

**A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE LAND QUESTION IN RELATION TO
INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICTS IN LAIKIPIA AREA SINCE 1895**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Conferment of
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History of Masinde Muliro University of
Science and Technology**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than indicated sources, support, and has never been presented elsewhere for any degree or award.

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Dr. Milton Jones, President Christian Relief Fund (CRF) and the entire staff in Amarillo, Texas in the United States of America.

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ABSTRACT

Land like any other natural resource was analysed broadly with the view of unraveling its ramification in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts globally. In light of modernism, institutional land reforms and new governance structures, land was still a factor in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts. There was need therefore to study why land triggers inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area. This study undertook a historical study of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1895 as its general objective. The specific objectives of this study were to; trace the migration and settlement of the ethnic communities and its influence on inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1963 investigate the dynamics impacting the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1992; examine the inter-ethnic conflict trends in Laikipia area since 1895, assess the influence of the land question on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895 and evaluate the socio-economic impact of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992 . Instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories were used to give a broad theoretical framework on the basis of this study's variables. The study was carried out in the six sub-regions of Laikipia area which included; Laikipia Central, Laikipia East, Laikipia North, Kirima, Laikipia West and Nyahururu. The study focused on the period since 1895, in order to enact the land question from colonial era and include contemporary dynamics. This study adopted the historical research design. Non probabilistic sampling technique was used to sample knowledgeable informants from the six regions. Snow-balling was used where referral cases are involved. The study's target populations were elders, political leaders, farmers and peace actors with a sample size of seventy-nine respondents and four focus group discussions. Respondents were sampled purposively from all the six sub-counties of Laikipia area. Data was then analyzed thematically according to the study's specific objectives. The study adhered to research ethics at all stages as much as possible except for anonymity. This ensured that objectivity, validity, reliability and the standards of this study were maintained. The study made the following main findings: Migration and settlement of the ethnic groups in Laikipia area led to inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1963. The study established that ethnic nationalism and ancestral land claims, change in land use and tenure, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, media, geo-politics, conservative nature of herders, colonialism led to the rise of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area since 1895. The study established that there were inter-ethnic trends conflicts in Laikipia area during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. The study found out that land question dynamics triggered inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1895. The study established that the protracted inter-ethnic land conflicts impacted negatively on the socio-economic and environmental fabrics of Laikipia area since 1992. The study concluded that ancestral land claims, colonialism, changes in land use and land tenure, geo-politics, ethnocentrism and skewed government resettlement programme led to the rise of the land question its impact on the inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The study recommended that; ancestral land claims and historical land injustices should be addressed. Dynamics impacting the land question should be fixed. Pressure attached to land as a force of production in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts should be reduced by developing alternative sources of livelihoods.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AMREF:	African Medical and Research Foundation
ASAL:	Arid and Semi-Arid Land
BATUK:	British Army Training Unity in Kenya
CBO:	Community Based Organisation
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CU:	Catholic Union
DPC:	District Peace Committee
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC:	East African Community
FAIM:	Friends African Industrial Mission
FAM:	Friends African Mission
FGD:	Focus Group Discussions
FPE:	Free Primary Education
GEAC:	German East African Company
GEMA:	Gikuyu, Embu and Meru association
GNI:	Gross National Income
GSU:	General Service Unit
IBEAC:	Imperial British East African Company

ICC:	International Criminal Court
IGAD:	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
KADU:	Kenya African Democratic Union
KAMATUSA:	Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu
KANU:	Kenya African National Union
KAR:	Kenya African Rifle/Kings African Rifles
KAU:	Kenya African Union
KDF:	Kenya Defence Force
KEM:	Kikuyu, Embu, Meru
KNBS:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KPR:	Kenya Police Reservists
KWS:	Kenya Wildlife Services
MP:	Member of Parliament
Mt:	Mountain
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NARC:	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition
NEMA:	National Environmental Management Authority
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization

NKG:	New Kenya Group
ODM:	Orange Democratic Movement
PNU:	Party of National Unity
RDU:	Rapid Deployment Unit
SALW:	Small Arms and Light Weapons.
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Programme
SLDF:	Sabaot Land Defence Force
TJRC:	Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission
TLG:	Tent of Living God
UN:	United Nations
USA:	United States of America
YK92:	Youth for Kenya African National Union in 1992

OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Articulation: It is the relationship between the reproductions of capitalism through changes in land use and the production units organised according to pre-capitalist relations.

Community: A group of people with a shared language, origin, belief or homogenous characters among the ethnic communities.

Conflict resolution: An inter-ethnic cordial solution process among the ethnic communities in Laikipia.

Ethnic identity: An ingrained sense of belonging to a member of the ethnic communities living.

Ethnic: An implication showing the sharing language, common origin among the communities living.

Ethnicity: That pertaining to being a member of the ethnic communities living.

Inter-ethnic Conflict: A disagreement among the ethnic communities resulting from land relationship.

Inter-sex: A population with a biological disorder of having genitals or reproductive organs which do not fit in the male/female binary among the ethnic communities.

Land Question: It is the historicity of land contestation among the ethnic herders and cereal agriculturalists and European generated in numerous and varied dimensions as follows; land use, identities, origin, settlement patterns,

colonialism, cultural stereotypes, territories, inequalities and population movements.

Militia: A proscribed armed group with a command structure that get hold of any region or part of Kenya such as inter-ethnic land conflict among inter-ethnic communities living.

Society: A heterogeneous setting of the ethnic communities living.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background to the study, focusing on global, continental, regional, national and Laikipia area with specific context on inter-ethnic land conflicts. It further, presents the statement of the problem which demonstrates why this study is vital. It also highlights the research objectives, research questions, justification, scope and limitations of the study. Further, it presents the literature review which illustrates the gap in the reviewed works. Finally, it captures the theoretical framework and the research methodology which demonstrates how data in this study was collected, analysed and presented.

1.1 Background to the Study

Inter-ethnic land conflicts were universal, every human civilisation world over grappled with it since the dawn of time.¹ An active expression of divergent views or violent confrontation between two groups or more was considered to be a conflict.² Therefore, conflict in this context was an outcome that denotes active misunderstanding concerning two or more ethnic groups arising from divergent concepts, attitudes and conflicting interests. These clashes of interests, concepts and attitudes turned into full blown inter-ethnic clashes. Conflicts, as a result, had the potential to trigger warfare on the basis of perceived cleavages and grievances conveyed through inter-ethnic tensions and aggression. Therefore, in concept and

¹Geoffrey Khamala. *Gender dimension of ethnic identities and conflicts in Kenya: The case of the Bukusu and Sabaot communities*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2009, p. 1.

²Mwenda I.N. *Complexities of natural resources conflict in Kenya: A case study of Laikipia District*, Nairobi: MA thesis, University of Nairobi, 2018, p. 7.

practice inter-ethnic conflicts resulted from conflicting ethnic views and vested interests.

In this perspective, heterogeneous ethnic societies were often susceptible to inter-ethnic conflicts.³ Mostly, the causal cleavages generating the violent ethnic confrontations emanated from underlying patterns of discrimination. This trend had been on the rise since independence in most of the African societies which experienced inequalities to access to land and other vital resources.⁴ Such glaring disparities persisted courtesy of inept land policies frameworks by governments' regimes and by extension an inactive international community. Ethno-political groups were likely to experience inter-ethnic conflicts in a foreseeable future for the reason that they co-existed with ethnic groups or states that share inter-ethnic clashes in the past.

