SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY & POLITICAL STUDIES

TRANSFORMATION OF CATTLE RUSTLING IN WEST POKOT COUNTY, KENYA 1895-2000

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JULY 2018
DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Eva Chepyatich and my sons Melvin Rutto and Daniel Poriot, for allowing me to take a lot of time away from them in order to concentrate on the thesis. Also withstanding difficult financial times during the entire period of study.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to my supervisors, Prof. H.A. Mwanzi and Dr. Pius W. Kakai for their professionalism, patience and mature guidance that I received from them. Their comments and corrections were a big push in shaping this thesis in the right direction. May God reward you abundantly.

I am deeply grateful to my wife Eva Chepyatich and children: Melvin Rutto and Daniel Poriot for withstanding the difficult financial times during my studies and also for not spending quality time with them. I am also thankful to my brothers and sisters Shadrack, David, Amos, Leah and Irene for support and encouragement. Lastly, my dear parents Vincent Lomoywara and Eliza Lomoywara for their continuous moral support throughout this journey.
This study focused on the transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County, Kenya in the period 1895-2000. The study aimed at identifying the main causes of cattle rustling in West Pokot County prior to 1895, establish the impact of cattle rustling on the people’s livelihoods in West Pokot County over time, discussing the weapons used in cattle rustling in West Pokot County, to establish means of ensuring people in West Pokot County did not keep arms and suggesting ways of managing cattle rustling in west Pokot County. In carrying out this study, attempts were made to test the following premises: There were many causes of cattle rustling in West Pokot County, Cattle rustling impacted on the livelihoods of people in West Pokot County, the type of weapons used in cattle rustling were changing over time, peace could be restored through awareness and conflict prevention. The study used both primary and secondary method of data collection. Primary methods included interviews and review of archival sources. Secondary data was collected from books, newspapers, reports, journals, magazines and research papers in order to get detailed information on the history of cattle rustling in West Pokot County. The theory used in this study was Cultural-Ecological Theory. Key findings included commercialization of conflict, joint raids, use of modern technology on raids, introduction of new actors to the conflict, seasons for cattle raids changed from time to time and displacement of population by cattle rustling. The study came up with recommendations on how to manage cattle rustling. They included establishing a fund to cushion pastoralists against harsh climatic conditions, mapping of entry and exit points of small arms and light weapons, initiating alternative sources of livelihoods, provision of security by the state and provision of universal education.
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<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>AADAR</td>
<td>African Affairs Department Annual Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>APFO</td>
<td>Africa Peace Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBR</td>
<td>Centre for Basic Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCF</td>
<td>Christian Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>Century</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEWARN</td>
<td>Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEWERU</td>
<td>Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJPC</td>
<td>Catholic Justice and Peace Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;PKAR</td>
<td>Colony and Protectorate of Kenya Annual Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPC</td>
<td>District Peace Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>Horn of Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP’s</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDS</td>
<td>Institute of Development Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Authority on Development</td>
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<td>ITDG</td>
<td>Intermediate Technology Development Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>KMC</td>
<td>Kenya Meat Commission</td>
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<td>KPR</td>
<td>Kenya Police Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDU</td>
<td>Local Defence Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>NADAR</td>
<td>Native Affairs Department Annual Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCK</td>
<td>National Council of Churches of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>POKATUSA</td>
<td>Pokot Karamoja Turkana Samburu Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QPM</td>
<td>Quarterly Peace Monitor</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALW</td>
<td>Small Arms and Light Weapons</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPDF</td>
<td>Uganda People’s Defence Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission on Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNPOA</td>
<td>United Nations Program of Action</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for Development</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WPDAR</td>
<td>West Pokot District Annual Report</td>
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<td>WVI</td>
<td>World Vision International</td>
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<td>WSDAR</td>
<td>West Suk District Annual Report</td>
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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

For purpose of this study the following were employed.

**Cattle rustling and raiding**- Are used interchangeably to refer to armed attacks by one group on another with the purpose of stealing livestock and not necessarily territorial expansion.

**Conflict management**- Activities undertaken with the main objective to prevent the vertical or horizontal escalation of violence.

**Closed District**- The buffer zone between Pokot and Whitehighlands during colonial regime.

**Light Weapons**- These are highly explosive weapons operated by a crew

**Pastoralism**- A source of livelihoods.

**Small Arms**- These are weapons designed for individual use.

**State**- A corporate group that has compulsory jurisdiction, exercises continuous organization, and claims monopoly of force over a territory and its population including all actions taking place in the area of jurisdiction.
# KEY POKOT WORDS

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<tr>
<th>Pokot Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Asis</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning the sun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baraza</td>
<td>Kiswahili word meaning public meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tororot</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamas</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kew</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning arid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokwo</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning council of elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosop</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning highland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngoroko</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning Warriors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilat</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning thunder and lightening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorsho</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning cattle raids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sapanu</td>
<td>A ceremony where a young man graduate to be an elder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifta</td>
<td>Somali word meaning bandits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tow</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning lowland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Werkoyon</td>
<td>Pokot word meaning a prophet</td>
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1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Violent conflicts involving pastoralists became widespread and increasingly severe throughout much of the Horn of Africa (HOA). The HOA contained the largest population of pastoralists in the world. Pastoralist communities in the region are nomadic, live primarily in arid or semi-arid areas, and depend for their livelihood on livestock; cattle, sheep, goats and camels. They relied on access to water and pasture land. Such resources were scarce and under increasing pressure. Persistent conflicts contributed to regional insecurity, stalling development. Governments in the HOA attempted to deal with the problem, initiating peace and disarmament campaigns, so that warriors who normally engaged in cattle rustling were encouraged to give up arms in exchange for money to start more peaceful income-generating activities.

Conflicts in the North rift region of Kenya were thought to be part and parcel of a pastoral culture and livelihood of resident communities. More so conflicts between Pokot and neighbouring communities were deemed to be resource based resulting from competition over pasture and water. Cattle rustling is the act of forceful raiding of livestock from one community by another using guns and leaving behind destruction of property and loss of lives. This concept should be understood alongside cattle raids which involve stealing livestock from one community by another without destroying property or killing people. It was therefore important to understand transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County in order to provide a clear picture of the current status of cattle rustling conflict and its effects to the residents.
West Pokot County is mainly inhabited by pastoralist communities. The county is divided into two areas; those inhabited by nomadic pastoralists and those inhabited by agro-pastoralists. During colonial period Pokot rustlers raided neighbouring communities. But during post-colonial period the trend changed making Pokot pastoralists raid Pokot agro-pastoralists in the same county. Pastoralists are some of the marginalized people in Kenya. Often they have less bargaining power over the changes impacting on their lives. People in this region derived their livelihoods from natural resources, pasture, water, vegetation and livestock. However, reduced access to these resources, in particular land and water, had in the last few years put them under intense pressure thereby compelling them to fight for their survival. (Omosa, 2005:1-12). Cattle rustling was mainly carried out by ngoroko (Pokot warriors) within the county and outside. Within the county included nomadic pastoralists and agro-pastoralists and outside comprised Pokot and other communities like Turkana, Karimojong and Marakwet.

Despite the presence of government security agents the cases of cattle rustling both reported and unreported have been growing in West Pokot county. The government carried out both voluntary and forceful disarmament programmes targeting illicit arms in the county yet cases of cattle rustling are still prevalent. Unless conflicts were managed properly, development and pastoral livelihoods would continue to diminish. Conflicts affected development and provision of essential services in this area through interference of the community's livelihood systems by restricting access to natural resources and marketing systems. Accessing pastoral communities had been hard due to their remoteness and infrastructure. There was unsustainable utilization of natural resources as livestock were concentrated in secure areas resulting in environmental
degradation whereas well watered areas with good pasture was avoided due to insecurity.

During the pre-colonial period cattle rustling was for reciprocal raids for restocking, payment of dowry and building of herds, but during colonial and post colonial period the practice has mutated to become commercialized, instead of a once thriving pastoral economy as a source of livelihoods. This transformation has for example been amplified by the use of small arms, unmitigated murders and use of mobile telephony, a phenomenon hitherto not experienced before. Therefore the need for a study on the transformation of cattle rustling to establish the establish causes, impacts and current status of the conflict.

1.2. Statement of the problem

In spite the abundance of documentary material on the historiography of Kalenjin there are gaps on the history of the Pokot and by extension transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County. Studies have dealt with larger groups like Kipsigis, Nandi, Marakwet and Tugen. It therefore provides an opportunity for a scholarly investigation with new epistemological focus for purposes of generating useful knowledge on the historiography of Pokot community and about the present status of cattle rustling in the county.

Hence this study examined transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000, probing why with all these efforts many cases of cattle rustling were still being reported in West Pokot County. This study provided answers to the following questions: What were the main causes of cattle rustling in West Pokot County? How had cattle rustling impacted on the socio-economic development in West Pokot
County over time? What were the weapons used in cattle rustling in West Pokot County? How had cattle rustling transformed in West Pokot County since 1895? What could be done to control this practice?

1.3. Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study was to examine transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study included the following:

a) To examine the main reasons for cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000

b) To assess the impact of cattle rustling on the people’s livelihoods in West Pokot County over time

c) To discuss the weapons used in cattle rustling in West Pokot county between 1895 and 2000

d) To suggest ways of managing cattle rustling in West Pokot County.

1.4. Research Premises

In carrying out this research, attempts were made to test the following premises:

a) There were many causes of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000

b) Cattle rustling impacted on the livelihoods of people in West Pokot County over time
c) The type of weapons used in cattle rustling were changing over time between 1985 and 2000.

d) There were various ways of managing cattle rustling in West Pokot County.

1.5. Justification and Significance

Conflicts sprung up in Africa in the last three decades, and pastoral areas were among the most vulnerable. Conflict was widespread in the arid and semi-arid zones of Kenya especially West Pokot County, and often overlaped with extreme food insecurity. Many local civil society organizations had programmes to manage conflict, and international Non-Governmental Organizations, intergovernmental organizations and donors were increasingly pre-occupied with understanding conflict and experimenting with solutions. Thus, there was an urgent need to investigate the causes of perennial pastoral conflict for purposes of generating useful knowledge about the present status of pastoral conflict in the County and draw lessons from experience of conflict mediation and management.

The existence of widespread conflict was a major hindrance to effective development in West Pokot County. It interfered with normal trade and local development efforts, and greatly reduced the willingness of government officials and NGO staff to work in the affected areas. It was only after such qualitative distinctions were discerned that objectivity and not emotionalism could be applied in the understanding of the phenomena of conflicts in West Pokot. Findings from the study may be used to inform policy and bring out basis for working out appropriate interventions for peace building and conflict management in the county. 1895 was the year when Kenya was declared East Africa Protectorate. The year 2000 marked the time Kenyan
government extensively conducted disarmament in pastoralists’ communities including West Pokot County.

1.6. Scope and Limitations

The study was targeted at pastoralists in West Pokot County. Three divisions were purposefully picked which included Kacheliba, Turkwel and Chesegon divisions. The main issue of focus was to investigate the transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County at the household and community levels. Due to poor infrastructure and general insecurity, the study areas were limited to the above three divisions in the county. The study focused on 1895-2000 period in order to cover pre-colonial period, colonial period and post-colonial period. This long span enabled the research to capture the history and impact of cattle rustling and how it was addressed during this period.

The researcher employed two research assistants instead of the required three. The sampled areas were far apart; the two research assistants were forced to cover the remaining areas. Pastoralists moved from place to place in search of water and pasture; it was hard to get respondents for a focused group discussion. Therefore, the study relied on purposive sampling and snowballing approach to interview key informants and administer questionnaires instead of the earlier intended focus group discussions.
1.7. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1.7.1 Review of Related Literature

This study used selected literature to explain issues of conflict in Africa, East Africa, Kenya and specific reference was made on literature on the origin and impacts of cattle rustling in West Pokot County. The study referred from the works of the following scholars; Anderson, Awuondo, Gartrell, Hennings, Herskovits, Hutchinson, Lonsdale, Martin and O’Meara, Markakis, Mburu, Mkutu and Eaton, Salih, Scheffran and Opiyo, Sandbrook and Tignor,

The origin of the Cattle Complex theory is traced to Herskovits, who coined the term while pioneering culture area studies within Africa in 1926. Herskovits found many East African pastoralists to be adhering to what he called “The Cattle Complex”, in which a strong attachment to cattle to the point of irrationality is maintained. While pastoralism had been the predominant economic force in Kenya before the colonialists arrived in the 1880s, droughts, diseases and a harsh policy favouring sedentary agriculture, resulted in a massive decline of the pastoral livelihood over the years. The destructive results were exacerbated by the fact that during the colonial era, large tracts of formerly important grazing areas were set aside for white settlers and national parks and reserves. Logically this resulted in an increased pressure on remaining pastures. The colonial administrations aspiring pacification of their newly acquired territories, first imposed territorial boundaries to confine the movement of animals and people, something that is almost impracticable in a mobile pastoral society. In later years policy aimed at land conservation through destocking inspired
by the idea that pastoralists irrationally over-emphasized the cultural importance of their cattle (Herskovits, 1926:22).

Hennings (1956:22) in his book, Africa Morning, discusses his experiences among the Keiyo while a colonial administrator in the 1930s. Hennings, presented a picture of a self-reliant people who were determined to preserve their cultural institutions but also eager to adapt to new changes brought in by the colonial administration. Henning's preoccupation was with Keiyo reaction to the building of the road from Kabarnet to Tambach in the 1930s. He is also shown as being very interested in curbing cattle rustling which saw him travelling long distances to caution the people particularly the Keiyo and Tugen. The book, however, suffered from generalisations and stereotypes, partly because of its autobiographical and anthropological nature. The book therefore lacked any substantive information on the Keiyo colonial history. However, it was very helpful in appreciating the methods used by the colonial administration in subjugating the Pokot under their rule.

Tignor (1976:7) explored the impact of colonial rule on three Kenyan societies, the Kamba, Kikuyu and Maasai. His interest was to examine how African lives were affected by the colonial system. He examined aspects of change and continuity. According to Tignor, the colonial system was a set of unequal relationships. Africans served as underpaid unskilled labourers, and as subordinate clerks, teachers and chiefs. The rural folks suffered forced destocking in the name of maintaining an ecological equilibrium. Tignor poses the key question which is relevant to this study, on whether colonial rule in Kenya was modernizing for the Africans or a hindrance to modernizing change.
Sandbrook, (1980:77) citing Weber defines a state as a corporate group that has compulsory jurisdiction, exercises continuous organization, and claims a monopoly of force over a territory and its population including all actions taking place in the area of jurisdiction. Weber’s definition contradicts Marxist philosophy which emphasizes that the state serves the interests of a few members of the population. Kenyan government inherited a colonial legacy on social classes where the rich control social, political and economic institutions at the expense of the poor.

Ecological factors were the root cause of conflicts in West Pokot County as opposed to political marginalization. He argues that during dry season there many cases of cattle raids but during harvest few cases are reported (Gartrell 1988:19). These views were supported in technocratic literature and this became paradigmatic in development/humanitarian accounts of the region (Oloka-Onyango et al.:1993; Knaute & Kagan: 2009; Meier et al.:2007; Stites, Akabwai, et al.:2007 and Stites, Mazurana, et al.:2007, Akabwai & Ateyo: 2007). These were similar to the conflict literature but emphasized on ecological loss, alongside other factors, particularly the breakdown of social order; though it is not clear from their accounts what kind of order they had in mind whether in reconstructing that which pre-existed the breakdown or creating it anew.

The root cause of social-economic problems among the Turkana could be traced to the disruptive and inimical policies of the colonial government in their attempt to pacify the Turkana. Turkana in their response build up a strong armed resistance and continued to defy the colonialists between 1895 and 1925. By 1900, they had evolved an effective system for the mobilization of young men into well-drilled corporate
units. This enabled them resist the imposition of colonial hegemony over them for the next 25 years. Their initiations were partly linked to livestock raiding activities as the new initiates wanted to prove their prowess and bravery (Awuondo 1992:44).

Awuondo further observes that for Turkana to counteract British raids, they had to in turn raid their neighbours in order to restock their herds. Turkana had been subdued and consequently pauperized through various government policies and actions. This study was informed by the work of Awuondo because it explains the main source of small arms and light weapons which dates back to pre-colonial period.

The pastoralists accumulated and maintained as much wealth as possible in form of livestock as a reserve during harsh and unpredictable weather conditions. Most pastoralists live in arid and semi-arid areas and most of them have adopted strategies for coping with the environmental stress which include raiding to restock lost livestock during droughts. This study was informed by the works of Salih because he explains how unpredictable weather conditions contribute to cattle rustling (Salih 1992:27).

Lonsdale, (1992:25) argues that World War II crucial processes of change began to accelerate in Kenya. First with the war the settler dominated monetary economy began a process of rapid and sustained growth. The growth of this sector had been moderate during the inter-war decades and had suffered serious setbacks during the depression of 1920s and 1930s. But there was a rapid growth in 1940 and 1960. Rapid growth in the colony both increased the rate of mobilization of Africans into monetary economy. Lonsdale emphasized on monetary economy as a source of conflict but he
did not relate it to socio-cultural and political causes of conflict. This study therefore filled the gap in literature by discussing socio-cultural and political causes of conflict.

The problems of the Sahel and the Horn of Africa are not a matter of climate alone. People and governments must bear a fair share of the burden of responsibility, through ill-advanced agricultural policies, inappropriate farming and animal-husbandry practices, overgrazing and increased soil erosion and destruction of indigenous agricultural systems that had achieved a delicate ecological balance through generations. For example, in response to drought conditions which are forcing local pastoralists to extent their search upon lands cultivated by sedentary communities, the government of one Sahelian state undertook a project to employ modern technology to sink boreholes to provide water to pastoralists herd. The problem which arose was that the sites of the boreholes quickly became overcrowded as pastoralists converged on newly opened sources of water. This led to clashes that escalated to interethnic conflict. This observation was helpful in finding out what the government in the area of study had done to solve the problem of climatic conditions and inappropriate policies (Martin and O’Meara 1995:32).

It was noted that in northeast Africa and East Africa most pastoralist groups spoke related languages and shared many features of culture and social organizations. Most East African pastoralists kept cattle, sheep and goats. (Martin and O’Meara 1995:193). The Maasai were often held to be classic case of East African people who were strongly committed to their particular cultural tradition. They rejected agriculture despising both the activity and the people who practice it (Gulliver 1969:234-235). This clearly showed the conservative nature of the Maasai and this
applied to other pastoralists in the continent, East Africa and Kenya in particular. But there was a gap in the work Martin and O’Meara because they make a generalization that all pastoralists despise agricultural production without recognizing that there were also agro-pastoralists.

Hutchinson (1996:56) argues that Nuer were almost totally absorbed in the care, exchange and sacrifice of cattle. Few Nuer at the pre-colonial period understood the concept of currency, fewer still understood the impersonal principles of market exchange, and literally no one parted willingly with a cow for money. Wage labour activities were seen as slavery. Rather people were bound to their herds in an intimate symbiosis of survival. Whereas cattle depended on human beings for protection and care, people depended on cattle as an insurance against ecological hazards and a vital source of milk, meat, leather and dung. This study was informed by the work of Hutchinson because it highlighted transformation of cattle rustling from pre-colonial to post-colonial and the great attachment pastoralist have on livestock.

Some literature on conflict in Africa posits that political factors, competition over scarce resources and proliferation of small arms are the major causes of conflicts. A case study by Goldsmith P. (1997:20), pointed out that pastoral conflicts had increased dramatically especially in Northern Kenya. The rise was attributed to intensified competition over scarce resources. Krathi and Swift (1998.38) observed that conflicts had grown rapidly in Africa in the last three decades and pastoral areas were among the most vulnerable making conflicts widespread in the arid and semi-arid zones and often overlap with extreme food insecurity. This study was informed
by observations from Goldsmith, Krathi and Smith as they explain origin of cattle rustling in West Pokot County.

Anderson (1999:241) in the case studies in his collections argues that pastoralists in Eastern Africa have been under extraordinary stress due to a powerful cocktail of factors: loss of pasture to expanding farms and national parks; commoditization of livestock and land; livestock enclosures; drought; warfare; ill-advised development schemes; environmental degradation and overgrazing; population growth; a growing gap between rich and poor pastoralists; and the breakdown of traditional coping mechanisms. Reasonable people can disagree on which of these factors is most to blame, but all agree that pastoralism now constitutes an increasingly vulnerable and impoverished sector.

Local and external perceptions and misperceptions of pastoralists and poverty are the subject of The Poor Are Not Us, a collection of eleven essays written mainly from a historical and/or anthropological perspective. Inasmuch as edited volumes such as this can possess a common theme, the core theses of this collection can be summed up as follows: (1) the conventional view held by "developers," that pastoralism is a flawed and doomed mode of production, is wrong; (2) the crises pastoralists were experiencing have been mainly the result of externally imposed constraints, especially including flawed development policies, not the result of dysfunctional and/or conservative pastoral practices; (3) those flawed development policies are produced by misperceptions of pastoralists, ignorance of their culture, bias against nomadism and mistaken presumptions about pastoral poverty. The Poor Are Not Us more or less explicitly embraces the role of defender and advocate of "the cause of the herding peoples".
Mburu (2000:16) in his study on Ilemi Triangle argues that politics of space and boundaries are the main source of dispute. It began with colonial treaties and arbitrary boundaries; particularly those delineating the 1907 boundary between Ethiopia and British East Africa not only undervalued the centrality of water and pasture to herders but the vagueness of the treaty also opened an opportunity for resource conflicts in one clause which states: “The tribes occupying either side of the line shall have a right to use grazing grounds on the other side as in the past, but during their migrations it is understood that they shall be subject to jurisdiction of the territorial authority. Free access to the wells is equally accorded to the tribes occupying either side of the line”. On the other hand ‘open frontier’ implied by the above clause invited resource conflicts among pastoral people of the newly created national identities during their transhumance and epicyclical movement to dry-season pastures and water. On the other hand, if the corresponding authorities enforced a ‘closed frontier’, communities that had previously grazed freely before the boundary was drawn would not honour the exclusion. This study was informed by the work of Mburu as it highlighted on the porous boundaries and how it contributed to conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

Mkutu (2003:13) argues that the Kenya–Uganda border is one of East Africa’s most severely affected areas in terms of firearm-related insecurity. Over the last three decades, small arms and light weapons (SALW) entered the cross-border regions in unprecedented numbers. This was evidenced in part by the frequent reports of violent cattle-raiding activities, banditry on roads and attacks on the Ugandan army. In Karamoja, on the Ugandan side of the border, estimates of the number of arms in circulation ranged from 40,000-60,000 (Mustafa Mirzeler and Crawford Young, 2000:407). This study was informed by the work of Mkutu, Young and Anderson.
because they highlight on the impact of small arms and light weapons in the
neighbouring communities. Proliferation of small arms was the main cause of cattle
rustling in West Pokot County.

According to Markakis (2004:2) Colonialism deprived pastoralists of autonomy and
freedom of movement by enveloping them within the boundaries of each state by
county boundaries, game parks, nature reserves, quarantine zones and tribal grazing
zones. To promote commercial agriculture, the pillar of the colonial economy, large
tracts in the pastoralist zone were opened to cultivation through irrigation, depriving
pastoralists of land and water. The result was to undermine the material foundations
of the pastoralist economy and to damage the fabric of pastoralist society, a process
that was accelerated by widespread conflict in the dry lands during that period. No
investment or technological innovation was brought to the pastoralist economy, nor
were any ‘modernizing’ processes such as communications, education, health care,
transport or urbanization introduced into the pastoralist milieu. As a result, when
independence came, pastoralism was isolated on the margin of the African state and
society.

Independence did not halt the decline of pastoralism; it accelerated it. The states in
eastern Africa and the Horn retained the colonial blueprint of the economy, promoting
commercial cultivation for export, often on irrigated land previously used for grazing.
Large areas in the pastoralist domain included designated hunting blocs, national
parks, nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries, from where mobile herders were either
excluded or were restricted in their activities.
Markakis work is relevant to this study because it shows how colonialism contributed to the decline of pastoralism in West Pokot County.

Conflict literature tended to focus on the proliferation of arms and how it contributed cattle raiding in West Pokot County, and these are exemplified in Mburu (1999, 2001, 2002), Mkutu (2008a, 2008b), Muhereza (1998), Grahn (2005), Jabs (2005, 2007), Bevan (2008), Leff (2009) and Mirzeler & Young (2000). To some extent they were geared towards humanitarian agency prerogatives which discussed the better intervention that were to be used in various conflict resolution or disarmament programmes. Eaton (2008) provided a rare counterpoint to this literature, where he argued that most causal explanations were simplistic and overgeneralised. Humanitarian-focused approach overlapped with the conflict literature, but often with different emphasis.

Scheffran and Opiyo (2012:12) argue that conflicts related to livestock raiding are not new phenomena in many pastoral societies in the Horn of Africa. Traditionally, various pastoral communities use raiding as a cultural practice for restocking of herds, especially after periods of drought or outbreaks of diseases. However, in recent years, livestock raiding has become more frequent, violent and destructive. They suggest that hunger and drought impacting on availability and access of resources are critical raiding motives among the Turkana, while increasing wealth and payment of dowry are the most important motives for the Pokot community. Violent conflict poses a significant threat to pastoral livelihoods which are already under pressure from recurrent drought, diseases and political marginalisation. The direct impact of violent raiding is felt in terms of loss of human life and property, reduction in livestock
numbers, limited access to water and pasture resources and forced migration. Indirectly, violent conflicts create a strong and omnipresent perception of insecurity which results in ineffective resource utilisation, reduced mobility, food insecurity and closure of markets and schools. These factors combined undermine adaptation strategies and pastoralism altogether. Hence, a framework of conflict mitigation is needed which addresses the specific raiding motives of each group.

Waller (2012:1) examined the troubled course of attempts to modernize and control pastoral production in Kenya over the last hundred years. It began with an overview of changes in pastoralism to provide context and then gives more detailed consideration to the failure of colonial attempts to manage livestock resources. He discussed recent developments in relation to the past. It argued that study of pastoralism’s past offers valuable lessons and provides insights into its present and possible future. He concluded that both infrastructure and policies had been inherited from the late colonial state and were the outcome of repeated but unsuccessful attempts since 1920s to modernize and ‘improve’ the pastoral economy and to increase its productivity.

In spite of the useful information contained in many of the above cited works none of the authors has concentrated on the history of the Pokot during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. Thus, this thesis is an attempt to remedy this omission and show transformation of cattle rustling from 1895-2000. The authors have examined the social, cultural and economic impacts of cattle rustling. What the authors have failed to do was to examine the changing nature of conflict in Pokot society and, therefore, they ignored the historical transformation of the conflict. This
study focused on the history and shows how changing circumstances affected both the nature and intensity of conflict in this area, and so provides a better understanding of Pokot society.

1.7.2 Theoretical Framework

In analysing the history and impact of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000, the study was guided by the general framework of cultural-ecological theory.

1.7.2.1 Cultural-Ecological Theory

This study was informed by cultural-ecological theory which deals with the whole pattern of relations between human beings and their environment. Nomadic pastoralism as distinguished from sedentary pastoralism is based on the principle that no adequate supply of water and grass was permanent. The seasonal changes which are usually characterized by long periods of drought forced the pastoralists to move to distant places in search of water and fresh pasture for their livestock. To further ground this research in the ecological theory, the observation that scarce resources cause conflict is well articulated by Osamba (2000:4) when he observed that during rainy season’s pastoralists have enough grass and water for their animals and therefore they confine their grazing activities within their areas. However, during droughts when pastures and water become scarce, pastoralists drive their animals into other people’s farms to graze. In the process they destroy crops of agricultural farmers and spark conflict among clans or ethnic groups.

The main proponents of this theory are; Goldschmidt, Porter, Oliver, Conant, Winans and Edgerton. Goldschmidt (1950:107) argues that institutions are mechanisms of
social interaction which serve the continued life of the society and all parts of the
social system must form an integrated whole so that changes in one part require
adjustment in others. He argues that in every society there is cultural and ecological
adaptation which influences economy, culture and behaviour. He gives an example of
ecological adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa. Apart from this, it is a known fact that
when there is scarcity of resources, particularly water and pastures among pastoral
communities, it generates conflicts over distribution of these resources. Pastoralists
usually disagree as to who gets what, who gets first and who has the right of the larger
share of the resources.

Pursuance of different interests by different communities, for example, pastoralists
pursuing pastoral practices of moving from place to place in search of water and
pastures and sedentary farmers pursuing agricultural production cause conflict. As
livestock are at the mercy of environment, severe droughts have consequently led to
heavy losses of animals as well as human beings. In order to replace animals which
had been lost in the calamities, people who were still strong enough went for raids. In
pastoral communities the competition for pastures and water is the main cause of
conflict. The need to accumulate livestock wealth through raiding is innate in
pastoralists who do not have the concept of breeding in order to increase and better
the herd but resort to raiding. Pastoralists value quantity but not the quality of
livestock. Though Spencer (2004:15) in his study of the Maasai pastoralists of Eastern
Africa discredits the Ecological school of thought by arguing that it was possible for
herders to accumulate as much animal wealth through peaceful animal husbandry as
compared to cattle raids, the circumstances in West Pokot County still render
ecological theory applicable to this study.
Cultural ecological theory was applicable to this study as it examined the relationship between human beings and environment. Scarcity of resources, particularly water and pastures among pastoral communities generates conflicts especially over distribution of these resources. Pastoralists usually disagree as to who gets what, who gets first and who has the right of the larger share of the resources. The harsh climatic condition and quest to control a large number of livestock were some of the factors that propagate conflict in West Pokot County.

