessed a hoe. Young people were not allowed to wander about without work, and parents and elders were very strict about this.²³ Since the other tasks, such as being ready for war and

Discussing clan affairs, were not performed all the time, it was obvious that women worked most of the time in the fields. This would indicate that their labour was exploited. As one informant put it:

'Women were married to cultivate, collect firewood, cook and give birth to children. They never participated in clan discussions. Sometimes they were only summoned as witnesses!²⁴

Clan elders organised the pattern of farm work. They decided when cultivation commenced. Together with medicinemen, they organised rituals in which sacrifices were made for the ancestors to ensure high yields.²⁵ The oldest man in the clan was the first to cultivate and sow crops. He was then followed by the rest of the members of the clan. Within individual families, the first wives were the first to cultivate, to be followed by the younger wives.²⁶ This arrangement was also observed during harvests.

The nature of farm work was determined by the different seasons of the year. Clearing of land in preparation for cultivation was done in October. Cultivation was then done between November and January. Crops were sown in February, when the long rains commenced, and weeded in March and April. Harvesting was done in the months of June, July and August. There were two major crops in one calendar year, a major one,

(higa) and a minor one, (opon). The minor crop was harvested between November and December.²⁷ These activities were also determined by the period the various crops took to get ready for weeding and to get ripe.

Production was primarily for subsistence. This was partly due to the limitations of technology which made farm work laborious, and partly, because people produced mainly to satisfy their food requirements. The harvesting of finger millet, for example required between 50 and 75 man-days per acre since it was done manually.²⁸ Then it had to be threshed and winnowed before being ground by hand. Each woman in the homestead possessed her own granaries in which produce was stored. She was required to guard against wastage of produce under her care. She did not exchange or use it in any other way without the knowledge and permission of the family head.²⁹

Problems in crop cultivation included drought, pests and diseases. As rainfall was not completely reliable, drought sometimes hit Kasipul and Kabondo resulting in very small amounts of harvested crop and therefore famine. The people still remember the famines of Ongonga and Abwao which were caused by droughts which occurred in 1875 and 1888 respectively.³⁰ A number of famines also occurred in the course of the twentieth century occasioned by drought and worsened by colonial

economic policy. Pests like army worms, grasshoppers and locusts were a menace to crops. Stalk borers and shoot flies were common sorghum and maize pests. Diseases like rust, tar spot and blast attacked finger millet.³¹ Birds and wild game also destroyed crops. Although charms were used to protect crops from pests and diseases,³² the surest measures against such menace were crop rotation, shifting cultivation and burning as a way of clearing land. Shelters were erected near the fields for use in guarding crops against the deprivations of birds and wild game.³³ The growing of root crops like sweet potatoes and yams was another measure against attacks by locusts and drought.

Pastoralism

Although agriculture gradually gained importance among JoKasipul and JoKabondo after their occupation of their present homeland, pastoralism continued to play an important role in their economy. Asked which economic activity was traditionally more important than the other some informants attributed equal importance to both while others conceded that agriculture was more important. People reared cattle, goats and sheep. They also kept chicken.

Livestock was acquired in six ways. One was through bridewealth payment. This was the easiest means of possessing many cattle. One who had many daughters received many cattle when his daughters were married.

'They were brought wealth while seated', declared one informant.³⁴ Another way was by raiding enemies' cattle. Examples of those who acquired cattle in this way, still remembered by informants, were Olweny 'Oti Tunge' of Kabondo who raided Kipsigis cattle³⁵ and Ongondo 'Apum Pieri' of Kakelo, who raided cattle from Kamwala.³⁶ One did not raid cattle which belonged to members of his own clan but those of rival clans and other ethnic groups. Livestock was also captured through victory in war against other clans and ethnic groups.³⁷ Further, the system of stocklending (riembo) also enabled those who didn't have cattle to build their own stock. One who was loaned cattle by a rich friend later permanently retained a bull and a cow from which he started to build his own stock.³⁸ What he retained was a form of payment by the lender for having looked after his cattle well. For the stocklender, the system was a safeguard against the disappearance of his cattle in the event of disease or raids.³⁹ Exchange of surplus grain was yet another way of having livestock. One started by producing surplus grain which he bartered for goats or sheep which reproduced and were exchanged for cattle. If one had large quantities of grain he would also exchange these directly for a cow which he would carefully look after until it reproduced.⁴⁰ It took one many years to get cattle by this method. Those who were lucky inherited their parents' cattle.

Livestock keeping was of subsistence value as it was a source of milk, meat and blood. It was also a way of accumulating and conserving wealth.⁴¹ Cattle also provided other products like manure, for fertilizing land, urine for adding a sour taste to and preserving milk, and hides and skins used for bedding, for making shields, sandals and clothing, all of which were useful in the domestic economy.⁴² Livestock was both a use-value determining material and social conditions of production and reproduction, and a religious value.⁴³ Livestock was used in payments of dowry to procure wives and slaughtered during ceremonies. Those with large numbers of livestock used them to get grain, hoes and other commodities.

Livestock, particularly cattle, were herded by young men on communal grazing land. Younger boys looked after sheep and goats. Herding was done on a rotational basis by members of the family or communally by members of the minimal lineage.⁴⁴

All the livestock in the homestead belonged to the family head. He distributed them to the different households, those of his wives and his sons' wives. He decided the use to which the livestock in the homestead were put. This was either for the payment of dowry for any of his sons' wives, exchange for grain and agricultural implements, or for slaughter.⁴⁵

As happened in crop production, livestock-keeping was accompanied by ritual. Once a year, a ceremony called dolo was organized by the head of the family. A cow, a goat or a sheep was slaughtered and a lot of alcohol was brewed. Members of the clan were invited to come and feast. The religious significance of the ceremony was to protect livestock from disease and raids.⁴⁶ More practically, the ceremony was a redistributive system. Both the fortunate and the unfortunate members of the community feasted together. It also led to closer relations among lineage members since it was reciprocal and provided occasions for get-togethers.

The ceremony was a result of the uncertainty which characterised cattle keeping. Diseases such as rinderpest, anthrax and Bovin pleuropneumonia occasionally broke out in epidemic proportions and killed large numbers of stock as did happen in the 1880s and a number of times in the twentieth century. Cattle raids were also frequent. Wild animals such as hyenas and leopards were another menace. Among JoKasipul and JoKabondo there were veterinarians who prepared herbs for the treatment of diseases which attacked livestock. These experts were paid in kind for their services.⁴⁷

Hunting, Fishing and Gathering.

Hunting, fishing and gathering were supplementary economic activities done on a part-time basis. The wet

Climate, the montane forest and the savanna grassland in Kasipul and Kabondo provided good shelter and grazing ground for many types of game, such as hartebeest, zebra, buffaloes, rabbits, porcupines, and ant bears. These animals were hunted by men with spears, machets and clubs and with the help of teams of well-trained dogs. Smaller animals were ensnared. Hunting⁴⁸ was undertaken during the dry season, oro, when there was little or no agricultural work, preferably after harvest. { There was large-scale hunting, dwar and a small-scale one, apedha. A leader of the hunting group, jatend dwar went around alerting people about when and where a hunting expedition was to be undertaken. Himself an expert hunter, the leader organised the hunting team which numbered fifty or more people from various clans, ensuring that they were properly spread out to surround game. Older men, Ogona and young boys trailed behind the hunters, to carry meat, a lot of which was obtained in a single hunt. Everyone had a share of the meat; those who struck animals dead received their hind legs. Hunting continued well into the twentieth century, though on a smaller-scale, due to the fact that much of the original forests were cleared for cultivation. Most wild game migrated further south-west into Maasailand.

Hunting was a source of free meat since cattle were rarely slaughtered. It was also a kind of sport. The social importance of hunting was that it served to link

up groups beyond the minimal lineage, thus contributing to the cohesion of a larger group.

Fishing, tengo was done by women in the major rivers like Miriu (Sondou) and Awach and in streams. This was a minor activity since the peoples' requirements for fish were mostly satisfied by trade with the people of Karachuonyo. It also served to link up women beyond the minimal lineage.

Gathering:

Several years of experience by Jokasupul and Jokabondo with plant varieties and species which abounded in the area made the people aware of their nutritional, herbal and technological value.⁴⁹ Different types of vegetables such as dek (Gynandropis gynandra), Atipa (Asystasia schimperii), Osuga (Solanum nigrum) and Ododo (Amaranthus spp.) edible mushrooms like Termitomyces rabuorii, Termitomyces microcarpus and Termitomyces magoyensis, and fruits like Carissa edulis were obtained from the bush.⁵⁰ Medicinemen also collected different types of herbs in this way. Craftsmen who made domestic implements like hoe handles, mortars and stools, baskets and made granaries and those who built houses, collected the appropriate types of raw materials from the forests. People did not plant trees because it was taboo to do so. Like hunting, gathering continued well into the twentieth century.

Crafts and Industry:

Crafts and industry included iron-smithing, basketry, pottery, and tanning. These were done on a part-time basis by specialists who also cultivated and reared livestock.

A number of clans had their own iron-smiths who came from particular families. Among the Jokabondo the Kombok and Kabonyo sub-clans in Kakangutu were famous smiths.⁵¹ Yugi Rabisa, Obonyo Oyugi and his brother Adhiambo Oyugi from the Konyango clan, and Migeni Kipuso and Migwambo Ayieko from the Kakelo clan were expert makers of iron tools.⁵² Iron smithing was learnt by apprenticeship.

Iron smiths mined a particular ore, 'biema' locally, and also imported it from Mugirango in Gusiiland. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the early years of the twentieth century, Nubian traders brought a type of iron, nalo. This was smelted in furnaces and then fashioned into iron hoes, spears, matchets, knives, razor blades, bracelets and earrings. Along the border with the Abagusii, Luo and Abagusii smiths sometimes worked jointly. Iron industries were small-scale, but they were important enough to make some iron smiths wealthy and highly respected, even feared. It was taboo to kill them during war-time.⁵³ To ensure the success of their

industry, the smiths, by way of ritual, slaughtered chicken and sprinkled their blood over the bellow, hammer and anvil.⁵⁴ Iron products were exchanged for grain and livestock. Sometimes people worked in smiths' gardens to get iron implements.

Some specialists made baskets of varying structures and sizes mainly for domestic use such as carrying and storing grain. They also made granaries. These were also exchanged for specified quantities of grain and numbers of livestock. In Kabondo, men who specialised in basketry came from the Kombok sub-clan.

Men who specialized in hides and tanning made clothes from livestock and leopard hides, and shields from buffalo hides. Experts in the making of big shields, kuot, came from Kachien, clan. These shields were used in wars and for dancing during funeral ceremonies.⁵⁵

A number of women were experts in pottery. Some of them were married in Kasipul and Kabondo already in possession of the art. Others learnt it only after they were married. Learning was mainly by observation.⁵⁶ Women collected clay for making pots locally in swamps and along river valleys. They made pots of various sizes and structures for storage of grain, water, milk, brewing beer, drawing water and cooking and serving different types of food. They also made clay pipes.⁵⁷

Pottery was a part-time occupation, the products of which were exchanged for grain or livestock locally and also with the Abagusii.

Distribution, Exchange and Trade:

The subsistence orientation of the economy did not imply the absence of surplus or exchange and trade. Although people produced for the purpose of consumption and reproduction, there existed produce in excess of what was actually required. It is this excess produce which constituted a surplus. That it existed implied that there was surplus labour, i.e. the amount of time spent in work by the productive class, women and juniors, in excess of time required to reproduce themselves at the existing level of the means of production.⁵⁸ The volume of surplus produce was limited by the relatively low levels of technology and the small-scale organization of the labour force. Some of the surplus produce was exchanged by families for livestock, implements for cultivation and other commodities.⁵⁹ Some of it was loaned to relatives, (Sumo), who, because of misfortune were unable to harvest sufficient produce. This was on the understanding that they would reciprocate if similar misfortune befell their benefactors.⁶⁰ Part of the surplus was also used for the preparation of beer which members of the lineage were invited to drink. This was also done on a reciprocal basis. Produce which still remained up to the next harvest

season was taken out of the granaries and stored on top of the new harvest to be utilized before new produce was consumed.⁶¹ Sufficient quantities of grain were also preserved for sowing during the next season. This was dried and mixed with ash to protect it from pests and with sand to ensure that it was not eaten up by members of the family.⁶² Produce from the family head's garden, mondo, was stored in his own granaries. This was exchanged for livestock. Some of it was distributed to his wives in case of shortages in their households. That excess agricultural produce was exchanged for livestock and other products meant that it had both a use-value and an exchange value, and was therefore a commodity.

Exchange of commodities (trade) developed among Jokasipul and Jokabondo and between them and Jokarachuonyo and the Abagusii as a result of the peoples' interdependence. Due to ecological differences within the region, individuals and groups of people were not able to produce all they wanted. There developed local trade among Jokasipul and Jokabondo and regional trade with the Abagusii, Jokarachuonyo and other neighbouring communities.

Trade was organised on the basis of exchange or barter. It was mostly carried out in homes, and in periodic market places which were situated along the borders with the Abagusii and Jokarachuonyo. After

the importance of trade had been realized, elders from Kasipul and Kabondo met those from the neighbouring Gusii clans and agreed through ritual to observe peace in the market places. Market places became highly respected. They were mostly operational during famines.⁶³ Trade was mostly carried out by women since it was taboo to molest them even during wars; men also participated in trade though infrequently.

Imports from Karachuonyo included iron hoes from Yimbo, salt (balo and kado osero) from Kaksingri, and fish which were exchanged for baskets of grain. Iron hoes and finger millet were also imported from Gusiiland in exchange for salt, pots, shields, sour milk and baskets.⁶⁴ In their middleman position Jokasipul and Jokabondo were responsible for the trafficking of goods between Karachuonyo and Gusiiland.

The exchange value of the commodities was measured in direct quantitative terms.⁶⁵ For example, finger millet from Gusiiland was measured to fill the basket or pot for which it was exchanged; a pot of sour milk or a basket of salt was exchanged for an equal measure of grain; one basket of grain was exchanged for a similar measure of fish in Karachuonyo. Locally between eight and ten big baskets of grain were exchanged for a bull and between three and five baskets of grain for a sheep or goat. One iron hoe was exchanged for three goats or one cow or five baskets of grain. One

big shield (Kuot) was exchanged for one cow.

Trade established links between communities beyond their clans and ethnicity. This led to cultural exchanges and intermarriages between the Abagusii and Jokasipul and Jokabondo. It also made possible the consumption of commodities which would have otherwise been difficult to obtain and, therefore, provided an impetus for the production of larger quantities of grain and industrial products. Equally important, it also played a significant role in the process of accumulation of wealth and therefore in socio-economic differentiation. For instance, one started off by producing surplus grain or industrial products. These he bartered for livestock. Livestock was used for marrying more wives which meant more children and, therefore, a bigger labourforce. This resulted in yet greater quantities of surplus grain which were once more converted into more livestock. Such a man became wealthy and was referred to as Okebe. As one informant put it:

A wealthy man possessed up to 100 cattle, many sheep and goats, 10 wives, many children and many granaries of grain.⁶⁶

Such a man had the means to feast the elders, play host to meetings and attract supporters and clients.⁶⁷ Accumulation of wealth was an important route to political influence and leadership.

All men were not capable of the same level of wealth accumulation. As a result, there existed poor or less well-off people and rich people. But the difference between the rich and the poor was not very big as everyone had access to land. Those who never possessed livestock were able to rear them through stocklending. There also existed mutual help among members of the minimal lineage. A wealthy man would, as a moral obligation, offer his cattle for the payment of dowry by his brother or brother's son. He also offered grain to hungry family. Since emphasis was put on hard work, there was a limit to the extent to, and frequency with, which such help was rendered, hence the Luo saying: 'chan ma kowadu ok moni nindo, the poverty in your brother's home never makes you sleepless. Furthermore, the uncertainties which characterised the accumulation of wealth meant that economic differences among people were never permanent. Widespread drought and epidemics led to famine and loss of livestock and human life, which affected everyone. A wealthy man might lose all his property overnight. Hence, one informant observed:

Wealth was got from hard work and thrift.
But generally one became rich because
God planned it.⁶⁸

To overcome the uncertainties of wealth possession people accompanied productive activities with ritual: hence the importance of the role played by elders

and medicinemen in production.

Various writers have argued that there existed exploitation in lineage societies. Judy Butterman has argued that the process of accumulation worked to the disadvantage of women. She has written:

In the initial step in this accumulation pattern, relations between male and female participants are still characterised by equality and complementarity. However, within the patrilineal social organisation, it is at the level of livestock where the allocation of the social surplus indicates exploitation. The ultimate social product accrued to the benefit of males.⁶⁹

Women produced surplus grain which was exchanged for livestock that was eventually used by men to bring yet other women into the homesteads. As a group, women paid their own bridewealth, therefore, participating in their own exploitation in the pre-colonial Luo society.⁷⁰

Writers like Dupre and Rey have also argued that in lineage societies, elders exploited juniors since they monopolised the product of labour of juniors and presided over their redistribution and also over marriage and therefore reproduction.⁷¹ Terray has supported this argument by asserting that exploitation exists when the control of the means of production gives

ose non-producers who exercise it the means of
termining the amount of surplus allotted to themselves.
his control renders the producers subordinate to the
non-producers.⁷² Among the Jokasipul and Jokabondo
subordination of juniors by elders manifested itself
symbolically in the fact that 'a son never possessed
a bull which was stronger in bull fights than his
father's even after he (the son) had established his
own homestead; if his bull threatened to overpower his
father's it was castrated.'⁷³ Women and juniors in
asipul and Kabondo did not constitute a class for
themselves but a class in themselves.

Political Organization

The existence of relations of subordination
and exploitation in the productive and distributive
systems among the Jokasipul and Jokabondo meant that
there were stresses and contradictions within the people's
mode of production. These stresses and contradictions
were man-made and also included intra-and inter-fami-
lial and clan jealousy and competition for ownership
of land and wealth. There were also cattle raids and
struggles over land between the people and their
neighbours the Abagusii and the Kipsigis. Other stre-
sses, like the famines of the 1870s, 1880s and 1905
and the epidemics which killed people and cattle, were
natural. It was mainly as a result of the people's

responses to these stresses that political and religious systems and the normative and ideological principles on which they were based evolved.⁷⁴

↳ The political systems of Jokasipul and Jokabondo, like those of the other Luo communities, were based on the principles of kinship, seniority and territoriality. These principles were of long standing and did not suddenly develop in the nineteenth century. They were constantly adjusted to meet new challenges and were duplicated at all the levels of socio-political organization. —

The basic level at which the principles operated was the polygamous family, dala which was composed of the father, his wives and children. The family was a productive, reproductive, political and socialization unit. Its members were bound together by feelings of affection, respect and fear for the father and older brothers and cooperation in economic activities.⁷⁵ The respect and fear felt for the father was based on his judicial, distributive and ritual functions. He possessed the powers to bless an obedient son or daughter and to curse recalcitrant ones. After his death, his eldest son took over these responsibilities. The family homestead was demarcated with euphorbia trees.

A number of genealogically related families formed the minimal lineage, Jokakwaro who occupied the lineage settlement, gweng. The group was led by a senior elder, jaduong gweny, from the core lineage. He

performed judicial functions, distributed land among the constituent families and represented them in their relations with other lineages. He also possessed ritual power.

The largest territorial unit occupied by the maximal lineage was Oganda which was composed of members of the founder lineages and stronger clans who had been incorporated. The need to cope with the problems of gaining adequate economic resources and exploiting them to the maximum, and also defending these resources from natural disaster and external raids led to the emergence and political and ritual importance of at least four types of leaders referred to collectively as ruodhi (singular, ruoth).⁷⁶ These included healers or seers, magicians, and rainmakers, Jobilo, who were consulted to avert both natural and human calamity; the war leader, Osumba muwayi, who sanctioned war for offensive and defensive purposes; the peacemaker, Ogai who was conversant with the laws of the community and was responsible for dispensation of justice, and the Okebe whose leadership emanated from his wealth.⁷⁷

These leaders discharged their functions in consultation with each other and other elders in different councils. There were the general territorial council, buch piny, in which general territorial matters were discussed; the war council, buch Iweny, which

discussed war matters and buch doho where cases of indebtedness and other infractions of the law were judged.⁷⁸ There was a police force, ogulmama which enforced the law.

Throughout the nineteenth century Kasipul and Kabondo remained highly acephalous. By the beginning of the twentieth century nobody had emerged as leader or chief of the whole of Jokasipul. In Kabondo the various clans were only beginning to appreciate the leadership of the jabilo, Njoga, at the Opanga fort. The chiefs who possessed authoritation power over the whole of Kasipul and Kabondo, respectively, were creations of the colonial state.

Conclusion

From the foregoing the following conclusions may be drawn. The Kasipul and Kabondo social formations evolved over many years as a result of the communities' interactions with different environments and other groups of people. The outcome of these was the development of economic and social systems which operated at the household, family and lineage levels. Three different modes of production existed; the Domestic Mode of Production, the Family Mode of Production and the Lineage Mode of Production. The lineage mode had, by the end of the nineteenth century

become dominant, subordinating the other two to its needs.

The lineage mode of production was based on the triple principles of kinship, seniority and territoriality. These principles reinforced and legitimised the patterns of material production, reproduction, distribution and relations of production/distribution at the domestic, family and lineage levels. Duplicated in the political sphere, these principles aimed at establishing equilibrium in society.

We have seen how Jokasipul and Jokabondo organised material production, the technology they used, how labour was organised and reproduced, the purpose for which what was produced in their mixed economy was used and the roles of kinship, seniority and territoriality in both economic and political organisation. We have also seen how the people adjusted themselves to their new environment and other challenges and the resultant patterns of change in the nineteenth century. Changes that took place as a result of the people's incorporation into the colonial state and economy are the subject of the subsequent chapters.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. See Jaetzold, R., Farm Management Handbook of Kenya, Vol. 11 Natural Conditions and Farm Management Information - Part A. West Kenya, Nyanza and Western Provinces pp. 2-17.
2. Ibid.
3. Oral interviews with Antonius Ondu, 16-10-85 Nyabando Kokelo; Robert Ondenge Nyaridi, 21-10-85 Kanyango; Johanness Mumbo, 23-10-85, Ayiengo; Zephania Muma Ondoo 28-10-85, Nyalenda; Odede Ongiyo 4-11-85 Kalanding; Mathayo Odera Oyoo, 4-11-85, Kalanding; Johannes Muga, 15-12-85 Ayiengo; Simael Ogony 16-12-85, Kopiyo; Sepania Atieno, 19-12-85, Kilusi; Kech 27-12-85 Ramba; Josiah Orinda Owili, 18-1-86, Obisa. See also Ayot, T.O. South Nyanza Historical Texts Vol I, University of Nairobi, Department of History (1976-1978) and Butterman, J. 'The Pre-Colonial History of Karachuonyo'. University of Nairobi, Department of History, Staff Seminar Paper No. 15, 1976-77.
4. Ogot, B.A., History of the Southern Luo: Migration and Settlement, Nairobi, EAPH 1967, Herring, R.S. 'The Joluo Before 1900'. University of Nairobi, Department of History, Staff Seminar Paper No. 21 1977/78.
5. Ochieng, W.R. An Outline History of Nyanza up to 1914, EAPH 1974, and also A Pre-Colonial History of the Gusii of Western Kenya C AD 1500-1914 EAPH, 1974.
6. Oral Interview, Ondenge Nyarindi, Josia Orinda Owili.

