A HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN LABOURERS
OF NYERI TOWNSHIP, 1902 - 1945

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

BY

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DECLARATION

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

KIRUTHU, FELIX MACHARIA

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

DR. MILDRED JALANG'O NDEDA (MRS)
DEDICATION

This work would not have been possible without the assistance of several people and institutions. My gratitude first goes to the University for awarding me a postgraduate scholarship, and to the Teachers Service Commission for allowing me to take it.

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To my parents, the late Germano Kiruthu, and Felichina Kiruthu

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

All the non-English terms used in this work are explained in the notes and Glossary of Terms on page 251.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIM - Africa Inland Mission
AIPC - African Independent Pentecostal Church
CMS - Church Missionary Society
CSM - Church of Scotland Mission
DC - District Commissioner
EAA - East African Association
EAS - East African Standard
EAPH - East African Publishing House
GMS - Gospel Missionary Society
IMC - Institutio Missionario Consolata
KAU - Kenya African Union
KCA - Kikuyu Central Association
KISA - Kikuyu Independent Schools Association
KNA - Kenya National Archives
KPA - Kikuyu Provincial Association
LNC - Local Native Council
NDESAFA - Nyeri District Ex-Servicemen Friendly Association
NDSA - Nyeri District Sports Association
PC - Provincial Commissioner
PWD - Public Works Department
OUP - Oxford University Press
YKA - Young Kikuyu Association
Some new districts have been gazetted by the government of Kenya since 1996, but their boundaries have not been demarcated on the Kenyan map yet. These include Gucha, Kuria, Mount Elgon, Nyambene, Koibatek, Thika and Maragwa.
MAP OF NYERI TOWNSHIP

Source: (Dutto, 1975: 9)
This study focuses on the creation of urbanization and an African labour force in Nyeri Township right from 1902 when Nyeri Fort was established by the colonial authorities to the end of the Second World War in 1945. During these years, several colonial policies were promulgated which created fundamental changes in the lives of the Africans both in the Town and in the surrounding villages. Colonial penetration was accompanied by appropriation of African land and labour which inevitably altered the majority of African lives.

Right from the start of colonial rule, the colonial government used force in order to acquire labour. Young men were forced to build roads, bridges and forts. In fact, the British had to exploit the pre-capitalist modes of production in order to acquire labour. Consequently, the loot captured from the resisting communities was used to reward the British collaborators in Nyeri. Thus, pre-capitalist formations were deliberately preserved partially by the British in order to assist in the reproduction of the African Labour Force.
The socio-economic life of the Africans was interrupted by the colonial forces. The African labourers who were forced to settle in Nyeri township and provide labour to the Europeans and Asians encountered serious problems, including insufficient native area for settlement of the labourers. Hence, crowding and disease outbreaks were common. Similarly, the British paid meagre wages to the African labour force in town. The labourers, in turn, responded by maintaining some interest in the reserves as a form of social security. As a result most of them belonged to two economic spheres: wage-earning in the town became complementary rather than an alternative to the produce of the family in the reserve.

Since the basis of the new mode of production was the exploitation of the indigenous modes of production, serious contradictions inevitably emerged. In Nyeri, the spurge of nationalism that accompanied the two World Wars is a good example of these contradictions. The Western education imparted to some Africans in mission schools enabled them to rationalize that the comfortable lives of the Europeans in Kenya was the direct result of the African drudgery and poverty. It is in this light that the emergence of welfare, religious, and political associations in Nyeri is analyzed. Moreover, the exposure of the African Carrier Corps and soldiers of Nyeri to
other countries and ways of doing things gave them confidence in dealing with Europeans. Indeed the modes of production paradigm contends that the articulation of various modes in the colonial state eventually leads to violence. In Nyeri, this was demonstrated by the violence that shook the township shortly after the Second World War in the name of Mau Mau resistance. The majority of the Mau Mau in Nyeri were African squatters, demobilised soldiers and petty businessmen. The common characteristic of all the members of Mau Mau was poverty and disillusionment with the colonial establishment.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

The process of urbanization world wide has captured the attention of Western Social Scientists from a variety of perspectives over the years. These include archaeologists [Childe, 1950]; Demographers [Jepherson, 1931; Wilcox, 1926; Duncan, 1951], and Sociologists [Wirth, 1938; Sjoberg, 1955; Weber, 1958]. Most of the sociological issues are related to the urban social structure, planning, race relations and cultural dependence. Demographers and archaeologists on the other hand give special attention to the spatial pattern of urban growth and the evolution of urban hierarchy. It is evident from these works that the phenomenon of urbanization is very complex and entails changes in the distribution of power in society, which in turn alters patterns of social relationships.

Similarly, studies on urban labourers in Africa have been undertaken by scholars in all fields. Worger [1983], for example, examined diamond miners in Kimberly South Africa between 1870’s and 1880s and concluded that Africans had
enter into wage labour in urban areas as far back as
the year 1870. Other studies on urban workers include
Kapferer [1973]; Grillo [1973]; First [1983] and White
[1983]. These studies point out that Africans received
the lowest salaries as compared to Asian and European
employees. This in turn determined their quality of life
in the urban centres during the colonial era.

Although several studies have been undertaken to analyze
the nature and impact of colonial policies on the
traditional societies in Kenya, few have considered the
impact of colonial rule on labourers in small urban
centres. Studies on urban workers in Kenya have been
undertaken by scholars like JanMohamed [1976; 1978];
Elkan [1972]; Clayton and Savage [1974]; Kerstein [1977];
Olumwullah [1986] and Odinga [1990]. With the exception
of the work undertaken by JanMohamed, Elkan, Olumwullah
and Odinga on the cities of Mombasa and Nairobi
respectively, other studies on urban areas e.g. [Stichter
[1982]; Clayton and Savage [1974]; Zeleza [1982]] are
general and encompass the entire country. Thus,
labourers in specific urban areas have not been
adequately tackled. In fact, some of these scholars
stress the need to study experiences of workers in
individual towns as a basis of understanding problems
faced by workers in different urban areas under colonial
rule [JanMohamed 1978]. Moreover, some of these studies are anthropological and tackle only the forms of behaviour and social institutions of Africans in town during the specific period of study. For instance, Ferraro [1971] and Southall [1953] undertook studies on Nairobi and Kampala, respectively, hardly paying any attention to the aspect of change through time among the labourers.

Other scholars who have paid attention to this phenomenon have approached it from a geographical and spatial perspective [Obudho, 1981], or from a sociological perspective [Elkan, 1972]. These approaches render such works a historical in examining and comprehending the various forces that gave rise to an African urban labour force in the colonial era. It is in this light that Southall (1953) calls for research on colonial urban communities through a synthesis of sociological and historical tools of analysis. This study is a response to this call.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As indicated in the literature review, the various approaches so far applied to the studies on urban labourers in Kenya leave several gaps that need to be
bridged in order to fully comprehend this phenomenon. One such gap is a historical study of the socio-economic lives of the African labourers in the urban centres. This study is an effort to fill this gap by examining a specific urban area and analysing the experiences of workers in colonial times historically. In the light of the above, this study traces the emergence of urbanisation and an African labour force at the dawn of colonial rule, analyses the socio-economic life of the labourers, and portrays their responses to the conditions of exploitation and depravity in the town during the period 1902 to 1945.

In order to investigate this general problem, this study focuses on labourers in Nyeri township an area where such a study has not been done. In the historiography of Kenya and Nyeri in particular, there are no publications surveying and analyzing the economic and social life of the African labourers in Nyeri town during the colonial period, which is one of the minor yet significant urban centres in Central Kenya. Consequently, the socio-economic consequences of the establishment of the urban centre on the African labourers and their responses to the conditions of exploitation in the town have as yet to be fully dealt with.
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study fulfills the following objectives:

a) It examines the colonial policies that led to the establishment of Nyeri Town and its consequent historical development up to 1945.

b) It analyses the factors that led to the formation of a wage earning group in Nyeri during the colonial era.

c) It examines the responses of the Africans to the Socio-economic conditions that they encountered in the town.

d) It examines the cultural patterns that emerged as a result of the settlement of different communities in the town.

e) It identifies the causes of protest and nationalism in Nyeri Town up to 1945.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Urbanization is a reality in Africa today after its emergence in certain areas in pre-colonial times while in others during the colonial period. It has been associated with particular ills such as urban poverty, urban
culture, political conflict, pollution and haphazard planning and others. The origins and nature of these problems can be fully appreciated if a detailed analysis is given of the ills in a given urban center with a view to providing their historical development and contemporary character. As Odhiambo [1974:37] states, ...

'knowledge is never neutral but functional; to be worthwhile, it must reflect the fundamental characteristics of the society ...'

The study contributes towards a better understanding of the roots and nature of urban labourers' problems in the Kenyan society in colonial times and indeed in our society today. Most of these factors that have been inherited have their genesis in the colonial era. Such inherited problems include: haphazard planning, poor drainage, crime and poor sanitary conditions. Perhaps knowledge of past circumstances and events would aid in prevention of some of the problems and in this way, solutions to problems currently facing urban labourers could be found.

The choice of Nyeri town as a subject of historical study is significant because there is no historical study on urban labourers of Nyeri. First, Nyeri is one of the few centres in Kenya that was established by the colonial
government to serve the white settlers, in the midst of African communities who had not experienced such foreign interference before. The documentation of such information is even more urgent because of the dying out of former colonial urban settlers and labourers. Second, Nyeri was the centre of nationalist politics in central Kenya. Indeed, most of the Mau Mau members came from Nyeri and the factors behind this, beg for historical answers.

In terms of theoretical and empirical confines, the study is a valuable contribution to the Kenyan historiography in that the modes of production approach is used in analyzing labourers in a specific urban centre. Most of the labour studies in Kenya that have been informed by the articulation of Modes of production paradigm have either been general in approach: analyzing the labour situation in the whole country, e.g. Stichter [1982]; or have had the main focus on rural areas of Kenya, e.g. Jalang'o Ndeda [1991] and Suda [1986]. These last two, in particular, focus on the impact of male migration in Siaya district and household labour organisation on small farms in Western Kenya.

The study covers the period 1902-1945. 1902 is a very crucial year for any study focusing on Nyeri because that
is when the area was conquered and subjugated by colonial forces [Muriuki: 1969]. This date marks the entrenchment of colonial rule not only in Nyeri but in the whole country especially when the Eastern Province of Uganda was brought under the sole jurisdiction of the British East African Protectorate. The impact of the colonial policies on the African labourers of Nyeri is traced upto 1945. This year is a landmark in world history in that it marks the end of the second world war, and which in turn, intensified political consciousness among the subject peoples. In Nyeri, for example, Africans began to demand for equality with other races. Time does not allow us in this study to go beyond the period after 1945: a long period in history which requires a full fledged study of its own.

1:5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the neglect of studies focusing on urbanization in colonial times by colonial anthropologists, there has been an enormous increase in literature on urbanization in recent years [JanMohamed, 1978:29]. Since the study on urban labourers is interdisciplinary, most scholars have approached it from the perspectives of their respective disciplines. For a long time historians have not made their contribution. A number of publications in this area
are therefore a historical.

Barber's [1967] study on urban development in the former Southern and Northern Rhodesia provides insight into the development of colonial urban centres in South Central Africa. It is evident that the bulk of European population settled in towns and that African populations in such towns were mainly meant to provide labour to the European community. Rayner [1962] in a similar study on Mashonaland, asserts that in Southern Rhodesia, the African was treated as "labour" since the Europeans held a belief that it was below their dignity to work with their hands. Africans, notwithstanding, were unwilling to submit to the new status of labourer. When they came to town, it was usually for a few months, after which they would drift back to their customary life in the villages. These studies provide useful insight into relevant issues on urban labourers in Kenya.

In an anthropological study on the city of Kampala, Southall [1953] outlines the historical origins of the city and explores the life of the Africans in the town prior to the advent of colonialism. However, he does not deal at length with relations between the Africans and other races like Europeans and Asians in the city and the issues that compelled Africans to move to the urban
centres during the colonial period. Southall's findings provide a valuable insight into the issues concerning interracial relations in urban centres such as Kampala, and the factors that made Africans to migrate to such centres.

Obudho [1981] gives a detailed analysis of the spatial growth of urban centres in Kenya as a result of colonial forces. He finally concludes that the construction of the railway, roads and other associated infrastructure accentuated the process of urbanization in Kenya between 1895 - 1962. However, the study does not relate the urbanisation process to the creation of a wage earning labour force and fails to adequately deal with the smaller urban centres.

Unlike Obudho, JanMohamed [1978] analyses the economic and social life of the African labourers in Mombasa between 1895 and 1939. He posits that African life in the port town, was pathetic. He states that:

A large number of immigrant labourers found themselves sharing rooms as lodgers in Swahili or other households. Most of these dwellings were unfit for human habitation [1978:435]

Due to these conditions, he reports that labourers responded corporately or singly in tackling the problem
that faced them. Discontent became rife and a spirit of independence quickly spread in the town. This was reflected in the strikes and riots which broke out from mid 1930s. These activities demonstrated the fact that the labour force which comprised of workers of diverse ethnic origins was already developing a common identity and was capable of concerted action. Unlike Mombasa, the subject of our study is a small town which emerged during colonial times. Indeed, it is a response to JanMohamed's [1978] call for more historical studies on the smaller urban centres during colonialism.

Elkan's [1972] study on the city of Nairobi, concludes that upto 1950s African labourers were involved in a circular migration pattern. In other words they were mostly target workers. As such employment was not regarded as superseding farm income, rather as a way of acquiring savings to invest in farm work and production. Thus nothing could conceivably be described as a permanent proletariat among Africans in Nairobi. However, he overlooks two factors. Firstly, he ignores the existence of Africans who became landless due to land alienation by the colonial state and who therefore depended entirely on the wage as a source of income. Secondly, from very early times there were already long stay migrants who were spending over 15 years away from
their homes [Ndeda, 1991]. This study addresses the issue of the landless among the Kikuyu and other categories of labourers with regard to the development of some of the slums in Nyeri town.

The city of Nairobi has been extensively studied by Mc Vicar [1968]; Hake [1977]; Olumwullah [1986] and Odinga [1990] who examine the influence of the colonial policies on evolution of the African settlement in Nairobi. They agree that the Municipal Council of Nairobi adopted policies that were based on the South African experience and that these policies did not impact on Nairobi alone, but also on other Kenyan towns. For instance, the decision of officials to develop squatter villages for Africans in the town was based not only on a desire to reduce health hazards and to improve the efficiency of the African labour force but also to increase the security of the European community. The impact of these segregationist policies are explored further in this study. The focus, however, is on a smaller town that emerged specifically due to settler interest.

Clayton and Savage [1974] explore the creation of an African labour force in Kenya between 1895 and 1963. They also examine the abolition of slavery, construction of the railway and the two World Wars in relation to
creation of wage labour. They assert that an African labour force was created mainly due to white settler demand for labour. The settlers' argument was that since the colonial government had encouraged them to settle in Kenya, it therefore had an obligation to ensure that they acquired sufficient labour [1974:21]. Consequently, the colonial state used various measures to ensure sufficient flow of labour for settlers and other state projects. Due to colonial interests in labour, an African labour force emerged in towns like Nairobi. These African workers were confined to particular sections of the town which comprised of scattered villages of huts of mud or flattened tins. Chicken and goats roamed all around such villages. Although this study gives a comprehensive analysis of the situation of plantation labour, it hardly deals with social and economic life of urban labourers in any detail. More so, smaller urban centres are only dealt with generally.

There are also a number of studies on organized labour in colonial Kenya by: Stichter [1975]; Van Zwanenberg [1975] and Kerstein [1977]. Stichter distinguishes a gradual rise in the militancy of the Kenyan workers into three distinct phases. In phase one, 1895-1919, the state initiated labour policies which provoked widespread negative reactions of a tribal, religious or individual
sort. In phase two, 1920-1939, a class of semi-proletarianised African workers evolved individual and collective modes of protest within the capitalist economy; and in the final phase, 1939-1947, a more fully proletarianised urban African working class escalated strike action and formed a general worker's union, while various groups of skilled workers formed occupational associations. Such an analysis provides valuable insight into the creation of an African labour force and worker consciousness in Kenya. Furthermore, the study raises suggestions on areas that need further examination, for example, the social effects that accompanied the phenomenon of the urban area. In the final analysis, it is evident that inadequate attention is paid to workers in small towns like Nyeri. As a consequence, this present study examines the socio-economic issues that perhaps contributed to the emergence of worker and political consciousness.

Van Zwanenberg [1975] on the other hand states that by 1930, settler agriculture was facing chronic indebtedness due to lack of farming knowledge and lack of credit. This extreme poverty led to heavy exploitation of African wage labour. A large amount of resources were thus transferred from the African communities to the settlers through land alienation, taxation and forced labour. This led to the
disruption of the status of most of the Africans. While Van Zwanenberg (1975)'s focus is more on agricultural labour force, it does however, provide some relevant insight into the economic and social conditions of African labourers generally.

Kerstein [1977] analyses the wages paid in colonial Kenya and post colonial Kenya. She maintains that during colonialism, wages were calculated to serve the needs of bachelors in spite of the fact that most labourers had families. She asserts that a functional division of labour along racial lines emerged with Asian employees forming a labour aristocracy in the colonial economy.

In Lonsdale's [1980] study on the creation of wage labour in colonial Kenya he concludes that white settler society ascribed to other groups some stereotypes aimed at making them surbodinate. For instance, the Indian was regarded as a trader while the African was regarded as a cultivator or a farm hand, and in this way, the colonial state was able to defend white dominance from economic competition with other races [1980:3]. He maintains that exploitation made Africans take up arms against the colonial state. This was a clear indication that the state had failed to reconcile Africans with settler capitalism. Obviously, therefore, the examination of
political consciousness among African labourers in a smaller town which may have developed as a result of these conditions will go along way to prove some of the issues generally raised by these scholars.

A lot of studies have been undertaken on colonial capitalism in Kenya [Langdon, 1975; Leys, 1975; Kitching, 1980 and Swainson, 1980]. Most such studies have been taken from the viewpoint of the dependency and articulation of modes of production perspectives. They show that Africans were not uniformly exploited by colonial capitalism; on the contrary; some Africans in Kenya did accumulate wealth during the colonial period. Our work investigates this issue with specific reference to Nyeri.

Swainson [1980] traces the emergence and rise in Kenya of a national African bourgeoisie; this is a class that Kitching [1980] calls the "petite - bourgeoisie". Leys [1985] and Langdon [1975] also point out the existence of a stratum of traditional rich in Central Kenya, who were later transformed into a class of accumulators during colonialism. Among these included some wage earners who combined wage employment and food production to accumulate capital. Infact, Kitching [1980] has noted in rural Kenya that it is no longer possible to identify any...
single entirely coherent mode of production, and that much social and economic activity can hardly be explained in capitalist terms alone. These studies highlight the complex situation in Kenya which is also the subject of our study.

Zeleza [1982] and Stichter [1982] both examine the creation of wage labour in Kenya. They trace the process that led to the emergence of a working class in Kenya upto the post World War Two era and point out that this class was not homogeneous. While Zeleza adopts analytical concepts from Marxist perspectives on dependent capitalism, Stichter on the other hand applies the articulation of modes of production paradigm in her study of worker consciousness in Kenya.

Berman [1992] has analyzed how the African societies in Kenya were subjected to contradictory patterns of transformation as a result of colonial intrusion. He points out his disillusionment with classical marxist theories of imperialism and theories of dependency and underdevelopment as tools for the study of African political economy: He sees them as too static, too deterministic and too Eurocentric to unravel the complex historical reality of modern African nations. He maintains that the settler economy, African economies as
well as the metropolitan state and the colonial state all influenced each other while at the same time, each sector acted semi-autonomously. This study aids in the examination of the interplay between the settler economy, colonial economy and African economies in relation to the development of wage labour in Nyeri town.

A few studies have been undertaken on Nyeri specifically. These include Cagnolo, (1933), Sorrenson, (1967, 1968), and Muriuki, (1969). They provide very important information on the pre-colonial social, economic and political organization of the Kikuyu of Nyeri, which is an important basis for comprehending the impact of colonial rule on the African society since they outline the traditional life of the people in the area at the advent of colonialism.

In his research on the land constraints on urban development in Nyeri town, Chege [1977] provides useful background information for our study. He asserts that early development of Nyeri town was influenced by both the topography and the policies of the colonial government. For instance, he asserts that alienation of land from Africans enabled the whites to acquire land on which to set up the town. The rugged topography on the other hand, led to the settlement of different races on
the separate ridges. Since this is a geographical study it is more concerned with the urban spatial development and its consequences while the issue of labour within the town is not tackled.

While Dutto's [1975] anthropological study on Nyeri is not concerned with the creation and existence of urban labourers in Nyeri, it provides information on the associations, religions and educational activities of the townsmen. However, apart from giving a brief historical development of the Town, since the study examines the townsmen in the post-colonial era, the existence of the urban labourers in the colonial era is merely mentioned.

Kariuki's [1991] study on the growth of Islam in Nyeri upto 1980, provides information on the interaction between the Waswahili, Kikuyu, Somali, Asians and Europeans during trade transactions or other economic involvements. He states that the Waswahili and Somali formed a stable group of urbanites in the town. Nevertheless he does not examine in detail the life of the labourers since his major concern is the development of the Islamic community.
1:6 RESEARCH PREMISES

This study is guided by the following research premises:

That;

1. The setting up of enclaves by the colonial state drained resources from Kenya's countryside;

2. The colonial labour policies extracted cheap labour from the Africans, thereby creating a wage-earning group in Nyeri Town;

3. The socio-economic conditions of depravity and racial conflict in the upcoming town of Nyeri, generated the emergence and growth of nationalism;

4. The new cultural patterns emerged as a result of the settlement of different communities in Nyeri;

5. The creation of a migrant working group together with the socio-economic forces of urbanization led to the breaking up of kinship ties and the basis of socio-economic organization in the neighbouring villages.

1:7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study of African socio-economic history has been dominated by two great traditions, namely, perspectives inspired by theories of modernization, and those derived from theories of underdevelopment and dependency.
Modernization approaches tend to see development as a process of change towards social, economic and political conditions prevalent in the industrialized West [Zeileza, 1988:3]. As Africans flocked into towns in great numbers, the modernization theorists suggested that they were entering the mainstream of history: The fact that the African was becoming an urbanite was an affirmation of modernity.

The modernization approach was based on the personian functionalist epistemology which conceptualized social systems as the institutionalization of a set of core values into norms and rules which through the process of internalization and social control were seen to regulate social behaviour. This school perceived African societies as developing from traditional simple societies to complex or western levels of social organization with colonialism being the major drive force [Olumwullah, Op. Cit. 49].

In the early 1970's modernization school came under attack from the so called 'dependency school' in Kenya, spearheaded by E.A Brett, Colin Leys and Steve Langdon [Hetherington, 1993:90]. The major criticism against the modernization approach is that it assumes that Third World countries must follow the same development path
that has been followed by the capitalist West in order to solve their economic problems. Furthermore, this approach underplays the disruptive role of colonialism and imperialism on today's so-called Third World societies. It places colonial, racial and class structures outside the realm of investigation, examining only individual responses to an implacable and unquestioned entity [Cooper, 1983].

The dependency perspective emerged in the 1950s from the writings of Latin American Scholars who were largely disillusioned with development policies based on modernization theory. Dependency therefore came out as a critique of, and as an alternative approach to, modernization or developmentalism. The basic tenets of this perspective were initially articulated in the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America [ECLA] under the leadership of Argentine economist, Paul Prebisch [Wallerstein, 1977].

The issues dealt with by the dependency perspective have important relevance for, and applicability to, Kenya and the rest of the underdeveloped world. The overriding concern of the perspective is to determine the structural causes or historical roots of underdevelopment. In the 1960s, the dependency perspective became widely known and
was popularized in Africa largely through the writings of Samir Amin [1972; 1974; 1976]. These have focused on the historical processes of underdevelopment in Africa especially capital accumulation and the structure of international relationships that reinforce poverty in the periphery. The dependency theorists perceive peripheral economies as part of the capitalist world economy and the internal situation in the periphery is explained in terms of their incorporation into this world system. The situation of dependency is asserted to have conditioned not only the international relations between the core and the periphery but also their internal structures such as agricultural development policies, organization of wage labour processes, land tenure systems and the distribution of resources between subsistence agriculture and export agriculture.

Closely associated with the dependency perspective is the World-System theory as expounded by Wallerstein [1977], which takes a wholistic view of the development process rather than a fragmented dualistic perspective characteristic of the modernization framework. This theory starts from the premise that the Unit of analysis is neither the household nor nation-state but the capitalist world economy.
Although the core periphery theories have made the essential point that the economic situation in the Third World including urbanization should be seen in a global context, they have not got to the roots of the processes themselves [Cooper, 1983]. Furthermore, these theories perceive all the internal changes in the Third World as universal and independent of the struggle that takes place in the specific parts of the world [Berman, 1991:5].

In this study the concept of modes of production and their articulation as expounded by Meillasoux [1975], has been adopted to analyze the socio-economic life of the Nyeri Town labourers during the colonial period. A mode of production involves two components. Firstly, there are the forces of production, which comprise technology, labour and raw materials. Secondly, there are the relations of production, which involve the way in which surplus is extracted and distributed [Klein, 1985:9]. Most marxist historiography centres around relations of production, notably class relations. However, some scholars lay emphasis on the forces of production which make possible relations of production [Claude Meillasoux 1973a, 1975d, 1977b]. The crucial thing is that both the forces and relations of production are related, and it is because of this relationship that we speak of a mode of
production instead of focussing on the separate components.

According to the paradigm of Modes of production and their articulation, capitalism in Third World does not revolutionize the relations of production as it did in Europe: Instead, it articulates with pre-capitalist modes of production sapping their autonomy without changing their internal logic, and draining adult male labour into wage employment without taking over the burdens of supporting women, children and non-working men [Meillasoux, 1975; Wolpe, 1972].

In this study the concept of modes of production is relevant in that it enables us to understand the dynamics of change. History is a dialectical process, in which change flows largely from the contradictions and internal tensions within any given situation:

The fluid nature of the problems we must deal with is underlined by articulation theory, an effort to understand the way in which capitalism preserves and exploits earlier modes of production, particularly on its fringes [Klein, ibid:11]

The articulation theory further explains the tension that often arises when capitalism attempts to preserve earlier modes. Thus, modes of production do not replace each
other in the development of a society, but instead a new mode of production can develop and establish its dominance on the basis of continued functioning of the older subordinate modes of production.

Though there were expectations that this theoretical perspective would reflect reality more closely than earlier approaches, the mode of production key failed to unlock all the doors. First, the modes of production identified by Marx like Asiatic, Antique, Feudal and capitalist, did not reflect the reality especially in Africa [Cardell, 1985:59]. Secondly, at the theoretical level, it is not clear how a coherent mode of production continues to overlap with industrial capitalism once the impact of the latter has made itself felt [Carter, 1978]. Finally, conceptualization on the mode of production has often been dominated by specific case studies. This has resulted in the fragmentation of the concept into a multiplicity of terms such as domestic, lineage and tributary, thus making it very difficult to derive general conclusions on an international plane [Harries, 1985].

This approach has been applied in the historiography of Kenya; Swainson [1980] has concluded that there has been a significant degree of capitalist development in Kenya
since early 1900s, and that by the 1970s an indigenous bourgeoisie which had its basis in the large scale employment of wage labour existed in both agriculture and industry. Even Leys had begun by 1980 to see the dependency discourse as an ideological handicap. A similar approach has been adopted by Stitcher [1982] in her studies of migrant labour and African response in Kenya and Ndeda [1991] in her studies on the impact of male migration on rural women in Siaya.

The value of the concept of the modes of production and their articulation, is that, it provides tools for the analysis of each particular society. It also focuses attention more clearly than ever before on the realm of production and its pivotal relationship to the whole social fabric. Since this study is production-related the concept is appropriate. For instance in Nyeri, the socio-economic life needed not necessarily to have been fully altered. The African labourers were forced to provide wage labour for the white settlers and the colonial government. Yet, the majority had to leave their families at home to produce for the household. The areas where they lived were a replica of the rural homes and the salaries were to be commensurate with their living standards.
The process of articulation may lead to antagonism: In Nyeri, some contradictions emerged since the African labourers were required to maintain the cleanliness of the town, yet no effort was made to provide housing, clean water and other facilities for the labourers. Again, they were exposed to western education, yet the aspirations they developed as a result, like higher standards of living were preserved only for the Asian and White races. Tension in the articulation situation stems from the fact that while trying to preserve earlier modes, the capitalist sector must introduce new relations of production. For instance, in spite of the colonial government's effort to preserve a poor standard of living for Africans, some African labourers were able to accumulate a reasonable amount of wealth. Even more important, the modes of production theory raises suggestive questions related to varied ways in which different patterns of production combine. For instance, Europeans had businesses and farms where African labourers worked. However, the labourers still developed their own petty businesses.

In Nyeri, some labourers lived on the fringes of the township. They therefore provided wage labour during the day and returned to rural life after the days work. Others were labourers for sometime, but later took to
1:8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a result of an analysis of two types of evidence; primary and secondary data. The data for the study was collected in three phases from December 1993 to September 1994.

Phase one involved the collection of secondary evidence from published and unpublished books, dissertations, journals and articles from the various libraries in Nairobi namely, Kenyatta University Library, MacMillan Library, Institute of Development Studies, Jomo Kenyatta Library at the University of Nairobi and the British Institute Library. This was a painstaking undertaking since some books yielded no useful information. Information from library research was noted down and categorised according to the subject discussed viz: works discussing colonial labourers upto the First World War; those discussing the interwar years, and finally those discussing the Second World War and the Post-War period.

The second phase of the study involved collection of oral data. Individuals and groups were interviewed with the aid of chiefs, who in consultation with other elderly
people, were rallied to identify possible informants knowledgeable in the history of Nyeri Town. These included colonial labourers, Waswahili traders and colonial civil servants. Personal contacts such as Michael Mutahi and other members of his family, were used as guides to other informants. It was in this way that invaluable informants like Newton Waikwa and Geoffrey Wakaba were interviewed. They provided information on the foundation of Nyeri Town and the living conditions of the different races within the town. Other important informants were also identified and contacted.

In order to have a data that adequately reflected a cross-section of views, representative samples were drawn. The informants were selected on the basis of several factors: First, the colonial civil servants who worked in Nyeri during the period under review were identified from the correspondence and written reports from the Kenya National Archives. Such colonial servants provided very important information because they had a first-hand experience of colonial labour conditions.

Second, we identified people who were staying in Nyeri during the period under review, Kikuyu, Waswahili as well other African communities who were employed by the European missionaries, Indian traders and individual
Europeans. An attempt was made to interview both men and women as to acquire data that would reflect the experiences of all the African labourers in Nyeri.