1.8 Methodology

This study employed both primary and secondary sources in order to collect qualitative information on the history and impact of cattle rustling in West Pokot County.

1.8.1 Research Design

The study used qualitative design with historical approach.

1.8.2 Variables of Analysis

In this study two types of variables were used; independent and dependent variables. The independent variables are factors that may be used to explain variation in dependent variable. The dependent variables are the outcomes the researcher attempted to predict. In the case of history and impact of cattle rustling in West Pokot County, the independent variables included factors that promoted conflict in the region of study such as small arms. The dependent variables included deaths,
displaced people, and destruction of property and theft of property. The study also tried to differentiate minor sporadic cattle raids from sustained violence.

1.8.3 Site Description

This study was conducted in West Pokot County which is found in North Western Kenya. West Pokot County covers an area of 9,064 km sq. It is located in the upper part of the Rift Valley region. It is bordered by Turkana County to the north, Uganda to the west, Trans Nzoia and Marakwet counties to the south and Baringo County to the East. It lies within longitude 34°47’and 350 East and 1 and 2 North. It stretches a distance of 132km from North to South. The county has four constituencies; Kapenguria, Sigor, Pokot South and Pokot North. (West Pokot District Development Plan 2009:2).

The county is characterized by variety of topographic features. In the southern part of the county are Cherangani hills with altitude of 3370m above the sea level. On the northern and north Eastern parts of the county are the dry plains of Turkana with altitude of less than 900m above sea level, the landscapes associated with this range of altitude can be found along the county boundaries. (West Pokot District Development Plan 2009:11) (Refer to map of West Pokot County, Appendix A3).

West Pokot has bi-modal type of rainfall, the lowlands receive 600mm, and highlands receive 1600mm. The high variations of rainfall means different economic activities are undertaken in different ecological zones. The district similarly experiences great variation in temperature. The low areas below 1750m above sea level have high temperatures ranging between 15ºc and 30ºc while areas 1750m and above sea level
experience moderate temperatures ranging from 10°c to 15°c and enjoy high rainfall making it suitable for agriculture and livestock production. (West Pokot District Development Plan 2009:11).

The major drainage systems in the county are Turkwel, Kerio and Nzoia rivers. About 95% of the catchment areas in the county are part of the main Turkwel. The 5% is shared between Kerio and Nzoia rivers. Turkwel and Kerio rivers drain northwards into Lake Turkana. The main rivers are Suam which drains into river Turkwel after the border with Turkana county and Muruny, also referred to as Wei Wei in the lower part. (West Pokot District Development Plan 2009:12).

1.8.4 Study Population

West Pokot has an annual population growth rate of 3.1%. The average number of people per household is 5. The great proportion of the population is settled in the highland parts of the county with high population density of 210 persons per km. While the lowland has population density of 10 persons per km. The varying settlement patterns and population densities corresponds to the varying natural resource endowment in the county. The highlands with high potentials for agriculture and livestock activities have attracted high population density. The lowland has erratic rainfall, high evaporation rate and poor soils which are suitable for pastoralism. The table 1 shows the changes in population in West Pokot County from 1979-1999.
Table 1: West Pokot Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>308,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>225,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>158,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>82,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>62,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>23,089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>20,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>18,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>25,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>22,483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KNA: WP/2/ PC/RVP/2/5/1.

1.8.5 Sampling Techniques and sample size

The researcher used purposive and snowballing sampling whereby he used the knowledge of the population as they presented their views concerning the problem through their experience. They were able to fully participate in giving their views. Since the population is varied it was divided into groups as follows;

Table 2: Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY-AGE BRACKET</th>
<th>SAMPLE SIZE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63-75</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-62</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-46</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different age brackets were interviewed in order to get different views and experiences. Age brackets 15-30 and 31-46 had more in numbers of respondents because of the assumption that youths were usually blessed by elders to go for raids, therefore, they had current first-hand experience on cattle rustling.
Table 3: Study Location and number of tools administered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH AREA</th>
<th>VILLAGES SAMPLED</th>
<th>INTERVIEWED</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CHESEGON</td>
<td>(2) Sigor and Lomut</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. TURKWEL</td>
<td>(2) Serewo and Chepkram</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. KONGELAI</td>
<td>(2) Kanyerus and Orolwo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondary data was collected by analysing published and unpublished materials such as books, journals and thesis. From these sources data on the history and impact of cattle rustling in West Pokot County was obtained and analysed with the view of identifying missing gaps.

1.8.6 Research Instruments

The instruments used in this research included questionnaire and Interview schedule (Appendix A2&A3). The questionnaire was administered to a sample of men, women and youth from sampled areas. The questionnaire items included inquiry on the historical causes of cattle rustling, the socio-economic impact of cattle rustling, consequences and coping mechanisms.

1.8.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out in Kacheliba which was one of the sampled study areas to understand the set-up of research area. Also it was a forum to test the questionnaires in order to know whether the questions were well structured or not. In
this study 13 respondents (15%) of the sample population were used for pilot study. It gave the researcher the opportunity to know materials required during actual research. After pilot study and making necessary amendments, the researcher evaluated the revised questions.

1.8.8 Validity and Reliability.

The study collected valid and reliable information from the elders, religious leaders, government officials and non-governmental organizations. To ensure validity of the instruments and the data collected, the tools underwent a peer review before they were administered. A pilot survey was undertaken and the results used to adjust the methodology and tools of data collection.

1.8.9 Data collection procedure

Primary and secondary data collection methods were used in this study. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire and interview schedule developed by the researcher on the basis of research questions. Interviews were the primary source of information in this research. Respondents were interviewed in their traditional settings through a series of direct community interviews. The interview schedule had questions that guided research assistants on the systematic way of asking the interviewees and how to capture them. They responded to a set of questions designed in conversational manner to avoid the question and answer technique which pastoralist communities are wary of. Individual interviews were conducted were held with men, women and youth in each of the selected six villages. Key informant interviews were held with Intergovernmental Authority on Development Field
Monitor, District Peace Committee Member, West Pokot County staff, youth leader, teacher, politician and religious leader.

The questionnaire had four parts; the first part had questions on the general information about the respondent. The second part had questions on the causes and effects of conflict, while third and fourth parts had questions on the role of stakeholders and their views on conflict resolution. The questionnaire was mainly structured and the respondent was guided by the interviewer through the illustrated answers to ensure that the respondent understood them and therefore responded suitably. The researcher administered 60 questionnaires; 20 in Chesegon, 20 in Turkwel and 20 in Kongelai. Since the sampled areas were on the border it provided an opportunity to get feedback from Turkana, Marakwet and Karimojong who resided along the border.

The researcher collected information from archival sources by visiting Kenya National Archives in order to orient himself with different collections to build on contextual knowledge and acquired relevant materials with the quest to refine and develop information needs on historical transformation of cattle rustling. During this initial step, various colonial reports were read. Of particular relevance were the annual reports, handing over reports, intelligence reports, safari (tour) files, labour files, Local Native Council minutes and court proceedings.

The researcher collected secondary data from reports, journals, magazines, periodicals and research papers. The aim was to get existing information on cattle rustling in
general and the extent of the impact of the menace. The researcher employed three research assistants during pilot study and during actual research.

1.8.10 Data Analysis

The researcher analysed the data recorded from archival sources, interviews, questionnaire and literature review plus the observed data in relation to set objectives of the study. The researcher analysed the information collected by sorting it out into thematic areas and presented the information in the form of tables which showed relationship between categories, display categories by informants, site and demographic profiles.

1.8.11 Data Management and Ethical Considerations

In this study respondents were protected by keeping the information they gave confidential and their consent was sought before revealing any information. The information collected was used strictly for learning purpose. The researcher also acknowledged the assistance received from various individuals such as respondents, professionals as a matter of courtesy. Other peoples’ work used was acknowledged.

The following chapter provides information on the history and migration of Pokot, history and cultural relations, historical background of West Pokot County economy and cattle rustling, climatic conditions and how it contributes to cattle rustling, the culture of Pokot, the colonial and post-colonial state repression and role of government policies and programs.
2.0. CHAPTER TWO: MIGRATION, PEOPLING AND GEOGRAPHY OF WEST POKOT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides information on the history and migration of Pokot, history and cultural relations, climatic conditions and how it contributed to cattle rustling, the culture of Pokot, the colonial and post-colonial state repression and role of government policies and programs. Cultural-ecological theory was mainly used in this chapter which shows how changes in climate and breakdown in cultural values contributed to cattle rustling in West Pokot County. This chapter provides an historical perspective from pre-colonial period to post-colonial period.

2.2 History and Migration of Pokot

The Pokot are one of the many communities which comprise the Kalenjin-speaking people. Because of this reason, their pre-colonial past cannot be divorced wholly from that of the Kalenjin. Various scholars using archaeological, linguistic and oral traditional evidence have attempted to show the process of their emergence. However, Sutton is so far the only scholar to have published on Kalenjin pre-colonial history as a whole. On the other hand, Distefano also attempted a comprehensive study of the pre-colonial history of the Kalenjin. His work is yet unpublished thus restricting accessibility. Using archaeological evidence Sutton provided a survey of up to three thousand years ago. He hypothesized that:

It was probably in their present territory of the western highlands of Kenya, especially the more northerly parts of this region that the Kalenjin evolved as a cultural and linguistic group. Very probably too, it was in this same region that the 'Highland' (or 'Southern') division of Nilotic speech from which Tatoga as well as Kalenjin descends, first developed, after splitting from what were to become the two Nilotic
divisions - 'River-Lake' (or 'Western') and ('Plains') (or Eastern') - somewhere around the borders of the Southern Sudan and the Ethiopian massif two thousand years ago or more (Sutton, 1976:22).

According to Kipkorir, the above passage posed the big problem of Kalenjin pre-colonial historiography, of whether it was dealing with tens of centuries or dealing merely with four hundred years (Kipkorir, 1977:167). Distefano took a more analytical approach combining both linguistic and oral evidence. He emphasized the fact that there was no doubt that there were various distinctive sets of societies present in the Rift Valley over the course of the last three thousand years. These fell under four distinctive sets of societies, identified with a variety of names and archaeological traditions (Distefano, 1985:148). Recent research would, however, aligned them respectively with hunter-gatherers, possibly originally Khoisan in language, Cushitic pastoralists, Southern Nilotic mixed agriculturalists, and more recently, Eastern Nilotic pastoralists.

Bantu-speaking societies were frequently crucial actors on both edges of the region and often within it. All of these communities showed periods of intensive interaction with one another, though the interaction between the Southern Cushites and Eastern Nilotes did not seem as strongly attested in this region, presumably because most southern Cushitic speakers were already gone from the region or absorbed by Southern Nilotes by the advent of the Eastern Nilotes (Kipkorir et al., 1983:12). Ehret using linguistic evidence argued that the Kalenjin are a Nilotic group whose original homeland was somewhere in the point where the river Bahr-el-Ghazal meets the Nile in the Southern Sudan. Ehret further postulated that by the beginning of the present millennium, a proto Kalenjin people lived somewhere in a belt of country running south-west from Mr. Elgon to the Rift-Valley. According to him, it was from these
people that the present Kalenjin eventually emerged (Ehret 1971:10). Distefano, concurred with this view. He argued that a Nilotic population entered the western highlands of Kenya near the corridor formed between Mt. Elgon and the Cherangany hills. Distefano named this people as the Laqok ab miot (the children of miot). Another theory was advanced by Huntingford who suggested that the Kalenjin people originally came from an area to the north or north-west of west Lake Turkana in the neighbourhoods of the Ethiopian border. He claimed that the group lived at Mt. Kamalinga about seventy kilometres to the north-west of Mt. Elgon. Huntingford asserts that, the Kalenjin dispersed from Mt. Elgon area sometime between 1675 to 1700 A.D. This date has been challenged by Sutton as being too recent (Huntingford, 1953: 33).

Matson recounted that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, groups of Kalenjin speaking people left the Mt. Elgon area. He too like Sutton felt that Huntingford’s seventeenth century date for the Kalenjin movement from Mt. Elgon area was too recent. While conceding that the genesis of the Kalenjin is obscure, he conjectures that the group was formed in the country between the River Omo and the Pibor tributaries of the Sabot, south of the Ethiopian boundary or south east of Sudan. Matson states that the Kalenjin contingents moved to the Mt. Elgon area where it seemed there was considerable amount of wandering within the concentration area before some of the sections settled permanently (the Sabaot) and others moved away to their present locations. These migrations were caused either by natural calamities resulting in famine, or desire to seek better grazing and more congenial habitat from 1490-1706 A.D. Their movements took the Kalenjin through the forests of North Nyanza (presently Luhya country) and reached Maseno before moving on to the
plains near the Kavirondo Gulf. Here, he claims, the group separated into the present various Kalenjin clusters (Matson, 1969:12).

Data collected by Hollis stated that most of the Nandi clans claimed to have come from Mt. Elgon. Hollis allied the Keiyo with the Tugen, the Nandi with the Kipsigis, while on the other hand he identified the Terik, and Okiek, as belonging together (Hollis, 1969:53). Peristiany’s collection of Kipsigis traditions state that the ancestral Kalenjin came from Tto where they were called Mnyoot. According to him, Tto is situated near Lake Chomus (Baringo). He further stated the Kipsigis claimed that they left the land of their ancestors because they were suffering from a severe drought. As a result they were on the move in search of better pasturelands. In addition, he stated that the Kipsigis traditions stipulated that close relations existed between them and the Keiyo, Tugen and Pokot (Perisitiany 1939:10). On the same breadth, Orchardson argued that the whole of Kalenjin speaking people may have come from a common stock originating around Lake Baringo. Orchardson talked of a period when the whole Kalenjin-speaking people were one group. He argued that in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the fathers of the Maina age-set were warriors, the Nandi, Tugen, Kipsigis, Marakwet and Keiyo were one people. At that time which he placed to have been about 1780 A.D. they lived in a land called Tto situated probably north of the present Tugen and Keiyo, and not far from Lake Chomus (Baringo) (Orchardson, 1961:23).

During the period, the rivers began to dry up. As a result exploring parties were sent out to scout for new countries in which to settle. The result was the dispersal of the present Kalenjin-clusters. On the basis of the evidence from oral tradition, Toweett
stated that the ancestors of the Kalenjin stayed at Mt. Elgon for a period of eight hundred years. He however, does not tell us how he arrived at such a period. If this is true, the Kalenjin had settled at Mt. Elgon as a distinct group before the tenth century. Toweett accepted the common historical notion that the Kalenjin migrated from a place called Misri', which he placed somewhere to the north of 18° Kenya. From Misri’, the Kalenjin supposedly stopped at Burgei (a warm place). Furthermore, Toweett claimed that all Kalenjins migrated together as a group and were known as Laqok ab miot (children of Miot). The Laqok ab miot are supposed to have gone through the Elgeyo-Escarpment corridor to their present homes. Toweett's oral sources indicated that movement to their present homes occurred in about 1670 A.D. when the Sawe and Chuma age groups were in power (Toweett, 1975:15).

Kipkorir is one scholar who has written on the Kalenjin phenomenon. This phenomenon refers to the artificial coinage of the term Kalenjin and the coming together as one people. Further, it referred to the still unresolved equation of Kalenjin origin and the 'misri legends'. His excellent rendering of oral traditions left no doubt that he believed that at some historical point, the Kalenjin people were one. Using the Marakwet as a case in point, he stated that certain clans claimed to have migrated from 'misri'. In the traditions, the Talai clan averred that they migrated from misri', and that their important stopping point was at Mt. Elgon. Here, they further stated that they met a man who taught them the rite of circumcision. They in turn taught this rite to the Sirikwa of Cherangany hills. The Sogom, another Marakwet clan likewise say that they came from misri'. However, they by-passed Mt. Elgon to their present settlement at Cherangany (Kipkorir, 1977:168).
In retrospect, Kipkorir's main concern was the urgency for scholars to collect oral information pertaining to the precolonial period of the Kalenjin people before the elders died out. The most controversial and hypothetical school of thought concerning the pre-colonial history of the Kalenjin was offered by Mwanzi. He dismissed the clan narrations of origin, migration and settlement of the Kalenjin people. According to Mwanzi all attempts by scholars to trace Kalenjin origin from a northern direction are equally unimportant and rejected such a possibility. His thesis is that the Kalenjin speaking people and particularly the Kipsigis as such "have not come from anywhere." He writes:

Rather than talk of the spread of the Kalenjin, we should talk of the coming together of the ethnic communities that make up the present Kalenjin groups. Concentration on migration tends to over emphasize physical movement and consequently overlooks social and cultural developments which normally require some degree of settled life (Mwanzi, 1977:25).

Mwanzi's highly hypothetical contention has been challenged by Distefano and Kipkorir. According to Distefano, Mwanzi's argument seemed more of a "mere semantic difference" and the outright rejection of all migration is at best ahistorical. He argued that, there certainly has been movement of communities between different parts of the Kalenjin region and into and out of adjoining regions, as traditional, archaeological and linguistic evidence all show. Kipkorir's view seemed to concur with Distefano. His argument was that linguistic and traditional evidence overwhelmingly showed that there was a migration of the Kalenjin mainly as a result of famine, however, this is not absolute.

Historical and archaeological research may at some juncture establish definitely whether people migrated or evolved. What was the most likely scenario was that the
two processes went on simultaneously. What emerged from these various theories of Kalenjin evolution was the subjective reality of Kalenjin ethnicity. Indeed, contrary to the apparent evidence from oral traditions, it was rare that any group of people in the past travelled as one group or from a common origin. It was a natural tendency for people to project a kind of unity in their past which may actually not have existed. However, groups of people do come from an external homeland to evolve a cultural identity.

Historically, Pokot which is one of the Kalenjin sub-ethnic groups is believed to have migrated from River Nile area bordering western Ethiopian highlands. One of Pokot myths says that they originally migrated from Egypt (Robins, 2010: xxvi). The migration took place about 3000 years ago. They proceeded to Uganda and entered Kenya through Mt. Elgon, this was the point of dispersal at which some of the Kalenjin settled and became farmers. The Pokot moved northwards and settled in West and East Pokot.

Pokot were previously called Suk in the literature and by outsiders during colonial times. During the colonial period, the Pokot were called "Suk" by Europeans. To some Pokot, the older designation was a reminder of an era in which Africans lacked the power to name themselves; to others, it represents the clever ruse of a forebear who outwitted powerful strangers by disguising his identity. In the first perspective, "Suk" is an ethnic slur that Europeans borrowed from the Maasai, who denigrated non pastoral pursuits; the name is said to derive from choc, a short sword or staff used by Pokot cultivators to till the soil. In the second perspective, a Pokot elder, when questioned by Europeans, referred to himself as "Musuk," a term for the nearby tree
stumps; his reply is said to exemplify ingenuity and cunning, two highly valued but morally ambiguous traits (Robins, 2010: xxvi).

Some people think that the Pokot were once part of larger Nandi-speaking people in the Nile valley region (Dietz, 1987:190). However, they have evidently lived in eastern Africa for centuries as smaller population. Armed with spears and bows with poisonous arrows, they have long fought over cattle with their powerful neighbours who included the Turkana, the Karimojong and the Marakwet. Thomson, in 1884, seemed to be the first European to personally encounter and wrote about the Pokot. In the account of his *Journey of Exploration among the Snowland Volcanic Mountains and Strange Tribes of Eastern Equatorial Africa*, Thomson wrote that the Pokot were:

> Strong-boned, ugly looking fellows, they were absolutely naked. A piece of flat brass hung from the lower lip of each and must have been both painful and awkward. The most remarkable feature of the Suk, however, was the manner in which they dressed their hair (a large, decorated, bag-like chignon). The Suk are described as very war-like, and generally quite a match for the Maasai, in which they frequently made raids. They occupied a magnificent and picturesque range of mountains (Thomson, 1885:312).

The views by Thomson presented a negative image about Pokot people; he has depicted them as uncivilized and backward. Every community had its unique way of life which they held dearly to them and cultural relativism was critical here.

Four years later, explorers Count Samuel Teleki and Ludwig Von Hohnel passed through the region after exploring Lake Rudolf (later renamed Lake Turkana). According to his diary of July, 1888 (Teleki, 1965:6), Teleki first encountered some short, weak-looking agricultural people on the mountains, but described the “Sukks” of Kerio valleys as “pleasant looking, handsome fellows of average height”. Renewed Pokot expansion began at the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of natural and health disasters. First, during the 1890s, rinderpest caused widespread losses
throughout the eastern and southern African plains. Karimojong and Turkana herds were especially decimated. This was followed by a disease of small stock, a locust infestation and drought. Small pox swept through East Africa beginning in 1899. All of the pastoralists on the plains were diminished in numbers and stock. However, those Pokot who lived on the mountains managed to survive in greater numbers, and many began to migrate to the plains (Teleki, 1965:7).

There were a series of Pokot-Karimojong raids in 1928, beginning from when the renowned Pokot warrior Lokitare took some Karimojong cattle after his six cattle were stolen. During the retaliatory raids, it is estimated that 3000 cattle were stolen and four people killed. This period followed a drought in 1927, along with boundary changes and grazing concessions to the Pokot in former Karimojong areas. During these raids and counter-raids spears, bows and arrows were used (Eaton, 2008:10).

Dyson-Hudson, (1966:243) argues that Kanyangareng River grazing rights had been a source of contention between the Pokot and the Karimojong since the region was officially opened to the Pokot during the drought of 1949. The two small Pokot cowherds were speared in that area in March 1953. In May, when Pokot raiders were intercepted by Karimojong, Pokot raiders killed a chief and a security official. Immediately afterwards there were massive raiding and counter-raiding on both sides, involving thousands of cattle, with the government in hot pursuit. Fines were levied on both peoples. Brasnett, (1958:21) says that the Kanyangareng area was subsequently closed to the Pokot. The 1953 fine for the Pokot was three while Karimojong paid one. (Dietz, 1987:189).

The new colonial government also helped to make Pokot expansion possible. In 1907, British soldiers quashed Maasai raids on the Pokot. Then, between 1913 and 1918, the
Kenya government sponsored punitive attacks against the Turkana, seizing their cattle and weapons. Pokot warriors were glad to assist with this effort. After that, some Pokot families began to move westward, settling on previously dangerous lands. However, before long, the Turkana were attacking again, and the affected Pokot tried to move to their traditional southern pastures, only to be denied access by the white settlers (Awuondo, 1992:10). When some continued further to the west, across the border into Uganda, the land appeared vacant, because the Karimojong, already suffering from an outbreak of East Coast Fever, had moved their cattle temporarily to other pastures. Pokot settlements in those areas remained a source of contention with the Karimojong for many years. The Pokot, who settled and grazed their herds in around Uganda’s Karamoja District, adopted so many Karimojong customs that they were often called Karapokot. One of the customs adopted by Pokot was sapana where young men graduated to take leadership roles in the community (Awuondo, 1992:11).

The history of Pokot-Kenyan government relations was not always been easy. Although the first government station was set up in 1903 in Baringo County, the colonial presence was almost non-existent throughout Pokotland, and those officials who were assigned to the few government outposts rarely stayed long. Taxes were imposed around 1910, and headmen and chiefs were appointed to collect them and to provide forced labour for roads and projects. During the 1930s, efforts were made to introduce agricultural tools and techniques, with little success. The seizure of traditional Pokot land for white settlement greatly restricted grazing land for herders. The Kenyan government later declared that arid pastures were being overgrazed and mandated annual quotas of cattle sales for each area. Christian missions were established in Pokot areas during the 1930s and in Uganda’s Karamoja District in 1950s (Brasnett, 1958:112).
Early colonial officials were frustrated by Pokot resistance to government-sponsored “progress”. Semi-nomadic, communal people, whose lives revolved around finding pasture for their cattle, were, of course, not interested in permanent settlement and land ownership to the exclusion of their neighbours. The imposition of chiefs conflicted with Pokot egalitarian values. Western medicine and religion were considered supplemental to, not substitutions for, their own herbs and beliefs. Skin clothing, beads and headdresses were symbolically meaningful, whereas western dress lacked cues of Pokot cultural identity. Children were not sent to school, because they were needed for the more important tasks of herding stock and obtaining more cattle through marriage. Many innovations brought by outsiders had brought benefits to Pokot society—education, tools, roads, famine relief, utensils, cattle markets and trading goods (Dietz 1987:12).

Cattle herders, like the Maasai, Karimojong or Pokot, were of a different ethnicity from the dominant Bantu-speaking ruling class. Pastoralists lived in distant, impoverished areas, resisted cultural change, engaged in raiding and violence, and were considered backward. Pastoralist became an embarrassment to those in power. From 1913 to 1964, West Pokot was isolated as “closed district”, and investment in the area was minimal. (Awuondo, 1999:14).

After Kenya’s independence in 1963, there were improvement projects in some areas. During the 1980s, churches were encouraged by the government to build more schools, and private and foreign investments provided additional limited services. Government efforts to confiscate weapons and to control raiding resulted in brief periods of peace and vulnerability to attack, followed by armament. In the colonial era
new changes were noted in West Pokot. Droughts, violence, epidemics, and restriction of land for pasture caused widespread poverty.

According to Steward (1955:10) cultural ecology is a process by which humans adapt to sudden changes in environmental conditions in which culture change is induced by adaptation to the environment. A key point is that any particular human adaptation is in part historically inherited and involves the technologies, practices, and knowledge that allow people to live in an environment. This means that while the environment influences the character of human adaptation, it does not determine it. In this way, Steward separated the vagaries of the environment from the inner workings of a culture that occupied a given environment. Viewed over the long term, this means that environment and culture are on more or less separate evolutionary tracks and that the ability of one to influence the other is dependent on how each is structured.

This study was informed by the work of Steward because pastoralist communities especially in West Pokot County were forced to change their lifestyle to adapt to the environment. Cultural ecology recognizes that environmental conditions play a significant role in shaping the cultures of a region. Unpredictable weather conditions in West Pokot County made the residents to develop adaptation strategies to cope with the changes.

Vital statistics for the Pokot region date from the onset of British rule, but demographic data was not collected systematically, and administrative boundaries have undergone extensive revision. Estimates for West Pokot, based on colonial tax rolls and national censuses, indicated that the County's total population grew from less than 20,000 in 1927 to an estimated 233,000 in 1988 (West Pokot District Development plan 2009:11).
Natural increase accounted only partly for this dramatic growth: the number of children born per Pokot woman did not seem to be higher than the Kenyan average, estimated at 6.7 in 1984, and epidemiological surveys suggested that infant mortality may have been higher among the Pokot than among other Kenyan groups. Immigration fuelled population growth since independence in 1963, especially in the southern highlands, where the principal administrative and commercial centres are located and where the land supports sedentary cultivation. Population density per square kilometer ranged from 64 persons in the southern highlands to less than 8 persons in the north western and eastern lowlands. The age structure of the population formed a classic pyramid shape (West Pokot District Development plan 2009:11).

2.2 History and Cultural Relations

Great Britain began to establish its sphere of influence by defining and, later, enforcing political boundaries that cut through ecological zones and local and long-distance trade networks. During this period, the Pokot moved into areas that were previously occupied by the Karimojong, but they lost grazing grounds to the Turkana, who were pushing down from the north and the west. Decades after the onset of British administrative activity in 1910, the southern grazing grounds of the Pokot were alienated for European farms (Knighton 2005:196).

Throughout the colonial period, West Pokot was a "closed" district, a status consistent with its role as a buffer between the northernmost reaches of the "White highlands," the name given to Kenya's European-settled areas, and the shifting frontiers of Turkana. With the exception of a handful of colonial civil servants and Protestant and Catholic missionaries (the London-based Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society,
which opened a station in West Pokot in 1931, and the Irish Catholic Kiltegan Fathers, who opened a school for catechumens in 1942), few Europeans ventured into the county. Government- and missionary-sponsored projects for economic and social betterment expanded after World War II, in conjunction with the rise of a grass-roots religious movement called "Dini ya Yomôt" that sought to drive Europeans out of the region. Dini Ya Yomot is a mixture of Swahili and Pokot words meaning religion of wind. These projects focused on soil conservation, education, and health care; the latter was pioneered largely by the Catholic Church, which opened the first hospital in the heart of the county in 1956 under the care of the Holy Rosary Sisters, an order of Irish nuns. (Robins, 2010:15).

Owing to its social and political-economic isolation during the colonial period, West Pokot was among the least-developed counties at the time of independence. The onset of modern infrastructure and transport, commercial townships, and land adjudication dates from the 1970s. So, too, does the expansion of primary- and secondary-school education, health-care services, religious denominations, and government involvement in the organization of women's cooperatives.

2.3 Historical background of pastoralists’ economy and cattle rustling

The cattle rustling phenomenon underwent fundamental transformation from a cultural practice of testing a person's personal bravery and prowess to bloody warfare between various groups. These posed serious challenges to societal structures, survival, as well as moral foundations (Salih 1992:29). The different tendencies and trends operated differently from one locality to another in terms of degree and impact, and all contributed to the state of violence and lawlessness in West Pokot.
Understanding these new tendencies and their relative importance was central to this research.

There were two types of pastoralism; highlands and lowlands pastoralists’ (Khan 1994:198). Various forms of pastoralist systems reacted differently to changes in the ecological, environmental and economic situations. It was partly true that pastoralists’ systems were largely products of climatic and environmental factors. Drought, famine and violence in form of cattle rustling threaten the existence of pastoralists’ groups in Kenya.

Pastoralists kept livestock with different levels of drought and feed-shortage sensitivity. The characteristics of the animals and the environmental conditions they faced determined the number and composition of the herds. Pastoralists lived in the harsh and unpredictable environment for centuries. Their production systems were a product of climatic and environmental factors and their objective was to accumulate and maintain as much wealth, in terms of livestock, as possible. For pastoralists livestock is not only a valuable source of food but also acted as a wealth reserve, a sacrificial gift and a means of marriage and other ceremonial payments (Salih 1992:27).