7. Oral Interview, Ondenge Nyaridi, Josiah Orinda Owili.
8. Oral Interview, Sepania Atieno.
9. Oral Interview with Johannes Mumbo.
10. Oral Interview, Sakaria Ougo, Wangapala, 16-12-85.
11. Oral Interview, Simael Ogony, Josia Kech.
12. Opanga is a Luo translation of "iron sheets".
13. Sheriff, A.M.H., 'Social Formations in Pre-Colonial Kenya, with special reference to the 19th Century', Historical Association of Kenya Annual Conference - August 1978 pp. 18-21.
On the influence of environment in economic activities Meillassoux has argued that 'the action of the environment is not unilateral since by their actions people produce a transformation in nature which then becomes the object of some new human action adapted to their transformed natural environment. Each environment in this way is subjected to a diversity of forms of exploitation which vary according to the techniques employed by diverse groups which themselves vary in their social and political organisation', quoted in Kahn, J.S. 'Marxist Anthropology and Segmentary Societies: A Review of the Literature,' Kahn J.S. and Llobera, J.R., The Marxist Anthropology of Pre-Capitalist Societies, The Macmillan Press Ltd. London and Basingstoke, 1981 p. 61.
14. Cited by Keenan, J., 'The Concept of the Mode of Production in Hunter-Gatherer Societies', Kahn, J.S. and Llobera, J.R., ibid p.31.

15. Ibid., p. 31.
16. Godelier, M., 'Modes of Production, Kinship and Demographic Structures', Block, M.(ed) Marxist Analyses and Social Anthropology, Malaby Press, London, 1975 p. 10.
17. Buttermann, J., ibid. p. 11.
18. Southall, A., Lineage Formation Among the Luo Oxford University Press, 1952 p. 20.
19. Oral Interview, Odolo Origa, Kowidi, 8-11-85.
20. Oral Interviews, Obara Misuku, Osuri, 6-11-85
Osiro Adipo, Owiro, 10-11-85.
21. Oral Interviews with Antonius Ondu, Ondenge Nyaridi.
22. Oral Interview Barrack Orwa, Odede Ongiyo.
23. Oral Interview, Orinda Owili.
24. Oral Interview, Elijah Oigo.
25. Oral Interviews, Odolo Origa, Odida Milanya, Kowidi, 9-11-85.
26. Oral Interview, Josiah Orinda Owili.
27. Oral Interview, Obara Misuku.
28. Dunbar, A.R., The Annual Crops of Uganda, East African Literature Bureau, 1969 p.6.
29. Oral Interview, Zephania Muma.

30. Oral Interview, Elijah Oigo.
31. Dunbar, A.R. op.cit. pp. 8 - 9, pp. 14-18; pp. 25-28. Oral Interviews, Obara Misuku, Osiro Adipo, Antonius Ondu.
32. Oral Interviews, Obara Misuku, Osiro Adipo.
33. Oral Interview, Obara Misuku.
34. Oral Interview, Dalmas Orwa.
35. Oral Interview, Odida Milanya.
36. Oral Interview, Antonius Ondu.
37. Hay, M.G. /^{M.J.} Hay/ 'Economic Change in Luoland: Kowe 1890-1945', Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1972, p. 104-105.
38. Oral Interview, Orinda Owili.
39. Keenan, J., op.cit. p. 33
40. Oral Interviews, Orinda Owili, Zephania Numa Ondoo.
41. Herring, R. op.cit. p. 12.
42. Hay, M.G. op.cit. p. 92.
43. Keenan, J. op.cit p. 35.
44. Oral Interview, Orinda Owili.
45. Oral Interview, Osiro Adipo, Orinda Owili, Obara Misuku.

46. Oral Interview, Osiro Adipo.
47. Ibid.
48. Oral Interview, Laban Okoth and also Butterman, J. op.cit. p. 8.
49. This has been revealed by studies carried out among the Luo by Professor J.O. Kokwaro. His findings about the value of the various plant species have been published in his, Luo-English Botanical Dictionary of plant names and uses, East African Publishing House, 1972.
50. Ibid.
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52. Oral Interviews, Ondenge Nyaridi, Barack Orwa, Antonius Ondu, Elijah Oigo.
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75. Oral Interviews, Zephania Muma Ondoo, Josia Orindo Owili.
76. According to T.O. Ayot, the word 'routh' implied a leader, a kind of generous man, a wealthy man and also a humble person, and not a 'chief' as he came to be known during the colonial period. This has led her to assert that the Luo political system operated on the basis of 'village democracy', implying that the ruoth exercised very limited power. See Ayot, T.O. ibid p. 15.
77. Mboya, P., Luo Kitgi gi Timbegi: A Handbook of Luo Customs, Anyange Press Ltd. Kisumu, 1983 pp. 9-12

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CHAPTER THREE

COLONIAL CONQUEST, ADMINISTRATION
TAXATION AND EDUCATION

A number of related events occurred between 1894 and 1913 that were destined to affect Jokasipul and Jokabondo profoundly throughout the colonial period. The first of these events was the declaration of a Protectorate over Uganda by the British in 1894.¹ Later in the same year, the area between the Kenya coast and Buganda passed from the control of the Imperial British East Africa Company to that of the Acting Commissioner in Uganda. Unknown to them the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were placed under British rule. It was only a matter of time before effective colonial control was imposed on them. Between 1895 and 1905 military expeditions were organized by C.W. Hobley against a number of Nyanza Luo peoples, of Ugenya, Seme, Gem, Yimbo Alego, and also the Abagusii.² These, the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo heard about and they were to influence their responses to the British. In 1899 the British administrative headquarters were transferred from Port Victoria to Kisumu, and soon, Kasipul and Kabondo together with Karachuonyo became part of Kisumu District. In 1902 Kisumu and Naivasha provinces were transferred from Uganda to the East Africa Protectorate, as Kenya

was then called. The following year, in 1903, a British administrative official, Boughton-Knight, established an administrative station at Karungu, presumably to check German encroachment from across the border with Tanyanyika.³ Karungu served as administrative headquarters of South Nyanza District until 1907 when Kisii took over under the charge of G.A.S. Northcote.

As the British colonialists were extending their control into South Nyanza, another group of Europeans, the Christian Missionaries were also expanding into the district.⁴ In 1906 the Seventh Day Adventist established a mission station at Gendia in Karachuonyo and in 1909 at Wire in Kasipul. From their first station at Ojola, near Kisumu, the Mill Hill Fathers established their station at Nyabururu near Kisii in 1911 and at Asumbi in 1913. Both the Christian missions built schools and began to convert people to the Christian faith.

Thus, Kasipul and Kabondo had become part of a large world, a colonial world based on a political and economic system entirely different from that to which the local people were accustomed. The Christian sects introduced a new religion whose world view was different from that of the indigenous people. What did the future have in store for the people? What changes were brought about by their incorporation into a colonial capitalist system?

In this Chapter we will analyse the articulation of the colonial state with pre-capitalist political structure and the changes this brought about. The colonial state, was imposed from above to supervise a captive population and economy.⁵ Its presence was over-arching, denying the indigenous people any substantial participation in the polity and economy. Its primary purpose was to dominate and exploit the local society.⁶ Like all states, once established, the colonial state acted at two levels, as the ultimate institutional apparatus ensuring the reproduction and accumulation of capital and agency for maintaining the patterns of class domination and subordination.⁷ That the colonial state performed these roles in a determinate manner did not imply that it was completely omniscient and omnipotent. As Berman has argued, it operated in a situation of uncertainty and instability, being at the same time caught up in the contradictory roles of supervising capital accumulation and providing ideological legitimacy.⁸ In the performance of its dual role the colonial state was influenced by a number of factors: the character of local political and economic institutions, the need to find or create local collaborators, the particular process of integration and the articulation of the indigenous economy with the capitalist system, the numbers of expatriate interests involved in the search for profit within the particular resources of the colony that dominated

expatriate economic interests.⁹ The colonial state had to extend and assert itself against indigenous economic and political institutions some of which it had either to destroy or restructure in the process.¹⁰ It is within this context that the nature and impact of colonial administration must be analysed.

The Establishment of Colonial Rule: The
Politics of Conquest.

Lonsdale has stated that the British conquest of the peoples of Western Kenya was carried out in four phases, namely, coexistence 1890-1895, ascendancy 1895-1897, domination 1897-1900, and control 1900-1908.¹¹ The relations of power between the various African communities and the British were almost equal in the first stage but became increasingly tipped in favour of the British in the successive stages, ultimately culminating in the total conquest and control of the Africans in the final stage. The British conquest of Kasipul and Kabondo did not divide itself neatly into these four stages. The course of events which led to domination and control all took place between 1907 and 1910.

The first people in Kasipul to establish relations with the British were Bala Oyugi from Kanyango, Sindalo Oyada from Sino Kagola and Sangoro from Konyango.¹² These people had gone to Kano during Kitoto's chieftainship and stayed there after Kitoto himself had

died and was succeeded by his son Owiti in 1902. While in Kano, the three men worked for Kitoto and later became servants for Arab traders, accompanying them on their trading excursions. In this way they learnt Kiswahili and were soon introduced to the British administration in Kisumu by the Arabs as possible allies, to be made leaders in Kasipul. As far as the Arab traders were concerned, if any of the three men became chief of Kasipul, he would ensure that their trading activities in South Nyanza would be free from the hostilities of the local people. The Arabs were particularly apprehensive about the activities of one, Oyugi Onger from Kakelo, who traded in hides and also snatched trade goods from the Arabs who reported the matter to the British. The administration in Kisumu thought that Oyugi Onger must be a local leader in Kasipul and wanted to make him chief of the area. The Arabs revealed this to Bala who, without informing his colleagues, immediately travelled to his home in Kanyango to bring his own Father Oyugi wuon Bala whom he presented to the administration as Oyugi Onger. Oyugi wuon Bala was duly received, dressed in chiefly regalia which was a white Kanzu and made headman of Mumbo, as Kasipul was then known. He established his camp near Nyahera and later transferred it to Oyugis, a place named after him which soon became the first trading centre in the area. A council of elders consisting of Opiyo Bwana from Kanyango, Nyakado Muga

from Kotieno, Ogola Obala from Kokal and Odwar wuon Opiyo from Kokwanyo were appointed to assist him.

The first contacts between Jokabondo and the British administration at Kisumu were occasioned by a fight between Kabondo hunters and the Kipsigis.¹³ A hunting expedition had taken a few Kabondo hunters to the boundary with the Kipsigis, near Sondu. A fight ensued between the hunters and the Kipsigis, one or two of whom were killed. The Kipsigis reported the matter to the British administration at Kericho which soon communicated the matter to the District Commissioner in Kisumu. A group of askaris led by a District Officer were immediately dispatched to the Kabondo Fort at Opanga to raid cattle as punishment for the crime the hunters had committed. Nyambok Ogilo the foremost Kabondo ritual leader, was called forward and ordered to give an explanation for the offence his people had committed. Nyambok did not understand what the European Officer was saying. He called Nyangwara Omolo from the Kasewe sub-clan who appeared to understand a few words of Kiswahili and one English word 'oret' (alright). He stepped forward and said 'ndio Bwana' and 'oret' to everything the administrative officer said. He was appointed headman of Kabondo partly because of his ability to communicate in Kiswahili and also because Nyambok refused the offer, failing to see how he would recon-

cile his role as a ritual leader and the responsibilities of a colonial headman. Nyangwara Omolo who was henceforth nicknamed 'Oreta' was headman for a very short time. On another occasion, another District Officer made a Safari to Kabondo. He was given a bull on his departure. The bull wildly ran away, whereupon Obudho Minene, a strong man from the Kodhoch sub-clan gave chase and brought it back. As a result of this display of strength, he was made headman in Nyangwara's place.¹⁴ His elders' Council included, Okoth, Omoth, Autho, Asero, Obulo and Owidi.¹⁵

By 1908 the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo were placed under British control and ruled by headmen imposed upon them by the colonial administration. Unlike other neighbouring communities, such as the Bogusero clan in Gusii, they did not ask for British protection. But like the Bagetutu, local incidents, such as the conflict between the people of Kabondo and the Kipsigis, and Oyugi Onger's attacks on Arab traders prompted the British to establish effective control on Kasipul and Kabondo. Local ritual leaders and diviners, such as Njoga and Nyambok of Kabondo and others in Kasipul had advised their people against military resistance against the colonialists.¹⁶ They had heard about the way communities which resisted such as Jo Uyoma, Jo Seme, the Nandi and the Abagusii, had been ruthlessly suppressed by British Hotchkiss and Maxim fire power.

They were not prepared to undertake a futile exercise in resistance with their spears and shields which could only have resulted in bloodbath.

Despite the crude methods they used to appoint headmen, the British had tipped relations of power in their favour in the process of political accumulation. They had displayed the superiority of their armed strength, though not directly on the people of Kasipul and Kabondo. They had established a power base which was to be transformed into a power relationship which was shared by their local allies, the headmen. To complete the process of conquest a local political system was created in which the headmen, who later became known as chiefs were allocated subordinate power and the functions of satisfying the demands of the colonial state on local economic resources through the collection of taxes, provision of labour and supervision of commodity production.¹⁷ Those recruited as chiefs in Kasipul and Kabondo, like others in South Nyanza and elsewhere in Kenya, used compliance with the wishes of the colonial state as a means to seize and consolidate their positions, for personnel, and, incidentally, local advantage. To guard against possible armed resistance the colonial state disarmed the people of Kabondo and Kasipul by confiscating and burning their spears and shields during the First World War.

Colonial Administrative Theory and Practice.

The appointment of chiefs and the disarmament of the people did not in themselves guarantee efficient administration. For purposes of administration the colonial state formulated the so-called 'indirect rule' policy and established an institutional infrastructure. The purpose of any institutional infrastructure is to have things done. Its efficiency in this regard depends on whether it is innovative or conservative within its ever-changing environment; whether or not it deals with issues that are fundamental to the peoples interests; whether its deliberations are consensual or coercive; and whether in the final analysis policies formulated by it are effectively translated into action. The success or otherwise of any institution is dependent both on whether it is sufficiently structured to effectively deal with problems and on the extent to which those who man it understand and are capable of carrying out what is expected of their roles. Perhaps these criteria constitute standards that are too high to fuse for evaluating the administrative performance of the colonial state. Nonetheless, there is need to use them not only because they are universal but also because the institutions of the post-colonial Kenyan state are a colonial inheritance.

Right from the start, the colonial state was faced with administrative problems. These have been summarised by Ogot thus:

'There was no reference model such as the Kiganda system to export to the rest of the country. And since the British were committed to the idea of governing 'native peoples' through chiefs, the problem became that of establishing the institution of the chief in the largely chiefless societies of Kenya. Moreover this difficult experiment was to be carried out by young, often inexperienced, semi-educated and overworked administrators!¹⁸

Native Policy

The British theory of administration wrongly called 'indirect rule' was based on two forms of misconception: first, on the belief in the existence of chiefs among pre-colonial African communities, and second, on the belief in the representativeness of their colonial appointees, together with emphasis on continuity with a pre-colonial past.¹⁹ These beliefs were based on British conservative perceptions of society and the way it should be ordered. This conservative mode of thought held that change in society should be slow and gradual. It was the belief which guided the administrative policy of the colonial state in Kenya, at least after 1910.

In 1909, the new Governor, Sir Percy Girouard, reported to the Colonial Office in London about the 'utter absence of any defined policy in Kenya'.²⁰ In 1910, he issued an official memorandum outlining his own directions of policy, based on Lord Lugard's theory of indirect rule. The memorandum, which was sent to all Provincial and District Commissioners in the country contained the following statements:

The fundamental principle and the only humane policy to be followed in dealing with peoples who have not reached a high stage of civilization is to develop them on their own lines and in accordance with their own ideas and customs, purified in so far as is necessary.

.... the introduction of so-called civilization, when it has a denationalising and demoralizing tendency should be avoided Every improvement must be by a natural process of evolution which will cause no dislocation of the conditions under which the natives find themselves.

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 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 tribe; but active interest, supervision and guidance on the part of the officers of the administration are all necessary for the prevention of abuses.

I warn those who are in favour of direct rule that if we allow the tribal authority to be ignored or broken it will mean that we, who numerically form a small minority in the country, shall be obliged to deal with a rabble, with thousands of persons in a savage or semi-savage state, all acting on their own and making themselves a danger to society generally.²¹

It is obvious from Girouard's memorandum that the colonial state was primarily concerned with security, for the maintainance of which, the administration would rely on colonial chiefs whose powers were to be subordinated to those of British administrative officers. It was certainly politically convenient and financially cheaper for the colonial state to rely on African chiefs for the maintainance of order, collection of taxes, mobilisation of labour and enforcing commodity production than importing 'chiefs' from Britain to perform these duties. Inherent in Girouard's policy

was the ideology of paternalism since the colonial chiefs had to carry out their duties under the direction of British Officers. Also, unknown to Girouard, far from the policy ensuring continuity of the pre-colonial political systems within the imposed colonial structure, there would soon be disjunctions between the new and the old systems. For both territorially and qualitatively the positions and functions of the established local authorities were ultimately radically transformed.²²

Even before Girouard's memorandum of 1910, the pre-colonial political structures were already subjected to transformation by the legal promulgations of the colonial state. In 1902 was enacted the East Africa Protectorate Village Headman Ordinance which sought to help in the appointment of administrative headmen in every part of the Protectorate and to grant such headmen powers to collect taxes and recruit labourers.²³ It was by this ordinance that the colonial Administration in Kisumu appointed Oyugi Wuon Bala and Obudho Minene as headmen of Kasipul and Kabondo, respectively. Both, men, as we have already seen, were previously not prominent leaders as the British had imagined. Nyambok, a prominent ritual elder in Kabondo, had decided to remain in the background, not to be caught up in the mesh of British supremacy. He later became a member of the elders'

Council hoping that he would continue to represent the interests of his Kodumo sub-clan. Apart from possessing no local influence, Oyugi and Obudho had no experience in what was expected of their new roles. And, this, according to the British, made them a hindrance to efficient administration. In 1908, when Kasipul and Kabondo were transferred from Kisumu to South Nyanza District, the District Commissioner, G.A.S. Northcote, reported that Obudho and Oyugi were only a little intelligent and could not perform their duties without a European at their back.²⁴

Between 1907 and 1912 the powers of colonial chiefs were increased by further legal promulgations. The 1907 Courts Ordinance created Native Courts and recognised tribunals under the direct authority of chiefs.²⁵ Later, in 1911, the Native Tribunal Rules recognized the constitution of the Council of elders in accordance with traditional custom.²⁶ The 1912 Native Authority Ordinance enlarged the formerly relatively minor powers of chiefs and laid down that they were to be appointed over specific areas, later to be called locations, whose boundaries were supposed to coincide with pre-existing clan boundaries.²⁷ In the locations of Kasipul and Kabondo, as in other areas of Kenya, chiefs were empowered to administer justice with the help of their councils of elders.

Together, all these Ordinances transformed the pre-existing political structures. According to

Ogot, centralised political systems, with legally defined boundaries, were now superimposed on previously acephalous communities. Previously, these communities were accustomed to solving clan jealousies and rivalries through secession or migration. Now these were to be tackled within fixed political and administrative entities.²⁸ The centralized political systems were now ruled by chiefs appointed by the colonial state. The traditional basis of their authority was increasingly undermined by Christianity which preached man's accountability to God alone, rather than to those who were still alive and the ancestors. Seniority was no longer a criteria for leadership. In Kabondo and Kasipul, as happened in other locations of South Nyanza, colonial chiefs ignored the authority of the elders and often acted independently of, or in consultation with, their retainers in all administrative matters, relying on Government support in the event of opposition.²⁹ They made use of thier authority to enrich themselves at the expense of their people.

Before discussing the role of colonial chiefs in the collection of taxes - a role which was usually abused and an exercise which had far-reaching economic effects, - it is necessary at this stage to analyse the nature and impact of colonial education. This is important because education played an important role in socializing local people into the colonial world of

oppression, alienation and exploitation. It was also crucial in bringing about economic change.

Colonial Education and Socialization.

From their initial centres at Gendia and Asumbi, respectively, the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) and the Mill Hill Fathers (MHF) expanded their activities to Kasipul and Kabondo and the rest of South Nyanza.

In 1909 Pastor Baker, who had briefly stayed with Pastor Andrew Carscallen at Gendia, decided to establish an SDA station in Kasipul. He was accompanied by Luka Simba, the first Christian convert at Gendia from Konyango in Kasipul. Initially, Baker had wanted to build a church at Nyahera in Kanyango but the local headman, Oyugi wuon Bala, refused to grant him land there. Instead, he offered Baker land at Pakla, a rocky place near Wire Hill.³⁰ Soon, a small house was built to serve as a church and school. A number of local people became converts and towards the end of 1909 another missionary, Pastor H. Brooks, arrived from Gendia to assist Baker. Between 1910 and 1930 a number of original local converts established SDA out-posts in their own villages. In Kasipul, for instance, Mireri Ngiela, Elijah Oigo, Elijah Ongowu and Omwoso Ogalo established schools at Apondo, Nyahera, Saye and Ringa, respectively. In Kabondo, on the other hand, Jacobo Osoo, James Ongudi, and

James Aroko established a School at Kowidi, and Joseph Ndiege and Paulo Owenga also established other schools at Mirani and Wangapala, respectively.

Like the SDA missions at Gendia and Wire, the MIF mission at Asumbi, after its establishment in 1913, also attracted converts from Kasipul and Kabondo who later established MIF out-schools in their villages. Benjamin Ayieko and Nyagowa established such schools at Awuoro and Nyagowa, respectively. Obala Omega and Ondijo Opiyo also built MIF schools in Kikelo and Kodera. In Kabondo, Wilbrodo Kwadha established a school at Opanga in 1928. Johannes Nyambori also established another school at Atela in 1948.

The Church Missionary Society established only one village school in the area. In 1928, Albert Okeno from Kasewe and George Malela from Kodumo jointly started a CMS church and school at Gotrateng in Kabondo. Okeno and Malela had been converted to Christianity when they were working as servants of a European settler near Limuru.³¹

It is obvious from the foregoing that the initiative of local people was a vital factor in the establishment of mission schools and the spread of Christianity in Kasipul and Kabondo. What factors led them to establish schools? What influenced local people to become Christians and acquire western education?