Finally, we interviewed colonial African traders in the town and those from the neighbouring villages. These were important in providing data on the impact of the town on the African reserves. An attempt was also made to get views from both those informants who had acquired western education and those who had not. This was because missionary education in particular, had a very big impact on those Africans who got it and this affected their perspective and outlook in life. The African soldiers who participated in both the First and the Second World War were also interviewed because the War experiences had a very big impact on the African labourers in the town.

A total of 44 informants were interviewed and they provided very important qualitative data which could not be obtained in any other way. For instance, they provided data on the behaviour and feelings of the African labourers in the face of new commercial, religious and political framework. Such qualitative data is imperative especially in social sciences where researchers have to grasp the interrelationship of
different people and changes in the social system and especially in an urban situation.

Individual interviews proved very useful in gathering specific information. However, in the course of the interviews other knowledgeable people like friends of the informants occasionally took interest and gave comments that clarified certain aspects. A tape recorder was used alongside note-taking in order to record the data. Owing to the nature of the study, a question guideline was used with no rigidity as to the order of the questions. Informants were allowed to talk and we interjected with questions to clarify specific aspects. This method proved more practical since some informants could only answer questions in regard to some particular aspects of the study. For instance, some were absent from the area during a particular duration and for this reason they could not know much about the labourers conditions within such a period.

The oral data were eventually transcribed and recorded verbatim into three categories: information on the period prior to the First World War; the interwar period, and finally the period after the Second World War. The credibility of the informant's data was checked through comparing the frequency of the facts in the data against
that provided by other informants.

The final phase of the study involved the gathering of archival data. This took place at the Kenya National Archives and at the Nyeri District Archives. Information was obtained from intelligence reports, Annual reports, political record books, labour reports and handing over reports. This was used to fill in gaps and to corroborate oral and secondary data. Archival research proved to be difficult to obtain especially because some materials had grown too old. The researcher had to squint in order to scratch out some evidence. Moreover, information was not consistently available: some reports could not be traced and thus left some gaps that had to be filled with evidence from other sources.

The data from various scattered reports were gathered and pertinent sections from the records divided into various categories: viz, early History of Nyeri; interwar information and Second World War information. All items on particular topics were kept together in order to verify the contradictions and frequency of the data.

Several problems were encountered in the course of gathering data from the field. First, the research allowance provided by the University could not sustain
the research long enough in an urban centre where food and transport were expensive. My personal contacts proved very useful then, and especially Micheal Mutahi who accommodated me after I exhausted my research allowance. Secondly, most of the urban labourers in the colonial era are either dead or retired to their locations sometimes very far away from the town. It therefore proved very difficult to trace especially the people who were at Nyeri in the early years of colonial rule. Finally, some of the informants could not be interviewed due to sickness or other domestic problems.

1:9 THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Nyeri Township lies about 160 kilometres north of Nairobi and is the principle Town of Nyeri District. It has a total area of 71 square kilometres and is the only town with a municipal status in the District. The township consists of Nyeri town, and four smaller townships of Kiganjo, Ruring'u, Kamakwa and Mathari Mission. The population of Nyeri Town was 56,760 by 1993, thus making it the most populous town in the district in terms of persons per square kilometre with 1,247 persons [Nyeri District Development Plan, 1994-1996].
The township lies at the edge of the Kikuyu Plateau, about 70 kilometres south of the equator. The attitude of this area ranges from about 1000 metres to 2,500 metres above Sea Level. To the north of Nyeri is Mount Kenya which rises to 5,600 metres while to the West lies Nyandarua (Aberdares) Range which rises to over 4,300 metres. The Kikuyu Plateau including the township, is characterized by the existence of parallel ridges and valleys. These features in turn have influenced the pattern of settlement and the political as well as social organization of the Kikuyu to a considerable degree [Muriuki, 1974:26]. For instance, the physical layout of the township was reflected in the distinct settlement of Europeans, Asians and Africans in separate locations during the colonial period [Dutto, 1975:7].

The area has got fertile soils and a good climate for agricultural production and settlement. The colonial government chose to establish their headquarters here during the conquest of Mt. Kenya region because of its agricultural potential. Since colonial times the town has been characterized by the existence of farming activities alongside other functions. This phenomenon has persisted upto the post colonial period, giving rise to an agricultural or rural based economy, side by side with town life.
Apart from serving as the capital of the Central Province of Kenya, Nyeri also serves as the headquarters of Nyeri District. It is endowed with a spectacular landscape providing a clear view of both the Nyandarua Range (Aberdares Range) and Mt. Kenya. Mt. Kenya National Park lies 70 kilometres from the township, while Aberdare National Park lies only 20 kilometres away. This makes the town a popular destination for tourists.

The town provides several services to the inhabitants of the area. A number of industries are located in the town. These include a soft drinks factory, printing, saw milling, baking and confectionary, motor garages and furniture workshops.

A provincial General Hospital which was established during the colonial period serves the whole province as the referral hospital. Other hospitals run by missions and private individuals also exist to serve the large population. Nyeri also serves as a socio-cultural centre. It hosts several educational institutions like Kagumo and Kamwenja Teacher Training Colleges, Medical Schools, Technical institutes as well as primary and secondary schools. Christians, Muslims and several Asian religions have their worshipping centres in the town.
1:9:1 Structure of Thesis

Chapter one is a general introduction of the study. It encompasses the background to the problem; statement of the problem; research premises; objectives of the study; literature review; justification and significance of the study; and a description of the methodology used in the collection of the data as well as formulation of the theoretical framework within which the entire study is based.

The second chapter discusses the process of colonization of Nyeri. It focuses on the causes of the intrusion of the Europeans in the region and the initial reaction of the Africans towards this unwelcome interference in their affairs. This chapter therefore provides the background information on which the study develops.

The third chapter traces the emergence of African labourers in Nyeri up to 1919. The creation of a wage labour system is examined as well as the problems encountered both by the labourers, the government and the settler community. Special attention is given to the socio-economic conditions of the labourers as well as the changes that took place in the town during the war.
Chapter four discusses the socio-economic conditions of the Africans in the town during the inter-war period. It discusses the response of the African soldiers after the World War 1, the emergence of political associations, aspects of cultural nationalism, as well as the renewed drive to improve African education.

The fifth chapter examines the conditions of African labourers at the onset of the second world war. It discusses the recruitment of Africans for war purposes and their socio-economic conditions both in the war and after they were discharged. The militancy of the African labourers is traced upto 1945.

Finally, chapter six, the concluding chapter, discusses the findings of the study as well as suggestions for possible areas of further research.
2.0 THE COLONIZATION OF NYERI AND THE EMERGENCE OF NYERI TOWN UPTO 1904.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we examine four issues. Firstly, the settlement of the Kikuyu of Nyeri who are part of this study and who formed the bulk of Nyeri labourer during colonial period is traced. At the beginning of colonial rule, the Kikuyu of Nyeri were still in the process of settling [Waikwa, O.L.:01-5-94]. Secondly, the chapter traces the process of the colonial state formation which set the stage for the articulation of the pre-capitalist modes of production with the capitalist modes. Third, the coming of the pioneer British administrators, Asian traders and missionaries in Nyeri is examined. Finally, the emergence of Nyeri town and the responses of the African communities in the area towards this interference in their life is analysed.

2.2 THE SETTLEMENT OF THE KIKUYU IN NYERI

On the eve of colonial rule, Central Kenya was occupied by the Maasai, Dorobo, Athi and the Kikuyu. The Kikuyu
pioneers appear to have reached their present territory via Ithanga, Tigania and Igembe regions in the north by the 14th Century A.D. [Mwaniki, 1973:17]. Other Kikuyu groups that followed later migrated from somewhere at the Kenyan coast north of the Tana [Muriuki, 1974:63]. This was probably due to increasing southwards pressure of the Oromo community which caused a general Bantu migration inland from the beginning of the 14th century [Sorrenson, 1967:6]. Oral traditions suggest the latter followed the Tana valley from the coast. By the 16th century, The Mount Kenya peoples, including the Kikuyu pioneers who had been migrating for centuries, had settled in Ithanga and Fort Hall [Wanyoike, 1991:15]. Ithanga, therefore, became a major dispersal area for the Embu, Mbeere and Kikuyu.

The migration of the Kikuyu to northern Fort Hall and Southern Gaki (Nyeri) was well under way by the 17th century [Muriuki, Op. Cit:64]. However, the occupation by the Kikuyu of Kiambu and Nyandarua districts took place in the 19th century. It would seem that the migration was accelerated by internal dissension, which in turn led to raiding on a large scale. Another factor that might have forced the Kikuyu movement from the Ithanga area was external hostile pressure by enemy groups including the Maasai. They therefore moved to more forested and rainy
highlands where they attained a more distinct consolidation as a group [Ibid:62].

From Ithanga some of the Kikuyu pioneers moved into Fort Hall and Ndia, while some groups migrated to the area around Sagana. From here, some groups crossed to Mathira and Mukurweini in Nyeri district, via natural bridges at Kianjege and Gathagana. According to oral traditions, Nyeri district was covered by a vast primeval forest which was sparsely inhabited by the Gumba and Athi hunters and gatherers. This area attracted the Kikuyu because of its adequate rainfall, cool temperatures and fertile soils, unlike the region outskirting it towards the eastern border.

It would seem that expansion into Tetu where Nyeri town was founded, took place in the 19th century. Informants Wakaba [0.1.:27-12-93] and Waikwa [0.1.:01-05-94], stressed that at the time of colonial establishment in Nyeri in 1902, the Aithiegeni clan was busy clearing new land for cultivation. However, the occupation of the Kikuyu to the north of Thagana and Chania rivers did not take place until the colonial period and especially after the eviction of the Maasai from the Nyeri plains to make way for the European settlement schemes [Muriuki, Op. Cit:67]. It should be noted that the first European
settlers in Nyeri took up land in 1904. Most of the early land alienations were in areas where Kikuyu influence was still secondary to that of Maasai, and this explains why the feeling on land issues was never as intense as in Southern Kiambu.

2:3 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH AUTHORITY IN KIKUYULAND

European imperialism along the Kenyan Coast can be traced to the Portuguese period in the Sixteenth Century. At this time however, they were mainly interested in trade in commodities like slaves, gold and ivory [Ochieng, 1992]. In the nineteenth century, the British increasingly gained influence along the East African Coast. This was through Sultan Seyyid Said whom the British government helped to establish economic and political hegemony in East Africa. The British position along the East African Coast was eventually concluded after the East African Treaty of 1886 and the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 which completed the parcelling of East Africa between Germany and Britain. Upto the nineteenth Century however, European trade was mainly conducted at the coast, as the Europeans were unable to penetrate the African interior due to their technical incapacity [Ibid].
In a bid to penetrate the interior of Kenya, a private company known as British East Africa Company was formed in 1887 under the presidency of Sir William Mackinnon. In the following year the company became the imperial British East Africa [IBEA], when it was given a royal charter by the British Government. This authorized the company not only to administer the British spheres of influence on behalf of the government but also to exploit this inorder to complete political and economic authority in British territories [Galbraith, 1972:141].

Mombasa became the headquarters of the company though other stations were established later at Kismayu, Malindi, Lamu, Kibwezi and Machakos. It was from these initial forts that control was gradually extended into the interior. It is the company, therefore, that laid down the foundation of the protectorate as well as for European colonization and settlement in Kenya [Githumo, 1974:171]. Some of the stations were to grow into urban centres, which further helped in the transformation of the pre-colonial socio-formations.

The company achieved its goals under the cover of its private army which consisted of Indian, Arab, Sudanese and Swahili troops under British Officers. Company officials made extensive journeys of exploration into the
interior of Kenya in 1890s, where they also engaged in acts of subduing the communities that refused to accept the British rule. Consequently, the company decided to extend its control from Mombasa in 1890, to the Maasai and Kikuyu countries.

By this time, the company had pacified several communities in Kenya. These included the Taita, Pokomo and the Akamba. The Maasai who had been a major power in Kenya were coincidentally weak due to the outbreak of cholera, small pox, animal diseases, as well as civil wars [Low, 1965:2]. It is possible that these problems made the Maasai to become the company's allies.

The Kikuyu had had encounters with a few European pioneers such Fischer, Karl Peters and Fredrick Jackson [Githumo, Op. Cit:174]. This had earned them a reputation of stubbornness among the Europeans; they were further accused of obstructing the activities of European explorers, and caravans on their way to Uganda. However, most caravans still preferred to pass through Kikuyu country since the community was predominantly agricultural and was able to provide the passing caravans with food and other supplies that could not be easily obtained elsewhere [Ibid.]. The IBEAC conquest of the interior provided a major point of departure from
the previous forms of domination. This is because at this point, capitalist market penetration became linked with political penetration; commerce was now aided by force. The immediate result of this confrontation between precapitalist economies and the invading capitalism was the dislocation of the pre-capitalist socio-formations [Stichter, Op. Cit.:3]. However, some pre-capitalist features were preserved deliberately by the British since they benefitted colonialism. For instance, the actual work of fighting; some of the weapons; and the actual construction of the fortifications was done by a multitude of labourers non of whom were British [Ibid.,].

Lord Lugard was responsible for the establishment of the first British fort among the Kikuyu. He had been instructed by the company to establish a garrison at Ngong in Maasai country but after considering the logistics, he decided to establish one at Dagoretti, a few miles from Nairobi among the Kikuyu and close to Maasai land. He negotiated for land and trade with the elder and leader of the area whose name was Waiyaki wa Hinga. Consequently, Lugard and Waiyaki signed an agreement that stipulated that the Kikuyu would supply the company with food on payment, while Lugard on behalf of the British agreed not to interfere with Kikuyu land [Githumo, Op. Cit.:176]. Unfortunately, the British did
not take the treaty seriously as reflected in their activities soon after Lugard departed for Uganda.

The company officials aroused resentment in the Kikuyu from the very outset since they demanded food, damaged crops and were arrogant and disrespectful to the Kikuyu of Dagoretti. Consequently, in 1891 Dagoretti fort was destroyed by Kikuyu warriors and George Wilson who was in-charge was forced to flee and seek help at Machakos. Soon, however, the British mobilized the Maasai, Kamba and some Kikuyu collaborators against Waiyaki and his people [Sorrenson, 1968:15]. A British official, Captain Smith established a new fort which was subsequently baptized Fort Smith, and the Kikuyu living around it were moved to the surrounding villages. This was the beginning of land expropriation by the Europeans in the Kikuyu country. While Fort Smith was under construction Captain Smith and his men raided the Kikuyu villages to obtain food, labour, firewood, sheep, goats, cattle as well as women. Waiyaki protested against the punitive expeditions against his people. Eventually he was captured and deported as a punishment for his opposition to British rule. Evidence has it that he died in Kibwezi under very mysterious circumstances [Mc Vicar, 1968:5]. His land was confiscated and given to the church of Scotland Missionaries, while the rest was given to European
settlers [ibid.].

Waiyaki was succeeded by a British stooge Kinyanjui Wa Gathirimu, a young man reportedly of mixed Kikuyu-Dorobo ancestry, who had made friends with the British soldiers at Dagoretti Fort before it was razed by Waiyaki and his supporters. Originally, Kinyanjui held the prestigious post of a caravan headman for the British. Thus he was in charge of a caravan which normally comprised hundreds of porters and warriors. After the destruction of Dagoretti station by Waiyaki, Kinyanjui collaborated with the British and since he knew Kiswahili, he was very useful to them as a translator. This facilitated his appointment as a headman. After he was appointed the local headman, Kinyanjui assumed a significant position within the colonial system.

The articulation of the pre-capitalist and capitalist relations of production led to several contradictions. This may be illustrated by British attitude towards traditional leaders who were subservient to colonial rule, and who, in turn, were rewarded. On the other hand, leaders who resisted, like Waiyaki, were dealt with accordingly and were quickly replaced with loyal appointees. Leaders appointed because of their collaboration, like Kinyanjui, did not command respect
and therefore, had to use force to exert their authority. This is indicative of the fact that capitalism co-existed with socio-formations which it subdued, and exploited.

In 1895 IBEAC was wound up after it became evident that it lacked both the resources and the power to defend the newly acquired territories. Consequently, Kenya became the British East Africa Protectorate one year after Uganda, which had been declared a British Protectorate the previous year. When the British Government took over the administration of Kenya in 1895, the consul General at Zanzibar continued to serve as Her Majesty's Commissioner until 1903 when a separate commissioner was appointed with headquarters at Mombasa [Memon, 1973:4]. Thus the stage for proper colonization of the country was set. However, the British continued to employ the services of the IBEAC company officials after the winding up of the company.

After declaring Kenya a protectorate, the British also took the important decision to build a railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. Although the early motives for building the railway by the British largely indicated a desire to suppress slave trade, subsequent arguments after 1895 were not so much based on suppression of slave trade, or on protection of missionaries but more on
economic prospects, administrative necessity and international rivalry. Indeed, the railway was to be used later as an excuse for settling Europeans in the territory [Kinyanchui, 1992:111].

2:4 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH AUTHORITY IN NYERI

Upto the early 1890s the African communities living around Mount Kenya were independent and their interaction with foreigners especially Arabs and the Waswahili revolved around trade. This situation was to change dramatically at the beginning of the 20th century.


Boyes was nicknamed by the Kikuyu "Karia Njahi" since he ate a type of Kikuyu dish - (Dolichos lab lab) at Karuri's home when his wife had given birth [Ng'ang'a, 1977:6]. Boyes allied with Karuri wa Gakure the Kikuyu leader in Metumi (here after Fort Hall). Karuri had risen to a position of prominence due to his business acumen. He made business trips to the coast to obtain cloth, beads, bracelets, metal leg bands and sea shells, which
shells, which he brought back to his home area and sold to his people at huge profits. During these trading expeditions Karuri met Kinyanjui wa Gathirimu who was already friendly with the white men. Henceforth, Karuri also paid several visits to the British Forts at Machakos and Dagoretti where he expressed his wish to welcome Europeans at his home.

Similarly, Karuri welcomed John Boyes and supplied him with warriors to strengthen his army. Perhaps without having planned it, Boyes' arrival here led to the foundation of British rule in both Fort Hall and Nyeri. Later British officials capitalised on Boyes' contacts with Karuri to obtain African support. Through Karuri's help, Boyes also made contacts with Wang'ombe of Gaki (Nyeri), who was also a prominent leader. Boyes' army was engaged in plundering, looting cattle, ivory, sheep, goats as well as foodstuffs from the Kikuyu villages. These activities led to the emergence of a group of Kikuyu mercenaries in both Fort Hall and Nyeri. These wealth-seekers were probably paid in livestock and other products that were looted from the Kikuyu villages in the area. Due to Boyes' involvement in Fort Hall and Nyeri, Karuri was able to utilise his military prowess to subjugate his enemies and to consolidate his position as a chief in Fort Hall.
From October 1900, Karuri fully accepted the colonial government's authority after he was introduced by Kinyanjui Wa Gathirimu to Francis Hall (Bwana Nyahoro), a former official of IBEAC, and later a British government official. Hall was the first link in the British chain of administration in the heart of Kikuyuland [Cagnolo, 1953:137]. Karuri also supplied the Naivasha station with constant food caravans until it became self-sufficient. He also furnished it with plentiful labour supply [Wanyaga, 1972:7]. Inspite of these favourable responses to White intrusion, it is clear that significant segments of Kikuyu society were opposed to dealings with the British. The struggle between these segments and those disposed to collaboration probably accounts for the Kikuyu reputation among outsiders as treacherous and unpredictable [Stichter, Op. Cit:8].

When the British decided to establish a second fort in Kikuyuland, the appropriate choice was Mbirri in Karuri's territory. Francis Hall, after whom the fort was named, selected the site, although the name Fort Hall was used after his death in 1901 [Low, Op. Cit:24]. No punitive expedition was required at the establishment of this fort since Karuri was already an ally prepared to work with the British officials. With the entrenchment of the
British rule in Fort Hall, they were now ready to spread their control farther north.

The establishment of a British fort in Nyeri was however, as a result of a historical accident rather than a well-conceived plan [Chege, 1977:9]. Many Asian caravans used to traverse the area in search of ivory and animal skins from Nyeri and Aberdare areas. One such caravan was wiped out while passing through Tetu in Nyeri in the late 1890s. Consequently, Asian traders asked for British protection. In response to this request, the British sent several punitive expeditions to the area. One expedition was dispatched from Fort Hall [Mungeam, 1966:9]. The second, sent from Naivasha under colonel Meinertzhagen, travelled across the Aberdare ranges to meet with that led by Mr. Barlow, sub-commissioner Hinde and Mr. Hemsted from Fort Hall. The destruction unleashed by these punitive expeditions was terrifying for the African communities in the area. The expedition from Fort Hall fought its way capturing livestock and burning houses as they went: British guns proved their supremacy over African traditional weaponry. The two British expeditions met and camped at a site just below Nyeri hill on 4th December, 1902 [KNA/PC/CP/1/1; Chege, Op. Cit:9].
Conclusively, the heavy fire-power combined with divide and rule tactics composed the offensive strategy which made it possible for the few British officers and the askaris to conquer several African communities. They had a clear military superiority over the Africans. As a result of these pacification programmes, important losses of manpower were suffered by the different peoples. The casualties were made up of the young men, who represented an important labour potential in the local economies. The removal of such resources could not take place without serious consequences. Reconstruction of African economies in particular became extremely difficult. For instance, some of the leaders in Nyeri who organized resistance against the British were hunted and punished. For example, Chief Gakere, a ring leader of the resisting groups was captured and exiled to the coast. Some of his associates were murdered by the British [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.1:27-12-93].

The British found their initial camp at Nyeri unsuitable due to lack of both water and firewood. After some deliberation the camp was moved on 6th December, 1902, to the present site of the Provincial Headquarters which was considered more favourable for defence purposes and the supply of provisions [Newton Waikwa O.1:30-04-94]. Colonel Meinertzhagen described this site as follows:
It has an ideal field of fire for six hundred yards in all directions, a complete barbed wire entanglement, and a ditch and parapet which would defy the most ardent savage. It could be easily defended by fifty rifles. [Best, 1979:134-135].

Free African labour was utilized in the building of the Fort at Nyeri. Indeed, since the Africans had been suppressed, it was only natural that they provide free labour for the British. On 21st December, 1902, the elders of the district found it prudent to visit the new station and make peace [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:7]. They also agreed to dig a road to Naivasha and guaranteed security of the travellers in the area. We can argue that the establishment of the Fort at Nyeri marks the beginning of forced labour in the area. By the end of 1902 the Nyeri ditch, the road to Fort Hall as well as a bridge across the Gura river were completed.

It can be concluded that though the conquering economy was capitalist, the first method of labour extraction had to be that found in the pre-capitalist economies. It was therefore capitalism which adapted its strategies, rather than vice-versa [Stitcher, Op. Cit:5]. The British lacked enough resources to provide wage payment to all the Africans who worked for them. Their exploitation of the pre-capitalist economies meant that both the pre-capitalist and the capitalist modes of production had to
co-exist side by side. It was this British behaviour perhaps, that made it difficult to socialize Africans into proper proletariat at the beginning of colonial rule. Moreover, the African mode of exchange did not value the British currency. According to Stichter (1982:5), for both collaborators and resistors, the eventual price of submission was not only the surrender of territorial sovereignty, it was also the provision of tribute labour. Thus, all the early supply of African labour to the British took on the character of tribute to conquering overlords.

It is apparent that by 1902 the British were steadily bringing the whole of the protectorate under their rule and the administrative apparatus was gradually being put into place. For instance, in April 1902, Kenya was gazetted as a province comprising Nyeri, Fort Hall, Embu and Meru regions [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:8]. In the same year, the Eastern Province of Uganda protectorate was annexed into the British East African Protectorate so as to bring the railway under one administration. Given the arbitrary manner adopted in the formation of administrative boundaries, the African communities were separated, and some of the border wars and tribal clashes witnessed in Africa today have their roots in these arbitrary boundaries.
Nyeri was named by Richard Meinertzhagen in 1902 after Nyeri hill which was the most prominent feature in the area. The Fort was called Nyeri inspite of protestations from Mr. Hinde who wanted it named after his wife [Dutto, 1975:8]. The meaning and origin of the term Nyeri is however, highly controversial. One informant maintained that the name has its origin from a stream that flowed down a neighbouring hill. The trickling sound of this stream made the Kikuyu around to nick name it "Nyiri" after the Kikuyu term for trickling [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.l:27-12-93].

Another informant relegated the origin of the name Nyeri to the climate around town in the sense that the hill adjacent was ever drizzling. The drizzling sound was therefore applied to the hill, which was called Kianyiri in Kikuyu [D.W. Karari, O.l:04-05-94].

The station was situated on the Chania river just north of the inhabited part of Tetu and on the edge of the northern plain. It comprised of huts and tents surrounded by a large ditch, eight feet deep, with thorns and barbed wire [Dutto, Op. Cit:10]. According to the provincial Record Book, there were no people living on this site which became the foundation of Nyeri township. There was sufficient supply of clean water although firewood was
scarce. It is apparent that the absence of physical habitation of the Africans in the area made the British to erroneously conclude that this was empty land. This misconception on the part of the British with regard to the question of land ownership was to prove a very difficult one throughout the colonial period in Kenya.

From 1902 to 1905, Nyeri served as the centre of the pacification programme in the rest of Mount Kenya region [D.W. Karari O.1:04-05-94]. Punitive expeditions were sent out from here to other regions in the district. The British government also posted several officials to administer the region. These comprised of an assistant District Commissioner and forty seven armed police [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:13/1903]. In the first six months, two prisons, a guard room and an office, as well as an officer's house were built. The station, therefore, was a living reminder that the Africans in Nyeri had lost their independence to the British.

The Kikuyu in Tumu Tumu area were conquered and subdued by the British in a punitive expedition sent in May 1903 from the newly established Fort in Nyeri. For a period of one year, the expedition under captain Meinertzhagen ravaged and looted Mathira especially parts of Iriaini and Konyu. Those who were conquered had to pay tribute to
the British either in form of labour, livestock or both. The people in Tumu Tumu who surrendered quickly to the British, had to send goats to the Nyeri Fort twenty miles away, as payment for the hut tax [Mburu, 1975].

Hostility towards the British, however, was by now mounting on the east. The Iriaini Kikuyu and their Embu allies begun to make periodic attacks upon those Kikuyu who had submitted to British rule. In May, 1903 the Iriaini Kikuyu cut up a caravan of six Somalis and ten porters. In November, two hundred of them crossed the Tana and disrupted Mr. Mclure's work of counting huts in Gethi by demonstrating before his camp [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:14/1903]. The Konyu Kikuyu who were hitherto friendly, joined the Iriaini in robbing Mathira and Tumu Tumu. They stole goats which were to be sent to Nyeri and paid as hut tax. Due to the Iriaini threat, a patrol of four Europeans, sixty Kings African Rifles, twelve police and 200 Maasai warriors traversed Iriani. They captured 275 head of cattle and hundreds of sheep and goats [Ibid,]. Eventually the Iriani and their Embu allies were subdued completely. They also had to pay tribute labour and hut tax through their chiefs to the British.
From these first encounters the British were able to establish their influence in the whole of Kenya province. By 1908 they had established a station at Meru quite peacefully since the Meru had taken note of the consequences that befell the Embu and Iriaini [Low, Op. Cit:22]. Only the Tharaka, to the eastern side of Mount Kenya, held out for a little longer. Soon they also submitted before the punitive measures of a small British military patrol in September 1910 [ibid.:44]. Three years later the last British post in this area was established half-way between Meru and Embu amongst the Chuka without any opposition.

2:5 THE SETTLEMENT OF ASIANS IN NYERI

Indians enjoyed an economic prominence on the East African Coast even before the 19th century. They provided organization and especially capital for the expanding trade in the East African Coast and acted as intermediaries in the overseas trade. Their presence in the East Coast, therefore, ante-dated European administration in East Africa. With the advent of colonial rule, Indian traders began to take a more active role in the interior. They expanded and exploited the existing trade networks and at the same time established new centres of commerce: As the colonial economy expanded
so did their economic activity.

The establishment of direct British administration and the increased security and opportunity it brought encouraged the migration of more Indians to East Africa. Moreover, most Indians were proud of extending British influence and authority in Africa [Zarwan, 1977:46]. The first large scale connection of Indians with the interior came with the introduction of Indian indentured labour to build the Uganda Railway beginning in 1896. Following the completion of the railway in 1901, the need for large scale importation of unskilled labour decreased. Nevertheless, indentured labour from India continued to be used on the railway and other projects.

Though a large number of the Indians in East Africa were unskilled and semi-skilled, there were however, skilled artisans and more importantly, clerical and administrative staff that were also officially recruited. The staff would be engaged both by the official agents of the East African colonial governments through direct advertisement and recruitment by individual departments or companies. At the same time, unofficial recruitment also contributed to the migration of many skilled and semi-skilled Indians. The railway and many private firms, thus recruited or imported labour outside official
channels. Other Indians simply travelled at their own expense to Africa in search of greener pastures. Besides regular visits home, early (Indian) settlers in Africa wrote letters and encouraged others to come [Ibid:46].

Many of those Indians who came to Kenya, on their own volition took to trading. Although most of the railway builders were repatriated under the terms of their contract, many returned to Kenya at a later date often bringing with them relatives, friends or casual acquaintances. Those who returned to India, usually with what seemed to be considerable savings normally informed others about openings for artisans and opportunities for business [Ibid.].

The role of the Indian trader in developing the trade of the country and thereby establishing interaction between the Africans and the international exchange economy was recognized by the early colonial military administrators. The Indian traders closely followed upon the paths of the early colonial military expeditions that were sent out to subdue the different African communities and bring them under colonial rule. The result of the expeditions was reflected in the establishment of military posts like Fort Hall, Nyeri, Embu, Meru, Kitui and Kisii among others. [Memon, Op.
Cit:14]. These early military forts subsequently formed the nucleus for the diffusion of Indian traders in the African areas of the country.

By 1903, Asian traders had followed the European government officials to the new station of Nyeri. It has been reported that in that year, four Indian shops and a Swahili butchery were built at Nyeri station. Some of the earliest Indians in Nyeri were Osman Allu and Mohamed Ali [Dutto, Op. Cit:10]. They built their shops overlooking the Chania Valley and sold blankets, iron and copper wire, sugar, cotton, cloth and salt to Europeans and Africans. At the same time, the Indians in Nyeri introduced the use of porters and later bullock wagons to transport their commodities from Nairobi to Nyeri [Wanyoike, 1991:52].