The loss of animals during droughts provided a justification for carrying out raids against other communities and depleting their resources so as to offset their own losses to restock the herds (Ocan, 1994:21). Dyson-Hudson termed this "aggressive confrontation" and its essential components of the pastoralists’ strategies to restore depleted herds were accepted practices among the pastoralists groups (Markakis
1993:1). To some extent, therefore, cattle raiding was both a response to disasters such as drought, and an attempt to increase the yields of their livestock by increasing their numbers in good season as an insurance against bad seasons.

“A person stripped of stock is stripped of the most active social relationship and thereby of selfhood and self-respect; so most people strive to keep some livestock and the fortunate few who have incomes from trade and regular employment continues to invest in stock” (see Markakis 1993:148).

Awuondo, (1992:9) views pastoralists differently. He argues that pastoralists operate multi-resource economies. They farmed a bit, traded, handcrafted, raided and made war on their own or for others and managed the labour of others working for them in both instances. Markakis and Awuondo however ignored the changes that occurred over the years in the lifestyle of pastoralists. In addition, pastoralists were not all the same, wherever they were, which in the above case the authors seem to have concluded. The case was even more different in the case of Pokot.

2.4 The Colonial State Policies on the Pokot

Some of the causes of intensive and extensive socio-economic problems among the pastoralist communities in West Pokot County could be traced to the disruptive and inimical policies of the colonial government in their attempt to control pastoralists. In their response, the pastoralists built up strong-armed resistance and continued to defy colonial orders. By the 1900s, they had evolved effective systems for the mobilization of young men into well-drilled corporate units with initiations partly linked to raiding activities, as the new initiates wanted to prove their prowess and bravery (Galaty 1991:20). To counteract British raids on them, the Pokot raided their pastoralist
neighbours, who were loyal to colonialists in order to restock their herds. In 1925 however they were subdued and consequently pauperized through various government policies and actions (Awuondo 1992:44). What then was the case in other pastoralist communities during colonial times? Could cattle rustling be blamed on colonialism yet it was practiced long before colonialists colonized the pastoralist communities?

In Kenya white settlers' plantation economies were established in the most fertile lands and pastoralists were pushed to infertile dry areas. Colonial officials regarded pastoralism as a primitive mode of production and efforts were made to discourage, with credence and sanction given by crude racist anthropologists propagating myths about its sociological correlates such as conservatism and the so-called "cattle complex". Communal reserves for African populations were demarcated. Fixed borders’ creation not only limited free access to grazing land and water, but also increased social conflict among the Africans. These borders hindered free movement of people and livestock. Pastoralists in West Pokot County were adversely affected by these measures since their mode of nomadism resulted from ecological demands necessitating mobility to balance ecological heterogeneity (Ocan; 1994:14). On top of droughts and famines, competition for resources led to the steady marginalization of pastoralists in West Pokot County. By the mid nineteenth century some pastoralists’ communities in West Pokot County adopted transhumance, a settled form of pastoralism where only animals were moved in search of pasture and water while their families settled "permanently" in given locations. This resulted in development of hostilities among the various groups over grazing grounds.
According to Ocan (1994:13), colonialism made political relations in West Pokot County worse because as access to land shrank and animal numbers and populations in restricted areas increased against available resources, acute competition for water and pasture between settlements became inevitable. Restricting movements meant that when animals of one group died, the only way to replenish stocks was cattle raiding. Colonialists also imposed market taxes, quarantine, destocking campaigns, and other impediments. Ocan seems to concur with the fact that even before colonialism relations between neighbouring pastoralists were already bad and therefore one could not place the blame on colonialism for the cattle rustling conflict.

2.5 The Role of Post-Colonial Government Policies and Programs

Interaction with the state played an important role in the creation of ethnic identities which eventually became fault lines for conflict. Anthropological analysis of historical processes of construction and reconstruction of ethnic identities in Africa showed that identity formation in the past was characterized by a high degree of dynamism and fluidity (Lamphear, 1992:16). This interaction first, with the colonial administration and later with ‘independent’ states, modified that situation; freezing existing ethnic identities as well as creating new fixed ones. Although ethnic labels were largely a creation of the colonial administration, they gradually became a social reality as various groups found it convenient to be recognized administrative entities when dealing with the state. Ethnic oriented labels worked as new poles of aggregation and were readily exploited by people as a way to adapt to a drastically altered socio-economic and political environment (Allen, 1994:2).
The colonial government believed that the only way to deal with the cattle rustling menace was brute force. However, despite the use of force they failed to achieve an end to cattle raiding. Instead it exacerbated the problem since the raiders tended to acquire sophisticated weapons to counter those of the government security forces (Markakis 1993:193).

During the early 1960s the post-colonial governments applied the repressive colonial government policies. The government was new but the policies were the same. The post-colonial government concentrated on the development of fertile areas as opposed to arid and semi-arid areas. West Pokot County was side-lined in terms of economic development. Pastoralists faced a number of challenges economic, security and climatic, they had to develop survival strategies. One of them was to raid neighbour communities during droughts and famine to recover lost stock. In the quest for protecting themselves from attacks, acquisition of small arms and light weapons became a necessity to the residents of West Pokot County (Lamphear 1992:23).

In the 1970s state brutality increased when pastoralists easily obtained deadly firearms from neighbouring countries undergoing political turmoil like the then Republic of Sudan. This proliferation of arms took place since the state had lost its monopoly of legitimate violence (Africa Now, 1996:3). Weapons were acquired not only for defensive but also offensive purposes. Another impact of state repression was the manner in which army officials stole confiscated livestock (Ocan, 1994:11). The plunder created a destitute, demoralized and brutalized society and the gun was seen as saviour (Allen 1996:122) to forestall any further raids and to restore past glory.
During the 1980s, the Turkana in collaboration with some elements in government and the security organs employed sophisticated raiding methods using heavy guns, military trucks for transport and large scale networks of smuggling extending up to the then Republic of Sudan (Markakis 1993:89). After 1979, the Pokot adopted similar military tactics. Consequently, from a means of obtaining a few animals and improving one's fighting prowess, raiding evolved into military operations using conventional war tactics and involving thousands of livestock resulting in young men, women and children being brutally murdered and property plus food stores being set on fire and shops looted (Mkutu, 2000:12).

The government sent military helicopters to bombard the suspected bandits' hideouts, with little success. The government also renewed emphasis on the policy of de-pastoralisation. From colonial to post-colonial period it could be said, as Samatar points out that the key to a mutually beneficial production relationship between the state and pastoralists has not yet been found (Markakis 1993:110).

In theory, violence was a monopoly of the State. Any kind of violence was by definition a challenge to the state’s authority. Open violence, even when it was not directed against the state itself, was always an affirmation of political autonomy from the government (Kurimoto, 1994:18). Violent and, sometimes, indiscriminate interventions by the security forces appeared very much as primarily directed towards re-establishing the state’s unique right to violence, and only secondarily towards conflict resolution. Direct conflict resolution interventions of the state in form of military operations for disarmament, like those carried out with heavy weaponry (including fighting helicopters) against Kenyan and Ugandan Pokot, Turkana and
Karimojong in mid-1980s (Dietz, 1993), changed the balance of power between different pastoral groups, with a consequent rise in cattle raiding and violence against the weakened parties.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed information on the history and migration of Pokot, cultural relations, historical background of West Pokot County economy and cattle rustling, climatic conditions and how it contributed to cattle rustling. The culture of Pokot, the colonial and post-colonial state repression and role of post-independence government policies and programs were also discussed. Cultural-ecological theory was mainly used in this chapter which showed how changes in climate and breakdown in cultural values contributed to cattle rustling in West Pokot County. The next chapter discusses the pre-colonial cattle rustling practices in West Pokot County.
3.0 CHAPTER THREE: PRE-COLONIAL CATTLE RUSTLING PRACTICES

3.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to analyse cattle rustling practices in West Pokot County in the pre-colonial period. It establishes the interconnection between relations of pastoralists in West Pokot County and their neighbours with cattle rustling. This chapter deals with historical relations between Pokot and the neighbouring communities. The history of cattle rustling conflicts in north western Kenya and eastern Uganda dates back to the period when cattle-keeping people came into contact with long-distance traders. This was around the early 15th century, when pastoralists were the dominant force in East Africa. Pastoralism was the most renowned source of livelihood, but over time these communities were dominated, underprivileged, and impoverished (Van Zwanenberg and King, 1975:1).

The Pokot started trading with Egyptian and Abyssinian ivory traffickers and later Arab and Swahili traders in the late 1890s. These traders exchanged guns for ivory. The acquisition of firearms by the Karimojong enabled them to poach elephants and introduced a new dimension in the competition for scarce resources, leading to the development of a superior social organization. At the same time, the Turkana were also busy acquiring weapons from the marauding bandits in Northern Kenya. These weapons found their way to West Pokot County through the Kenya-Uganda border. Due to the porous borders it was easy to transport the arms to Kenya. The theoretical strand that guided this section was cultural ecological theory.
3.2 Historical background: Communal Relations in the Period 1894-1910

The historical event which culminated into the actual arrival of colonial rule in eastern Uganda and western Kenya was the declaration of the British protectorate over Uganda in 1894 and Kenya in 1895. This was in fulfilment of the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 (Heligoland treaty) in which Uganda became a British sphere of influence. At this time, western Kenya formed part of the wider region of eastern Uganda. Consequently, it was the 1894 declaration that ushered in British imperialism in Karamoja and Kenya thereafter. This led to significant administrative changes through the imposition of British imperial authority over the various communities in the region (Kwamusi, 1996:12).

The colonial officer’s perceptions and Act of Marginalization Right from 1894, the early British Colonial Officers in Kenya and Uganda had intolerant ideas and views about West Pokot and Karamoja. For instance, William Grant, Hesketh Bell and Colonel Colville (the British colonial officers in Uganda) described northern Uganda and Kenya as areas where the British would only fritter away their resources without any reward. Consequently, the extension of the British imperialism into northern Kenya and Uganda took a gradual process that was completed much later than was the case in the southern regions (Ogot 1968:25).

According to Ogot (1968:26) and Kabwegyere (1981:11), these areas were perceived as marginal in two main ways. First, they are dry and sparsely populated and thus did not strike the British as regions that could offer any economic value. For instance, when the new British Commissioner to Uganda Hesketh Bell visited the regions in
1906, he was not impressed by both northern Uganda and North western Kenya describing them as regions with little or no promise of successful development.

Second, the inhabitants of the regions particularly the Pokot and Karimojong were perceived by the colonizers as uncivilized, war like, and hence had little to contribute to the development of their areas. In most cases, they were unwilling to submit to colonial authority. Therefore, in the colonizers’ view, the two northern areas only offered heavy expenditure without any economic reward. Besides, their decentralized and small scale political organization did not impress the British at all. As Barber (1968) puts it,

“No tribe in northern Kenya and northern Uganda had an effective Central political leadership to make it powerful enough to capture attention of the British. At best, they were seen as potential threats to British interests and as potential allies to share the burden of administrative expansion.” p86.

The point to note here is that the change of guard where Lord Lansdowne succeeded Salisbury at the Foreign Office in London also came with a change of heart and policy on the British expanding to the north. On the same note, James Hayes Sadler who succeeded Sir Harry Johnson and Fredrick Jackson as the new Commissioner in Uganda had favoured Johnson’s policy of expansion but was forced to abandon it very quickly due to opposition from London. Likewise, the British East African territory which bordered north east Uganda had little or no British activity (Ingham, 1957:12). For instance, Sir Charles Elliot who was commissioner in British East Africa between 1900 and 1904 had mixed feelings about expansion. With the exemption of the administrative post at Lake Baringo also known as “the place in the wilderness,” Elliot never advocated for expansion for its own sake or administering an
area because it is there Barber (1968). He vividly expressed this when he wrote to Lansdowne saying that,

I am convinced that it is useless to spend lives and money on subduing the barbarous inhabitants of barren deserts… not unless it is absolutely necessary to protect our borders to allow the general movement of the protectorate not to be retrogressive (Barber 1968:46).

In effect, what Eliot had in mind was that given the fact that northern Kenya and northern Uganda had little if any economic value, they could only be brought under British control if there was external threat to the borders and for easy movement of the British officials and perhaps troops. Consequently, British activities in northern Kenya and northern Uganda were marked by a fierce opposition. For instance, by 1905, the position was still the same as Sir Donald Stewart, Eliot’s successor in British East Africa had London’s policy confirmed to him in a dispatch which read,

It is not the policy of His Majesty’s Government to extend their practical administration over the remote parts of the protectorate until it is thoroughly consolidated around existing centres and stations as the advantages of getting small tax is not commensurate with the risks and expenses which such expansion would entail (K.N.A FOCP 8357,1904:2).

However, as time went by, it became necessary for the British to extend their control in the areas north of Elgon and between the Nile and Lake Rudolf which is now Lake Turkana. This was in accordance to Johnson’s view that expansion to the north was in itself desirable. On his part, Sadler had expressed the same view but stated that it should only be undertaken if it could not be avoided (KNA, 1906). It was not until there were ethnic based wars and constant attacks on the British officials by the Suk and Karimojong, the people referred to as ‘quasi civilized’, that the British made their control felt by pacifying them. The point to note here is that right from the beginning,
the British imperialism in northern Kenya and northern Uganda was marked by poor relationship between them and the local people. This arose from the mistrust and how they perceived each other. To the Pokot and the Karamajong, the British were viewed as intruders or (Ngiserukale) in Karimojong out to interfere by maligning them in the context of entrenching their political authority and their way of life. To the Pokot and Karimojong, this was un-acceptable hence vehemently resisted. On their part, the British colonizers perceived the Pokot and Karimojong as pockets of disgruntled “primitive” people trying to resist the British “superior civilization” that had been “accepted” by the majority. It was for this reason that the two communities engaged the British colonial authority in persistent wars.

Despite the fact that the Pokot and Karimojong were perceived as primitive, their regions were gradually incorporated into colonial Kenya and Uganda respectively. For instance, in 1897, the British were compelled to abandon their half-hearted policy of occupation of East Africa. This was after the Sudanese troops, presented their grievances of low pay at Eldama Ravine in the Kalenjin territory, inadequate, and delayed basic needs to Macdonald who was a British official in the area (Karugire, 1980:32). When their grievances were not settled, they killed three British officials on their way to Buganda with the intention of toppling the British and establishing themselves as rulers of the region. According to Karugire (1980:33), the British only managed to defeat the Sudanese in 1899 after receiving assistance from Nabongo Mumia and Nandi mercenaries when he stated that “the idea to ask for reinforcement from Mumia and the Nandi came about after it emerged from the British colonial circles that the Sudanese could easily team up with the ‘war like’ communities of Pokot and Karimojong”. To ensure that the British remained in control of northern
Kenya and northern Uganda, Colonel Colville who was in charge of the colonial administration in Uganda, dispatched Valvet Spire in 1894 to establish an administrative post in Mumias and Karasuk.

The setting up of administration posts in Mumias and Karasuk areas was purposely for opening up the Kavirondo and the turbulent Rudolf region even though they were perceived as areas with little or no economic significance to the British. However, the major turning point in the colonial government’s attitude to the Pokot was in the years after 1900. This was prompted by fighting in the region. First, was the colonial government’s report of 1900, which revealed the fierce ethnic fighting to control the lucrative ivory trade that had been ongoing in the region. This report indicated that the British interest in the two protectorates was under intense threat from the Ethiopian Emperor, the ivory hunters as well as from the fighting communities (Ochieng, 1986:41).

The Ethiopian threat to the British was made real when, in 1891, Emperor Menelik sent a circular letter to the European powers (Britain included) declaring that he intended to extend his empire to its traditional limits of Khartoum in the west and Lake Victoria in the South. This was confirmed by Sir Rennell Rodd who had been sent by the British government in 1898 to negotiate with Menelik when he wrote to Salisbury:

“I am convinced of the fact that Menelik is straining every effort to bring under his sway all the countries he lays claim to in his proclamation of 1891” (National Archives Entebbe, A106).

It is important to note that Menelik’s claim and threat went into the years after 1900. It was this that compelled the colonial government to change its policy of
‘concentration’ or keeping the British occupation to the more “economically viable” south to that of “expansion” into the north. Subsequently, Governor Fredrick Jackson in 1902 extended the British authority and control in Karamoja and Rudolf areas by sealing the administrative loopholes and vacuum that were initially exploited by poachers and Menelik’s forces. In 1903, Jackson reported that the entire country lying West of Lake Rudolf and for some distance south is continuously swept by raiding bands of Abyssinians or Ethiopians and this had to be stopped (Barber, 1968:50). From this time onwards, the colonial government then viewed the North more positively as a source of revenue though not for a long time. This was because most fortunes from ivory trade went to individuals and not to the government. Besides, the colonial government could not rely on revenue from ivory as the elephants had been depleted through destruction by poachers.

Second was the prevalence of inter-ethnic raids, which forced the colonial government to change its attitude towards the pastoral communities in the region. The emphasis was then not how economical the region was to the British but how effectively the areas could be put under British control. The point to note here is that the colonial governments in Kenya and Uganda did nothing to end cattle raids and inter community fighting except for 1909. In 1909, the only attempt to curb or probably end the incessant inter-ethnic wars in Northern Kenya and Uganda, the colonial government called for a peace conference in Karamoja (Gulliver, 1955:13).

This conference failed to achieve its objective of bringing harmony between the hostile communities particularly between the Pokot, Karimojong and Turkana. Two reasons have been advanced for the botched conference. According to Mkutu
(2008:12), the first reason for the failure of the conference was the fact that the colonial government lacked viable alternatives to cattle raiding and commitment to African livestock development. He argues that the latter was vehemently opposed by the colonial government due to the competition it was imagined it would offer to the white settlers. Now, the white settlers were the colonial administrative partners in revenue generation for the colony. As such, the development of the African livestock sector as a way of ending cattle raiding and the insecurity that it caused was regarded by the colonial government as a ‘minor factor” in their development agenda. In fact, they were comfortable with the status quo. Karugire (1980) argues that the second reason was the use of administrative variant of chiefships as the full- blown village based despots.

The chiefs were meant to replace the council of elders in the case of stateless societies like the Karimojong and the Pokot. In Uganda for instance, chiefships were only instituted in communities that could not adapt the Kiganda model of political administration which the British had wanted to export into all parts of the protectorate (Karugure, 1980). The Kiganda Model had received a lot of accolades from the colonial administration as probably the most viable and cheapest political organization as compared to the decentralized system. To the British colonial administrators, the latter was defined in terms of what political institutions they lacked rather than in terms of how they organized their political life. Consequently, the Pokot and the Karimojong systems of governance, which fell in this category, did not strike the colonial officials as appropriate for collective presentation of law and order, administration and the protection of human rights among people.
The British use of local chiefs as their main instruments of administration in East Africa Protectorate and Uganda only epitomized their politics of manipulation and division in these areas. As a result, the appointed chiefs were an integral part of the new system of alien rule but were hated, ridiculed and rebuked by their subjects. This kind of situation was caused by the fact that the colonial authorities in Kenya and Uganda had mandated the chiefs to undertake administrative and executive functions for which there was no precedent in their ethnic organizations. Cases in point were, first, when they presided over judicial cases in the villages, a privilege that was accorded only to the elders’ *poy* in the case of the Pokot. Second, was when they forcefully carried out the colonial government’s disarmament order on their subjects. This came about after the British signed the Brussels Arms Regulation Treaty in 1890. Consequently, the British colonial governments in the two protectorates implemented what became known as the firearms ordinance in 1903 as a way of fulfilling the Brussels Treaty (National Archives Entebbe, 1911). Therefore, the 1903 firearms ordinance permitted the colonial chiefs to disarm the Karimojong and Pokot to what these locals referred to as an ‘acceptable level’.

The worst scenario was that the chiefs acquiesced the new political arrangement to exacerbate division in West Pokot and Karamoja areas (Mamdani, 1996:19). Besides, the chiefs retained their firearms as they maintained a monopoly of force in northern Kenya and north Eastern Uganda. A church leader from Alale indicates that in contrast to what was expected, the chiefs used their firearms as instruments of vengeance on their old and new rivals and not for ensuring peace and order. As such, the colonial disarmament in Karamoja and West Pokot areas created serious
imbalance as not all people in possession of illegal firearms were disarmed and this enhanced rather than curbed the raids and violence between these communities.

The large presence of the colonial chiefs at the Karamoja Peace Conference meant to create harmony between fighting communities only led to failure of the conference even before it commenced. The problem of the acquisition and misuse of small arms in northern Kenya and northern Uganda was due to the European, Swahili, and Ethiopian and Nubian incursions into these areas in search of elephant tusks. These foreign traders gave the local people guns to hunt down elephants while others exchanged them with elephant tusks. As a result, almost every community in northern Kenya and northern Uganda that were in contact with these ivory traders became armed with guns, hostile to each other and later to the British. It was this kind of situation that was used to justify the stereotyping of the Pokot and Karimojong as being “war mongers”, yet this was the outcome of their interaction with foreigners such as ivory traders.

Given the fact that northern Kenya and northern Uganda areas largely remained arid or semi-arid, sparsely populated and relatively “volatile” to the British colonizers, between 1902 and 1960 the two regions remained “closed districts” (Zwanenberg, 1975:37). Consequently, apart from the established administrative and military outposts, who were purposed to pacify the local people, there was little if not nothing in terms of development that the British colonial government did in these areas. In any case, the leaders of the two protectorates and later colonies, Sir James Hayes, William Grant, Charles Elliot, Edward Northey, Fredrick Jackson, and C.W. Hobley, were all under instruction from the British Foreign Office in London to concentrate on
the “economically viable” areas in the two colonies. This kind of situation drew support from a detailed Foreign Office dispatch to the commissioners of East Africa and part of it, which read,

“You will bear in mind that in the opinion of His Majesty’s Government, it will not be desirable to push too quickly amongst tribes in outlying districts who have little to offer of commerce and have not yet accustomed to the sojourn of the white man. Such tribes should rather be attracted to larger centres where they will see the work of civilization in progress and begin to appreciate its advantages” (National Archives Entebbe, 1930).

Based on the foregoing, the northern Frontier District of Kenya and Karamoja remained not only peripheral but also marginalized throughout the era of British colonization in Kenya and Uganda. This not only hardened the Karimojong and Pokot ethnic consciousness and belief but also changed their perception both on the colonizers as well as the citizens. The situation was that they considered themselves heroes who were able to block the White man from interfering with their culture or as second rate citizens who were abandoned during the White-man’s development moments.

Consequently, the Colonial government’s position of classifying these areas as either “closed” or “restricted” not only interfered with the ties between neighbouring communities, but also with how these communities perceived colonial administration as well as those of the post independent regimes. It is perhaps this that has led to cross-border incessant raids and rustling that has persisted to date. Due to the colonial marginalization policy, the idea of attracting the peripheral communities to centres of “civilization” or development was self-defeating. In addition, the colonial government’s introduction of land tenure system in Kenya and Uganda had far
reaching effects on both the Karimojong and Pokot. For instance, the 1954 Swynnerton Plan introduced the concept of title deeds for the first time in Kenya. It was purposely meant to integrate the pastoralists by creating group ranches where the title gave security to each group while circumventing their ability to access pasture (Mkutu 2003). As a result, the creation of group ranches meant confining the Pokot of Kenya to small pieces of land, which was detrimental to their pastoral activities. It also meant that they were to keep only few herds for themselves.

The two regions have remained predominantly pastoralist in orientation like many other parts of Kenya and Uganda. Their economic disparity with other parts in the two countries are discernible poor infrastructure, poor roads in vast areas, inadequate and dispersed health facilities, poor telecommunication services, bad schools and no electricity to mention but a few. The regions seems to be so neglected that one hardly identifies government presence in the remote villages. The day to day life of the inhabitants of these regions is in reality a tale of constant interaction with poverty and insecurity appears in multiple forms; the incessant conflict with neighbours over land, water and pasture, fear of famine and starvation, fear of destruction and loss of life among many others. In other words, the majority of people in the regions are destitute, poor and lack the means of empowerment.

The historical foundation of cattle rustling conflicts and its cross-border nature necessitated this study to analyse the historic relations among the communities bordering West Pokot County in order to appreciate social, economic, and political realities. Prior to the 18th century, Turkana County was inhabited by a diverse group of pastoralists, including the Samburu and the Merille (then referred to as the Dassenech). The entry of the Turkana into the region occurred during the second half
of the 1890s CE and continued through the middle of the 1900. The Turkana, having separated from their brethren, the Jie-Karimojong (now living in Uganda), expanded their territory in all directions, displacing the Toposa, the Dongiro, and the Dassanech in the north, the Dodoth and Karimojong in the west, the Pokot in the south, and the Samburu in the southeast. Displacement by the Turkana occurred over an extended period. Many but not all of the defeated groups were assimilated. According to P.H. Gulliver (1955), the Turkana were strong economically and militarily, since they were in possession of guns. Although stable relationships historically existed between different groups, these relationships fluctuated according to the degree of conflict over grazing and water resources (Gulliver, 1955:10).

For instance, the Pokot established symbiotic relationships with the Karimojong, which allowed them access to dry season grazing across the border with Uganda. In contrast to this arrangement, the Turkana not only had wet-season pastures in a drought-prone zone, but their traditional dry-season grazing lands were also along the border with Uganda—yet were insecure due to raids by the Dodoth sub-clan of Karimojong. They therefore used force to gain access to “their” dry-season rangelands.

It was evident that these three sets of communities had to move temporarily from one place to another to exploit key resource patches and that such mobility required some resolution of land use and management conflicts between these groups. Traditionally these methods included raids and counter-raids or negotiations. Since the last century, however, patterns of land use were slowly changing. After colonization, borders were fixed and access to key resources was curtailed. Worse, the Turkana communal area
was split between more than one political entities, which conflicted with indigenous resource use strategies. This meant that within the new fixed ethnic boundaries, the environment was placed under even more severe pressure.

During the pre-colonial period, livestock transactions served to maintain social interactions that cut across tribal boundaries and linked neighbouring ethnic groups. What were called “bond friendships” grew out of mutual economic interests between groups that lived near each other (Sobania, 1991:11). Such relationships were very beneficial in securing individual survival in the event of disasters such as raids, drought, and diseases. However, pauperization occurred whenever this system of reciprocity broke down.

During the latter part of the 19th century, following a series of livestock epidemics, even wealthy stockowners were reduced to poverty. The worst-affected groups were forced to seek assistance from neighbouring communities. On occasion, the Karimojong went to seek food among the Pokot (Dietz, 1987:12), while the Turkana went and sought food from Dassenech in Ethiopia (Sobania, 1991:10), where the Dassenech allowed them to cultivate food. No individual kept all of his animals in one place, but always had some loaned to friends.

During the pre-colonial period, land tenure and management were customary. There were a few variations from one community to another given differences among lineages vis-à-vis inheritance. As far as communal land was concerned, it was understood that this was for use by the whole community (Kisamba, 1992:10).
Conflicts over water and pasture were very rare, if they occurred. Agro-based communities never bothered with title deeds since these were irrelevant to them.

3.3 Reasons for Cattle Rustling

3.3.0 Introduction

This section provides information on the causes of cattle rustling during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Due to the dynamic nature of the conflict it has been changing over time. It was important to understand these changes in order to give recommendations on how best to resolve the conflict. In Pokot society there were periods of peace and good relations, and where no cattle raids between warring groups were witnessed. There were cases where joint raids were carried by Pokot and Turkana warriors. These groups attacked either side and it was difficult to know who was who. Social conflict theory was used to explain the significant increase in cattle rustling in West Pokot County against the Turkana, Marakwet and Karimojong since 1920s. The reasons were varied and some are enumerated below.

3.3.1 Replenishing Depleted Resources

One of the most serious consequences of the enormous changes that took place in Kenya, especially, West Pokot County in the past 900 years was that pastoralists lost access to key dry season grazing areas because land was alienated for other uses and/or occupied by other people (Grey 2000:405). The imposition of colonial boundaries in many cases cut off pastoralists in the county from their traditional dry season and drought reserve areas. With time some wealthy native pastoralists in West Pokot claimed ownership to land in their particular communities restricting access to them by other pastoralists by fencing. Over a century ago, Pokot pastoralists grazed
their herds on the plateaus of the western highlands of Kenya. The majority of land on these plateaus was used for mixed farming, ranging from small plots to large commercial holdings eliminating an important safety net for pastoralists during dry seasons.

Pastoralism was practiced almost entirely in semi-arid and arid areas in Kenya and Uganda. A per capita decline in cattle was evidenced due to large numbers of pastoralists being crowded onto more marginal lands with decreased access to adequate dry season grazing areas, herd size diminished. Prolonged periods when rainfall was below normal exacerbated the problem, affecting the amount, type and nutritional value of pasturage. Grazing in such areas had harmful effect on herds. For the Pokot pastoralists whose livestock could not naturally replenish themselves under such conditions artificial meant they devised hence the cattle raids on or by the people of Pokot (Grey 2000:405).

Rainfall in West Pokot County was highly variable (in amount and timing) and thus totally unreliable from one year to the next. From 1979 to 1999, there were 7 years of drought and crop failure in the semi-arid areas of Kenya predominantly inhabited by Pokot (West Pokot District Plan, 1999:2). Longer-term drought to the extent that it affected the grazing lands and watering points had an impact not only on rangeland production but also on species diversity and nutritive quality of forage plants, affecting ultimately the size of the herds that could be sustained.