Remarkably, there was a noted trajectory twist in the occurrence of conflicts globally from the time when cold war concluded.⁵ Traditionally, the world was largely entangled in vicious inter-state wars that stretched into decades of ugly hostilities. However, in the recent past, inter-ethnic conflicts were on a steady increase. Most of the traditional studies in social sciences, peace and security centred on examining inter-state conflicts globally, but, since the iron curtain fell marking the end of Cold War, inter-state trajectory declined tremendously.

Competing interests over limited natural resources, attitudes that emanated from diversity in culture and politicisation or weaponization of ethnicity by the elites who wield socio-political and economic influence among other factors remain the common

³Burnell P. Randall and Rankner L: *Politics in the developing world, 3rd edition*, London: Oxford University Press, 2008. p. 28.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 258.

driving factors of inter-ethnic land conflicts globally.⁶ On a global spectrum, the nature of conflicts in several jurisdictions ranged from causal dynamics, the scope of the conflict to the actors.⁷ These also included land as a limited natural resource. In Canada, as is historically the case in the United States, the primary conflict between the Indians and Europeans settlers revolves around the European westward expansion.⁸ The Indians were displaced as settlement progressed from East to the plains and later to the Pacific. This created the land question in Canada that has survived countless regimes unresolved.

In Southern America, Brazilian land issues have become complex in the last fifteen years due to conflict over property rights resulting from friction among squatter peasants, multi-interest organisations and government.⁹ Conflicts in this environment impacted negatively on agricultural activity in both public and private land. The absence of a decisive legal framework on property rights particularly on land has exacerbated a land question in Brazil.

Sri Lanka endured a history of land related problems since the collapse of colonialism.¹⁰ Policy makers opted to make land settlement to be based on ethnic composition rather than district ratio. Thus, Tamil peasants were typically displaced from the schemes in areas that had hitherto been seen as their traditional homelands. The resultant migration of people from Sinhalese majority amounting to an alien

⁶Beatrice Imbuye. *Intra-ethnic Relations among the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon*. Nairobi: MA thesis Kenyatta University, 2016, p. 12.

⁷Barbieri K. *Economic interdependence: A path to peace or source of conflict*. In *Journal of peace Research*, 1996, p. 33.

⁸Elliot, J.L: *Native Minorities and Ethnic conflict in Canada*, California: University of California Press, 2007, p. 177.

⁹Nascimento S,E,V and Saes, M, S,M. *Property Rights and Land conflicts in Brazil: The case of Mongangua's Growers Association*, UC Berkeley: Latin American and Caribbean Law and Economics Association, 2007, p. 1

¹⁰M. B. Ranathilaka. Nexus between land and ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka Real or imaginary: An analysis of land, Agricultural and irrigation policies in Sri Lanka, In *Sri Lanka journal of Economic Research Volume 2;2014*, p 69.

encroachment into Tamil homeland could not be justified with available historical evidence. Therefore, there was no proper and even institutional policy frame work to reduce ethnic discrimination over land or power, a move that was vital for future stability and development of the country.¹¹ Nevertheless, after independence every political party in power had implemented colonisation programs in North Eastern region of Sri Lanka with lack of awareness and conciliation of the Tamil people. The settlement program after independence overlooked pre-colonial land holding issues and entrenched the land problem further at the expense of the Tamil people sparking a cycle of land dispute that persists to date.

Inter-ethnic land conflict pitted Vietnamese against the Chinese in the second half of the 20th century. The cause of disagreement was the Vietnamese incursion of Cambodia in 1978. At the height of this crisis dubbed the war of expansion Vietnam wanted to occupy Cambodia. The resultant human ramification of this crisis was the compulsory displacement of nearly one million ethnic Chinese from Vietnam.¹²

In India, the key driver of land conflicts was established to be poor land administration. This was a result of institutional inefficiencies or lack of sustainable legal framework regarding land holding rights. The impact of this state of affairs was socio-economic impediments that derailed developments.¹³

The land question and its influence on inter-ethnic relation were significant in the pre-colonial modes of production in Africa. The economic and cultural value of land was deeply entrenched in the pre-colonial African setting.¹⁴ Since the pre-capitalist

¹¹*Ibid*

¹²Richard T. Schaefer. *Sociology*. New York: Mc Graw Hill; 2012, p.269.

¹³ Singh, P.K, Nair A and Isaac J: Are land conflicts Documented sufficiently? *International journal of Rural managemenet, Volume 18 issue 1, 2021* pp. 7-38

¹⁴Jomo Kenyatta. *Facing Mount Kenya: The tribal life of the Gikuyu* edited by J. Kariuki. Nairobi: East African Education publishers, 1938, p. 12.

African societies, land was a critical force of production. In the pre-capitalist setting, land use ranged from grazing fields, entertainment joints, public roads, and forests reserves particularly sacred shrines to shifting crop cultivation.¹⁵ It was essential to note that in every pre-colonial organised unit of administration and settlement among the Agikuyu herding areas existed where livestock grazed in common. Besides, special zones for salt licks (*Moonyo*) and mineral spring's *irori* were reserved. Access to these special zones was free and common to all residents of these administrative units. Further, there were designated places for public meetings and entertainment called (*ihaaro*). Land was also reserved for public roads and foot paths called (*njeracia agendi*). Lastly, like any other religious African society they believed in ancestors and Supreme Being *Ngai* worship. As a result, there was land reserved as sacred places where these communities met to offer their sacrifices also considered as their sacred places.¹⁶

These vast tracts of reserved lands made European imperialists residing in Africa to adapt the Eurocentric concept of idle and unoccupied land.¹⁷ Yet, the critical usage of land both for grazing and agriculture had negative cultural significance, including generating inter-ethnic land relations in the pre-colonial Africa. Leo reinforces this cultural implication by positing that agriculture and animal husbandry were the leading basis of survival of the African pre-colonial societies.¹⁸

¹⁵. Ruth Nasimiyu. *The participation of women in the political economy of Kenya: A case study of Bukusu women in Bungoma district, 1902-1960*. Nairobi: MA thesis University of Nairobi, 1984, p. 62.

¹⁶Jomo Kenyatta., (1938). *Op.Cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁷*Ibid.*,p. 21.

¹⁸Leo C. *Land and Class in Kenya*. Toronto: University of Toronto press, 1984, p. 29.

The notion that land holding in the pre-colonial African customary system was exclusively communal was not widely generalised and substantiated.¹⁹ In the certain patriarchal ethnic communities in pre-colonial Kenya, individual land holding was evidently accompanied by the accumulation of women and children as a sign of wealth, prestige and source of labour.²⁰ Pre-colonial land tenure system in Africa underwent a series of evolutions between individual, public and communal land ownership in every western sense of the word.²¹ Among the Agikuyu community in Kenya for example, oral tradition had that God (*Ngai*) gifted Gikuyu and his generation a flourishing and splendid natural land. In essence, land here was God given. Thus, land tenure was established to ensure family units had rights over land and by extension the clan.

Land matters were subject to clan system of patronage, and so, literally the clan owned the land. Henceforth, the clan further subdivided the land to individual families, but, the kinsmen in the families subscribed to clan patronage regarding land crises and redistribution.²² As a common property in this arrangement, access to land was subject to the authority of the respective council of elders in an organised and coordinated ethnic system. Therefore, land defined cross-border inter-ethnic relations within the parameters of this organisation. Land tenure in this case was communal. Among the Agikuyu for example the socio-political organisation during the pre-colonial period was centred on *Mbari* or lineage as its smallest unit. *Mbari* constituted members of

¹⁹Peter Benedict Odhiambo Ndege. *Inaugural lecture: From accumulation of women and children to land grabbing Agrarian Kleptocracy and land question Kenya*. Eldoret: Moi University press, 2012, p. 2.