After opening shops at Nyeri station, the Indians next opened shops at Mihuti which was located halfway between Muranga and Nyeri on the Nairobi-Muranga-Nyeri road, the only road between Nairobi and Nyeri by 1911 [KNA/PC/CP/2/1/1:4-5/1911]. By 1916, the trading centre had six Indian shops, a permanent rest camp for travellers and a daily market, where Africans exchanged agricultural produce among themselves and Indian -brought goods. The Indian traders went to the market to
buy especially maize which they later milled [Wanyoike, Op. Cit:53].

The District Commissioner in Nyeri reported in 1908 that Indian traders in Nyeri bazaar and their agents purchased substantial quantities of local produce from the Kikuyu and sold it to passing caravans or transported it to Nairobi, Naivasha and Rumuruti [Mangat, 1969:85]. The same report indicates that Indian trade goods were in high demand among the Africans in the area. It can be concluded that it is the Indians who started trade and commerce in Nyeri station. Thus, the town became an important centre right from the very beginning as it provided business opportunities for Indian traders, a home place for the immigrant Africans especially from the coast and a centre for market and economic services for the surrounding population [Chege, Op. Cit:14]. From 1906, the European settlers began settling in North Nyeri. This accounts for the increased demand for African and Indian goods during this period since the settlers required commodities like maize flour (posho) to feed their labour. This trade between the Kikuyu and the Indians led to the gradual adoption of the use of cash (the Indian rupee) by the former, who now needed money to purchase commodities brought by the Indians and also pay taxes.
Commenting on the impact of Indians on the Kenyan economy, Tandon (1973:2) states that Indians fitted neatly into the free enterprise system that was initiated through colonialism. This was because, unlike the Africans, they were accustomed to the European ways; they had developed some of the required skills, they had considerable drive, and above all, they had a high respect for money. The retail distributive trade was perceived by the whites as something below their proper occupation. It was therefore the Indians who competently fulfilled this function by setting up shops all over Kenya. They sold English and Indian imports together with some African products to the large number of Africans brought into the monetary system. Just like the Europeans, the African sector was very important to the Indian traders. Its preservation was a must because Africans served as the market for Indian products as well as cheap labour, which enabled Asians to earn high profits. Unequal exchange was also significant because Africans did not receive equal or fair value of the goods they sold to Indians. Prizes were not set by Africans but by Indians who bought the goods.
The work of the Christian missions in Kenya ante-dated the entrenchment of colonial rule. Both Protestant and Catholic missions were active along the coast where they fought against slavery and slave trade prior to the IBEA company rule along the coast.

However, after the establishment of company rule in Kenya in 1887, Christian missions became more active in a bid to spread the gospel into the interior. For instance, in 1889, Sir William Mackinnon (head of IBEA company) and Alexander Bruce (a director of the company) conceived the idea of setting up a private Christian mission in the heart of the territory they were administering [Macpherson, 1968]. The mission was named the East African Scottish Mission, and their first missionaries arrived in Kenya in 1891. In September 1891, these missionaries set off from Mombasa with the aim of setting up a station at Dagoretti. However, they established their first station at Kibwezi since they learnt that there was a tense relationship between the Kikuyu and the British at Dagoretti. Nevertheless, by 1900 they had established Thogoto in Kikuyuland as their headquarters. By 1908, they had visited the Mt. Kenya area and established a station at Tumu Tumu. Similarly, the
African Inland Mission which was formed in the United States of America, set off from Mombasa, and by the end of 1896, they established their first Mission Station at Kibwezi. From Ukambani, they established their headquarters at Kijabe on the escarpment near Naivasha [Sandgren, 1976].

A favourable time to establish mission work in Kenya's interior came after the building of the Uganda railway. It enabled the British Protectorate Government to put more areas under their control due to ease in transportation. For central Kenya, it was Dr. Hinde the sub-commissioner at Fort Hall who invited the Vicar Apostolic at Zanzibar to establish Catholic Mission stations in the country and he recommended chief Karuri's country as a possible site [Wanyaga, Op. Cit.:3]. Tuutho in Karuri's country was, therefore, the first Consolata Mission in Kenya. The pioneering team reached Tuutho from Nairobi via Naivasha in 1902. They built temporary buildings there with the help of Karuri. It was from here that they started exploring other areas to the north. Only four months after the foundation of Nyeri station in 1902, the Consolata Missionaries opened a mission station at Tetu, formerly known as Kamakwa, one mile away from Nyeri Town.
As a result of Dr. Hinde and Father Perlo's visit to chief Wambugu's location in Nyeri, another mission station was established at Gikondi in 1903. Chief Wambugu consented to a mission station in his area with little difficulty. Other Consolata Missions in Nyeri included Karima and Kaheti established in 1904 and 1908, respectively. It is therefore apparent that the establishment of these missions went hand in hand with the entrenchment of colonial rule and the establishment of white settlement.

After the foundation of the Consolata Mission at Tetu in 1903, they opened yet another station on the slopes of Nyeri hill and named it Mathari in the following year. This station was to become the headquarters of the Consolata Fathers Missions in the area. It occupied about three thousand acres of land. However, though the missionaries and the colonial government regarded this land to have been a "no man's land", this was highly disputed by the Africans in the area. Justifying the land acquisition by the Consolata mission at Mathari, Father Cognolo states:

The land thus legally acquired was entirely bush and completely uninhabited, the domain of wild animals. The Agikuyu considered it a "no-man's land", a buffer between them and the Maasai. No one had ventured to plant a garden there or
to graze his herds for fear of Maasai raids or attacks by wild beasts. The application (by mission) was in no way considered unreasonable and the land was granted to the mission for mission purposes [Father Cognolo, 1933:15].

The above argument notwithstanding, Mburu [1975] illustrates that the land taken over by the mission was indeed coveted by both the Maasai and the Kikuyu. He states that the name Mathari comes from the Kikuyu term "Guthara" which means to snatch for oneself. The reason for this name is that the place where the mission stands was indeed a salt lick that was used by both the Kikuyu and the Maasai for their cattle. It can be argued that even though the land taken over by the mission was not inhabited by either the Kikuyu or the Maasai physically at the time of colonial invasion of Nyeri, it definitely belonged to the African communities because of the following reasons: First, the communities practiced shifting cultivation and nomadic pastoralism. These two practices required that a particular area be left idle for a duration either to regain fertility or to allow good pasture to sprout. Second, pioneer settlers in North Nyeri testified that they found the Maasai grazing their animals in the area [KNA/DC/NYI/1/2:1911]. In addition, the Maasai had suffered many tragedies in terms of civil wars and diseases as well as famines, which inevitably reduced their populations. It is possible that it was
during this catastrophic period in the Maasai community that the Europeans arrived.

Having established themselves at Mathari, the Consolata Mission established three big coffee estates namely: Kamwenja, Hill farm and Mathari where they recruited many African labourers. They also established orchards for grapes and plums as well as other fruits. In 1907, they then set up a saw mill. Essentially this mill was to prepare timber which would be used in the making of prefabricated houses which would later be transported by porters to the various mission stations being established. Later on, the saw mill was engaged in various activities commercial or otherwise, for the use of the missions themselves or individual adherents. Once again, Karuri proved very useful to the Europeans in this venture. He sent a caravan of 200 porters who spent five days transporting the materials for the saw mill installation from Limuru via Naivasha to Nyeri, [Newton Waikwa, O.l:30-04-94].

While the Consolata mission employed some unskilled African labour in their farm, saw mill, and at their construction sites, they did not employ many domestic servants because of two main reasons. Firstly, according to informants, unlike the British settlers who relied on
African labour, they believed in using their own hands. Perhaps due to shortage of funds they had to avoid such an indulgence. Secondly, since most of these missionaries came from peasantry backgrounds in Eastern Italy, their origin therefore, motivated them to respect manual work. Possibly they may have also wanted to impart this ideal to their African followers [ibid.]. The mission was at the forefront of transforming the Africans' lives both in the township and in the rest of the district. By 1932, it had installed four posho mills at Gura river. Again, these mills generated cash as a result of milling charges and also employed a number of African labourers.

In 1909, the position of Consolata Mission was further enhanced in Nyeri when the pope granted it the status of Vicariate and Father Perlo was consecrated as the first Bishop of Nyeri Vicariate:

The progress of the mission work and the development of all activities warranted the intervention of the higher Ecclesiastical Authority. The Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar, Mgr Allgeryer, and Father Filipo Perlo met in Italy at propaganda Fide. They decided that the time had come for the authoritative pronouncement, which they made thus; the Vicariate of Zanzibar was divided and Kikuyu land, including the Northern region was assigned to the Consolata Fathers. [A living church, 1986:7].

The boundaries of the newly-formed territory then called the Vicariate of Kenya were: To the South, the Thika
river, to the North, the political border of Abyssinia, to the West, the Aberdare Range and to the East the Tana river and the border of Somaliland. Father Filipo Perlo was appointed the first Vicar Apostolic of the Nyeri Vicariate and on October 23rd 1909, consecrated Bishop in the sanctuary of Consolata in Turin [ibid.].

The following conclusion can be adduced on the establishment of mission stations. Given that the coming of the missionaries to the interior of Kenya took place at the same time with the entrenchment of colonial rule the Africans regarded the missionaries to be synonymous with the colonial government's officials and settlers. The Nyeri Kikuyu coined a saying that "Gutiri Muthungu na Mubea" (there is no difference between a priest and a white settler). Similarly, both the missions and the colonial agents introduced new life styles that were practised side by side with the traditional African practices. These missions therefore, were effective agents of cultural change in Nyeri. They constituted an important focus during the colonial period and afforded an opportunity to examine the kind of strains, tensions and conflicts engendered by the clash of cultures under colonial conditions. In these early years, the conflicts and clashes did not assume violent forms but in later years they engendered major political conflicts.
2.7 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is evident that Nyeri Town provided the field where the Europeans, Indians and Africans interacted. It is quite clear that the influence of the Township was felt far and wide in its hinterland since the Town dwellers depended on the surrounding regions for some of their needs such as labour.

It is quite evident that the colonial administration in Nyeri enabled other immigrant communities to settle down within the Town. Missionaries got land as well as protection from the colonial state, while the Indian traders benefitted from the colonial protection. A number of contradictions consequently emerged in Nyeri. For instance, whereas some Africans embraced the Europeans both missionaries and European administrators, there were others who were opposed to any dealings with the European community. With time, there was a lot of antagonism between these two significant elements which in later years would result in bigger conflicts.
NOTES

1. The name Athi does not, identify any particular ethnic group. It simply means "hunters" and both the Dorobo and Kikuyu could have been Athi [Wakaba, C.I.: 27-12-93].

2. It is possible that some of the pioneer Embu and Kikuyu groups originated from the Ethiopian highlands. These pioneer groups travelled via Tigania and Igembe regions before settling at Ithanga [Mwaniki, 1973:17].

3. John Boyes was nicknamed "Karia Njahi" by the Kikuyu. Njahi are a type of Kikuyu beans (Dolichos lab lab). A meal of these beans was served in a homestead following the birth of a baby. Since Boyes ate this meal at Karuri's home, he was nicknamed "Karia Njahi" [Ng'ang'a, 1977: 6].

4. Francis Hall after whom Fort Hall was named, was nicknamed by the Kikuyu - Mr. Nyahoro. This was because he was generally friendly and polite while relating with the Kikuyu [Newton Waikwa, O.T.: 01-5-94]

5. The first missionaries in Central Kenya travelled by train to Naivasha, from where they trekked to Fort Hall through the great forest on the eastern slope of the Aberdare Range [Consolata Fathers, 1987].
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 THE EMERGENCE OF WAGE LABOUR IN NYERI, 1902-19

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we examine how the European colonization of the Kenyan highlands had an important impact on the Africans up to 1919: the end of the First World War. Specifically, we examine how the colonization of Nyeri inevitably led to the creation of a wage earning group of Africans in the township. Further, we analyse the socio-economic consequences of the First World War on the African labourers in Nyeri. It is a fact that the War played an important part in forcing the pace of change among the African peoples of Kenya. It enabled them to realise that they were part of a social system no longer under their own control [Rosberg and Nottingham, Op. Cit.: 28].

The policy of encouraging White Settlers to occupy Kenya was propounded by Charles Eliot, the first British Commissioner to British East Africa Protectorate. He held strongly that the prosperity of the country depended on persuading Africans to work on estates under European direction [Norman Leys, 1924: 157].
Apparently, Eliot had not worked in Africa before his assignment to British East Africa, having worked elsewhere in Europe and Japan. He was concerned that the British taxpayers had paid over 5.5 million British pounds in interest and sinking fund for the Uganda Railway. Moreover, several surveys had been made and it became evident that few profitable minerals existed in the protectorate. Eliot wanted the country to pay its way within a short time, and it was for these reasons that he encouraged European settlers to come and settle in Kenya. Indeed, the railway would make it possible to have a European settler economy based on the export of cash crops from the fertile temperate land of Kenya Highlands. The railway, therefore, strengthened the case for White Settlement [Rosberg and Nottingham, 1966:18].

Eliot began to actively encourage European Settlement in 1903. Significantly, he obtained most of such settlers from South Africa and until just before the first World War, South Africans, whether of British or Boer Stock, were the majority in the Kenya highlands. Their ideas on the treatment of Asians and Africans were to prove quite controversial during the entire colonial period [Sorrenson, 1967]. These settlers brought with them from South Africa the ideas of racial segregation; forced labour; pass system and land alienation, both within the
By the time the settlers arrived in the Kikuyu country the Kikuyu themselves had been subjugated by the British and, therefore, could no longer resist the alienation of their land. According to Sorrenson:

In addition, the Kikuyu had recently suffered a series of bad harvests, due to droughts and locusts, and then a smallpox epidemic, particularly severe in the Kiambu district where, according to one estimate, seventy five per cent of the population perished. Others survived by retreating into the forest of the Kikuyu escarpment or to Fort Hall, and many of these people had not returned to their own land by 1902 when the alienation of land started... Certainly much of the land was unoccupied and some of it was reverting to bush but, in terms of Kikuyu custom, it was not ownerless: it had merely reverted to the surviving members of the Mbari. To Eliot, anxious to promote European settlement, there seemed to be no reason why the 'gaps' between Kikuyu cultivations should not be alienated to European settlers. And to the settlers themselves the opportunity of acquiring this fertile and accessible land was not to be missed. The fact that there were small groups of Kikuyu in occupation was an added advantage, for they could provide labour force. [Ibid, 1967:17]

Consequently, the number of resident settlers rose from 600 in 1905 to 2000 in 1907 [Zeleza, 1989:40]. The
colonial administration assumed that the Africans in Kenya would be more productive working for European settlers than cultivating their own areas. This assumption was given more credence by the belief that the Africans would become more civilised if they came into direct contact with Europeans. Thus, the Europeans were considered to have a civilizing mission by the colonial government.

After Eliot left the protectorate in 1904, the 1902 Crownlands Ordinance was implemented and it authorised land leases and grants to European settlers. Consequently, several reserves were created in the years between 1904 and 1910, in the Kikuyu country. For instance, after 1906 considerable areas of land fringing the Kikuyu country, most of it used as temporary grazing land, between Nairobi and Fort Hall and near Nyeri station were alienated for European settlement [Sorrenson, Op. Cit.:19].

The creation of the reserves, and other artificial boundaries by the colonial state had a big impact on the African communities. First, Africans began to adopt ethnic identities out of previously scattered allegiances. At a wider level, district boundaries began to map out tribes which claimed ethnographic purity that
the British expected of them [Zeleza, Op. Cit:40]. This was contrary to the traditional practices characterized by overlapping and blending that gave rise to the assimilation of different African communities.

Before the colonial administration built a fort at Nyeri in 1902, the area formed good grazing land, and it was a no-man's land which also served as a battle ground as well as a place for peaceful exchange of goods and women between the Kikuyu and the Maasai. However, the Maasai could raid as far south as Karatina and the Kikuyu could raid as far north as Nanyuki [Muriuki, 1969]. The colonial government alienated land in this area in the pretext that it was ownerless by virtue of the fact that no people were settled there. The African claim to this land was justified because of two reasons: First, the pioneer European settler in this area Arnold Paice, on reaching Nyeri, said that he found beacons marking land, which contained several old Maasai Manyattas, a great deal of game and nothing else [Davies, 1980:14]. Second, another pioneer settler in Nyeri, Mr. Maxwell, maintained that although Kikuyu were not resident north of the Chania river prior to 1912, the Maasai were occupying the area west of Nyeri Hill. In fact, the township area including north Nyeri was initially regarded by the colonial administration as a closed district upto 1908,
and no Europeans were allowed to go north of Muringato river without special permission as this was Maasai country [KNA/DC/NYI/1/2: 1912].

By 1910, demand by white settlers for the best and most fertile areas was great and in March of that year the Kikuyu living to the north of Chania river and north of Rumuruti road were moved to their respective chiefs in the 'Reserves' to give room for white settlement [Ngunjiri, 1973]. Consequently, Nyeri Township and its northern surrounding areas were alienated in 1911 to become part of the settler controlled Nanyuki District.

3.2 PIONEER SETTLERS AND EMERGENCE OF WAGE LABOUR IN NYERI

Two distinct areas for white settlement developed in Nyeri. One area specialised in agriculture, while the other specialized in pastoralism [KNA/DC/NYI/3/2:60]. The agricultural area lay within a radius of six miles from the Nyeri flag staff, and coffee was the staple product here. The area between Amboni river and the Aberdares Range to the West, Mount Kenya to the East and Nanyuki to the North, was the pastoral area in which specifically cattle and sheep were reared.
The first settler in the agricultural sector, Mr. Paice, was a pig farmer. His first batch of pigs had to walk from Nyeri, across the Aberdares to Naivasha led by four employees, one Kikuyu and three Meru. They reached their destination - uplands factory-eight days after their departure. Due to the long journey the pigs lost a lot of weight despite the fact that foodstuffs to feed them was carried. Other pioneer agricultural settlers in Nyeri included: Mrs Williams, Carberry, Evans, Mac Dougall, Maxwell, Swanson and O'Hagan.

One of the earliest settlers in the pastoral area was the Bastard family. Here, Mrs Bastard made butter, packed in boxes, and transported by runners to be sold in Nyeri before it turned stale [Davies, Op. Cit:150]. By 1915, other settlers in the pastoral area included Anstey, Barry, Campbell, Forrester and Murray.

Most of the pioneer settlers in Nyeri were quite poor. In the words of Sandy Herd [1986:59], the early settlers in Nyeri had meagre resources as illustrated by their mud houses. However, they were given a lot of land by the government. Indeed, Swanson and Lane, testifying before the Native Labour Commission in 1912, stated that they had 640 acres each in Nyeri out of which only 30 acres were exploited at any given season [ibid., 1912:194-197].
It is significant to note that some of these settlers engaged in land speculation since they could acquire land quite cheaply. As soon as they were allocated land, they sold it to new immigrant settlers at huge profits. The settlement of these pioneer Europeans set the stage for the high demand for African labour. It is against this background that the labour situation in Nyeri ought to be explained.

The emergence of a small but important group of Africans earning wages in Nyeri started as soon as the skeleton of administration was laid out. The Assistant District Commissioner at the Nyeri Fort, embarked upon recruiting chiefs, headmen, interpreters, porters and hut counters. While the chiefs and headmen were recruited from the locality, the interpreters, porters, soldiers and hut counters were initially recruited from other areas [Kitching, 1981:12]. In Nyeri, therefore, Coastal communities like the Waswahili, the Wanyamwezi from Tanganyika, and some Maasai comprised this early group of wage employees, [Mzee Jidi Uledi, O.L:04-05-94].

Among the pioneer employees in Nyeri were some Kikuyu from Fort Hall and Kabete where the impact of colonial rule and settlement had been felt earlier than in Nyeri. Some of the pioneer employees were former caravan
headmen, who had proved useful to Europeans in this capacity, most of whom were literate. Others may have been the products of the first mission school for freed slaves just outside Mombasa [Kitching, *Ibid.*:12]. The rest were soldiers who helped the colonial administration to subdue the Africans in the area. The British allocated an area for the settlement of the African pioneer employees in Nyeri [Dutto, 1975:1]. From the very outset, therefore, Nyeri became a crucible of power from where expeditions were sent to punish the Africans who resisted colonialism. Both Maasai and Kikuyu eventually always regarded Nyeri as alien because of the nature of its founding. This was given credence by the fact that the customs of the early urbanites were quite different from those of the local people [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.I.:28-12-1993].

After 1905, these early employees were supplemented by the graduates from the missions, who joined the labour market two or three years before the First World War. For example, in Nyeri, the Italian Consolata Missionaries whose station was established at Tetu in 1902 started a school at Mathari in 1905. The mission began training some of the local adherents how to read and write [D. Karari, O.I.:06-05-1994]. The Church of Scotland Mission, Tumu Tumu, established in 1909 was unlikely to have
produced many graduates before the First World War. Commenting on the government employees recruited from among the mission boys, Lonsdale [1989:28] states that missionaries attracted two very different streams of client; both the young relatives of chiefs, and the poor. Moreover, an orphanage for African children discarded by Kikuyu at birth due to certain customs, was established by the Italian Mission at Mathari [Provincial Record Book Nyeri, 1901-1924]. The orphans who by 1911 numbered 44 were cared for and provided with elementary education. It was from among such mission boys that a certain cadre of early colonial employees emerged. Such Africans had closer contact with the Europeans and were certain to provide slightly better skilled labour when employment opportunity arose.

It is noteworthy that the Kikuyu who largely occupied Nyeri lacked traditional structures which clearly identified chiefs who had the kind of executive authority over the population like among the Wanga of Western Kenya. Consequently, the pioneer period gave opportunity for men who had managed to acquire a smattering of literacy or numeracy usually through informal contact with Europeans to establish themselves [Kitching, Op. Cit:13]. Thus in Nyeri, powerful personalities during the pioneer years of colonial rule, were those who struck...
friendship with the whiteman.

Consequently, the District Commissioner and District Officers normally decided who was a good employee based on serviceability to the government. For instance, a chief or a headman would be judged by his success in collecting hut tax from Africans. Such men were chosen since they had some significant qualities beneficial to the Europeans such as their readiness to aid the colonial administration and their demonstration of some understanding of what the Europeans required.

In Nyeri, Chiefs Ndiuini, Nderi and Wambugu were the pioneer colonial chiefs. Chief Ndiuini was one useful personality who acted as a guide to Dr. Hinde on several expeditions before the station or boma at Nyeri was established. Due to this, after establishment of the station he was promoted to become a chief. Chief Nderi was son of the famous Warrior - Wang'ombe of Gaki, who was renowned as a fighting leader of the Tetu Kikuyu and the most powerful man in the district when John Boyes first visited Nyeri in 1899. The Europeans identified with Nderi since his family was respected both by the Maasai and the Kikuyu in Nyeri. Chief Wambugu on the other hand was an admirer of the Western civilization with Christianity included, evidenced by the fact that he
invited the Consolata Missionaries to establish a church at Gikondi in 1904.

Some tribal police were later employed as chiefs due to their loyalty to the colonial administration. These included chief Njakio of Tetu and Chief King'ori of Othaya [D. Karari, O.I:06-05-94; and Joseph Gikonyo, O.I:03-05-94]. Indeed, most of the early colonial employees began to be recruited from among either the relatives of these pioneer chiefs and later on from among the Christian converts.

The Consolata Missionaries in Nyeri contributed significantly to the creation of wage labour among Africans in the Township. The missionaries acquired a large farm to the north-west of Nyeri Town, just below Nyeri Hill, in 1904. They then established three big coffee estates namely: Kamwenja, Hill Farm and Mathari in this area. Each farm was supervised by a priest [Nyuguto, 1981].

While most of the labourers came from the local area, a few were from Fort Hall, and even as far away as Kisumu [Geoffrey Wakaba and Newton Waikwa, O.I:04-05-94]. These labourers inhabited the big villages established within the coffee estates. Cultivation and cattle grazing were
not allowed in these villages since provision was not made for such activities. However, the labourers were given small plots of land elsewhere to cultivate and it was possible for able individuals to acquire many separate plots.

For those living in the estate villages it was mandatory to work on the coffee farms unless for reasons of old age or other very sound reasons. Thus, employment in the mission farms was just as exploitative as elsewhere because the labourer's wage was subsidised by what he produced in the estate farm and that of the family farm worked on by family labour. The labourer was not likely to be paid a living wage with such provisions and other benefits such as health care and a pension scheme.

Labourers living in the mission estates constructed their own huts in areas allocated by the priest in-charge of the farm. The huts were all made of mud and were grass thatched. Thus, an organised pattern of settlement developed in the estates. Small shops were also located within each estate village. All disputes in such villages were settled by the priests.

The African occupants of the mission farm were mainly composed of wretched people of the society like the
orphans and ahoi because they did not own land anywhere. These labourers were in all ways treated like squatters in the settler farms of Nyeri. They were paid meagre wages since it was assumed that the produce from their farm plots could supplement their meagre incomes. The wages paid to African labour in both the settler and mission farms as well as the Township were almost equal. By 1910, the farm labourers earned a wage of 3 rupees and a tin of posho. Other labourers such as cooks and houseboys were paid between 4 and 5 rupees and a tin of posho, [Esther Muringi, O.I:04-05-94 and Kariuki Kaguri, O.I:05-05-94].

3.3 EARLY LABOURERS IN NYERI TOWN

One African group that settled in Nyeri Township fairly early was the Swahili. By 1905, there was considerable Swahili settlement. Their early presence could perhaps be explained by the fact that right from the pre-colonial times, the Waswahili traded with the local people in livestock, grain, beeswax, ivory and hides [KNA/DC/NYI/3/2:47]. They even established camps in Kikuyuland and one such pre-colonial camp was Kagio in Kirinyaga. So it was, relatively, easy for them to entrench themselves in this area and other parts of Kikuyuland right from the start of colonial rule. In
fact, the Waswahili were instrumental in the British colonisation of Kenya first, by aiding in the initial conquest and second, by participating in the early administration of the conquered regions of Kenya since the days of company rule. This was because the Swahili had earlier experience with the Europeans and had been subdued much earlier than others.

The Waswahili fitted easily into the roles assigned to them by the colonial administration because of a number of reasons. Firstly, they were literate for they had been exposed to the Islamic education which had made them to become useful colonial agents. As a result, they comprised the earliest group of wage earners not only in Nyeri but in the entire protectorate. They were also employed as porters, hut counters, interpreters, gardeners as well as soldiers.

Secondly, they had previous urban experience. For them, it was a matter of choosing one of a few urban alternatives. They were mostly Muslims, their universalistic religion affording them a wide range of choices because worship was not linked to any particular place or social system [Tarmakin, 1978]. From these early migrants there developed in Nyeri the Swahili community comprising of Africans who settled permanently in the
town. They are the ones who introduced the Islamic religion to the Nyeri Africans. Consequently, Islam became very popular and its impact has persisted to date. The Waswahili were later joined by Somali livestock traders some of whom settled permanently in the Township.

Inspite of the long Swahili presence in Nyeri, the Kiswahili language was despised in the Town for quite a while because it was regarded as the language of colonial administration perhaps due to the employment of many Waswahili as colonial agents. Their role in the colonial administration was construed as sympathy with the colonial government and evidence of enmity with other Africans. Similarly, a large number of colonial employers preferred that their employees speak Kiswahili as a mark of their status; Africans who spoke English were viewed with great suspicion [Clayton and Savage, 1974:146].

As the Township expanded the number of settlers and administrators also increased and all of them required labour. The large population of Indians in the Town also needed labour. With the increase in the demand for labour the numbers of African labourers also rose. Most of the Africans in the Township were thus employed to service the colonial administration, settlers, Indians, Waswahili and the Somali. Mzee Jumbe Mwinyi [0.1:05-5-94],
maintained that the Maasai and Kikuyu labourers served as sweepers or domestic helpers for the rich Waswahili and Somali. But Somali employment was usually not permanent because of their nomadic lifestyle, and being livestock traders they stopped in the township only long enough to do business, after which they moved on. The colonial administration also required clerks, sweepers, grass cutters, interpreters, messengers, carpenters and station hands.

Nyeri was particularly attractive also to European sportsmen and hunters because it was rich in game. The sportsmen therefore added to the need for more African labour in the safari camps, and porters to assist the safari parties. Delano Roosevelt, Ex-president of the United States of America (henceforth USA), was one of the many such sportsmen. He visited Nyeri town and spent some time shooting wild game in the area in 1909,[Provincial Record Book, 1901-1924].

The 1914 DC Annual Report states that the Township required a lot of labour supply for its upkeep. The type of labour required most was porterage. Due to lack of mechanised vehicles, transport of goods from one place to another relied either on oxen or donkey wagons, and sometimes on human labour. As Mzee Jumbe Mwinyi said,
Porterage was a preserve for African labourers [0.1:05-5-94, Majengo Nyeri].

In the pioneer years of colonial rule the African men were employed to perform domestic tasks such as herdsmen, gardeners, cooks as well as houseboys in the European farms near the town [Joseph Gikonyo, 0.1:04-05-94]. African juveniles were mainly employed as baby-sitters and as house-boys. The Europeans preferred to employ labourers on long term basis unless during coffee-picking season when juveniles as well as women were required to pick coffee.

The Indians on the other hand, employed some African shophands to retail their merchandise and as baby-sitters, since the shops served both as business premises and as living quarters. Unlike the Europeans, both the Asians and Waswahili were in the habit of employing African labour on daily basis. Sometimes, this took the form of hourly pay or piece rate. An example of a job that was mainly paid for on piece rate was that of splitting firewood [Jidi Uledi, 0.1:06-05-94 and Mathengu Kinyeru, 0.1:03-05-94].

It is worth noting that women's participation in the labour market was quite low. This was because of three
The main reasons: First, the traditional system of division of labour was patterned along gender lines so women's tasks did not allow them to be easily released by the system. They were, therefore, required to cater for the reproduction and feeding of the family, while the menfolk were required to provide protection in the household. Second, colonial rule was a male system so the men were targeted to provide wage labour for the Europeans. The migrant labour system that emerged could only be sustained by the ability of the rural households increasingly headed by women, to produce their own subsistence and for the reproduction of the males. Third, there was concern in the African societies that women would be harassed by badly behaved men if they worked away from their villages.

The most important factor determining the pace of Nyeri's growth was its position as the centre of European rural settlement in the Kenya Province. The Town developed as a marketing, supplying, servicing and processing centre for its agricultural hinterland. Maize mills and saw mills were among some of the early industries in Nyeri since they supplied posho and sawn timber to the settlers in the region. Similarly, other social services and amenities like hospitals and churches were also provided in the town.
In March 1913, a survey of the Township plots was announced with the provision that each community - European, Asian and African, be allocated a separate section of the Town. This confirmed the allocation of resources and power within the Town along racial lines. This allocation was in inverse ratio to the size of the three racial communities. It also formalized in Nyeri the typical structure of a town in a settler colony. It rigidified the racial hierarchy within which the Europeans occupied the upper echelons in terms of economic resources, social status and political power.