The pastoralists witnessed a subsequent decrease in their stocks, which led to restocking through raids on their neighbours, the inhabitants of West Pokot County.
This triggered off counter raids by the affected parties, creating a cycle of cattle rustling and violence (West Pokot District Plan, 1999:2).

3.3.2 Traditional Pastoralists Cultural Values and Practices

Cattle raiding in many areas remained a culturally accepted activity. Traditionally, livestock raiding was not considered a crime and successful raiders were respected. Killing an enemy in battle earned one respect (Grey 2000:405). The cost of getting married was another factor that promoted raiding. In some areas, the family of a young man paid a very high bride price to the family of the chosen bride.

Bride price a generation ago was around 25 head of cattle per bride in Pokot; by 2000 it ranged from 50 – 100 head of cattle. Gray (2009:73) says that in the late 1990s the bride price was frequently over 100 head of cattle and she put this down to the extraordinary success Pokot warriors had as raiders. (Interview with Daniel Loyelel, DPC member, 5th January 2011). The high bride price required for marriage existed alongside declining per capita livestock holdings and deepening poverty. It was extremely difficult for a young man or his family to obtain the required number of livestock through normal means. Sometimes the bride price had to be paid all at once (putting the potential bridegrooms at risk of raiding!), instead of over a period of time. This encouraged unmarried Pokot men to steal or raid from neighbouring communities.

Mocking by girls and women was another factor driving the Pokot youth to raid and mount counter-raids on the Turkana, Sabiny, Marakwet and Karimojong. Females, in song and dance, sometimes encouraged young men to prove their bravery and gained
wealth by raiding for livestock. Local prophets and soothsayers of the Sabiny also encouraged the youth to raid, as they themselves received their (variable) share if the raid was successful.

3.3.3 Early Proliferation of Small Arms

In the first half of 1888, the East African coast had been the conduit for as many as 37,441 assorted firearms, mainly Breech-loaders and Winchester rifles (Beachey, W 1962 Vol. III, No. 3, pp. 453). By 1910, private armies operated in Turkana borderlands with Ethiopia and Sudan, which were organized in units of between six hundred and one thousand fighters. They were mainly armed with single shot rifles and they operated in smaller tactical units (Robert O Collins, 1961:16) Therefore Britain had to pacify. Karamoja and Turkana regions before it could claim full administrative control of its sphere of influence.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with relations between the Pokot and neighbouring communities. During the pre-colonial period, Pokot community lived peacefully with their neighbours and few cases of conflicts were reported. But during colonial period many cases of inter-community conflicts were reported, especially, between Pokot and Turkana on the Kenyan side and Pokot and Karimojong from Uganda. In the post-colonial period government propagated legacies of the colonial government which led to further marginalization of pastoralists in Kenya and especially West Pokot County. Social conflict theory was applied in this chapter to locate conflict in West Pokot County which emanated from the socio-cultural relations during pre-colonial period, colonial and post-colonial period. The next chapter deals with causes of cattle rustling in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period.
This chapter has highlighted on the causes of cattle rustling and its transformative nature in West Pokot County and neighbouring communities. It has also provided information on the causes of cattle rustling in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. Dynamic natures of cattle rustling, especially, from social to commercial aspects have been discussed. Government policies have been highlighted and it has shown how government policies either controlled or enhanced cattle rustling.

In analysing the historical causes of cattle rustling social conflict theory was employed in order to epistemologize social, economic and political causes of cattle rustling conflict in West Pokot County. The main causes of conflict discussed in this chapter include; replenishing of depleted resources, cultural activities, structural factors such as poverty, availability of small arms and light weapons, weakened traditional authority structures and commercialization of conflict. The objective of this study was to ascertain the causes of conflict in West Pokot County which have been achieved in this chapter.

The next chapter discusses population trends and land tenure systems; how they have been changing and affecting nature and extent of cattle rustling. It covers the transformations in colonial period.
4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: TRENDS IN CATTLE RUSTLING; COLONIAL PHASE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the advent of colonial rule in Kenya and West Pokot County in particular. It analyses administrative matters in West Pokot under the colonial and post-colonial state and how it contributed to cattle rustling conflicts. In addition, this chapter covers population trends and land tenure in West Pokot County. In particular, it highlights government intervention in traditional land tenure, irrigation, crop and livestock production, as well as trade and gold panning among the economic activities, covered in subsequent chapters of this study that served as vital coping mechanisms in West Pokot County. In this chapter cultural ecological theory was used to show how population increase contributed to conflict as people compete for scarce resources which has shown how West Pokot County residents coped to scarce resource and changes in climatic conditions.

4.2 Administrative History and Causes of Cattle rustling

Before 1920, the Pokot mainly used traditional weapons for purposes of defending themselves against their enemies as well as for raiding their neighbours. The traditional weapons widely used then were spears, bows and arrows, shields, knives, machete, sticks and clubs. During World War I (1914–18), the colonialists introduced guns in several parts of the African continent. In Turkana, the first guns entered the county through the River Omo, from Ethiopia, around 1920. At this time on the African continent, guns were very few and far between indeed. The Turkana exchanged ivory for guns with European traders. They used the guns thus acquired to
kill elephants for more supplies of ivory. With time, guns fell into the hands of other communities neighbouring the Turkana, such as the Toposa and Dodos of Sudan, the Merille of Ethiopia, the Karimojong of Uganda and the Pokot of both Kenya and Uganda. At this time, the most readily available guns were Mk-3s and possibly Mk-4s (Mkutu 2001:23).

After the transfer of Uganda’s Rudolf Province to Kenya in 1926, Britain tried to confine the Pokot, Turkana and Karimojong within the newly created states. Before the colonial delimitation sliced through their grazing areas arbitrarily the Pokot, Turkana and Karimojong had lived within the Rudolf Province where they shared natural resources through the extant system of social reciprocity (Robert O Collins, 1961:16). These transhumant peoples were expected to respect the invisible meridians that delineated the newly created states. In order to get protection from the coloniser each ethnic community was expected to lay down arms they had acquired over many decades and stop cross-border livestock rustlings.

In 1910, a new post was established at Nyabotok (currently Kainuk) where it stayed until 1913, as the headquarters of Turkana County. In 1913/14, the colonial government established its first administrative post in West Pokot at Marich, the present day centre of Wakor in Sigor constituency. In 1915/16, the administrative center was moved from Marich to Kacheliba in the western plains. Two years later (1918), West Pokot County was created. Until 1921, the county was part of Naivasha province. Between 1921 and 1929, West Pokot was part of the Kerio province, and then it was part of Turkana County until 1941. In 1941, the county was incorporated into the Rift Valley province (Schneider, 1953:46-47).
Until 1922, part of present-day West Pokot County, the Karapokot or Kassauria areas northwest of the Saum River, was administered from Uganda. In 1922, after negotiations between Kenya and Uganda, Karapokot was handed over to West Pokot County. In 1926, after further negotiations, the West Pokot/Karamoja section of the Kenya-Uganda boundary was defined and demarcated in the same year. This was an attempt to align the border of the two territories with the boundary between the land of the Pokot and that of their western neighbours, the Karimojong. At the same time, the West and East Pokot boundary was defined and demarcated. By 1929, North and South Turkana, East and West Pokot had separate county administrative stations; that of West Pokot was at Kacheliba. In June 1930, Kacheliba was abandoned and the station moved to Kapenguria, and it has remained the county headquarters ever since. Kapenguria also doubled as the provincial headquarters for the newly created Turkana province. The Province comprised of North and South Turkana, and West Pokot counties (C&PKAR, 1929:21).

The move to Kapenguria was undertaken to improve conditions for European administrators. From the point of view of the county administrators, “Kapenguria was undoubtedly a more healthy and pleasant spot in which to live for the officers and clerical staff (WSDAR1, 1930, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP 2/5/1).”

The new headquarters were officially visited by His Excellency the Acting Governor, H.M.M. Moore, on 13 December 1930. The Governor also held a baraza (meeting) at Kacheliba and toured the northern boundary of the county, on the Kenya/Uganda border, created in 1926. But despite this choice, Kapenguria was not the best center

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1 West Suk District Annual Report
for administering West Pokot. It is situated on the escarpment and at the southernmost part of the county. By 1930, the African population in the area was extremely sparse. Kapenguria was also unpopular to the Pokot, owing to the prevalence of the east coast fever that rendered cattle raising impossible. In the meantime, following the Governor’s visit and negotiations with the Uganda government, it was once again agreed that the Karapokot area, though part of Kenya Colony, was to be administered from Uganda to harmonize the Pokot/Karimonjong border relations (KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP 2/5/1).

The creation of restrictive boundaries however was not welcomed by the Pokot. The Pokot were opposed to territorial confinement as it interfered with their traditional grazing management and cattle movement, particularly during the dry season, when in search of grazing pasture and water (WSDAR, 1924, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). As a matter of fact, Pokot resentment against territorial confinement escalated in 1926, with the creation of the Pokot/Karimonjong or the Suam boundary along the Kenya/Uganda border. The Pokot, by then confined on the Kenyan side, had numerous water holes and the Suam River, but no sufficient grazing land. On the other hand, the Karimojong, confined on the Ugandan side, had some ample grazing, but no permanent source of water. This boundary not only interfered with Pokot and Karimojong grazing and water rights, but it also divided the Pokot into two, with one group in Kenya and the other in Uganda. Although the Pokot and the Karimojong had territorial conflicts and cattle raids before the advent of colonialism, they also had grazing agreements and watering rights and shared the available resources amicably (Kenya Land Commission, Vol. II, 1726 and 1730).
Evidently, the Pokot made known their resentment of the Suam boundary to the colonial administration in 1932. Specifically representing Pokot interests before the 1932/33 Carter Commission, Lepelupel s/o Kokwa, a Pokot of Tarakit provisionally in Uganda, stated that:

We do not want the Suam boundary. The inhabitants of Kaddam and Tabachiach were one people with us and the government then cut them off by placing a boundary. We now want the amalgamation not only of the Pokot now in Kenya and Uganda, but also with the Karamonjong. We are one people and what is now troubling us and spoiling our country is the boundary (Evidence of Lepelupel s/o Kokwa before the Carter Commission at Narramit, West Pokot District, 13 and 14 October 1932, Kenya Land Commission, Vol. II, 1735).

Furthermore, the Pokot were not only opposed to the Suam boundary, but all boundaries imposed by the colonial government, particularly those separating them with their neighbours the Turkana, the Elgeyo and the Marakwet. Worse still, the Pokot were divided into West and East Pokot, with the East group residing in Baringo County. As stated by Sengdel s/o Kochodet before the Carter Commission, “the Pokot were more interested in peace, access to grazing fields and water than boundaries in their midst” (Kenya Land Commission, Vol. II, 1734-1735). In the same tone, Lutukumoi s/o Yoi, a Government Headman of Masol and by then about 60 years of age, duly affirmed before the Commission that “we do not like the government boundaries or taxes”. Thus, a feeling of unrest and enmity was being engendered between the Pokot and their neighbors, contrary to all the intentions of administration.

Clearly, the Pokot argued that boundaries created scarcity of resources and led to both human and livestock confinement with no sufficient room for movement. This led to antagonisms and outright conflicts. Worse still, they could not let the grass recover as
it did in the past. These complaints were voiced by Aikimo s/o Sakwora, a Government Headman and member of the LNC, before the Carter Commission:

Before government interference, we used to make reservations for grazing during the dry weather. The land was divided into dry and wet weather grazing areas. Offenders were punished. The hills and the Suam area were kept for the dry weather and Kaddam for wet weather. From time to time we made peace pacts with the Karamonjong, and we have over the years inter-married with them (Kenya Land commission, Vol. II, 1733-1734).

In the same tone, Loduk s/o Atuchei, also a Government Headman and representative of the Pokot, duly affirmed to the Commission that:

In the past, we used to graze our cattle as far as Kitale. We met no interference. The government arrived and pushed us back, out of that area, and Riwa was made the boundary. Within a short time, Kaddam was made the boundary. In those days (1916), there was grass throughout the whole of our area. Later on, the grass diminished, but we could see that grass still remained on Kaddam. Then the government withdrew the boundary to the Suam River. This was unsatisfactory to us. There is no room for us. Our own area as now left to us is dried up and there is no room for grazing and cattle movement (Kenya Land Commission, Vol. II, 1733).

In spite of Pokot complaints, Karapokot together with Upe was administered from Amudat as part of Karamoja with its headquarters in Muroto, Uganda from 1930-1970. It was not until 1970, when the Uganda administration handed over the area officially to the government of Kenya. After some discussion about a possible special status as a sub-district, Karapokot was later divided into Kacheliba and Alale divisions of West Pokot County. Thus, the continuous movement of the groups in search of grazing and water for their livestock (and occasional raids) was the reason for frequent and long term border crossings and the administration strategy to contain the same (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas, 1985:44).

During independence period West Pokot was divided into three divisions, Kapenguria, Sigor and Karapokot. However, as noted earlier on, Karapokot was still
administered in Uganda until 1970. Between 1970 and 1995, West Pokot was divided into five divisions and twenty two locations. Kapenguria remained the headquarters of the county. While political life centered on Kapenguria, economic life was around its “twin town” Makutano.

Besides the creation of West Pokot district and related boundaries, the colonial administration also went ahead and established a Local Native Council (LNC) in the area, as in other parts of the colony (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, NADAR, 1931:27). Specifically, a LNC was set up in West Pokot in 1925. This was a legislative branch that consisted of chiefs (nominated) and one elected member from each location. At the same time, there were varying numbers of headmen, depending on the size and population of the location who acted as assistants to the chiefs. (Schneider, 1957:51). The duties of the LNC included adjustment of salary scales of its employees, making by-laws, imposing cess (levies) on grains and livestock products, licensing local traders, and effecting a proper use of the land. From time to time, the LNC was audited by the Local Government Inspectors who made sure that whatever levies were collected contributed to revenue needed in running the administration (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

The LNC in West Pokot, among other LNCs in various parts of the colony, served important government functions in African occupied areas. The colonial state used chiefs and LNCs to pass on government policies to the African population. For instance, beginning in the 1920s through the 1950s, the LNCs were used in implementing destocking policies, soil conservation and better farming methods as dubbed by the colonial administrators. Besides, one of the ways in which the state
could provide its minimal economic assistance to African farmers, herders and traders was through the LNCs. Therefore, in the absence of sufficient economic incentives and failure to involve African producers in measures designed to increase food and cash crop production, the colonial state relied heavily on chiefs and the LNCs to implement its policies and to spread the necessary propaganda. In addition, as part of the local government, the LNCs also became a source of wage labour and salary employment in African occupied areas (Ndege, 2008:199-200).

In 1953, the LNC was replaced by an African District Council (ADC), but representation continued to consist of one nominated and one elected member from each location. In the same year, twelve chiefs were nominated and twelve members elected to the new district council (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). In addition to the LNC, a local police force was established, which functioned as a law enforcement body at the disposal of chiefs to help in carrying out administrative orders, particularly tax collection.

The local police, or Tribal Police as it was referred to by the British administrators, was regularized by the Tribal Police Ordinance of 1929. By this ordinance, provision was made for the establishment of units of local police in accordance with the principle that it was the duty of Africans to police themselves in the colony. Besides, the local police served as a direct link between the local councils and the central administration. This meant that recruitment of the local policemen was not only based on the physical and mental capability, but also those individuals holding a certain prestige in their community. At the same time, the colonial administration carefully avoided enhancement of local police authority to a stage where the LNCs could be
subordinated to it (Great Britain, C&PKAR, 1938:50). Thus, the policy of the colonial government in the administration of Africans was to govern through councils, the local police, chiefs and headmen, and in limited proportions entrust these institutions with a measure of local responsibility and authority (As mentioned earlier on, these institutions in the Kenya colony were answerable to the DOs, DCs, PCs, the Governor and then the CO).

4.3 Taxation

In the colonial period taxation as a source of revenue was the most important government activity. The Pokot like the rest of the population in the colony paid a hut and poll tax. A hut tax at the prescribed rate was payable on each hut (dwelling house) owned or occupied by the tax payer. The age of the liability for payment of the poll tax was 16 years and only raised to 18 years by the Native Hut and Poll Tax (Amendment) Ordinance of 1936. A poll tax at the prescribed rate was payable by all able-bodied African males who were not liable to pay hut tax. Hut and poll tax collection fell under the District Officer (Great Britain, C&PKARs, 1931:55 and 1937:57).

It should be noted here that, right from the beginning of colonial rule, whatever taxes raised in West Pokot as well in other African occupied areas, were mainly invested in government projects, for example infrastructure, and in high potential European settled areas among other state operations. In this case, African occupied areas, in particular marginal areas like West Pokot, ended up being marginalized in terms of state allocation of necessary resources needed for socio-economic development. In the
opinion of colonial administrators, the colonial state had meagre resources earmarked for the colony’s socio-economic development. Therefore, they had to be spent in designated areas, for example, for financial and technical support of European agriculture that brought in quick financial gains (Great Britain, C&PKARs, 1931:55 and 1937:57). Yet Africans, including those in marginal areas like West Pokot, were compelled to pay taxes from farm produce and livestock sales, as well as wage labour among other sources, regardless of whether they had enough for subsistence or not.

Specifically in West Pokot, before 1915, attempts were made to collect a hut tax in the form of livestock, but with very little success. Between 1915 and 1922, the Pokot were compelled to pay their taxes in rupees (Rs) and afterwards in shillings (Kshs). However, taxation in the area was not firmly established until after 1922, when taxes were set at Kshs. 12 per hut and their collection was intensified. The estimated tax for 1915/16 was Rs. 14,915, and by 31 December, 1926 Kshs. 110,304 had been collected (see tables 1.4 and 1.5). Some of the 1926 tax was from people who had not paid for two or more years. From the administrative point of view, a more accurate count was made in 1926 that made it possible to detect more tax defaulters (Schneider, 1957:46).
Table 4: Annual Hut Tax Collection from 1915/16 to 1922 in Rupees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TAX IN RUPEES</th>
<th>TAX PER ANNUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915/16</td>
<td>14,195</td>
<td>Rs. 3 per tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916/17</td>
<td>23,727</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917/18</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918/19</td>
<td>16,140</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919/20</td>
<td>27,235</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920/21</td>
<td>36,102</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921/22</td>
<td>44,956</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Taxes shown for 1921/22 were for 9 months period. Besides, the exchange rate for rupees and shillings was one rupee for two shillings. Source: Compiled from WSDARs, 1924 and 1926, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1.

Payment of taxes was a noble cause but the problem arose when the distribution by the government was skewed. The areas considered highly potential (white highlands) were allocated more resources at the expense of arid and semi-arid areas. Table 1.5 below shows tax increase from 1922 to 1926. It is evident that there was a major increase of taxation every year, meaning the locals were overstrained by the colonial government.

Table 5: Annual Hut Tax Collection from 1922 to 1926 in Shillings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TAX IN SHILLINGS</th>
<th>TAX PER ANNUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>82,800</td>
<td>Rs. 12 per tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>87,252</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>88,752</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>85,440</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>110,304</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from WSDARs, 1924 and 1926, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1.
In the 1930s through the 1950s, taxes declined in West Pokot County. In 1931, drought and locust invasion in the area made it impossible for the Pokot to pay their taxes promptly. At the same time, the 1929-1933 Great Depression affected the economy of the colony as a whole. The depression struck savagely, affecting both European and African production. The majority of European settlers lacked the reserves of the capital necessary to withstand the slump, and so confronted the crisis politically, rather than economically, by pressuring the government to prop up their production with subsidies and all forms of protection (Anderson, 1984:321). The economic depression was severely felt in African reserves where low prices for agricultural produce and for livestock prevailed. For instance, in areas away from urban centers prices for sheep and goats fell as low as a shilling per head. At the same time, prices for hides, a major African product, fell from a normal Kshs. 30 per frasila (36 pounds) to four or five shillings in some districts (Talbott Jr., 1976:35).

The essential problem with many African products was that they were bulky and low per unit value; thus, they could not withstand a drop in prices especially when transport and other overhead costs remained constant. The result was that prices offered in trading centers for both farm produce and livestock products were so low that farmers/herders often could not even be encouraged to deliver their commodities for sale. Yet the difficulties facing both Africans and the colonial government were further complicated by the necessity for Africans to pay taxes and for the government to collect them. Initial problems developed due to the inability of employers, especially European small-scale farmers, to grant advances to their African labourers to pay taxes (Spencer 1998:21).
As the depression worsened, the tax paying capacity of the African population became increasingly smaller. In some areas, such as Embu and Meru counties, located far from transportation facilities for marketing crops and forced to compete with the Kikuyu for jobs (particularly in Nairobi and on European farms in Central Kenya), the payment of taxes became extremely difficult. Tax collection in agricultural areas such as Nyanza region also fell short (Nangulu 1986:10). In West Pokot, there was trade depression in livestock products, particularly in hides and skins, and in view of the adverse conditions, the colonial administration found it necessary to collect taxes from the area at reduced rates (NADARs, 1931 and 1933, 26-27 and 47). A proclamation dated 27 April 1931, fixed the rate of hut and poll tax for West Pokot and the rest of Turkana County at Kshs. 10 and Kshs. 6 per annum, respectively (C&PKAR, 1931:55). Nonetheless, the African population was compelled to pay taxes.

They were concerned with survival at the subsistence level rather than meeting tax requirements. In fact, administrative officers in West Pokot as well as in other parts of the colony, including the high potential areas of Nyanza and Central Kenya, spent the entire year collecting taxes, whereas in years of plenty the job normally took three months. Generally, tax collection during the depression years became more difficult than ever before (Barber 1968:23).

In the 1940s, the hut and poll tax in the study area was once again increased to Kshs. 11 and Kshs. 12, respectively. Nonetheless taxes collected continued to decline. The World War II and lack of roads in West Pokot added to the difficulties of tax collection in the area. For instance, the estimated taxes for 1946 was £3,149 and for
1947 £3,461, well below the 1926 total tax collected (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, Report of Native Affairs, 1946-1947:93). Generally, tax collection was poor and by the end of 1950, Kshs. 15,825 remained to be collected in West Pokot (WSDAR, 1950, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). This was also due to shortage of personnel in the county headquarters. For example, the three available tax clerks in 1950 were engaged in compiling tax rolls and records required by the central registry. However, they had to be sent out to collect tax to the detriment of their clerical work (WSDAR, 1950, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). Yet, of an estimated poll tax of Kshs. 90,000 in 1953, the sum of only Kshs. 84,680 was collected. This was a big disappointment to the administration.

Undoubtedly, a contributory factor was to be found in the harsh famine conditions experienced during the year (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). In sum, as tax and commodity producers, Africans were perceived as a means to enable the colonial state secure the necessary revenue (Ndege, 1993:198).

Like other African groups, most of the inhabitants of West Pokot were compelled to pay taxes, even during periods of economic depression. In the case of West Pokot, for example, during the Great Depression, state imposed taxes made it almost impossible for the population to survive in an already arid and semi-arid environment (Nangulu 1986:6). In this case, it can be argued that the colonial state created conditions through extraction of African resources (for example, Africans were compelled to dispose of their livestock at throw away prices to meet tax requirements), that made coping with drought and famine extremely difficult for the majority of people in the Kenya colony, in particular West Pokot.
Worse still, the colonial state marginalized the same tax paying African populations, in terms of state investments in their occupied territories and socio-economic development in general. Thus, West Pokot was not only neglected in terms of state/private investments, but (like other Kenya’s marginal areas) also isolated conspicuously from the rest of the country, more important from main business centres, for example the capital city Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya’s main outlets to the outside world, due to the poor transportation network in the period under review (Awuondo 1992:12).

4.4 History of Population Development

In terms of population development, West Pokot had an estimated population of 22,483 people in 1924 and 25,191 in 1926 (see table 1.6 for details). In the 1930s and 1940s, estimates reflect population decline rather than growth in the county (see table 1.6). For instance, in 1938 West Pokot was estimated to have a total population of 18,603 people, a decline from the 1926 estimates (WP/1, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1.41). The explanation for decline in population is that there was considerable fluidity of movement among the Pokot, between Karapokot and Karamoja in Uganda and East Pokot in Baringo County. As noted by the DC West Suk, E. M. Hyde Clarke:

The Suk were at this time an extremely fluid people, and their movement may be compared with that of a rubber ball-squeezed in one place, whether by raids, drought or from other causes, they bulged in another (Memorandum from Clarke to the Kenya Land Commission, Vol. II, 1741).
It is estimated that, in 1933, some 7,000 Pokot were administered by the Uganda station at Moroto under the terms of the provisional agreement made in 1930/31 (NADAR, 1933:24). Besides, in the 1930s, most Africans (non-Pokot), for example the Somali traders, left the old trading site at Kacheliba and the county all together after the county headquarters were moved to Kapenguria (WSDAR, 1933, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

Table 6: West Pokot County Population Estimates, 1924-1943

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POKOT</th>
<th>AFRICAN*</th>
<th>ASIAN</th>
<th>EUROPEAN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>22,238</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>24,908</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>18,375</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>20,166</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>22,228</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23,089</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Non-Pokot

Source: Compiled from WSDARs, 1924, 1926, 1938, 1939 and 1943, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1.

Variation in population figures is partly explained by the methods used in recording them. According to Schneider, in the 1920s through the 1940s, population estimates were based on a survey carried out by tax clerks, by way of asking adult males for information about their families and herds at the time when they paid taxes. But no check was made on the information given by the men so that only the figures relating to those who paid tax were reliable because those men were actually counted (Shneider, 1953:18-19). As noted by Isaac Sindiga (Sindiga 1990:14-22), population figures given to tax clerks concerning the number of women and children were unreliable as Pokot custom prohibited counting. Besides, most people did not reveal the number of family members because of the fear that the data would be used for taxation purposes Therefore, population estimates in the 1920s through the 1940s
must be read with caution as they represent estimates based on incomplete information.

Nonetheless, there was steady population growth between 1946 and 1948. Population estimates for 1946 was 24,633 and 1947 was 24,733, although these were still below the 1926 estimates (KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). Thus the period 1926 to 1948 was probably characterized by high fertility and high mortality rates. It is worth mentioning that modern health care was far removed from the centres of African populations and had little impact before the 1950s (Ndege 1996:254). As noted by George Ndege, the colonial state was not enthusiastic about being involved in the extension of colonial health care services in the African reserves. In this respect, there was a marked distinction in health care between reserves on one hand, and townships and European settled areas on the other (Ndege 1996:302). Although preventive medicine began to be the centre of focus in the 1920s and 1930s, the reserves continued to lag behind and were marginalized in this aspect, and this was especially the case in West Pokot.

In 1948, moreover, the first countrywide population census was conducted in Kenya colony. The results showed that West Pokot had a population of 28,000 people. Forty years later, in the 1989 census, West Pokot had a population of 225,449 people, projected to about 275,965 by 1994 (see table 1.7 for population trend) (West Pokot County Development Plans, 1989-1993: 13-14). The sharp rise in the 1979 and 1989 total population figures is probably due to the fact that enumerators went to homesteads as opposed to the colonial method of relying on hut tax roll and headmen memory. Besides, the Bureau of Statistics in its comments on the 1989 census noted
that it was reasonably satisfied about the validity of its figures. It warned however, that, it was impossible to conduct a faultless operation of this scale with the means at its disposal. In particular, many parts of the country, especially in West Pokot (among other low potential areas), that over the years were marginalized by the state in terms of allocation of funds for the development of transportation network (among other socio-economic activities), were inaccessible and were not always reached by enumerators. The Bureau, however, emphasized that, the 1989 census was a vast improvement over the quality of the 1969 and 1979 censuses (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas, 1985:35). Nevertheless, census data was collected with difficulties and furthermore total population figures might not give the accurate figure.

**Table 7: West Pokot Population Trends, 1948 to 1989**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Number Counted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>62,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>82,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>158,652*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>225,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>512,690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In the 1979 census, the Pokot numbered 140,949 out of the total district population of 158,652.*


Based on the census data in table 1.7, the population grew more rapidly after independence and accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s. Natural increase through surplus of births over deaths, partly explains this rapid growth. However, it should also be noted here that population growth rate in West Pokot, was far below the
national average. For instance, by 1990, the rate of natural increase in semi-arid areas in Kenya was about 2.2 percent per year, compared to the national average of 3.5 percent (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1994-1996:7). Although no exact statistics were available, it was probable that child mortality in West Pokot and other semi-arid areas were higher than the average for Kenya. Especially outside Kapenguria constituency, health services were not yet as available as compared to Western or Central regions of Kenya. This was another good example that clearly showed that West Pokot still suffered from state marginalization, and thus, lagged behind in Kenya’s socio-economic development. Besides, there were no indications that the number of children born per woman in West Pokot was higher or the same as the Kenyan average. Thus, the explanation for lower fertility rate among the Pokot was the frequent drought and food shortages which afflicted the population. This was as a result of the highly variable rainfall and harsh environmental conditions. Pronounced droughts at times diminished irrigation and herding resources, namely, water and grazing pastures, that led to famine. Under-nutrition had bearing on infant mortality and also reduced the potential reproductive period for women by delaying menarche and bringing menopause forward. In addition, it led to natural abortions (Sindiga, 1999:20).