These questions can be best answered by taking into account the nature of the colonial situation. Colonialism was characterised by a political order with new political values and power relationships. It was also characterised by an economic order based on materialism and exploitation. European administrators and their local African representatives ruled oppressively. They usually threatened to use force and sometimes actually used it. This alienated local people. Soon, some local people were impelled to emulate the social forms of the colonialists. They did so by adapting christianity, going to school and also assimilating value patterns and cultural traits which were functional in the new order.³² This phenomenon, explains Paulo Friere, derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt the attitude of 'adherence' to the oppressor.³³

Although the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were converted to Christianity because of its material appeal, their expectations were not fulfilled. Their enthusiasm for western education was neither completely satisfied nor rewarded. As happened in the rest of South Nyanza District and, indeed, the whole of Kenya, western/colonial education in Kasipul and Kabondo was characterised by a number of shortcomings. For instance, its curriculum was not relevant to the

needs of the local people. Financial limitations meant that throughout the colonial period the number of schools was very small relative to the local population and demand for education. By 1962, for example, only Agoro Sare, Ringa and Ober in Kasipul, and Wangapala and Oriang in Kabondo offered what was then called intermediate education.

Nevertheless, through the gospels of salvation, obedience and work, Christianity and colonial education performed its socializing role in the colonial world.

Education, both in the hands of the missionaries and under the supervision and control of the colonial state, was simple, aimed at implanting certain truths with a minimum of reasoned explanation. The African was assumed to have little power of reasoning. Learning was carried out by rote and by faith. All that was taught was accepted as legitimate by virtue of the authority of the teacher. Little attempt was made to make education practical and relevant to the local peoples' everyday experiences. Hemsted, a District Commissioner of South Nyanza who visited a few SDA and MHF schools in 1916 reported that: 'it is difficult to quite gather what the propaganda is, but so far as I have been able to make, it consists of collecting crowds of natives together and singing elementary

Luo sentences, translated from the Bible'³⁴ Reading, writing and numeracy were also taught. In the MHF schools this was done as follows:

The letters were nailed to the wall, to be sung out in rotation by each of the scholars and repeated by his companions. The pupils were trained to read and the constant repetition of the letter was aimed at impressing on their minds some important religious truth. Two years were devoted to the eradication of superstition, evil habits and vices the next two years were devoted to the instruction on the Ten Commandments and Sacreaments. After this the Catechumenates came and lived for a month to six weeks in the mission compound where the priest examined them closely on what they had learned. The Catechist who failed to answer questions thrown at him was sent back for another three months.³⁵

The SDA village schools in Kasipul and Kabondo carried out a similar type of education. Village teachers with the help of their pupils, carried portable blackboards to Wire Mission station where vowels and the alphabet were written by a European Pastor or a literate Luo convert. These were then taken back to the village schools to be recited by pupils. Later pupils were taught to read and recite carefully chosen verses from the Bible. After qualifying in this one was baptised and was qualified to proceed

to substandards A and B at the Central Schools at Asumbi for the Catholics and Gendia und Kamagambo for the SDAs, and after 1934 to the African Government School, Kisii. These higher institutions of learning instructed pupils in Religion, Arithmetic, English, Swahili, Crafts and also conducted Teacher Training Courses. Very few joined these schools and proceeded to other schools outside the district. Those who went to schools outside the district, such as Maseno received better education.³⁶

Both the SDA and MHF missionaries were constantly criticised for offering substandard education. In 1928, the District Commissioner, Hodge, reported that 'the tendency of the missionaries is to concentrate on passing certain educational standards rather than on turning out citizens, who by their knowledge of handicrafts and better agricultural methods will raise the standard of living not only of themselves but of the whole reserve'.³⁷ In 1934, another District Commissioner, Major C.E.V. Buxton criticised them of devoting their first care to saving of souls rather than to improving the minds and raising the standard of living of their adherents.³⁸ It was because the mission schools did not provide relevant education that the LNC, the DEB, and later the ADC, campaigned for secular schools.

The system of education practiced by the MIF and the SDA missionaries in Kasipul and Kabondo and in the whole of South Nyanza District, was the type that has been called by the revolutionary educationist, Paulo Freire, the banking system of education which regards pupils as depositories and teachers as depositors of knowledge.³⁹ This type of education was aimed at minimising the pupils' critical and creative power and thus annulling the development of their consciousness. It resulted in creating passive people who accepted their oppression as preordained.

Missionary gospels of salvation, obedience and work reinforced the cultural conquest of the people, their colonial oppression and exploitation. Through the gospel of salvation, the missionaries engaged themselves in the cultural assault of the people. In this, writes Freire:

The invaders are the authors of, and actors in, the process; those they invade are the objects. The invaders mould; those they invade are moulded; the invaders choose; those they invade follow the choice - or are expected to follow it. The invaders act; those they invade only have the illusion of acting, through the actions of the invaders.⁴⁰

The missionaries in their tendency to puritanism denigrated everything African irrespective of its

social function. They, for instance, insisted that Luo marriage, burial and recreational practices were barbaric and unchristian.⁴¹ But this puritanical tendency was least among the Roman Catholic M.H.F. at one end of the theological spectrum and greatest among the fundamentalist SDA Protestants, at the other.⁴² The impact of missionary cultural assault was that it made their converts in Kasipul and Kabondo convinced of their intrinsic inferiority. They began to accept the values, standards and goals of the invaders, the missionaries and the Colonialists. Their world view became that of the missionaries, as was testified by Absalom Nyariaro, a product of SDA education.

The knowledge we got from school was that knowing God is the beginning of wisdom. We became different from those who did not go to school. We knew things they did not know. We saw the world differently ... Our homes became different from those whose owners did not go to school.⁴³

Nyariaro and few other mission educated people became both culturally and economically differentiated from the rest of the people who did not attend mission schools.

The gospel of obedience was aimed at creating people who were easy to control. It was the policy of the colonial government that schools should incul-

cate discipline in Africans. 'To the African in his primitive state', reasoned the Director of Education in 1926, 'military or semi-military discipline makes a strong appeal.'⁴⁴ He also emphasized the role religion would play as a basis for discipline and in inter-racial relations since it practised admiration, affection and respect.

It is therefore not surprising that both the MHF and the SDA denominations stressed the virtues of obedience. They would admonish their converts and students:

Obey the Government, for God is the one who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power. So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow ... Obey the laws then for two reasons: first to keep from being punished and second, just because you know you should.⁴⁵

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.⁴⁶ 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 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.'⁴⁷ 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.

In the gospel of work, Christian missionaries preached that individual effort, thrift and economic success was sanctioned by God. They also preached that the acquisition of wealth was bad only when the purpose of later life in heaven was enjoyed here on earth. This was the essence of the 'protestant ethic of capitalism'.⁴⁸ The spirit of capitalism was stronger among SDA followers than it was among their Catholic counterparts. Regarding work as a holy call, SDA mission adherents worked hard on their land and became prosperous peasants in the area. They also became prosperous petty traders. They included people like Elisha Nyanginja Oguok and Barnaba Ogot from Kakelo, Timotheo Oindi, Zablon Ogwang and Absalom Nyariaro from Kujwach, Isack Mbori from Konyango, William Ayodo and Simeon Mwangi from Kabondo, James MbaKa from Kotieno and Patroba Opere from Kokal. These people were economically differentiated from the rest of the people. They also acquired European clothing and furniture, bicycles and later motorcars.

Colonial Chiefs and the Collection of Taxes.

One of the ways in which the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo immediately experienced the oppressiveness of colonialism was through taxation by which the colonial chiefs were instrumental in the appropriation of

surplus for capitalisation of the settler sector. The earliest legislation imposing a tax on huts in Kenya was contained in the Hut Tax Regulations of 1901 which empowered the Native Commissioner to impose a tax on all huts used as dwelling places, to be paid by all occupants.⁴⁹ These Regulations were repealed by the East African Hut Tax Ordinance of 1903 which specified that the Hut Tax should not exceed 3 Rupees per annum for each hut. This Ordinance remained in force until 1910 when it was replaced by the Native Hut Tax and Poll Tax Ordinance. The Hut Tax remained at 3 Rupees but an additional Poll Tax of 6 shillings was imposed. The Ordinance empowered the Governor to increase the tax to 20 shillings. Except for a short period in 1921 when the tax was raised to 16 shillings, most communities in Kenya, including those in South Nyanza paid 12 shillings. Section 10 of the Ordinance allowed District Officers 'to remit tax for those without sufficient means to pay the whole amount of such tax and those unable to obtain employment by reason of age or infirmity and to issue certificates to this effect.'⁵⁰ Section 12 empowered the Governor to grant exemptions from the tax to those who were completely unable to pay. These exemptions were in practice very rarely and grudgingly granted.

The intention of the 1910 Ordinance was to tax a man in proportion to his wealth which was estimated by the number of wives he possessed. 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 the shape of daughters, who in their turn, would be married off.⁵¹ Even widows were liable to pay tax for the huts they lived in.

Taxation imposed a very heavy burden on the people. Although the Hut Tax first stood at 3 Rupees, absence of money in Kasipul and Kabondo in the years before 1914 meant that tax payments were made in kind. Shortly before the First World War the Hut Tax had been increased to 6 shillings and to 10 shillings at the beginning of the War. After the War it was increased to 16 shillings. The depression of the 1920s led to its reduction to 12 shillings. Later, when the Poll Tax was introduced to be followed by the Local Native Council and Locational rates in 1926 and 1946, respectively, the tax burden became heavier. The Poll Tax and the rates were paid equally by the rich and the poor.

The manner in which the taxes were collected and defaulters dealt with was brutal. Colonial administrative officials accompanied by their tax and revenue clerks and Tribal Police made frequent safaris to the locations of Kasipul and Kabondo to

to take taxes already collected by chiefs, or to supervise such collections. Prior to the District Officers' safaris to the tax collection centres, within the locations, Chiefs and Headmen, also accompanied by their clerks and Askaris harried their sub-locations for tax, often taking away for sale livestock belonging to those who were unable to raise tax money. This exercise sometimes took place at night when the majority of tax-payers were home, as they often hid in the bush during the day.⁵²

The District Officers did not hesitate to deploy the Tribal Police for purposes of tax collection. On the 24th July 1936, K.L. Hunter, the District Commissioner at Kisii, dispatched four such policemen to Kabondo, which according to him, was notoriously bad in tax payment. He recorded in his diary that the policemen did good work since over 500 shillings was collected during the week. On this occasion ten defaulters were imprisoned and a few cattle sold.⁵³ On another occasion during the same month, Hunter recorded that 160 defaulters from both Kabondo and Kasipul were in custody. He only released some of them after he had been informed that the majority of those imprisoned had groundnut crops not yet harvested and that their continued imprisonment would mean the rotting of their crops and hence loss of tax. Even after that, he convicted and sentenced 43 out

of the 160 defaulters.⁵⁴ Taxes were demanded irrespective of whether or not crops were ripe for sale by the producers.

On their safaris the District Officers kept records of those exempted from tax payments, those who had died, those working outside their locations, those in prison and taxes that were due. The Table below shows such records for two sublocations in Kasipul and is fairly representative of what is obtained elsewhere.

Table 1: TAX EXEMPTIONS 18TH DECEMBER, 1935

Sub-Location	Exempted	Deceased	At Work Outside	Prison	Paid	Outstanding	Tax Due
Kanyango	12	8	44	4	Sh.527	Sh.7	Sh.53
Sino	21	3	34	7	Sh.287	Sh.10	Sh.27

Source: Safari Diary 1935-1938 PC/NZA/3/1/439

Tax exemptions were also kept for every location. These helped the Administration to estimate both the percentage of those exempted from tax payments and tax that was due as shown in the Table below.

Table 2: TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR KASIPUL & KABONDO 1936 & 1937

LOCATION	EXEMPTION PERCENTAGE		ESTIMATED TAX (SHS).	
	1936	1937	1936	1937
KASIPUL	25.9	17.98	87,420	99,705
KABONDO	15.5	12.92	37,080	38,253

Source: Safari Diary 1935-1938 PC/NZA/3/1/439

Specific days were chosen for the collection of taxes in scheduled areas. The Table below shows daily collections at different centres between 20th January and 24th January 1943.

Table 3: DAILY TAX COLLECTIONS AT SCHEDULED CENTRES 20-24 JAN. 1943

CENTRE	JAN 20 1943	JAN 21 1943	JAN 22 1943	JAN 23 1943	JAN 24 1943
OYUGIS	POLL TAX Shs.11,200 LNC RATE Shs.3,000				
KOTIENO		POLL TAX Shs.11,200 LNC RATE Shs.1,200			
OBER			POLL TAX Sh.16,800 LNC RATE Sh.2,100		
KABONDO				POLL TAX Sh.11,200 LNC RATE Sh.2,400	
OYUGIS, KABONDO, & OBER					POLL TAX Sh.11,200 LNC RATE Sh.5,700

Up to 1930 taxes were estimated by the number of huts counted. After 1931 a poll system was used. The Table below is a record of tax estimations and collections between 1925 and 1937 in Kabondo and Kasipul. The difference between estimated and collected tax consists of those exempted from tax payments, wage workers outside the locations and defaulters.

Table 4: TAX ESTIMATION AND COLLECTION 1925-1937

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ESTIMATE</u>	<u>COLLECTION (Shs.)</u>
1925	KABONDO	2760 Huts	2630
	KASIPUL	7449 Huts	7430
1926	KABONDO	2947 Huts	2500
	KASIPUL	8240 "	7459
1927	KABONDO	3031 "	2714
	KASIPUL	8103 "	7978
1928	KABONDO	3135 "	2834
	KASIPUL	8664 "	8182
1929	KABONDO	3090 "	3020
	KASIPUL	8693 "	8614
1930	KABONDO	3045 "	7916
NOV.1935	KABONDO	41,380 (Poll & Rates)	24,492(Tax & Rates)
	KASIPUL	104,572(" ")	71,000(" ")
DEC.1935	KABONDO	37,254 (Tax Only)	24,492(Tax Only)
	KASIPUL	91,818 (" ")	72,000(" ")
APR.1936	KABONDO	-	6,557(Tax & Rates)
	KASIPUL	-	5,859(" ")

Table 4 (Cont.)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ESTIMATE</u>	<u>COLLECTION (Shs)</u>
OCT. 1936	KABONDO	-	-
	KASIPUL	-	3,596 (Tax & Rate)
13 MAY 1937	KABONDO	38,253(Tax Only)	20,568 (Tax Only)
	KASIPUL	99,705(" ")	58,344 (" ")

Sources: Political Record Book 1930-1940 DC/KSI/3/5
Safari Diary 1935-1938 PC/NZA/3/1/439.

The ability of the chiefs and headmen to collect taxes as and when required was the yardstick by which their efficiency was measured by the colonial administration. Their subjects had a different measure. A chief who was efficient in tax collection in the eyes of the Administration was considered oppressive by the people. The chiefs themselves were torn between the need to serve the administration efficiently and rule their subjects fairly. Quite often, the former took precedence. Cases of oppressiveness and corruption by the chiefs were commonplace. This placed the administration in a contradictory position. Defence of an oppressive and corrupt chief meant the betrayal of the subjects whose interests the administration was supposed to be seen to protect. But if this was done tax payments would not be forthcoming and the colonial state

would not sufficiently accumulate capital. Sometimes, therefore, the administration singled out and dealt with cases of corruption, apprehending or dismissing chiefs accused of such behaviour. This was done without regard to the fact that corruption and oppression often went together. Slackness on the part of chiefs to collect taxes gave an added excuse for the deposition of chiefs.

As early as 1911, D.R. Crampton, the District Commissioner at Kisii, complained in a letter to the Provincial Commissioner at Kisumu that:

There seems to have been a great deal of dissatisfaction in certain clans owing to oppression by the chiefs. When we first came into the country, an effort was made to strengthen the hands of the chiefs and give them authority over their respective tribes, and although this was to a great extent brought about, it resulted in the chiefs levying fees in the name of the Government but without reference thereto, and with the object of enriching themselves only.⁵⁵

In the subsequent years the District Commissioner reported that in the majority of cases, the chiefs and headmen were indolent, incompetent and untrustworthy.⁵⁶ As a result, chiefs Ohudho Minene of Kabondo and Oyugi Bala were retired in 1914 and replaced by Ondiegi and Omiti respectively. While

Omiti was soft, Ondiegi was cruel and corrupt. Ondiegi took bribes from the people he did not assess for tax. He also forced people to work in his farm and captured a number of people to join the Pioneer Corps and work for settlers.⁵⁷ In Kasipul, Omiti was retired and Auma Ogalo from Kakelo sub-clan was briefly made chief, soon to be replaced by Phillip Owili. Owili was the first educated chief in both Kasipul and Kabondo, having gone to the Seventh Day Adventist School at Wire and Gendia. Before he became chief he was Omiti's clerk. Like chief Ondiegi of Kabondo he was harsh and corrupt. He snatched cattle from those who did not pay tax and confiscated hoes belonging to people who worked in his demonstration farm.⁵⁸ Besides, he was disrespectful to junior District officers, often failing to meet them when they visited his camp.⁵⁹

The oppressiveness and corrupt activities of Ondiegi and Owili led to unrest in the two locations which found expression in the religious movement, Mumboism. Originating from Alego in 1914 this movement quickly spread to South Nyanza via Karachuonyo. Its leader in Kasipul and Kabondo was Mosi Auma from the Kakangutu sub-clan. The movement was strongly anti-colonial and anti-christian. Rejecting everything Europeans, Mosi preached that Europeans would soon leave the country. It spread to Gusiiland, where the

Abagusii used it more vigorously to oppose colonialism and soon became a source of anxiety to the administration. Its leaders were imprisoned. The administration also found it necessary to quell the growing political agitation by attempting to assuage peoples' distress. On the 28th May 1922 the Chief Native Commissioner, accompanied by the Senior Commissioner Harry Tate visited the district and held a meeting with all chiefs, headmen and elders. At this meeting the reduction of taxes as well as the alleviation of other burdens were intimated. According to the District Commissioner, D.R. Crampton:

The visit did much to dispell political agitation amongst the Joluo of the district by shewing that the native had a special representative at the seat of Government who was well acquainted with all their grievances and aspirations and who paid individual attention to their welfare but at the same time expected individual loyalty from Native Authorities and their subjects in the carrying out of orders which had been well considered by himself and the Government.⁶⁰

This visit was soon followed by that of the Governor Edward Northey in July 1922. The Governor announced at a meeting with chiefs, headmen and elders that he had ordered the hut tax to be reduced from 8 to 6 florins. According to the District Commissioner,

"the visit to the district by His Excellency was greatly appreciated by all classes of the native community and did much to impress upon the native mind the personal entity of His Majesty, the King's representative in the land and his interest in their welfare."⁶¹ The sentiments expressed by R.D. Crampton about both visits were soon proved contradictory by Harry Tate, the Senior Commissioner who had accompanied both the Chief Native Commissioner and the Governor to the district. On the 17th November 1922 he wrote a strongly worded letter to all chiefs and headmen:

You must pay your taxes and obey at once the orders of Government or else I shall have to punish the people who refuse to listen. The Government who (sic) placed you in authority has the power to set you down and he (sic) has no respect for persons Whether you are a big chief or a small headman you are under the authority of Government and liable to punishment for disobedience.⁶²

What prompted the writing of the letter was the failure of chiefs to remit sufficient tax to the administration for which they were considered slack and disobedient. Both Owili and Ondiegi were soon dismissed as chiefs. Owili was imprisoned for corrupt activities in the mid 1920s and Obewa Odera was made chief of Kasipul. But because he was weak

and illiterate he was replaced by Gideon Magak in 1935. Ondiegi was replaced by Nyanjong Owidi who had been a Tribal Retainer in Kisii, in 1929.⁶³ Although he was chief for 12 years, the administration considered him to be corrupt and inefficient in tax collection and other administrative duties.⁶⁴ The people of Kabondo complained about his high handedness and also that of one of his headmen, Okwany Kirewa, whose ruthlessness led many people from the Kodumo sub-clan to migrate to Tanzania.⁶⁵ Nyanjong had a form of prison called Kamtudi in his home in which he confined tax defaulters whom he forced to work in his farm. He was also accused by the administration of failing to suppress Mumboism led by one of his headmen, Mosi Auma.⁶⁶ It was because of the people of Kabondo's complaints against him and the administration's negative attitude towards him that he was retired in 1941 Kabondo and Kasipul were amalgamated and placed under Gideon Magak. Charles Odep a former Hut Counter from Kabondo, became his assistant.

In Magak, 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 1935.⁶⁷ 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.⁶⁸ 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.⁶⁹ He was awarded certificate of honour in 1939. He set a standard which subsequent chiefs in the two locations tried hard to emulate.

Economic Consequences of Taxation

Taxation transformed the pre-capitalist social formations of Kasipul and Kabondo in a number of ways. First it changed the pre-colonial political system into a colonial institutional infrastructure, the Native Authority System headed by chiefs, which rechannelled surplus produce from the people for purposes of accumulation by the colonial state mainly for the capitalization of the settler sector of the economy.⁷⁰ Second, it made wage labour, commodity production, and sale of livestock necessary thereby influencing the monetization of the pre-capitalist economy.⁷¹ It also led to socio-economic differentiation since it was a means

by which colonial chiefs appropriated their subjects' surplus to accumulate wealth. Furthermore, it led to greater burdens for women and young men.⁷² Women were the actual owners of huts on which tax was levied. They were the people who paid tax through production and sale of crops although in the event of default, their husbands who were the owners of the homestead, were held responsible by the colonial administration. Widows paid their own tax and were held responsible in case of default. Young men were forced to go out and work to pay their own taxes and those of their helpless fathers as was testified by one, Owich Omwaro from Kodumo sub-clan:

I went to work at Jamji Estate in Kericho to buy clothes such as the Katana⁷³ long trouser and also because my father was poor and could not raise money for tax. My father used to come to me in Jamji to collect money for his tax. This was around 1930.

Councils of Elders and Tribunals

Apart from the collection of taxes in their locations, colonial chiefs were required to discuss and initiate economic and social development, and also to administer justice. The institutional infrastructure for the performance of these tasks was the Native Authority System which consisted of the Chiefs' Councils of Elders and Tribunals. The Chiefs worked

under the orders of the District officers who were in turn answerable to the Provincial Officers.