The Asians occupied an intermediary position, while the Africans formed the bottom part of the pyramid. This hierarchical structure was enhanced by the concept of the colour-bar which applied to all spheres of urban life. According to Tamarkin [1977:106], urban roles which in a normal society are allocated on the basis of socio-economic status was allocated in a settler-colonial town on the basis of race and colour.

It is apparent that a similar situation prevailed in Nairobi which was the capital of the colonial administration in Kenya. In 1913 for instance, a report by an urban consultant in Nairobi prescribing the ideal conditions in an urban centre stated that:
In the interests of each community and of the healthiness of the locality and the country, it is absolutely essential that in every town and trade centre there should be well-defined and separate quarters for Europeans, Asiatics and Africans [EAS, 2nd April, 1950].

Discussing the major mitigating factors which led to the inauguration of the policy of control and racial segregation in Nairobi, Mcvicar and Mary Parker suggest that there were two main factors. First the desire to reduce health hazards which were associated with urban squatter villages and second, there was the urgent need to increase the physical security of the Europeans as well as to improve the efficiency of the African labour force [Olumwullah, 1986].

Whereas the services of the Africans were required by the Europeans, they at the same time made sure that Africans led an inferior life. In Nyeri, the African village whose residents were mainly the Waswahili, was moved to a new location set aside for "natives". This location was specifically selected for the Africans because it was not a pleasant place for the European race. Dutto [1975] describes this location as being full of gulleys:

It was characterized by mud houses, low sanitary standards and general lack of facilities as compared to the residential areas of the other
races. The Europeans settled in the area west of the administrative offices, whereas the Asian and Goan government officers settled in the Central part of the Township, south of the administration block [Ibid.].

It is also worth noting that whereas the Europeans and Asians could be allowed long term leases for the plots, no such provision was made for the Africans who were regarded as temporary settlers in the Township. The rural households of the Africans was preserved so he could go back when his services were no longer needed due to old age, health and other factors. Both Europeans and Asians discriminated against the Africans by describing them as inferior, dirty and untrustworthy. Although the Waswahili regarded themselves as superior to the other Africans, they also fell within this category and in 1911 the DC Nyeri expressed this most aptly when he said:

I do not personally consider that the Swahili is a desirable person and his influence on the raw native is rarely beneficial [KNA/DC/-NYI/3/2:47/1911].

In the light of the above the following conclusions can be reached. First, the policies of control and segregation were used as a rationale for exempting the Europeans in Kenya from the responsibility of providing for the reproduction of labour power, while other
communities especially Africans were exploited. This was evidenced by the fact that the African labourers often constructed their own huts and supplemented their pay with food from their reserves, where their families cultivated and kept some livestock for subsistence. Thus, capitalism in colonial Kenya depended on the maintenance and transformation of pre-capitalist relations of production rather than removing the labourers from their means of production fully. During the times of sickness or old age, the labourer would be supported by the reserves, hence the need to preserve the pre-capitalist relations of production.

Second, there existed several unjust Township rules that governed the behaviour of the township residents. Some of these rules stipulated that no one could sell cattle, sheep or goats in the Township except at the place set aside for the purpose in the market. Grazing within the Township, the unyoking of animals for a longer duration than the one that was deemed reasonably necessary to load and unload by the colonial authorities, were prohibited [Joseph Gikonyo, 0.1:07-05-94]. Such regulations were aimed at ensuring proper control over the Africans.

The Africans who worked in urban centres were exposed to great risks because of two main reasons. First, the
colonial government argued that Africans were supposed to fend for themselves and that by virtue of their temporary residence in the Town there was no need to provide for their social needs [Parker 1948:200]. Second, the labourers built their own huts in the African location—commonly referred to as the 'native' village. Since they could not afford good building materials, their huts were often leaking and unhealthy. These conditions provided the Europeans with an excuse for condemning the Africans as dirty and stinking; Abuor has captured this situation most distinctly:

The White Settler had made sure during the construction of such quarters, or labour lines, that they were situated on the worst available sites, and that, in order to make them look inferior to the master's grand home, all the grass and trees had been removed ... They also stored leaves of trees .... thus giving the estates a horrible smell, which the White settler used as an excuse for abusing and discriminating the black man as a "dirty primitive native" [1970:24].

Several disease outbreaks were reported in Nyeri Township affecting mainly the African location [KNA/PC/CP/1/1/1911]. These diseases were as a result of the poor living conditions of the African labourers in the Township.
Sanitation within the African villages was not taken into account. As such, the Africans resorted to the bush for toilet facilities. But while toilet facilities were not available to them, they had to take care of the sanitation in European and Asian houses. The duties of some African labourers included emptying the toilet pails used in the Asian and European houses. This was a humiliating task to the Africans who felt unjustly treated. However, they had to continue carrying out some such tasks because of the need for cash [Joseph Gikonyo, 0.1:08-05-94/Ruringu Nyeri].

Commenting on similar problems in Nairobi, Odinga [1990] states thus:

The consequence of poverty, inadequate water supply and lack of housing was the outbreak of different diseases with plague having a tremendous impact on the population of Nairobi [Odinga, 1990:68].

Perhaps this explains why most of the upcountry African labourers did not respond enthusiastically to the new urban phenomenon. Coming to town meant that Africans would have to put up with an urban system based on racial stratification, where social control was formally enforced by an alien and legally superior minority. The tribal social norms which suited the needs of both the
group and the individual gave way to formal administrative and Township laws and regulations, the logic of which Africans did not always appreciate. In the African location they had to live side by side with people whose language they did not understand and whose customs were often objectionable. For instance, some of the spices used by the Waswahili were highly suspected by the Kikuyu who thought they were elements of witchcraft [Muriithi Muthui, O.I:08-05-94/Majengo Nyeri]. In the African locations the labourers lived in congested and filthy conditions within the urban location. Moreover, they were subjected to a less agreeable rhythm of work and leisure [Tamarkin, Op. Cit:107].

Because of the abhorrent town conditions the exhortations from administrative officers were disregarded by the Africans, evidenced by the fact that most Africans were not interested in leaving their homes to work for the Europeans prior to the First World War. First, the wages given to the labourers were pitifully low. This is well illustrated by the fact that some Africans from Nyeri preferred to go all the way to the Coast region where wages were higher [Muriithi Muthui, Op. Cit]. Secondly, housing was grossly inadequate in the town while social services were non-existent. Finally, the upcountry Africans regarded life in town as morally inferior, the
town being a place where labourers lost their traditional customs and virtues [Tamarkin, Op. Cit].

The reluctance on the part of Africans to provide labour for the Europeans was interpreted by the colonial state to mean that the Africans were lazy. However, it was reported that Africans refused to work hard enough for Asians and Europeans but worked hard at their homes. A.R. Barlow, an authority on the Kikuyu, wrote in the Kikuyu News in September 1913 that:

The usual argument one meets when urging that the native needs time to attend to his own affairs is that the male native while at home does no work, but lolls about watching his women slave for him. This is an erroneous idea [Norman Leys, Op. Cit:212].

Several measures were adopted by the colonial government to make Africans provide labour for the government and white settlers in Nyeri. The hut tax which was first levied in the country in 1901 at the rate of two rupees for each hut, was one of the methods used to acquire labour [Ibid.:212]. This is well illustrated by the fact that as early as 1903, a tax collector's house had been built in Nyeri and a hut tax was already being levied in the area [Provincial Record Book KNA/PC/CP/1/1/2].
Colonial administration was organised in such a way that the Africans would find it hard to evade tax collection in that in the first six months of 1903, a prison was completed, a guardroom and an office as well as an officer's house. The high number of policemen and hut counters stationed in the Township was required to ensure that law and order was maintained. Failure to pay hut tax was a criminal offence which could lead to the subjection of the Africans to heavy penalties by District Officers, Chiefs, Headmen and their retainers [Raphael Warugara O. I:06-05-94].

It is apparent however, that the imposition of taxation as a measure to force Africans to provide labour, was unsuccessful mainly because of the following factors: First, initially Africans could pay their taxes in form of livestock. Secondly, the African consumption patterns did not change drastically in the early years. Upto 1908, for the main labour-supplying area of the Kikuyu and Kamba reserves, officials reported that the African wants were few and little money satisfied them since there was no inclination to accumulate riches to meet unforeseen contingencies. Again, there was little demand for articles of European manufacture. Furthermore, the cash was not used in capitalist terms. For instance, the Africans who provided wage labour invested their cash
primarily in livestock, which served as the means of exchange for most African communities [Stitcher, Op. Cit:31].

From 1902, the hut tax was raised by stages so that by April 1903 it had gone upto 2 rupees per hut, and between 1906 to 1907, it was raised to 3 rupees. The overall effect of this was to accelerate the number of Africans who went to sell their labour for cash income. Taxation was nevertheless, a double-edged sword: it encouraged wage employment as much as peasant commodity production [Zeleza, Op. Cit:50].

The years 1904 and 1905, thus, saw the expansion of agricultural activities in Nyeri. Africans sold foodstuffs, milk and bananas especially to the Asian and African communities who lived within the Township. Since the Africans could pay taxes without taking up wage employment, this meant that the colonial government continued to experience a shortfall in labour both for the administration and for individual settlers.

The introduction of taxes had some serious consequences in Nyeri. Firstly, a number of Africans are reported to have destroyed their huts and kept their wives in one hut as a way of reducing the amount of hut tax due from them.
This was a serious interference with the traditional modes of living especially among the Kikuyu where each wife was head of a household which, in turn, occupied one hut. Thus, the imposition of hut tax curtailed the privacy and independence hitherto enjoyed by African families. Consequently, the huts became congested and this further increased the risk of the spread of some diseases. The tax issue also led to a general feeling of anxiety among the Africans in Nyeri [Provincial Record Book KNA/PC/CP/1/1:65]. Commenting on Nairobi, Professor Beck attributes the spread of plague during the colonial era to the disruption of African Social Structure. She states:

At the beginning "Native" huts were not overcrowded since according to their customs only one adult human being occupied one hut ... After the introduction of a hut tax of five rupees, it became common for more than one person to occupy a hut to avoid payment of more taxes .... [1970:26].

In Nairobi, therefore, African huts in the African location became congested and unhealthy because they were constructed with poor materials. Often they were grass thatched thus providing a good habitat for rats and other pests. Moreover, the huts were built haphazardly with no particular plans. The control of rats in such an environment proved impossible.
Secondly, the Poll Tax which was introduced in 1910 as a measure of netting adult males who escaped paying hut tax due from married men, led to the escalation of the departure of men from their homes to both the towns and settler farms especially in North Nyeri. From the Kikuyu point of view, squatters had a number of advantages. They enjoyed greater freedom from Europeans, chiefs and their retainers who increasingly harassed the Africans in their reserves. Squatters on white settler farms had a lot of land to cultivate and could keep large amounts of stock. Some of them worked only a few days in a year while others could evade paying taxes altogether [Stitcher, Op. Cit:36].

Since taxation and land alienation had been unable to attract enough labour for the government and White Settlers, the administration reverted to compulsory labour levies and indirect pressure through chiefs and headmen. As Zeleza puts it:

... Under colonial capitalism, African institutions were distorted in order to serve wider colonial objectives. They were emptied of their social and cultural meaning and remoulded into vehicles of naked extortion and exploitation. Communal labour was compulsory for everybody including ... women and children, as stipulated in the Native Authority Ordinance of 1912 ... [Zeleza, Op. Cit:51].
Inspite of the African protests against forced labour to the Native Labour Commission (1912), the Native Authority Ordinance of 1912 empowered appointed headmen to make legal arrests and compel attendance by Africans within their jurisdiction at native tribunals. Each headman could require 24 days per year of labour for the community benefit from each African male under his control.

Indeed, the 1912-13 Native Labour Commission Report demonstrated the virtual domination of the political and economic scene by the labour issue in Kenya [Clayton, 1971:180]. Over two hundred European witnesses gave evidence, and over 60 Africans and fifteen Indians. The commission noted that among the factors that affected provision of labour included bad housing, ill-treatment of labourers by the employers, misunderstanding due to language, hardship on journeys to and from work, as well as poor and monotonous food. The commission found, from evidence, that the actual diet of many labourers seemed limited to maize meal or beans, the latter being often mouldy, causing diarrhoea. Ingredients like salt, leaf or root vegetables and meat were mostly absent [Ibid.:183].

The 1912 Native Labour Commission also heard from various witnesses in Nyeri that chiefs were being bribed by
professional labour recruiters with livestock and other presents. Some of the chiefs were, however, ignorant and could not tell the difference between a European government officer and a private labour recruiter. It can be concluded that in addition to taxation, land alienation, compulsory labour and labour recruitment by chiefs, the colonial government helped to recruit labour both for the government and for individual settlers, through passing legislations that forced Africans to look for wage employment.

Despite the obvious disadvantages of urban life, several factors slowly led the Africans in Nyeri into wage labour without any compulsion. Firstly, it has been reported that many Africans migrated to town to get money for dowry or for buying some of the newly introduced commodities like clothes and bicycles. Secondly, there was an element of adventure in going to work in the town in a period in which traditional adventures were considerably restricted. Such adventurous elements went to join the Waswahili community in the native village in Nyeri Town. Some Kikuyu girls were married and assimilated in this Muslim community. This eventually helped to forge some friendship between the Waswahili and other African elements in the Town. Thirdly, some people were forced to join the urban community due to the
hardships they encountered in their communities, both man-made and natural. For instance, according to the 1904 District Annual Report, the Meru people were flocking into Nyeri Township in search of work both to raise hut tax and to escape the raiding expeditions against them by the Samburu and the Rendille.

The Embu and the Ndia people also flocked into the Township that year to escape the hard conditions prevailing in their areas due to drought [Geoffrey Wakaba, 0.1:27-12-94]. Their influx led to an increase of population in the African location with the consequence of increasing congestion.

3.4 NYERI TOWN AT THE ONSET OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Upto 1914, when the First World War commenced, there were three important factors determining the pace of Nyeri's growth. These included: The administrative role of Nyeri both as provincial and district headquarters; its role as a business centre and its role as the centre of the European rural settlement in the Kenya Province.

On the 15th of May 1911, Nyeri was officially excluded from the native reserve and proclaimed a Township. According to the 1911 Annual Report its area was to
comprise a radius of one mile from the government flag staff covering a total of 1811 acres. In 1912, the provincial headquarters was shifted from Fort Hall to Nyeri. Thus, Nyeri became the headquarters of Kenya Province and Nyeri District, respectively [KNA/PC/CP/1/1/2/1912]. This same year marked an important turning point in the development of Nyeri since Kenya province extended to cover some part of Ukambani, Meru, Embu, Kirinyaga, Nyeri, Fort Hall and North Nyeri including Nanyuki.

The concentration of various administrative branches in the Town gave added impetus to its development. Nyeri inevitably housed several government departments in the province. For instance, the Township became the provincial headquarters of the Public Works Department (henceforth PWD). This department employed many African labour gangs which constructed bridges and made roads in the province. Moreover, Nyeri also housed the PWD depot for the Northern Frontier District. A provincial prison which held convicts from all over Kenya province was also setup in the Township. Since this was a major prison, all convicts held were offenders who had committed serious offences and had been sentenced to serve more than six months terms [KNA/PC/CP/4/1/1: 83/1915]. The head of the prisons department, an Asian, qualified as a first grade
chief warder and below him were thirteen African policemen. This prison was a further sign that the Africans in the area were British subjects since failure to observe the new colonial laws could lead to imprisonment. It also meant an increase in the number of Africans in the Township both as prisoners and labourers.

The 1915 Provincial Annual Report indicated that the Township African population totalled 521 in that year. Though a few were civil servants, the majority were labourers [KNA/PC/CP/4/1/1:81/1915]. The town's administrators required many labourers. As earlier stated they needed the services of grass cutters, gardeners and cooks in their homes. Furthermore, although the colonial administration hired Goans and Waswahili in their offices to do clerical work, they still required Africans to be messengers, porters and cleaners.

Nyeri also served as an important trading centre especially for the Asian traders. The most prominent Asian traders in Nyeri at this time included Allidina Visram, Wali Hassan, Osman Allu and Hassan Hassan. They sold to the Africans in the area - a number items such as Americani, blankets, iron, brass, copper wire, beads, shirts, Khaki trousers, lamps, enamel cups, tobacco, matchettes, iron bars, hoes, sugar, rice and flour.
Consequently, the Indian bazaar in Nyeri expanded rapidly inevitably affecting the lives of the Africans particularly in the Township. Firstly, many Africans were employed by the Asians to market their merchandise both within the township and in the various trading centres in the area. Secondly, many Africans were drawn into the money economy. Some of the items they required like hoes and swords were now to be bought from the Indians.

Hand in hand with commerce, a number of industrial activities expanded prior to the War. These included: posho mills, saw mills, tanning and printing. Osman Allu’s posho mill located on the Chania river near the PWD was said to have been the oldest and best equipped [Cecilia Nyakinyua, 01-05-94]. The Consolata Mission in Nyeri was also involved in industrial activities. As Father Cagnolo indicates:

One of the first Consolata Brothers who came to work in Kenya, started a tannery and a shoe-making shop, and after forty-four years shoes and leather goods are still turned out there. He has taught his craft to many African boys, who are now reaping the fruits of their excellent training. In 1913 a printing press was started. It was developed into a real printing school for Africans. Hundreds of publications in several Bantu languages have been turned out during all these years, and one of the most notable is Wathiomo
Mokinyu, a Kikuyu monthly started in 1916. Many Africans have learnt to become expert type setters, the knowledge has stood them in good stead. [Ibid., 1953:102]

Nyeri also proved to be an entertainment centre. It was the rendezvous for local and safari people who met normally in the evenings to exchange news. The Kenya General Stores especially, became important since it coupled up as a lodging or boarding place for the safari people without camping facilities. However, a camping ground with grass sheds, kitchen and stables was maintained in the township. This in turn required a constant number of porters to ferry the load required by camp occupants whenever they were in Nyeri. Indeed, most of the safari parties stayed in Nyeri before proceeding to Nanyuki which lay thirty seven miles to the west of the Township. The proximity of Nyeri to a lot of game made it a convenient tourist and game hunting resort.

It was because of a pressing need to give comfortable accommodation to tour parties that a small syndicate comprising of Sandy Herd and Mrs Mackie built the White Rhino Hotel in 1914 (Dutto, 1975). The hotel was not fully utilised due to the First World War and the rooms were used only when occasion demanded until 1918. A description of the Hotel was given thus:
A row of six stone bedrooms with wooden partitions and ceilings (sic) was not exactly sound proof and many good-natured criticisms were levelled about this and that, for example, you would hear anyone changing their mind (sic) from one end of the building to the other, and also the White Rhino charges at sight [Herd, 1986:59].

Thus, though a very modest beginning for the hotel industry in Nyeri, the White Rhino was a pioneer in the tourist industry which was to grow to unsurpassed levels in the years following the First World War. Moreover, several Africans managed to acquire skills in cookery and catering from this pioneer hotel [Kariuki Kaguri, O.1.:02-05-94]. Indeed, the Hotel Industry has remained one of the most developed industries in Nyeri to date.

By the time of the First World War, a number of Africans in Nyeri had acquired some important skills. In addition to those Africans who got their training from the mission schools, the Public Works Department initiated a training depot for carpentry and joinery in 1909 [Kitching, 1981]. Nyeri prison also offered artisan courses and agricultural skills. These courses produced semi-skilled Africans who earned better incomes than the majority of the labourers in the town.
Since Nyeri was an agricultural town, most African labourers were involved in agricultural-oriented tasks. Some of them acquired specific instruction through European and Indian apprenticeship, sometimes by merely watching and listening. These skills encompassed not only the artisan skills but also other useful and marketable abilities. For instance, some acquired simple literacy, cart driving, maintenance, ploughing and cookery. It can therefore be concluded that by the outbreak of the First World War, Africans in colonial Kenya were not merely passive recipients of new knowledge but rather they were quick to respond positively to the new challenges they encountered. Some used the new ideas and technology to their advantage. It could not be said they were completely victims of their circumstances since they used progressive ideas to advance themselves. For example, after 1914-18 war, tea shops run by Africans who had learnt cookery began to emerge in Nyeri.

3.5 FIRST WORLD WAR AND ITS IMPACT ON LABOUR

The first world war imposed a severe burden upon the African population, while the European demands increased in both scope and pressure [Clayton and Savage, 1974]. In the years preceding the war, many Africans had been exposed to the new colonial economy in East Africa. The
Uganda railway, Indian merchants and the vastly improved shipping helped to open the international economy to African surplus producers [Overton, 1989]. The war thus marked an important change, since it ushered in a period of relative decline in the African economy because African resources were now mobilised for war purposes. Nevertheless, the British colonial authorities at first expected the War to be purely a European phenomenon which would be settled quickly. Unfortunately, it became apparent that the war was getting prolonged and that East Africa would be affected too. The authorities then manipulated their demands for African labour so that the Africans were being urged to portray patriotism by supporting the War effort.

In 1914, the acting PC for Kenya Province Mr. H.R. Tate attended a famous meeting accompanied by the Nyeri DC. The proceedings were interpreted by a senior Swahili interpreter in Nyeri, Jumea Bin Makame [Newton Waikwa, O.I.: 30-04-94]. The main objective of this meeting was to deliberate about the war with chiefs, headmen and elders of Nyeri. The PC was at pains to remind the leaders about the Great War which was occupying the thoughts of all Europeans. In the meeting, the PC emphasized that the life of Africans in the country would be a hard one if they ever came under the domination of the Germans, and
that they therefore had an almost equal interest with the Europeans in securing the defeat of the enemy [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:333/1915]. These sentiments were undoubtedly meant to woo the Africans to support the cause of the whites in Kenya. He then appealed to all people under the British flag to rally behind the British.

Consequently, the Africans were gradually incorporated into the war effort. The military authorities first requested carrier labour in August 1914. The chiefs were made to understand that they would be relied upon to provide the men who would carry the weapons and luggage of soldiers to the war-front. They would also be relied upon to encourage the people to sell their food and livestock to the army at lower prices [Ibid]. In their effort to please the colonial masters some of the over enthusiastic chiefs not only provided men but also other gifts in support of the war effort. Sometimes the gifts were quite substantial like the 3000 goats given by Nyanza chiefs. Fines were also used to supplement the war resources especially in terms of livestock [Overton, Op. Cit:209].

The chiefs started immediately to meet the demands of the administration. The Njama of Nyeri went from house to
house forcing people to report for medical examination. Those who did not cooperate with these men were tortured and the njama did not hesitate to carry out raids on the villages around the Township to secure the required number of men for the carrier corps [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.1. 27-12-93]. After medical examination, those who were brought forward were arranged into three groups. Those who were certified to be medically fit were taken to Nairobi to await their departure to the various warfronts. The next group was made up of those who although not medically fit, were strong enough to work on settler estates and Townships in the War period. Altogether between March 1915 and August 1917 when carriers were no longer needed, a total of 14,293 people from Nyeri District alone were taken to serve as porters [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:62/1917]. The Provincial Annual Report 1917 stated:

So many males were forced to leave their homes so that it was possible to walk for miles in the heart of the reserve without seeing a young able-bodied native anywhere [KNA/PC/CP/1/1:62/1917]

The other parts of the Kikuyuland and Western Kenya were equally affected by the carrier corps recruitments. The four districts of the Fort Hall, Nyeri, Embu, and Meru sent over 40000 men mostly to Carrier Corps. Most of
these men were usually from the ages of 17 years to 35 years and were physically the best or most healthy. On average they were away from their homes for one and a half years. This of course had a serious impact on the demography in African areas which became very imbalanced with the young men missing. This in turn negatively affected the agricultural production in the sense that since men were recruited into the war effort, the womenfolk remained behind to carry out rural subsistence production. Thus, the function of the womenfolk was relegated to that of reproducing and maintaining cheap labour reserves.

The impact of the war was also felt by missions. However at first the mission schools were a haven for the Africans who did not want to take part in labour recruitment and for this reason they became unpopular especially with the chiefs [KNA/PC/CP/2/1/1: 159/1917]. Commenting on the War impact on missions, Strayer [1973:9] states that while many Africans had associated themselves with the CMS as a means of pursuing some positive economic or political goal, others saw in the mission a means of escape from war, famine, political upheaval, family problems and increasingly from the demands of a colonial state. However, as the demands of the war increased, the missions were also forced to
participate. The majority of the male members of the mission societies joined the war to serve as chaplains with troops and with the carrier corps. Similarly, a number of nuns of the French and Italian mission in Nyeri served as nursing sisters in the War. African teachers and pupils were recruited into the carrier corps to such an extent that the work of some missions in the area was nearly stalled [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.I.:28-12-93/Ruringu].

The hardships created by the War effort in the reserves led to an escalation of men leaving the rural areas to both the white settler farms in North Nyeri and also to the urban centres. Close relatives in both the urban centres and farms helped to accommodate the incoming relatives. Perhaps it was for this reason that the labour in some particular departments seemed to be from the same localities; for example, the conservancy department in Nyeri Township was reported to have been dominated by the Kikuyu from Ndii [Joseph Gikonyo, O.I.:03-05-94/Ruringu]. Indeed, Sinclair [1978:48] has concluded that the East African towns are characterised by persistence of the kinship ties and primary relationships arising out of invitation of relatives through ethnic associations and relationships to town. Thus, there was an increasing trend that saw labourers both in the town and in settler farms, sharing a common background. As a result, some of
the traditional practices were transferred from the reserves to the urban centres. For instance, respect accorded the older labourers by the younger ones was still obvious. Newton Waikwa who served as a clerk for many years in the township confided that the issue of detribalization of Africans was just a myth because labourers in the Township maintained regular contact with the Reserves,[Newton Waikwa O.1:30-04-94]

3.6 THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON AFRICAN LABOUR IN THE TOWNSHIP

The hardships that were triggered off by the war helped to exacerbate the poor living conditions of the Africans in the township. Medical services were in a poor state especially within the town to the extent that the colonial state realised the inadequacy. The PC himself testified in 1916 that the whole province was understaffed, badly equipped with hospitals and insufficiently financed. These sentiments were revealing especially in the face of the war situation.

The War aggravated the situation. The carrier corp recruits who worked in the unhealthy areas of both British East Africa and German East Africa, and often subsisted on diet to which they were not accustomed,
consequently became prone to disease and many of them had to be repatriated to the province. Diseases ranged from anaemia, bronchitis, valvular heart disease, malaria, to dysentery and small pox, not to mention the serious injuries they sustained at the hands of armed German soldiers. Many of the Carrier Corps died in hospitals before they reached home while others succumbed after arrival at their villages. The returning soldiers disseminated disease resulting in the spread of epidemics especially in the Native Village where many of them went to stay as they sought for treatment. The fear of conscription kept many ex-carriers from going direct to the reserves. Indigenous medicine catered for a large population of the Africans in the Township throughout the War period. Unfortunately, the socio-economic conditions in the Township created favourable environmental conditions for the spread of diseases some of which were unknown in the area. For instance, the situation was aggravated by the fact that Africans were forced to relieve themselves in the bush due to lack of proper sanitation.

Although famines and droughts were not a phenomenon unique to the period of the War, the War simply exacerbated the conditions. In 1918 a famine christened "Ngaragu Ya Thika" (The famine of Thika)
broke out in this area. It was so named because food could only be obtained from the terminus of the Nairobi-Thika branchline of the railway at Thika [Wanyoike, 1991]. Many people from Nyeri had to embark on the long journey to Thika to get maize which the colonial government had imported from South Africa [KNA/PC/CP/1/1/2:65]. The situation was aggravated further by the increase in African taxation during the war.

Facing severe cashflow problems in 1915, the government moved rapidly to impose an increase in taxation from 3.00 rupees to 5 rupees per annum. This tax was approximately equal to average monthly rates of pay for unskilled labour [Overton, Op Cit:211]. These increases affected Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya and Machakos Kamba but the Maasai and by implication - other pastoral groups were not affected. The tax increase was implemented between 1916 and 1917 and it helped to increase the government revenue in Central and Western Kenya in particular. The early wartime financial crisis was thus solved by exploiting African taxation and in particular those sedentary agriculturalists whom it was easier to exploit [Ibid.,:211]. The result of this taxation was anxiety among the Africans. In fact, many of the urban labourers were always in debt and this kept them in perpetual worry.
Exploitation of African resources was uneven. For instance, some areas like Nyeri where the European proximity was close were much more exploited than areas further from centres of colonial administration. Africans in Nyeri were therefore quick to respond to this exploitation by struggling to get enough cash to pay taxes through wage labour and trading. The response of various groups and regions was therefore conditioned by the penetration and development of capitalism as well as its articulation with previous modes of production [Zeleza, 1989:63]. In Nyeri the most common response to the higher rates of taxation was exodus of the younger men to towns like Nyeri, or to the settler farms in North Nyeri.

Unfortunately, though a number of Africans were employed in the PWD workshops, posho mills, shops and saw mills, the wages paid to them were quite low. The standard wage of the unskilled labourers ranged between 4 rupees to 10 rupees for those who remained fairly long in employment (those who worked for several years for the same employer). Inspite of the African position however, the labourers learnt to choose where and for whom to work. Jobs like cart-driving that were time consuming and labour intensive were better paid [Mzee Jidi Uledi, 01.04-05-94].
The missions in Nyeri contributed to the expansion of skilled African labour in the Township. At the end of the war, the best technical education for Africans is reported to have been obtained at the Italian Nyeri hill farm station. Carpentry, blacksmithing, masonry and brick making were taught under the supervision of European artisans. According to the PC annual report of 1918, it was not instruction alone that was imparted but good quality work was evidenced and utilised in the development of the nation. The CSM Tumu Tumu also offered technical education as well as medical training to Africans in the hospital as dressers. Most of these trainees were later employed by government departments especially within the township. By 1916 Tumu Tumu trainees are reported to have been playing football with the office workers at Nyeri Boma. This illustrates that a sizeable group of African civil servants was already in existence at the township. Indeed, the colonial government granted land to CSM as an act of appreciation for the support of the mission. Nyamachaki school and church were constructed on this land [Newton Waikwa, 0.1:30-04-94].

Another factor that accelerated a shift between the
The name Nyamachaki started as a nickname given to Miss Marion Stevenson who was working for the CSM from 1911 to 1926. She is reported to have been receiving several
cheques from her brother professor Stevenson of Edinburgh University with which she used to promote CSM activities in the area, hence the name Nyamachaki [Ibid].