²⁰*Ibid*

²¹Jomo Kenyatta., *Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

²²Meek C.K.. *Land Laws and Customs in the colonies*. London: Oxford Universities press, 1946, p. 26.

who shared a common ancestor, who were estimated to be in hundreds. Members of *Mbari* owned land communally for their common use.²³

There were cases of individual land holding tenure during the pre-colonial era.²⁴ This was especially in isolated cases where land was acquired through purchase by individuals. The agriculturalist Gikuyu in particular bought land from their neighbouring Ndorobo who practised food hunting and gathering for sustenance. This ushered in the private ownership of land under the Gikuyu traditional land tenure system. Land acquired through purchase was not subject to clan patronage except in cases where it was sold and elders were called upon to witness the transactions. However, such land ceased to be private land upon the demise of the father.²⁵ Therefore, land holding in pre-colonial Africa embraced individual land holding rights depending on the circumstances surrounding its acquisitions. Among the ethnic Agikuyu during the pre-colonial era for instance, individual land holding rights shifted in the event the father died.

In this circumstance, land was automatically transferred to the sons and none claimed it as their individual property. However, this land was held in trust by the deceased eldest son. At this point, the clan resumed its patronage and land holding rights shifted to communal tenure. Pre-colonial land holding rights also varied on the basis of the pastoralist and crop cultivating societies. Private land tenure systems worked systematically in organised communities that were predominant crop cultivators than in those communities that adopted nomadism in rangelands.²⁶

²³Leo C. *Land and Class in Kenya*. Toronto: University of Toronto press, 1984, p. 30.

²⁴Jomo Kenyatta., *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

²⁵*Ibid*, p. 17.

²⁶*Ibid*

In monarchical systems, especially among pre-colonial African communities that were stratified along castes, land holdings and redistribution was exclusively a preserve of the Kings and consular chiefs.²⁷ The rest of the subjects under the lower cadre of the caste pyramid were given land on rented terms, a system that was synonymous with the pre-modern feudal system in Europe. It was therefore misleading from an Afrocentric view to claim there were idle and unoccupied lands in pre-colonial Africa. It was further erroneous to classify land tenure system in pre-colonial Africa as exclusively communal when evidences of public and private land in the western sense can be adduced. The pinnacle of conflictual inter-ethnic cross-border land relations in the pre-colonial era were inter-ethnic conflicts that arose at the height of migration and settlement over land use and tenure – land use was primarily for grazing or cereal agriculture among cereal cultivators and pastoralist groups of people.²⁸ The historic migration treks and settlement patterns in Africa and inter-lacustrine swathes of East Africa were muddled with inter-ethnic land relations over cross border land conflicts.

As earlier alluded to, it is upon these established systems and factors that inter-ethnic land relations arose; which also included defending ethnic land borders in case of intrusion by another ethnic group. Even if, inter-ethnic cross-border land conflicts were prevalent during the pre-colonial Africa, these societies experienced relative peace and cross cultural exchange during the inter-war period altogether.²⁹ At the height of these cordial relations, language, customs, political structures and sources of livelihood were exchanged among communities that lived in isolated ridges connected by a geo-commercial inter-ethnic network in the interior of Africa. Such organised inter-ethnic trade networks under the patronage of indigenous chiefs, Kings and council of elders

²⁷Meek C.K. *Op. Cit.*, p. 27.

²⁸Makila F. E. *An outline History of the Babukusu*, Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1976, p. 48.

²⁹Pius Kakai. *History of inter-relations in Mt. Elgon, Bungoma and Trans Nzoia*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2000, p. 42.

would rise into regional and international trade web connecting Africa and the outside world through the Indian and Atlantic oceans in the pre-colonial era.

During the pre-colonial era, Africans were entangled in an infinite cycle of supremacy and reliance, hinged on patriarchal authority decreed across sexual categories and generations, ancestries, clans, dialects and ethos.³⁰ On how pre-colonial conflicts were resolved, Ochieng who also propagated peacetime and conflictual pre-modern interaction among the ethnic societies in Africa reinforced robust symbiotic ethnic ties and occasional inter-ethnic relations over land use.³¹

European colonisation of Africa became another avenue for the construction of the inter-ethnic conflicts over land use in Africa.³² In their desire to introduce Africans to the global value chain, European powers leveraged the modernism theory that justifies the European colonisation of Africa. The Berlin conference 1884-1885 became the genesis of colonialism in Africa that heralded a radical shift in the traditional African land use, tenure system and resultant inter-ethnic relations.

Before the scramble and partition of Africa, Europe experienced a continental revolution which sparked the European imperialism era overseas – Mercantilism.³³ Mercantilism bred European expansionism overseas in what became the age of European Imperialism for socio-economic, militarism and strategic interests that led to

³⁰Berman, J.B. '*Ethnicity, Patronage and the African state: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism.*' *African Affairs*, 97, (Accessed at: <http://afraf.oxfordjournal.org> on 22/10/2022 ; 1998. p. 307.

³¹William Ochieng R. '*First World Essays on Kenyan History*'. (Ed)., Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1975, p. 44.

³²Bertocchia, G. and Canova, F. *Did colonization matter for growth? An empirical exploration into historical causes of Africa's underdevelopment European Economic Review*, volume 46, London: European Economic review; 2002, p. 1852.

³³Brantlinger, P: *Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the myth of a dark continent vol.12, No. 1, 'Writing, and Difference.* Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1985, p.168.

the colonization of Africa.³⁴ European powers battled to amass colonies to stamp authority in the global affairs. European powers mad rush to acquire colonies in Africa was unprecedented with near military clash between them.³⁵ In this vein, the Berlin conference was convened to water down military conquests among European powers in Africa.³⁶

The colonial hegemony in Africa served transitorily as a reprieve from pre-colonial cross-border inter-ethnic land conflicts which in a narrow sense as previously observed were centred on contestation over agricultural and grazing fields in their course of migration and settlement. It was therefore imperative to note that, negative ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations over land use were deeply entrenched in the pre-colonial Africa's rich history.³⁷ The colonial era somewhat created inter-ethnic land cleavages through their structural boundaries that they arbitrarily created at the outset of colonialism in Africa through colonial land policies. These boundaries had less or no regard to ethnic composition and pre-existing land tenure system in Africa and remain the surviving colonial legacies triggering inter-ethnic land conflicts in Africa.

The land inequalities created during the European imperialism in Africa served to strengthen pre-existing pre-colonial inter-ethnic relations over land issues that eventually led to the violent explosion of inter-ethnic land conflicts soon after the independence of several African Countries.³⁸ It was also useful to note that the colonial regimes in Africa disregarded the traditional African land tenure system in favour of a

³⁴Emory R.J: *History of Domestic and Foreign Commerce of United States*, Washington DC: Carnegie institution of Washington, 1915, p.37.

³⁵Cowie, H.S. *Imperialism and Race Relations, Revised edition*. Melbourne: Nelson; 1982, p.433.

³⁶Ali Mazrui, A. *The Imperial Fragmentations: The Legacy and Racial conflict*. Denver: Colorado University of Denver; 1969, p. 8.

³⁷McWilliams, W.C and Piotrowski, H: *The world since 1945: A History of International Relations* 5th ed. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers; 2014, p. 270.

³⁸*Ibid*, p. 270.

radical imperial land tenure system on the basis of racism. This also altered the course of African relations to the means of production and created a new class system that was in favour of the white settlers by the virtue of land holdings in the white highlands.³⁹ Land use during the colonial period in Africa included farming and settlement, African settlements christened reserves on the basis of ethnicity, public land or crown land designated for the construction of colonial administrative institutions, railway construction and roads, forest reserves and wild life conservation. Therefore, land tenure in the colonial period in Africa was basically private, communal and public or crown.