Therefore, a considerable part of the rapid population increase in West Pokot could be explained by the movement of people into the county. Areas where influx of population occurred most over the years were Mnagei, Lelan, Riwa and Kipkomo in Kapenguria and Pokot South constituencies. In the 1930s and 1940s, there was an infiltration of newcomers, mainly the Bukusu, Nandi and Saboat into the county. The Saboat started to enter the county in 1933 and continued to increase their numbers to
such an extent that in a 1942 government decree they were notified to return to their homeland in the present Mount Elgon (Nangulu 1986:5). Owing to the World War II, the order was never carried out, and after the war, the newcomers already in West Pokot County were allowed to stay. This was only on condition that they had to pay 15 cattle per tax payer to the colonial government and to adopt Pokot customs and live as Pokot. As a matter of fact, this condition, whether it was unique to West Pokot or applicable to other parts of the colony (a subject outside the scope of this study), was unrealistic and was meant to chase the newcomers from the county. However, the policy of removal of squatter stock from Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu settler farms gave the movement into West Pokot a fresh fillip and there were over 100 Nandi in Mnagei location in 1947 (see table 1.8 for details) (Nangulu 1986:6).

Table 8: Table Showing West Pokot, population of outsiders 1947*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Goats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saboat</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>5,220</td>
<td>1,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nandi</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>1,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukusu</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This figures are based on tax count in Mnagei location, Kapenguria constituency. They represent about 25% of the Mnagei population and they do not include other ethnic groups as the Sebei, who are akin to the Pokot, and have co-existed over the years. Besides, there were 50 more families in Riwo location, not included in this table. The Bukusu had a least number because they migrated to West Pokot County late, the Sabaot and Nandi started migrating to the county in 1933.

Source: Compiled from WSDAR, 1947, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1.

In addition, the in-coming ethnic groups settled in the county without following Pokot customs and instead continued with their own. They settled mainly in the southern part of Mnagei location, and engaged in rain-fed farming and livestock keeping. Evidently, there was an increase in both human and stock population (see table 8), and newcomers were viewed with growing concern by the colonial administration and the Pokot in Kapenguria and in other divisions. The colonial administration blamed the
Pokot in Mnagei, and particularly Chief Kimoi, for encouraging the infiltration of the newcomers into the county in return for rewards in livestock. Despite this, the 1940s and 1950s in-migration was still negligible (KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

However, after independence, in-migration increased sharply in West Pokot County. For instance, in 1969 just under 10 percent of the population of the county was of non-Pokot origin.

By 1979, the percentage of non-Kalenjin had grown to about 11 percent, Luhya 5,312, Kikuyu 4,144, Turkana 3,855 and Luo 1,379 origin in that order, formed the major groups of these immigrants (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas, 1985: 40). These groups of people have mainly settled in the high potential areas of Kapenguria division and in the business centres, such as Makutano, Ortum and Chepareria. Civil servants in Kapenguria and in divisional headquarters, some businessmen and other workers, who are not permanent residents, constitute the backbone of these groups.

There was also population growth in Chepareria and Sigor divisions. Chepareria follows Kapenguria because of its fairly fertile agricultural land and accessibility. The Kapenguria- Lodwar (A1) road passed through the division. Gold panning along the river banks and on the Sekerr hills also accounted for the higher population in the area, especially in Endo and Sook locations.

As for Sigor constituency, there was population growth in Weiwei, Mwindo and Lomut locations. Sigor division which accounted for 21.5 % of the county population because of fertile agricultural land coupled with irrigation facilities. In addition, in Kacheliba and Alale divisions, there were few people because the area was
predominantly arid with very few irrigation facilities (see tables 1.7 and 1.8) (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas, 1985:38).

Table 9: Table Showing West Pokot District Population Projections by Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>1989 Census</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1994</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kapenguria</td>
<td>55,957</td>
<td>108,650</td>
<td>112,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chepareria</td>
<td>35,094</td>
<td>57,362</td>
<td>59,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigor</td>
<td>34,221</td>
<td>51,395</td>
<td>53,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kacheliba</td>
<td>19,842</td>
<td>29,805</td>
<td>30,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alale</td>
<td>13,542</td>
<td>20,333</td>
<td>20,973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 10: Table Showing Population Density by Division 1979-1994 (per sq km)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1994</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kapenguria</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chepareria</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigor</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kacheliba</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alale</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Worse still, Kacheliba and Alale experienced severe food shortages from time to time and were among the most outlying parts of Kenya. Kacheliba and Alale (compared to Kapenguria and Sigor) were indeed poorly served by road or any other means of communication. Furthermore, like most parts of West Pokot (apart from Kapenguria and areas along the Kapenguria-Lodwar road) they were also poorly served by administrative and trading centres, as well as social institutions, among other services associated with socioeconomic development. The poor state of Kacheliba and Alale, and of the study area in general, reinforced the fact that over the years, West Pokot has been neglected and marginalized in terms of state investments and allocation of government funds necessary for general development in the area.
Generally, population density was quite low in the county as a whole. Even the most populated areas around Kapenguria show densities of less than a quarter of the population for whole divisions in, for example, Kisii, Kakamega, Vihiga or Kiambu counties. Nevertheless, between 1979 and 1994, population density for West Pokot doubled, although the figure varies from 10 persons per square kilometer in Alale to 70 persons per square kilometre in Kapenguria division. The average density for the county in 1994 was 31 persons per square kilometre (see table 1.10) (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1994-1996:10-11) Population density is partly determined by agricultural potential (rain-fed and irrigation farming), gold panning, trade and employment opportunities in the county. Thus, population distribution was and still is uneven with pockets of high concentration in Kapenguria, Cheperaria and Sigor divisions.

It can also be argued that low population density in the study area partly explained lack of enthusiasm on the part of the state to allocate necessary funds for the area’s socio-economic development. As noted by Schaik and Reitsma, one of the reasons why the national government may have preferred to channel investments to more suitable high potential areas was the comparatively low density of population in most arid and semi-arid areas, in this case West Pokot, where relatively few people could benefit (Dietz 1987:19). Thus, West Pokot among other marginal areas in Kenya suffered from aridity and related problems on one hand, and state marginalization on the other. Consequently, since the colonial period, West Pokot has lagged behind in socio-economic development compared to other regions of Kenya.
4.5 The Land

In terms of land utilization the Pokot themselves utilized their land largely on the basis of altitude, rainfall and agricultural potential. As noted by Hogg (1984), the Pokot have divided their land into four zones. Briefly, he analyses the four zones as follows:

The Masop, or high mountain tops, which receive most of the rain are heavily forested, the Kamas, or steep mountain slopes, which are the area of traditional habitation and finger millet cultivation, the Tow, or flat valley land, which provides some of the most farmland, and finally the Kew, or parched dry-lands, which abut the escarpment wall (Hogg 1984:2).

Besides, in the four zones, soils vary greatly. As noted by Dietz: soils in the highest parts have moderately good fertility and rather low erosion susceptibility. Escarpment soils are loose, with low fertility. Near the rivers, alluvial soils were highly fertile..., although in the most arid areas salinity posed a problem, as there were occasional flooding (Dietz 1987:152). Thus, food production in the area corresponded more or less to altitude, soils and climatic conditions.

The mountains and valleys were inhabited by the agricultural Pokot, and the drylands by the pastoral Pokot. The herds of the mountain/hill farmers consisted mainly of goats and sheep and only a few cattle, and in the plains, each pastoralist family owned a large number and variety of stock, and sometimes hundreds of cattle (Meyerhoff 1981:120). However, the mountain and plain Pokot were by no means separate, closed groups as contacts like inter-marriages, ritual celebrations and trading grain for milk and other animal products were quite frequent (Meyerhoff 1981:126). Mountains and valleys provided safe havens for rustlers; they used as defensive positions.
Besides, irrigation was used by the agricultural Pokot mainly in the Kamas and Tow. There were a few irrigation furrows in Masop areas, but by and large the highlands received rain at sufficiently regular intervals that made irrigation unnecessary. The area between the Tow and Kew at the foot of the escarpment was also important for irrigation (Hogg 1984:2). But rivers in the Kew or parched drylands were purely seasonal, thus made agriculture by means of irrigation impossible. The parched drylands stretch through Kacheliba, Alale and some parts of Sigor division. Livestock in these areas were purely local breeds which adapted to the hot climatic conditions (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1989-1993:1).

Generally, the county, being a semi-arid area, suffered from water scarcity. Surface and piped water supply served only some 15% of the total county population. The first piped water supply in West Pokot was commissioned in 1954 at Kapenguria. A large part of Kapenguria was served from the Makutano water supply, commissioned in 1973. The intake of Kapenguria and Makutano water supplies was from the rivers and streams east of Siyoi, about eight kilometres from the county headquarters. Water was normally pumped to treatment works near Kapenguria and Makutano and then pumped to high level storage for distribution. By 1983, all divisional headquarters in the county had piped water supplies. Sigor and Chepareria were served by gravity from the Weiwei and neighbouring streams. Intake of the Kacheliba water supply was a well in the Suam River. However, during the dry season, piped water was insufficient to meet the needs of Kapenguria/Makutano and other divisional headquarters (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1989-1993:1).
Besides, ground water supply (boreholes) served about 50% of the county population. About 30 boreholes were drilled in present Kacheliba division in 1952 and 1953. The United Nations Children’s Education Fund (UNICEF) carried out this program on behalf of the Uganda government. In 1981 and 1982 a number of these boreholes, which had broken down, were cleaned and rehabilitated and new ones drilled by the Kenya government, under the Ministry of Water Development. By 1983 the county had 54 operational boreholes, and over 80% were in the arid areas of Kacheliba and Alale divisions. The rest of the population survived the hard way by tapping water from the wells in riverbeds. The sand in the seasonal stream beds stored considerable amounts of water. By digging down in the sand, water could be reached. Although in the driest periods, very little water was found and only then after digging down a few meters. As a result of these several factors, only about 35% of the population had a reliable water supply (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1989-1993: 25).

Although West Pokot suffered from aridity, mineral deposits were found in the area. Gold is the most important mineral found in the county. It has been panned near Marich Pass since the beginning of the 1950s, near Korpu/Turkwel Gorge since the early 1970s and in Alale since 1981. At several places, the rocks contain small amounts of gold. Single grains of gold were released from the rocks during weathering and transported by rivers and deposited in river beds. Gold was then panned by local people. However, the concentration was not high enough to start large scale gold mining projects (West Pokot District Development Plan, 1994-1996:19). Besides gold, other minerals found in the county are copper, cobalt, chromite, nickel, kyanite, asbestos, and mica. Their quantity, however, was
small, and some of the old mining places are now abandoned because profits were not sufficient (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, *District Atlas*, 1985:20).

In addition, it is important to recognize that agricultural, pastoral and mineral rich parts of the county are owned by the population through inheritance/land allocations. Traditional land ownership among the Pokot was vested in a clan. Pokot are divided into a large number of small exogamous patrilineal named clans. Each of these clans had its own clan land, often quite widely distributed. Land was allocated and inherited by male members of the clan (daughters married outside the clan). Each clan had its rules governing the use of land by individuals and families. The guardians of this land were clan elders (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, *District Atlas*, 1985:54).

Ideally, a family could cultivate plots in the highlands, on the mountain slopes and the valleys. In this way they could benefit from varying rainfall, soil conditions and irrigation. However, not all families had plots which exactly matched this ideal distribution. Some families only had land on the valley floor and on the steep mountain slopes, while others held plots on the steep mountain slopes and the highlands (Hogg 1984:5). Besides, access to irrigation furrows has always been as important as access to land. In this case, rules and regulations existed about the access to furrows. Therefore, traditional rules governing the Pokot use of land and irrigation contributed to their survival in a harsh environment, before, during and after the colonial period.
On the other hand, European settlers had no interest in land in West Pokot during the colonial period. The harsh environmental conditions made it impossible for Europeans to alienate land in the area. However, other parts of the Rift Valley specifically Trans Nzoia county neighbouring Pokot territory, suffered from land alienation. Although a detailed reconstruction of events leading to land alienation in Trans Nzoia is beyond the scope of this study, the acquisition of Trans Nzoia by European settlers, directly and indirectly, had an impact on the socioeconomic life of the Pokot.

Significantly, when the colonial administration first established an outpost in West Pokot, the Pokot were using part of Trans Nzoia, particularly the Kitale plains, as grazing grounds for their stock (Interview with Krop Moroto, 5th January 2011). The colonial administration eventually alienated most of the Kitale plains, a portion of the coveted “cool, invigorating climate, fertile soils and wide pasture grounds” which later became known as the “white highlands” simply because more land was wanted for Europeans (Reynolds 1982:27). As stated by L.D. Sanders (1963:3), shortly before the 1914-18 war, A.C. Macdonald, Director of Agriculture, in company with Cecil Hoey (an early and prominent white settler), examined the country north of the Nzoia river lying between Mount Elgon and the Cherangany hills with a view to future European settlement. The area became known as “Trans Nzoia” and was subsequently surveyed and divided into a large number of farm plots many of which were taken up by the “soldier settlement scheme “of 1918. Development in the region remained slow until the middle twenties, mainly on account of the long transport haul from railhead, but in 1926 the Uasin Gishu and Kitale sections of the Kenya-Uganda railway was opened to traffic to the considerable benefit of agriculture in the area.
The Pokot refer to this seizure of land and their expulsion from the Kitale plain grazing areas as *Kanyi Kwenda* - “the time of being chased” (Nangulu 2001:114- Oral Interview with Longiro Lomada, at Makutano town, 6 December 1995). As noted by Hyde Clarke, with the advent of European settlement, the Pokot were driven north out of Trans Nzoia, and then with the delimitation of boundaries they were suddenly compressed into an area very much smaller than they had previously enjoyed (Memorandum from Clarke to the *Kenya Land Commission*, Vol. II, 1741). Thus, many Pokot believe that they have been victims of a double injustice in regard to Trans Nzoia. Not only was the area simply expropriated by the colonialists, but no real attempt at restoration of their grazing rights has been facilitated by the government of independent Kenya. Although most of the former European estates in Trans Nzoia are now owned by Kenyans, very few Pokot own land there - a fact that has been interpreted by particularly Pokot politicians as state marginalization and is not taken with equanimity (Reynolds 1982:28).

From the early 1970s, the process of land transfer from traditional ownership to individual freehold or leasehold was implemented in some parts of West Pokot, particularly in Kapenguria division. In this division, the government concentrated its efforts on social and economic development as compared to other parts of the county. Kapenguria is more accessible and it is in the highlands, suitable for arable farming and human settlement. The Land Adjudication Department in the Ministry of Lands and Settlement was responsible for this process. Councils of elders, chiefs, the Survey Department and the County Land Board were all involved in land adjudication. The procedure involved the declaration, gazetting, demarcation, survey and registration of
land (Meyerhoff, 1981:26). Almost 30 percent of the land area of West Pokot was under adjudication in 1983. Of all the land adjudicated, or under adjudication, approximately one eighth was parcelled up as smallholder farms, the remainder as group ranches (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, *District Atlas*, 1985:55). For instance, adjudication work in one group ranch, Ortum East, Chepareria division, was completed during the 1989-1993 period. In this same period, adjudication for Sangat and Korellach group ranches in Sigor division, was still in progress (Swynnerton 1955:9-10).

However, by the time land adjudication started in West Pokot, large tracts of land had been registered in other parts of Kenya. Once again this provided a clear indication of lack of enthusiasm on the part of the state to fully integrate marginal areas in the country’s development agenda. This was due to the fact that expected gains from land registration/consolidation, for instance increased food and cash crop production, tended to be lower in the country’s marginal areas as compared to high potential areas. It is therefore not surprising that the process of land consolidation started late (and is yet to be completed) in the study area (Swynnerton 1955:9-10).

In the 1950s, the direction of land ownership and agricultural policy in general was altered after the Swynnerton plan was published in 1954. Dubbed “a plan to intensify the development of African agricultural policy in Kenya,” the plan had a major impact on land ownership and African agriculture in the 1950s and beyond. Swynnerton proposed that traditional land ownership be turned upside down. He recommended that all high potential African occupied land, that is, in all of Central Kenya including Embu and Meru, all of Nyanza region and Kericho, Nandi, Elgeyo, Taita hills and
parts of West Pokot, be surveyed, and fragmented holdings be consolidated and enclosed (Swynnerton 1955:9-10).

Swynnerton envisaged that a number of benefits would flow from the reform. Provision of legal title deeds, and the accompanying security, was expected to encourage long-term investment in holdings and to provide collateral for farmers to obtain credit to support such investments. The plan also noted that with consolidation, it would be easier and more economical for the state to provide agricultural and veterinary services to individual farmers to grow cash crops and to improve the management of their livestock. This intensified farming would yield a number of advantages. In appropriate areas, surplus food production would be increased to feed the populations, employed labour and for export. Besides, a number of substantial and financially valuable cash crops, for example coffee and pyrethrum, would be produced as a source of revenue for both rural populations and the state. At the same time, the output of stock products would be increased to meet the needs of both domestic and export markets. In sum, the reform was expected to contribute directly to alleviation of poverty in the rural economy, through its beneficial effects on output and employment (Swynnerton 1955:9-10). Although the Swynnerton plan emphasized colonial government’s concern to intensify the development of African agriculture, its primary aim was to contain problems related to the land question, in an attempt to safeguard European occupied land in the Kenya highlands.

Following intensification of political pressure from Africans, barriers against African land ownership in the Kenya highlands were lifted, a substantial acreage was transferred to Africans by the early 1960s and land consolidation began outside
Central Kenya. For instance, by 1962, roughly 300,000 holdings had been consolidated in Kikuyuland, and more farms were enclosed in the Rift Valley, particularly the area occupied by the Kipsigis. In Nyanza region, steady progress in land consolidation was reported. The number of farms consolidated in 1962 was 8,537 constituting 41,380 acres. At the same time in Maasailand (part of present Rift Valley), consolidation and demarcation teams were at work in the Ngong area, around Loitokitok and in Narok County. For example, at Loitokitok 1,500 acres of land were registered for individual holdings. Whereas in Meru and Embu, land consolidation made slow progress, with frequent halts for consultation, arbitration and appeal. The same applied to Coast region, where land consolidation gained ground very slowly (Great Britain, *Kenya: Report for the Year 1962*:42).

In the meantime, following Kenya’s independence in 1963, the land problem led directly to land consolidation as the focus of new government policy. In principle, all agricultural land in Kenya was legally defined as private property, that is, it could be bought and sold like any other commodity, by any member of the Kenyan community (Van Zwanenberg, 1975:52). Besides, the main objective of land policy adopted by the independent government, as in the 1950s, was to create political stability in rural areas, settle the landless and stimulate the production of food and cash crops. Whether this political stability was achieved (given the 1990s land/ethnic clashes in various parts of the country) remains open to discussion. To settle the landless and stimulate the production of food and cash crops also turned out to be contradictory (Van Zwanenberg, 1975:53). For instance, independent Kenya was faced by food shortages that led to famines, and the government has from time to time appealed to the
international community for food aid to salvage the starving population. Arid and semi-arid areas were worst hit by the famine and drought.

The supposed agricultural transformation which followed land consolidation and enclosures in Kenya from the mid-1950s onwards had by 1970 touched only a minority of the small holdings of Kenya in any way. At least two-thirds of them, including the study area, continued to combine the raising of grains and pulses together with traditional stock rearing on more marginal land, just as they had done before 1954. Even within those areas where the cash crops would grow and intensive dairying was taken up (Central Kenya, Kisii, Kericho, Nandi, Trans Nzoia, Bungoma and the Kapenguria division of West Pokot), it was generally only the larger farmers who would spare the land and obtain the labour power to enter into the new enterprises on a scale which had an appreciable impact on farm output and income.

Thus, while the government seems to have seen a direct relationship between land consolidation and cash crop production on one hand and livestock keeping (in particular dairy farming) on the other, it is not applicable to most parts of the country. As the government has tried to stimulate cash crop production and dairy farming in general, as shown in this study, producers, for example in West Pokot, have continued to maintain subsistence farming to meet their daily needs.

Besides, land consolidation has not been met with enthusiasm among the Pokot ever since its inception. The Pokot tended to resist government policy on land enclosures, citing the same reasons why they were opposed to creation of boundaries: a need to share grazing pastures and water for their animals, as well as for irrigation among
other necessities, vital for their survival in a harsh environment (Interview with Lorot Chidan, 5th January 2011). But perhaps of greater significance is the fact that despite the fact of land consolidation in various parts of the country where it was completed as early as the 1960s and 1970s, for example in Central, Western and Nyanza regions, land owners have once again subdivided their plots (mainly fathers to sons) according to old age-tradition (Van Zwanenberg, 1975:53). This is partly explained by the fact that lack of security of occupation outside the home, particularly in urban centres, has over the years led to a widespread need for a rural base, in both high potential and marginal areas. Thus, retention of traditional patterns of land ownership/distribution among the Pokot, as well as other Kenyan communities, in one way or another undermines government policy behind land consolidation.

Nonetheless, land consolidation introduced before Kenya’s independence remained a major aspect of government policy. As at the end of 1978, a cumulative total of 7.6 million hectares had been wholly or partly covered by the reform, or over half of the total registerable area in Kenya. By any standard, it was an ambitious program, and over the years claimed a sizeable share of total government spending on agriculture (Killick, 1981:169). Therefore, what appears to have happened since 1954 is that, there was a transformation in government policies, despite setbacks here and there, affecting land ownership and agricultural production, in most parts of the country (especially in high potential areas).

Evidently, the inter-ethnic tensions in West Pokot go back to the colonial period. In the 1930s and 1940s, there was growing tension between the Nandi immigrants and the Pokot. Prolonged tension and ill-feeling between the two groups culminated into
the murder of two Nandi men at Polol near Kapenguria in December 1947. This incident worsened the Nandi/Pokot relationship, with each side preparing for confrontation. In 1955, there was open conflict between the two groups prompting government intervention. As a result, the colonial government evicted a few Nandi, those labelled as trouble makers, from the county in the same year. Commenting on the Nandi/Pokot conflict, the District Commissioner noted that “unless action was taken to control immigrants and future infiltration in the district, the administration was heading for serious trouble” (KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

Nonetheless, more Nandi moved into the county, and they brought in more cattle from Uasin Gishu in the 1950s. At the same time, the Pokot called upon government intervention and demanded the removal of immigrants from the district. However, Pokot demands were rejected by the colonial administrators on the grounds that the Pokot themselves had let immigrants into the district by way of bribery and corruption, and they were told to “make best of it” (WSDAR, 1955, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). One reason for Pokot ill-feeling towards immigrants in the 1950s was that several of them had enclosed their land, and each year a greater area was put under the plough. The Pokot were at least realizing that they had given away most of Mnagei which was their best agricultural land, to the immigrants.

Yet, on the other hand, the movement of the Pokot outside the county in the colonial period was minimal. For example, whenever the men moved, they went to Trans Nzoia or Uasin Gishu counties where they worked on short-term as guards and herdsmen (Nangulu 2001:232). After independence, it became apparent that some immigrants were there to stay, particularly those who managed to purchase land and
acquire title deeds in West Pokot. In sum, land is the mainstay of the Pokot and the Kenyan economy as a whole. Whether for grazing, mining, rain-fed and irrigation farming, land is guarded by the Pokot at all costs. Thus, land tenure and related politics in the history of the Pokot is also central to our understanding of how the area inhabitants have utilized limited productive land to survive in a harsh environment.

4.6 Communal Relations in the Colonial Period 1910-1920

This section provides epistemological analysis of the relations between the Pokot and other neighbouring communities during the colonial period. The aim was to establish how colonial governments contributed to conflicts between and within communities. According to Galaty colonial governments interfered with harmonious relations between communities by introducing artificial conflicts. They did this by rewarding the preferred community while others were left, this led to mutual suspicion and anger which degenerated into protracted conflicts. The main conflicts were between Pokot and Turkana (Galaty et al 1977:184).

Colonial governments in Kenya and Uganda adopted policies that contributed to the economic and political marginalization of West Pokot community during colonial rule. The colonial governments favoured the establishment of white settlers and a plantation economy at the expense of peasant production. Pastoralism which is the economic backbone of Pokot community was regarded by colonial officials as a primitive mode of production and efforts were made to discourage it (Galaty et al., 1977:186). One method the government used was to demarcate ethnic reserves for African populations. This was aimed at making more fertile land available for alienation to white settlers. The creation of fixed borders did not only limit free access
to grazing land and water, but also increased social conflict among the Pokot and neighbouring communities. These borders hindered the free movement of people and livestock. The Pokot community was adversely affected by these measures since their mode of livelihood required nomadism.

Colonialism further exacerbated political relations in West Pokot County because, as access to land shrank and populations of animals and people in restricted areas grew, competition for water and pasture between settlements became more acute. Restricting movement was a fatal decision that meant that when animals of one group died, the only way to replenish stocks was through raids (Markakis, 1993:6).

The colonial government affected the livelihoods of Pokot community who previously had the freedom to move their livestock from one grazing point to another. West Pokot County was arid and semi-arid county where pasture and water availability was pegged on climatic changes. During the pre-colonial period they were able to organize their grazing patterns within and across the border (Uganda). The colonial government introduced policies that restricted movement of people and livestock within and outside West Pokot County. This led to death of animals due to drought; the residents resorted to raids to recover lost stock (Ocan 1994:4).

The introduction of taxes had implications on the economic well-being of the Pokot because the taxes were based on the number of animals one had. The taxation policy was aimed at eradicating ‘cattle complex’. Cattle complex was the practice where Pokot community kept a huge number of livestock but low economic value.
The colonial government’s grazing policy for Pokot, Turkana and pastoral communities around the 1940s was centred on providing additional water supplies to ensure a more even distribution of stock and to rest the areas around the permanent water points. This was achieved by vigorously enforcing grazing controls to avoid ecological degradation (TDAR, 1943). Water surveys were conducted throughout the affected counties and likely areas for development of water points were identified on the basis of local requirements, particularly where raids were rampant. The aims were to relieve the pressure on overgrazed areas, ameliorate the people’s condition of life, and to keep people and livestock at a safe distance from the inter-ethnic borders where raids were most common.

During the 1950s the British attempted to deter raids among the Pokot and other ethnic groups, the British had created a no man’s land along the international frontiers. Following the ratification of borders with Ethiopia, the British administration embarked on policies that had profound ramifications for Pokot pastoralism. One policy was to prohibit Pokot from crossing international borders. Violators of these restrictions were punished by an instant fine of twenty per cent of the total number of livestock found trespassing (Lamphear, 1976:12). In spite of heavy fines imposed and patrolling of the borders by the army and the police, the Pokots and other groups continued to transgress when grazing conditions proved inadequate in their territory. The prohibition on crossing borders seriously threatened Pokot pastoralism, based as it was on movements between wet-season grazing within Pokot territory and dry-season grazing that took them across international borders (Lamphear, 1992:13).
4.7 Colonial Government’s Neglect and Poverty

Pastoralists have been victims of state repression since the colonial period. This had negative effects on the social, economic and political developments of the pastoralist communities especially Pokot. British colonialists, in Kenya and Uganda, adopted inimical policies that contributed to the economic and political marginalisation of the Pokot community. The colonial government gazetted game reserves and parks where livestock grazing was restricted. The Mount Elgon and Kidepo National Parks were results of the colonial and post-colonial government policies of gazetting livestock grazing (Stites et al, 2007:27).

The side lining of pastoralists’ in West Pokot County by modern institutions and power centres of the state was often accepted as an explanation for widespread violence. However, the equation: less state = more violence (less state is equals to more violence); which polarized violent conflict and the state, failed to recognize the latter as a key factor in situations of conflict. Any analysis of the actors in a situation of conflict should include the state. A strong anti-pastoralist bias existed in Kenya resulting in a systematic government neglect of pastoralist-inhabited areas. The indigenously developed pastoralists’ systems of natural resource management and pastoralists’ culture were not understood or accepted by the people in the dominant culture. Needs and aspirations of leaders shaped government policies since pre-independence directing investments toward the higher growth areas of the country. Lack of appropriate land tenure policies and laws in pastoralists’ areas meant their land rights were neither respected nor protected, particularly in regard to dry season grazing areas (Gray 2009:73).
During the colonial era there was a tendency to formulate negative stereotypes of pastoralism. Since then pastoralists’ cultural values were viewed as simple questions of law and order, and assumed that only when cattle were raised in a settled and controlled environment would the cattle raiding conflicts cease among the Pokot (Gray 2009:73). This led to a sense of neglect and exploitation on the part of pastoralists. Whenever a cattle raid occurred in the colonial times, the government sent punitive expeditions against the suspected raiders killing many people, and confiscating livestock even that which was genuinely theirs. Such measures created strong resentment against colonial rule, and resulted in the tendency to reject all forms of foreign influence and cultures (Soper 1985:5).

General poverty was one of the most evident characteristics among pastoralists in West Pokot County. Physical and administrative infrastructure was poorly developed. Livestock was the basis of the economy, yet opportunities for livestock marketing were meagre (Ingham 1990:36). There were very limited economic opportunities for these people. This was particularly relevant to the energetic young men, as opportunities were limited both in the traditional pastoralists sector as well as outside the sector. Many people in West Pokot County dropped out of pastoralism, primarily because they had lost their livestock to drought, raids or disease in the process becoming destitute. For instance, Kenya’s National Poverty Eradication Plan 1999-2015 reported that the highest incidence of poverty in the country occurred in the arid and semi-arid counties where the poor accounted for nearly 80% of the population (KNPEP 1999-2015).
The largely pastoralists’ counties provided the most intractable poverty problems in Kenya. The poor found a solution to their situation in raiding of livestock from their neighbours in order to make ends meet. Some people in Pokot who were rendered paupers by a raid were forced to try and recover their animals and hence they were forced to also mount cattle raids that in most cases were indiscriminate and never targeted on the culprits who took their stock (KNPEP 1999-2015).

Growing marginalization and poverty combined with a deep sense of alienation and detachment from the government for pastoralists in Kenya. The Pokot referred to government as "Kchumba," or that that "eats our cows" (Interview with Renson Apakamoi, 4th January 2011). The phrase, "Republic" by people in the West Pokot County found in the Pokot denotes a people who feel cut off from the mainstream of government services.