Most of the clerks and interpreters at Nyeri's administrative centre were themselves former students of Tumu Tumu and the Italian school at Mathari. However, the relations between the Italian Mission at Nyeri and the colonial government were at times quite strained. The DC Nyeri attributed this to the refusal of the Italians to pay their coffee plantation registration fees, their non-native polltax and in one case a court fine. The Consolata Mission argued that it was not in receipt of salaries and was therefore without means to meet such liabilities. The colonial administration under the influence of the British settlers helped to fuel these disagreements since it coveted the large mission farms of the Consolata mission. Religious differences accentuated their relations since whereas the Italians were Catholic, the British administrators were mainly Anglican [Raphael Wangara, O.I.:16-05-94].

Another factor that accentuated conflict between the Consolata Mission and the Colonial Government, was the great influence of the mission on its followers. For instance, after the War, the Consolata mission decided
to expand and diffuse Christianity through the system of Christian settlements around the mission stations. This policy led to the establishment of Christian villages clustered around the mission stations. These settlements were different from labourer villages and were aimed at housing converts and separating them from their pagan brethren (Nyuguto, 1981).

As soon as an African was baptised the other Christians went to fetch him with his other belongings and gave him a house which they had built on a communal basis. Boys and girls were housed in dormitories "Merango". These villages were named after Christian patron saints. For example, the village in Tetu was called "Villagio San Paolo" and the village in Karima was called "Villagio Maria di Mondovi". By 1934 the Africans started leaving those villages because of congestion. However, the missionaries were opposed to this African move.

Conclusively, we can argue that the First World War had a big impact on African labourers not only in Nyeri Township but in the whole country. For instance, the recruitment of male labour during the war seemed to expand African contact with money economy. However, the effect was negative to the African economic advancement, given that the War years were a period of inflation. This
arose out of the shortage of foodstuffs, trade goods and livestock which in turn triggered off high price increases for commodities [Overton, 1989].

Nevertheless, although the majority of the labourers led a more difficult life as a result of the war, there was a small group among them that managed to accumulate more wealth than ever before. It was after the war that the number of Africans owning roadside tea kiosks, eating places and butcheries to serve the crowds who gathered on market days increased. As time went by, these grass and mud kiosks were rebuilt in brick or stone, provision stores appeared, and business extended from market days to every day throughout the week [Somerst and Marris, 1971:9]. In Nyeri Township, such businesses prospered in two places respectively. One of them was at the Kamakwa market which was dominated by Africans from the reserves. The African location in the Township also experienced this spurge of entrepreneurship. Macharia Rware an employee in a European butchery was one such entrepreneur. He set up a soup kiosk using bones and offal from the butchery to supplement his monthly wages. Eventually, he was able to accumulate a substantial amount of money [Mathai Maina, O.I.:20-05-94].
Other African traders in the Township included the Muslim Mwinyi Wa Makata who run a teashop at the Native Village. Nevertheless, before the War, the few Africans engaging in trade in the Township were Waswahili or Somali in origin. Members of these two groups formed a stable element in the town and also developed as a class of house owners renting rooms to upcountry migrants. They therefore took an advantaged position in the affairs of the Township as compared to other Africans. The headmen in the Native Location were always recruited from either the Somali or Waswahili community, during the colonial era.

3.7 CONCLUSION

We can conclude that wage labour system was introduced by the colonial establishment in Nyeri. Since Nyeri Town started as a fort, most of its early inhabitants like the Europeans, Asians, Somali, and Waswahili were foreigners to the area. They were joined by christian missionaries from the Scotland Mission and Consolata Mission. All these communities required African labour. The earliest wage employees were colonial servants like soldiers, porters, hut counters, chiefs and headmen.
Serious difficulties were encountered in the effort to make the Africans provide wage labour because of a number of reasons. Firstly, initial capitalism was weak financially and it therefore could not pay the labourers enough to encourage them to take up employment. In fact, during the pioneer years of colonial rule, capitalism exploited the pre-capitalist socio-formations in order to pay the first colonial servants. For instance, the warriors and chiefs were paid through livestock and food looted from the conquered communities. Forced labour was also used to construct bridges, roads and fortifications.

Secondly, despite the various measures like taxation, coercion and land alienation, taken by the British to force the Africans to turn out for wage labour, the Africans still could choose where and for whom to work. However, the African labour was exploited through unequal exchange relations. The wages paid to the labourers could not provide subsistence for the whole family. This in turn made the urban labourers to maintain interests in the reserves where their families were staying.

During the First World War, military recruitment became exceedingly unpopular in the reserves. This motivated many African men to migrate to Nyeri and other urban centres like Nairobi. Others migrated to the White
Settler farms especially in North Nyeri. By 1919, when the war ended, there were many men in Nyeri Township seeking for wage labour. The War, therefore, led to a great expansion of the labour supply.

However, Africans in Nyeri Town were not fully deprived of all their sources of income up to the end of the war. They still had access to land and some of them had established good trading links that enabled them to mobilise resources to meet the new obligations which the colonial forces introduced. However, this was only achieved after a lot of suffering. As Kitching [1981] observes, the Africans lived poorly — poor feeding, shelter, clothing and medical services.
NOTES

1. Pioneer settlers in Nyeri found pig rearing difficult since the pigs had to be driven on foot for a distance of 80 miles across the Aberdares Range via Naivasha to the Bacon Factory at Uplands [Sandy Herd, 1959: 59].

2. The settlers from Nyeri who gave views to the Native Labour Commission (1912-1913), testified that they paid their labourers between 3 and 5 rupees per month and 1.5 tin of posho [Native Labour Commission Report 1912-1913: 194-199].
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE NYERI LABOURERS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1920-1939)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we examine the consequences of the War experiences upon the Africans in Nyeri Town in the interwar period. This period witnessed revolutionary changes in the African political and socio-economic life. Consequently, there was new vigour or thirst for education, emergence of independent churches as well as political associations. These manifestations of the African responses to the colonial onslaught on their traditional life are examined. Africans were not merely victims of manipulation by capitalist forces but they also transformed aspects of the same forces for their own benefit.

After the First World War, additional labour had to be secured to sustain the economic reconstruction of the colony. The railway system was extended from Nakuru through the Uasin Gishu to Uganda. Another extension was made from Thika to Nyeri. At the same time the extension of Kilindini harbour started [Clayton and Savage,
Asian immigration increased and coincidentally, the colonial authorities started the soldier-settlement schemes to recruit more settlers. The soldier-settlement scheme which was inaugurated in 1919, was significant in that it was the largest single allocation of the land for white settlement in the colony's existence. It contributed to the increase of the area of white settlement by a third, involving over two million acres of land [Dunder, 1993:70]. The basic motivation behind the scheme was to strengthen Kenya's White minority in the face of African unrest occasioned by World War 1, and to act as a giant engine of economic development by bringing many settlers to the colony to counter the perceived Asian immigration threat [ibid., :70]. The overall result was a demand for more African labour to help in the reconstruction of the economy and to serve the large number of immigrants.

Consequently, in 1919 the registration scheme for Africans was effected. This was done through the famous Natives Registration Ordinance [Zeleza, 1989:52]. The Ordinance introduced the 'Kipande' which raised alot of controversy in the 1920s. The Kipande represented an attempt to systematize the labour control system. Once registered, a worker could not be deregistered. The Kipande document was designed to be used as an instrument
with which to keep track of labour supply. It facilitated the enforcement of labour contracts in that it enabled penal sanctions to be taken against the labourers who deserted. Workers were, therefore, fully restricted from changing employers. Finally, the Kipande led to standardization of low wages because it made it virtually impossible for a worker to bargain with a new employer for a wage that was higher and unrelated to his former wage as recorded in his Kipande [Ibid., 1989:52].

The post war years also witnessed a financial crisis that was provoked by the Great Depression in the international commodity prices and the change in the local currency from rupees to shillings. The currency factor led to more demands for the reduction of wages by one third [Atieno-Odhambo, 1977]. In 1905 the Indian rupee had been adopted as the basis of currency in British East Africa, with a rate of exchange fixed at fifteen rupees to one pound sterling. Due to various economic factors the value of the rupee increased against the pound during the war, making exports to Britain far less profitable than they had been. Eventually it was decided to drop the rupee and make the shilling the standard currency. However, in the meantime many European farmers in Kenya had lost money or gone bankrupt while large numbers of African troops and carriers whose wages had been paid in paper currency
found that their money was worth little \cite{ibid.,:149}.

Unfortunately for the Africans, Edward Northey a pro-settler Governor was appointed to Kenya towards the close of the war. In 1919, he issued the notorious Northey circulars in which he directed DCs, Chiefs and Headmen to "encourage" Africans to provide labour. The government also defined services for which compulsory labour was legal. They included public services and private contractors working for the state, which under the circumstances could mean any employer. It was in fact quite common for men signed under the compulsory labour procedure to be forced to sign labour contracts with settlers \cite{Zeleza, Op. Cit.:51}.

Since the settlers had made a significant contribution to the war effort, the government appreciated such efforts by giving the settlers a greater say in the affairs of the colony. For instance, in 1918 they were given seats on the Executive Council \cite{Atieno-Odhiambo, Op. Cit.,:155}. Thus after the war, the settlers emerged more powerful than ever before and therefore the oppressive measures taken against the Africans in this period can be seen from this perspective. Indeed several ordinances were passed to ensure that Africans provided labour. These included: The Native Authority Ordinance, Amendment
These new amendments sparked off a lot of resentment both among the Africans and some missionaries. The Anglican bishops of East Africa and Uganda, and Arthur of the church of Scotland mission drew up a statement known as The Bishops Memorandum. They criticised the Northey circulars and especially the governor's command that PCs, DCs, and Chiefs help in the labour supply [EAS, 15th November 1919]. They also took issue with female and child labour. They observed that the Africans had their homes, crops and also plans for development. Therefore, for them to be forced to leave their farms for the benefit of someone else was unfair since this would mean leaving their houses unguarded. In other words the bishops stated that compulsory labour was tantamount to promoting economic development of the white enclaves at the expense of African Reserves [Ibid.,].

It was against this backdrop that the responses of the African labourers in the interwar period should be seen. They were bitter for having participated in the war, only to receive unjust treatment in total disregard of the
selfless service and sacrifice they had offered during the war.

4.2 URBAN LIFE IN NYERI AFTER THE WAR

After the war, a number of ex-carriers and ex-soldiers went to work in Nyeri town where it is reported that they brought a new vision of life to the people of Nyeri. They developed familiarity with English mannerisms and British administration during the war. More importantly the contact that the African ex-carriers and ex-soldiers had in the war created a sense of inter-tribal knowledge and unity. As indicated by R.W. Hemsted:

Chiefly perhaps, they brought back the knowledge that there were different kinds of whitemen than those they had hitherto known; but they also brought back some idea of the power of organization. Combined with other causes it is probable that the growth of native political Associations and of native independence of thought really dates from the war years [Rosberg and Nottingham, 1966:32].

Indeed, during the war many African communities got a chance to interact and eliminate some of the mistrust and suspicion that was experienced prior to the war. This is evidenced by the fact that Kikuyu and Swahili Muslims together formed a single social group in Nyeri.
Township, which had both Kikuyu and Swahili cultural elements, after the war. At the close of the war, a group of ex-World War 1 soldiers settled in the Nyeri's Native Village. Consequently, these soldiers got married to Kikuyu and Maasai girls who had ran away from their rural homes due to the hardships experienced there during the war. The girls started a new life among the Swahili community in the Native Village. Some of them are said to have been enticed with rice and chapati as well as sugar, which were uncommon among the local Kikuyu and Maasai communities [Said Gitonga, O.l.:11-05-94].

Kikuyu and Maasai women who married Waswahili husbands, soon got their relatives to visit them in their new homes. Consequently the Waswahili and local African communities developed brotherly relations. The Kikuyu in particular, gradually began to accept bride wealth from their Waswahili in-laws. Many of the young men from Tetu would visit their Swahili friends and borrow hats and modern clothes during important functions like the dances that took place on the Chania river valley [Mzee Jidi Uledi, O.l:05-05-94].

The interaction between the Waswahili and the Kikuyu led to Islamization of many Kikuyu. Consequently, Islamic culture became quite a significant influence in Nyeri
Town evidenced by the fact that those who converted to Islam resisted any effort to make them go back and stay in the reserves insisting that they had to live near their place of worship in Town [Hake, 1977:49]. They stated that Islamic brotherhood barred them from cohabiting with pagans. Consequently, Kikuyu who converted to Islam moved into the Native Village to worship together with their Swahili Muslim brothers. Some Koranic schools were also introduced in the Native Village to impart the tenets of Islam to the new converts.

Those who embraced Islam sometimes lost their claims to cultivating land. Thus, they therefore comprised the big proportion of men who were compelled to seek their living by either employment or trade in Nyeri Township [Said Gitonga, O.I.:11-05-94 and Mzee Jidi Uledi, 0.1.05-05-94].

After the War, Nyeri became an important rural centre for the European settlers in Central Kenya. This inevitably affected the lives of the African labourers in the Township. The White settlers in Kenya Province formed a distinctive group consisting of the representatives of power and privilege in the British Empire. According to Dunder (1993), Kenya was the public schoolboy colony or
per excellence the retired officer's colony. At the same time the colony was peculiarly aristocratic. Even the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi was popularly known as "The House of Lords" because of its aristocratic ownership and guests [lbid.,:70]. In support of these sentiments, Berman has argued that:

The most striking social characteristic of the settler community was its strong aristocratic flavour. Among the most prominent Kenya settlers were Delamere, Cranworth, Portsmouth and Hindlip, as well as numerous younger sons of titled families including those of Lords Southesk, Enniskillen, and Nottingham. In addition, several peers had extensive interest and investment in Kenya, notably the Duke of West Minister, the Earl of Warwick, and the Lords Armstrong, Cobham, Howard de Walden, and Waleran [Berman, 1974:164]

The colony was, therefore, viewed as an area of settlement for gentlemen only. European settlement on the pattern of Southern Rhodesia was rejected and determined efforts were made to prevent the growth of a class of poor whites [lbid, 1974:164]. Indeed, the soldier settlement scheme was restricted to former commissioned officers and the winners of lottery for the assignment of farms.
Ironically, apart from a few individuals with large private fortunes and small numbers of plantation development by well financed British foreign corporations, the majority of the Europeans in Kenya possessed only modest capital resources. Thus the upper class character of white settlement in the colony was a factor of social background and status aspiration rather than wealth [Berman, Ibid., 168]. This meant that the African labour had to be exploited in order for the Europeans to maintain the luxury of so many labourers in their homes befitting the status they aspired to.

A number of Europeans in Nyeri were allotted farms but instead abandoned them and migrated to Nyeri township where they established some businesses. Thomas Lee who had risen to become a Quarter Master Sergeant Major in World War 1 ended up running a butcher's shop in the Town though he had been given a soldier -settler farm. Gray Leakey who got a 2000 acre soldier - settler farm in Laikipia also moved to Nyeri township where he joined the White Rhino Hotel as a manager in 1922. Later he settled down to farming in a smaller farm within the Township where he grew coffee [Mathengu Kinyeru, 0.1:03-05-94].

Most of the soldier - settlers discarded their farms because of two main factors: First, most of them were inexperienced in farming. Second, some of them did not
have enough capital to embark on farming. Moreover, most of the farms were in remote parts of the province.

Nyeri Township proved to be very popular with European settlers during this period due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the European cost of living was very low. It was possible to maintain a household staff of five for about 3 pounds sterling a month [Mzee Mathengu Kinyeru, O.1.02-05-94]. Secondly, Nyeri proved attractive due to the availability of a lot of wild game. Some of the settlers hunted for sport as well as for financial gain. Finally, the cool climate of Nyeri was quite attractive to some. An example of such a settler was Eric Sherbrooke Walker. Walker became a prominent businessman in Nyeri in the early 1920s, and built the Outspan Hotel in 1926. Another example was Baden Powell who had stopped over in Nyeri on his way to South Africa for a scouting Jamboree but decided to spend sometime at the Outspan where he discovered that the climate suited him very well. He was to stay at the Hotel from 1938 till his death in 1941 [Best 1979:135]. His cottage, Paxtu, is now something of a memorial, and each year Nyeri is visited by hundreds of scouts and guides from all over the world, in pilgrimage, to see his grave.
The aristocratic nature of the Europeans in Kenya had a direct bearing on the number of labourers that were required not only in the farms but also in residences and businesses. Europeans believed that manual labour was beneath them and, therefore, every small job had to be done by African servants and labourers. According to Kariuki Kaguri, for each European home there were approximately three to five servants working in the house: one cook; one "toto" or "boy"\(^7\) to wash the sufurias; another "pendri boy"\(^8\) to wash the delicate plates and cups; a "headboy"\(^9\) to lay the table and serve food; and finally a "junior boy" to clean the clothes [Kitching, 1981:24].

The increased number of Europeans and Asians in Nyeri led to the expansion of employment opportunities for African labourers. A group of better paid manual workers were the domestic servants both for the Europeans and Asians. These men earned wages whose level was largely determined by the quality of the relationship with an employer. Those who showed themselves to be trustworthy could earn a good wage [Kitching, 1981:24]. In fact, the minimum wages paid to domestic staff up to the Second World War were usually double those paid to ordinary unskilled labourers. In addition, valued servants would be better fed and housed. However, there were very large
differentials separating the wages of a valued cook or house servant from sweepers or water carriers. In the domestic sector, more than any other perhaps, the wage structure was the creature of the employer. This was also true of the Hotel industry.

Kariuki Kaguri [O.1.:03-05-94], stated that in the absence of proper labour guidelines, the employers could terminate the services of their labourers on the spot for flimsy reasons. Similarly, punishments were quite arbitrary, ranging from whipping, to outright dismissal. Occasionally, a worker could be sent to the police for punishment and this was one of the most feared forms of punishment. Since the wage structure and form of punishment depended on the employer’s preference, wages for domestic servants were not standard. The colonial state became concerned only when the labourers deserted which was considered to be a very serious offence and could lead to a fine or a prison sentence, for the labourer concerned.

Poor wages and harsh working conditions became a major source of frustration especially to the mission educated Africans (herein after athomi). The Africans who went through the system expected to be absorbed into the economic life of the colony. Admittedly, some were
engaged as artisans, clerks, messengers and houseboys. However, the majority were frustrated and disillusioned either at home or in urban centres and settler farms. Commenting on the colonial education in the Southern Rhodesia, Mashingaidze has stated thus:

However well geared and designed to produce a docile, obedient and submissive class of labourers, narrow system of education had its own ways of exceeding these limits - undetected by designers. Thus even this largely unimaginative system of education could make the African mind free to an extent which had never been foreseen by both government and the missionary leaders. In fact, unwittingly the government and the missionaries accelerated the emergence of African nationalism, whose origins are traceable through some converts and former mission pupils beginning to ask awkward questions, for which they were labelled rebels and recalcitrants [Mashingaidze, 1976:278].

The reason behind the poor relations between the mission educated Africans in Nyeri town, and the Europeans was that the activities of the athomi or the mission-educated generated labour discontent either directly or indirectly. For instance, the mission educated were quick to point out to the low wages paid to the African labourers. European attitude towards the athomi is summed up in DC Nyeri Annual Report of 1934:
The fruits of this athomi are bitter discontentment amongst the labourers which is directed not against those responsible for it, but against the European, or Indian who, are both indirect sufferers by it [KNA/DC/NYI/1/3:33]

These sentiments represented the attitude of the European community towards the educated Africans. The colonial administration believed that the traditional society deserved to be preserved. This arose from their paternalistic authoritarianism and assumption about social evolution. They assumed that the process of African transformation would take a very long time and thus, there was concern with the maintenance of control over the western-educated African commonly referred to as the "detribalized native" [Berman, Op. Cit.:125]. The excuse that Africans were still undergoing social evolution was used to deny Africans good housing in urban centres. They were presented as a category of men who straddled between the village and the town and therefore it was assumed that lack of the evolution of a developmentary consistent social services policy for Africans in towns was to be blamed on the Africans themselves [Olumwullah, Op. Cit.:123]. Such attitudes on the other hand are the ones that were attacked by the athomi not only in Nyeri but in most of the urban centres in Kenya.
The confrontation between the mission educated Africans and the Europeans in Kenya led to the formation of organisations by African employees with both political and industrial aims. In Nairobi, domestic servants and other labourers formed the young Kikuyu Association under Harry Thuku in 1921 [Clayton and Savage, Op. Cit., :120]. Citing the factors behind the founding of the Association, Thuku states:

The final thing is when we heard that the settlers were going to reduce African wages by one-third. Many of us got very angry, and we called a meeting in Pangani on 7th June 1921 to see if we could form a Young Kikuyu Association [Thuku, 1970:20].

Apparently, the formation of the Young Kikuyu Association was inspired by the Young Baganda Association. Young Kikuyu Association (herein after YKA) changed its name to East African Association in 1922 to enable it to get a wider membership from other African ethnic groups.

The ideas of YKA received immediate support from Africans in different towns all over Kenya with Nyeri included. It was the first Association to reach the Nyeri Township. Initial support was minimal but later it became firmly established with very fervent followers [Ngunjiri, 1974:38]. Drivers, domestic servants, messengers and
clerks gave Thuku favourable support. Others included teachers, businessmen and traditionalists who were opposed to the whole idea of colonial administration.

In response to Thuku’s popularity in the Kikuyu Country the colonial government sponsored some Kikuyu chiefs to travel all over Kikuyu country and preach against Thuku’s ideas. When these chiefs came to CSM Tumu Tumu Thuku’s stronghold, some of the apprentices undertaking industrial training asked some political questions that evidently showed support for Thuku thereby embarrassing the chiefs [Joseph Gikonyo, O.I.:05-05-94 and Geoffrey Wakaba, O.I.:30-12-93]. This unfortunate situation resulted in the cancellation of contracts of more than 20 apprentices including that of Hezekiah Mundia and Johana Kunyiha. Mundia was to become the president of Kikuyu Central Association in Nyeri while Johana Kunyiha became the leader of the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association. Thus in response to these dismissals from Tumu Tumu school, the apprentices showed full-fledged support of Thuku’s East African Association.

The expulsion of the students from CSM Tumu Tumu was viewed by the Africans as an act of intolerance on the part of the missionaries. It is this intolerance that persuaded the Africans that the missions and the colonial
state were one and the same. In other words, missions were perceived as accomplices in the oppression of the African hence the popular Kikuyu remarks during that time "Gutiri Muthungu na Mubea".

Chiefs' activities only had a positive result for Thuku's activities in Nyeri Township. Thuku hired a taxi and followed them in a bid to repair his dented image among the people. Circumstances also favoured him. For example, near Nyeri town he saw a large number of young girls and women cutting reeds under the supervision of the tribal police and decided to intervene. The women had been ordered to cut reeds for thatching the Nyeri Police lines. According to Thuku's own words:

I, therefore, asked him (policeman) to dismiss the women and said I would remain there until they had all gone back home. The policeman made no trouble because he himself was angry at this forced labour seeing his sisters going out to work for no reward. But the administration in Nyeri was very annoyed [Thuku, 1970:32]

The East African Association's popularity in Nyeri was greatly enhanced by Thuku's visits in the area. Songs were coined in his praise calling him "Munene wa Nyachinga"¹⁰ (Chief of Women), [Joseph Gikonyo, 0.1:05-05-94]. As earlier stated, Thuku was arrested in 1922 but
after his release from detention at Marsabit in 1931, he was met by the KCA leaders in the township led by Hezekiah Mundia and Johana Kunyiha who organised a rousing welcome for him. Thus indicating the persistence of the attitude of revolt in Nyeri against European injustice.

4.3 KIKUYU CENTRAL ASSOCIATION AND THE FEMALE CIRCUMCISION CONTROVERSY IN NYERI

Thuku's activities in Central Kenya antagonised him with both the colonial administration and the Christian Missions whom he attacked [Ochieng, 1980:118]. As a result he was deported to Kismayu in March 1922 and later to Marsabit. Following his arrest, political activities in Central Kenya and Nyeri in particular were carried out in great secrecy. Therefore, although the East African Association was proscribed by the colonial government, it continued to operate underground after Thuku's arrest.

In 1925, another Association was formed under the leadership of Joseph Kang'ethe and Jesse Kariuki who were later regarded as extremist politicians by the colonial government [Middleton, 1965]. The Association was called Kikuyu Central Association (herein after KCA), and it replaced the East African Association. Right from the
beginning, KCA was faced with the problem of credibility since the British administration refused to look into their grievances. The Nyeri PC dismissing it as a non-starter described it as:

a loose organization of perhaps several hundred discontented young men who do not quite know what they want and whose real burden is that they chafe under any form of authority: They are in no sense representatives of the Kikuyu of the province [KNA/PC/CP/8/5/1].

For instance, a mass meeting convened in Nyéri by KCA in 1925 did not materialise because of the colonial government's failure to licence the meeting. Nevertheless, evidence shows that KCA had many followers in the township by late 1920s, despite frustrations by the colonial government [Mzee Jumbe Mwinyi and Jumbe Uledi O.1:06-05-94].

After 1926 however, Hezekiah Mundia and Kirori Motoku joined the association alongside with 300 young mission-educated men [Pancrasio Wachira, O.1.:30-11-95]. Most of the supporters of KCA were the former supporters of the East African Association of Harry Thuku, who were working in Nyeri township.
KCA was concerned with both the urban problems experienced by Africans and the problems experienced in the reserves. For instance, in 1926, the Nyeri committee of KCA wrote to the PC at Nyeri concerning information they had received that some Africans had been removed from their village 200 yards from the railway line at Karatina. The association strongly protested the encroachment on land and eviction of the Kikuyu

[KNA/PC/CP/8/5/2:1926].

One of the most bitter conflicts between the KCA and the European community in Nyeri was over the issue of female circumcision. This operation appears to have been less severe in Southern Kikuyu areas like Kiambu but very severe in Nyeri. In Southern Kiambu only the tip of the clitoris was cut and no other part of the sexual organ was interfered with [Kenyatta; 1938: 146]. In Nyeri, the operation was described as follows:

It involves the removal of the clitoris, the labia minora and part of the labia majora with the surrounding tissue resulting in the extensive scarring and affecting the woman's natural functions [Macpherson, 1970:107].

The Church of Scotland Mission taught against the practice since its initial settlement at Kikuyu. In Nyeri, an experiment of circumcision in hospital for
Christian girls was made in 1915 in the presence of Dr. Philip of Tumu Tumu, who found the operation so brutal that he refused to sanction its being repeated and thereafter opposed the custom by every means in his power [Macpherson, *ibid.*]. Even at the inter-mission level, there was consistent propaganda against female circumcision. Thus, female circumcision was persistently attacked by missionaries before 1928.

However, from 1928 there was a lot of conflict between the CSM, CMS and AIM on one hand and the KCA supporters on the other, over the female circumcision issue. In March 1928, the question of female circumcision was brought up at a Baraza called by the government in Nyeri town to discuss various problems affecting the community [Kariuki Kaguri, O.1:03-05-94]. The meeting was attended by paramount chief Kinyanjui and Jomo Kenyatta in his capacity as general secretary of KCA. The KCA representatives announced their intention of contesting in the forthcoming Local Native Council elections on a platform of preserving tribal customs, especially circumcision of girls. This public declaration brought the KCA in open conflict with CSM in Nyeri and later throughout the province [Rosberg and Nottingham, *Op. Cit.*:114]. Nyeri township, therefore, provided the platform where the circumcision controversy was discussed.
by the African leaders in Nyeri. Johana Kunyiha and Hezekiah Mundia, of the Church of Scotland Mission were at the forefront in supporting KCA and its advocacy of continuity of the traditional values.

Following the KCA meeting in March, the CSM called for a meeting of church elders in Nyeri in April 1928. The participants included Willy Jimmy Wambugu Maina from Mahiga, who was to become a leader of Independent Schools Association in Nyeri. The elders announced a campaign against female circumcision in the district because apparently the Local Native Council in Nyeri was the only one that refused to pass a by-law regulating the custom in the whole of Kikuyu country [Ibid.,:115].

To counter KCA activities, the CSM sponsored a political Association composed of staunch CSM educated followers whose name was Progressive Kikuyu Party [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:16]. The Association stood for the abolition of female circumcision and its associated songs and dances. This loyalist Association also sponsored candidates for the Local Native Council elections to compete with KCA. However, the loyalist association performed dismally in the elections and it was only in Tumu Tumu that they acquired one seat [Kamuyu-Wa-Kangethe, 1981].
Nyeri township was a KCA stronghold and when the Local Native Council elections (herein after LNC) were held in 1928, Hezekiah Mundia won the seat for the Township. His teashop became the KCA headquarters in the area and KCA propaganda was therefore spearheaded from Mundia's teashop to the rest of the district.

The female circumcision controversy in Nyeri had serious repercussions in the area. First it inevitably led to suspicion and enemity between the Africans. For instance, rumours were rife, including one that the Europeans opposed the female circumcision so that they could marry the uncircumcised girls and eventually obtain the land of the Kikuyu. Uncircumcised people regarded as immature by the community were perceived as a threat to the welfare of the community since they could easily give the land away to the foreigners. Thus, Nyeri township and reserves became divided into Karing'â (pure Kikuyu) and the Kirore (thumb print or sign). The Karing'â group refused to sign for the abolition of female circumcision, while the Kirore group were loyal to the church decision. In later years this division was to cause bloodshed during the Mau Mau war [Joseph Gikonyo, O.I.: Op Cit]. The loyalists were subsequently subjected to accusations and alot of abuse. Muthirigu, a Kikuyu adaptation of a coastal song with a rousing chorus and unlimited number of improvised verses
was sang despite being banned by the colonial state. It continued to be sang underground as an anthem of resistance among KCA sympathisers and it abused the loyalists: Some of the verses stated thus:

The finger printers have been too conscientious
In order you may know
They have really finger printed
Ngara Wu Kaigwa.13
Finger printed with his buttocks.

Dr. Arthur has given birth
And his wife has given birth too
I found them asking each other
Who will take care of us.
The District Commissioner has been bribed.
He has been bribed with
uncircumcised girls So that we may lose land

Kamuyu-Wa-Kang'etho, 1981:281

It is significant to note that the female circumcision controversy provided the KCA with a good chance of enlisting popular support in the area [KNA/DC/NIY1/1/4:-16].

Certain individuals in Nyeri went into extremes to ensure that their daughters were circumcised. For instance, there was a case in which a girl from Tumu Tumu boarding school was lured home near the township and circumcised against her will. Her father had requested her to go home to aid in maize harvest but on her arrival home, she was forcibly circumcised [Ibid., 18]. The girl's father and
the circumciser\textsuperscript{11}, were charged with voluntarily causing hurt: They were respectively sentenced to 14 days and 70/- fine [Kanogo, 1987]. The case generated a lot of excitement and protest from all the African elders around Nyeri. They reasoned that a father had a right to circumcise his own daughter and not merely a right but a duty [Ibid., 80]. It is important to note that even some staunch CSM followers arranged for their daughters to be circumcised in secret.