Presently, in the post-colonial Africa, inter-ethnic land conflict prevalence was overwhelmingly on the rise and their spillage effects included inter-state conflicts like the case of Central Africa and West Africa. A similar conflict plunged Zaire into civil war from 1998 – 2003 claiming three million lives. This civil war spilled over to other states of East and Central Africa, including Uganda, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Chad, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Angola and Sudan.⁴⁰

In the most recent times, the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in the Great Lakes region arise from a litany of factors.⁴¹ These causal factors included; politics, cultural stereotypes, territorial contests on land and the politicisation of negative ethnicity. As expected, cultural and economic land use remains one of the chief trigger of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Africa. Besides, global warming has become a notable factor in the conversation.⁴² As an environmental factor initiating inter-ethnic land conflicts it

³⁹Leo C, *Op. Cit.*,p. 44.

⁴⁰ McWilliams, W.C and Piotrowski, H., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 256-267

⁴¹O. M. Ouma. '*Ethnicity and conflict in Molo Region of Nakuru County, Kenya*'. Kakamega: Masinde Muliro university of Science and Technology, Peace and Conflict Studies; 2013, p. 82.

⁴²P.P.W. Achola. '*The Sociology of Knowledge and African's Dependency: The case of the Sciences.*' Nairobi: A paper presented to the Third Professor of world peace Association-PWPA Continental Conference, 2nd -6th May, Nairobi; 1990, p. 14.

presented emerging twist to the conventional socio-economic factors. Prolonged drought causes diminishing of grazing fields among the pastoralist communities leading to protracted inter-ethnic resource-based conflicts. The society's economic substructure or the mode of production in a given society was more likely to generate inter-ethnic conflicts. The need to control the forces of production within these modes of production triggered inter-ethnic animosity and clashes.⁴³ Both homogeneous and heterogeneous communities faced with these natures of inter-ethnic conflicts as every group fought to control the limited forces of production like land and justify inter-ethnic violence as a means of achieving their target.

The most regrettable inter-ethnic conflicts over access to socio-economic and political resources including land within the Great Lakes region in the post-colonial Africa happened in Rwanda in 1994. The conflicts spilled over to Burundi and Uganda and eastern region of Democratic Republic of Congo between the ethnic Tutsi and Hutu.⁴⁴ These ugly inter-ethnic explosions even if they arose from the traditional differences between the two communities, were evidently part and parcel of the deep rooted colonial legacy in the region. The majority ethnic Hutu were disfranchised by the Belgian colonial regime from educational, professional and administrative opportunities throughout the colonial era. An elite class of the Tutsi emerged in the post-independent era amassing land creating a land holding gap, holding senior positions in government and army while the Hutu felt left out.

Armed with socio-economic and military capital the Tutsi displaced the Hutu in a regrettable war that lasted three years.⁴⁵ Belgians intentionally reinforced their ethnic heterogeneity through issuance of identity cards and conscious policies aimed at

⁴³*Ibid*

⁴⁴*Ibid*

⁴⁵McWilliams W.C and Piotrowski H, *Op. Cit*, p. 286.

creating ethnic intolerance between the Hutu and Tutsi. The Belgians preferred the minority Tutsi over the Hutu in a strategy to avoid an alliance between them against colonialism. The Tutsi benefited materially from the colonial regime in education and colonial public service. These isolated the Hutu and created a wedge between these ethnic groups.⁴⁶

Instructively, the land contest between the Hutu and Tutsi aligned with the land occupational concept.⁴⁷ The Tutsi were traditionally herders while the Hutu were exclusively an agrarian community. Land use, catalyzed by the mode of access and distribution orchestrated by both the Belgians and post-colonial governments in Rwanda; was one of the factors that led to the Hutu uprising.

Before the British invaded the hitherto pre-colonial Kenya and eventually set-up a colonial hegemony, under the consular patronage that midwifed the present Kenya, the country did not exist.⁴⁸

The interior swathes of the contemporary Kenya were a network of domestic economies consisting of nomadic and traditional pastoral forms of production and shifting cereal agriculture. Autonomous ethnic communities lived and roomed on separate ridges with cross ethnic commerce depending on the usual demand and supply of highly sought merchandise. These movements became the ancient traces of inter-ethnic assimilation and displacements resulting from cross- border land conflicts besides other vital natural resources.⁴⁹ The region that later became Kenya throughout history was populated by a blend of hunting and food gathering, crop farmers and

⁴⁶*Ibid*, p. 286

⁴⁷Bethwell A. Ogot. *Emerging Themes of African History: The Role of the pastoralists and agriculturalist in African History; the case of East Africa*, edited by T.O. Ranger. University of East Africa: East African publishing House, 1968, p. 127.

⁴⁸Kising'ani, E. *Rethinking Frantz Fanon in the context of Kenyan Decolonization Experience 1985-1992*, Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2003, p. 55.

⁴⁹*Ibid*

pastoral ethnic communities.⁵⁰ These groups of people included the hunting and gathering Gumba who inter-married with the cereal agriculturalist Gikuyu to give rise to the Athi.⁵¹ And, the Nilotic pastoral Maasai who believe that every cattle in the universe belong to them, the group roamed the Northern and Western Kenya before settling in the southern region of the Uasin Gishu plateau.

The hunting and gathering was the foremost occupation of the communities that peopled this region of Eastern Africa. This population would later be displaced, annihilated or assimilated by the agricultural communities who had wielded power through the mastery of iron technology. This metal technology hardened this people into organised groups. This supposed groups practiced cereal agriculture, observed a similar culture and their metal technology gave them the ability to clear the bushes and migrate as a group from their point of origin to the next convenient place. The metal technology as well readily supplied them with basic weapons of defence in cases of external invasions.⁵² Therefore, land was the basic natural resource upon which these early societies eked their living by gathering food, hunting, grazing and practicing cereal agriculture.⁵³ Land therefore in the concept and practice in this pre-capitalist Africa was a critical force of production in their mode of production. Besides its economic value, it had socio-cultural significance that was deeply entrenched in these African societies.⁵⁴ Instructively, perhaps this state of affairs informed why access to land in rural Kenya is the most contested issue that has survived to date.⁵⁵

⁵⁰Bethwell A. Ogot., *Op. Cit.*, p. 126.

⁵¹Jomo Kenyatta, *Op.Cit.*, p. 15.

⁵²Morgan W.T.W. *East Africa: Its people and resources*, Nairobi: Oxford university press, 1972, p. 17.

⁵³Ruth Simiyu. *Militianisation of Resource Conflicts: The Case of Land-based Conflict Mount Elgon Region of Western Kenya* , Pretoria: ISS, 2008, p. 4.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ S. Omwoyo. *The Agricultural Changes in Kipsigis Land c-1894-1963: a historical Inquiry*. Nairobi: PhD Thesis; Kenyatta University, 2003, p.100.

It was also noteworthy to state that initially Kenya was earmarked as a small flax colony using Kenyans labour that would serve as a reward to the British injured ex-soldiers who had gallantly fought during the First World War in a one million acre scheme.⁵⁶ This was informed by the fact that such an investment required intensive labour in-put which native Kenyan Africans would be compelled to provide by force. But, as fate would have it, the global market of flax collapsed marking an end to this colonial ambitious plan. Be that as it may, colonial rule was established in Kenya in 1888 when the Imperial British East African Company was granted a royal charter and initiated its administrative and trading ventures by establishing various trading and administrative posts across Kenya.⁵⁷

This colonial expansion was orchestrated at the expense of native ethnic communities who were effortlessly subdued through treacherous concessions that were later dishonoured with exceptions of few determined resistances that were ultimately crushed altogether.⁵⁸ In elaboration of this Kisiang'ani states that colonialism in Kenya was accompanied by the introduction of new ways of life to the hitherto unique but immensely rich traditional African lifestyle. Kisiang'ani avers that this new culture which, by and large, created a permanent crisis among the African people, had serious socio-economic implications including the evolution of land question among many and varied ethnic communities in Kenya.⁵⁹ In essence this resulted in inter-ethnic land conflicts. The British colonial regime in Kenya through series of land legislations repealed the traditional land tenure system and enacted new land laws that were crucial in theory and practice. These new land laws altered completely traditional African land

⁵⁶John Kamau. *People, power and politics: A century later, Kericho tea estates still a sweatshop and hotbed of impunity*. Nairobi: Sunday Nation February, 26th; 2023, p. 24.