4.8 Pastoralism and the Impact of Colonialism: The Case of Destocking, 1920-1960

In early 1920s the colonial state interfered with African livestock keeping and utilization. For instance, considerable grazing land was removed from the traditional range system in the first two decades of the twentieth century to provide land for European occupation in Kenya. As a matter of fact, most of the land alienated for European settlement was located in the most productive regions of the Kenya highlands and parts of the Rift Valley. This affected livestock keeping practices of, for example, the Maasai in present Uasin Gishu, Laikipia, Narok and Kajiado counties. Kalenjin speakers, the Nandi and Kipsigis, also lost much of their agricultural and grazing land to European settlers, in the present Rift Valley region.
(Anderson 1984:332). For West Pokot, as shown in chapter two of this study, although the inhabitants did not suffer from land alienation per se, acquisition of Kitale plains in the neighbouring Trans Nzoia for European settlement interfered with their traditional grazing management and cattle movement, particularly during the dry season, which affected the search of grazing pasture and water.

Furthermore, by the mid-1920s, some colonial administrators argued that Africans, particularly herders in Kenya’s marginal areas, were keeping more cattle than the land could hold; thus leading to overgrazing and contributing to land degradation. They further argued that it was extremely important to restore the natural grass cover in the affected areas of these parts of the colony for sustenance of livestock and agricultural production. To this end, the colonial administrators called for culling of livestock, popularly known as destocking, mainly in pastoral areas of the Kenya colony (Mackenzie 1998:119).

Destocking became a reality from the late 1930s and throughout the 1940s, when colonial administrators argued that there was widespread evidence that soil erosion in Kenya’s pastoral areas was mainly caused by overgrazing. The interconnected problems of land degradation and overstocking were hotly debated by the veterinary section of the colonial administration. Both administrators and the veterinary staff concluded that pastoral areas of Kenya, most of which were arid and semi-arid in nature, were becoming impoverished. Consequently, the colonial state’s response to this situation was the implementation of the destocking policy, to cull the cattle either by some form of cattle tax or compulsory purchase of animals, purportedly as a check on land degradation. Therefore, throughout the 1930s, pastoral areas, for example,
Machakos, Kitui, Baringo, Elgeyo, Marakwet and West Pokot were all affected by the destocking policy (van Zwanenberg 1970:99-100).

However, it should be noted that, right from the beginning, destocking policy was met with strong resistance from African herders. Worse still, the droughts of 1927-1929 and 1933-1934 took a heavy toll on African livestock, particularly in the pastoral areas of the Rift Valley (West Pokot included) and in north-eastern part of the country. But to the surprise of the African herders, these natural calamities did little to divert the colonial state’s policy of destocking, thus, fuelling African resentment against the policy and its related activities (Anderson 1984:332). Moreover, these periods of drought coincided with the Great Depression which in one way or another did much to prompt the colonial state to intensify destocking in African occupied areas. In response to the depression, the colonial administrators forced Africans to dispose of their stock at throw away prices to government licenced buyers making it easier for the state to raise the much needed revenue, to sustain state functions and the colonial economy in the face of “collapse” of European settler agriculture (Jarvis 1991:95).

One of the most important effects of colonialism on livestock keeping in Kenya, and West Pokot in particular, was the establishment of grazing schemes as part of controlled grazing and stock management in the country’s pastoral areas. The Specific goals of grazing schemes, according to colonial administrators, were to heal the existing damage to the land caused by overgrazing, to prevent further erosion, and to increase the carrying capacity of the land through sound livestock Management (van Zwanenberg 1970:65).
However, it is worth mentioning that the establishment of grazing schemes was not necessarily meant to sustain the land for the benefit of African herders, but to enhance livestock production for market to the benefit of the colonial state (Mackenzie 1998:119). Furthermore, it can also be argued that grazing schemes were established as a justification to implement destocking policy that virtually affected almost all African herders in the colony, for the benefit of the state. Thus, there is little doubt that in the 1930s, at the height of the depression, the colonial state simultaneously enforced the establishment of grazing schemes and destocking as government policies in African occupied areas. As noted earlier on in this chapter, destocking policy enabled the colonial state to extract as much revenue as possible from African herders, particularly during the depression years (and beyond) to sustain the colonial structure. In sum, it can be argued that commodity production or revenue collection for the benefit of the colonial state was at the centre of controlled grazing and destocking policies, rather than concern for African subsistence.

In West Pokot County, the first grazing scheme in the area was established in 1936, at Morpus, Batei location. This started as an experimental scheme, aimed at grass planting as a check on land degradation. First, a report from the West Pokot Department of Agriculture was sent to the Agricultural Officer, Kitale, who supplied planting grass for the project in 1936. The majority of grasses supplied were Rhodes (Chloris Gayana), Gnoden SPP. and Brachera Bizantha, all droughts resistant. Secondly, a grazing scheme was established in the Kongelai area, Riwa location. This scheme was expanded between the late 1930s and late 1940s (Meyerhoff 1982:120).
In 1949, the area from Mtembur to Kongelai was brought under grazing control. The Kongelai scheme was then bounded by the Kaiboni River on one side and the Suam on the other. The scheme was closed from the start of the rains, around mid-April, to 31st December each year, as recovery period (WSDAR, 1949, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

In the 1950s, the policy of grazing control, by selecting areas into pairs and resting them became more emphasized. For example, at Chepareria two areas, one of 30 acres in the rain shadow and one of 300 acres in the dry belt, were each divided into three blocks for rotational grazing. Thirty head of cattle were grazed during the rainy season in the 30 acre area, moving from block to block, and, according to the DC, the results seemed to be encouraging. Consequently, other grazing areas were established in Riwa, Kipkomo, Batei and Sook locations (refer to appendix 3 for map of West Pokot County).

The normal closing of the grazing areas took place during the rainy season, with the hope of preserving some pasture land for the dry weather. However, in Batei lack of rain in 1952 resulted in both unclosed and closed areas being grazed bare (WSDAR, 1952, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). In response to the problem, there was vigorous effort, once again, to plant drought resistant grasses in West Pokot district. With the help of Pasture Research Officers, W.A. Davidson and D.C. Rennie, a thorough experiment was started on the six 20 acre blocks at Kongelai. This experiment was designed to discover to what extent drought resistant grasses would grow in the area and at what times of the year they would be ready for grazing (WSDAR, 1952, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).
By 1953, the principles of periodic closure of grazing areas was still being watched by most Pokot herders and, as in the previous years, large blocks in Riwa, Mnagei, Sook, Kipkomo and Batei, were closed during the rainy season (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). However, the Kongelai scheme received a setback when Pokot herders, facing desperately dry conditions, invaded the area set aside at the beginning of the year. At the same time, destocking and fire robbed the Chepareria control area of value. Meanwhile at Morpus, the grass plot also showed setbacks, and the bulking of only one indigenous variety of grass on experiment commenced. But it was too little to meet any meaningful grazing needs (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

Nonetheless, between 1955 and 1959, controlled grazing in a number of schemes on a four block, four month rotation period, were established in West Pokot County. These grazing schemes were located in Riwa, Kipkomo, Batei, Chesera, Nakwijit, Masol and Lelan (see table 1.11 below for details). In 1956, Riwa grazing scheme was extended to the east and west, so as to take in the entire plain between the hills on either side, to a total of 48,000 acres. By the end of the year, there were 4,200 stock on the scheme. However, the cost of maintaining the scheme was extremely small, about £1,250 being spent during the year in addition to about £1,500 over the preceding two years (AADAR, 1956:94). This was applicable to all schemes and was in line with the administration’s principle of minimizing expenditure on grazing schemes and maximizing profit on livestock production, most significantly through the inexpensive destocking policy.
The four block, four month rotation grazing adopted as the answer for the recovery of the semi-arid areas. The sequence for development in West Pokot was as follows:

Table 11: Riwa, Kapenguria Sub-County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1955</td>
<td>Pilot scheme of 20,000 acres started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1955</td>
<td>Full scheme of 48,000 acres started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>4 hafirs constructed*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Grazing fees collected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Kipkomo 43,000 acres and Batei 30,000 acres, Chepareria Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1957</td>
<td>Schemes started (traces were cut in 1956)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>3 hafirs constructed in Kipkomo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>3 dams dug in Batei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Chesera 23,000 acres, in both Kipkomo and Riwa Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Traces cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1959</td>
<td>Scheme started</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Masol 143,000 acres, Sigor Sub-County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>9 hafirs put in and traces partly cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1959</td>
<td>Scheme started</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Water supply in the schemes was also provided by construction of hafirs or tanks.


At the same time, grazing schemes for Kipkomo and Batei of 43,000 and 30,000 acres respectively, were planned, traces cut and reserves of grass put aside ready to start on 1 January 1957. The schemes in Kipkomo location included Kipkomo and most of the Chesera grazing scheme, in addition to areas suitable for agricultural development between Korrelach, Chepareria and the Muruny River. In Batei location, a scheme was established between Sebit and Ortum area and the lush and productive Parua area as far as Karapokot (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

In Lelan, 70,000 acres were gazetted as ADC forest, to include the forest reserves of Kapkanyart and Tangasia. The area included an estimated 13,000 acres of grassland.
and the controlled Lelan grazing scheme that had been in operation since 1956. The
gazetted area consisted of a three block scheme, two blocks open and one closed,
changing over every six months (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley,
confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). However, the unsolved
problems in Lelan were the issues of land ownership and land usage in the forest area.
A considerable number of Pokot families had grazed their animals in the forest
patches and settled in the same areas as far as they could remember. Yet the
administration wanted them out, based on colonial land usage bylaws that prohibited
grazing in the gazetted and controlled areas (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley,
confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). The Forest Department also
insisted on “no goat raising” in Lelan. As a matter of fact, this was an unnecessary
irritation to Pokot stock owners. The number of goats in Lelan was small, about 3,000
against 9,000 cattle and 9,000 sheep in 1959 (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to
Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Thus, the government
was not only denying a considerable number of Pokot families grazing rights and land
ownership in Lelan, but also reinforcing destocking policy in the area.

In the meantime, another forest boundary was created around Sekerr that was
surveyed and gazetted at the end of 1959. This demarcated area became a controlled
grazing zone and all habitations, human and stock, were excluded. Two hills in Sook
location, Chepnyal and Cheptaran totalling about 20,000 acres, were also closed to
Pokot habitation and became controlled areas under the land usage bylaws (Handing
Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).
In addition, one more grazing scheme, 50,000 acres at Nakwijit in Sook, was in
preparation in 1959, for start up the next year (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to
Furthermore, the colonial administration worked out stocking rates in all gazetted and controlled grazing areas. In Riwa, Kipkomo, Batei and Chesera, the stock rate was worked out at about an animal to ten acres or slightly more. It was estimated that when Kipkomo was fully recovered, it would carry an animal to six acres, the others slightly less. In Masol, stocking before the scheme started was one animal to 30 acres. As from 1959, the rate was an animal to 70 acres, based on the fact that it was one of the most arid areas in the county. In Lelan, for comparison with Masol, the stocking rate in 1958 was an animal to 1.3 acres of grassland though they grazed the forest too. Commenting on the stocking rate in 1959, the DC, Shirreff, noted that the destocking rate was not of primary importance, but it was the regular rotation that was important for better livestock management in the county (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

At the same time, each scheme had a Grazing Committee in place. Members of these committees were mainly Pokot elders, some of whom doubled as chiefs and headmen. In Riwa and Lelan, grazing elders also doubled as grazing guards, to monitor against trespassing. The objective of the committees, as noted by Shirreff, was “to teach the people to run the schemes themselves” (Swynnerton 1955:25). But the real reason, in Shirreff’s words, was “to avoid if possible too obvious control of grazing schemes by a European Officer;” to minimize Pokot resentment, direct it away from confrontation with European administrators, and, more important, minimize expense in running the
schemes. Therefore, European administrators mainly played supervisory roles in grazing schemes.

The system adopted (except for Masol) was that the DAO, then Hugh York, surveyed the scheme, made sure traces were cut and, together with the DC, got the scheme started (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Afterwards, the grazing committees were set in place. Between 1956 and 1959, Riwa was supervised by York, and Kipkomo, Batei and Chesera by a Mr. Robinson from Chepareria (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Masol was York’s plan, but the execution was carried out by Shirreff and the Officer-in-Charge, Sigor location, in frequent consultation with the District Land Officer, Kapenguria. The Officer-in-Charge also doubled as the supervisor for the Masol scheme. From time to time, all schemes were visited by York and Shirreff to assess progress (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

Lelan was in theory under the Forest Department, but in practice the administration ran it through the Pokot Chief, Porit Loliwale. Likewise, in Riwa, the Chairman of the Grazing Committee, Lolem Kitiyo, was appointed headman of the whole scheme area (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Indeed, the African authority had been brought into the running of the schemes to minimize expenses as much as possible. Lastly, all grazing schemes were declared controlled areas under section 2 of the ADC land usage bylaws. These covered the prosecution of trespassers from outside; and fines, mostly paid in cash,
and were always awarded to the ADC, as part of the grazing scheme funds (Handing
Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

However, it should be noted that Pokot herders resented the establishment of grazing
schemes in their land and administrative measures affecting the same. For instance, a
show of force by the General Service Unit (GSU) had to be used twice in 1957 alone
to contain Pokot resistance against grazing schemes. Particularly, an attempt by the
administration to use indigenous authority, Kokwo, to work out details of locational
stocking rates, as well as destocking orders, as part of controlled grazing was strongly
resented by Pokot stock owners (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, AADAR, 1957:48).

Furthermore, Lelan was the most difficult location, consisting largely of people who
went to Karapokot when grazing control was imposed in the low plains, and
subsequently they returned, only to ignore the ADC bylaws. As a result, they
constantly grazed their stock in controlled areas. Likewise, in Riwa, Kipkomo and
Batei locations, there were constant attempts by Pokot herders to graze their stock in
controlled areas. The administration responded by tightening security, and schemes
were patrolled by the GSU on a regular basis (Kenya Colony and Protectorate,
AADAR, 1957:48)

First, small-scale experimental grazing schemes were set up in the early 1960s in
present day Machakos and Baringo counties. In both areas, according to the colonial
administrators, experiments ranging from one to two years demonstrated that rested
pasture could recover and that proper grazing management could be maintained if
stock levels could be kept low enough to prevent a further cycle of overgrazing.
Consequently, these minor and short term “successes” were the basis for considerable faith among colonial administrators in the process of pasture/land reconditioning in Kenya. At the same time, many administrative officers were of the opinion that controlled grazing and compulsory destocking would end the threat of erosion, while also easing congestion in the African reserves as a whole (Anderson 1984:104).

Worse still, there was the problem of animal theft/poaching from Karapokot into Riwa grazing scheme. Although offenders were supposed to be brought to book under the ADC bylaws, lack of funds and personnel made it difficult for the colonial administration to protect controlled areas effectively. Only half of the population in Masol stayed permanently in the location; the rest chose to be constantly on the move with their animals as a response to both destocking and confinement on rotation basis in the grazing schemes. Mnagei people also resented grazing schemes and stock rating measures; as a result, they kept large herds in other locations, mainly Karapokot, through traditional social networks (Van Haastrecht 1985:12).

Nonetheless, grazing schemes in West Pokot County continued to operate into the post-colonial period, as detailed in subsequent sections of this chapter, but frequent droughts made it very difficult to run them in their proper rotations. In sum, during the colonial period the government intervened in livestock keeping through the creation of grazing schemes in African occupied areas. However, most of the grazing schemes were failures. For instance, by 1962 only ten percent of all the schemes in Kenya were operational (van Zwanenberg 1970:107). The explanation for these failures, specifically in West Pokot, ranged from the semi-arid nature of the land,
resentment from the local population against government interference in their grazing pattern, and trespassing, according to government administrators.

But more important, the objective behind the creation of grazing schemes was perceived negatively by African herders. Grazing schemes were established as official policy to control overstocking/overgrazing and more important, raise revenue for the state through the interconnected policies of controlled grazing and destocking. They were not designed to fully develop the resources of that area for the benefit of both the state and the local population (Downing 1989:22).

Furthermore, destocking took precedence over improved animal husbandry that is, integrating development of various factors: land, water, grass, animals and the needs of the local inhabitants. As a result, the compulsory reduction of the numbers of African stock was usually the first step taken by administrators of grazing schemes. Not surprisingly, these measures met fierce opposition from African herders, in this case Pokot stock owners, who resented government interference in their subsistence economy (van Zwanenberg 1970:107). Moreover, the difficulty of measuring overgrazing, particularly in Kenya’s marginal areas as noted earlier in this chapter, suggests that this was not likely to have been the deciding factor in whether or not to establish grazing schemes or to move toward different grazing patterns, as opposed to those suitable to the environment and practiced by the local population over the years.

In this case, grazing schemes were established to enhance livestock production mainly for sale, for the benefit of the colonial state. What was lacking was any real understanding on the part of colonial administrators of the relationship between the
local grazing patterns and the range conditions that could have been of use to both the state and African herders, whatever their access to land (Jarvis 1991:107). When all is said and done generally in West Pokot County, grazing schemes were handicapped by erratic rainfall as well as lack of support from the local population; thus, proper rotational grazing was difficult to achieve and areas near permanent water, in the view of colonial administrators, were always overgrazed.

In the late 1930s, the relations between the Pokot and the Elgeyo went sour once again. A certain number of stock thefts caused tensions between the two groups. Most of the offenders were arrested and received heavy sentences, and even though tensions between the groups remained high, the situation did not deteriorate into open conflict. During the last four months of 1938, border patrol was doubled, and some order appeared to be restored (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, NADAR, 1938:38). Generally, relations on almost all borders appeared to be satisfactory, and the only disturbance, which was of minor importance, was between a few Pokot and the Turkana. Pokot herders in their penetration into Karamoja were provocative toward the Turkana, but the Turkana in each instance reported such incursions rather than resort to arms. This made it possible to adjust matters in some peaceful manner (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, NADAR, 1938:36).

In the 1940s and 1950s, trespassing by Pokot herders, particularly to Karamoja, was frequent and Karimojong herders into West Pokot occasional. A dry year with grazing shortage caused renewal of boundary disputes between the two groups. Besides, the Turkana/Karimojong boundary agreement of 1936 had provided for mutual use of certain water holes and grazing areas to the two groups and a total exclusion of the
Pokot except by permission (*NADAR, 1937:46*). Furthermore, on the southern Turkana/Pokot border, a group of Pokot complained that earlier grazing concessions around Loya and Loteruk were denied to them. Consequently, a joint *baraza* with the DO, Lodwar, was held at Kolossia in December 1944. Members of the Pokot community were hoping to use this meeting to get a foothold in areas which they claimed to be traditionally theirs, for example, Loteruk and Koilongol. Tsetse fly had spread into the Masol plains so that large areas of good grazing were denied the cattle, especially during the rainy season. Therefore, Pokot herders in the affected area desired tsetse free and wet weather grazing in Turkana territory (*WSDAR, 1944, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1*).

Furthermore, livestock diseases occurred sporadically during the 1940s and 1950s in West Pokot. For instance, in 1946 and 1948, there were outbreaks of east coast fever and foot and mouth diseases, respectively (*Kenya Colony and Protectorate 1950:36*). Between 1949 and 1953 no abnormal outbreaks of disease were reported except in 1952, when two outbreaks of anthrax were noted in Mnagei location (*WSDAR, 1952, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1*).

In the following year, east coast fever was reported on the Chepareria escarpment and its extensions and trypanosomiasis in the Malmalte basin, Sigor Sub-County. Scattered locusts also invaded the county, causing havoc to crops and pasture, especially in the Sigor area (*WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1*). In the same year, 1953, a rinderpest inoculation campaign was carried out in Masol, but, as noted by the Director of Veterinary Services, it was not a compulsory measure in the district (*WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1*). In Mnagei, spray pumps were
introduced and several were in regular use as a step towards disease control (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

Although in 1955 there was some administrative concern for the control of disease in West Pokot County, the issue was not taken seriously enough. The administration was mainly preoccupied with whether or not dipping and spraying could be introduced in the grazing schemes. Some discussions began in 1958 because there was a high rate of mortality from east coast fever among cattle in the Chepkogeph area, Kipkomo scheme. The conclusion reached, as noted by the Director of Veterinary Services, was that dipping or spraying was too expensive, it required a great deal of supervision, and to be effective had to be universal and compulsory. Some veterinary officers also argued that “dipping or spraying would break down the acquired immunity the cattle had to east coast fever, particularly, if calves were dipped too.” (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Even though in 1961 there was a stock census in Mnagei in connection with the introduction of bylaws making dipping compulsory, little was done to bring it to realization (Handing Over Report, Minter to Foster, confidential, 20 November 1961, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

In 1956 to 1957 there was drought and West Pokot residents resorted to hunting and gathering even though farming and herding were the main bases of the Pokot economy. Edible roots, leaves and fruits were gathered and used as food all over the area, although the items gathered differed with the season. For example, most of the fruits ripened in the first half of the dry season from July to early December. These foods served as auxiliary to the main items of diets, but at certain times of the year
they became important as a source of sustenance. This was particularly true in the Masol area where many wild plants were gathered during the dry season (January to March) when milk production was low (Kipkorir 1983:11).

At the same time, ant hills, which proliferated in the area, especially in the plains, yielded huge quantities of termites (*Termes Bellicosus*) which were gathered over the years, fried and eaten, or dried and stored for future consumption. Termites were considered a delicacy among the Pokot. They were available only for a short time during the year, and appeared at a time when food resources were low and so formed an important addition to the diet and supply of protein. Their importance was shown by the fact that ant hills were individually owned and jealously guarded (Kipkorir 1983:11).

Furthermore, the vegetation in the area attracted bees, and accordingly bee keeping and honey collection were important activities among the Pokot. Members of the Pokot community collected honey from the river banks. For example, the riverine forest of the Weiwei was an important honey producing area for West Pokot. Moreover, it was the responsibility of the men to prepare bee-hives and collect honey at the beginning of the dry season. Honey was an important source of food for most Pokot families. It was a relish that accompanied the main dish, especially during the dry season when vegetables were scarce (Kipkorir 1983:112).

As in the case of gathering, hunting was important during the season of the year when food from farms and herds was scarce, and an occasional gazelle, hare or spur fowl was welcome to augment the diet. Members of the Pokot community used a number
of different types of traps to snare any type of animal from squirrels to elephants. Birds or small animals were snared or hunted with stones, throwing sticks or bows and arrows. Poisoned arrows were used when animals were hunted for human and animal protection and not for food. The Pokot did not use dogs in either hunting or herding, as dogs exposed their location to enemy raiders (for example, the Turkana) by barking (Schneider 1953:211).

Traditionally, the main rationale for hunting was to provide the family with meat. Secondly, the safety of the community and domestic animals was only guaranteed by effectively keeping away the wild game, for example lions and leopards, that were hunted not so much for their meat and skins but for protection. Thirdly, and probably the most important reason, was that by hunting wild game for subsistence, the family herds were then left to multiply, forming a basic resource (capital) for the family. A limited amount of fishing also engaged members of the Pokot community. A bony but flavourful type of barb was trapped in pools of stagnant water which formed in the river beds when streams were trapped for irrigation in dry seasons and sections of them. In the Weiwei irrigation system, fish that got into the furrows and channels were trapped and swept out of the water by hand or by using a sort of net consisting of mass twigs and leaves (Schneider 1953:212-213).

Just as in farming and herding, division of labour in hunting and gathering developed along gender and age lines. Food procurement was such that men were solely responsible for wild game and women and children ensured the availability of wild vegetables, roots, berries, and at times mushrooms that were collected and prepared as relishes. Fruits were collected by every member of the family, men, women and
children - and mainly eaten as snacks while working in the fields, herding or traveling (Nangulu 2001:161).

However, during the colonial period, the administration interfered with the Pokot hunting and gathering activities, a source of their food supplements and trading items. As early as the 1920s and 1930s, the colonial administration warned the Pokot in *barazas* against hunting and imposed fines for killing game. For instance, the tendency of Pokot men to hunt leopards for their skins, mainly for clothing and for sale, led to a circular letter to the chiefs in 1937 stating that “leopards might only be killed in defense of life or stock.” (WSDAR, 1937, WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). It was also noted in this circular that in the future “applicants for permits to sell leopard skins must obtain a letter from their chief stating that the leopard was killed in such circumstances.” (WSDAR, 1937, WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). Furthermore, in 1959 a Pokot man was given 6 months in prison for killing a zebra (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

What Pokot men had practiced over the years as hunting for food and clothing items was then termed as poaching by the colonial administration. Specifically, the DC, Shirreff, in the same year noted that the worst poachers were the cultivators of Weiwei, Lomut and Sekerr who traditionally depended on game for meat, having a few or no stock. He further noted that “it was their responsibility to keep enough stock so that there should be no excuse for them to stop poaching.” (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). The DC was also of the opinion that, “the Pokot are a hunting people who if left to themselves would finish off all the game except the forest dwelling species.” (Handing Over
Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). He further emphasized that they had been warned: “the only permitted killing was in defense of self or stock, but only limited action had been taken so far to stop poaching.” (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Shirreff concluded that if hunting did not stop, “I suggest that we make it an offence for young men to carry bows and arrows, except when herding stock.” (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

By 1959, there were small numbers of elephant, rhino, lion and buffalo found in the Kapkanyar area, Kapenguria division, and also in Malmalte area and on Mount Mtelo, both in Sigor division (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas 1985:8). Other species occasionally seen were gazelles, giraffe, zebra, impala, bush buck, and cheetah. Shirreff was of the idea that if poaching were controlled, game would be attracted into some grazing schemes and, Masol, in particular, would become a game sanctuary (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Even though Shirreff did not state the advantage of the sanctuary in the area, one can argue that this was to serve as a tourist attraction for European visitors and residents alike in West Pokot County.

Ironically, while members of the Pokot community were restricted from hunting for food and other needs, European hunting parties continued to operate in the area. In 1959, Shirreff noted that “controlled hunting should be encouraged as a means of ensuring the preservation of game, and in addition to the Malmalte area, occasional hunting parties be permitted into Riwa location.” (Handing Over Report, Shirreff to
Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Thus, the colonial administration with its game policy, in one way or another, interfered with Pokot hunting activities and hence their source of food supplements.

It should further be noted that overstocking and overgrazing are relative terms, and the difficulty of measuring these two aspects makes it absurd that they were used as deciding factors in the implementation of destocking in African occupied areas in the 1930s and beyond (Jarvis 1991:96). As noted by Richard Waller and Neal Sobania (1994), far from being overstocked, some pastoral areas may have been understocked, both in terms of the carrying capacity of the rangeland and of the family subsistence requirements (Sobania 1994:45). Moreover, given the fact that in Kenya, droughts occur at least every three to five years, and in almost all cases take a heavy toll on livestock, naturally overstocking could not have been a serious problem to warrant the implementation of destocking policy, particularly in Kenya’s marginal areas (Patterson 1969:25). Therefore, destocking, as one of the key issues of policy and implementation in the colonial period, may have been addressing the wrong problem and thus, compulsion was used where none was required (Sobania 1994:54).

In this case, one can argue that destocking was not motivated by the concern of herders’ welfare, but for the benefit of the colonial state. The colonial state used overstocking as an excuse to forcefully acquire animals from African areas at throw away prices to meet the needs of the domestic and export markets. For example, at the peak of the depression in the 1930s, the Maasai, Kamba and Pokot, were compelled to reduce their animals, mainly earmarked for slaughter, and others, particularly bulls, were forcibly sold to European farmers for breeding purposes (Vermaat 1986:22).
Thus, in addition to hut and poll taxes imposed on Africans, through livestock sales the state was able to obtain the much needed revenue for its own functioning. Indeed, increased destocking not only denied most Africans, in particular Pokot families, their use of animal products, but in the long run it also undermined their stock reproduction and accumulation cycles that were anchored in the agro-pastoral economy (Jarvis 1991:95).

It is also worth mentioning that government policy on destocking was based on the presumption that the potential value of African-owned livestock to the colony was immense, but by the 1940s and 1950s, to a large extent its use had been limited to merely a token passed between families in payment of bride wealth. This custom, according to colonial administrators, was partly responsible for the overstocking of African occupied areas, with consequent deterioration of the available grazing land (Patterson 1969:28).

Therefore, according to the colonial administration, the problems which African-owned livestock presented to the government and for which the solutions were not easy to find, were how to accommodate numbers to the carrying capacity of African grazing areas, improve the quality of the stock, turn the stock to economic use, and eradicate disease (NADAR, 1948-1957:62). At the same time, the administration argued that, although to Africans stock was currency and wealth, the general system of the communal grazing militated against the control of numbers (NADAR, 1948-1957:62). This led to the following irrational statement:

If a man has a fence or definitely limited area on which to graze his cattle he will soon find by experience how many head his land will
carry. But when an indefinite number of Africans has equal rights to graze unlimited herds of stock over a large communal area, there is no incentive for one individual to limit his herd unless all his neighbours are prepared to do the same. Yet, the African society is not yet so organized as to contemplate any such arrangement. The individual therefore collects as many head of cattle as he can and if he cannot find suitable grazing in his own Reserve he is apt to wander over boundaries of that Reserve on to European farms, alienated Crown Land or Forest Reserve (NADAR, 1948-1957:62).