The female circumcision controversy had a great impact on the entire Kikuyu society. Out of it there emerged a move by Africans to establish an educational system that was free from missionary control. Secondly, some of those who seceded from the church and who owned land on which the mission schools had been built reclaimed possession. Third, the withdrawal of church support from teachers who refused to sign the circumcision pledge led to the closing down of some schools.

For the Africans, the crisis was solved by the founding of independent churches and schools. Two major movements emerged in Kikuyuland to enhance education. These were namely Karing'a and Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA) [Mburu, 1975:2]. KISA operated largely in Northern Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri districts where
land grievances were less acute than in Southern Kiambu. It was, therefore, more concerned with educational and religious matters and collaborated with missions in the baptism and ordination of its followers. It was affiliated to the South African based African Orthodox Church. The Karing'a movement on the other hand, operated mostly in Southern Kiambu and was more radical in outlook. It combined educational matters with political issues such as land alienation and population pressure.

In 1929 the African Independent Pentecostal Church (AIPC) was founded and its base became Ngangarithi on the outskirts of Nyeri town. The church was founded by Johana Kunyiha and its influence spread to all corners of the district. Nyeri town provided stimulus to the growth of cultural patriotism. Africans in the Native Village including the Islamised ones supported this splurge of cultural activity. The Independent School that began as an outgrowth of the AIPC Ngangarithi attracted children from all over the township [Ibid.]. Supporters of KCA were quick to withdraw their children from the mission schools to the independent school. This was significant in that it illustrated that the town was not an isolated island, but rather a centre of networks of migration and ideas. Indeed, many social, economic and political developments were spearheaded from the town.
Hand in hand with the development of independent churches and schools, the African leaders in Nyeri began to demand for a government school in the township. Mission education was found to be inadequate since it was mainly technical, offering subjects like agriculture, carpentry and masonry. Mission education aimed at turning out low-level skilled labour with no ambition but to stay among their rural communities as village artisans, or to provide labour for the European community. The Africans wanted an education that would put them on more equal terms with Europeans and Asians. The colonial government approved for the establishment at Nyeri of a secular government school for Africans in 1930.

The school buildings were constructed from the Local Native Council funds though from 1932 the government assisted the LNC in paying for the expenses of running the school. The LNC agreed, to provide £2000 a year for the salaries of the teaching staff, both Europeans and Africans. Consequently, the school was formally opened by the Provincial Commissioner on 21st January 1933, starting with 90 boarders of whom 70 were drawn from Nyeri area mostly from CSM elementary schools. 20 of the students came from Kerugoya area, mostly from CMS schools based at Kabare and Mutira stations. The school taught practical skills and had workshops for training masons,
plumbers as well as carpenters. By the end of the year 1933, the school was promoted from District to provincial school.

Conclusively, it can be argued that the conflicts experienced in Nyeri between Europeans and Africans stemmed from the oppression that the Africans were subjected to. Even the female circumcision controversy was sparked off by deeper factors than simply missionary interference with a tribal custom. The EAA of Thuku and KCA were both concerned with poor labour conditions and land alienation in Nyeri in particular.

It should be noted that confrontation between the from groups was reforming negation but abound positive consequences. The confrontation between the mission educated and the Europeans in Kenya might have encouraged those athomi without wage employment opportunities to open businesses in the Native Village. In the 1930's, many Africans opened tea shops in the town and began shops dealing in tea, sugar and cigarettes. This was one of the first business lines which Africans ventured into as capital costs were low and there was little Asian competition. Food could be sold both to the residents of the Native village and also to way-farers by the roadsides or even at the native market at Kamakwa, which
was the first market for the residents of the township.

One such African trader was Hezekiah Mundia. After forfeiting his apprenticeship he opened a tea-shop in Nyeri township which became the district's political meeting place. Since the colonial government was very watchful of any signs of Thukuism, nobody dared to hold open meetings, rather political matters were discussed over a mug of tea at Mundia's teashop [Ngunjiri, OP. Cit:39]. This was how most Africans in town came to learn about the EAA of Thuku and KCA.

Hand in hand with the growth of political consciousness among the Africans after the war, conflict was evident between the Asian and African traders. This conflict intensified after the war because of two main factors: First, Asian dominance in the retail and wholesale trade prevented Africans from successfully entering the retail trade. In their intermediary role in commerce, Asians proved an ominous obstacle to aspiring African businessmen—they had the money and skill and they could thrive on small profit margins [Tamarkin, 1978:109]. Similarly, they could get goods on credit from the Asian firms which was an advantage over the Africans.
Conflict was also evident in the field of skilled labour where Asians dominated. The structure of the Township is important in understanding the labour relations between the three races in Nyeri. The whites were the masters and the Africans were the subjects. In between the two, there was the Asian community which occupied an ambivalent position. In the work places Asians were the immediate bosses of the Africans and, therefore, much African frustration was vented against them. However, Indians were denied the right to own or lease land in European settled areas. At the same time they lacked the native land unit of the African [Dutto, 1975:27]. Nevertheless, the Indians led a relatively comfortable life. Their position in the colonial economy mainly as traders and skilled labour enabled them to fit into urban life better than the African labourers.

In the interwar period, the African owning of lorries and small cars increased. By 1927, there were some 52 Africans owned vehicles in the Kenyan Province [KNA/PC/CP/1/1/2:1927]. This efficiency in transport had several consequences in Nyeri. First, Africans took advantage of these new developments to travel all over the country. Second, members of the nascent political associations could spread their propaganda much more effectively. The lorries and cars were used by some
businessmen, like Simon Wanyaga, to ferry cargo from different places. The transport business in Nyeri led to self-employment for many Africans.

The African enterprise in Nyeri was further boosted by the extension of the railway line to the township in 1927 [Wanyoike, OP. Cit]. Commenting on its value the DC South Nyeri stated in 1927 that:

> the railway had brought to their doors a constant and reliable access to the market of the world and the people are quick to take advantage of their opportunities [Annual Report 1927 KNA/PC/CP/4/1/2:232].

The construction of the Nyeri station at Kiganjo added to the importance of the township in that the produce grown in the area could easily be transported to various destinations. Table 1.0 shows the exports from Nyeri township during the period 1929-1930.
Table 1.0
ITEMS EXPORTED FROM NYERI STATION IN 1929 AND 1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCE</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>290 tonnes</td>
<td>1422 tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize flour</td>
<td>53 tonnes</td>
<td>234 tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>53 tonnes</td>
<td>24 tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>3 tonnes</td>
<td>3 tonnes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KNA/PC/CP/4/1/2

Economic activities similarly increased. For instance, all the milling and grinding of export maize was done in the town at the Indian mills. This necessity led to a higher number of labourers getting employed both in Nyeri town and at the Nyeri railway station. Nyeri railway station became important as a centre for exporting hides and skins while Karatina grew from a simple market place to a collecting and distribution centre.

We can conclude that the increase in conflict between the African community in Nyeri and the immigrant communities mainly Europeans and Asians, resulted from the economic hardships experienced by the Africans. However, Africans
were not just passive sufferers, they seized opportunity to advance themselves when this was possible.

4.4 THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE AFRICAN LABOURERS IN NYERI DURING THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

The Local Native Councils which were established by the colonial government from 1924 helped a lot to improve the African living conditions during the inter-war period. The idea behind the setting up of Local Native Councils (herein after LNCs) was to provide a way through which African grievances could be channelled to the colonial administration, in the absence of the loyal political associations. Other duties of the LNCs were regulation of drinking, brewing of native liquor, granting of plots to schools and churches, as well as regulation of size and tenure of plots, and the nature of buildings to be put up.

In Nyeri the LNC established a council Hall at a staggering cost of 1000 pounds. Water tanks and a hostel for elders consisting of 8 rooms were added. Since the Headquarters of the LNC was in the township, elders and litigants from all over the district had to visit the council offices from time to time. The establishment of the LNC headquarters in the township led to the
employment of more Africans as, both clerks and messengers in the town. Though the wages paid by LNC were not high, the workers were happy since they did not experience racial discrimination.

The LNC also contributed in the construction and establishment of a permanent show ground at Ruring'u. The facility contained six permanent sheds, model dwelling house, five model shops, six public latrines and a godown for use by Africans. It is noteworthy, however, that the LNC got their funding from the taxes paid directly by Africans. Nevertheless, these new facilities helped to improve the lives of not only the labourers in the township, but also of those Africans in the reserves. The show exposed the Africans to modern ways of life. Commenting on the importance of Nyeri show when she visited it on the 15th September 1930, Perham says:

In the crowd, too, were Indians and Goans, scornful Somalis and detached, rather listless Arabs. Of the Europeans there were officials of all sorts and settlers from the neighbouring white area; and all mingling, jostling, laughing, pointing, with utmost good humour... the show provided a great opportunity for education. Dr. Paterson for instance, the chief Medical Officer was busy educating the Africans. In a few hundred square yards on this show-ground he has demonstrated all he wanted to teach in a way they could understand [Perham, 1976:187]
The show, therefore, helped to make Nyeri an important centre where all the people in the province could meet. It, in turn, exposed the African labourers in the Township to more ways of entertaining or handling visitors and new arrivals to the Township.

Inspite of the facilities established by LNC in Nyeri, Africans still felt disadvantaged. Whereas the fact that they were willing to pay local rates of one or two shillings per head, in order to get services through the LNC, the Europeans on the other hand received such services at the expense of the colonial state itself, or at the expense of the Africans [Berman, Op. Cit.,:193]. Moreover, the Europeans further benefitted from discriminatory custom duties that permitted many items necessary to their economic well being to enter the country duty free, while low cost items for the African communities were subject to duty [Ibid.,]. Indeed, in the 1930s, there was a general move of tariff rates downwards in order to favour the European consumers in Kenya:

There was a reduction in the rates of duty on imported sugar, reduced from 12s per 100 lb to 6s per 100 lb, in cotton piece goods,... The most drastic reduction was on wheat and wheat flour,... These changes were certainly of assistance to the bulk of the White Consumers (African consumed mainly maize flour rather than wheat) [Swainson, 1980:42]
The African labourers did not fail to note the glaring disparities that existed between their living conditions and those of other races. Even European education was subsidized by the government. The European government school in the township had 25 pupils being prepared for Cambridge Preliminary Examination. In contrast, no government elementary schools were provided for African children at all, in the township. Under the principals—Mrs Anderson and Mrs Yexal, the European school in Nyeri enjoyed good facilities that were highly envied by the African children, Joseph Gikonyo [O.I.:05-05-94], stated that as he grew up he noted the glaring disparities between facilities provided for Africans and those provided for other races in Nyeri.

If the Africans in the township felt disadvantaged in the provision of education, they were even more disadvantaged in the provision of health services. Upto 1932, it is the missionaries and local medical specialists who provided medication for the Africans in the Town. The LNC again, provided funds for the construction of the new Native Civil Hospital which was opened in 1932 [KNA/DC/NYI/1/3:43]. This hospital began serving Africans from North Nyeri farms as well as those within the township. It was run by an Indian sub-assistant surgeon and, on completion, it could accommodate upto 40 inpatients.
Since the medical facilities provided in the hospitals were inadequate to serve the whole African population, it follows that the traditional medial specialists continued to service the colonial economy.

Housing for Africans in the township was also neglected. The DC's Annual Report for North Nyeri states that although several huts had been rebuilt or reconditioned in the native village in 1931, the general condition of the village was quite poor. Provision for an entirely new layout for the village was therefore urgently required. Indeed, there were as many as 620 Africans in the town who were living in rental rooms at the village. It can be argued that this number probably covers only those labourers who were permanent in the township. However, it does not account for those who would go to the town whenever need arose and those who went to work in the township from their homes. Moreover, these labourers always had lodgers:-who were not necessarily employed. Thus, the population was by far bigger than the official figure.

Because of the poor housing conditions in the township, some of the labourers travelled to the township on a daily basis from the reserves, while others were creative
enough, to construct their own huts within the native location in the township. The government provided housing only for government clerks, policemen and health staff as well as other government employees. Even for the five African government clerks, only 2 small houses were provided [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:11].

These poor living conditions in the Township had some serious consequences. First, crime rate went up, for instance, in 1931, several crimes such as house-breaking were committed in the township. The police under E.C. Allen did a lot of work to curb this problem. Second, there was a serious plague outbreak within the township in 1931. Two African labourers died as a result and many more were taken ill. Among the dead was one of the employees of Cairns Brothers while the other one was an employee of Osman Aliu [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:17]. The problem brought about by the plague was to prove endemic in the Native Village and the reason for its outbreak was always identified as the crowded living conditions that harboured the plague infested rats. The open drainage system and haphazard construction of huts in the native village in the township also contributed to the spread of diseases in the township.
The colonial authorities saw the urban problems as being caused by the laziness of the Africans in the urban centres. They, therefore, responded by keeping away from the township and the adjoining areas all those Africans who were unemployed. In other words, the unemployed Africans were branded as undesirables. Consequently, they were arrested and sent back to their reserves. The same situation was experienced in other urban centres including Mombasa. In 1930 the Mombasa DC Mr. Merchant requested for the removal of unemployed Africans from Mombasa to the reserves. LNCs were requested to vote money for the repatriation of their tribesmen [KNA/VQ/1/39:1930]. It is important to note that there was a serious economic depression in 1930s and it is possible that it may be one of the reasons that increased the rate of unemployment in the townships all over the country.

It can also be argued that the situation in Nyeri illustrates the contradictions arising out of the articulation of the precapitalist and capitalist modes of production: The reserves became important as labour reservoirs which could also accommodate the undesired labour from other sectors during times of economic hardship.
It is noteworthy that European missions played an important role in the process of African urbanization in Nyeri. The Consolata Mission at Mathari and the CSM at Nyamachaki catered for the Africans in the Township. They provided schools for the African children and provided them with churches which acted as social places. Missions therefore performed a vital function in the process of social change among the Africans. Such centres operated as urban communities facilitating the adjustment of Africans to urban life. To an extent they helped African to overcome tribal divisions by providing an alternative or supplementary basis for social organization [Tarmarkin, 1978:111]. For instance, the missions organised football and athletic competitions in the township. For example, The DC Nyeri was the guest of honour during the Consolata Mission drills on 24th May 1931 [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1/4: 1933].

KCA and the Muslim Association acted just like the tribal associations in Nyeri. Both demonstrated a growing commitment to urban life. While KCA was vocal on issues affecting the labourers in town like the Kipande and wage issues respectively, its leaders also took keen interest in the activities taking place in the reserves. The Muslims, however, were much more committed to urban life since they regarded their stay there as a long-term
venture. Thus, the muslims used religious affiliation to solve their common urban problems. They contributed money to construct their worshipping places and to assist the needy members. In fact, it appears that the community aspect of Islam in Nyeri was its biggest attraction. When the pioneer urban dwellers came to live in Nyeri the Muslims were the only organised and accessible African community in the town. Therefore, those who chose to live permanently in the town realised that they could not rely on their fellow tribesmen in reserves for material or moral support. The Muslim community offered its members material help in time of need. Indeed, many of the members of this community had mixed forms of marriages, for instance, Kikuyu women married to Waswahili husbands. The Muslim community had therefore to assist its members especially in their socio-economic needs.

The African labourers in Nyeri showed lack of interest in forming ethnic based social associations and this perhaps could be attributed to two factors. One, many of the labourers were from the Kikuyu community, majority of whom were target labourers in the sense that their commitment was still in the reserves where their kinsmen and families were staying. Second, the particular relationship of the Kikuyu with the colonial government emphasized issues like land, education and tribal
customs, which applied to the tribe as a whole and encouraged a sense of tribal unity inhibiting more localised affiliations. It also developed a taste for political rather than social organizations. KCA which emerged after the 1920s was indeed a tribal organization that tackled most of these political problems.

By 1939, there was a large number of Africans seeking wage employment in Nyeri town. This was accompanied by an upsurge of political activity not only in the town but also in the reserves all over the province. According to 1939 District Annual Report, KCA had a lot of influence in Nyeri Town. One clan in Chief Muhindi's location near the town refused to pay their taxes in the reserves opting to pay their taxes in Nairobi. This was interpreted as part of KCA engineering, by the colonial administration [KNA/DC/1/4:1939]. The Kikuyu provincial Association was also becoming very influential in some parts of Nyeri District. Following an outbreak of plague in 1938, village cleaning regulations were put into force in the township and reserves. However, members of the Kikuyu Provincial Association and KCA agitated against these regulations and as a result four members of the Kikuyu Provincial Association and twelve members of KCA were prosecuted [Ibid].
The tension in Nyeri township was further exacerbated because the reserves were overcrowded, overcultivated and overstocked. This situation was brought about by the eviction of squatters from North Nyeri. In 1937 the Resident Labourers Ordinance made it clear that squatters were not tenants and had rights only so long as they were employed [Kanogo, 1987:97]. The ordinance had harsh consequences on the squatters. Above all the sense of insecurity resulting from the change of their status was largely responsible for the widespread political unrest throughout the White highlands. The presence of the squatters in the immediate neighbourhood of Nyeri meant that their problems had a great impact upon the town.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, there was a lot of apprehension in Nyeri town both due to the uncertainty brought about by the reports of the impending war, and also because of the unemployment. There was also general hardships experienced by the majority of the Africans. In May 1940 the KCA, along with Taita and Ukamba Members Association were proscribed when the Government took advantage of the war situation to get rid of embarrassing political agitation. KCA however, continued to propagate its ideas secretly since it could no longer convey African protest to the colonial authorities [Tamarkin, 1973].
4.5 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, we can conclude that it is possible to recognise the continued existence of pre-capitalist survivals among the African labourers in Nyeri Township. Rather than experiencing a drastic change towards modernization in the period under review, pre-colonial features continued to survive. For instance, African herbalists treated the sick. Similarly, most of the labourers would leave their families in the reserves, where the labourers would also retire either due to old age or sickness. Some labourers even constructed huts in the traditional styles in town where they lived. Thus, capitalism exploited the pre-capitalist modes of production rather than getting rid of them.

It is however clear that the British administrators and the settlers considered town life to be unsuitable for Africans. This led to two consequences: First, the British looked on the Western educated Africans with a lot of suspicion. Second, adequate facilities were not developed for the African communities in the Township. The result of this situation was that the Africans struggled to improve their life. This struggle is reflected in the violence experienced during the circumcision controversy in Nyeri township and in the activities of Thuku and KCA.
Finally, in the period under review, some urban migrants found themselves either without employment, or in a situation where the opportunities were not commensurate with their aspirations. Some of these joined the informal sector. They survived on hawking, touting or stealing. Such are the Africans regarded as undesirables by the colonial government. The problems experienced by the Africans in the Township helped to fuel the political Associations activities in Nyeri. KCA was particularly popular.
Governor Northey issues a circular to administrative officers on 23-10-1919, in which he stressed that they, together with chiefs and headmen must exercise every possible lawful influence to induce able-bodied male relatives to go into the labour field [Zeleza, 1980: 73].

The Kikuyu who converted to Islam were accepted by the Waswahili Muslims in the native village in Nyeri Township. They assisted one another in times of need and also worshiped together. They therefore formed a single social group [Mzee Jidi Uledi, 0.1:05-5-94].

Eric Sherbrooke Walker was a prominent businessman in Nyeri. He was married to Bettie the daughter of the Earl of Denbigh. He was also the owner and proprietor of the Outspan Hotel Nyeri [Hemsing, 1974].

Baden Powell was the founder of the Boy Scout Movement, and he lived in Nyeri from 1938 till his death in 1941 [Best, 1979;135]. His wife's (Olive Powell) remains were also buried in Nyeri later. Olive Powell was the founder of the Girl Guides Movement. Hence Girl Guides visit Nyeri to commemorate her birthday, an occasion they call "Thinking Day".

Paxtu Cottage was built for Baden Powerll within the Outspan Hotel, Nyeri. The cottage was given the name Paxtu as this was Baden Powell's home village [Ibid.].

Kariuki Kaguri [0.1:03-5-94], had a long period of interaction with Europeans in Nyeri Township. he was employed at the Outspan Hotel, Nyeri in the 1920s and he retired from service in 1977.

The term "toto", was the name given to the young boys who were mainly employed as Kitchen - hands in Europeans and Asian homes in the colonial period in Kenya [0.1: Kariuki Kaguri, Ibid.].

"Pendri boy" was the name given to older boys whose work included washing to delicate cups and plates. These were mainly employed in European homes [Ibid.].
9. The "headboy" on the other hand, was the equivalent of the headcook. Normally, this was an adult man who supervised cooking of meals and laying of the table in European homes [Ibid.].

10. Nyachinga is a Kikuyu term referring to women in Nyeri. Today the word is not commonly used [Ibid.].

11. The circumciser was the wife of Chief Ndiuni of Nyeri Gikonyo, O.1:05-5-94].

12. Cultural patriotism in Nyeri was evidenced by the fact that African parents withdrew children from schools due to the female circumcision controversy. The Africans sent their children to Independent Schools instead [Joseph Gikonyo, Op. Cit.].

13. Ngarau Wa Kaigwa was one of the royalists bent on fighting female circumcision among the Kikuyu [Kamuyu-Wa-Kang'ethe, 1981:496].
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE NYERI LABOURERS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR [1939-1945]

5.1 INTRODUCTION

During the Second World War, Kenya's economy was reorganized so as to help the British Government win the War. Consequently, all the resources including manpower and materials, were mobilized for the purposes of war. At the outbreak of the war the colonial state acquired broad power of coercion over labour, among other things. New regulations, were therefore passed, such as the 1940 Defence (Native Personnel) regulations, which gave the governor power to order Provincial Commissioners to produce quotas of workers for military and essential services [Zeleza, Op. Cit.:147]. These regulations were used both to mobilize and recruit labour for the army and services designated as essential as well as to ensure that private farmers and employers received sufficient labour.

In this chapter we critically examine the effects of the war on social, economic and political life of the African labourers in Nyeri Township. It is also argued that the African experiences during the war directly caused the
political ferment experienced during the post-war period in Kenya.

5.2 NYERI AND THE WAR SITUATION

The Second World War made Nyeri an important centre in a number of ways. Firstly, the Public Works Department constructed a big refugee camp which was meant for the numerous foreigners who had to be interned in the course of the war. Quite early in the war the demand upon the resources of Nyeri began to make itself felt; with the entry of Italy into the war the situation became highly critical. Large numbers of troops arrived in Nyeri and military operations with subsidiary services made a heavy demand upon manpower. Subsequently, as the Italian campaign in Ethiopia progressed, the whole colony was asked to accommodate increasing numbers of Italian prisoners of the war and later Polish and other refugees from Europe who required not only food, but also labour for these permanent camps [Brown, 1946:69].

The outbreak of the war found the local Kenya Defence force well organised. The enemy aliens were therefore expeditionally collected and interned. A large proportion of the guard for the Central internment camp was recruited from Nyeri. This inevitably enabled many
Africans especially in the town to take part in the war thus benefitting particularly those seeking wage employment.

The establishment of a central internment camp at Nyeri was aimed at controlling the activities of the Italian missionaries. The Italians had heavily invested in the township through the setting up of churches, schools, a hospital, printing press and a massive coffee plantation. This was evidenced by Mathari mission in the township which was the agricultural, industrial, intellectual and religious centre for the IMC [Institutio Missionario Consolata] activities in Kenya [Nyuguto, 1981:75]:

At the beginning of the War in 1939 the Italian Government remained out of the war. Therefore, missionary work in Nyeri mainly by Italian Missionaries, was not affected. However, when Italy joined Germany to fight the British in 1940, all the Italian Consolata Fathers and Brothers were taken as prisoners of war. The Seminary Block in the Mission was the first 'prison' for the priests and brothers. They were to be transferred later from here.

The Consolata priests and lay brothers were interned at Kiganjo Station next to the Nyeri Railway station
Only the nuns were left to take care of the mission property at Nyeri. Several mission facilities were converted for war purposes. For instance, the printing press was taken over by a guard from South Africa; the Mission Hospital was also converted into military use. The war, was therefore, disastrous to the progress of the mission. Even technical instruction in the mission schools was stopped because of the internship of instructors like lay brothers and fathers. Consequently, the Consolata Mission was taken over by neutral Irish Fathers in June 1940.

In October 1940, the colonial administration made a call for recruits to join the Military Labour Corps. The response was quite good and offers were made by Africans for participation in the war as clerks, hospital dressers and motor drivers: They were quite willing to provide non-combatant services. In the reserve at Karatina, Africans gave land for a Dried Vegetable Factory to serve the war needs. Army mules were also allowed to camp on African grazing fields. Some even provided cattle and money donations, according to the DC Annual Report 1942.
However, just like in the First World War, the recruitment of the Africans into the war effort had an unsettling effect on farm labour. Some former farm labourers took advantage of the war to join the corps which were offering higher wages and better rations than the private farms. According to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1940, even skilled and unskilled labour for the Public Works Department (PWD), was hard to come by [KNA\DC\NY1\1\4: 2]. The settlers in Nyeri responded by urging for compulsory conscription of labour for the farms through the Farmers Association which held its weekly meetings in the White Rhino Hotel [Joseph Gikonyo O.1: 03-05-94].

Throughout the war period there were several troops in Nyeri township. Consequently, more police lines were constructed as well as houses and other facilities required for the military. African telegraphists were also trained and new quarters erected [KNA/DC/NY1/1/4: 9]. Thus, the township was not only growing spatially in terms of buildings, but also in the increase of its population. For the first time, a large number of relatively qualified African labour was stationed in the town. Some of these were soldiers while others were medical orderlies and clerks.
Due to this new development in the township, it became important to improve health facilities in the town. For instance, water supply facilities were set up at Kamakwa [Mathengu Kinyeru, 0.1:2-5-94]. A health inspector was also stationed in the township. His primary concern was meat inspection and the general health regulations of the township of Nyeri and Nanyuki, which experienced a very high growth of population due to the presence of war troops [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:2]. A large military hospital was also built at Nyeri station. The first block was staffed by South African General Hospital staff. Sanitary facilities were also improved through the construction of more toilets and four public latrines for Africans. These facilities were set up at the police station; DC's office, The African location and at the African market of Kamakwa. The War, therefore, led to the improvement of several facilities in the township and although these improvements were aimed at benefitting the soldiers, in practice they benefitted all the Africans in the township.

Due to increased military demand for meat, a new slaughter house was constructed in the township in 1941, because the old one was incapable of meeting the military demands. A veterinary officer responsible for the management of the pig finishing depot was also stationed
in the town. This expansion of the town and multiplicity of activities necessitated employment of more and more labourers. This in turn enabled many Africans to take jobs with more responsibility and higher remunerations.

The large foreign or migrant population in Nyeri during the war had a profound impact on the lives of the African labourers. The large influx of the Europeans entailed a demand for eggs, poultry, fruit and vegetables which resulted in soaring prices, and no effective control was possible in view of the widespread prevalence of this petty trading [Brown, Op. Cit.:16]. Fatma Idi, explained how her family made money through the sale of milk, uji (porridge) and other food stuffs especially to the Sudanese, Ugandan and other soldiers in Nyeri station, as well as to the Italian prisoners of war. This was, therefore, a period of financial boom for some of the Africans in the township [Fatma Idi O.t:4-5-94]. This trade also had the effect of withdrawing still more African men from the usual forms of employment especially in the farms.

As the war continued there was a great and increasing demand for the products of sisal plantations as well as pyrethrum. This, therefore, necessitated the compulsory conscription of labour not only in Kenya but the whole of
East Africa. However, the African labourers resisted this forceful conscription in two ways. Firstly, they became laxed in performing their responsibilities. Brown (1946) commented that the conscription of labour encouraged a lethargic outlook on the part of the worker who was naturally inclined to do the irreducible minimum of work. Secondly, some workers simply deserted the farms since they could earn a living through the sale of commodities within the township. Desertion was possible at this time due to the general confusion in the area arising out of the war situation.

Due to Nyeri's role as a supplying and servicing centre catering for the military authorities as well as the European settlers, the Second World War contributed to the development of secondary industries in Nyeri. For instance, numerous saw mills sprung up to undertake contract work. The timber resources near the township were exploited at increased speed to meet the existing requirements and the war needs. The most established saw mills were owned by Asians and Europeans. The West Kenya Saw Mill and the Tinga Tinga saw mills in particular thrived due to the war, since they supplied building materials to the military authorities [Newton Waikwa 0.1: 30-4-94].
Inspite of the enhanced financial atmosphere and activities of the saw mills, the conditions of service for the Africans were very poor. They set up makeshift buildings to shelter the machinery while a small settlement of roughly constructed African huts housed the labour force. The saw mill labourers were men of diverse origins as some were of Maasai, Nandi, Akamba and Kikuyu and Luhya origin. They were paid by piece-work and they earned about 30 shillings per month [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.I:27-5-94], which was remarkably a higher wage than the common pay for workers.

While various secondary industries emerged due to the war requirements, in certain instances, some others expanded from their initial modest peace-time enterprises. For instance, the printing press at Mathari Mission expanded after the take over by the military authorities. This expansion of industries was significant not only to the Nyeri Township community, but also to the whole colony because of two reasons. First, it demonstrated the potentialities of the colony much of which had not been discovered. After the war the pace of industrialization was to increase especially in the large urban centres like Nairobi and Mombasa. Second, this demonstrated the capacity of the African to undertake new forms of employment which were largely foreign to his previous
experience. It is reported that some of the machinery operated in these new industries in Nyeri exacted a high standard of watchfulness and care in their management. Brown (1946) has stated thus:

It is somewhat surprising to find that the African has so far overcome his usual casual attitude to such duties as to warrant his being put in charge. His standard of performance is by no means equal to that of the skilled English operating and the numbers employed in each process are therefore appreciably larger than would be the case in Europe. With increasing experience, however, this discrepancy will no doubt be reduced and the African will gradually approach the standard of performance in industrialized countries [Op. Cit.:85].

African labourers became apprentices thus they got industrial training on the job. The majority operated machinery they had not known previously. Given the rudimentary education obtained in the mission schools, their quick adjustment to industrial practices was a remarkable achievement. Africans in Nyeri acquired skills in construction, printing, and in manufacturing. The training of African novices in industrial skills was done by the Italian prisoners of war. Italians found it easy to train the Africans in Nyeri due to a number of factors. Firstly, a large number of Nyeri labourers were acquainted with the Consolata Missionaries as strong
adherents of the catholic church. Thus, they had a cordial relationship with the Italian prisoners. Secondly, since the Italians were prisoners, they sought to impress upon the African labourers that they were more humane as compared to the British settlers, [Kariuki Muthaithi, O.1:04-05-94]. Unlike the British who were arrogant, they adopted a friendly and brotherly attitude towards the African labourers. Finally, right from the inception of the Italian Mission Settlement, the Italians did manual or dirty work. In their interest to train the Africans, they were a contrast to the Asians who jealously guarded their artisan skills on one hand, and to the British settlers who depended on African labour to do manual labour.