⁵⁷Pius Kakai, *Op. Cit*, p. 43.

⁵⁸McWilliams, W.C and Piotrowski, H, *Op. Cit*, p. 130

⁵⁹Kisiang'ani., *Op.Cit.*, p. 59

holding rights sparking a radical paradigm shift regarding land tenure systems in Kenya.⁶⁰

The colonial authorities enacted colonial land policies that subsequently led to the alienation of African land for the settler farming and establishment of public utilities.⁶¹ In 1890 the foreign jurisdiction act was enacted to enable the Europeans settlers' community to buy or lease land in Kenya. This was the initial window of opportunity for the Europeans to buy or make land concessions and agreements, with local leaders in East Africa. Further, in situations where the latter was impossible; military expeditions were sanctioned.⁶²

Formulation of land policies apparently to legitimatise violent alienation of African land by European imperialist in Kenya; went on with the enactment of the Indian land acquisition Act of 1894. The implementation of this act saw Kenyan African land confiscated for the construction of the Uganda Railway and other public utilities during the colonial period.⁶³ In 1897, a significant regulation was effected permitting Europeans to lease land in Kenya for a period of 20 years. This, lease was subject to review.⁶⁴ Yet, another land mark land policy during the colonial period was the East African Order in Council of 1898. The Act vested powers in the British commissioner in Trust to sell or lease land in Kenya.⁶⁵ Subsequently, the African

⁶⁰Collin Leys. *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The political Economy of Neo-colonialism*, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1976, p. 44.

⁶¹B.B.C Arap-Kisembe. *The role of 'Worgondet and Kirwagindet' in the History of the Sabaot People of Mount Elgon during the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries'*. B.A. Dissertation, University of Nairobi, 1978, p. 28.

⁶²O. Mweseli. *The Reform Debate in Kenya in Wanjala. S.C. essays on land law*, Nairobi: Faculty of Law UON, 2000, p. 4.

⁶³Sorenson M.P.K. *Origin of European settlement in Kenya*. Nairobi: Oxford University press, 1968, p. 53.

⁶⁴S. Wafula, 'Colonial Land Policy and North Kavirondo African Reserve to 1940'. B.A. Dissertation, University of Nairobi, 1981, p. 20.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

customary land holding rights in Kenya were technically, transferred to the commissioner. This was an anticipatory move to create room for an influx of European settlers in Kenya. This increasingly transferred African customary claim on land to the commissioner.

The East African Order in Council of 1901 defined the crown land in Kenya. Moreover, it empowered his Majesty King Edward VII 1901-1910 with the responsibility of controlling crown land in East Africa.⁶⁶ This was public land acquired through treaties, agreements and concessions. The ramification of this development was dire to the African customary land holding. Africans in Kenya lost their customary land holding rights acquired through treaties, agreements and concessions to the crown. Crown land was by the decree of the East African order in council of 1901, all public land in the British East African protectorate acquired through treaty, convention or agreement by his majesty or land acquired through land acquisition Act of 1895.

The pinnacle of the colonial land alienation and the genesis of the land question in Kenya was the enactment of the Crown Land Ordinance of 1902. The policy gave the British Commissioner the latitude to sell freehold land estates in Kenya.⁶⁷ The British Commissioner in Kenya oversaw the alienation of chunks of native African lands; in what became '*the white highlands*.' As a result, European settlers acquired land in Kenya at two rupee per acre or leased it for fifteen rupees per one hundred acres. Europeans whose population was less than one per cent of the Kenyan population at the time, occupied three million hectares of prime land, and called it '*white highlands*.' Africans in Kenya were restricted from owning land within these highlands. Shiroya

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷Ruth Nasimiyu. *Op.Cit.* ,p. 64.

contends that European settlers in Kenya maintained a firm grip on the Kenyan white highlands at the expense of Asians and native Africans in Kenya.⁶⁸

The Kikuyu, one of the biggest agrarian groups of people in Kenya, lost chunks of their ancestral lands in the former *white highlands* to the British settlers during the colonial period as many other ethnic groups.⁶⁹ Later, the British imperialists in Kenya conceived a policy to settle native Africans in Kenya in restricted reserves in 1904. Ethnicity was a major factor in the distribution and allocation of these reserves. These areas later grew into notable centres of administration in Kenya. It was estimated that about six million Africans in Kenya lived in the eight four thousand square kilometre area called *reserves*. These designated areas agricultural potential varied. A World Bank report cited that a sizeable land mass of these land were arable even though others were described as infertile and crowded.⁷⁰

The 1902 Crown Land Ordinance was reviewed in 1915 to include land occupied by the native Africans in Kenya. It also included land set aside by the governor for the benefit of the African natives in Kenya.⁷¹ The revised Crown Land Ordinance of 1915; legally rendered Africans in Kenya squatters at the mercy of the crown. This was the initial steps of the problem of landlessness in Kenya. The declaration of Africans in Kenya as tenants during the colonial era was a consequence of the Crown Land Ordinance of 1915. From this moment, all traditional land holding rights were forfeited and the problem of landlessness as earlier mentioned was introduced among Africans in Kenya.

⁶⁸O.J.E. Shiroya. *Dimensions of Nationalism: The African Context*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation; 1994, p. 35.

⁶⁹Walter Moss, Janice Terry and Jiu-Hwa Upshur. *The Twentieth Century, Reading in global History*. New York: McGraw-Hill humanities, 1998. p. 137.

⁷⁰Leo C. *Op.Cit.*, p. 42.

⁷¹ KNA/PC/NZA/3/14/29B:1949-56 –prior to 1952, accessed on 3/4/2019

The introduction of colonialism and money economy at the onset of colonialism in Kenya led to radical change in land holding rights and land use. As earlier mentioned, in a system that was driven by western capitalism, land was commercialised and customary land rights dropped.⁷² Through systematic colonial land policies; Africans in central Kenya, Nyanza, Western, Coast and Rift Valley regions in Kenya were dispossessed off from their land for settlers farming.⁷³ The 'Kenya white highland' as were referred to became the settlement areas for British settlers who practised plantation farming and ranching especially in the dry land rangelands to help the colonial regime raise revenue to meet its administrative costs and sustain the colonial economy in Kenya.⁷⁴ Deliberate efforts were mooted to entice and lure the British settlers with guaranteed cheap labour in the Kenyan colony that was to be obtained from Kenyan Africans by force. They engaged in labour intensive plantation farming that required indentured servitude kind of labour.⁷⁵

Later, in 1918 the colonial government conceived a plan to allow African labourers to legally trade their labour for temporal residency in the *white* highlands.⁷⁶ This was reinforced through the introduction of the squatter system through the Resident Native Ordinance. In this legal arrangement native Africans were prevailed upon to provide labour in the settler farm, in return, they were allowed to live on settler farms as a compensation for the labour rendered.