Thus, based on a wrong premise, destocking was recommended as the quickest and least expensive means of making livestock keeping meaningful in African occupied areas. Yet, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, African traditional systems, in particular the Pokot grazing pattern, had evolved within a framework of common access to land and water. This framework appears to have been well suited to the environmental conditions faced in semiarid West Pokot, where rainfall is low, seasonal and highly unstable. Generally, traditional range management systems in Kenya’s marginal areas enabled herders to exploit the available resources in ways which were, at least in many dimensions, efficient (Jarvis 1991:96). In this case, government intervention through destocking, citing overgrazing as the main factor, caused by African grazing patterns over a large communal area, was indeed uncalled for. In retrospect, destocking was tantamount to colonial exploitation of African livestock owners.

For West Pokot, the colonial administration estimated in 1931 that Pokot herders had about 320,000 head of cattle, and worked out a ratio at 13 animals to every household. As a result, it was asserted that such enormous numbers of cattle had eaten West Pokot County out of grass, and the only solution to land degradation was destocking. Expectedly, destocking was carried out in West Pokot from in the 1940s. For
example, as part of destocking policy, over 3,000 head of cattle, from Kipkomo, Chepareria division (refer to map in appendix 3) alone, were cheaply obtained for soldiers as part of the war effort in 1939 (Vermaat 1986:23). This was based on unfounded justifications that in the 1930s and early 1940s, West Pokot experienced gross overstocking, as the number of cattle was abnormally increased by the immigration of the Nandi and Saboat from the Trans Nzoia (European settler) farms to the area. On the same note, the colonial administration stressed that Kapenguria division, in particular Mnagei location, had absorbed most of the immigrants, and besides overstocking, the area under cultivation was increasing rapidly, leading to land degradation. The administration further noted that in addition to Kapenguria division, the western plains near the Suam River (refer to map in appendix 3) and the dry weather grazing in the high region of the Cherengany hills, among others areas in West Pokot County, were steadily deteriorating. Thus, outlets for surplus cattle were essential to reduce the number of stock to land carrying capacity in the area (WSDAR, 1947, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1). The colonial government used destocking policy as an excuse of forcefully taking away animals from the Pokot. Pokot community like other pastoralists believed in keeping a large number of herd for social and cultural reasons. The only remedy was for them to raid neighbouring communities to replace the lost stock.

In the 1940s, according to the colonial administration, over-stocking continued to constitute the most serious problem facing the African areas of the Rift Valley region. As a matter of fact, all DCs in the region met in 1940 in search of solutions to prevent further land deterioration in their areas presumably due to overstocking. As a result, they suggested that a permanent outlet for surplus cattle was an essential preliminary
to any plan for reducing the number of stock to land carrying capacity and, if regular sales (with good prices paid) were emphasized, this would develop into the most valuable method of conserving and improving the districts (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, AADAR, 1955:85).

The DCs also pointed out the necessity for an accurate stock census being made before any measures for destocking could be undertaken (Kenya Colony and Protectorate, AADAR, 1955:85). There was opposition in Sekerr and Masol locations, but it was completed without any major incident. The total stock figures for the district were placed at approximately 135,500 goats, 120,000 cattle and 42,000 sheep at the beginning of the year. Commenting on the figures, the DC noted that, “there was localized overstocking, but the district as a whole could carry these numbers without any problems” (WSDAR, 1953, KNA: WP/2/PC/RVP/2/5/1).

However, in April 1955 the question of overstocking was once again considered at the District Commissioners’ meeting, and, as a result, a report was prepared on the subject and forwarded to the ALDEV Board. After this, the board recommended that a special committee be appointed to once again look into destocking measures. At the request of the board, therefore, a committee was then appointed consisting of the Provincial Veterinary Officer, the District Commissioner, Kitale (Trans Nzoia district), and the Senior Livestock Officer, Rift Valley region. After various sittings, the committee came up with a report detailing requirements and steps of destocking that was unanimously accepted at a District Commissioners’ meeting on 5 October 1955 and was forwarded to the government for appropriate action (AADAR, 1955:85).
Consequently, steps were taken to implement the committee’s report in all counties of the region. In West Pokot, a district baraza was held in 1956 to once again enforce destocking as recommended by the report (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). By 1959/60, various steps were taken to further reduce the number of stock in the whole district. First, Individual Destocking Notices were issued under the ADC. Then, Individual and Locational Quota Systems were introduced as steps towards stock reduction. Last, but not least, the Reduction of Livestock bylaw became operational from September 1959, and was to be effective until August 1960. In the meantime, destocking files were kept by the DO, Kapenguria, and each Chief had a list of his location’s stock owners with their quotas (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

However, Mnagei and Lelan had had reductions based on individual quota system since 1957 and Riwa since 1958. Batei and Kipkomo were new additions to the Individual Quota System in 1959. In Batei, the rather severe method was adopted of making everyone with at least five head of cattle (h/c) to sell one or more animals. While in Sook, a flat locational quota of 300 h/c every two months had to be produced either at Ortum or Kishaunet sale yards, based on 10 percent of the total locational holding (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). In Masol, Sekerr and Mwino, a flat locational quota of 50 h/c every two months had to be produced at Ortum. Meanwhile, Lomut, Cheptulel and Weiwei had to produce a flat locational quota of sheep and goats: Lomut 200, Cheptulel 200 and
Weiwei 125, based on the 1958 locational holding of small stock. No set cattle quota was imposed, but people there could produce one slaughter animal in lieu of 5 goats if they wanted to (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

Commenting on destocking in 1959, the outgoing DC, Shirreff, noted:

I make no claim that this system is perfect. Strict adherence to quotas requires persistence by the administrative staff. But, limited administrative staff in the latter part of 1958 and the first part of 1959 meant that supervision was inadequate (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

Shirreff further noted that although it was anticipated by the government that in 1959 West Pokot was to produce nearly 9,000 h/c, “there had been moans about destocking,” and the Pokot were not by any means ready to part with their animals (Handing Over Report, A.D. Shirreff to E.H. Risley, confidential, 14 September 1959, KNA: DC/WP/2/4).

As a matter of fact, the Pokot had been openly opposed to destocking. For example, destocking met severe opposition in Lelan, and the administration had to use force to implement individual quotas in the area. Still, the real cattle sales for Lelan in 1958 were one of the worst in the district as only 40% of the quota was realized. In Sigor division, locational quotas were still a fairly new idea in 1959, and the local population was openly opposed to it. In particular, the people preferred to exchange their stock for food or money than go by either Locational or Individual quotas imposed by the government. Yet the idea of exchanging small stock for food was not popular with the administration, and it was necessary for the Pokot to maintain a firm front (Dietz 1983:18-19).
Undoubtedly in 1960 resistance against destocking was felt all over West Pokot, and the result was a strong anti-government feeling among Pokot herders (Dietz 1983:18-19). Most Pokot herders mainly wondered if destocking was ever going to stop and this was balanced by a growing desire to sell stock on their own account in order to obtain money or food during the dry season. Therefore, Pokot herders were opposed to reduction of stock that was not only their wealth but also their food and currency. Besides, knowing how *Tilia* worked, it is possible to understand the Pokot resentment against destocking. To the Pokot the government was attempting to destroy *Tilia*, an important socio-economic institution and a coping mechanism against stock raids and disease (Dietz 1983:18-19). Thus, although total figures of animal disposal over the years through destocking were not available to the researcher, it is clear that continuous reduction of livestock meant endangering Pokot survival in a harsh environment.

**4.9 Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed how colonial and post-colonial policies on land and taxation contributed to economic marginalization of West Pokot County. It also discussed population increase and competition for scarce resources in the County. The study has shown how West Pokot was relatively isolated from the rest of the new colonial entity, due to its rugged topography that made communication almost impossible. Communication within the county was even more difficult as both roads and means of transport were lacking. This partly prompted the colonial administration to refer to West Pokot as “a closed district,” where nothing much happened and to which no greater attention was given. Despite the challenges the inhabitants of West
Pokot paid taxes and its meagre resources were exploited through unbalanced trade for the benefit of the colonial regime. West Pokot although an outlying county in the colonial and post-colonial period, and over the years marginalized by the state in terms of resource allocation for meaningful socioeconomic development, still holds an important place in Kenyan history.

This chapter has highlighted on the connection between increases in population the increase in demand for scarce resources which leads to increase in incidences of cattle rustling. It was clear in the chapter that some of the immigrants from the neighbouring communities might have brought small arms into West Pokot County. The introduction of small arms light weapons helped to transform from a tradition to cultural practice into a military activity eventually commercializing it. The objective of this chapter was achieved. The next chapter discusses trends in cattle rustling in post-colonial stage.
5.0. CHAPTER FIVE: TRENDS IN CATTLE RUSTLING; POST COLONIAL PHASE

5.1 Introduction
This chapter provides a historical perspective on the sources of small arms, their entry and exit routes and their impact on West Pokot county residents. It covers pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. It highlights the cultural transformation where the Pokots used traditional weapons in the precolonial period but later there were easy availability of small arms and light weapons. Social conflict theory has been used in this chapter to epistemise the connection between small arms and conflict in West Pokot County.

5.2 History of Small arms and Light Weapons Proliferation-Regional perspective
For a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of arming and cattle rustling in West Pokot County, it is important to briefly trace the history of organized violence in the region and how small arms and light weapons were transported in and out of the county. The history of private armies in Eastern Africa is difficult to sketch although organized raids and predatory expansion predate European colonialism of the nineteenth century. Before colonialism, pastoralists of the region had been accustomed to the independence and freedom of openly carrying firearms they had for many decades obtained from Ethiopian gunrunners and Arab and Swahili slave traders, poachers and merchants from the east African coast (Darley, H., 1926:10). There were sprawling gun markets in Maji, south-western Ethiopia to the extent that ammunition was used as local currency.
Acquisition of large amounts of guns in Pokot began to be noticeable only decades later, in the period 1978-79. This was a tumultuous period in Uganda, characterized by acrimony and war against the regime of then President Idi Amin Dada. After the fall of Amin, the Karimojong looted the abandoned arms and ammunition at the Moroto Barracks. The acquisition of surplus guns by the Karimojong soon found a ready market among the Pokot. The continuing conflict in the Sudan provided a steady supply of arms to the Turkana community which also found their way to West Pokot.

It was evident, therefore, that the gun culture and its historical background in West Pokot County goes beyond Kenyan borders into the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. In the recent past, the fall of governments in Uganda (1979 and 1986), Ethiopia (1991) and Somalia (1991) as well as the continued conflict in the Southern Sudan in a great way contributed to the availability of illegal small arms in this region (Osamba 2000:12).

The colonial government ordered communities in West Pokot and Turkana counties to surrender guns peacefully. After failing to adhere to the orders Britain conducted a disarming campaign dubbed ‘Operation Tennis’ from the Turkana side of the Kenya/Uganda common border (KNA:K 967-6203. Memorandum on Turkana Affairs by Turnbull). On the ground the operation was unsuccessful for lack of proper co-ordination and the evasive agro-pastoralists simply re-located to rugged mountainous terrain out of reach of colonial patrols. Nevertheless, Karamoja and Turkana regions were declared ‘closed districts’ where movement within and outside was restricted without a valid pass. The draconian legislation was ostensibly to contain the spread of livestock diseases down south particularly rinderpest and pleuro-pneumonia. In
addition, by restricting transhumance the policy had the impact of sedentarizing and pauperising the two communities who previously had a thriving agro-pastoral economy and barter trade in grain, ironware, and livestock. It also insulated them from mainstream nationalism and fervour of patriotism raging in the southern half of each country.

Actually, the 25 East African Brigades that were deployed to spearhead the invasion of Abyssinia was garrisoned in West Pokot and Turkana counties (Mburu 2000:3). Similarly, the Karimojong had served with distinction as Askari for the Kings African Rifles during military campaigns conducted in Africa and Asia. From the 1967, the two pastoral communities strengthened their raiders using the weapons and skills gained in the colonial wars to revitalise the tradition of dynastic raids and predatory expansion.

Apart from providing troops for imperial policing duties, Pokot, Turkana and Karamoja regions remained economically deprived having the lowest literacy rate and highest infant mortality unlike the hinterland of each country. The two communities lacked road communication and infrastructure that could generate local employment. After political independence from Britain in the early 1960s the authorities of Kenya and Uganda continued to exclude the northern regions from the social, economic and political changes that were taking place in the south (Odegi 2002:15).

Hence the two communities failed to gravitate to the rhythm of statehood and instead strengthened their primordial identity as enclaves within the newly formed states. By 2000 the insulation was so strong that when Kenyan Pokot travelled to their county
headquarters they said they are visiting Kenya as if in another country. These deprived people simply did not connect with the state (Mburu 1999:89). Neglecting these communities strengthened gun culture, which they saw as a source of security, livelihood and status symbol. On the one hand, communities which did not benefit from government supplied arms felt the gun was a safeguard from domination and dispossession not just by the immediate pastoral neighbour but also by the predatory state (The Monitor, Kampala, February 20, 2002, Editorial).

Arming was also been motivated by a need to control natural resources and conversely disarming was unlikely to succeed unless it was accompanied by a consensual mechanism for sharing the existing natural wealth. It is important to note that in theory, customary law within the state and across the international boundaries governed pastoral land where individuals, clans and bond partners shared the natural resources according to their needs. In practice, however, entrepreneurs from, outside expropriated pastoral land for commercial use without benefiting the local people. Uganda recognised this problem and promised cultivable land to people who surrendered guns voluntarily (East African Standard, May 19, 2002). The strategy was plausible as long as the long-term objective was the provision of an alternative livelihood and not to convert agro-pastoral Karimojong into pure sedentary cultivators.

External factors also increased the instability of ethnic groups inhabiting remote regions of eastern Africa. In particular, political fragmentation and civil wars had domino effect on the Pokot, Karimojong and Turkana. They played host or been caught up in armed conflicts between various factions. Specifically the civil war in
southern Sudan, sporadic rebel movements in north-eastern Uganda, the fallout from the fragmentation of Siad Barre’s Somalia, low-intensity conflicts in Ethiopia during Mengistu Haile Mariam rule, Rwanda, and the contemporary situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo all affected the military balance among pastoral communities of the Kenya/Uganda/Sudan borderlands. Both the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and the government in Khartoum armed the pastoral communities purposely to use them for civil war in southern Sudan. In July 1988, SPLA factions close to Sudan’s border with Uganda and Kenya were logistically over-stretched and desperate to replace combat losses. However, their poor discipline at the time discouraged volunteers from enlisting and they dished firearms indiscriminately to the Turkana, Pokot, and Karimojong amongst other pastoral nomads of the Uganda-Kenya-Sudan border region to gain popularity and to recover their combat losses in the civil war. In direct competition with the SPLA the government of Sudan in the last decade supplied more than 50,000 rifles to the Toposa ethnic community alone (*AFRICANEWS* Vol. 68, November 2001). Overall it was estimated the government in Khartoum has injected more than 250,000 small arms excluding landmines to prop-up pro-government ethnic communities in an effort to destabilise areas of southern Sudan controlled by the SPLA (*AFRICANEWS* Vol. 68, November 2001). These arms found their way to Turkana county and later West Pokot county.

According to respondents (personal communication with Reverend John Lodinyo of Kiwawa Baptist Church) the first guns entered West Pokot around 1979. These were manual homemade guns that came from Turkana. They were called Tupai, Michir or Pogela in the Turkana language. The guns came from the Karimojong and the
Turkana, who had acquired guns much earlier. Another source that was developing around this time was Somalia, through Baringo (Mutotso 1993:32). Somali cattle traders came with guns, which they sold to a number of Pokot. The cost of a gun then was 40 cows. Thus only the wealthy could afford guns then.

In 1980 there was a major conflict between the Karimojong and the Pokot in Churchor along the River Kanyang’areng in Kacheliba constituency. The Karimojong lost to the Pokot and out of the confrontation, many Pokot acquired G3 and Mk-4 guns in large numbers to prepare for future conflicts. The Karimojong had acquired these guns from the Moroto Barracks after the Tanzanian Army ousted Idi Amin from power (Mkutu 2001:23). They took advantage of the confusion and change of leadership to raid the armouries after the army had fallen. It was this large number of guns in civilians’ hands in Uganda that increased the number of guns among the Kenyan Pokot because they were cheaper and the threat of gun-propelled raids was more serious (R.C. Soper (ed), 1985).

It may be claimed that arming by the two communities was a product of domestic political instability. The case of the Pokot will highlight this point. The community started acquiring guns in large quantities in the 1979 following the routing of President Idi Amin’s army in Uganda by an alliance of Tanzanian People’s Defence Force and Ugandan exiles. One major source was the Moroto barracks which the fleeing Ugandan dictator abandoned intact thus allowing the Pokot to access unlimited quantity of small arms and ammunition. Be as it may, in the context of the Pokot, Turkana and Karimojong people, the governments of Uganda and Kenya were also part of the problem. For instance, having liberated Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni initially allowed the Karimojong to keep some firearms for self-defence
against the Turkana and Pokot cattle raiders of Kenya and Uganda and the Toposa of South Sudan. However, the Ugandan government underestimated the community’s perception of security needs and centrality of weapons in the remote regions of Uganda. Consequently, the Karimojong, through raiding and dealing, increased their arsenal with more than 150,000 illegal firearms (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Report, 22, March 2000). The Pokot accepted they owned guns, which they acquired through barter for their livestock. They were willing to surrender them on condition the Kenyan government compensated them 20 cows for each gun.

5.3 Sources of Arms in West Pokot County

In Kenya, the Pokot started acquiring guns in 1979. These were heavy, cumbersome, somewhat outdated, and cost 60 head of cattle each (Karl Vick, the Washington Post, July 8, 2001). In 1986 an assault rifle such as the German make G.3 or HK 21 cost 15 cows. In 1991 seven goats bought a new AK 47 Kalashnikov that was lighter, user-friendly and carried more ammunition (Consult Oscar Oketch, & Antony Lokwang, .20 cows per gun. New Vision, Kampala, October 25, 1999). In 2000 the price was inestimably low particularly along the porous borders from disparate sources. Similarly the Turkana experienced the same trend of arming. In the 1980s and 1990s the Kenyan government covertly armed pro-government Turkana with Kalashnikovs through a former cabinet minister in President Daniel Moi government (Robert Muggah and Eric Berman 2001:65). It was unclear whether the arms were for destabilising Uganda, and for politically motivated livestock rustling as claimed by some, or for Turkana’s self-protection. It was alleged the government-supplied weapons came from disarmed ‘Shifta’ bandits operating along Kenya’s frontier with
Somalia, and from previous confiscation of arms imported by Idi Amin’s government before it collapsed.

The Turkana like their linguistic cousins in Karamoja, increased their arms through illegal purchases, barter and raiding. There are no reliable estimates of the quantity or types of guns currently possessed by the Turkana of Kenya. However, it may be deduced that their ability to intimidate their Marakwet and Pokot neighbours who were estimated to possess 20,000 guns, and occasional forays into eastern Uganda, South Sudan and south-western Ethiopia indicated they had a significant quantity and quality of firearms (Robert Muggah and Eric Berman 2001:66) Furthermore, although military patrols were common in Pokot and Turkana the post-colonial government in Kenya did not carried out an organised disarming campaign to augment Uganda’s effort across the common boundary. Paradoxically, due to the lack of frontier policing unilateral disarmament created a security vacuum, which made vulnerable communities to rearm.

The Kenya-Sudan border region was so awash with small arms that one ethnic group used guns for part payment of dowry when taking a bride from the other (Markakis 1994:21). Whereas cattle had a symbolic role in marriage and in the social-political and economic life of herders, their substitution with modern firearms indicated arms bearing had acquired a significant role in the spiritual and material culture of the pastoral communities in Kenya especially West Pokot County.

The arms race amongst the Pokot and Turkana and their pastoral neighbours was motive for bonding and raiding in the belief there was security in numbers. Cattle
rustlers were so well armed and operated in such large numbers that regional governments were reduced to ineffectual witnesses of low-intensity ethnic cleansing. A few randomly selected incidents illustrated the severity of the problem. In September 1997, fifty Turkana were killed in a 4 a.m. raid by a combined force of Kenyan Pokot and Ugandan Tepe ethnic communities numbering one thousand. The Pokot-Tepe alliance was armed with AK 47 assault rifles and stole 7,000 cattle (The Weekly Review, Nairobi 26 September 1997).

In March 1999, one hundred Pokot gunmen from Kenya attacked a Turkana village killing 30 people before escaping with 2,000 heads of cattle (The Daily Nation, Nairobi 9 March 1999). Five months later, the Turkana formed an alliance with the Karimojong in a raid that massacred 140 Dodoth of Uganda. What was most disturbing was the fact that the Turkana-Karimojong alliance burned food crops; gang raped women, set huts on fire and threw seventy children into the flames (BBC Online, 11 August 1999 http://news.bbc.co.uk). Later, an attack in February 2000 by the Ugandan Karimojong on Kenyan Pokot killed one hundred people and stole 1,800 cattle and 5,000 sheep (The Daily Nation, Nairobi, 26 December 1998). It is therefore not surprising that despite good logistical support and a take-charge approach by President Museveni personally, very few guns have been surrendered in Karamoja. Over the same period the appeal for disarmament by Kenyan authorities to their people has yielded a grand total of one firearm (Vick 2001:15).

Furthermore, due to the devastation of pastoral productivity by ecological changes, it was harder for animal keepers to recuperate immediately from heavy losses of livestock. Hence, it was logical to hide their guns, which they used to engage in
reciprocal raids not only to repair their warriors shattered pride but also to replace what had been physically stolen. Cultural ecological theory was applicable in juxtaposing ecological changes and the demand for small arms and light weapons and their resultant impact on people’s livelihoods in West Pokot County.

5.2 Regional Instability and Proliferation of Arms

Several decades of regional instability adversely affected Kenya, especially, West Pokot County. The regional conflicts in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda contributed to flow of weapons into Kenya and the main transit points were West Pokot and Turkana counties. West Pokot County shares borders with Uganda and also Uganda shares border with South Sudan; this provided a smooth flow of arms from these countries to West Pokot County.

In Ethiopia there was nearly two decades of civil war. The collapse of the central government in Somalia in 1991 also contributed to increased cattle rustling. Each of these factors contributed to increase in the availability of modern weapons. Members of some groups benefited from the lack of effective administrative control in the area, as it allowed them to organize and carry out livestock raids with relative impunity (Lumpe 2000:10).

Increase in the supply and availability of modern weapons in West Pokot County since 1979 was critical in the cattle raiding equation. The Karimojong acquired guns following the lootings of the government armoury in Moroto in 1979, 1985 and 1986 after the fall of the Amin, Obote II and Okello governments, respectively. These events played a key role in changing the nature of cattle raiding in Kenya because the
arms found their way into the hands of pastoralists in West Pokot County (Stites and Akabwai 2007:10). The supply of arms and ammunition continued principally from the South Sudan, Ethiopia, Northern Uganda and Somalia. The estimated supply of firearms in West Pokot in 1999 was around 90,000 – 100,000. The proliferation of weapons was an important income generating activity for some people, who sold them to pastoralists. Because government did not provide pastoralists with adequate security many of them felt they needed modern weapons to protect themselves, their families and their livestock (Mkutu 2006:21).

The weapons from neighbouring countries entered the country and found their way to the markets in West Pokot County. Map one show the main arms markets in West Pokot County which were Kanyerus, Lokitanyala, Lotukum and Orolwo.

Weapons are transported from Uganda to Kenya by use of donkeys (Interview with Renson Apakamoi, 4th January 2011). The feeling among the Pokot people that the Karimojong, Turkana and Marakwet got away with theft and murder for years sparked off need for response (Personal communication with Renson Apakamoi, 4th January 2011). From this point of view, the use of military force to secure disarmament resonated, and the former President Moi Initiative for disarmament did not bear fruits.
Kenyan Government launched its disarmament program in Pokot and some Pokots begun voluntarily handing in their illegally owned firearms on December 2, 2000 (Mburu, 2000:153). In the plan, the Pokot had been given six months to turn in a hoped-for 40,000 weapons. The challenge was that there was no joint disarmament; it was carried out in Kenya and yet the neighbouring communities retained their weapons (Mburu, 2000:153). After the initial period, anyone found to possess an illegal gun was to be arrested. The government promised to commit development resources to the area in exchange for weapons. The security personnel were to be deployed along the borders between Kenya and Uganda to protect residents of Pokot from cross border raids.

5.3 Lack of an Effective Government Approach to stopping cattle raiding

Government interventions in the past were characterized by military operations with soldiers brutally punishing whole villages and communities as culprits. The result was resentment and mistrust on the part of the innocent people. Payments of livestock to compensate another group that had been raided, a practice that originated in the colonial era, penalized individuals, families and communities, that had no involvement in the offenses committed. At the same time, people generally recognized that it was the responsibility of the government to protect the life and property of its citizens (Pax Christi Netherlands, 2000:2). Announcements of disarmament campaigns dramatically increased raiding in anticipation of guns being taken. Apparently raiders hoped to consolidate herds-gains by timing their raids as close as possible to the disarmament deadline so that retaliation would not be possible by their disarmed victims (Knighton 2005:12).
Inflammatory speeches by politicians frequently triggered raids and counter raids in West Pokot County. Such speeches focused on real or assumed offenses of another group, like previous raids and/or violent attacks on women and children. Using the media and political statements to incite supporters, politicians frequently focused on highly charged issues and failed to address issues of conciliation (Knighton 2005:12).

5.4 Weakening of traditional authority structures

Unlike the past, raiding sometimes occurred without the formal sanction of elders, local prophets and soothsayers. When unsanctioned raids occurred, elders were often involved in trying to retrieve the cattle that young men in their group raided. The simultaneous pull of cultural tradition and the push of contemporary factors affected all groups. Male elders and opinion leaders generally played a key role in decision-making. Traditional structures and methods of conflict-resolution provided an important starting point for developing peace and development strategies in the region albeit not as vigorously as it was in the past (Mkutu 2000:5).

Youth on the other hand said that while they were prepared to give their elders and the government time to reclaim the cattle or negotiate compensation, they would not wait forever and would undertake a retaliatory raid if needed (Knighton 2005:13). Elders were sometimes pushed by youth to sanction such raids if formal government processes produced no results. Consequently, a series of livestock thefts triggered a major retaliatory response by the affected group. This was characteristic of the conflict between Pokot and the Sabiny of Kapchorwa (Knighton 2005:13).
5.5 Commercialization of Raiding and the Monetization of indigenous Economies

During pre-colonial period cattle rustling was a social issue or mainly for the purpose of restocking depleted stock. In the Post-colonial period introduction of commercial raiding represented a major change for the worse among the conflicting parties. In West Pokot County powerful, wealthy individuals, including livestock traders, arms dealers and others, sponsored raids. Young men were hired to carry out raids, and the organizers provided guns on credit to the raiders. The cattle were stolen and in some cases were herded into trucks waiting by the roadside. The livestock were then transported or driven on foot. Commercial raiding was becoming a more important factor contributing to escalation of rustling than ecological pressure (Galaty 1991:2).

When the cattle were raided and sold in distant markets, the ability to locate and restore those animals to rightful owners during the livestock recovery was destroyed (Mkutu 2000:6). This undermined the restitution of stolen animals. Commercial raiding also caused a reduction in the per capita numbers of cattle among pastoralists. This was in contrast with traditional raiding, which redistributed rather than removed cattle and it distorted social and cultural reasons that cattle fulfilled. As young people became less and less able to meet inflated bride-price, they became less interested and integrated into systems of social and cultural control and more apt to participate in raiding for pay. This in turn was part of the reason that victims of contemporary raiding were no longer restricted to the warriors. With the commercialization of cattle raids, the value of cows by the Pokot people was no longer simply cultural but was tied directly and concretely to market forces. Because controls and limits on raiding ceased to be governed by social sanction, violent raiding increased, revenge killings proliferate, and cycles of violence grow more and more serious (Mkutu 2000:7).
In early 1960s colonial government introduced game protection policy aimed at boosting tourism to economically benefit this semi-arid part of the country. However, the county had only one game reserve. This was the Nasolot National Reserve on the boundary with Turkana near Turkel gorge (Hendrix, Mwangi and de Vos, District Atlas, 1985:73). However, very few tourists visited the Nasolot National Reserve. Although there were no exact figures for this reserve, undoubtedly insecurity from frequent border clashes and cattle raids was a major constraint to the development of tourism in the area. Thus, the intended economic benefits from the game reserve, particularly for the Pokot population, were yet to be realized in this part of the country.

In 1962 As a matter of fact, there was an outbreak of bovine pleuro pneumonia and foot and mouth disease in Karapokot, and foot and mouth in the same year in Sigor, and the administration responded by placing the two regions under temporary quarantine (Handing Over Report, A.J. Foster to J.M.A. Herdman, confidential, 30 June 1963, KNA: DC/WP/2/4). Thus, control of disease was never seriously considered by the colonial administration. Destocking and quarantines were always used as solutions for entomological and disease control.

Likewise, the administration proved more diligent in collecting taxes and appropriating cattle as fines, despite resistance, than it did in providing protection for Pokot herds against Turkana and Karimojong raiders. Disease and inter-ethnic raids remained a serious problem throughout the colonial period and continued to be so in the post-colonial period as well.
Pokot farming and livestock activities were in fact two sides of the same ecological coin (Spear 1993:120). Over the years, members of the Pokot community cultivated grains and supplemented them with animal products - milk, meat and blood. Livestock were also socially and economically valuable and were domestically and locally managed. The Pokot source of food also depended on the use of wild resources, by way of seasonal hunting and gathering. For example, vegetables, wild fruits and relishes - termites and mushrooms - were an important supplementary food supply. The Pokot strived to attain a degree of food security, based upon a sound adaptation to their environment through a more or less efficient and balanced exploitation of their fauna and flora.