The war also impacted on the Reserves. Two factories were established for the drying of locally - grown vegetables for military requirements at Karatina and Kerugoya in the African reserves on the slopes of Mt. Kenya. The Karatina factory was constructed by the Public Works Department in 1942. It was an extremely large factory, complete with a boiler house, engine - rooms, labour lines for 400 labourers, European and Asian houses, administrative block, sweepers lines and a hydro electric power station at Sagana river [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:7].
The two factories could handle large quantities of vegetable evidenced by the report that over a period of 4 years, they had produced over 15,000 tons of dried potato, cabbage and carrots. This was equivalent to 150,000 tons of fresh vegetables for the use of the troops in Burma. As a result the areas adjacent to the factories were busy, engaged in market gardening which maintained the African population [Brown, Op. Cit.]. The industry employed many labourers:

Nearly 4,000 persons directly and another 10,000 indirectly. The substantial nature of this contribution from a comparatively small area of one native Reserve will be obvious. From a financial point of view the benefit to the local population is great, over £10,000 per month being paid out in wages and for the purchase of fresh vegetables [Ibid., 1946: 86].

The potential of this industry was immense, given that large areas of East Africa lacked such products especially during the dry season. Furthermore, the factory product was of very high quality [Samuel Gitonga O.I: 01-05-94]. Unfortunately, the future of the factory was uncertain because the colonial administration wanted to retain the facility against the wishes of the returning ex-soldiers who felt that Africans deserved not only to own the facility but also to manage it, since it was located on their land [Kinga Mwendia O.I: 02-05-94].
Evidently the ex-soldiers would not quietly succumb to be exploited by the colonial state.

Another significant industry to develop was a small factory for the production of dried milk for military use: It was described thus:

The factory produces some six to seven hundred pounds of powder milk daily. Each pound is the equivalent of 5/6 of a gallon of fresh milk. The product is welcomed by the military hospitals and the undertaking might well be on a much larger scale; Unfortunately, the local supply of milk appears to admit of little expansion. When Military requirements no longer account for the whole production, there would seem to be a great opening for the utilization of this product for the benefit of the native population, especially in Tanganyika where over large areas the children have never tasted cow's milk [Brown, Ibid.: 85]

The milk factory provided some cash to the Africans milk suppliers. Similarly, several labourers from Nyeri and other parts of the country were recruited to work in the factory. Thus a small segment of industrial work force was created in Nyeri. However, unlike the industrial workers in the capitalist nations, these industrial workers in Nyeri were not fully proletariat-ised and they still had one of their feet in peasant farming. What emerged was a degree of differentiation among the
labourers depending on whether one had other resources in the reserve, which could be mobilized to increase wealth. Owners of larger pieces of land in the reserves occasionally hired labourers to work on the land. The labourers were therefore involved in both capitalist and non-capitalist relations of production. It is therefore important to recognize ability of the labourers to determine to some extent the nature of their world, rather than being the functionalist expression of some structure [Smith, 1985].

The development of differentiation among the African labourers in Nyeri is an indication that capital does not totally destroy, but preserves the indigenous socio-formations, often unconsciously. And that even at a lower level as relations advances, differentiation can be acquired if Africans do not remain innocent victims.

5.3 THE LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF THE AFRICAN LABOURERS IN THE TOWNSHIP

During the war, the number of Africans in the township rose tremendously because of factors related to the war. First, there was a compulsory conscription of labour in the reserves. As a result many Africans sought wage employment in the township rather than get conscripted to
work in European farms. Second, the large number of troops and war activities themselves gave rise to job openings in the form of construction work, sawmilling or domestic help. Finally, food requirements for the large urban population had to be supplied by some of the Africans in the township.

However, a tense atmosphere existed due to the war activities. For instance, in August 1942, emergency exercises brought all work in Nyeri to a standstill for a number of days, according to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1942 [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:9]. In the town, the Italian and British soldiers battled along the banks of Chania river. At Nanyuki a band of escaped prisoners of war succeeded in blowing up the Nanyuki post office after routing the guard [Ibid.]. All these activities led to more troops being posted to the township.

As a result of the war, the normal common articles of daily use became rare. This was because shipping space was at a premium. Meat products for instance, were in such short supply that the government resorted to shooting out herds of game to keep bellies full [Best, 1979:146]. These shortages had some serious repercussions; some amount of petty crime like pilfering and housebreaking became rampant in the township. This
trend caused friction especially between the employers and their labourers. Juveniles were also very many in the town, such that their members are reported by the courts to have been "worrisome" [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1].

Apart from these rampant problems, between 1941 and 1943 there was a serious drought that led to a famine nicknamed "Ng'aragu ya Mianga" meaning the Cassava famine [Kariuki Muthaithi, O.I: 04/05/94]. This was partly caused by a locust invasion prior to the war [KNA/DC/NYI/2/2:1937-38]. This famine forced some of those with no source of income to start pilfering. According to informants, some families were so much hit by the famine that the government had to provide them with ground Cassava for survival - hence the name "cassava famine" [ibid.]. Even more important, the famine was caused by the withdrawal of the men from the reserves so as to serve in the war effort.

In spite of the prevalence of these problems in town the colonial government did not attempt to determine the causes of the problems. For instance, the issue of Juvenile and labour delinquency in the township was only noted as a serious problem by the colonial administration during the war. Two factors could have led to this phenomenon. First, the dislocation of the squatters from
the settler farms especially in the North Nyeri and Rift Valley. As already stated, some of the squatter children had been brought up in the white owned farms. It was therefore becoming very difficult for them to fit in the life of the already congested Reserves, where they were majorly unwelcome due to food shortages. It is such juveniles who ended up in the township.

Second, child labour had become quite prevalent in Nyeri by the Second World War. Young boys commonly called "totos", were employed by Asians and Europeans in the township in various capacities. They were engaged as kitchen-hands [Mathengu Kinyeru O.I: 02-05-94]. Most of the colonial administrators justified their use of child labour. For instance, Brown (1946) tried to justify this form of labour in his report on the labour situation in East Africa during the War. He stated thus:

the precocity of boys in question invites them to seek for work with avidity and to perform their tasks even to a degree which may be definitely deleterious... Picking of coffee berries and pyrethrum flowers are tasks small fingers and supple limbs are very well situated; indeed, when it is the case of a crop growing near the ground like pyrethrum, short stature is a very definite advantage. Such work is carried out almost entirely according to the inclination of the children who only work as they feel disposed; the actual wage earned may be extremely small, but it is in practise a welcome addition to a
family budget which includes very little spending money for the more youthful members [Brown, 1946:27].

These Juveniles were particularly disadvantaged in that arduous toil was exacted from them in conditions that were often insanitary and uncomfortable. Employment of child labour was more common in the retail shops and similar places where very long hours were characteristic of the type of work done. The juveniles were accommodated in the backyards of their employer's homes and they mainly fed on the leftovers from their employer's kitchen [Joseph Gikonyo, 0.1.:03-05-94].

Narrating their work experiences as "toto" or kitchen boys, Mathengu Kinyeru [0.1:02-05-94] and Joseph Gikonyo [0.1:03-05-94] related that it was quite common for the employers to administer corporal punishment on the labourers. It was worse for the "toto" because whipping at the hands of Europeans and Asians was the order of the day. At this stage it should be noted that the Kenyan colonial administration applied the Indian penal code in dealing with African punishments. This code allowed for the practice of corporal punishment in the form of flogging [Berman, 1974:127].

Nevertheless, some of the mistreated juveniles could escape from the bad employers especially at the moment of
impending punishment. It was much easier for boys to desert because unlike the adults very often they had no Kipande. Once they escaped it was very difficult to track them down. It was perhaps the desertions from employers, that accounts for the existence of many juveniles in Nyeri town at the time. The first class magistrate courts in Nyeri issued warrants of arrest for two such juveniles on 22nd November 1945. These were Gichangi wa Ndegwa and Hiuhu wa Macharia [KNA/DC/2/12/5:1946]. However, they could not be traced since they didn't have a Kipande.

Employment of juveniles was disadvantageous to them for a number of reasons: Firstly, the child lacked a good atmosphere to grow in where parental love and care could be experienced. Secondly, they lacked the opportunity to acquire education both in form of parental guidance or Western education, that could enable them to improve their lives. Such children became socially unstable and they largely contributed to the occurrence of many antisocial practises in urban areas. Finally, the juveniles were seldom in a position to control their own earnings and as a consequence they could easily be exploited by bad employers, and irresponsible parents as well.
Increase of the population in Nyeri township during the war led to a subsequent rise in the number of in-patients at Nyeri Hospital [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1/]. The average number of in-patients was roughly twice the number of beds. The LNC became so concerned that it decided to vote money for the construction of a new ward despite the fact that this was a responsibility that should have been shouldered by the colonial government. According to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1943, the government contribution was only by posting Dr and Mrs Patton, a Resident Medical Officer of health and a nursing sister, to try and handle the already bad situation.

The LNC therefore constructed a 34 bed ward with a block of 6 staff quarters in the township. They also added a new wing to the maternity block. By 1944, the number of in-patients was averaging 133 per day [KNA/DC/NYI/1/4:11]. The situation was so serious that during the post war years the LNC had to subsidize the mission hospitals so that they could provide medical attention to the Africans. The Asians were equally lacking in proper medical attention. Because of the discriminative policy in the colony, the three races could not get medical attention in the same places. The Asian community agreed to build a ward in the Native civil Hospital grounds and hand it over to the government.
for the exclusive use of their community [Ibid.].

In contrast to both the African and Asian medical services, the Europeans established two hospitals for the exclusive use of their race. These were, the Cottage Hospital at Nanyuki and Mount Kenya Hospital in Nyeri town [Geoffrey Wakaba O.1:27-12-93]. Mount Kenya Hospital however, was not fully complete until 1948 [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1:11]. Although the Military Hospital served the African corps, discrimination was quite rife with regard to the provision of medical services in these hospitals [Geoffrey Wakaba, O.1:27-12-93]. This discrimination was also evident in the housing of the African medical staff. Brown Report of 1946 is quite illuminating as regards the hospitals:

The question of houses for government employees as a whole is a large one, any solution of which will entail considerable expenditure. There are however, certain instances where action seems to be urgently required, in particular the majority of native hospitals are entirely lacking in accommodation for their African staff; thus in case of accident or emergency arising at night, a preliminary search to find and bring dressers, nurses, and orderlies etc would be required before the hospital could function efficiently [Ibid.:58].
Though by 1944 some improvements on the Nyeri Native Hospital staff housing had been made, more attention was given to European and Asian staff. According to the DC Annual Report 1944, three class 111 houses were built for Europeans, and two Asian quarters were completed in that year. Since facilities were provided along racial lines, it follows that in the colonial establishment the education qualification of the staff was not as important as the racial origins of a worker. Thus, housing and salaries were based on racial considerations [Mzee Jidi Uledi O.1:04-05-95].

Nevertheless, the living conditions of some of the Africans improved tremendously in some aspects. This is because, during the war a good number of Africans managed to secure jobs as hospital dressers, nurses, orderlies and cooks. Others acquired skills in lorry driving and machine operation in the factories that were emerging. This category of labourers managed to acquire prestige because of their relatively better status. As a result, some tension developed between such privilege categories and other labourers in the township. Class differentials was becoming evident and was the source of much tension.
That such tension existed was evident at the beginning of the war. The dressers at the General Hospital had some skirmishes with the neighbouring Kirichu Market men over the issue of Kikuyu girls. The residents of Kirichu Market complained that their young women were being enticed by the dressers with money and exotic commodities, thus being morally corrupted [Fatma Iddi, 01:04-05-94]. However, the real cause of the disagreement was that the young men at Kirichu with no regular income, were unhappy since their girlfriends were leaving them for the hospital workers. As a result of these skirmishes, a police station was set up next to Nyeri railway station to aly the danger of the hospital getting attacked.

A similar disturbance occurred at Karatina between the township labourers and the military transport drivers. These drivers' work involved the transportation of dried vegetables. A near fight situation was experienced here and the situation was also averted through the posting of police to guard the military drivers. It is apparent that a number of Kikuyu girls got children as a result of these short-lived affairs with either the military men or the hospital workers. A number of such girls had to stay in the African village in the Township since they could not be forgiven by their relatives. Others went to
Pumwani in Nairobi and disguised themselves as Waswahili [Fatma Idd, 0.1:04-05-94].

The confrontation between the Africans in Nyeri highlighted a number of factors: First, that the increasing differentiation between the labourers posed a threat to the smooth running of the colonial state and hence the colonial administration had to step in and prevent disruption of order.

Secondly, the imbalance between the population of men and women in the township posed a great problem. Going by the Hut Tax census of 1942, it is obvious that the numbers of men were too high as compared to that of women. The census tabulated the population viz:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married men</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single men</td>
<td>581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the Hut Tax census cannot be a precise record of the existing population in the town, it nevertheless highlights the small number of women in relation to that of men. The majority of the labourers were, therefore, living as bachelors since their wives were in the reserves. This was dictated by a number of factors: the low wages and the inadequate living quarters. This probably accounts for the friction between the hospital
dressers at Nyeri and other labourers at Kiricho over the issue of Kikuyu girls. This problem seems to have been rampant in all towns, for example, Hake (1977) gives a similar picture of Nairobi at around the same period. He states:

Davies report also documents the imbalance between the sexes in the town. There were, he stated, 25,886 African men employed and living in Nairobi against which were counted only 3356 female dependants in the town, a proportion of just over one to eight. The result was inevitably prostitution and venereal diseases. [Hake, 1947:52]

The Handing Over Report North Nyeri 1939, provides the breakdown of some of the wages paid to the station hands (manual labourers) in the Township of Nyeri. Given that this category of labour was better paid in comparison with other labourers, these figures illustrate the fact that African labourers in the township could not live with their families, since the wages could not cater for a family. Table 1.1 provides a breakdown of some of the wages paid to Nyeri Township station hands by 1939.
Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Labourer</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Salary per Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mbasha Kamau</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ngare wa Kiama</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Karanja Maingi</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Njogu wa Ndag'ang'a</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kamonde wa Njiro</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ngojo Warue</td>
<td>Sweeper</td>
<td>Sh.16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Njorge Mwangi</td>
<td>(Native Market)</td>
<td>Sh.11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kimondu Karuru</td>
<td>(Cart Driver)</td>
<td>Sh.11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Kamote Gashuru</td>
<td>(Slaughterhouse)</td>
<td>Sh.10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maalim Mohamad the headman got Sh.33.00 per month, while Newton Waikwa the office boy got Sh.30.00 per month.

Source: KNA/DC/NYI/2/1

The wages paid to the African labourers were pitifully low and this explains why there were fewer women in the urban centres; the wages were simply not sufficient to support a family in an urban situation. According to Hake (1977), the estimated cost of living for a single man in Nairobi at this time was Sh.21.00. However, even the majority of married men did not get this required minimum for a bachelor. In Nyeri the wages paid were much lower than those paid at Nairobi. Such poor wages led to a number of consequences in town. First, the labourers jointly rented rooms in the African village. This phenomenon gave rise to overcrowding and prostitution with consequent spread of venereal diseases, especially during the war [Mzee Jumbe Bin Mwinyi 0.1:09-05-94].
The issue of prostitution among the African girls in Nyeri was discussed at a meeting presided over by the Nyeri DC in March 1939. The meeting recommended that the native pass laws ought to be amended in order to control the entry of native girls into towns. The new law was amended thus:

That no female native, whose lawful guardian is normally resident in a Native Reserve shall expect within the boundaries of such Native Reserves, or a Municipality or Township, travel or be transported by any other motor vehicle as defined under the Traffic Ordinance No. 26 of 1928, unless she shall be in possession of a pass duly authorising her to do so, endorsed by such guardian and issued by a District Officer, or other duly authorised agent stating the points between which such pass is valid and the period of such validity [KNA/VQ/1/40:1939].

It is significant to note that the LNC also undertook to post a tribal policeman in the Indian Bazaar at Nyeri who would prevent women and girls from boarding lorries and buses except the girls with valid passes [Ibid.]

It is evident that prostitution was one of the few avenues open to African women in towns to earn cash. This was because domestic service was mainly monopilised by African men, office jobs by European and Asians and small

Second, some African labourers began growing their own food within the suburbs of the township. Newton Waikwa narrated how he cleared and cultivated land and finally built himself a house on the fringes of the township. Since he could cultivate and grow his own food, he managed to settle with his family unlike the majority of the African labourers [Newton Waikwa O.L:30-04-94]. It is such natives who could keep families in town. But families would still subsist within the precapitalist sector but not within the capitalist one to aid the men to supply labour.

Finally, due to the low wages paid in the township, the labourers supplemented their income through hawking and also through the distillation of Nubian gin. [Handing Over Report 1943, KNA/DC/NY1/2/1]. With time, the brewing of this beer spread to the reserves and mills for the preparation of jaggery from sugarcane became quite common in Nyeri. The jaggery was then used in the brewing of the beer. The troops based in the town provided a ready market for the brew. Thus, the age-old custom of preparing beer was now being commercialised; capitalism was transforming some indigenous modes of life. However, whereas capitalism brought about this new form of trade,
it at the same time tried to control it since the Nubian gin was associated with criminal activity in urban centres. The police were occasionally dispatched to the African location in the town to arrest those brewing or drinking this liquor.

5.4 THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR II ON NYERI TOWNSHIP

Africans in the township became more politically conscious during the war. At the beginning, this spurge of nationalism was experienced among the Kikuyu Muslims, a factor that eventually led to the split between the Waswahili and the Kikuyu Muslims in the town. A man called Kimendero who originated from Southern Nyeri, led the splinter group of kikuyu muslims. The group called itself Jamia-Tul-Baladia [Newton Waikwa O.1:30-04-94]. Kimendero bought land from the Aithiegeni clan at Ruringu on which he settled the Kikuyu Muslim community.

According to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1942, the Kikuyu Muslims were very active in the 1940s and they required close supervision as they showed definite signs of becoming increasingly Kikuyu conscious [KNA/DC/NY1/1/4:1]. The Kikuyu muslims adopted the name Jamia-Tul-Baladia which in Arabic means "our own place" [Mzee Jidi Uledi, O.1:04-05-94]. Tul-Baladia erected
their own mosque and even applied to be allowed to have a separate register of marriages. However the colonial administration refused to grant this request. The Kikuyu muslims were unhappy due to the system of religious leadership which favoured only muslims of Swahili origin. Probably, the breaking away of Tul-Baladia is parallel in a sense to the independent movement in the christian churches during the inter-war period.

The exposure the African soldiers had during their tenure in the war effort was largely responsible for the new spurge of nationalism. Prior to the War the African political organizations in Kenya did not challenge the legitimacy of the colonial state. The world war 11 ex-soldiers participated in the war outside Kenya. They fought in Ethiopia, Egypt, Ceylon, Burma and India [Kinga Mwendia 0.1:05-94]. Before they left Kenya, there was some discrimination against African soldiers. For instance, Africans got a poor uniform, lower quality food and stayed in less comfortable barracks [Mzee William Kikanga, 0.1:-5-94]. However, when they went abroad, this discrimination was not experienced. Concerning the war, Waruhiu Itote (General China), who fought in the Kings African Rifles in Burma and who later joined the Mau Mau revolt had the following comment:
Among the shells and bullets there had been no pride, no air of superiority from our European comrades-in-arms. We drank the same tea, used the same water and lavatories, and shared the same jokes. There were no racial insults, no references to "niggers", "baboons" and so on. The white heat of battle had blistered all that away and left only our common humanity and our common fate, either death or survival [Itote, 1967:27]

Apart from equality in treatment, the ex-soldiers also acquired a number of skills hitherto unknown to them which included: knowledge of reading and writing in English since literacy was a necessity among the soldiers in war. They acquired skills such as driving, motor vehicle maintenance, metal and electrical work, signals work, cooking, clerical work and medical orderly work. These new experiences gave the African soldiers more confidence in their outlook to life especially because they considered themselves to be equal with white settlers.

The colonial government was aware that the ex-soldiers would encounter problems after their demobilization, since they had acquired new ideas and values in the war [Shiroya, 1968:103]. However the colonial establishment perceived the issue of demobilization of soldiers as a social problem rather than a political or economic one. In line with this, social welfare programmes were
initiated after the war. Welfare centres were established in towns and district headquarters [KNA/VG/12/4:1949].

Among the activities of the centres were the distribution of films, formation of African clubs and the installation of wireless sets in the LNC halls, beer halls and coffee shops. Community centres were also established to educate Africans in trade, fiscal policies of central and local government, better methods of agriculture and hygiene. Sports, choirs and athletics were also emphasized in the community centres. The government hoped that these activities would occupy the ex-soldiers.

Some attention was paid to the education of women. Homecraft courses were offered at the Jeanes school Kabete to a selected number of women mainly wives of Africans working in government departments, for instance, the army, police and prisons [KNA/VQ/12/4:1949].

The social welfare programme faced a number of problems. Firstly, there were too few community centres in the reserves to serve the ex-soldiers. Secondly, the majority of Africans did not show any interest in them, mainly because most courses offered emphasized team games and athletics [Shiroya, Op. Cit.:131]. Moreover, most of the courses offered were completely irrelevant to the African
economic, social and political problems. It is evident that the frustrations encountered by the ex-soldiers contributed a lot to the upsurge of political ferment in Kenya and Nyeri in particular, after the war.

It was obvious that the colonial administration would encounter problems in dealing with the ex-soldiers for several reasons: First, in Kenya the colonial administrators and white settlers still looked down the African as a primitive man. These settlers and administrators shared the same socio-cultural background that gave them a similar attitude towards the other races. Moreover, the officials in the district had to become friendly to the settlers in the small and tightly knit social circle centering on the local club. These settlers could make life miserable for an administrator and his family if they found reason to dislike him [Berman, Opt. Cit.:178]. The sympathy of administrators for settler interest was also increased by the government policy of encouraging officers to build homes in Kenya and to stay on after they had retired from service, as well as permitting officials to make private investments of certain types.

Secondly, during the war, the ex-soldiers made a lot of savings because the wages were slightly higher and they
did not have time to use money in war. For instance, William Kikanga confided that during this period he got 32 shillings per month, besides food and uniform. He could remit as much as 20 shillings per month. Moreover, after demobilization, the soldiers got war bonuses which by all standards were quite substantial. The ex-soldiers found it hard to fit in their former life-styles after they were demobilized and this is what made them dissatisfied.

According to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1945, African trade and transport was becoming increasingly hard to handle. In the manpower, Demobilization and Reabsorption Report of 1945-1946, it was also stated that the reabsorption schemes could only absorb some of those who had received a little craft or mechanical training in the army. The remainder found their opportunities for further training blocked by the increasing Asian population. Again, two disastrous forms of enterpreneurial activity by demobilized soldiers were the purchase of second hand box-bodied lorries or buses and the formation of cooperative enterprises by individuals lacking in any commercial or accountancy knowledge [Clayton and Savage, [bid:259]. Commenting on these enterpreneurial activities, Huxley has stated thus:
 Everywhere in the new and well-planned markets, ex-soldiers are opening small shops which can offer little but a few packets of local tea, a few bars of local soap and perhaps some bottles of paraffin. No amount of discouragement will stop them applying in their hundreds for licences either to trade or to run taxis... Yet applications continue to pour in and grievances to multiply as more and more are turned down by a somewhat wayward transport board in Nairobi. It was not, perhaps, one of the government's brighter efforts to sell to Africans hundreds of surplus army lorries with one hand and refuse subsequently to licence with the other [Huxley, 1949:352-353].

In Nyeri the African businesses were curtailed by the colonial government after the war in several ways, and this brought about a lot of conflict between the ex-African soldiers and the government. First, the distribution of the market centres was brought under the control of District Councils, which were under the European settlers. These District Councils allotted the plots in the market centres under their jurisdiction in limited numbers and set high building standards [Somerset and Marris, 1971:9]. These strict requirements were used to victimise the Africans who were perceived to be against the policies of the colonial setup. One such victim was Kirori wa Motoku of Ruring'u market [Joseph Gikonyo 0.1:03-05-94].
Kirori Motoku had erected a concrete building at Ruring'u market within Nyeri township. His, was the first African-owned storeyed building in the township. He was however, accused of being an agitator and of having infringed building rules. He was also accused of sending letters periodically to the DC through Asian lawyers, to petition the condemnation of his building [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1]. The action of sending protest letters is significant because it illustrates that the Africans were now questioning some of the colonial rules that hitherto were accepted without any questions.

The second way in which the colonial administration tried to control African business enterprise in Nyeri was through business licenses. In the 1940s, the administration started a policy of systematic harassment of African shopkeepers, principally by requiring shops in gazetted trading centres to be licensed and denying licences to those thought to be engaged in illicit trading [Kitching, 1980:171]. This antagonised mainly the ex-soldiers who wanted to invest their war-savings either individually or as a group. However, the general attitude of the European community to the ex-soldiers was that they were all corrupt [KNA/DC/NYI//4:17].
Nevertheless, some of the ex-soldiers utilised the various skills they learnt in the army to employ themselves rather than to seek wage employment. Among these included Domeniko and Beattah who had large garages at Ruringu. Damiano another ex-soldier owned a garage at Kamakwa Market. His garage was so well organised that the colonial administration was impressed:

Chaps (Africans) here have developed their markets to a commendable extent, if anything they are over ambitious... I think the next thing is to develop the market services to get shopkeepers to appreciate clean quarters and surroundings, the aim being to get the shopkeeper and his family permanently resident on his plot and to sever his connection with the reserve outside [Handing Over Report Nyeri 1948-KNA/NYI/2/1].

As a result of the several barriers used to curtail African enterprise by the colonial government, most of the ex-soldiers responded by turning into politics. For instance, an application for malt liquor license by some African businessmen was bitterly opposed by the officers commanding the General Hospital, an action, that annoyed the ex-soldiers [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1]. This further convinced the ex-soldiers of the need to use politics to achieve their goals. According to the DC Nyeri Annual Report 1946:
To trade is still the goal of every Kikuyu's desire but whether owing to the feeling of frustration caused by this failure to gain the sort of success he aims at in the face of established interests and his own inexperience and ignorance or owing to the ferment of nationalistic aspirations which are working throughout the entire world, fact remains that politics have now become his equally absorbing passion.

[KNA/DC/NYI/1/4]

It is worth noting that most of the ex-soldiers had by 1946 began to experience hardships. Several factors accounted for these hardships. First, unlike the Asians in the town who had more experience, the ex-soldiers were inexperienced in business enterprise. Second, due to inexperience, most of them were hasty and failed to lay proper plans before they embarked on business. For this reason, many of them either opened shops or run vehicles that were normally old and defective. In the ensuing competition, many of their businesses collapsed. Finally, unlike the Asians who had means to obtain credit from their fellow Asian wholesalers, the ex-soldiers relied heavily on their war savings which soon began to run out. Since the Asians in towns were often organized and oriented around the smaller groups of religious association, they could easily assist their members in business. This was not the case with the upcoming African businessmen, some of whom had extended families to support.
The DC Nyeri Handing Over Report for 1945 has recorded that the Kenya African Study Union (KASU) had established branches in the district with the object of looking after the interests of the African community [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1]. It is therefore apparent that there was a direct correlation between the living conditions of the African labourers and the political developments in the township. KAU was named among the dissident elements existing in Nyeri in the 1948 Handing Over Report:

The dissident elements of the district are many though they are submerged. The local branch of KAU is at the focal point of anti-government feeling [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1:2].

Most of the KAU members in Nyeri, were either ex-soldiers or mission educated men. Therefore, unlike most of the other associations that had cropped up in Nyeri, KAU had the support of the elite in the township. These included teachers, clerks, messengers and businessmen [Pancrasio Wachira, 0.1:11-05-95]. KAU was concerned with the improvement of African life. Their grievances included lack of political representation in the government, poor wages and discrimination of the Africans in the urban centres.

The ex-soldiers in Nyeri also formed the Nyeri District Ex-servicemen Friendly Association (herein after
NDESAFA). The headquarters of this Association was at Kamakwa and the chairman was Stanley Kinga wa Mwendia, who was its leader for many years [0.1:02-05-94]. Kinga Mwendia himself, attended the Kagumo High School in 1935 where he met Jeremiah Nyaga from Embu. In January 1938 he attended Alliance school where he studied upto 1939, when the Second World War erupted. He soon got a conscription order to join the War in 1940. He fought in various countries including Burma, Sri Lanka, and India. Among the other ex-soldiers with him from Nyeri included Gilbert Mugenyu, Waruhiu Itote (General China) and Ephraim Mithamo [Ibid.].

NDESAFA was formed in 1946 after the soldiers were discharged from the war. They rented a building at Kamakwa within the Township which acted both as their meeting place as well as their headquarters. Their main aim was to promote African political, economic and social progress. NDESAFA members concentrated their efforts in assisting ex-soldiers in their business enterprises. Sometimes they also helped to bail out the Africans arrested for failure to pay taxes.

It is interesting to note that the Nyeri labourers whose traditional social structure had been severely disrupted by the colonial impact and whose traditional communal
values had consequently weakened, were able to evolve, in a situation of intensive change, new forms of cohesion and cooperation adapted to cope with the opportunities presented by the modern urban economy. For instance, transport lorries and other businesses were owned jointly by groups of Africans, especially the ex-soldiers not only in Nyeri but also in other towns in the country.

At around 1947, NDESAFA spearheaded a campaign around Kamakwa against cattle dipping. This was because the veterinary officers had used a strong cattle-dip chemical called Asankola, that led to the death of a number of livestock. Eventually, the government accepted that cattle dipping was a voluntary exercise and no more forceful dipping was enforced in Nyeri.

The other leaders of NDESAFA were Kirori wa Motoku, Murage Wokabi and Gachuru Ngorano, all literate and enlightened men. Most of them had lived in Nairobi and had links with the other members of KAU in the country. NDESAFA published a newspaper in the township entitled Nyeri Observer, which circulated all over the township between 1946 and 1947 and its editor was Kinga. The paper reported the activities of the LNC and educated the residents on local and national affairs. It could possibly also have helped to arouse nationalist awareness
in the district.