It was also imperative to note that Africans in Kenya during the colonial era were preferred for the provision of labour in European farms because it was convenient and

⁷²*Ibid*

⁷³W. D. Nang'endo. *The operation of Kavujai Land control board, Kavujai Division of Bungoma District*. Nairobi: LBB dissertation: University of Nairobi, 1981, p. 10.

⁷⁴John Kamau, *Op. Cit.*, p. 24.

⁷⁵*Ibid*.

⁷⁶Leo C., *Op. Cit.*,p. 42.

cost friendly relative to the imported European labour.⁷⁷ Commenting on this colonial economy in Kenya, Odhiambo observed that the infiltration of money economy on the peasantry communities in the colonies brought about capital conservation in dependent relations.⁷⁸ Colonialism was a form of capitalism that connected African colonies including Kenya to the global value chain in Europe and the rest of the world.⁷⁹ It was also prudent to note that land was significant as a resource of production in this established colonial economy that was connected to the global value chain. Land was therefore a critical natural resource in the agrarian colonial Kenya that the colonial economy relied on.

The declaration of Kenya as a colony in 1920 and the subsequent unpopular colonial activities prompted Kenyan Africans to form ethnic organisations to agitate their grievances.⁸⁰ Bailey and Bundeh shared this by asserting that after Kenya was declared a British Colony, Africans started to form ethnic based political formations to voice their grievances.⁸¹ To maintain a firm grip on the Kenyan Colony, Mutoro confirmed that the Europeans orchestrated a strategy to divide Kenyan Africans by using one community to fight another.⁸² This was done discreetly to divert their attention from the colonial body politic that had deliberately excluded them from socio-economic prosperity.

⁷⁷J. K. Momanyi. *Politics and Nationalism in Colonial Kenya: The case of Abagusii c. 1939-1963*. Nairobi: M.A thesis, Kenyatta University, 1996, p. 20.

⁷⁸M.C. Odhiambo. *Advocating for land policy reforms in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania: NGO lessons and prospects*, Lagos Nigeria: Paper prepared for the second workshop of the pan-African programme on land and Resource Rights held on 15th to 16th July, 1977, p. 235.

⁷⁹E. A. Brett. *Colonialism and underdevelopment in East Africa: The politics of Economic change 1919-1939*. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1973, p. 31.

⁸⁰M.P.K. Sorenson. *Origin of European settlement in Kenya*. Nairobi: Oxford University press, 1968, p. 53.

⁸¹Jim Bailey and Garth Bundeh. *Kenya: The National Epic*. Nairobi: Key way publication, 1993, p. 24.

⁸²H.W. Mutoro. *The Abaluhya Reaction to Colonial Rule: 1880 to 1930*. Nairobi: Department of History; Kenyatta University, 1976. p.7.

The British presumed that the Africans would unite and resurrect their determined effort to repossess their alienated land, as earlier expressed at the dawn of colonialism in Kenya. The colonial government devised a divide and rule policy as a strategy to hold on Kenyan colony as well as continue to manipulate Africans in the colony. They consciously rewarded certain ethnic groups through socio-economic developments in their region and discriminated other ethnic groups who appeared to resist colonialism. While this was a ploy to neutralise any collective armed resistance by ethnic groups in Kenya, it created inequalities between them that included the appropriation to limited natural resources like land. Colonialism shaped ethnic self-consciousness and steadily changed distinct groups of clan cleavages into outfits enthusiastically ethnic.⁸³ Later on, proponents of Europeans settlement in the white highlands; anchored their justifications of the land alienation on the basis of unoccupied lands, rights of conquest and creation of a buffer zone in the middle of warring and hostile indigenous African communities.

Kenyans were later thrust into global affairs at the height of European imperialism in Africa.⁸⁴ They were recruited to fight in the great world wars alongside Europeans and Asians. This was a critical paradigm shift in the way Africans perceived the world. Ex-servicemen were exposed to the global affairs that ingrained in them ideals of liberty, equality and the concept of a free man; they were later instrumental in championing for the independence and return of alienated African land in Kenya and Africa in general.⁸⁵ Ex-service men were tired of colonialists and their policies which denied

⁸³L. Chweya. *Electoral Politics in Kenya*, Nairobi: Claripress, 2000, p. 232.

⁸⁴S. S. Kenyanchui. *European settler Agriculture in (ed). Ochieng. W. R. and Maxon R; An economic History of Kenya*, Nairobi: East African publishers limited, 1992, p. 117.

⁸⁵Ferguson E.D and Adu A. Boahen. *African perspective on colonialism*. In *The Journal of African Historical Studies*; 23 (2), 1990. p. 334.

them access to ownership of land in the *white* highlands.⁸⁶ They joined hands with African nationalists in Kenya to champion for Liberation in Kenya through formation of militia, unions and political entities.⁸⁷ Political parties formed in Kenya after 1945, were pre-occupied with the push for independence and were national in ethnic composition. On the brink of independence in Kenya, Kenyans were optimistic that an end to colonialism in Kenya meant the return of their land. Even so, the colonial regime in Kenya tried to solve the land problem before independence. However, the settlement programs did not entirely fix the land problems that survived several regimes since independence.

The colonial legacy was very present in the recent inter-ethnic conflicts in the post-colonial Kenya in a plethora of social, economic and political realms.⁸⁸ This included the alienated land to build mission stations, colonial infrastructure and establish settler farming. The resulting skewed patterns of land distribution and redistribution that entrenched landlessness in Kenya became central to grievances in the liberation struggle.⁸⁹ This was particularly the case in the Rift Valley and Central Kenya.

The institutional failure to address landlessness and historical land injustices in totality entrenched the culture of land grabbing and inter-ethnic land conflicts in post-independent African regimes. The sense of confidence that overwhelmed Africa and Kenya toward independence, would momentarily be eclipsed with endless misery, coup d'état, civil unrests, suppressive and autocratic regimes, corruption, land grabbing

⁸⁶S. S.Kenyanchui. *Op. Cit.*, p.14.

⁸⁷*Ibid*

⁸⁸Z.W. Samita. '*Pneumatology in the African Church of the Holy Spirit in Kabras Division, Kakamega District.*' M.A Thesis: Kenyatta University, 1992, p. 85.

⁸⁹K. Kanyinga. *Struggle of access to Land: the squatter question in Coastal Kenya* (Copenhagen: CDR working paper, centre for development; 1998); p. 7

and refugee problems soon after independence.⁹⁰ The wave of optimism and euphoria that clouded Kenyans toward independence would later turn out to be painful memories of unresolved land question and the problem of landlessness in the post-colonial Kenya.

Post-colonial governments tried to settle landless Kenyans through the buyout policy and settlement programs even though these initiatives did not fix the land question conclusively. These hopes of a new Kenya would soon vanish upon Kenya's independence.⁹¹ The clause of land at independence intimated that all Kenyan ethnic groups had to drop all claims to the land that was alienated by the colonial government, either given to the British settlers or treated as crown of government land. It was further agreed that in independent Kenya land could only be acquired through purchase. There were to be arrangements made from Africans to purchase such lands from settlers.⁹² The very pro-independence political operatives that native Africans in Kenya trusted as guardians of their freedom presided over land grabbing and reckless land policies negating the spirit of freedom and justice conceived during the momentum for independence. Authoritatively, this was a post-independent African challenge.⁹³

In this regard, the Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission report pointed out that the post-independence Kenyan government ineffectiveness to review colonial land policies satisfactorily have pressed the Kenyan communities hard into perpetual inter-ethnic land conflicts as the only available option to express their grievances.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Makau Mutua. *Kenya's Quest for Democracy*. Kampala: Taming Leviathan, 2008, p. 2.