We have already discussed the various legislations which defined the duties and powers of chiefs and elders and how these allowed the chiefs to develop authoritarian tendencies to the extent that they soon ignored the elders with whom they were required to work. As early as 1910 the Luo chiefs in South Nyanza felt that the institution of the Council of Elders tended to diminish their authority. They preferred to work independently in all matters, relying of Government support in the event of opposition.⁷⁴ Although a Central Baraza was started in Oyugis in September 1923 to replace Locational Barazas, the Chiefs of Kasipul and Kabondo, like others in South Nyanza did not like the development. They resented the system because it resulted in the loss of their power, and the revenue they previously extorted from their subjects in connection with civil cases.⁷⁵ In a meeting with the Governor, Robert Coryndon, in Kisumu in February 1924 all the Luo Chiefs demanded that the Central Baraza system be abolished. The Governor himself was of the opinion that the system was a good one and that it should be continued.⁷⁶ This happened but the administration did nothing to ensure that chiefs worked closely with their elders. Complaints against chiefs continued throughout the

1920s and long after. In 1925 the District Commissioner, W.F.C. Campbell, reported that 'elders and chiefs appear so apathetic though when met in Baraza they appear intelligent enough and apparently listen to what is said to them but the effect soon wears off.'⁷⁷

What led to the apathy of the chiefs and elders was that they were expected to do too many things while funds were not available. As Campbell himself noticed, apart from the collection of tax 'questions of great importance to the people, namely education, remedial measures against diseases, etc. were mostly being toyed with rather than accomplished'.⁷⁸ This, together with continual changes of the European staff in Kisii meant that the Native Authority system lacked a sense of direction at the locational level, given the fact that chiefs and elders themselves could not actually initiate policies of development without the approval of the District Commissioner. Further, both the chiefs and elders were not adequately remunerated for all the work they did. As a result, none of them took barazas seriously and a number of elders failed to attend their deliberations. On 20th February 1936, the District Commissioner, K.L. Hunter, on his safari to Kabondo, recorded in his diary that:

The elders are obstinate stating that as the divisional Tribunal has started, they who remain will receive no remuneration,

hence they do not intend to attend Monday barazas. One man in particular is noted, namely Obudho Minene, and the next Officer visiting Kabondo is asked to enquire whether he has been attending regularly and if not to take action against him I made my warning very clear to all that they must attend.⁷⁹

Like the Baraza system of the chiefs and their Council of Elders, the Tribunal System did not work well either. Locational Tribunals were instituted in Kasipul and Kabondo by the 1907 Courts Ordinance and the 1911 Native Tribunal Rules which placed them under the authority of chiefs and elders. It was the same Council of Elders which converted itself into a Tribunal to administer justice. As soon as they were established in South Nyanza, the District Commissioner, G.A.S. Northcote, reported:

Native law is in a degenerate state. There is no procedure as we understand the word; any evidence is admitted; there is no limitation to the number of witnesses, and the trial is usually a howling competition of simultaneous arguments; no respect is paid to old men who sit as assessors.⁸⁰

Northcote's impression about the nature of Tribunals may have been exaggerated by his lack of knowledge about how cases were traditionally tried among the Luo, hence his misunderstanding the number of people

allowed to give evidence. But he was right in noticing that the elders were getting ignored by the chiefs who were beginning to arrogate to themselves judicial powers. In the years that followed, chiefs became inefficient and corrupt in trying civil and criminal cases in the Locational Tribunals. Often, most people in Kabondo and Kasipul who were prosecuted felt that it was the personal judgement of the chiefs who openly demanded bribes to offer better judgement. This resulted in people's ill-feeling towards them.⁸¹ Complaints of the general inefficiency of the judicial system were widespread all over Kenya.⁸²

- The 1930 Native Tribunal Ordinance tried to better the position by establishing Divisional Tribunals and giving them jurisdiction over all Africans within their area irrespective of tribe.⁸³ It was not until 1936 that such a tribunal was established at Kosele to serve Kasipul, Kabondo and Karachuonyo. The Divisional Tribunal removed from the chiefs some judicial powers which were now placed in hands of appointed Tribunal Elders. What continued to happen was that the chiefs and their elders continued to deal with cases, mostly petty, at locational levels. They also influenced the hearing of appeals which were taken to the Divisional Tribunal. Elders who sat in the Divisional Tribunal were also not free from corruption.

The Local Native (later African District)
Council

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.⁸⁴ 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.'⁸⁵ 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.⁸⁶

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.⁸⁷ 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 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 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 powers to regulate matters pertaining to markets in reserves in having a decidedly adverse effect on progress.⁸⁸

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.⁸⁹

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 sprea-

ding 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.⁹⁰ The writers demanded his transfer. The Provincial Commissioner responded to the allegations by stating that 'no notice is taken of anonymous letters.'⁹¹ 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.⁹²

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.⁹³ 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'.⁹⁴ 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.⁹⁵

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.⁹⁶

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.⁹⁷ 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.⁹⁸ 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.'⁹⁹

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.¹⁰⁰

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.¹⁰¹ 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.¹⁰² In 1956 their total expenditure amounted to 360,540 shillings.¹⁰³ In 1960 the LACs had incomes ranging from 2,700 to 83,500 shillings for the poor and rich locations, respectively.¹⁰⁴ Given the wide range of the services the LACs were required to provide it is obvious they were grossly undercapitalised. 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.

Conclusion

In this Chapter we discussed how the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo were placed under colonial rule an event which presaged loss of independence and the incorporation of the people into a world capitalist system administratively and economically different from what they were accustomed to in pre-colonial days.

This brought about new forms of stress to which the people had to adopt themselves. The institutional infrastructure established by the colonial state was ultimately a system of control. Its working was in the final analysis influenced by the realities of the colonial situation rather than the theory of 'indirect rule'. The principles on which it was based were conservative rather than innovative. It dealt with issues which were fundamental to the colonists' rather than the subjects' interests. Its deliberations were coercive rather than concensual. Those who manned it did not fully understand their roles because of the contradictory situation within which they operated. It did not sufficiently politicise people to operate effectively within the entire Colony since their perception of problems and their politics were confined within the locations and only to a very limited extent to the district. It nonetheless brought about change in people's relations of power at the local level.

The colonial administration, system of education and taxation were together crucial in the incorporation of the peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo into the colonial and international capitalist systems. Colonial administration was an institution of control which also defined the levels of peoples political and economic participation, both locally and in the whole country. Colonial education provided the ideology which justified such control in terms of obedience, changed the local

peoples values and beliefs through salvation and committed people to commodity production, wage labour and trade through the gospel of work. If colonial education did not provide sufficient ideological justification for work the system of taxation did so. Apart from being a source of capital accumulation by the colonial state for the running of its day-to-day business, it was an important factor in forcing the people to participate in the colonial economy. The next three chapters discuss the historical development in commodity production, migrant labour and trade and their impact on the local people.

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CHAPTER FOUR:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMODITY PRODUCTION

The peoples of Kasipul and Kabondo were drawn into commodity production, after the establishment of colonial rule in 1907, by the requirements of metropolitan and colonial capital. Crops, livestock, and livestock products - hides and skins and ghee-constituted the major commodities whose surplus was accumulated by the colonial state. What has been written on the process and impact of capital accumulation on world and regional scales by dependency theorists like Amin, Rodney and Brett have mainly focused on the political role of the colonial state in the transfer of surplus from the periphery, the colonies, to the centre.¹ Little work has been done on the internal dynamics of colonial production and accumulation and the responses of indigenous people to capitalism.² What happened to pre-capitalist modes of production when they were incorporated into the world and colonial capitalist systems? What changed in them and what remained resilient has received less attention. Did the systems of production in the colonies generate their own dynamics, internal conflicts and blockages to further development in the process of capitalist expansion? This question that has been asked by Fred Cooper³ is of fundamental importance in the analysis

of the process and impact of commodity production.

The Chapter discusses colonial agricultural policy and the responses of the peoples of Ksipul and Kabondo. This is done within the context of the world capitalist system and the colonial economy. It is against this background that trends in crop production, livestock keeping and the extraction of livestock products is further discussed. The final section analyses the economic and social consequences of commodity production.

Colonial Agricultural Policy and Trends in
Crop Production.

After the establishment of colonial rule in Kenya, the immediate concern of the colonial state was to create a productive capacity in all parts of the country which would be sufficient to maintain the minimal administration and military presence required to sustain foreign control. By March 1909, two years after colonial rule had been established in Kasipul and Kabondo and the rest of South Nyaanza, the economic situation in Kenya was never attractive. Revenue fell short of expenditure by £ 16000 while the greater part of exports which amounted to a meagre of £ 157,000 still consisted of 'natural' products like ivory, beeswax, hides and skins.⁴ Major Legget (latter Sir

Humphrey) who had been sent to Kenya in 1905 to investigate the economic prospects of the Protectorate had felt that in order to overcome the financial crisis, a highly capitalised plantation agriculture, on the one hand, and African peasant farming, on the other were to be encouraged.⁵ Girouard, who was the governor at the time, also saw the future economic development of the country chiefly in terms of European agricultural production.⁶ He expected the settler population to contribute 20 per cent of the £ 680,000 and the local African population 4 per cent £ 273,000 of the total revenue estimated for the financial year 1910-1911.⁷ The 'dual policy' which was to characterise Kenya's agricultural development throughout the colonial period had thus been initiated. What was significant about the policy was the greater attention which the colonial state gave to the settler sector than to African production. Although the Department of Agriculture was established in 1903 it was not until the 1920s that it concerned itself with the condition of African agricultural production.

Before the 1920s the methods used to stimulate agricultural production in Kasipul and Kabondo and other locations in South Nyanza, as indeed in other African areas, included encouragement in the production of traditional crops such as sim sim, and millet, purchase and distribution of new seeds, of groundnuts,

maize and cotton which were grown in demonstration farms, and the introduction and sale of iron hoes and ploughs. A report by an administrative officer, C.M. Dobbs in 1908, that 'We prefer that the people of South Kavirondo should get their taxes by the cultivation of economic products' and that 'a native plants economic products at the instigation of the white man who tells him he will be able to get rupees by selling them',⁸ was suggestive of the administrative compulsion that characterised the early years of official sponsorship of African crop production; it also anticipated the paternalism which was to characterise South Nyanza's economic future. It further influenced the people's response to colonial agricultural initiatives. Seeds of new crops were bought by money from the livestock captured from the Abagusii during the years of their 'pacification'. They were distributed to people through their chiefs and production quotas were imposed on each location.⁹ Indians who had established shops in Oyugis and Kendu Bay were persuaded to import hoes made by a Birmingham firm and to sell them to local inhabitants. Between 1914 and 1920 about 1200 to 1500 such hoes were sold throughout the district.¹⁰ All this was done without an adequate knowledge of the climatic and soil conditions of the area.

Apart from the compulsion and paternalism which characterised colonial initiatives, the following factors influenced the local peoples responses to the growing of both traditional and new crops in quantities over and above their subsistence needs. The people for instance, considered whether the crops possessed high exchange or cash value, that is whether, they could be used to accumulate cattle or whether they fetched a good price for purposes of paying tax and buying domestic needs such as clothes.¹¹ This consideration was made against cash returns from wage labour which was increasingly becoming an alternative occupation. With regard to the growing of new crops, two further considerations were made, namely, whether they fitted into the peoples diet and also whether they could be easily integrated into the agricultural cycle and the domestic labour process to which they were traditionally accustomed. Further, the influence of local pioneers, the first to grow the new crops, was another important factor in the spread of the crops. The pioneers were themselves influenced to value these crops by missionaries and exposure through wage labour. Finally, increase in population determined the quantity of crop production. It therefore took time before the new crops were widely grown. 'We mondo ongi kore mondi', let us first see its

nature, was the peoples' characteristic attitude to colonial innovation.¹²

During the early years of colonial rule, and up to 1920, traditional crops like millet, finger millet and sim sim constituted the largest crop produced in Kasipul and Kabondo, and in South Nyanza district. Sim sim in particular had a ready market. As early as 1906 an Italian Trading Company had sent out its local Asian agents to buy large quantities of their crop from the district. An oil processing plant which used sim sim as a raw material was established in Kisumu in 1913. The crop was mostly exported to Marseilles and other European ports, where it was used in the manufacture of fats and soap.¹³

Though introduced in 1908 when the colonial administration issued about 9000 pounds for distribution throughout South Nyanza, groundnuts did not immediately become popular. It was initially believed in Kasipul and Kabondo, and neighbouring Karachuonyo, that the crop caused venereal disease and jiggers which were becoming prevalent at the time.¹⁴ It slowly became accepted as a food crop after those who grew and ate it failed to die. It was also realised that in comparison with other crops, groundnuts fetched a higher price. After the 1930s, the crop took the place of sim sim, which had ceased to be a signifi-

cant export crop due to the decline in its price. The popularity of groundnuts was further enhanced by the fact that, as a root crop, it survived the locust infestation of 1930-32. Throughout the rest of the colonial period the crop was grown in increasingly larger quantities both as a food and cash crop.

Before the introduction of yellow flint maize in 1910, and shortly later, another variety, Hickory King, the people of Kasipul and Kabondo grew a traditional type of speckled maize, bando rachich, though in very small quantities. The new varieties of maize were harder and therefore difficult to grind. Like the traditional type, very little quantities were initially grown, mainly to be roasted and eaten on the cob, or mixed with beans and baked. It was not until the 1918-19 famine that most people for the first time ate ugali made from maize flour.¹⁵

During the famine, the colonial administration had shipped many bags of maize meal to the port of Kendu Bay from where it was distributed for sale at Oyugis and other local centres.¹⁶ Others who had gone out for wage labour had also cultivated a taste for it. Even after this, it was still believed that maize meal was light and, eaten on its own, it had that people satisfied only, briefly. It was therefore common practice to mix maize flour with ground sor-

ghum to give it 'weight'. Because grinding it on the traditional grinding stone was difficult, it was not until watermills were locally established in the 1930s that the crop became widely grown. It also found a ready market after the establishment of tea estates in Kericho and Sotik. Although its price was lower than that of sorghum and finger millet, it was grown because it suited local climatic and soil conditions. It was also easily integrated into the traditional agricultural cycle and labour process.

The first attempts at colonial official sponsorship of cotton growing were made in 1908, but were immediately abandoned because 'there (was) no use in encouraging the natives to plant it at any rate until it (was) possible to carry out a regular supervision over their shambas.'¹⁷ In 1914 it was reported that 'cotton has practically lapsed owing to the exceedingly low prices and poor interest on the part of the natives living in cotton growing areas!'¹⁸ It was not until 1925 that the colonial administration revived cotton growing more forcefully, an agricultural officer N.D. Spranger, having been posted to South Nyanza district primarily for this purpose. So strong was the colonial administration's desire to have large quantities of cotton grown that in the years which followed, even people living in the high rainfall

areas of Kasipul and Kabondo were coerced to plant the crop. In these areas, the crop merely grew tall and failed to yield pods. It wasn't until this happened that the crop became confined to the low-land sub-locations bordering Karachuonyo, namely Kakelo, Kokwanyo, Kachien, Koderera, Kodumo and Kakangutu. The first cotton ginnery was built at Kendu Bay by Messrs Small and Company in 1932. A second one was built by John L. Riddock at Homa Bay during the cotton boom in 1938-39. Local cotton buying stores were established at Kendu Bay, Doho Kosele, Kakelo and Ramba in Kabondo. The boom was short-lived and the amount of cotton produced in all the cotton growing areas in the district was insufficient to support the two ginneries. Riddoch's ginnery at Homa Bay was bought off by Small and Company who closed down theirs at Kendu Bay, in the late 1940s.¹⁹ The decline in cotton production was due to its unpopularity. The crop took up to 9 months to ripen, in the course of which it required a lot of work. Before the seeds were planted, land was prepared for six weeks. In its early stages, the crop required continuous weeding. When it eventually ripened, it required careful and constant picking as the buds opened, so that the lint was not stained. The lint was then sorted before being taken to the buying centres which were situated many miles from the growers.²⁰

Apart from being labour intensive, cotton fetched very low prices and was inedible. It did not fit into the traditional labour process and agricultural cycle. The force with which it was introduced led people to associate it with colonial oppression. The few who continued to grow it in the marginal areas of Kasipul and Kabondo did so in the absence of any alternative cash crops.

Another crop which was labour intensive and did not fit into traditional labour patterns and agricultural cycle was coffee. Formerly a preserve of European settler farmers, Africans were first allowed to grow the crop in 1934 despite much settler opposition. The First Robusta coffee nursery was started near Oyugis in Kasipul in 1935 and the first planting commenced in 1936. Each person who had agreed to grow the crop was allowed to plant only 16 trees. In 1937 there were approximately 50 acres of coffee owned by a few mission adherents in Kanyango, Kokal, Kakelo and Kojwach sub-locations.²¹ The first attempt to grow coffee was a failure partly because the variety, robusta, was not suited to climatic and soil conditions and also because the conditions for growing it were not carried out as a result of lack of proper instruction. Ideally, one was required to properly prepare land on which he intended to grow the

crop, dig holes three feet deep and two feet wide, each measured nine feet apart. These were then manured a few weeks before coffee seedlings were finally planted. Box ridgings were to be made around each coffee plant to retain sufficient water. Plants such as bananas and small trees were also to be grown in the garden to act as wind breakers. The field was mulched to maintain moisture and constantly weeded to be kept free from weeds.²² Because these conditions were not fulfilled the first coffee trees failed to yield berries. Coffee growing was consequently abandoned to be revived in the early 1950s when a more suitable variety, arabica (Blue Mountain) was introduced. Even after this had been done people were allowed to plant only 50 coffee trees each. The number was raised to 100 later in the 1950s.

Throughout the colonial period the colonial government's dual policy, compulsion and paternalism in agriculture and the responses of the local people influenced the trend of crop production in Kasipul and Kabondo. As in other African locations, the years before 1914 saw the expansion of areas under crop production. Altogether, African produce contributed about 75% of Kenya's exports and, therefore, the largest revenue.²³ Wrigley has termed the period 'years of prosperity'. The period was followed by one

of disaster between 1915 and 1920 when the role played by African agriculture in the colonial economy declined, relative to that of European settlers. This situation was never reversed throughout the colonial period. The condition of African agriculture, however, continued to vacillate in response to fluctuations in the world economy such as those brought about by the brief post-World War I prosperity, 1922-1928, the Great Depression, 1929-1938, the boom created by World War II, 1939-1945, and the post-war reconstruction.

- During the years of the First World War (1914-1919) agricultural production in Kasipul and Kabondo was interrupted by the administration's recruitment of the Carrier Corps which took away part of the necessary labour. In 1918 the failure of rains led to the failure of crops and famine. An influenza epidemic which broke out in the same year claimed a number of lives.

When the Department of Agriculture issued a major policy on African Agriculture in 1920, it merely restated the dual approach to agricultural development in the country and the discrimination which would continue to be practised in favour of the development of the settler sector. These were put in the following words:

It will be seen that in order to develop the agricultural resources and wealth of the country, it is essential if the natives are to take their proper place in the economic life in Kenya, that they should be made to utilize profitably those large sections of the country in which they are left in undisturbed and peaceful possession. Under any circumstances progress must inevitably be comparatively slow among tribes which have so recently come into touch with civilization and whose methods and outlook cannot easily be changed ... An increase in native production should be directed towards an output of produce which can be exported: maize, sorghum, groundnuts, sim sim, cotton, beans, peas. Each of these crops is well suited to the resources and facilities of the native and no question of competition against the European grower should arise.²⁴

It was as a result of this attitude that the colonial administration continued to pay little attention to the development of agriculture in African areas. The work of the Department of Agriculture was extended to South Nyanza district for the first time in 1924 when one European agricultural instructor, Spranger, was posted to start cotton production in

the Luo locations bordering Lake Victoria. It was also during this period that ploughs were introduced in Kasipul and Kabondo. The first people to buy and use them for cultivation were chiefs Phillip Owili of Kasipul and Ondiegi of Kabondo and a few others, like Elijah Oigo and Elisha Nyanginja, who had been to the mission school at Wire. Prices of agricultural products were increased but were not high enough to make production profitable. The road from Kisii to Kisumu and from Oyugis to Kendu Bay were completed but were not usable throughout the year. What gave an impetus to local agricultural production was the opening of the Tea Estates in Kericho after 1925. Little else was done in terms of extension and material assistance to farmers.

In the absence of adequate agricultural staff the responsibility of stimulating agricultural development fell on the District Officers who had to handle agricultural and veterinary matters in addition to their regular administrative tasks.²⁵ District officials relied mainly on local chiefs and headmen to promote agricultural development. The latter convened barazas where they sounded colonial agricultural policies. They also mobilised local labour for work in communal demonstration farms, and occasionally, in their own farms. Local labour was also

recruited for work in the Kericho tea estates and other parts of the country. In contrast to African agricultural production, the European settler sector received more frequent extension services, financial support and were provided with better roads. Settler produce fetched higher prices than African produce. As Wrigley has pointed out, African economic agriculture, especially in Nyanza Province, had been stifled in the interest of European agriculture, and by 1928, the proportion of African contribution to the total export trade in Kenya was less than 20 per cent.²⁶

The 1928 locust invasion, the 1928-30 decline in prices and the disastrous drought of 1931-34 compounded the misfortunes of crop production in Kasipul and Kabondo as well as other locations in South Nyanza. 'The damage to food crops which is suffered annually by natives', reported the District Commissioner of South Nyanza, D.R. Crampton in 1934, is such that would never for a moment be tolerated by European farmers growing crops for sale.²⁷ This was not to suggest that the depression did not affect European farmers. African producers suffered more since the crops they produced suffered from the slump more drastically than those of European agriculture.²⁸ Paradoxically, it was during the years of depression that the district administration

embarked upon a programme of developing agricultural production in the locations of South Nyanza.

In 1931 instruction plots were discontinued. A local staff of trained agricultural instructors was built and Local Native Council farms were set up to provide farmers with high yielding seeds. By the end of 1934, there were 10 government and 26 LNC paid instructors in the whole district.²⁹ Cotton growing was more vigorously enforced, particularly in the lower areas of Kabondo and Kasipul where prospects for the crop were found by District Officers on Safari to be better than the higher parts of the locations.³⁰ Coffee growing was also introduced in 1935. During the years of depression, people were forced to cultivate more extensively to get sufficient returns.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 created high demand for foodstuff particularly to provision Allied troops in the Middle East and Ethiopia. As a result, the colonial government encouraged greater production of food crops, particularly maize and millet. It threw the entire staff of the Department of Agriculture behind this effort. In January 1940 and, August and October 1942, the Nyanza Provincial Commissioner and Agricultural Officer

accompanied by the South Nyanza District Commissioner, toured Kasipul and Kabondo and other locations in the district. They held barazas in which they exhorted local inhabitants to trebble the cultivation and sale of food crops without delay.³¹ A requisition order for the buying of maize and millet was made and those who failed to comply and refused to sell their produce were threatened with legal sanction.³² The Kenya Farmers Association was the sole buyer of all surplus produce.

The policy of maximum production during the war years led to a state of agrarian crisis in Kasipul and Kabondo. It resulted in an unprecedented increase in the quantity of surplus grain, much of which was never actually sold due to bottlenecks at the Kendu Bay port.³³ This necessitated the use of Homa Bay port for the export of produce from all the locations in the district. Increased crop production had been encouraged without any improvement in agricultural techniques. The resultant overcropping led to soil exhaustion and erosion. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that although the use of ploughs had become more widespread than before, people had never been adequately trained in their proper use. Fields were ploughed downhill, making it easy for rain water to wash away top soil. Farm boundaries

were turned into big gulleys.³⁴ As soil became exhausted due to overuse and erosion, and as better land was brought under cultivation, weeds - particularly striga - invaded the fields and competed with crops for the already depleted plant nutrients. Crop pests became more rampant, inflicting untold damage to crops.