NDESAFA members controlled both KAU and the LNC. Kinga was a member of the LNC from 1947 to 1949. At the same time, he was the chairman of KAU, Nyeri branch. Anderson Wamuthenywa was the vice-chairman (Ibid., 0.1:02-05-94). NDESAFA operated both as a political Association as well as a welfare Association. For this reason, it attracted members from different ethnic groups in the town. These included, the Akamba, Kikuyu, Maasai, Waswahili and Somalis. NDESAFA also established the Nyeri Education Society which catered for educational needs of students from all over Nyeri. In the 1950s, NDESAFA helped to acquire funds and to send many bright students from the area for further studies outside the country. These included Henry Wariithi, Joseph Nderitu Kiragu, Benson Wahome Mutahi and Joseph Kiboi Wairi [Newton Waikwa, 0.1:30-04-94]. Most of these students went to India where they took courses in law and agriculture.

As a result of the political activities spearheaded by NDESAFA in the township, the DC tried to promote a sports Association with a view to providing recreation-al activities for the many young men in the town. He reasoned that the young men with nothing to do except hanging around the markets, would turn to politics or
crime. The Nyeri District Sports Association (NDSA) was therefore formed under Ephraim Githae, to try and occupy the labourers so that they could avoid getting involved with KAU and NDESAFA activities [KNA/DC/NYI/2/1]. The leaders of the Association were mainly the clerks working at the DCs office and for the LNC. For instance, Solomon, one of the leaders was a clerk at the LNC while Benjamin was a cashier in the LNC. Since the Association had the goodwill of the colonial administration alot of funds were donated for it through the DC for promoting its activities; it could therefore engage in organising interlocational competitions as well as away matches.

At around 1948, NDESAFA was involved in the controversy surrounding the ownership and management of the Karatina dried vegetable factory, which had been set up during the war to provide vegetables to military authorities. The land on which the factory and its labour stood had been leased to the government by the LNC, with consent of the owners, for the duration of the war and one year thereafter [Huxley, 1949:349]. At the end of the lease, NDESAFA agitated for the return of the land and for the operation of the factory by a locally owned company: The united Companies of Mumbi [ibid:350]
The United Companies of Mumbi offered to buy the dried vegetable factory from the government for 30,000 pounds but the offer was rejected. Instead, the government proposed to sell the factory to a European company in partnership with the Kikuyu on a half-half basis so as to form an Anglo-African Company: The united Companies of Mumbi was to own 49 per cent of the capital and the European company would also own the same amount of capital, while the government would own 2 per cent. Again, on the board of management of this factory were to sit three representatives of the firm, three of them Kikuyu and one of the government.

NDESAFA rejected this arrangement and subsequently the factory had to be closed down. The tussle over the ownership of the Karatina Vegetable factory is significant because it highlights the tension that was building up between the ex-soldiers and the colonial administration in Nyeri: The Africans did not want anything short of political and economic independence. Thus, the factory had to be closed down. Though it generated some income to the labourers and farmers, it nevertheless, represented a form of servitude unless it was managed by the Africans themselves [Kinga Mwendia, 0.1:02-05-94]. Huxley has captured the mood of the Africans in Nyeri at this time vividly:
The industry has been killed. This was a political murder, not a natural death. And the story illustrates sharply the present mood of this suspicious, tortuous-minded, ambitious and sharp-witted people [Huxley, 1949:349]

Another bitter row in Nyeri erupted over the efforts of the government to enforce soil conservation measures aimed at rehabilitating the bad soil erosion taking place due to a rapidly increasing population. The ex-soldiers agitated against the compulsory terracing arguing that what required to be addressed was the whole issue of land. It was obvious that land distribution in the country was the cause of this land denudation, something which the colonial administration was reluctant to accept. Indeed, as at the end of the First World War, the Government introduced a soldier-settlement scheme to distribute land in the white highlands to Europeans who had fought for King and Country, and many took advantage of this opportunity to shake the rubble of Europe from their feet [Best, 1979:157]. Moreover, the socialist government had enforced austerity measures in Britain which made many ex-officers to look to Kenya for settlement.

Other British settlers came to Kenya after India attained independence in 1947. Many pensioned-off officials and civil servants from India settled in Kenya. Sometimes
they were followed by Asian traders and craftsmen who preferred a new life in Kenya to the upheaval at home after Pakistan broke away from India [Ibid.:180]. The African ex-soldiers in Nyeri were quick to compare the treatment given to them, and that of other races, by the colonial administration: In the township itself, the Europeans continued to enjoy privileged status, while African labourers experienced low wages, unemployment, landlessness and racial discrimination. Commenting on the comfortable life of the European community in Post-war Nyeri, Nottingham and Rosberg have stated thus:

As the country's future became more assured toward the end of the World depression, Nyeri began to rival Kitale as a small corner of England in Africa; the influx of civil servants and army officers from India after Britain's withdrawal in 1947 further emphasized this character [Rosberg and Nottingham, Op. Cit.:79].

It was against this background that the tone of proceedings in the official African representative bodies, LNCS, became increasingly outspoken. New associations were formed, both secular and religious, with strong political overtones [Bennet, 1976: 120]. Notable among these new political associations was the Forty-Group, an association based on the Kikuyu ex-servicemen of the group circumcised in 1940, many of whom
had seen service outside Kenya [Kinga Mwendia, O.1-02-5-94]. A significant feature of this new impetus of nationalism was the strengthening of links between the forces of rural and urban discontent through oathing. In North Nyeri, settler livestock were maimed and there were rumours that all the Europeans would be killed in the area.

In October 1952, the colonial government declared a state of Emergency in Kenya. Consequently, NDESAFA members were arrested in Nyeri Town including Kinga Mwendia. However, the rate of murders, arson and cattle maiming rose alarmingly in Nyeri. This was because many members of the Forty-Group went into hiding in the Aberdare and Mount Kenya forests, from where they coordinated their attacks. Nyeri town became the government centre for fighting the Mau Mau movement in the province since many Europeans were threatened.

5.5 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is evident that the exposure provided to the ex-soldiers in particular enabled them to press against some of the injustices meted out to the Africans both in the township and in the reserves. The desire of the ex-soldiers to lead a better quality life
culminated in the formation of cooperatives and welfare associations, whose activities were antagonistic to the interests of the colonial administration. This conforms with our theoretical argument that the imposition of capitalism on the African socio-formations gave rise to some contradictions in the economy, politics and cultural life of the Africans: The training given to the Africans was used to fight the very people who imparted that training. This explains the violent situation in Kenya in the early 1950s, popularly called the Mau Mau resistance.
NOTES

1. Some ex-soldier who settled in Nyeri after the war, were trained on how to work with signals in the army [William Kikanga, O.I: 03-05-94].

2. Kirori Motoku was the first African in Nyeri town to construct a storeyed building. His building was however condemned by the colonial administration on the grounds that he had infringed the building regulations [Joseph Gikonyo, O.I: 03-05-94, Ruringu, Nyeri].

3. KAU was first established in 1944 by the African politicians in Kenya with the objective of assisting Eliud Mathu, the first African to be appointed to the Legislative Council. The Colonial Government demanded that KAU change its name to KASU (Kenya African Study Union). In 1945, the founder reverted to the name KAU, once again (see Ochieng, 1980).
6.0 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to examine the historical factors that led to the creation of Nyeri Town. Further, the study has examined the creation and expansion of wage labour system among the Africans in the town in the period 1902-1945. The socio-economic life of the African labourers during the period under review has been analysed in relation to that of the Asians and Europeans in the township. The responses of the African communities towards the capitalist influence has also been examined in this urban centre which grew to become the headquarters of the Central Province of Kenya.

Various forces operate not only to give rise to but also constantly transform a settlement into an urban centre [Aseka, 1990]. These forces include; trade and commerce; political needs; religion and other socio-cultural requirements of a community [Gist, 1956: 6]. Thus, most urban centres have specialized functions. Some are production centres, entre-ports, centres of trade and commerce, political capitals and even cultural centres. Nevertheless, urbanisation is a dynamic process that is characterized by two types of change. First, it entails
overall changes in the social system including the spatial expansion of population, buildings and other structures. Secondly, it involves changes in the individuals social relationships as they participate in urban institutions.

In pre-colonial Kenya, there existed few urban centres except along the coast. However, there existed a number of central places in the interior where the local people met to exchange goods or to fulfil their political and socio-cultural obligations [Obudho, 1976].

The colonial period brought radical changes in the development of urban centres in Kenya. This is because the European penetration led to the establishment of new stations. These included: Fort Hall, Witu, Machakos, Nairobi and Nyeri. At the same time, some pre-colonial caravan centres which served as resting places and centres for procurement of trading commodities and fresh supplies expanded. These included: Mumias, Karatina, Kagio and Taveta among others.

Nyeri Town emerged as an administration centre from where the pacification process in the Mount Kenya region was based. The establishment of Nyeri boma entailed alienation of land from both the Maasai and the Kikuyu
who jointly used that particular land for grazing their livestock. With the subsequent establishment of European settlement schemes in Mount Kenya region, Nyeri increasingly became a centre to service the European settler community in the area.

Consequently, colonial capitalism deliberately imposed a segregated economic, political and socio-cultural climate in which the Europeans dominated and exploited African resources. Such urban centres like Nyeri were regarded as bases for administration and commercial activities rather than centres for permanent African settlement. Africans in town were required to provide labour to the government and to the immigrant communities.

The study takes cognizance of the fact that labour relations are perceived as the most important analytical factor determining the social processes in communities all over the world. According to the Marxian Labour theory of value, under capitalism labour is considered and treated as a commodity, yet it is different from all other exchangeable goods because it is carried out by human beings living under certain social conditions. The theory concludes that the capitalist receives surplus labour because he employs the labour power of the worker for a longer period than is needed to reproduce this
labour power [Marx and Engels, 1973]. In support of this thesis, it is argued here that during the colonial period African labour was transformed from a position of merely reproducing itself to that of exploitative relationships. For instance, wages in the capitalist sector of African societies could remain relatively low because a large part of the labourer's needs were still met by the food production of the old village community. In practice the wages had to cover the labourer's living expenses only during his productive period [Ndeda, 1991:10].

Our analysis of the labour situation in Nyeri, focused on the variations and problems that arise in the penetration of capitalism into the pre-capitalist socio-formations. We have seen that the forms and effects of this penetration in Nyeri were partly shaped by differing openings available in the pre-existing forms of organization, leading to highly variable articulations of capitalist and non-capitalist relations, of both old and new forms of exploitations. For instance, the pioneer African employees of the British were paid in kind rather than cash. Sometimes the livestock raided from one community would be used to reward the British sympathisers, especially the warriors and the porters. The logic behind this practise was based on the fact that capitalism had to use pre-capitalist modes of production
to strengthen itself during the period of transition [Stichter, 1982]: Indeed, livestock raiding was an old practice among the African communities but now it was exploited by the weak capitalism.

According to Stichter (ibid.), collaboration arose more from military weakness than from economic incentive: The superior weaponry of the British was used to dictate the actions to be taken by African leaders. In Nyeri, chiefs like Nduuni and Nderi had to provide labour to the European conquerors. The new system offered large material rewards to individuals who could serve not as labourers, but as intermediaries in the labour market. Anyone who was able to procure workers stood to gain a great deal from the British in presents, military backing and eventually, salaried appointments as a chief [Kitching, 1980].

We have seen that Nyeri emerged as part of the government's aim of establishing control over the Africans in Kenya's interior. Nyeri was, therefore, established as an enclave meant to exploit African resources. The earliest wage labourers were British servants like soldiers, porters, hut counters, tax collectors, chiefs and headmen. Many of these were foreigners in Nyeri. Some had been recruited at the coast
where some communities had a long history of interaction with Europeans, while others were Maasai, Akamba and Kikuyu recruits from areas that had been pacified earlier by the British. These pioneer employees were instrumental in the massive exploitation of African resources like labour in Nyeri. Whereas the basic unit of production in pre-colonial Nyeri was the household or the extended family, the colonial conquest initiated gradual changes in the pattern of production. For instance, forced labour was used for the construction of Nyeri station and the roads to serve the station.

The creation of a stable wage-labour force in Nyeri and Kenya in general was essentially a product of White Settlement and the establishment of European colonial administrations that required messengers, hut counters and soldiers. However, an analysis of the pioneer years of colonial rule in Nyeri indicates that it was difficult for the colonial government to acquire enough labour for its needs. Most of the Africans were ready to expand food production for the market rather than provide labour. Thus, the colonial government introduced measures with the aim of extorting labour from the Africans. These included the use of professional recruiters, imposition of Hut and Poll tax as well as forced labour. Indeed, the chiefs were made responsible for inducing their people to
work for the government and other employers by the Native Authority Ordinance of 1902 and 1912. Governor, Edward Northey went to the extent of instructing administrators to encourage Africans to provide labour. Thus, compulsion or forced labour was quite prevalent. The Hut tax was introduced in 1902 followed by a Poll tax in 1910. In general, the hut tax was targeting adult men living with their families while poll tax was meant to encourage younger men to come out and work [Clayton, 1971:165].

To some Africans however, wage labour was a means of alleviating problems. For example the orphans under the care of the Consolata Missionaries at Mathari gladly worked for the mission. The Meru and Ndia people also flocked into the expanding Town of Nyeri to escape internal warfare and famine prior to the First World War. Possibly other communities might have offered labour in the town under similar circumstances. The fact that Africans could choose when to provide wage labour, demonstrates that they were not passive and ignorant but rather, they could manipulate the colonial situation to serve their own needs. This reflects our theoretical argument that the forms and efforts of capitalist penetration are partly shaped by differing openings available in the pre-existing forms of organization.
Four groups in Ny\-eri required wage labour and were at forefront in socializing the Africans into becoming wage labourers. These were namely: the colonial administration; white settlers; the Asians and the Christian Missionaries. However, all these groups lacked enough capital to transform the Africans into a full-time proletariat [Zwanenberg, 1975]. Thus, some of the Africans became casual labourers while others would provide labour on piece rate. Under the target labour system, the labourers migrated temporarily and sold their labour power for a period of time, then returned to their homeland for rest or agricultural work before migrating again. These labourers were still tied to their reserves where their families produced for subsistence. But there were those who chose to live permanently in the town. Most of these joined the Swahili community which gave them a sense of security especially during the time of need. Majority, were adventurous girls from Kikuyu and Maasai communities who married Waswahili. Others were Islamised Kikuyu.

These African immigrants in Ny\-eri lived in mud houses in the African location. The population of men in the location outnumbered that of women as most labourers lived as bachelors. The prevalence of migrant labour illustrates that pre-capitalist formations were partially
preserved in order to assist in the reproduction of the African labour force. Migrant labour was cheap because the worker's families remained behind in the reserves thus freeing the employers from the expense of paying a wage on which the whole family could subsist. The cost of maintaining workers while away from their work during sickness, and in their old age, were also assigned to the reserve economies [Beinert, Op.Cit.].

The Missionaries and the Asians in Nyeri helped to orientate Africans in the ways of the Europeans. Missionaries introduced Christianity, reading and writing to their followers as well as western medicine. The Africans who got an opportunity to acquire mission education became a distinct group in the colonial establishment. They were known as athomi meaning readers. Many of them were employed in the mission centres as well as in the town. These were able to accumulate wealth more than the majority of African labourers since they could combine wage earning in urban centres and commodity production in the African reserves. This illustrates the contradictions experienced in the process of articulation of modes of production in that the Africans were given meagre wages by the Europeans so that they could continue supplying labour. Yet, some of the Africans were still able to accumulate enough money to
start their own small enterprises.

Apart from the athomi, the Consolata Mission in particular employed many African labourers in their three coffee estates of Mathari, Kamwenja and Hill Farm. Their labourers came from both the surrounding areas and from other parts of the country. For instance, some were Akamba, Kikuyu from Fort Hall and some Luo. Indeed, the conditions in these labourer villages were similar to those of the African village in the town.

As a result of the settlement of different African communities in the town, some inter-ethnic marriages took place. The most common involved Kikuyu and Maasai girls who married Waswahili men. Most of them converted to Islam and therefore Islamic religion became widespread in Nyeri's African village as evidenced by many converts. Though there was suspicion between Kikuyu and Waswahili initially, the two communities came to accept one another through friendships and other relations arising out of intermarriages. However, urban life in the African location in the town was generally looked down upon by majority of the Africans. We have seen that Africans detested urban life because of two main reasons: First, it involved living with strangers for neighbours whose customs were at times quite different from those of the
majority Kikuyu. Second, with time, the villages took the form of slums where sanitation was ignored. These factors account for the strong repugnance of some of the Nyeri African population towards urban life. This in turn motivated the Africans to maintain interest in the African reserves.

It is clear that the First World War was a landmark not only for the Africans in Nyeri, but in the whole colony. The war gave opportunity for Africans from different communities to interact. Some of them acquired skills especially in medical work. After the war some of the savings made by the ex-soldiers and ex-carrier corps were used to start small-scale businesses within the Township.

However, it was during the war that the exploitation of the African labourers was done on a scale not experienced before. The exposure acquired by the ex-carriers and ex-soldiers coupled with the great exploitation subjected to African labourers in this period, helped to arouse a form of militancy unprecedented not only in Nyeri but in the whole country. The support given to Harry Thuku in Nyeri after the war should be seen from this perspective.

In the inter-war period, it is argued that the problems experienced by African labourers in Nyeri Town can best
be understood within the context of the powerful position occupied by the white settlers in Kenya. Land, both in the town and in the Kenyan highlands was a crucial factor in understanding labour relations in the colonial period. Nyeri town, in particular, emerged as a centre to service the community of settlers in the area. Since the Town and the Highlands were reserved for the Europeans, the only Africans allowed there had to be labourers. It was, therefore, in the town that labourers experienced the oppression of the wider social and political systems in which they participated. It was also in town that new forms of consciousness emerged.

The idea of separation of races was used to justify the imbalance in provision of services in Nyeri. Thus, schools, housing and medical services were not improved to serve a large community of Africans. The labourers in turn responded by maintaining some interest in the reserves as a social security. Most of them belonged to two economic spheres: wage-earning in the town was complementary rather than an alternative to the produce of the family in the reserve. Others responded by intensifying business enterprise since they could not get jobs. This situation illustrates the contradictions characterising the articulation of capitalism into pre-capitalist modes of production: The reproduction of
labour had to be shouldered by the reserves.

The spurge of cultural nationalism experienced in the Town during the inter-war period should be seen as an African response against a multiplicity of grievances including labour grievances; though on the surface the grievances appeared to be cultural or religious. The contradictions of the articulation of the two modes of production are reflected here in that whereas the Independent Church Movement was Christian in inspiration, it advocated for the safeguarding of the African indigenous culture.

We have seen that the Second World War had a profound impact on the African labourers in Nyeri: First, many of the ex-soldiers got an opportunity to visit other countries like Egypt, Burma, India, Sri Lanka and Israel. This gave many of them a lot of self-confidence especially because they interacted with other colonised people who encouraged them to fight for political independence. Secondly, they lived and fought side by side with Europeans and this demystified "European superiority." Finally, many labourers acquired many new skills either in the War, or in Nyeri Town under the Italian prisoners of war; the war created a functional need for technically trained personnel. Ironically, the colonial
administration wanted to confine the ex-soldiers to the rural areas after demobilization. This action created conflict between the ex-soldiers and the colonial administration after the War.

The impact of the war spilled into the post-war period. It was characterised by the emergence of African Associations covering all spheres of urban life. These associations gave expression to the problems, hopes and aspirations especially of the ex-soldiers. However, specific labour unions did not emerge in Nyeri at this time. Their absence can be attributed to two factors: First, apart from Waswahili and Somali most African labourers were involved in domestic work, others were self employed in the Town. Many of the self employed were unable to secure employment since capitalism had developed to a point whereby the African labourers had to voluntarily provide labour, sometimes in excess of the colonial requirement. Second, most African labourers in Nyeri could be described as target workers. This system of labour could not encourage development of labour unions due to its temporary nature. Thus, unlike the larger urban centres like Mombasa and Nairobi where trade unions were thriving, in Nyeri they did not exist during the period under review.
In the absence of labour unions, welfare Associations like the Muslim Association and NDESAFA (Nyeri District Ex-Servicemen Friendly Association) flourished. NDESAFA was formed by ex-servicemen mostly from the Town. However, though taking concern over urban labourers, it also took a lot of interest in the Reserves. In 1945, a local branch of Kenya African Union (KAU) was formed. KAU members were also members of NDESAFA and the Local Native Council. The formation of a KAU branch in Nyeri can be seen as an attempt by the African labourers to turn to nationalist politics against the background of their failure in finding solutions to their problems within the local Associations. It is significant to note that KAU was established in all the large urban centres in Kenya including Nakuru and Nairobi.

From 1947, there emerged from within the ranks of the urban labourers a militant and violent movement which was to be known as Mau Mau. Nyeri became a key centre of the movement [Dutto, 1975]. Significantly, many of the members of the movement had worked in Nairobi or in the North Nyeri Settler farms. Others were former squatters evicted from the Rift Valley but who hailed from Nyeri; indeed, most of them were petty traders in the Township whose trade barely gave them livelihood. The movement grew to be a full-scale war and it shook the country in
the early 1950s. The movement can be seen as an attempt by Africans to solve their land and labour grievances forcefully because of disillusionment with constitutional methods which they regarded as slow and painful. However, since the period after 1945 is beyond the scope of our study, it is hoped that further research could be undertaken to give more insight into the impact of the Town on the African labour force especially between 1945, and 1963 when Kenya attained self-government.
APPENDIX 1

SAMPLE QUESTION GUIDELINE

[PART ONE]

1. NAME
2. AGE
3. GENDER
4. PLACE OF BIRTH
5. ETHNIC COMMUNITY
6. RELIGION

FORMATION OF A WAGE EARNING GROUP IN NYERI

[PART-TWO]

1.1 What does the name Nyeri mean?
1.2 Were there foreigners who used to visit Nyeri before the colonial era? If there were, who were they?
1.3 Why did these foreigners come and where did they reside?
1.4 Who owned the land now occupied by Nyeri town?
1.5 Who constructed the town and for what purpose?
1.6 Where were you living before you came to town?
1.7 What made you come to town?
1.8 How did you meet with your employer?
1.9 Was your employer an African, Asian or a European?
2.0 If Asian or European, what nationality was he?
2.1 What kind of work did you do?
2.2 For how many hours did you work per day?
2.3 How were you paid for your services?
2.4 How did you spend the dues you were paid?
2.5 Where did you reside?
2.6 Did you have a family?
2.7 Where did the members of your family reside?
2.8 What other categories of workers in terms of gender and age were employed by:
   a) your employer?
   b) other employers in Nyeri?
2.9 How did you compare working for Europeans, Asians and other Africans in terms of:
   a) Payment?
   b) Hours of labour?
   c) Treatment of employees?

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TOWN

3.0 Who were the administrators in the town and how did they administer it during the colonial period?
3.1 What communities dominated the town in terms of:
   (a) Political influence?
   (b) Population?
   (c) Trading activities?
3.2 How did the different communities in the town relate to one another?
3.3 How did the Africans in the town relate to the villagers from the neighborhood of the town?
3.4 Did villagers from the neighborhood visit the town?
3.5 How often did they come to town and for what purpose?
3.6 Who were the traders in the town?
3.7 What commodities did they trade in and where did they obtain them from?
3.8 Did these traders venture into the neighborhood and how often?
3.9 How were the "reserve" areas affected by the movement of some of the people into the town?
3.10 Were there any specific categories of Africans from the reserves who were lured into the town more than others in terms of gender and age?

RESPONSE OF AFRICAN WORKERS TO COLONIAL EXPERIENCE IN THE TOWN

4.1 Did the Africans participate in the governing of the town?
4.2 What of the Asians and Europeans?
4.3 How did you communicate your grievances to your employer in:
(a) the places of work?

(b) residences?

4.4 What was the nature of residential quarters?

4.5 How far were they from those of the Europeans and Asians?

4.6 What distinguished them from those of other races?

4.7 What materials were used to construct your quarters?

4.8 Did you own your quarters or were you paying rent on them?

4.9 How was the sewerage disposed?

5.0 Did you share toilets or did everyone have his/her own?

If yes, who cleaned toilets?

5.1 Where did you obtain drinking water from?

5.2 Did the other races use the same water?

5.3 Where did you receive medical attention?

5.4 Was it free or did you pay for it?

5.5 Did other races get medical attention in the same way or were there some differences?

5.6 Did you know any people who participated in the First World War?

5.7 How were such people recruited?

5.8 What kind of work did they perform in the war?

5.9 Who took care of their families if they had any, at this time?
6.0 Did these people come back to Nyeri after the war?
6.1 Were there any changes that followed the return of these people after the war?
6.2 Did the female circumcision controversy affect Nyeri?
   If yes, in which way(s)?
6.3 Were there any political parties or associations in Nyeri before the World War II?
6.4 If yes, which were these parties?
6.5 Who were the leaders of the parties?
6.6 What activities did they carry out?
6.7 Were there people who went to fight during the Second World War?
6.8 How were they recruited?
6.9 What differences existed between the First World War soldiers and those recruited during World War II?
7.0 What repercussions were experienced in Nyeri due to the departure of these soldiers?
7.1 What major changes took place after they returned in:
   (a) the area of politics?
   (b) education?
   (c) economically?
   (d) socially?
CULTURAL IMPACT OF THE TOWN ON THE NYERI COMMUNITIES

7.2 How did the different communities in Nyeri town relate in terms of:
   (a) worship?
   (b) education?
   (c) social groupings?

7.3 What features could be associated with each different community?

7.4 How did the Africans respond to the new features introduced by other groups?

7.5 How did the Africans in the urban area compare with those in the reserves in terms of:
   (a) Western education?
   (b) religion?

7.6 How do you compare the social impact of the Europeans, Indians and Africans on each other in terms of borrowing cultural practices from one another like:
   (a) general behaviour?
   (b) types of food?
   (c) ways of dressing?
   (d) ways of worship?

7.7 Were there any intermarriages between different ethnic communities or between the races residing in the town?
7.8 Did the town have any impact on the reserves in terms of:

(a) family relationships?
(b) division of labour?
(c) eating habits?
(d) economic ventures?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahoi</td>
<td>Refers to the Kikuyu who had no land of their own in the pre-colonial period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapati</td>
<td>Bread made from wheat dough traditionally cooked by Waswahili.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Askari</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athomi</td>
<td>Christian converts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boma</td>
<td>A Kiswahili term for a camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapitieni</td>
<td>The tribal retainers also called Njama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mubea</td>
<td>Catholic Priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mzee</td>
<td>Elder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ng'aragu</td>
<td>Famine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njahi</td>
<td>A type of Kikuyu bean (Dolichos Lab Lab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njama</td>
<td>Refer to Kapitieni above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posho</td>
<td>Maize normally given to labourers by the employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uji</td>
<td>Kiswahili term for Porridge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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b) Oral Evidence

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a) Papers Read at Conferences, Seminars, etc.


b) Dissertations and Theses


(c) Published Articles


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- Journal of South African Studies
- Canadian Journal of African Studies
NAMES OF INFORMANTS

[AGES ARE ESTIMATED]

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2. Charles Mathengu Kinyeru; 82 years; interviewed on 2nd May 1994 at Kamakwa, Nyeri.

3. David W. Karari; 70 years; interviewed on 4th May 1994, at Bahati Hotel, Nyeri Town.

4. Esther Muringi; 72 years; interviewed on 4th May 1994, at Kangemi, Nyeri Town.

5. Bi. Fatuma Iddi; 73 years; interviewed on 4th May 1994, at Kangemi, Nyeri Town.

6. Gathu Ndarahi; 90 years; interviewed on 20th June 1995 at Kaheti Nyeri.

7. Geoffrey Wakaba Wokabi; 85 years; interviewed on 2nd December 1993, at Ruringu Market, Nyeri.

8. Gibson Mangua; 81 years; interviewed on 20th June 1995, at Kaheti Nyeri.

9. Gitau Waikwa; 60 years; interviewed on 30th April 1994, at Skuta, Nyeri.

10. Hassan Makata; 70 years; interviewed on 7th May 1994, at Nyeri Town.


13. Jumbe Mwinyi Makata; 73 years; interviewed on 5th May 1994, at Kangemi, Nyeri.


15. Joseph Kariuki Kaguri; 80 years; interviewed on 2nd May 1994 at Kamakwa, Nyeri.
17. Kahama Mwari; 62 years; interviewed on 5th March 1995 at Kaheti, Nyeri.
18. Kanake Gathecha; 72 years; interviewed on 22nd May 1995, at Nyeri Town.
20. Kariuki Wa Kimunya; 68 years; interviewed on 2nd May 1994, at Kamakwa, Nyeri.
22. Kamau Kiai; 70 years; interviewed on 19th June 1994, at Kamakwa, Nyeri.
23. Kihara Wambugu; 65 years; interviewed on 27th December 1993, at Kangemi, Nyeri.
24. Kiboi Wairi; 65 years; interviewed on 2nd May 1994, at Kamakwa, Nyeri.
25. Kinyori Itote; 65 years; interviewed at Kaheti, Nyeri on 1st December 1995.
27. Martha Wairimu Gikandi; 85 years; interviewed on 1st May 1994 at Ruringu, Nyeri.
28. Mathai Maina; 72 years; interviewed on 20th May 1994 at Kangemi, Nyeri.
29. Micheal Mutahi; 50 years; interviewed on 30th May 1994, Nyeri Town.
30. Muriithi Wa Muthuhi; 82 years; interviewed on 8th May 1994, Nyeri Town.
31. Mzee Muriuki Kiongo; 75 years; interviewed on 6th May 1994 at Kiawara, Nyeri.
32. Muriuki Kogi; 81 years; interviewed on 5th May 1994, at King'ong'o, Nyeri.
33. Newton Waikwa Wangaria; 89 years; interviewed on 30th April 1994, at Skuta, Ruringu Nyeri.

34. Ngari Muchemi; 76 years; interviewed on 11th May 1994, at Kamuyu, Nyeri.

35. Osman Hossan; 76 years; interviewed on 27th December 1993, at Majengo, Nyeri Town.


37. Raphael Warugara; 76 years; interviewed on 6th May 1994 at Mathari Mission, Nyeri.

38. Rebecca Nyawira Murigu; 75 years; interviewed on 4th May 1994, at Bahati Hotel, Nyeri Town.


40. Samuel Gitonga; 65 years; interviewed on 1st May 1994, at Nyeri Town.

41. Stanley Kinga Mwendia; 75 years; interviewed on 2nd May 1994, at Kamakwa, Nyeri.

42. William Kikanga; 70 years; interviewed on 3rd May 1994, at Ruringu, Nyeri.

43. Wanjohi Mungau; 75 years; interviewed on 25th December 1995, at Kaheti, Nyeri.

44. Yusufu Jumbe Mwingi; 70 years; interviewed on 9th May 1994, at Kangemi, Nyeri Town.