⁹¹O. W. Maloba. *Mau Mau and Kenya: An analysis of a peasant Revolt*. Nairobi: East African publishers, 1989, p. 189.

⁹²Kuria, K. K. *Majimboism and ethnic clashes in Kenya today*, Nairobi: UON-School of law, 1993, p.21.

⁹³Odinga Odinga. *Not Yet Uhuru*, Nairobi: East African publishers, 1967, p. 253.

⁹⁴Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission, 2013.

Ineffectiveness by post-colonial governments to solve the colonial land problem was the root cause of post-colonial inter-ethnic land conflicts. Consequently, the Land question in Kenya was escalated by lack of an inclusive legal, policy and established outline for land regulations and control. Confusing land tenure legislations were instituted, which fail to restore order in the chaos of happening. This state of affairs made access, ownership and utilization of land controversial and an emotive issue.⁹⁵

Besides pre-colonial underlying issues like land claims on the basis of pre-colonial cross-border conflicts, colonialism, government inefficiency to solve the land question as earlier discussed, structured cross border black markets of Small Arms and Light Weapons heightened inter-ethnic land conflicts in heterogeneous societies globally.⁹⁶ Governments' ineptness to nib these entrenched cross-border firearms web in the bud is a leeway to the organised militia who trade them for monetary value or proscribed minerals markets at their disposal. The marauding militias courtesy of the porous borders acquire these firearms, apparently to patronage lawlessness in war torn areas which was a breeding ground and haven for their illicit organised systems. Political uncertainties and the Lords Resistance group of Eastern Uganda heightened and facilitated the cross-border illegitimate arms trade through the porous Kenya-Uganda border.⁹⁷

The land question was weaponised by politicians in Kenya for political expediency during every election cycle. Politicians in Kenya perennially took advantage of the unresolved land problem in Kenya to whip electorates' emotions and rally them

⁹⁵M.C. Odhiambo. *Advocating for land policy reforms in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania: NGO lessons and prospects*. Lagos Nigeria: Paper prepared for the second workshop of the pan-African programme on land and Resource Rights held on 15th to 16th July; 1977, p. 235.

⁹⁶F.K. Warurii, *Inter-ethnic conflicts: trends, causes, effects and intervention in Rumuruti Division of Laikipia*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University, 2015, p.1.

⁹⁷J. Khaemba. *Inter-ethnic conflicts on the border lands of Kanyarkwat and Kwanza locations of trans-Nzoia and west Pokot Counties – Kenya*. Doctoral dissertation, Moi university, 2014, p. 18.

towards achieving political objectives.⁹⁸ Politicians therefore were critical in generation and orchestration of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya under the guise of political liberation and emancipation. This case was replicated across Africa and beyond.

The notion that the land question in Kenya can only be solved through elected leadership made the electoral process in Kenya highly volatile and explosive. Even so, the 2010 new constitution in Kenya that was hailed as the ultimate landmark in the reform agenda in Kenya, establishment the land commission to provide a legal framework to fix the historical land injustices in Kenya.⁹⁹ Regrettably, the 2010 constitution dispensation did not offer a solid policy and legal framework on how to address the historical land question in Kenya.¹⁰⁰

Ethnic antagonism and controversial elections that ensued since independence every electoral cycle were by and large an expression of land rights in Kenya especially in the defunct *white* settlement scheme in Rift Valley and Central Kenya. Moreover, political figures were accused for aiding their ethnic groups to be resettled in the former settlement schemes at the expense of others.¹⁰¹ Political actors' weaponised ethnic identities along resource based inter-ethnic conflicts in the Kenya's electoral

⁹⁸S.N. Bogonko. *Kenya: 1945-1963*. Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1980, p. 223.

⁹⁹Mkandawire, T., 'The Social Science in Africa: Breaking local Barriers and Negotiating International Presence' in *African Studies Review* vol. 40 No. 2 September Monthly News (1993), September, (1997) p.18

¹⁰⁰Muoka, K. B: *Inter-ethnic conflict Affecting Reconciliation in Nakuru County, Kenya, between 1992 and 2013*, Kakamega: Masinde Muliro University of science and Technology, Peace and conflict Studies, p. 133.

¹⁰¹S.M. Kariuki, *Can negotiated land reforms deliver? A case of Kenya's of Kenya's South Africa's and Zimbabwe's land reforms policy debates* (ASC working paper, 59/2004: African studies centre 2004); p. 3

system.¹⁰² The volatility of this state of affairs led to an expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in the aftermath of the election cycle in Kenya.

The ever-growing population also exerted increasing pressure on what was already a scarce resource. It was against a backdrop of growing environmental awareness and sensitivity which, grounded in the logic of sustainable exploitation of resources and environmental conservation requires that population migration into certain ecological sites was controlled.¹⁰³ Population pressure was an emerging factor in utilization of land resource in Kenya. At independence the Kenyan population stood at eight million. With an annual population growth of barely three per cent, the population bloated to more than five times the initial population at independence. Moreover, only twenty per cent of the Kenyan land mass was arable.¹⁰⁴ This made access to land emotive and contested issue overtime. Furthermore, cultural stereotypes and socialization were fertile grounds for inflaming inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya and globally.

Cultural identities were potential threats and impediment to multi-ethnic nationalism in Kenya.¹⁰⁵ Negative ethnicity was an old practice that originated from pre-colonial Africa societies. In this regard, the colonial authorities only reinforced or diluted ethnic' pre-existing fault lines in African societies. Although ethnocentrism was as old as human civilization, it was over the time been elevated to different levels so as to access limited natural resource.¹⁰⁶ Cultural intolerance was augmented by symbols and factors ingrained in the general culture of particular ethnic groups including rites of passage, religious orientations, and languages. The rites of passage socialized initiates

¹⁰²K. Njogu: *Citizen Participation in Decision Making towards inclusive development in Kenya*. Nairobi: Twaweza communication, 2013, p. 81.

¹⁰³K. Njogu. *Op. Cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁴Ruth Simiyu. *Op. Cit.*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁵Charles Wasike. *Mt. Elgon ethnic conflicts and the threat it poses to East African community's cohesion*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2009, p. 20.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid*

into warriors that form traditional aspects of inter-ethnic land conflicts in African setting.¹⁰⁷ The initiates' noble responsibility became the military defense unit of the ethnic group against external invasion. This did preclude defending their land against any perceived or potential intrusion. Negative ethnicity was a factor that has an immense ramification on the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya.

Broadly, the state was variously indicted for the manifestation of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya.¹⁰⁸ The government whose noble duty was to protect its citizens was variously cited as responsible for the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya. The government was accused of presiding over land grabbing, rewarding political sycophants to remain relevant and makes half-hearted responses and interventions in particular inter-ethnic land conflicts. For instance, the Ndung'u report compellingly incriminated the Moi regime for senseless land grabbing as a political avenue to remain relevant and reward cronies for political expediency. Further to this, grabbing of public land was a colonial mentality inherited by successive post-colonial power brokers who coalesced around Kenya African National Union political stalwarts.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, governments orchestrated inter-ethnic land conflicts to divert the attention of citizens from popular national revolt by dividing them into enclaves.

The half-hearted intervention by the government in inter-ethnic land conflicts in 1991 and 1992 in areas like Mt. Elgon was contributory to their escalations. At the height of these flaring inter-ethnic land conflicts, several conflict resolution mechanisms were instituted including litigation and legislations whose settlements remained unenforced

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁸ M. Munene. *Historical Reflection on Kenya: Intellectual Adventurism*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi press, 2012. p. 87.