In contrast to this state of affairs, European agricultural production was better coordinated and planned by a Board of Agriculture. In this sector, Production Committees were formed during the War in each district to approve schedules of crops to be planted and sold to avoid the disastrous consequences of overproduction.³⁵ The European settler sector, therefore, emerged from the war in a better state than the African sector, the contribution of whose production continued to be regarded as fortuitous and unstable even in the years that followed the war.³⁶

→ When the Second World War ended in 1945, the Director of Agriculture blamed the underdeveloped nature of African agriculture on conservative African farming practices without regard to the fact that it was the colonial government itself which was responsible for it. He also reiterated the virtues of paternalism. In his opinion:

The African in Kenya has not yet arrived

at the level of education which enables him, of his own accord, to plan his agricultural economy successfully. He has little knowledge of farming practices, no means of gauging the effects of external factors on his economy. In his case, therefore, it is essential that his general farming policy shall, to a large extent, be dictated to him in the light of the experience and knowledge of the officers of government responsible for his welfare.³⁷

It was this attitude that characterised the colonial policy of increasing food sufficiency and the conservation of soil in African areas during the post-war period. The Troup Commission which compared agricultural prospects in African and European sectors recommended in 1952 that serious agricultural development such as would produce large marketable surpluses should only be undertaken in European settler estates.³⁸ It was not until after the recommendations by Frank Swynnerton came out in 1954 that the need for greater capitalisation of African was considered. But this was only undertaken in the late 1950s in Central Province, where land consolidation had been carried out and individual farm owners granted security of land tenure. In Kasipul and Kabondo where inheritance customs in land ownership and land fragmentation continued to characterise land tenure

such prospects of agricultural development were precluded.

Much of the efforts of the local administration in Kasipul and Kabondo after the war mainly constituted soil erosion measures. In 1947 the district administration ordered the building of trash lines between farms, the use of manure, the uprooting of weeds and the growing of root crops, mainly sweet potatoes and cassava.³⁹ An Agricultural Betterment Fund was started in the district in 1949 to finance anti-soil erosion measures. Agricultural Committees were also appointed in each location to liaise between agricultural officers and farmers. Further, soil conservation courses, each lasting one week were held in Kisii, attended by about 8 people from Kasipul and Kabondo.⁴⁰ In 1950 the African District Council voted £ 3,240 for soil conservation purposes in the whole district. Soil conservation measures were rendered ineffective by the shortage of agricultural staff and funds and the way they were carried out. A lot of force was used. Farmers were, for instance, required to uproot weeds and pile them along the road for inspection by agricultural instructors.⁴¹ Those who did not comply were fined. Soon the campaign was seen as another form of colonial oppression rather than an attempt to conserve the soil. Inten-

tions to change the system of land ownership in the district were contemplated but never attempted throughout the 1950s. In 1955 it was estimated that out of a total area of 131,200 acres in Kasipul and Kabondo 6,900 acres were unsuitable for arable but suitable for grazing purposes; 12,500 acres were not suitable for any agricultural purpose; 96,460 acres were under adequate soil control; and 320 acres were under sound land use.⁴² This state of affairs was mainly due to colonial agricultural mismanagement.

Livestock Keeping and the Extraction of
Livestock Products:

The existence of a livestock pastoral economy alongside crop production provided an alternative source of colonial accumulation in Kasipul and Kabondo whose inhabitants were in 1907 reported by G.A.S. Northcote, the First European administrator in the district, to possess large herds of cattle.⁴³ Before surplus crop produce was available for sale, cattle were captured by the administration for tax. Large quantities of hides and skins which had been previously used for bedding, clothing and shields, were collected by Arab and Indian traders who were

already established at Oyugis and Kendu Bay. Rinderpest epidemics, which killed large numbers of livestock intermittently between 1909 and 1919, and a number of times in subsequent years, made available large quantities of hides and skins for sale. In fact, during the early years of colonial rule, and throughout the 1920s, hides and skins constituted the bulk of commodity exports from South Nyanza district.⁴⁴

Before the 1920s no major attempts were made by the colonial administration to improve livestock keeping and the production of hides and skins. As Judy Buttermann has observed, the collection of these commodities for long remained an activity similar to gathering.⁴⁵ Enforced sales of cattle for purposes of tax payment was a new form of raiding by the colonial authorities. The first European stock inspector, was posted to South Nyanza district in 1927. His task was to show better methods of preparing better quality hides and ghee. The first hide drying banda, an enclosure with a roof, was built in Kasipul at Oyugis trading centre in the same year.⁴⁶ Soon it became a school where local inhabitants received instruction on shade hide drying.⁴⁷ The stock Inspector also promoted cattle sales.

In the early 1930s a Veterinary Officer, Ward,

built a camp at Ongongo hill in Kanyango in Kasipul, where he gave instructions in ghee manufacture and hide preparation. He introduced the first milk separators and sold them to a few people in the area. He also inoculated cattle. It was after this that ghee production commenced. As a precondition for establishing milk dairies, the administration required in 1934 that prospective dairy owners construct bandas and maintain them, along with cream separators, receptacles of milk and utensils used in the manufacture of ghee, in good sanitary condition. It was after these conditions were fulfilled that dairy owners were issued with certificates of registration. Since the inputs required for ghee production were costly only a few local people ventured into the enterprise. The first dairy operators in Kasipul included Ezekiel Mbori, Mola Onyuka, James Mbaka, Elija Ongowu and Joram Ngadi. Others from Kabondo included Elias Rachuonyo and Obara Misuku.⁴⁸ A new ghee separator cost between 150 and 200 shillings. In the 1930s, dairy operators bought milk from sellers at the average price of between 14 and 21 cents per gallon. About 13 and 14 pints of milk made a pound of butter, and about 50 pounds of butter made 1 tin of about 37 pounds of ghee. Milk sellers went back home with the milk from which butter had been extracted.

Ghee was sold to Indian traders at Oyugis at 14 shillings per 40 pounds.⁴⁹ In comparison to hide production, the manufacture of ghee was more profitable. It became very difficult to induce people to build bandas for preparation of hides and skins as the extra trouble taken in doing so as was required by the administration was not commensurately rewarding. The difference in the price of sun and shade dried hides and skins was minimal.

In the 1940s the Local Native Council took the initiative and built hide drying bandas in Oyugis, Doho Koscle, Ramba and other local markets. The administration then required that all hides be dried in the LNC owned bandas. Local hide traders brought raw hides from sellers and took them to be dried at the LNC bandas before selling them to Arab traders. Hides and skins were subsequently exported to England the USA and Spain.

During the Second World War large numbers of cattle were bought by the Meat Supply Board which was established by the colonial government and given cattle requisitioning powers to supply meat to Allied soldiers. Every location in South Nyanza was given a quota to provide a specified number of cattle and the Nyanza Provincial Commissioner had to be promptly informed about the number of cattle each location

made available. In 1941 locational quotas were drastically increased despite appeals by local elders and chiefs that they be reduced.⁵¹ Large numbers of cattle in Kasipul and Kabondo were taken to local buying centres in Oyugis, Mikaye, Gamba and Sondu where they were auctioned and bought by the Meat Supply Board. Cattle were auctioned throughout the war years and continued intermittently in the years that followed.

Throughout the colonial period, the buying of livestock and livestock products, in the absence of adequate veterinary services, led to the degeneration and decline of livestock keeping. The situation was worsened by the colonial administration's emphasis on crop production. As more land came under crop production the wide open land frontier which had previously sustained animal husbandry was closed. By the end of colonial rule, livestock economy in Kasipul and Kabondo was undermined. In 1955 the total stock population in the area was estimated at 78,600.⁵²

Impact of Commodity Production

The incorporation of Kasipul and Kabondo into the world and colonial economy through commodity production led to partial changes in the pre-existing forces and relations of production. In the forces

of production there occurred changes in the variety and quantity of crops grown by the people and also in the technology they used. In relations of production, the organisation of labour, the purposes for which what was produced was put, and how surplus was extracted and distributed, and finally, the reproduction of producers were all partially altered.

As we have already seen, although the colonial administration introduced new crops such as maize, groundnuts, cotton and coffee, the growing of traditional ones like sim sim, finger millet, and millet also continued. There was dramatic increase in the quantity of marketed crop and livestock products, as people sold these products to pay tax. As local markets were established and as new needs such as payment of tax and acquiring imports such as iron hoes, ploughs and clothing arose, production ceased to be mainly for use value. Surplus produce increasingly acquired exchange value. Population increase also led to more land being brought under cultivation.

Increase in the quantity of crop production was made possible by changes in technology as imported iron hoes and ploughs gradually replaced traditional wooden and small-bladed iron hoes which disappeared by the 1940s. The new instruments of labour, together with the use of oxen to draw ploughs, increased

physical efficiency in production. Imported technology led to the gradual decline in traditional industrial skills, particularly the manufacture of iron tools. Instead traditional craftsmen increasingly became engaged in repairs of imported hoes and ploughs, and other domestic tools.

But the quantitative increase in crop production and the manufacture of livestock products was never accompanied by appropriate techniques in agriculture and livestock keeping due to lack of adequate extension agricultural and veterinary services. As we have seen, this led to deterioration in soil fertility and the condition of livestock. Consequently, there was relative reduction in both crop yields and livestock productivity per acre. Peasant production continued to be vulnerable to drought and crop and animal diseases.⁵³ Further, administrative emphasis on crop production gradually led to the predominance of agriculture over livestock keeping. This undermined the balance which had existed between the two forms of production during the pre-colonial period. Other economic activities like hunting and the gathering of fruits which were significant during the pre-colonial period also declined as forests became cleared for settlement and crop production.

The transformation of production from use-value to exchange value also led to changes in the organization of labour within and among households. Whereas before the advent of colonialism people worked in their fields just long enough to satisfy their subsistence requirements, during the colonial period they were forced to work for longer hours to be able to produce surplus for sale. Also, due to the periodic absence of males from their homes to places of wage labour, domestic farm work, and even the herding of livestock, which had traditionally been the work of men, increasingly came to be the responsibility of women. It is also true that the participation of men in crop production was made more regular by the gradual widespread use of ploughs which required more physical effort. Further, as each household became increasingly concerned with its own well-being, and as labour became monetarised, traditional cooperative work, saga, declined. It was replaced by paid labour, otongo, as the more prosperous peasants hired labour at a cost.

— Commoditization further led to the marginalization of the producers. Although the entire colonial economy occupied a position which was peri-

peripheral or marginal to the world capitalist system, within the colony itself, the African peasant sector became subordinated to that of the European settler farmers. It became what may be described as a periphery within a periphery; a sub-economy. Through commodity production and deepening market relations, the people of Kasipul and Kabondo came to serve capitalist development by offering cheap labour, cheap food and markets for profit-making goods from the metropole. Like peasants in other parts of Kenya their 'ultimate security and subsistence (lay) in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land, but who were involved, through rights and obligations, in a wider economic system which includ(ed) the participation of non-peasants.'⁵⁴ At the levels of both production and distribution they became internationally related to metropolitan capitalists and locally to European settler farmers, a relation which was based on economic exploitation and political domination.

Participation in a wider economic world as commodity producers led to a transformation in the people's cycle of reproduction. Defining reproduction as 'the renewal from one round of production to another of the social and technical elements

and relations of production among producers', Harriet Friedmann has argued that for it to occur, the means of production must be renewed and the social product distributed among those who labour and those who control the means of production in such a way that production must recommence in its previous form!⁵⁵ According to her the transformation of reproduction takes place when it is undermined and some of the old elements of production are recombined into new ones. Among the people of Kasipul and Kabondo such transformation did not occur in the actual ownership of land as everyone possessed it, but in the size of family land holdings, which varied from household to household. ← And as we have also seen there was deterioration in the quality/fertility of land. Livestock also became scarce and more costly. New and more expensive instruments of production, iron hoes and ploughs were also introduced. Prices of surplus produce, which acquired an exchange value were low relative to imported commodities. All these increased the cost of production and decreased real returns to labour. People found it increasingly costly to renew their means of production to buy farm inputs, procure wives, rear children, eat a balanced diet as they sometimes sold even their subsistence requirements. This sorry situation which emerged

has been described by Henry Bernstein as 'simple reproduction squeeze.'⁵⁶

Commodity production did not create an entirely immiserised peasantry. It offered ^{an opportunity for} new forms of accumulation to a few people. Those who owned large pieces of land, oxen and ploughs were able to produce greater quantities of surplus whose returns they reinvested in further production and other forms of economic activity. Some of them even hired and paid labour to work on their farms. It was these people who bought milk separators, ox-drawn carts and established water mills. They also entered trade in grain, hides and skins and cattle. They owned shops and built mabati, iron-roofed houses. The more adventurous ones bought lorries and entered transport business. These new forms of wealth were indications of peasant economic and social differentiation, a process which will receive more detailed analysis in Chapter 6.

Conclusion

In this Chapter we have analysed colonial initiatives in crop production and the extraction of livestock products and the responses of the people of Kasipul and Kabondo. We have argued that in commodity production colonial policy was influenced

by the needs of metropolitan capital, the need by the colonial state to get revenue and the interests of local European settlers. The responses of the local people were, on the other hand, influenced by pre-existing forms of production and the new obligations and needs created by the colonial situation. Central to our argument has been that contradictions and conflicts which existed between metropolitan and colonial interests, on the one hand, and settler and peasant producers, on the other, and the way these were resolved by the colonial state, created blockages to local capitalist development. The subordination of the colonial economy to the capitalist requirements of the metropole and also of local peasant producers to European settlers, precluded any positive economic development. Forces of production in Kasipul and Kabondo were only partially transformed by the introduction of new crops, iron hoes and ploughs, ghee separators and flaying knives. This led to quantitative increase in the surplus of crop and livestock produce. The persistence of pre-capitalist forms of crop production and livestock keeping meant that production was not qualitatively changed. At the level of relations of production the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were marginalised both internationally and within the colony. Among

themselves there occurred economic and social differentiation.

Those effects of commodity production were complemented by the recruitment of the local people into wage labour, the subject of the next Chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MIGRANT LABOUR

Colonial Demands for Labour, Methods of Recruitment
and Working Conditions

In his analysis of the economics of colonialism in Kenya, Richard Wolff¹ has identified three major stages in the transformation of the African population into a wage labour force between 1895 and 1930. The first stage, 1895-1914 was a period when the colonial government carried out experiments with alternative methods of development and ultimately decided to establish a settler - dominated estate agriculture as the basis of Kenya's economy. The second stage, 1914-1919, coincided with mobilization of the career corps, for war apart from the normal labour recruitment. The third stage, 1919-1930, which continued upto 1939, saw the establishment of a regular labour supply on the basis of war-time mobilization. To these three stages may be added two more: the period between 1939 and 1945, which once again saw the mobilization of the Pioneer Corps for both military and civil labour during the Second World War, and the years between 1945 and 1963 during which there was increased labour recruitment for settler agriculture and secondary industries. These five stages coincided with

an increase in demand for labour by the Government, European settlers, private firms and individuals which influenced the methods of labour recruitment and Government labour policy in general.

From the outset South Nyanza District, of which the locations of Kasipul and Kabondo, are part, were seen, together with the whole of Nyanza Province, as a labour reservoir for European settlers apart from for Government requirements for construction of administrative buildings, roads and transportation of goods. In the early years of colonialism, the peoples of Kenya did not have the material incentive to avail themselves for wage employment due to the relative self-sufficiency of their economies. R.W. Hemsted, the District Commissioner of South Nyanza District, was led to report in 1911 that 'the natives of this district are so very rich that few of them will seek to work elsewhere'.²

As happened in other parts of Kenya, it became necessary to use extra-economic methods to force people to seek wage labour. The first of these was taxation, whose laws were promulgated in 1897, 1902, 1910 and 1913. The process of tax collection has already been discussed in Chapter 3. Its purpose was both to raise revenue and to coerce labour as it was hoped that its payment in cash would force people

to avail themselves for work. But taxation had some shortcomings, since it did not discriminate between incomes obtained from sale of produce or cattle, and those earned from the sale of labour power, thus giving people the option of choosing how to get cash.³ This was particularly true of Kasipul and Kabondo, and other locations in South Nyanza District, where fertility of land and people's possession of large herds of cattle made possible the payment of taxes by means other than wage labour. In 1923, another District Commissioner, D.R. Crampton could still report that:

The number of young Luo who leave their reserve to work outside still remains small in comparison with the population and I doubt if anything short of an earthquake will ever change this affair.⁴

This is not to underestimate the role of taxation in forcing some people into wage labour. Since prices for agricultural produce and cattle were not all the time favourable, particularly during periods of economic depression, a number of people could only get cash through wage labour. But the supply of labour was usually not commensurate with the ever-increasing demand for it. Other methods of increasing its supply became necessary.

In other parts of the country, particularly in the Central Province, land was alienated and native reserves created since 1905. This created landlessness and pressure to participate in wage labour. In South Nyanza District, it was mainly administrative compulsion, legalised by the 1912 Native Authority Ordinance, that forced people to go out to work. This legislation empowered District Officers and Chiefs to recruit labour from the reserves both for public work and settler agriculture. It was through this means that the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were forcefully recruited by their chiefs to work on the roads from Kisii to Kisumu, Kisii to Homa-Bay, and Oyugis to Kendu-Bay. Others worked as porters of administrative officials and missionaries and as servants and touts of Indian traders. Some labourers were also sent out to work in the Public Works Departments in other parts of the country, Mombasa harbour and water works at the Coast, the building of the railway branch to Magadi and sisal plantations.⁵ Chiefs who provided labourers were paid cattle which had been raided from the Abagusii in the 1907 invasion.⁶

The outbreak of the first World War in 1914 led to increased demands for labour. More people were forced to join the Carrier Corps and to work in

settler farms. The colonial state vested more powers of conscription and punishment for evasion of work in District Officers and Chiefs by the 1915 Native Registration Ordinance and the Native Followers Ordinance. The nature and extent of state coercion during these years were reminiscent of the slave trade era. Richard Gethin, a local Irish businessman and later a labour recruiter, described the process of labour recruitment in the following words:

Labour was forced out by chiefs for the new farms and Government departments - the chiefs were frequently handed out cases of whisky and brandy for so many recruits produced. On arrival at Kisii they were placed in a hut under strong guard and in the morning those who had not escaped were tied together and sent to Kisumu by road.⁷

Chiefs of Kasipul and Kabondo at the time, Phillip Owili and Ondiegi, respectively, sent their askaris to raid people's homes at night. Every homestead was required to produce an able-bodied young man, and parents who did not want their sons to be recruited paid cattle.⁸ Such abuse of labour recruitment soon embarrassed the colonial and Imperial Governments and led to the 1919 Amendment to the Master and Servants Ordinance, by which the Government hoped to ameliorate the situation. But it possessed neither the will

nor the capability to ensure that the new labour rules were followed.

By the end of the War in 1919, both the Colonial State and European settlers were impressed by the effectiveness and success of the coercive methods used in war-time mobilization. Settlers urged their continued application and the Colonial State acceded to this request. The Northey Circulars of 1919 and 1920, and the 1920 Amendment to the 1912 Native Authority Ordinance reinstated the wartime system of forced labour. The Northey Circulars, in particular, required Provincial and District Commissioners all over Kenya to:

1. exercise every possible 'lawful influence' to get labour including that of women and children if (settler) farms were near the reserves.
2. remind the native chiefs and elders that they must render all lawful assistance and that it was their duty to encourage employed young men to go out and work.
3. keep records of chiefs who were helpful and those who were not to be reported for information of the Governor.
4. hold public meetings at which labour

requirements, rates of pay and conditions of labour were explained, and to which native authorities and labour agents were invited.

5. invite employers and their agents to enter freely into reserves to get in touch with chiefs, headmen and natives.
6. provide requirements for Government Departments from the more remote areas not providing much plantation labour.⁹

If the Northey Circulars were intended to conceal the element of force in the recruitment of labour this was contradicted by the 1920 Amendment to the 1912 Native Authority Ordinance. This legislation provided for compulsory requisition of paid native labour for settler farms and labour required by Government for a period not exceeding 60 days per individual.¹⁰ Chiefs were empowered to recruit such labour on orders from District Officers. Only those who had been fully occupied for three out of the previous twelve months were exempted.¹¹ The 1921 Native Registration Ordinance strengthened the coercive methods which the 1920 Ordinance had legalised. It required every adult male (16, and later 18 years old) to receive and carry a Registration Certificate (Kipande), in which each employer recorded the time a labourer worked, the kind of work

performed, wages earned and general comments on the individual.¹² All these, and the fact that loss of the certificate and desertion from work rendered one liable for punishment, made the Registration system a means by which the supply of labour was controlled.

Apart from administrative coercion there also developed a system of labour recruitment by European-owned private recruiting firms. In 1922, six such firms operated in South Nyanza District. These were, respectively, owned by John Riddoch, who was represented in the district by Richard Gethin; Mackay, represented by Mackay himself and Y.E. Yates; Beadoch, represented by Captain Billingham and Runton; J. Maxwell, represented by Firth; Miss Maclean, represented by Phillips; and the Nyanza Corporation, represented by Grant.¹³ The representatives were assisted by sub-recruiters. Then there were also the African Highlands Produce Company, a local subsidiary of James Finlay Company of Glasgow and the Kenya Tea Company, a subsidiary of the Brooke Bond Company, which established Tea Estates in Kericho in 1925. These companies employed their own European and African agents commonly known in South Nyanza District as JoKasimba, as labour sub-recruiters. In Kabondo their employees included Naman Nyanginja

who manned their labour camp at Sondu, and Elias Rachuonyo, who was stationed at the Oyugis labour camp. From Kasipul were Joram Ngadi and Joel Ogweyo, both from Kojwach sub-clan.

Labour recruiting agents were required to obtain permits valid for 12 months from the Provincial Commissioner in Kisumu. The private labour recruiting firms charged employers, 3 to 4 shillings per head for the labourers they had forwarded, plus the cost incurred in their rations, travel and supervision.¹⁴ The Tea Companies which financed their own recruitment paid their local African subscribers between 2 and 4 shillings and also provided them with uniforms. They transported their labourers from their labour camps which were established at strategic parts along the major roads throughout South Nyanza District.¹⁵

Corrupt methods and deceit often characterised the methods used by private recruiting firms and the Tea Companies to get labourers. The following statement from a European sub-recruiter illustrates what happened in Kabondo and other locations in South Nyanza.

I went to Chief Ondiegi and asked for labour. Ondiegi asked if I could give him shot gun cartridges. I said no.