However, the establishment of colonialism interfered with the Pokot livestock keeping and hunting activities, and hence their food supplements, in one way or another. Particularly, the creation of boundaries interfered with Pokot grazing movements and hunting activities, respectively. Yet, almost all government efforts, whether colonial or post-colonial, intended to improve Pokot livestock production were less than fruitful in the area. Specifically, the establishment of grazing schemes/group ranches was handicapped by erratic rainfall and the outbreak of livestock diseases from time to time. Therefore, intended proper rotational grazing for better livestock management/production was difficult to achieve and it only aggravated Pokot resentment against government policies. Particularly in the colonial period, the Pokot were not only opposed to livestock and human confinement in grazing schemes, but also resented destocking as well as taxation policies.
In the post-colonial period, there were government attempts to introduce exotic dairy cattle, wool sheep, a modern beekeeping industry and the promotion of tourism through the Nasolot National Reserve as a package for economic development in this part of the country. However, positive impact of these activities on the larger Pokot population, particularly in terms of food security, is yet to be realized (Spear 1993:121).

5.7 Communal Relations in the Postcolonial Period, 1963-2000

This study analysed relations between the Pokot and neighbouring communities in the post-colonial period (1964-2000) in order to establish how the post-colonial government contributed to conflicts in West Pokot County. The analysis of the inter community relations enabled this study to contextualize transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County by linking post-colonial government policies with conflicts, especially, cattle rustling.

During the post-independence period in Kenya, land-use conflicts worsened inter-community relations due to land-ownership issues. No endeavour was made to revive colonial grazing schemes in the postcolonial period. Neither colonial nor post-colonial governments had a clear range-management policy at the time of independence, while both also wished to avoid being associated with colonial repression of the indigenous population. For this among other reasons, border incursions continued unabated following independence in the early 1960s. Moreover, individual groups were allowed to make their own arrangements with their neighbours in regard to sharing pastures and watering points. The increased potential for friction as formerly restricted areas
under government control were opened up led to an escalation of raids and counter-raids in the postcolonial period (Dietz 1993:14).

The relations between Pokot and the neighbouring communities worsened during the early 1970s, in this period a week hardly passed without a raid being reported to the authorities. This was the time when the Karimojong hit the Pokot and Turkana hard (Awuondo 1992:9). Security forces had to be deployed along the Kenyan–Ugandan border in West Pokot County. This became a major preoccupation and strained military resources. Raids and counter-raids resulted in enormous loss of livestock, leaving a large proportion of West Pokot County residents’ destitute (Awuondo 1992:10).

Because of poor security, large chunks of grazing lands were abandoned, while secure areas became over-used. For example, the Mosol and Simbol plains, bordering Turkana County to the southwest, had been used in the past by the Pokot as a wet-season grazing area. Following incursions of ngoroko (warriors) into the area, and subsequent raids which resulted in thousands of heads of cattle lost and many people killed, the Pokot ceased using the area in 1974 (Awuondo 1992:11).

One reason raids and counter-raids grew and were hard to control in the late 1970s was that rustlers could cross international borders and then take refuge in their own countries, making pursuit by both security forces problematic, especially, with the Pokot who lived on both sides of the border (TDAR, 1979). Porous borders, coupled with poor security, only increased the potential for illegal activities and, in turn, suspicion led to distrust between the communities and the security forces. This was
the time also when the Karimojong in Uganda broke into the Moroto army barracks, increasing the level of sophisticated weaponry available on the market (Inselman, 2000:5). Arms from this cache found their way the Pokot community.

Given frictions along the common border between Kenya and Uganda, the Ugandan government as early as the 1970s sought to impose a policy that restricted the Pokot from entering Uganda without documentation from the relevant authorities. This was meant to control raids and counter-raids as the communities competed for resources in the dry seasons. It is important to note that the British were effective in controlling cross-border raids because they ran the government both in Kenya and Uganda. The necessary coordination and support could be achieved as required. The problem as both countries transitioned after independence was that they maintained sovereign border-non-interference policies based on prerogatives (Osamba 2000:2).

During the 1980s there was massive flow of arms form the neighbouring countries. These arms found their way to West Pokot County and other neighbouring counties. Following the fall of the government of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia in early 1980s there was a lot of arms in circulation in Ethiopia. The secessionist war in southern Sudan had likewise injected more weapons into West Pokot County. The availability of modern weapons exacerbated ethnic conflicts in the county for a long time (Robinson, 1984:6).

During the 1990s Kenyan government established development projects, especially in marginalized counties, to alleviate poverty and insecurity. Where people were considered to be a threat to the scarce natural resources, the policy of the government
was to protect those resources. This was achieved most notably through the creation of forest reserves, national parks, and game reserves. Unfortunately, the gazetting of these game parks and reserves alienated the Pokot who were restricted to specific areas, like the plains, against their wishes (Mamdani and Mahmood, 1996:14). This forced the Pokot to extend their movements miles beyond their traditional grazing areas along the border.

Conflicts between the residents of West Pokot County and their neighbours; the Karimojong, Turkana and Marakwet revolved mainly around cattle raiding. Cattle raids were a form of conflict as well as a symptom of much deeper conflicts and fractures over a period of time. For centuries, raiding other groups for livestock was a traditional method of replenishing herds in the wake of drought, disease and loss to other raiders. In some respects, this raiding was seen as a quasi-legitimate sharing of resources, permitting groups on the verge of economic ruin and even starvation to re-establish their systems of food production and natural resources management (Awuondo 1992:24).

Pastoralist communities’ migration patterns knew several curtailments. Their lifestyle and movement went beyond modern state borders. The Karimojong communities’ need for water and pastures, combined with seasonal fluctuations, tied them to a high degree of mobility. Colonialism was a first infringement on their lifestyles as it imposed national boundaries and emphasized ethnic differences (Mwagiru, 2008:288). As such, boundaries restricted the communities’ migration possibilities to head for environments with greener pastures and more pools, making the access to land more scarce, and competition harder. Furthermore the boundaries reduced the
interdependency between communities and as such reduced also the advantage of maintaining amicable relationships with each other (Chapman and Kagaha, 2009:2). In such an environment there was more room for hostility and insecurity to develop. The deteriorating security situation in its turn further hampered the pastoralists’ itinerary possibilities, which created a vicious cycle (Stites et al, 2007:4). It also hampered the pastoralists’ access to markets, on which they depended to sell their cattle and buy provisions.

Another explanatory factor for the high level of insecurity and gun violence, accompanying cattle raiding in the county, was the changing nature of raiding. In the past, entire communities in West Pokot County were involved in the consultation process to decide whether or not to conduct a raid. The elders of a community organized ceremonies and planned the raid. It was impossible to imagine a raid without their involvement (Interview with Wilson Chekeruk, 2nd January, 2011). Afterwards, the stolen cattle joined the herds of several families of the community. All this implied that the entire community approved of the raid and benefited from it. Targeted communities were challenged in advance, and the battle was fought outside the villages. Women and children were consequently spared and the death toll was kept down (Stites et al, 2007:4).

Cattle raids were planned and carried out by smaller groups of young warriors, often without the consent of the elders and the wider community. In many cases, the raids were secretive and the targeted community was taken by surprise. The rustlers descended upon a village, killing women and children who could not defend themselves (D. Akabwai and P. E. Ateyo, 2007:25-26). With the changing nature of
cattle rustling, the frequency of raids caused a considerably higher impact on societies affected.

The main reason that explained the rise of cattle raids performed by young warriors was the waning authority of the elders, traditionally an important actor to balance the pros and cons of a raid. The elders, presumed to act in the interest of the entire community, tried to avoid thefts from neighbours, because this could harm the inter-community relationships and its accompanying advantages (Stites et al, 2007:4). During the post-colonial era, their authority got a first blast. The traditional leaders were side-lined by the new administration that created a modern leadership structure. It led to confusion about how customary leadership related to the elected local authorities (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009:4). Further, during the last decades of 20th century the traditional transfer of power and authority by the elders to younger generations was being held off within the West Pokot County. This strengthened a feeling of disgruntlement within the younger generations, decreasing their sympathy and respect for the elders and their authority (Stites et al, 2007:16-18, 61).

Additionally, there was the worsening poverty and the elders’ rising inability to ensure food security, which affected their status (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009:2).

Traditional authority and the old raiding patterns were seriously affected by the widespread proliferation of small arms in the Horn of Africa. Small arms flooding into the region because of frequent conflicts became widely available and cheap. Reliable information on the number of small arms present in West Pokot County was practically non-existent. The firearms enabled cattle rustlers to successfully raid other communities in small bands, outside of their own communities’ consent, for their own
profit (Stites et al, 2007:26). The repercussions, however, often recoiled upon the entire community of the warriors, as raids produced revenge attacks. In many cases, counter-raids were not directed towards the attackers’ village, because of ignorance or power gaps, which affected third communities (J. Bevan, Arms Survey, 2008:25). Apart from that, the proliferation of small arms changed the power balance in the Pokot community. It appeared that elders were more reluctant to punish those who had guns (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009:4).

The changing value of cattle was another factor that led to increased insecurity in West Pokot County. Traditionally, cattle had an important cultural and social value to the Pokot community. Over time, the traditional value lost weight in favour of the economic value, because of the rising demand for cattle products. Commercial reasons became the primary motive for cattle raiding in the county (Interview with Amos Chesuswo, 4th January, 2011). In the post-colonial period, the objective of cattle raids were mostly personal rapid profit, conducted by a small group of warriors, often no more than ten in number. The looted cattle were quickly sold or bartered for guns, alcohol, food or other goods (Alusala, 2010:11). In the past, the reasons for carrying out a raid were much more diverse. Next to an increase of wealth, the community aimed to use the cattle to redistribute wealth and food in times of scarcity, to avert competition for resources within the community. Furthermore, raids was a way for young men to prove their manhood and to acquire bride price, (Stites et al, 2007:60) as a bride price could amount to 100 head of cattle (IRIN, May 2006).

Fighting the security problem and executing disarmament exercises had been a challenge for the government of Kenya, especially, in the 1990s. The commercial
nature of cattle rustling attracted powerful individuals, such as politicians, government officials, military officers, wealthy businessmen and traders (Stites et al, 2007:27-28). The weak presence of state institutions in the West Pokot County, the lack of law and order, and the police’s inability to deal with the security problem created an environment open for armed raiding.

Colonial government in Kenya cracked down on rising levels of insecurity by increasing the number of security personnel in pastoralist regions. This strategy suppressed the symptoms of the problem, but did not address the deeper social, political and economic causes of it. Consequently, after independence, insecurity flared up as the post-independence governments could not avert the violence with the same display of power as colonial governments did (Farah, 2008:288).

The government structures especially provincial administration were not adequately implanted in the county and lack the local population’s trust. Traditional mechanisms on the other hand were firmly embedded in the local communities and were present in areas where state authority was completely missing. During 20th century, however, these mechanisms failed to cope with the rising level of violence. Among other things, this was caused by the aforementioned waning authority of the elders, a lack of equality and the failing of enforcement of punishment and compensation because of the widespread presence of firearms (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009:11). Being unable to respond to thefts and raid, to try the culprits and to provide compensation to victims, the state could not prevent retaliation, and as such could not halt the cycle of violence (Eastern African Affairs Volume 107, 2008:89-110). The state’s security and justice institutions thus hardly succeed in delivering security and justice in the West Pokot
County. In case of cross-border raids it was even almost impossible to regain the stolen cattle in a lawful manner (Stitles & Akabwai, 2007:60). In a move to contain cases of cattle rustling, Kenyan authorities allowed Ugandan soldiers to pursue Pokot raiders on Kenyan territory. Such cooperation was exceptional, but might be essential to curb cattle rustling in the future (New Vision, December 2010).

The level of insecurity and the lack of law and order promoted the proliferation of small arms in the county. On the one hand, firearms offered a means to gain rapid profit through rustling. On the other they were indispensable to defend one’s livestock and family against raiders. Pastoralists relied on self-defence because of the weak state security apparatus (Alusala, 2008:188). Ever since then, Kenyan government did not try to settle pastoralists, as they were often not sympathetic of their way of life. For example, the government restricted migration routes, imposed international borders on them and seized grazing land to create forest reserves, continually decreasing the availability of pasture and water for the people of West Pokot County.

The process of and reasons for raiding cattle varied from one group to another. Traditionally, in Kenya, cattle raiding among the Pokot community were done during the day. The magnitude of the raid was fairly small and the number of herds of cattle and other livestock that were raided were equally small. The raids were carried out mainly in the dry season because it was easier to travel through the bushes and wilderness when it was dry than when it was wet and muddy. It was also one way of evading detection, as the footprint marks of livestock were more apparent on wet than dry surfaces (Interview with Apakamoi Renson, 2nd January 2011). The other reason was that rivers and swamps formed the boundaries of West Pokot and other districts.
It was difficult to get across rivers with animals when water levels swelled due to heavy rains. The planning for and blessing of raids was done by elders and soothsayers plus indigenous prophets and executed by the youth. Weapons such as arrows, bows and spears were used. And the numbers that raided a village of livestock were between 20 and 100 young energetic men (Interview with Samuel Krop, 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 2011).

The raids were done after thorough reconnaissance with details about the location of the animals and the military strength, in respect of numbers of men and their arms and munitions, of the community that was to be attacked. Once the raiders had obtained all the required information they pounced on their opponents and scattered entire villages taking the animals, mainly cattle, in the ensuing stampede. The raiders usually took livestock and food from the granaries. They rarely killed their victims; first because the weapons used were not so efficient; and secondly their victims were caught by surprise and totally unprepared to mount resistance. It was then left to the affected community to revenge. It was equally the role of elders in communities that raided each other to try to create a solution to the problem and stop the tit-for-tat raids (Interview with Samuel Krop, 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 2011).

The influx of modern weapons completely transformed this conflict. The traditional rules that governed raiding between the pastoralists loosened and partially replaced by more random raids. Traditional raiding and warfare required long training and special skills. Some of these skills were no longer needed when modern weapons were used. Those who were not expected to defend their livestock under traditional rules could do so with modern weapons. For this reason livestock thieves and raiders shot and
killed innocent people. Traditionally, non-combatants were spared during raids. Women, children, the sick and elderly were not killed (Interview with Lorot Chidan, 3rd January 2011).

In late 1990s there was witnessed extreme levels of violence against women, children, and the elderly and destruction of property. This led to increased animosity and hatred between the people of West Pokot, the Karimojong and Turkana pastoralists’ communities in the region, and a strong desire for revenge further inflaming the situation and leading to more cattle raids. Unlike the pre-colonial period raids in post-colonial era were carried out by the youth more often in small groups that were not sanctioned by the elders, soothsayers and local prophets. This created hatred never seen before. In the event of a raid those that lost their livestock were left with the option of carrying out a counter raid. The timing of the counter raid did not matter (Personal communication with Lorot Chidan, 3rd January 2011).

For the Pokot people of Kenya, a counter raid was mainly bent on recovering the stolen livestock. This was referred to as chorsho. It was not only the responsibility of those who lost cattle to embark on the process of recovering the stolen or raided livestock through counter raid but the burden was upon the entire community (Interview with Susan Cherop, 3rd January 2011). This was because of the local philosophy that “today is my day and tomorrow it is someone else’s”! All people in the community realized their role in helping each other in times of raids and in mitigating their effects.
While cattle raids between the people of Pokot and their neighbours were frequent, they were also unpredictable and intermittent. They were not steady and unrelenting and were characterized by peak and lull periods when there was a relative calm and then sudden outbreaks of raids. The periods of peaceful relations were punctuated by short episodes of cattle raiding, and after a series of such raids, one group could mount a major response and violence escalated. The cattle raiding conflict between the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist groups within Kenya, especially, West Pokot County could be characterized as recurrent rather than continuous. (Interview with Susan Cherop, 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 2011).

Cattle raiding between the Pokot of Kenya and other neighbouring communities were witnessed since the early 1960s when Pokot warriors stole cattle from Karamoja and Kapchorwa, leading to a series of raids and counter raids, thefts and counter thefts. The Sabiny community in Kapchorwa, and the pastoralist Pokot of Uganda and Kenya had both positive and conflictual relationships amongst themselves. Some of the alliances were long standing, stretching back many years, while others lasted for only a short period of time. Territorial, social and political affiliations especially between the Pokot and Sabiny people of the most-eastern part of Kapchorwa had long been fluid (Galaty 1993:13).

Better relationship toward the Pokot shown by the Sabiny people of Kapchorwa was due to the much closer cultural ties they shared as compared to the Karimojong. Sometimes the alliances between the Pokot and people of Kapchorwa were expedient rather than deeply rooted in cultural or ethnic tradition (Interview with Francis Lokorcholia, 5\textsuperscript{th} January, 2011). This fluidity served a vital economic function,
allowing pastoralists to avoid the harshest impacts of unpredictable weather patterns and accelerated recovery from “catastrophic livestock losses” by reducing uncertainty (Grey 2000: 405). These groups made temporary pacts to share resources, particularly grazing areas and water sources.

During the annual dry season, Pokot and Karimojong people shifted their cattle from their semi-arid homelands in Moroto and Nakapiripirit Districts in Uganda, and West Pokot County in Kenya and moved into Kapchorwa to take advantage of more plentiful pasture and water. During these periods cattle raids were conspicuously absent. After the rains returned in these semi-arid areas belonging to the Pokot and Karimojong and the herds recovered and began breeding, raiding to restock resumed (Interview with Joseph Akaule, 4th January 2011).

Alliances of convenience were established when group members of two conflicting parties, the Pokot and the Sabiny people in Kapchorwa combined forces to raid another group, the Karimojong. However, the situation was characterized by frequently shifting alliances, especially by the Pokot (Interview with Peter Lonyala, 3rd January, 2011). It was, therefore, difficult to pin down and predict cattle rustling because it shifted around. The hot spots kept shifting from peace to conflict. This illustrated the dynamic nature of cattle rustling.

5.8 Conclusion
This chapter has argued that cattle rustling was a traditional activity among the pastoralists in West Pokot County in the pre-colonial period. Traditionally, the pastoralists practiced cattle rustling using spears and bows; during the colonial and
post-colonial periods the weapon of choice was the AK-47. Small arms and light weapons were used as a means of achieving social, economic and political goals. Pastoral communities armed themselves for defensive and offensive reasons. First, they needed to protect themselves and their cattle from being plundered by hostile groups. Second, they used arms to forcefully steal stock from other pastoral communities. Small arms and light weapons transformed the scale, intensity and brutality of the conflicts.

The objective of this chapter was fully met especially by combining cultural ecological and social conflict theories in explaining the connection between small arms and light weapons and conflict in West Pokot County. It exposed how sources of arms have a historical perspective and their origins are traced from neighbouring countries. It is worth emphasizing that post-colonial state investments in grazing/ranching schemes and improved stock were too minimal, to enhance livestock production in West Pokot county. Cultural-ecological theory expounded the fact that Pokot herders kept different types of animals, mainly as sources of food and a coping mechanism in a harsh environment, there was little effort on the part of the state to invest more, for example, to control livestock disease or to enhance quality and surplus production in the area.

It can therefore be argued that the state was more interested in extracting as many animals as possible from the area to raise state revenue than in investing in the development of quality/surplus livestock production for the benefit of both the state and Pokot farmers/herders. This in itself reinforces the fact that West Pokot continued to be marginalized in terms of state allocation of resources for the area’s
socioeconomic development. It did not provide meaningful support of the inhabitants’ continued effort in livestock keeping, while striving for food security in a harsh environment, as compared to the country’s high potential areas; all this, despite the fact that Pokot animals were extracted for the benefit of the state. The following chapter provides a summary of findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations.
6.0 CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

6.2 Summary

Cattle rustling has been a major security issue in West Pokot County from colonial period. Although raids were experienced in pre-colonial period the intensity was not compared to post-colonial period. The introduction of small arms and light weapons and commercialization of cattle rustling complicated the conflict. The influx of modern weapons completely transformed this conflict. The traditional rules that governed raiding between the pastoralists loosened and it was partially replaced by more random raids. Traditional raiding and warfare required long training and special skills. Some of these skills were no longer needed when modern weapons were used. Those who were not expected to defend their livestock under traditional rules were able to with modern weapons. For this reason, livestock thieves and raiders shot and killed innocent people. Traditionally, non-combatants were spared during raids. Women, children, the sick and elderly were not killed.

Cattle rustling was a traditional activity among all plain pastoralists especially Pokot. Traditions, cultural songs and dances carried from one generation to another highlight the existence of cattle raiding before the coming of the Europeans to East Africa. Pastoral communities engaged in cattle rustling culture, raiding weaker communities and taking away their animals as a means of expanding grazing lands, restocking livestock and obtaining cattle for bride price. When warriors returned from successful
raids, ululation and other songs of praise welcomed them. Among the singers were the potential brides for the warrior.

Violent conflicts, especially cattle rustling, became widespread and increasingly severe in the North Rift region of Kenya especially in West Pokot County. The origin of these conflicts dates back to 18th century but the trend and intensity of the conflicts changed drastically over a period of time. This study found out that the measures put across by the state to control conflict were not working and were contributing to more conflicts and miseries to the people of West Pokot County.

6.3 Conclusion
The study has provided the historical causes of cattle rustling in Pokot society by analysing communal relations in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. The main historical causes of cattle rustling were the quest to replenish depleted resources due to harsh climatically conditions; people in this region derived their livelihoods from natural resources, pasture, water, vegetation and livestock, reduced access to these resources, in particular land and water put them under intense pressure thereby compelled them to fight for their survival, weakening of traditional authority structures; in the past youth sought advice from elders before raids, proliferation of small arms and light weapons and commercialization of cattle rustling.

The study established that in West Pokot County cattle rustling has impacted on the livelihoods of the residents. Most of the people were displaced from areas bordering Turkana, Marakwet and Uganda (Karamoja districts). Alale division that borders Turkana County and Uganda had 11,871 displaced people. Some schools especially
along the borders were closed and some of the residents were forced to flee to Uganda.

The has provided an historical perspective on the sources of small arms and light weapons, their entry and exit routes in West Pokot County. It has shown how cattle rustling was a traditional activity. Traditionally, the pastoralists practiced cattle rustling using spears and bows but during post-colonial period the weapon of choice became AK47. The study also exposed how sources of arms have a historical perspective and their origins could be traced to neighbouring countries.

This study has provided historical transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County by highlighting the history and migration of Pokot, cultural relations during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. It has also highlighted government policies that affected the livelihoods of West Pokot residents.

The study has provided information on the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial administration, population and economic trends and land tenure system in West Pokot County from 1895 to 1980s. The increase in population led to increase in demand for the scarce resources and hence increase in cattle rustling. Historical sources of small arms and light weapons and their entry routes have been highlighted. In the pre-colonial period the Pokot used bows, arrows and spears for raids but the culture transformed over time to the use of arms. In the post-colonial period the raiding was accompanied by arbitrary killing of innocent people, majority of them women, children and the elderly. The practice of cattle rustling underwent fundamental
transformation from a cultural practice of replenishing to a more militarized, 
predatory and destructive practice.

In the pre-colonial period cattle rustling was a social practice but the introduction of 
money economy the demand for cattle in exchange for money grew. People from 
outside the community hired youth and provide them with weapons to conduct raids. 
The stolen animals were transported to far destination; Kenya Meat Commission in 
some instances was a beneficiary of the theft. In the 1990s to 2000s the dynamic 
nature of cattle rustling transformed to a commercial venture; where animals were 
stolen and sold in government owned Kenya Meat Commission (KMC), sometimes 
the animals were slaughtered and transported to the local butcheries and the residents 
consume the stolen animals without their knowledge. The numbers of small arms and 
light weapons in circulation increased in the County. The stolen cows were exchanged 
with guns.

This study has analysed the coping mechanisms adopted by the residents of West 
Pokot County over time. Colonial government policies affected their normal 
livelihood; it introduced Destocking policy of 1920-1963 and Grazing schemes 1930-
1963 which were aimed at controlling the number of livestock. This was contrary to 
Pokot culture where it was prestigious to keep a large number of herd. Grazing of 
livestock was free and the land was communal during pre-colonial period but colonial 
government introduced restricted grazing. Border clashes and cattle raids 1963-1995; 
during this period many cross border raids were reported and the residents had 
resorted for hunting and gathering as a survival strategy.
This study used Cultural-Ecological Theory to explain the causes, impact and transformation of cattle rustling 1895-2000. It has been used to explain the environmental adaption and copying mechanisms of the residents of West Pokot County. This study has filled the gap that existed on the literature that provides historical transformation of cattle rustling. This study has provided historical transformation of cattle rustling from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. The findings from study will be used to inform policy on the ways of curbing cattle rustling in Kenya and the Horn of Africa. Other researchers can use the findings from this study for future research. It will supplement the current indicators for conflict early warning and early response used by IGAD and National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management to monitor dynamic nature of cattle rustling conflict.

6.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, a number of recommendations are advanced below;

**Establish a fund to cushion pastoralists against harsh climatic conditions**

The study recommends establishment of a fund to cushion pastoralists especially in West Pokot County from the effects of harsh climatic conditions. One of the causes of cattle rustling as elaborated in chapter four in this study is replenishing of depleted resources as a result of harsh climatic conditions.
**Need to conduct mapping of entry and exit routes of small arms**

The study recommends an intensive mapping be conducted to establish the main routes of small arms and light weapons to and from West Pokot County. This study has elaborated the routes in chapter six. This will enable the government to enhance border patrols and surveillance in the targeted areas.

**Initiating alternative source of livelihoods**

The study recommends initiating alternative source of livelihoods for the residents of West Pokot County as a coping strategy to drought and famine as discussed in chapter seven. This will reduce over reliance in cattle and the residents can keep livestock for commercial purposes as opposed traditional value.

**Provision of security by the state**

The study recommends that the government should enhance security in the border areas. More security personnel should be recruited and deployed in the county. Security forces should be armed with appropriate facilities and instructions to apprehend conflict perpetrators. This has been extensively discussed in chapter eight of this study.

**Provision of university education to the Pokot**

The study recommends that both national and county governments should make efforts to ensure education is accessible to the residents of West Pokot County.
STATEMENT ON DOCTORATE COMPLETION

My PhD took eight years to complete due professional reasons. The work I do necessitated I travel within and outside of the country frequently. This meant I had to reschedule defenses and delayed submission of corrections.
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Republic of Kenya


Oral Interviews

Oral interviews are listed by name of informant and date of interview and the site where interview took place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amos Chesuswo</td>
<td>Kongelai</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Loyelel</td>
<td>Kongelai</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Lokorchoila</td>
<td>Turkwel</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladys Cheproo</td>
<td>Turkwel</td>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Akaule</td>
<td>Kongelai</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krop Moroto</td>
<td>Turkwel</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lorot Chidan</td>
<td>Turkwel</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
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<td>Peter Lonyala</td>
<td>Kongelai</td>
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<td>Susan Cherop</td>
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<td>Wilson Chekeruk</td>
<td>Chesegon</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; January 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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APPENDICES

A1: QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

My name is Meshack Korir Lomoywara a PhD student in Kenyatta University in the Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies. I am undertaking a research on the “Historical transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000” . You are free to contribute to this research by filling the questionnaire. The information you provide will ONLY be used for the purpose of this study

DETAILS

1. a) Name (Optional) __________________________________________________________
   b) Sex  Male □  Female □
   c) Marital  Single □  Married □  Widow(er) □  Divorced □
   d) Age  18-28 □  29-39 □  40-50 □  51 or above □
   e) Level of education Primary □  Secondary □  Tertiary □  any other □  
   specify ______
   f) Occupation ________________________________

2. What was the value attached to livestock among the Pokot?
   _________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________
3. What were some of the sources of livestock among the Pokot? Were the sources the same in the past? Please explain.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. In your opinion what were the main causes of cattle rustling in West Pokot County?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

5. Have you ever been affected by the impact of cattle rustling? If yes explain.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

6. What were the coping mechanisms you adopted? Have these mechanisms been affected over time? Please explain.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. In your view what has been the relationship between Pokot community and the neighbouring communities over time? Please explain.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
8. In your opinion who were the principle antagonists engaged in cattle rustling in the area over time?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

9. In your view what is the link between the impact of cattle rustling and the current economic situation of the county.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

10. a) In your opinion who is trying to reduce the intensity of cattle rustling in West Pokot county?

b) Have they been successful or not

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

11. Suggest measures which should be taken to eliminate cattle rustling among the Pokot.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
12. How can peace be achieved in Pokot?

-Thank you-
A2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

My name is Meshack Korir Lomoywara a PhD student in Kenyatta University in the Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies. I am undertaking a research on the “Historical transformation of cattle rustling in West Pokot County 1895-2000”. You are free to contribute to this research by giving your opinions.

DETAILS

1. a) Name (Optional)__________________________________________________________

   b) Sex        Male □   Female □

   c) Marital     Single □   Married □   Widow(er) □   Divorced □

   d) Age         18-28 □   29-39 □   40-50 □   51 or above □

   e) Level of education Primary □   Secondary □   Tertiary □   any other □

   specify________

   f) Occupation________________________________________________________

2. What were some of the causes of cattle rustling over time in West Pokot County?

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

3. What was the relationship between Pokot community and neighbouring communities over time?

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
4. What was the value attached to livestock among the Pokot?

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

5. What were some of the sources of livestock among the Pokot?

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

6. What were the coping mechanisms you adopted?

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

7. In your opinion who were the principle antagonists engaged in cattle rustling over time in West Pokot County?

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
8. In your view what is the link between the impact of cattle rustling and the current economic situation of the district.

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

a) In your opinion who is trying to reduce the intensity of cattle rustling in West Pokot county?

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

b) Have they been successful or not?

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________
Figure 2: Map of West Pokot County

Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, 2018