

*** ETHNIC INDIGENE AND NATION BUILDING IN KENYA: A CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE 1962-1963 KALENJIN-LUHYA BOUNDARY CLASHES IN ALDAI AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 'NEW NATION'**

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Abstract

The advent of colonialism and the attendant activities of formal government authority over the African peoples and drawing of boundaries brought a new dimension of relationship between the communities resident in Aldai. Whereas the Kalenjin speaking peoples regarded themselves as the 'owners' of the area currently known as Aldai, the colonial government lumped them together with the Luhya and Luo speaking peoples under one Central Kavirondo and subsequently North Nyanza Province. Treasured cultural practices like female circumcision and cattle raiding were banned. Traditional enmities between the tribes were re-awakened, and a state of perpetual tension ensued between the communities living side by side in this period. This is reflected in the reports of the colonial administration during the drawing of the borders. There were problems between the neighboring Nandi and Tiriki of Serem. The Tiriki were forbidden from working in Nandi land (KNA 1956 DC/KBT/82 LND 16/1/1 Document No. 39)

This paper discusses the arbitrary boundary making activities of the colonial government in this largely un-researched Aldai area in Western Kenya. How the boundary drawing project was the laying ground for some of the insidious ethnic differences between the neighboring communities. And finally, reflect on the challenge of nation building vis-à-vis ethnic identity in the light of troubled emerging ethnic relations in the Kenya.