Ondiegi then said: 'If I get you some people, will Mr. Hamilton send me some whisky?' I then asked Ondiegi to return some deserters and the Chief demanded 4 shillings. After I had paid him he told me to go and take the deserters.¹⁶

Regarding labour recruitment as a source of income, chiefs used all means, including force, to get labourers for the recruiters. The Tea Companies also sought their help. Chiefs were invited to tour the tea estates to see for themselves the conditions under which their subjects worked. But it was also through lies told by recruiting agents that the Tea Companies got many juvenile labourers who were, for instance, told that their work would be that of chasing away birds from the shambas.¹⁷ This state of affairs continued throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Six months contracts locally called Ogirimiti (Agreements) were signed between the employers and the labourers. These contracts were renewable. The majority of labourers from Kasipul and Kabondo and the other locations of South Nyanza District went to work in the Tea Estates in Kericho, Sotik and Nandi.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 compounded the problem of labour shortage throughout Kenya as once again, there was need for both civil

and military labour. Many people were conscripted into the Pioneer Corps. In South Nyanza, the Assisted Recruitment Scheme was instituted in 1941 for recruiting both civil and military labour. As happened in 1914-1919, chiefs employed high-handed methods to obtain recruits. Gideon Mogak who was Chief of Kasipul and Kabondo during the 1939-1945 War was singled out for praise by the District Administration for his compliance in making available the needed labour.¹⁸ In 1944 it became necessary to raise a special Tribal Police force to deal with labour deserters and the District Commissioner of South Nyanza, W.A. Perreau, reported that 'this has been of value in arresting civil and military deserters, and what is of more value, including many deserters who are forced to return to work to evade arrest.'¹⁹ The high-handed methods used to recruit both military and civil labour caused a stampede of many people from the Luo locations into Tanganyika.²⁰

After the Second World War the problem of Labour shortage continued in the Tea Estates and other employers in Kenya. To solve this problem the Tea Estates resorted to the recruitment of even greater number of juveniles whom they considered more proficient in tea plucking.²¹ Although this had been a common practice since 1925, it had not led to protest, perhaps because the number of juveniles

involved was comparatively less. After 1945 the protests by the Local Native Council, and later the African District Councils, could not be ignored by the Government. In 1949 a Labour Officer was posted to South Nyanza District to inquire into the problem. A system of issuing certificates to juveniles going out of the district into employment was recommended.²² This was intended to tighten control in the recruitment of juveniles who left the District without parental consent. The Certificate System was introduced in 1950. Through this system, labour recruiters were required to issue certificates to their juvenile recruits, to be signed by parents who did not object to their children going out to work. The system was used for a trial period but was soon abandoned because of the consequent heavy fall-off of juvenile labour experienced by the Tea Estates.²³ A modified system which replaced it did not require the prior consent of juveniles' parents. Instead, recruiters had to report to the chiefs.²⁴ Employers were also required to submit monthly returns of juveniles engaged and discharged. Even the modified system failed to work satisfactorily as recruiters slipped out of the District with juveniles, particularly during week-ends, without reporting to the Chiefs.²⁵ It must be noted that the Government did not intend to abolish the recruitment of juvenile labour, but

simply to minimize the number of those recruited since it did not view it as a serious problem. It had to give the appearance of trying to rectify the situation because of the protests by the LNC and ADG. Juvenilles continued to be recruited throughout the 1950s.

At the work place, wherever the labourers went, working conditions were often poor. Labourers were paid very low wages as this was critical for colonial capital accumulation. Van Zwabenberg has pointed out that 'wage levels were low in terms of the workers' purchasing power of imported goods and living standards generally, i.e. the purchasing power of wages was lower than subsistence in the reserves.'²⁶ He has estimated that a labourer's annual tax obligation alone ranged between 24 and 34 shillings in the 1920s and 1930s when wages were very low.²⁷ This meant that most of a worker's income from wages in a year went into the payment of taxes, particularly if he did not have any other source of income. In the 1920s the Tea Estates for example paid 4 to 5 shillings to juvenile labourers who had not got Registration Certificates and 8 to 10 shillings to older people and provided them with rations of flour and salt. But these did not sufficiently cover their costs of living and they had

to rely on provision of food from their homes.²⁸

The Tea Estates also housed labourers in very small houses which were shared, assigned them excessive daily tasks which were performed for long hours i.e. from 7 a.m to 5 p.m. and often used the whip to have the work completed.²⁹ One informant remembers what happened in an estate where he worked in the 1930s. In his words:

Bwana Sitwet (probably Stewart) was very cruel. He occasionally came to check if work was properly done. He did not talk to workers. If he noticed anything wrong he would call the Nyapara (head boy) who often ran to him, his hat off, carried near his chest. He sometimes brutally beat up the Nyapara. Europeans killed many people in this manner. They killed Apiyo Wuon Abuor from Kokwanyo. If a worker spoilt his work his daily ration and monthly wages were reduced.³⁰

↳ Poor working and living conditions impaired labourers' health and this situation was prevalent in other places of work. For instance, many who were recruited from South Nyanza to construct the Uasin Gishu railway died of respiratory disease.³¹ Despite these appalling conditions the supply of labour was brought in touch with demand for it not by the normal market factors, but through the tax system and legalised coercion.³²

Responses to Wage Labour and the Labour

Supply Condition

Studies on African labour history have revealed that a number of economic and social factors influenced peoples' attitudes and responses to wage labour. In his study of the proletarianization of the African peasantry in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Giovanni Arrighi³³ found that in the early years of colonialism 'there existed a rough balance between the means of production and the means of subsistence within the peasant economy' which initially made 'participation in the money economy discretionary in the sense that it was not essential to the subsistence requirements of the African population'. According to Arrighi, African participation in the money economy, either through the sale of wage labour or commodity production, could only be attained if their discretionary cash requirements were transformed into necessary requirements. Their choice to allocate their labour-time either to wage labour or to commodity production subsequently depended on the comparative effort price of either alternative. Their choice further depended on other factors: the extent of monetisation of traditional transactions such as marriage; land population ratio; fertility of land; natural factors such as famine; the price of agricultural goods; desire for and cost

of imported goods and education; cash requirements such as for payment of taxes; and, the level of wages and working conditions. These factors can be said to have influenced the attitudes and responses of the people of Kasipul and Kabondo to wage labour and influenced labour supplies in South Nyanza District and other parts of Kenya .

The table below shows the number of labourers registered for work inside and outside South Nyanza District and the percentage employed against estimated able-bodied adult population for the years whose figures are available. Although the table shows labour returns for the whole of the district it should reflect what obtained in the various locations. Such locations like Kasipul and Kabondo which are closer to communication networks and the Tea Estates at Kericho must have supplied slightly more labourers than the others to the southern parts of the district. The table shows that there was a slight increase in the supply of labour between 1912 and 1914, a big increase between 1914 and 1919, and sharp decline between 1919 and 1921, a steady but slight increase between 1922 and 1939, and finally, another major increase between 1940 and 1942. Fluctuations in labour supplies coincided with periods of famine, the 1914-1919 and 1939-1945 wars, periods

Table 5: Labour Registered for Work Inside and Outside
South Nyanza District

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF LABOURERS REGISTERED</u>		<u>TOTAL ADULT MALE POP.</u>	<u>% EMPLOYED</u>	
	<u>INSIDE</u>	<u>OUTSIDE</u>			
1912	535	1,967	2,522	41,808	11.3
1913	401	4,029	4,430		
1914	4,412	9,560	13,972		
1915	463	6,929	7,592		
1916	1,210	8,006	11,216		
1917	149	9,661	9,810		
1919	322	234	656		
1920	141	3,148	3,289	37,532	12.8
1922	187	8,743			
1925	112	1,294	1,406		
1926				44,259	21.7
1927				48,640	18.4
1929			7,910	52,070	22.3
1930			6,399		
1931			1,236		
1935			1,099		
1936			3,140		
1937			2,399		
1938			3,250		
1939			2,935		
1940			4,218		
1941			6,274		
1942			9,486		
1943			3,881		
1944			4,683		

Source: South Kavirondo District Annual Reports 1912-1944 and Stichter, S., Migrant Labour in Kenya: Capitalism and African Response 1895-1975, Longman 1982 p. 54-55.

Note: The figures should not be considered absolutely accurate since a number of workers went out on their own without being registered.

of depression and recovery. Although the percentage of those employed slowly increased from 11.3% in 1912/13 to 22.3% in 1929, they did not exceed 30% throughout the 1930s and 1940s and were generally lower than those of the districts in Western Province and Kisumu and Siaya.³⁴

The level of monetarisation of traditional transactions remained relatively low for a long time in Kasipul and Kabondo and the rest of South Nyanza District. This was mainly due to the absence of favourable market conditions which would have encouraged commodity production. Besides, much of the land was fertile and the land/population ratio was low. In 1949 and 1951 the population density of Kasipul was estimated at 133 and 174 persons per square kilometre respectively.³⁵ These figures were much lower during the earlier years. People also possessed large herds of cattle. In 1955 stock population in both Kasipul and Kabondo was estimated at 78,600.³⁶ This meant that the majority of the people were able to satisfy their subsistence needs and meet their tax obligations and other cash requirements without necessarily having to sell their labour power. Furthermore, people's demands for imported goods, for some time, remained low. In 1913 the District Commissioner, D.R. Crampton noted that:

At present the natives generally speaking show little desire to utilize their savings in buying imported goods with the exception of well-known articles such as iron-wire, beads, hoes, knives and a certain amount of Merikani and blankets. The greater part of any money earned is hoarded up by buying livestock.³⁷

But eventually, from the 1930s this situation changed a little as commodity production became undermined and a number of people cultivated new values and tastes. One informant who went to work in Jamji Estate in Kericho in the late 1920s gave the following reason for doing so:

I went out to work because our cattle were getting finished as they were being taken away for my father's tax. My father was sometimes caned if he failed to pay tax. So I went out to work to save our cattle and to rescue my father from from the canes. There wasn't much one did here at home to get money to pay tax.³⁸

Another informant went out to work to get imported goods which had acquired a new social utility:

I went out to work in 1930 because I wanted to buy clothes and shoes. I wanted to talk to girls and one could not do so without these things. They were difficult to get here at home.³⁹

For a number of people, discretionary cash needs were slowly becoming necessary needs. And so they either engaged in commodity production or went out to work to get cash.

Commodity production was shrouded in uncertainty. It was affected by fluctuations in produce prices and natural factors such as drought and/or locust invasion. In periods of depression, for instance in 1920-22 and 1929-36 when commodity prices were very low, a bigger number of people went out to work. On the other hand, during periods of recovery, for instance 1922-29 and 1936-1939 and 1940-1955 fewer people went out to work, because returns from commodity production were higher. In 1945 and 1946 the latter factor caused shortage. According to the District Commissioner, P.M. Gordon:

The underlying causes for the shortage of labour in 1945 continued in 1946. High prices, good crops, lack of objects to buy with plentiful money available, all tended to make the African perfectly content to remain at home, where in fact he can often make a better living than he could by offering himself to labour under European employment.⁴⁰

The Table below shows economic conditions between 1918 and 1955 in Kenya and the rest of the world which coincided with changes in the supply of labour in South Nyanza District.

Table 6: Economic Conditions Between 1918 & 1955.

<u>YEARS</u>	<u>ECONOMIC CONDITION</u>
1918-1920	Rise in prices for agricultural commodities
1920-1922	Fall in prices
1922-1929	Period of recovery, rise in prices
1929-1936	The Great Depression, fall in prices
1936-1939	Period of recovery, rise in prices
1940-1955	Continued rise in prices

Source: Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A. with King A., An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970. East African Publishing House 1975 pp XXII-XXIII.

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 Kabendo 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

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/Otongo. 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.

Table 7: Years of Famine in South Nyanza District

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FAMINE IN LOCAL NAME (DHOLUO)</u>
1905	Opande
1917	Kanga
1920-22	Ongere
1926-28	Omwagore
1930-33	Osodo or Nyangweso (years of locust invasion)
1934	Otuoma
1943	Ladhri
1947	Konyri girieki (rely on your own devices)

Source: Kenya Population Census 1979: Enumerators' Instructions Republic of Kenya p. 73.

Despite slight fluctuations wages were generally low throughout the colonial period as is shown in the Table below.

Table 8: Approximate Average Monthly Wages 1914-1953

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>AVERAGE MONTHLY WAGES</u>
1914	6/80 rupees or about 10 shillings
1915	5/10 rupees or about 7 shillings
1916	5/25 " " " 8 Shillings
1917	7/03 " " " 10 "
1919	8-10 shillings
1921	5 - 7 "
1922	8 - 10 "
1923	6 - 8 "
1924-29	12 - 16 "
1930-36	6 - 10 "
1937-39	10 - 12 "
1946	16 " in the Tea Estates
1953	24 " in the Tea Estates

Sources: South Kavirondo District Annual Reports 1914 to 1946, Van Zwanenberg R.M.A., Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya, 1919-1939 E.A.L.B. 1975 p. 36 and Osoro, J.M. A Lull Before the Storm: A Study of African Labourers in the Kericho Tea Estates, 1939-1958, University of Nairobi, Department of History, Staff Seminar Paper No. 1 1977/78, October 1977.

The figure below shows the relationship between wages and the supply of labour in South Nyanza District between 1914 and 1944. The three peak periods of labour supply coincided with the first World War, the period of economic recovery during the years between 1922 and 1929, and finally the Second World War. Although wages were high during the two wars, it cannot be said that by themselves wages provided the incentive for people to seek employment as force was used to conscript both military and civil labour. During the inter-war period, fluctuations in wages did not necessarily lead to changes in the supply of labour. Although wages increased after 1922 the supply of labour did not immediately rise. This was mainly because there was a rise in the price of agricultural commodities and many people were able to satisfy their subsistence needs through engagement in agricultural production at home. As has already been seen, this was the period during which the methods of labour recruitment during the 1914-19 war continued to be employed by the colonial state. Between 1926 and 1932 many people went out to work on their own, partly because of increase in wages, and also, because of the famines which hit the area. The period between 1930 and 1936 saw the Great Depression which brought down both wages and the supply of labour. Wages and prices of agricultural

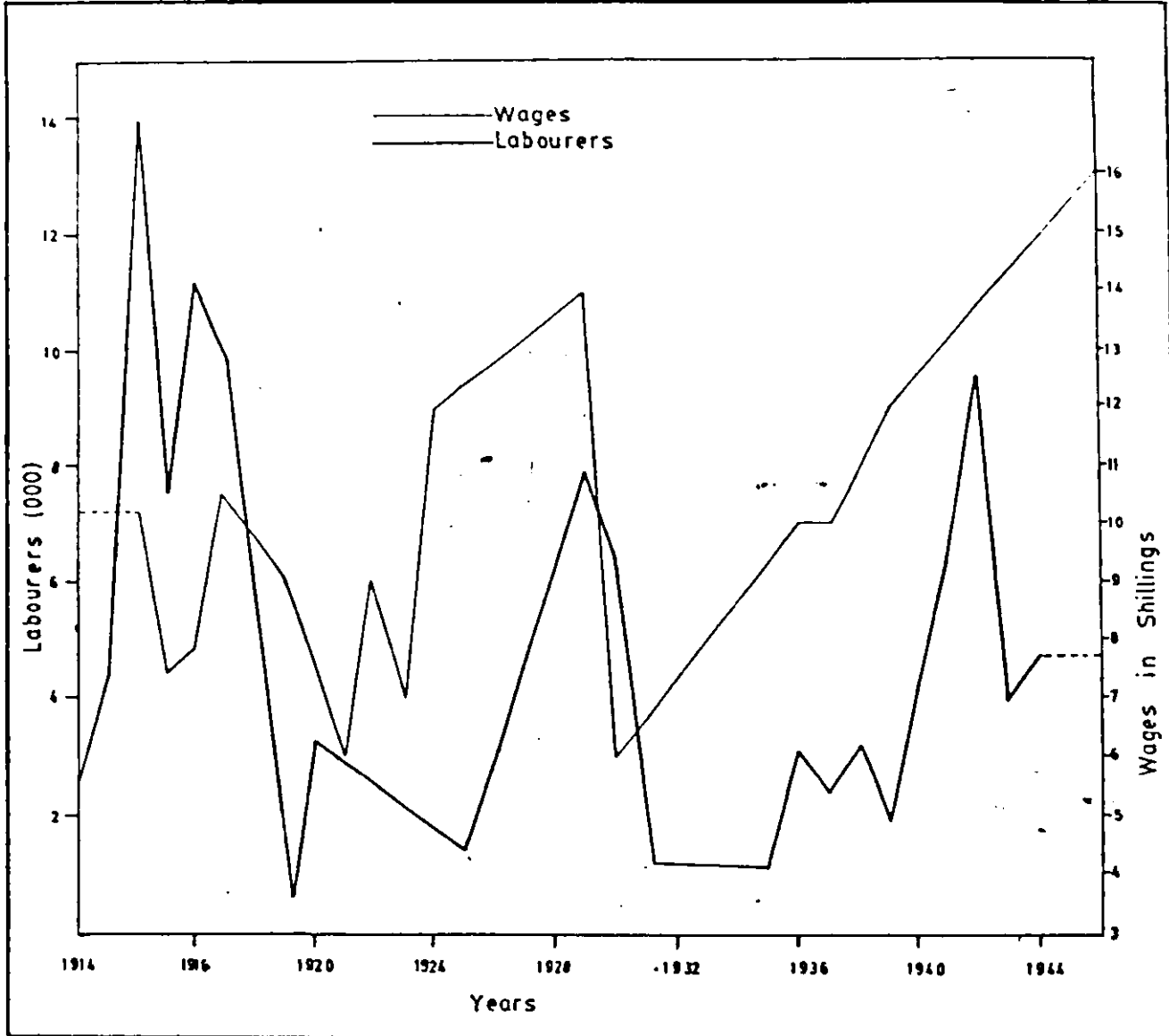


Figure 1: Relationship Between Wages and Labour Supply in South Nyanza District 1914-1944.

products rose once again between 1936 and 1940. But the number of labourers did not immediately go up because returns from peasant commodity production within the District were higher than returns in wage employment. After 1939 the supply of labour shot up to attain another peak, partly because of the continued increase in wages and also mainly because of the conscription of people into the Pioneer Corps. This explains the dramatic drop in the supply of labour after demobilization at the end of the War. The conclusion that may be drawn from all this is that the relationship between labour and wages was not a simple one. It was multi-variant since peoples consideration of returns to labour in wage employment versus returns to commodity production were made in the light of other prevailing factors such as prices of agricultural products, the quantity of yields, the size of household holdings and the amount of real wages paid.

Rather than being the sole determinant of the absolute numbers of people who went out to work, differences in wage levels and working conditions influenced people's choice of place of work. This happened because labourers, before they went out to work, tried to redefi~~n~~e wage rates and conditions of employment using their own social networks to find alternatives that provided better wages, less dangerous work - or work places that allowed access to land.⁴¹

In response to this the Tea Companies in Kericho in particular, increased their wages and improved working conditions to induce people to seek employment in the Tea Estates rather than from other employers. In 1946 the Tea Companies paid their workers 16 shillings per month. Realising that other employers were likely to attract more labour the Kenya Tea Growers Association which had been formed in 1931 adopted a graded system of wage increase. In 1953 workers were paid 24 shillings for the first six months. Those who worked continuously for between seven and eleven months were paid monthly wages of 26 shillings. 30 shillings a month was payable to those who worked continuously for thirteen to eighteen months. Apart from this, the Tea Estates attempted to improve working conditions by increasing food rations and providing educational, health and recreational facilities. Apart from these inducements the majority of people from Kasipul and Kabondo went to work in the Tea Estates in Kericho and Sotik because these places were nearer to their homes.

Apart from economic factors certain people were drawn into wage labour by the influence of those who had gone out to work earlier. These people came back home with exciting stories about the outside world, for instance, places like Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru and Kericho. They also came back with imported goods like

clothes, bicycles etc. and acted as a frame of reference for young people in the community. Out of feelings of adventure and a desire to emulate those who had been out to work, a number of people entered wage labour.⁴² Others entered wage labour because it provided an opportunity to escape from the traditional patriarchal control of the elders.⁴³ For whatever reason the people of Kasipul and Kabondo were drawn into wage labour, their lives were affected in a number of ways.

Impact of Wage Labour

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 of manpower. Although the percentage of able-bodied adult males who went out to work over the years has been estimated at 35% at the highest, this group of people were away from their homes during the seasons when their labour was most needed there. 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 and reduced the productive capacity of land.⁴⁴ The problems began

to be experienced in the 1940s. The situation was further exacerbated by the fact that whatever agricultural skills labourers acquired from the Tea Estates and other work places were not applicable back home where climatic and soil conditions were different.

Migrant labour also led to changes in the relations between men and women and young men and elders. Absence of men meant that women now became more responsible for the reproduction and the day-to-day running of the family. Apart from cultivating land and performing other necessary domestic chores women also engaged in petty trade to maintain their families.⁴⁵ Young men who were able to save their wages to buy cattle and ploughs now accumulated productive capital and marry wives independently of the patriarchal control of the elders. 'Where once the old man was able to control the economy of the home', observes Whisson, 'now the senior person relies considerably upon the charity of his children to maintain himself in clothes, and often food if he has not got a young wife to cultivate for him'.⁴⁶

The impact of exposure to the outside world in regard to the acquisition of new values depended on where one went to work and the working conditions there. Those who went to work in the Tea Estates in Kericho, and they constituted the majority of wage

labourers from Kasipul and Kabondo, did not change their values and life-styles as much as others who went to such places like Mombasa, Nairobi and Nakuru. One informant remembers that:

In Kericho we did not learn much. Most of us who came from the same village worked and lived in the same Estates and the type of social life we led was the same as it was back home. Our wives brewed beer for us and our musicians entertained us.⁴⁷

Labourers managed to buy clothes, shoes, blankets, bicycles and other imported goods, the possession of which was difficult for those who did not go out to work. Back home these people constituted a new social category called Jonanga or Jokapango. They were regarded with mixed feelings: on the one hand they were admired; on the other they were thought to be lazy and improvident for they never did well in other areas of life. According to one informant who never went out to work:

Those who went to work bought clothes, shoes and blankets. But when they came back home and their money got finished they sold these things to us. The majority of them never did well. Some of them who never went ^{back} to work again became servants of prosperous farmers.⁴⁸

This view was confirmed by another informant who had gone to work in Mombasa in 1930 and stayed there for over ten years. He remembers that:

Some of those who did not go out to work were in a better position than me. They married and got children before I did. What I possessed were clothes and a bicycle which they borrowed. But you cannot compare these things with children. Many of those who went to Mombasa did not marry because they stayed out there too long and came back very old. When they came back they could only inherit widows. Others who carried heavy loads at the harbour became physically deformed.⁴⁹

But this was not true of all those who participated in wage labour. Some used their savings and newly acquired ideas to accumulate productive capital either in commodity production or trade once they retired from work. While in work some of these people like Absalom Nyariaro from Kojwach apprenticed in trades such as tailoring and bought sewing machines. They came back and opened tailoring shops.⁵⁰ Others bought ploughs and oxen and after retirement became engaged in cultivation. The experience of an informant who worked in the Tea Estates in Kericho in 1930s and later in Limuru in the 1940s illustrates how some migrant workers became rich rural cultivators:

It was while I was working in Limuru that I met a Mkikuyu friend called Kinyua whose influence changed my career. One day, in 1944 he told me that he was retiring from work to go back to his home in Nyeri to buy land and settle down as a farmer. I asked him what he meant by buying land because I had not heard about this. He told me that if land was not being bought in my area then I should retire from work and go back home to possess for myself as much land as I could. He said that in his home area there was already land shortage and that land was very expensive. So I came back home and fenced over 30 acres of land for myself. When I was doing this people said I was mad. But I went ahead, bought a plough and four oxen and started farming.⁵¹

As a result of people's varied responses and adaptation to wage labour a process of socio-economic differentiation took place. Wage labour did not create a fully fledged proletarian class in Kasipul and Kabondo as migrant labourers continued to derive their subsistence from land whose ownership they did not lose. When they seasonally went out to work their wives and children cultivated land back home. But there eventually emerged two categories of migrant workers: at one extreme were the workers whose low wages and conditions at the work place did not allow investment in lucrative commodity production and trade; at another

extreme were relatively better paid workers whose exposure to new ideas at the work place enabled them to invest in land and other inputs like ploughs, oxen, sewing machines, milk separators etc. After retirement the former became poor peasants and the latter rich peasants.

Conclusion

This Chapter has analysed colonial capitalist penetration of Kasipul and Kabondo through the wage labour system. It has argued that migrant labour was necessitated by the underdeveloped nature of settler estate agriculture and the relative self-sufficiency of lineage-based indigenous economies. To extract surplus value from the product of African labour the colonial state resorted to a contradictory articulation of capitalism with indigenous economies by restructuring them. This involved their partial conservation and destruction. This was mainly because the colonial state found this mode of articulation to be economically cheap and politically convenient.

Stages in the transformation of the people of Kasipul and Kabondo into a wage labour force have been identified. The role of taxation and other extra-economic methods such as legalised coercion and recruitment by private firms and working conditions have also

been discussed. These, together with peoples attitudes and responses to wage labour determined the labour supply condition. It has been argued that, contrary to what was once believed about irrational African responses to the money economy, African attitudes and responses to wage labour were influenced by rational considerations of the realities of the colonial economic situation. Their decision whether or not to participate in wage labour was determined by factors such as the extent of monetarisation of the traditional economy, land/population ratio, prices of agricultural goods, cash requirements for the payment of taxes and buying imported goods, etc. Considerations of relative effort-prices of alternative economic activities determined whether one availed himself for wage labour or engaged himself in commodity production.

Among the consequences of wage labour were the underdevelopment of local agricultural production; changes in the position of women and in relations between young men and elders, and exposure to new values and acquisition of new goods. Participation wage labour also led to socio-economic differentiation as it offered some people opportunities for investment in commodity production and trade. How this process took place, and the extent to which it further transformed the lives of people in Kasipul and Kabondo is the subject of the next Chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

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2. South Kavirondo District Quarterly Reports, September 1911 DC/KSI/1/1.
3. Van Zwabenberg, R.M.A., Colonial Capitalism and Labour in Kenya, 1919-1939, East Africa Literature Bureau, 1975 pp. 102-103. For detailed discussions of the use of taxation by colonial authorities to force Africans into wage labour, also see Arrighi, G. 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia', in Arrighi, G. and Saul, J. (eds.), Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, East Africa Publishing House. Nairobi, 1973 p. 194; Cooper, F., 'Africa and the World Economy', African Studies Review, XXIV, 2/3, June/September 1981, p. 33 and Stichter, S. Migrant Labour in Kenya, Capitalism and African Responses 1895-1975, Longman, 1982, p. 29.
4. South Kavirondo Annual Report, 1923 DC/KSI/1/2.
5. South Kavirondo Annual Report, 1913, DC/KSI/1/1.
6. Ibid.
7. Quoted in van Zwabenberg, R.M.A. Colonial Capitalism, op.cit.
8. Oral interview with Barnaba Ogot.

9. Quoted in Dilley, M.R., British Policy in Kenya Colony, Frank Cass, 1966, p. 223.
10. Dilley, M.R., ibid. p. 225.
11. Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A. 1975, op.cit. p. 116.
12. Wolff, R.D. op.cit. p. 199.
13. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1922 DC/KSI/1/1.
14. Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A. 1975, op.cit. p. 175.
15. Detailed descriptions of the Tea Companies' labour recruiting methods and working conditions in their estates have been carried out by J.M. Osoro in his, 'Unity and Diversity in Labour Recruitment and Welfare: The Tea Estates versus other Employers of Labour 1925-1938', Historical Association of Kenya Annual Conference Paper, 1977 and 'A Lull Before the Storm'. A study of the African Labourers in the Kericho Tea Estates 1939-1958'. University of Nairobi Department of History, Staff Seminar Paper No. I 1977/78, 5th October, 1977.
16. Quoted in Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A. 1975, op.cit., p. 175.
17. Oral Interview with Mathayo Odera Oyoo.
18. See Character of Chiefs in District of South Kavironodo, Political Records, DC/KSI/3/1.
19. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1944, DC/KSI/1/6.

South Kavirondo Annual Report 1939 DC/KSI/1/4.

This was rationalised by the Tea Estates as follow: 'the tea industry needs juvenile labour because the dexterity and co-ordination of hand and eyes comes more easily to a juvenile than to an adult and he is therefore more easily trained as a plucker. An adult who has never plucked before is never as efficient as one who was trained during his earlier years,' quoted in arap Koriri, K.M., 'Narration and Interpretation Counterposed: The Kericho Tea Plantations and the Problem of Labour Supplies, circa 1925-1960'; Kenyatta University College, Department of History, Staff Seminar, No. 8, 1977/78 p. 7.

South Kavirondo Annual Report 1949 DC/KSI/1/11.

South Nyanza District Annual Report 1950/KSI/1/12.

Ibid.

Ibid. See also the Monthly Intelligence Reports 1950 PC/NZA/3/11/455 and South Nyanza Monthly Intelligence Reports May 1950 PC/NZA/3/1/446.

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Ibid. p. 81.

Oral Interview with Gerson Ndaya.

Osoro, I.M. 'Lull Before the Storm' op.cit. p. 1.

Oral Interview with Laban Okoth.

31. Stichter, S. op.cit. p. 57.
32. Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A. 1975 op.cit. p. 224.
33. Arrighi, G. 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', op.cit. pp. 192-193.
34. Stichter, S. op.cit. p.27 and South Kavirondo Annual Report 1928, DC/KSI/1/3.
35. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1949, DC/KSI/1/11, South Nyanza Annual Report, 1951, DC/KSI/1/13.
36. South Nyanza Gazetteer 1955 DC/KSI/5/3.
37. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1912/1913 DC/KSI/1/2.
38. Oral Interview, with Nelson Owich Omwaro.
39. Oral Interview with Laban Okoth.
40. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1946, DC/KSI/1/8.
41. Cooper, F. op.cit. p. 40-41.
42. Informants like Silverivs Mwenja and Johannes Nyambori, both from Kodumo clan remember how then were influenced to go out to work in 1920 when they were still very young by one, Atedeo Abongo from their clan who had been to work earlier.
43. Cooper, F. op.cit. p. 43.
44. See Ivanov, Y.M.; Agrarian Reforms ant Hired

Labour in Africa, Progress Publishers, Moscow
1979, pp. 19-20, Cooper, F. op.cit. p.34.

45. For a discussion of changes in the position of women see Cliffe, L.; 'Migrant Labour and Peasant Differentiation: Zambian Experiences' Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 5 No. 3 April 1978, pp. 339-342.
46. Whisson, M.G., Change and Challenge, Christian Council of Kenya, 1964 pp. 119-120.
47. Oral Interview with Nelson Owich Omwaro.
48. Oral Interview, James Mbaka.
49. Oral Interview, Silverius Mwanja Ojwang.
50. Oral Interview, Absalom Nyariaro.
51. Oral Interview, Laban Okoth.

CHAPTER SIX

ROADS, MARKETS AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF 'ENTREPRENEURSHIP'

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.¹ 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 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 these influence the local people's agricultural production, their participation in trade and the flow of goods and ideas?

The second level should focus on the development of entrepreneurship.² 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 we have used case studies.

The Establishment of the Transport System.

Prior to the establishment of colonial rule in 1907, head portage along foot paths constituted the only system of transport in Kasipul and Kabondo. Dependence on human physical strength limited both the quantity of goods which were carried to traditional markets and the distance which could be covered by travellers and traders. During the colonial period

transport networks consisting of bridle paths, motor roads and lake transport were established in South Nyanza district for political and military control and the exploitation of local resources. Land transport linked the administrative headquarters at Kisii with locations within the district. Locational marketplaces were also linked by road with lake ports like Kendu Bay and Homa Bay which were opened between 1909 and 1910. These were in turn linked by lake transport with the rail head at Kisumu. The railway then provided the link with Mombasa and the rest of the World.

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.³

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 porterage. 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 administration for military transport.⁴ 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.⁵

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, Gethin and Dawson.⁶ Between 1926 and 1930, another development was the improvement of lake communication between the lake ports at Homa-Bay 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. 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.⁷

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 harbour

at Kisumu had insufficient lighterage and inadequate rolling stock and could, therefore, not also cope with large exports, even after the war.

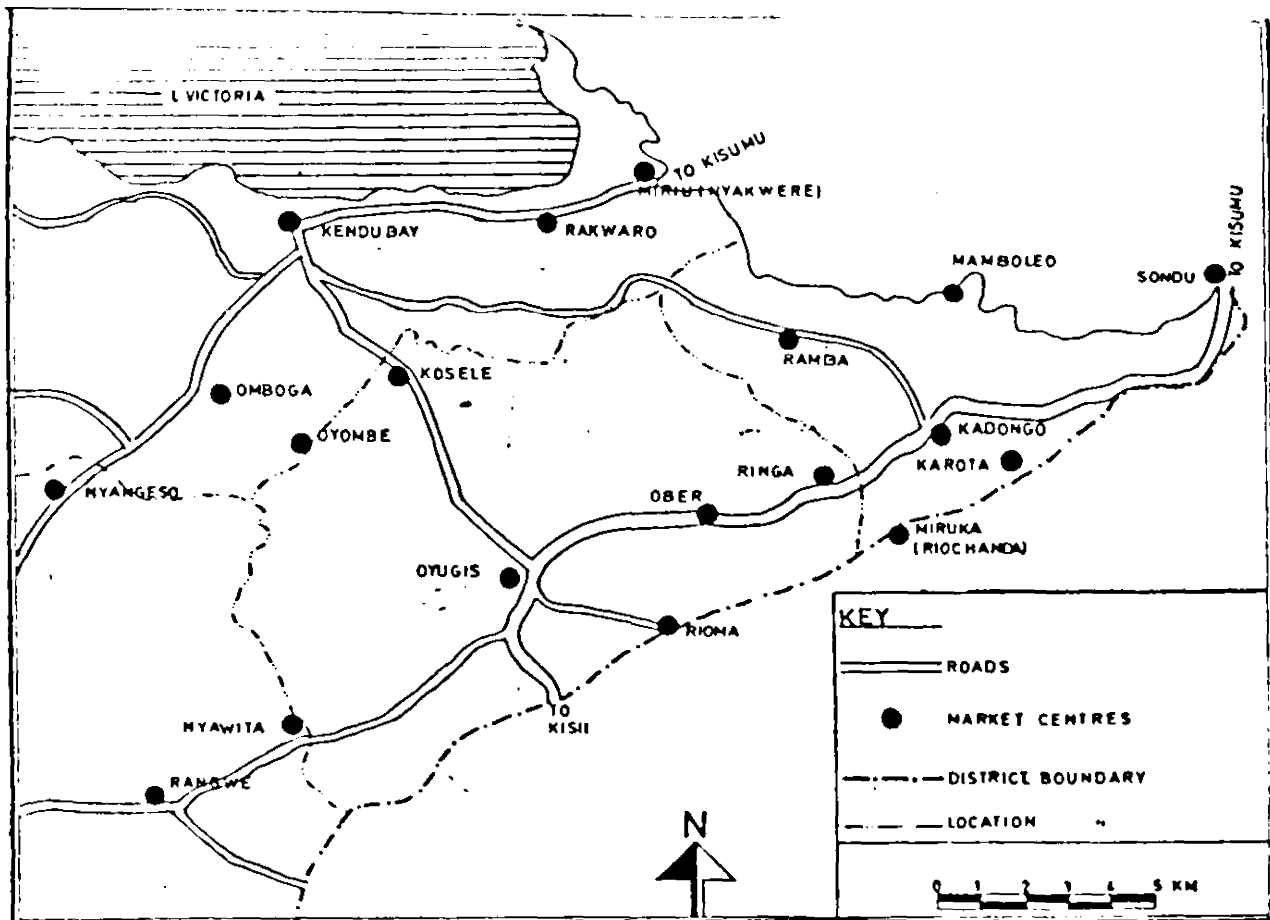
Lack of adequate transport in South Nyanza led to the establishment of a system of produce-buying and transportation whereby transporters only bought produce from specified markets in which their costs were subsidized. The Nyanza Provincial Commissioner felt that 'the system has a distinct advantage in that transporters are always sure of a full load when directed to a market'.⁸ 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.⁹ A few local people who had ventured in the 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',¹⁰ aptly describes the situation which has its roots in the colonial period.

The Extension of Markets, Government Control
and Trends in Local Trade.

The initial step taken by the colonial administration to encourage trade in locally-produced commodities and imported goods was to establish markets and trading centres. The first trading centres were established in 1910 at Oyugis and other nearby areas like Kendu Bay and Rangwe.¹¹ In subsequent years, the number of Indians licenced to trade in these centres increased. In 1915 there were 12 Indians at Oyugis operating 7 shops, 6 Indians and 9 Arabs at Kendu Bay and 10 Indian traders at Rangwe.¹² Smaller markets were established during and after the Ongere famine of 1920-22. They were set up along the border areas between the Luo and the Gusii at Miruka (Riochanda), Karota, and Rioma (Gamba) where the two communities had traditionally engaged in exchange of goods. Other markets established in the 1930s included Kosele, Ober, Chabera, Mamboleo and Ramba. By 1935 there were 167 markets in the whole district and 9 in Kasipul and



Map 7: Transport Systems and Trading Centres.

Sources: Republic of Kenya. South Nyanza District Development Plan 1984/88.

Kabondo. By 1950 the number increased to 17.

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.¹³ Soon the local people themselves carried their produce to Indian shops. In all these instances Indian traders bought cheap and sold dear, thereby making such high profits that a District Commissioner reported that 'it is in this direction that an enterprising European firm could do business'.¹⁴ The European traders who joined Indian traders in the district were Richard Gethin, Max Klein and later, Dawson who also operated transport business, using Kisii town as their base.

Up to the early 1920s there was no government legislation regulating the quality, quantity, prices of produce, the number of traders and the manner in which transactions were carried out in local trading

centres and markets. Naturally, the market system operated in favour of foreign traders, and against indigenous primary producers and traders. It also operated against the economic interests of the colonial state in regard to getting revenue and the transfer of surplus. The slump which hit the colonial economy between 1920 and 1928, the depression which occurred between 1936 and 1939, and the post-World War II economic situation, necessitated government intervention to regulate both the quality and quantity and also prices of domestic products in order for Kenya's economy to compete favourably in the world market and to increase government revenue. The government therefore enacted various Ordinances and market rules to control the market system.

The earliest control to be established was in the ginning and marketing of cotton which was considered a special crop, apart from wattle and tobacco. The Cotton Ordinance of 1923 gave the Governor wide powers to control, by rules, the growing and internal marketing of cotton. The Cotton Rules of 1937 gave Provincial Commissioners in cotton growing areas power to determine the number and situation of buying centres and to limit the number of persons who might be licenced to buy at buying stores at any

buying centre. The government possessed exclusive powers to licence ginnerers.¹⁵

The legislation which established control over the marketing of other produce was the Crop Production and Livestock Ordinance of 1926. The Ordinance gave the Governor in Council powers to enact rules for a wide variety of purposes, including the improving of the quality of produce and assisting and controlling the marketing thereof.¹⁶ A number of rules were subsequently promulgated in various provinces and districts under this Ordinance to provide for the improvement of produce through inspection and control of marketing. For instance, the Nyanza Inspection Rules of 1935 and the Native Improvement and Inspection Rules of 1936 provided for both 'basket' and 'perimeter' inspection of maize, beans, groundnuts, potatoes, simsim and rice.¹⁷ Also, the Native Produce and Inspection Rules of 1937 controlled the marketing of bags of produce, the hours of purchase and sale, and the displaying and alteration of prices offered for produce.¹⁸

Another major legislation, the Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance of 1937 provided inter alia for:

The Governor to declare areas in which the purchase of native produce may be controlled

and regulated; the licensing of traders in such areas in respect to the purchase of specified native produce; the establishment of markets in declared areas; and, the granting by the Governor-in-Council of exclusive trading licences.¹⁹

This Ordinance also gave the Governor powers to make rules controlling the marketing of native produce at markets established under the Ordinance. It was under this Ordinance that the following rules were enacted: the Marketing of Native Produce Rules of 1937 which limited the purchase and sale of native produce to declared markets and made it necessary for a purchaser to provide himself with a shelter and other necessary equipment; the Native Produce Marketing (Weights and Measures) Rules of 1937, which stipulated use of 'bushel measures' for various specified grain crops and the avoirdupois pound for other types of native produce; and the Marketing of Native Produce (Nyanza) Rules, 1940, which applied the 1937 rules, with modifications to all districts within Nyanza Province.²⁰ The 1940 Rules were later modified and applied to South Nyanza district by the South Nyanza District Marketing Rules of 1949 which made provisions for the establishment of trade, transfer of plots, the nature of trading buildings, sanitation requirements and sales of livestock.²¹

Together, the outlined Ordinances and Rules were intended, by establishing control over the market system, to ensure, first, that local produce was only bought and sold at specified markets by licenced traders, and second, that at some stage, between the sale of produce and its export, from districts, it was inspected so that only produce of good and sound quality left the districts, and finally the country. Rules which dealt with matters such as the display of prices, the types of weights and measures to be used were designed to ensure honest dealing between the producer and seller. Apart from getting exports of high quality, the other objectives were not achieved as sales, particularly of cattle were carried outside the legitimate marketing system across the Tanganyikan border into South Nyanza and Central Nyanza districts. Prices which were set up were not always honoured.

In implementing the Ordinances and rules with regard to issuing licences and establishing shops, Provincial Agricultural officers and District Commissioners worked on principles and conditions which favoured European and Indian traders. This limited the scale and scope of African participation in trade. For instance, although section 4, 17(a) of the Native Marketing Ordinance 1935 stated that 'a licence to purchase in a declared area may be granted to any person'.

Section 3 of the Marketing of Native Produce Rules 1937 which said that 'no person shall purchase or sell any native produce unless he has provided himself with a shelter and such other equipment as may be considered necessary by the licencing authority', set a condition which was prohibitive to Africans, most of whom could not afford to put up permanent shops with adequate stores for produce and consumer goods as was required by the administration.

Apart from limitations of capital, the administration's attitude towards African traders was generally negative for most of the colonial period. African traders were regarded by the administration as:

the unemployed and mostly unemployable -- As they emerge from the mission school their main ambition appears to be the achieving of a competency by means of petty cheating -- This finds expression in the incredible number of middlemen - traders who are found on almost every reserve road trading on a miserable capital, but persuading the native producer to dispose of his produce at a figure much below the market prices. It further finds expression in the shops, butcheries and hotels which have sprung up like mushrooms and owe their existence to that misguided patriotism which is the last refuge of the Scoundrel.²²

Thus, although the South Nyanza District Commissioner, K.L. Hunter, reported in 1937 a growing demand in the district from Africans for facilities to be afforded them for participating in produce trade, nothing was done to encourage them for a long time.²³ 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'.²⁴ 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.²⁵ 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 as time would no doubt come when they would be big merchants.²⁶ 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 Chabere, 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. I found that $6\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound was the price on boards and on enquiring from wholesale buyers I was told that they were 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 $6\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and at this stage I 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 my scale had put it up.²⁷

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 South 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 indigenous growth. The tribute is perfectly open and recognized and cannot be described as bribery.²⁸

African demands for better trading facilities started in 1930 and continued throughout the 1940s and 1950s. In an attempt to make their position better, the Luo of Nyanza formed the Nyanza Native Chamber of Commerce (Buch Ohala) with branches in both Central and South Nyanza Districts. It had local representatives in Kasipul and Kabondo. In 1946 leaders of the Chamber held meetings in various trading centres in South Nyanza, reportedly, with the main object of replacing Asian middlemen with local African traders.²⁹ It was as a result of pressure by the Chamber that Trade Committees were formed by the local administration in 1947, with representatives from each of the major markets. The function of the Committees was to advise the administration on matters related to trade and transport licensing.³⁰ In the 1950s the administration responded positively to local pressure and attempted to encourage local traders in retail and transport business.

In 1954 the South Nyanza Joint Board was established to advance loans to African Traders. But the local traders were never able to challenge the superior position of Indian middlemen. This was because of a number of reasons. First, so many African traders were granted retail licences that

when they flocked into the few trading centres they were not individually able to make good profit. Most shops were not adequately stocked as consumer demand was also low. These limited traders' turnover. Second, transport costs from wholesale shops in Kisii and Kisumu to the rural trading centres which had poor transport access were prohibitively high. Third, local traders lacked finance as they were denied credit facilities by banks on account of the fact that they lacked collateral security. The South Nyanza Joint Board had limited funds and only loaned up to 1,000 shillings to very few people. These problems were compounded by a fourth factor - the fact that most local traders, being late entrants in business, lacked the necessary commercial experience, having in the past been denied trading opportunities on equal terms with Indians. Some of those who were given licences and granted loans by the Joint Board, used the borrowed capital to marry more wives, a form of social accumulation.

The Development of 'Entrepreneurship':

Case Studies.

As a method studying economic change the study of entrepreneurship is concerned with how people struggle for survival and how in the course of this certain individuals acquire positions of

economic power. It also 'shows how sets of relations deriving from different modes of production and from different institutional contexts can be combined for entrepreneurial profit.'³¹

For our purposes here we define entrepreneurship as control of, and utilization of capital and organizational (decision-making) skills with the ultimate aim ^{of} economic expansion. Economic expansion in turn may be primarily aimed at subsistence or capital accumulation, or both. The person who is engaged in entrepreneurial activities may be a capitalist or simply a subsistence trader.³²

The following case studies³³ represent various forms of entrepreneurship, types of entrepreneurs and the years during which they operated.

1. Okech Mwanja 'Rachumbi'

Born in the last years of the nineteenth century and orphaned during his youth, Okech Mwanja initially lived with his uncles for whom he herded cattle. He later left his home in Kodumo clan, Kabondo, to live with his sister who had been married in Kabodho, Nyakach. He herded cattle for her, also helping in domestic work. The cattle which were paid for his sister's dowry had been appropriated by his

uncles. It was while he was staying with his sister that he met one, Oliech Ogola who was already trading in eggs which he took to Kisumu to barter with Indians for salt. Through Oliech's influence Okech soon joined the trade. Okech started by selling a hen he had been given by his sister. He accompanied Oliech to Kisumu where he bought salt. He went back home and exchanged the salt for eggs which he took to Kisumu and got more salt. He did this a few more times travelling also to Fatana, Kericho and Lumbwa. In time he accumulated some capital and bought sheep which he later exchanged for cows. Later he went back to his Kodumo sub-clan and continued with the trade, still travelling to distant places, bartering eggs for salt which he peddled locally to get more eggs from Women, hence his nickname 'Rachumbi'. It was from the proceeds of this trade that Okech accumulated 25 heads of cattle which he paid for the dowry of his only wife in 1920. Even as a married man with a family he continued with the trade until 1946 when his eldest son started work in a Tea Estate in Kericho. He also paid part of the dowry for his son's marriage in 1948.

2. Nelson Gaga.

Gaga comes from Kombok in the Kakangutu sub-

clan, Kabondo, reknowned for iron-making and other crafts like basketry and pottery. Born about 1915 he was apprenticed, by an iron-smith from his village. After he had become proficient in the craft he acquired his own bellow, harmer and anvil and made a kiln. In his industry, Gaga worked with his own apprentices. He made such articles like bracelets, matchets, spears and hoes and mended ploughs and old domestic utensils, using scrap metal from old hoes, ploughs and utensils which he either brought or got from those who brought their articles to be mended. He studied original parts of imported ploughs to make spare parts which fitted. He bartered his merchandise for grain, sheep and goats or charged money. In this way he accumulated a large number of livestock which he used to pay dowry for three wives and buy a plough for he also engaged in crop cultivation. He also paid tax and school fees for his children. When he went out to work for wages in the late 1930s and was paid 6/= a month he only stayed there for three months and came back to proceed with his craft which he realized paid him more.

3. Jabedo Adenyo

Jabedo initially worked for Indian traders at Oyugis and Kendu Bay. He was recruited into the

Carrier Corps in 1914. After the war he went to work near Thika as headboy in a farm owned by a European between the 1920s and 1930s. As headboy he was allowed to own a retail shop within the precincts of the farm. He bought an ox-cart with which he transported sugar and timber to stock his shop. He bought a motor cycle, a rifle and another ox-cart. When he retired from work in the 1930s he had already accumulated enough capital to establish a retail shop and operate transport business, using mainly ox-drawn carts, back home in Kodumo, Kabondo. He bought local produce which he transported to Indian shops in Kachapa and Oyugis. Later, around 1937, he migrated to East Kodumo where he continued with his retail and transport business and trade in local produce. He transported bala (a type of local salt) from the lake region to the Gusii country in places like Ikonge where he bartered his merchandise for finger millet and maize. He sold these to Indian traders and accumulated more capital which he used to stock his retail shop at Sondu, buy cattle and a plough. He acquired a large tract of land, using his rifle to threaten away the Gusii who lived near Chabere. He settled some Nyakach immigrants on part of this land and established a form of patron-client relationship with them. His wives brewed local beer which they

sold to those who went to Sondu market. He built houses which were rented by labour recruiters from Kericho Tea Estates. The local administration soon knew him and the Provincial Commissioner, K.L. Hunter (formerly D.C. Kisii) became his personal friend. He was given a contract to transport material for the building of a Police Station at Sondu for which he was handsomely paid. In 1938 he was made a member of the Sondu Market Tribunal and later also a member of the African Tribunal Court at Kosele. He became a man of high social status because of his wealth and influence. 'When one saw Jabedo one saw a European', says an informant.

4. Elisha Nyanginja Oguok

Nyanginja first went to the African Inland Mission in Nyakach in the early 1920s, and later, the Seventh Day Adventist school at Apondo, in Kojwach sub location, Kasipul. In the mission schools he was taught the virtues of hard work which greatly influenced him. After knowing how to read and write, he left school and started to trade in cattle and hides, having taken one of his father's cows as his initial capital. He travelled to Rangwe from where he bought heifers which he took to Ngege near Sondu and exchanged them for bulls brought to

the market by the Kipsigis. These, he again took to Rangwe where he got three heifers for each bull thereby making good profit. The Kipsigis preferred heifers to bulls because of their reproductiveness. Nyanginja used the proceeds from this trade to buy a plough in the mid 1920s, becoming one of the first people to own a plough in the area. He then commenced extensive cultivation, growing millet, groundnuts, finger millet and maize. He used both family and hired labour in his fields and sold surplus produce to local Indian traders. He also ploughed for other people who paid him either in kind or cash. He bought an ox-cart and started trade in salt from the lakeside and grain from the Gusii. He also established a water mill in which local people milled their grain paying him either in kind or cash. He did all these throughout the 1930s thereby accumulating more capital which he used to build a mabati stone house, buy a lorry and operate transport business and build a shop at Mikaye, being the first person to do all these things in Kasipul in the 1940s.

5. James Mbaka

Having attended a local mission school and became baptised in 1926, Mbaka from Kotieno, Kasipul

became a farmer and trader. He traded in cattle and hides having got initial capital from sales of his surplus maize, groundnuts and finger millet. He travelled on foot to Awendo, Migori and Mohuru to buy cattle cheaply. He took the cattle to Ngege, Ahero and Kiboswa in Central Nyanza where he sold them at a profit. Later in the 1940s he established a butchery at Rawinji near Oyugis trading centre. He bought cattle locally, bred them and later slaughtered them for sale. He dried hides from the cattle at the Local Native Council shed at Oyugis and sold them to Indian and Arab traders. He used proceeds from his business to buy a bicycle and a plough and to build shops at Oyugis when Africans were first allowed to establish business at Achuna in Oyugis. He never went out to work for wages.

6. Patroba Opere

Opere was educated at the Seventh Day Adventist School, Wire before becoming a teacher at a local school in the 1920s. He quit teaching in the early 1930s because it was not sufficiently paying. He then trained as a tailor at Oyugis trading centre and bought his own sewing machine. In 1940, together with others who possessed sewing machines, he made and sold clothes. Together, they initially made

clothes in their homes and later in the verandahs of Indian shops at Oyugis before building their own premises. Sometimes they would be loaned capital up to 600 shillings, or clothes worth the same amount by Indian traders for their business. After the sale of clothes they shared profits with the Indians. Opere used proceeds from the tailoring business to engage in other commercial ventures. He bought a plough and cultivated surplus produce for sale. He also bought a separator for the manufacture of ghee. And, together with Zephania Muma, Kileon Oga, Philemon Amolo and Dishon Wala, he entered into a business, having bought a second hand truck worth 3,000 shillings from an Indian transporter in 1947. Later in the 1950s Opere bought his own 4 lorries to transport maize, groundnuts and pots to local markets. The initial joint transport venture had collapsed after being operative only briefly. He remembers that transport business had a lot of problems, particularly from Indians who charged expensive for repairs and spare parts and who also stole parts which could not be easily replaced. He further remembers that Indian traders at Oyugis usually discouraged Africans from engaging in big business. "An Indian would say, 'will you manage, you empty headed black fellows? You do business with us: we

bring and you take.'" |

7. Doris Ombai

Formerly living in Agoro, Nyakach, Doris with her husband migrated to Kochieng in Kasipul in 1949. While in Nyakach Doris had learned how to brew Nubian Gin in the late 1940s. Apart from this she also made pots which she bartered for maize from the Kipsigis. While in Kasipul she continued with the brewing of Nubian Gin the bulk of which she sold to some shopkeepers at Mikaye at 3 shillings a bottle. The shopkeepers, in turn, sold the brew to lorry drivers and other customers at 5 shillings a bottle. Doris joined the Seventh Adventist Church in the mid 1950s and ceased to brew gin. She used the capital she had obtained from brewing to commence trade in cassava and groundnuts. She bought one sack of cassava and two sacks of groundnuts which she took and sold at Ahero at a profit. She used the proceeds to buy more sacks of both products and took them once again to Ahero. She did this many times, also growing some cassava and groundnut in her own shambas. From the proceeds of this trade she maintained her household and paid fees for her children's education. She felt bound to engage in trade, despite strong local opposition to women's trade in distant places,

because her husband who had another wife, cared very little about the family. Doris continued with her business throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

8. Anjilina Akelo

Anjilina was married in Kojwach, Kasipul in 1949. Her husband started work in the Tea Estates in Kericho almost the same time. She never lived with him at the work place. Remittances by her husband back home were not sufficient for the upkeep of their household whose members increased with the birth of more children. Anjilina grew potatoes along with maize and millet in their shamba. Maize and millet were mainly for domestic consumption. She cooked the potatoes and carried them to Miruka (Riochanda) market, about six or seven kilometers from home on Sundays. At the market she exchanged her merchandise for grain, mostly finger millet. The grain was directly measured in the basket in which she carried potatoes. At the end of the day she would carry a basketful of grain back home. She would then take the grain to the lakeside market at Nyakwere (Miriu) about 20 kilometers away, on Mondays, and sell it at about 5 or 6 shillings a basket. She would then use the money to buy household goods such as soap, paraffin and fish at a few

shillings each. She kept the balances which remained until they sufficed buying clothes and other necessities. She carried out this trade throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Her journeys were always on foot.

The following inferences can be made from the foregoing case studies. They attempt to answer the questions we asked at the beginning of this Chapter about the development of entrepreneurship in Kasipul and Kabondo. These are questions about the social origins of entrepreneurs, opportunities offered by the colonial economic system for entrepreneurship, sources of capital and how capital was used.

The majority of those who became 'entrepreneurs' in Kabondo and Kasipul during the colonial period were originally 'marginal' or less well-to-do members of society. Those were people who experienced economic disabilities either because their parents were very poor and so they had nothing to inherit or because they became orphans while still in their youth. Such people, represented here by Okech Mwanja, had every reason to apply themselves more vigorously than other relatively well-to-do people to whatever economic opportunities which presented themselves.

Also, it was mainly the 'marginal' or less well-to-do members of society who more readily left their homes for wage labour or went to mission schools. Some of those who had earlier been employed as wage labourers, like Jabedo Adenyo, later invested their earnings in business. Some types of wage labour exposed a number of people to the world of business.

Other people like Elisha Nyanginja Oguok and Patroba Opere who had been to mission schools became literate and acquired, among other Western values, the ethic of capitalism. These were very important prerequisites for entrepreneurship.

Only men engaged themselves in the types of business that entailed distant travels and absence from home for a few days. Women's trading activities were confined to subsistence marketing because they were traditionally expected and required to undertake greater domestic responsibilities than men. As it illustrated by the business activities of Doris Ombai and Anjilina Akelo, subsistence marketing was extremely crucial in the reproduction of individual families.

Entrepreneurship among indigenous people in Kasipul and Kabondo during the colonial period derived

some of its features from the pre-capitalist mode of production and others from capitalism. These were features relating to the forms of capital people acquired to start business, how they acquired them and what they were used for. During the pre-colonial period initial capital included iron hoes, grain and livestock. These were acquired through inheritance, borrowing or by one's own hard work. During the colonial period all these still existed and constituted capital inputs. They were acquired as before. But additional forms of capital were also introduced, consisting mostly of imported items. These included iron hoes, ploughs, ox-carts, bicycles, sewing machines, milk/ghee separators, lorries, etc. Savings from wage labour were also a form of capital imported capital goods were acquired either through the sale of agricultural and livestock products. Money which accrued from this transaction was then used to purchase imported items from Indian shops. Savings from wage labour were also used in the same way.

After their acquisition, both the pre-colonial and colonial forms of capital were used for further capital or social accumulation. As we have seen, pre-colonial forms of capital like surplus grain and livestock were bartered or sold to get more of

the same, or to buy imported goods. Possession of large quantities of grain and large numbers of cattle were also a form of social accumulation because they raised one's status. Similarly, possession of imported goods was capital investment since they made production, and therefore, further accumulation of wealth, easier. But it was also a form of social accumulation since, in itself, it enhanced ones social status.

The fact that indigenous entrepreneurship derived its features from both pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production can be explained by how the two modes were articulated with one another. As we argued in the introductory chapter the process of capitalist articulation with pre-capitalist modes of production entailed only partial dissolution and restructuring of the latter mode a number of whose features still survived. Our case studies here illustrate that during the colonial period, the people of Kasipul and Kabondo like others elsewhere in Kenya, responded to colonialism by combining what still survived in the pre-capitalist mode of production and what colonialism offered for economic survival and entrepreneurial profit.

Paradoxically, colonialism also imposed

limitations on indigenous people's business activities thereby making them small-scale in capital investments and output. The reasons for this are to be found in the political economy of colonialism. In relation to trade, the colonial state was generally opposed to the participation of indigenous people in large-scale business. This led to the formulation of market and business regulations which favoured expatriate communities and firms and discriminated against Africans. Apart from this Africans did not have access to substantial capital which was necessary for the establishment of large-scale business.

Throughout the colonial period in Kasipul and Kabondo we find that the businessmen engaged themselves in two or more economic activities at once and relying basically on family labour and limited capital. Such economic activities as is illustrated by the case of Elisha Nyanginja Oguok, would include grain production, livestock keeping, trade in grain and livestock, operating a water mill, and transport business. This diversification of business was aimed at spreading risks to avoid losses and failure.

Impact of the Extension of the Market

At the beginning of this Chapter we emphasised

family labour. Individuals sold their labour power outside the area for wages. More indirectly, the products of labour on the one hand, and land, on the other, were valued in market or monetary terms. This subsumed labour under capital. It also commercialized land although land had not become a commodity that was directly bought and sold.

Furthermore, the extension of the market provided the local people new forms of capital and opportunities, for acquiring and using them for economic expansion. Despite the limitations imposed by colonial market regulations to the extent to which indigenous people engaged in trade, a number of people seized the opportunities and used them for entrepreneurial profit. This led to social and economic differentiation in Kasipul and Kabondo.

Conclusion

In this Chapter we have analysed the establishment and extension of transport and market systems, the centralization of government control over markets and trade and finally the forms and consequences of rural capital accumulation. We have argued that contrary to common assumption, the transport and market systems did not bring about economic develop-

ment in Kasipul and Kabondo. The transport system did not adequately integrate the local economy with the rest of the district and the country while the market system operated mainly in the interest of local Indian traders and foreign import and export firms. Local people constituted the lowest link in the chain of the market system and engaged themselves in a simple small-scale form of merchant capitalism which ultimately led to socio-economic differentiation in the area.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. 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-Kitaro', in Ogot, B.A. (ed.) Hadith 5. Economic and Social History of East Africa, East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1975 pp. 24-65.
2. The study of entrepreneurshship as an approach to the analysis of economic change has been strongly recommended by Norman Long in his, An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural Development, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1977, pp. 105-143. This approach has also been fruitfully used by Polly Hill in her study of economic change in West Africa in her book, Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa, Cambridge University Press, 1970.
3. See Brett, E.A. Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa, The Politics of Economic Change 1919 - 1939, Heinemann, London, Nairobi, 1973 p. 201, Brown, L.H.; Agricultural Change in Kenya, 1945-1960, Food Research Institute, Stanford, 1968, p. 66.
4. South Kavirondo Annual Reports 1911-1920.
5. Political Record Book 1930-1940 DC/KSI/3/5.
6. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1926.

7. Letter by Senior Agricultural Officer, Nyanza Province to Director of Agriculture, Nairobi 23-2-1946, Market and Marketing of Native Produce 1946-1951 PC/NZA/3/28/29 and South Kavirondo Annual Reports 1945-1947.
8. Letter from P.C. Nyanza to the Director of Agriculture on Transport Organization for the Marketing of Produce in South Kavirondo, 9th March 1946, Markets and Marketing of Native Produce 1946-1951 PC/NZA/3/28/29.
9. South Nyanza District Annual Report 1950.
10. Quoted in Ocharo, A.O. 'The Role of Rural Transport Systems in Agricultural Development: A Case Study of South Nyanza District, Kenya, M.A. Thesis, University of Nairobi, June 1977 p. 6.
11. South Kavirondo Quarterly Reports 1910-1912.
12. South Kavirondo Annual Report 1915/16.
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14. Ibid.
15. Markets and Marketing of Native Produce 1937-45, File number PC/NZA/3/28/30.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., and also The Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance 1935, Rules in Trade and Commerce. Markets and Market Rules 1935-1945, PC/NZA/3/28/31.
21. South Nyanza District Market Rules 2nd July 1946, Marketing Rules 1946-1951, PC/NZA/3/28/32.
22. Quoted in Van Zwanenberg, R.M.A., Economic History of Kenya and Uganda op.cit. p. 213.
23. Letter by K.L. Hunter, D.C. South Kavirondo to P.C. Nyanza Province dated 3rd November 1937, Markets and Marketing of Native Produce PC/NZA/3/28/30.
24. Letter by Senior Agricultural Officer, Nyanza Province to DC South Kavirondo, dated 8th November 1937, ibid.
25. Marketing of Native Produce Ordinance, Siting of Markets in Nyanza, Native Markets Ordinance 1938-1940 PC/NZA/3/28/58.
26. Ibid.
27. Safari Diary, K.L. Hunter, 15th-17th September 1937, Safari Diary, 1935-1938, PC/NZA/3/1/39.
28. Letter from DC South Kavirondo to P.C. Kisumu

dated 3rd December 1946, Markets and Marketing of Native Produce 1946-1951 PC/NZA/3/28/29.

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Long, N. An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural Development op.cit. p. 104.

See the definition of Capitalist given by Stephen Hymer 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.

Excepting the stories about Okech Mwanja, Jabedo Adenyo and Elisha Nyanginja Oguok, all the case studies have been prepared from oral interview with the people themselves. Information about the people named above, the first two of whom are now dead, was given by respondents who knew them.

Although Per Kongstad and Mette Monsted have 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. 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, pp 77-99 and 172-177.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters we have discussed changes which took place in the economy of Kasipul and Kabondo in the nineteenth century and during the colonial period. We have used as, our key concepts, modes of production and articulation, to argue that economic change was brought about by changes in forces and relations of production before and during the colonial period; colonial administration played a primary role in the incorporation of the indigenous economy into the colonial and world capitalist system; the colonial economy disturbed, partially destroyed and then restructured local production and exchange through commodity production, wage labour and trade; and finally, the colonial economic system led to socio-economic differentiation among the local peasantry.

The transformation of the economy of Kasipul and Kabondo in the nineteenth century has been discussed in terms of the influences of the environment on the peoples migrations and settlement of the area and their development of a mixed agricultural and pastoral economy. Other economic activities included hunting and gathering, crafts and industry

and trade. Production was constrained by simple technology, low population, limited market, and uncertainties brought about by drought and animal and plant diseases. Production was, therefore, mainly for subsistence. There was some surplus produce which was exchanged for industrial products such as iron hoes and also cattle. It was at the level of exchange that people accumulated wealth in the form of wives, stores of grain and cattle. The basis of economic organization was the kinship system, which, together with the principles of seniority and territoriality operated at the the level of domestic units within individual families, and at the level of minimal and maximal lineages. These determined the allocation and ownership of land, organization of labour, and the distribution of products. We can therefore, speak of a lineage mode of production as having evolved by the end of the nineteenth century as the dominant mode.

In the course of the nineteenth century the major economic change in Kasipul and Kabondo was the increasing dominance of agricultural production over livestock keeping. This was brought about by peoples settlement in an area which had higher rainfall and better soils than the one they had previously occupied near the lake in Karachuonyo. As the new

settlement became more permanent and as the population increased, the people improved their technology through the manufacture and importation of iron hoes. This, together with the fact that they occupied a middleman position between the Abagusii who were predominantly agricultural, and the Luo of the drier areas of Karachuonyo, led to the production of greater surpluses of grain and other manufactures, for trade.

Economic changes which took place in the twentieth century were the result of the incorporation of Kasipul and Kabondo into the capitalist economy by the colonial state. This event brought about new stresses and opportunities to which people continued to respond as they had always done in the nineteenth century, though in changed circumstances. The colonial political structure was a system of control whose primary purpose was to ensure the security of the colonial state for its organisation of the people for participation in the colonial economy and its supervision of the transfer of surplus to the metropole. Colonial institutions such as chiefs, local councils and the system of taxation were the major instruments in this exercise. A new situation was created whereby people's economic activities were no longer under-

taken independently but in line with the needs of the colonial state which represented the interests of metropolitan industrial and merchant capital, local European settlers and expatriate traders. Consequently, to serve these interests and to get revenue the colonial state compelled local people to engage themselves in the production of primary commodities and wage labour. It also established a network of roads and markets to facilitate the transfer of local surplus produce.

The world capitalist system possessed a different internal logic from that of the local lineage mode of production with which it was articulated. Having its centre in the metropole the former had evolved more developed instruments of production in the form of capital goods and relations of production which was mainly based on profit making. The owners of capital of goods and technology sold for profit. The latter consisted of lineage members who owned land collectively and produced primarily for subsistence. Within the two modes of production wealth was accumulated differently. During the colonial period, Britain which was at the core of the capitalist system transformed colonial areas into its periphery. In Kasipul and Kabondo, as elsewhere in Kenya, this transformation was done

through the partial destruction and restructuration of the lineage mode of production to serve metropolitan needs. Thus in commodity production, the colonial state encouraged, mainly through compulsion, the local production of greater surpluses of traditional crops such as millet, simsim, and finger millet, and also of those it officially sponsored like maize, groundnuts, cotton and coffee. It also encouraged the extraction of livestock products like hides and skins and ghee. In crop production new seeds were distributed and new implements like iron hoes and ploughs were imported and sold locally. In livestock production, flaying knives and ghee separators were similarly imported. Hide drying sheds for the production of high quality hides were established. These innovations led to quantitative changes in production as the people now produced greater quantities of surplus grain and livestock products. There was very little qualitative change in production as agriculture and livestock keeping continued to be organised on 'traditional' methods. Agricultural and Veterinary services were confined to settler areas. There was no need for the capitalization of local production through technical and organizational improvement of production so long as people produced sufficient quantities of commodities

required by the capitalist world. Prices for commodities and wages for labour which was requisitioned by force, were kept low as the costs of the reproduction of both the producers and wage labourers were transferred to those aspects of the lineage economy which remained intact. This arrangement was economically and politically convenient for the colonial state but it precluded local economic development.

Agricultural and commercial development was, further, hindered by poor transport and marketing systems. Although the establishment of roads and the introduction of donkeys, ox-carts, bicycles and lorries transformed the local system of transport and provided a link between the area and the rest of the world, poor transport remained a problem in Kasipul and Kabondo throughout the colonial period, and continues to ^{remain} so today. In trade there developed a market system which was poorly organized. It was centrally controlled by the colonial state and the local people occupied the lowest link in the chain, only permitted to engage in small-scale businesses.

Although the local people's responses to and participation in the colonial economy were undertaken

within the limitations imposed by the colonial situation, they played a significant role in determining the transformation of the local economy.

Their engagement in the economy was influenced by the pre-existing forms of production and production relations and, also, the new obligations and needs created and imposed on them by the colonial situation. Peoples entry into commodity production, wage labour and trade did not result in the transformation of the entire fabric of the pre-colonial society.

They produced for cash to pay taxes and buy other requirements for reproduction, but they also continued to produce to meet their subsistence needs.

Land continued to be owned on the basis of kinship although this ideology increasingly became confined to the family. Family labour continued to be used in production although a few rich people subsidised family with hired labour. As people had access to land those who were engaged in wage labour did not become a fully fledged proletarian class.

In trade, pre-colonial forms of accumulation, i.e. exchange of grain for livestock, etc. co-existed alongside new forms. This is not to deny the fact that in production, reproduction and exchange capitalism had penetrated individual house-

holds. Differential responses to and participation, in the colonial economy led to socio-economic differentiation among the local peasantry. The local economy which emerged during the colonial period was underdeveloped.

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Johannes Nyambori, Atela	15/1/86
Samuel Oondo Adenyo, Chabera	16/1/86
Musa Odanga Aluko, Kolwa	17/1/86
Elekia Muga, Othoro	20/1/86
Aroko Awich, Anjech	21/1/86
Musa Orinda, Anjech	21/1/86
Simeon Mwagi Aroko, Mirani	22/1/86

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Incka Ongidi, Osuri	7/11/85
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