¹⁰⁹ Pius K. Kidombo. *The Architecture of Corruption in Kenya*. Nairobi: Sino printers and publishers, 2007, p. 24.

by the government of the day.¹¹⁰ Governments were unsuccessful in recognizing the place and power of traditional governments compelling the groups of people to resort to conflicts as their only option to determine their inter-ethnic land disputes. Customary conflict determination approaches were further debilitated by entrenchment of private enterprise, leaving the community prone to continued raids and retaliation.¹¹¹

The land problem in Kenya from a broadened perspective was contextualized in many and varied ways as follows; the land claims that arose from the conflicts of migration and settlement and the systematic dispossession of peasant indigenous Kenyans of their land during the colonial era. The skewed colonial and post-colonial government settlement and resettlement programmes. The land buyout policy adopted at independence by president Jomo Kenyatta's regime.¹¹² The provincial administration's involvement in land issues during the 1960s and 1970s, including the licensing of ethnically-based land-buying companies, was part of a broader effort to address landlessness after independence. The practice of awarding land to political loyalists, either as a reward from past regimes or as a survival strategy, became deeply ingrained in Kenya's political culture soon after independence, ignoring the fundamental land issues in the country. The inconclusiveness of the governments in Kenya to fix the historical land injustices and claims in central Kenya that continues to generate tensions and feeling of dispossession. The land issues in central Kenya made worse by selective criteria employed to resettle the Mau Mau ex-fighters.¹¹³ Land grabbing in Kenya which gave the rich and influential people in government the liberty to grab and

¹¹⁰ Angelique Haugerud. *The culture of politics in Modern Kenya*. London: Cambridge University press; 1993, p. 73.

¹¹¹ C.M. Weible, *Beliefs and perceived influence in a natural conflict. An advocacy coalition approach to policy networks*. In *Political Research Quartley*, 58 (3), (2005): p. 464.

¹¹² Konrad Adenauer. *The invisible violence in Kenya: A case study of Rift Valley and Western Regions edited by Jonathan Wasanya Maina*. Stiftung: Instrument for Stability: Crisis Preparedness component, 2011, p. 21.

¹¹³ Konrad Adenauer. *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

dispossess the poor from their legally owned land with impunity. Unleveled pitfalls that surround private land holding in Kenya coupled with the pastoralist land claims that have survived several regimes. The endless culture of ethnic incitements by politicians over historical land claims in various parts of Kenya.

It was against this background that inter-ethnic conflicts over land use were perennially experienced between the Pokomo and Oromo in Tana Delta between 2012 and 2013.¹¹⁴ The Kisii, Kipsigis and Agikuyu experienced inter-ethnic conflicts over land use in Kuresoi Sub-County.¹¹⁵ In the study area, the Agikuyu, Samburu and Turkana have engaged in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti Division over land use in the recent past.¹¹⁶ There were deliberate monumental efforts by various non-Governmental agencies like the Kenya Red Cross Society to end inter-ethnic conflicts in Kenya.¹¹⁷ The Kenya Red Cross determined to end inter-ethnic hostilities in Baringo County set up a 1,000 acre Tot Koloa irrigation scheme to produce maize, millet, sorghum, green grams, water melon and vegetables to promote food security and a harmonious co-existence among the ethnic groups in the region. On the face value the project was very viable with high value returns for all the ethnic communities living in the region.¹¹⁸ In the initial stages the project, acted as a buffer zone for the warring ethnic communities and inter-ethnic clashes sharply dropped. But, the 300 million mega project in 2013 was vandalized and the area converted into a battleground.

In the study area, policies enacted by successive colonial and post-colonial governments served not only to disregard the wishes of pastoralists group of people but

¹¹⁴ Kirchner K. *Conflicts and Politics in Tana Delta Kenya: An Analysis of the 2012-2013 clashes and the General and the General and presidential elections*. University of Leiden: African Studies Research, 2013. p.61.

¹¹⁵ Leley Johana Kipkemoi. *Factors influencing inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub-County*. Master's thesis, University of Nairobi, 2015, p.78.

¹¹⁶ Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 6-11

¹¹⁷ Daily Nation, Tuesday January 18th, 2022. p. 10

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*

also every so often openly disenfranchise pastoralists' wellbeing at the expense of ranchers, horticulturalists, in addition to other resources consumers.¹¹⁹ This inflicted more woes to the uncertainties of pastoralist groups of people, primarily their access to limited natural water and land for grazing field. An inter-ethnic conflict within the national or regional borders created a hostile environment that denied any region or country the impetus for economic take off.

This study adopted a paradigm shift from the traditional resource scarcity and abundance causative variables of inter-ethnic conflicts that were popular among scholars in the last century.¹²⁰ It incorporated the former with emerging factors like institutional inefficiencies in governance system, human activities and anthropological arguments in bringing out a holistic cross dimensional explanation of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Understanding the historicity of the land question, its impact on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area, the stakeholders involved and other inter-ethnic land conflict enhancing factors was essential in prescribing the right remedies to the conflict including its management.

It was against this backdrop that the land problem in inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area attracted the consideration and curiosity from countless researchers from diverse disciplines. Numerous studies conducted in Laikipia Area were oblivious to the historicity of the land problem in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area; a lacuna which this study filled. This study took into account analysis, perspectives and input of other scholars as building materials in appreciating, interpreting and shedding insights on inter-ethnic land conflict in Laikipia Area. It was

¹¹⁹S.R. Tyler. *Policy implications of natural resource conflict management. In cultivating peace, Conflict and Collaboration in natural resource management.* IDRC: Ottawa, ON, CA: 1999. p. 25.

¹²⁰Jennifer Bond. A holistic approach to natural resource conflicts: The case of Laikipia Kenya. *In A Journal of Rural Studies*; 6(3), (2014): p. 122.

also an avenue for offering solutions to land centred conflicts in the study area and beyond. In order to bring out the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895 this study was guided by Instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Land, its use and appropriation is a phenomenon that permeates the entire fabric of the political economy the world over. In most societies land is productive soil, a factor of production and reproduction. Further, land is a place of interment, a dwelling place of ancestors and gods. It is also interpreted to mean ethnic territories and home ground. Its appropriation leads to the creation of social relations and formation of class systems globally. The land question is how land is utilised, its economic value, and migration and settlement patterns. It is also the inequalities created overtime and socio-economic milestones thereon.

Laikipia Area is peopled by agriculturalists, herders and ranching communities. The agriculturalists include; Abaluhya, Kisii, Kikuyu and the Meru. The herding communities comprise of Pokot, Turkana, Ndorobo, Tugen, Samburu and Maasai. The ranching communities on their part are mainly white settlers and wealthy Kenyans. Laikipia Area grapples with different dimensions of conflicts, they include human-wildlife conflicts, ranch invasions, cattle rustling and natural resource based conflicts. Land as a limited natural resource is a critical factor of production in Laikipia Area. Land use in Laikipia Area is mainly urban settlement, forest reserve areas, pastoral areas, ethnic territories, private settlements, large scale ranching, large- and small-scale farms, and government land. This economic potential makes Laikipia tower as an emerging commercial hub in the defunct Rift Valley Province of Kenya. Laikipia

Area experience cycles of inter-ethnic conflicts among agriculturists and herders communities. These endless inter-ethnic land clashes impede Laikipia Area's potential as a commercial hub in the region besides gradual loss of lives and livelihoods. Intervention measures by governments and several actors in the peace building crusade have had less or no impact at all. Therefore, there was need to find out why land generates inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area in spite of the intervention measures.

In addition, studies conducted in Laikipia Area on inter-ethnic conflicts demonstrate an existing gap on a historical study of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts. Warurii study examined inter-ethnic conflicts: trends, causes, effects and intervention in Rumuruti Division of Laikipia Area, Kenya (1963-2010).¹²¹ Warurii's study had geographical and knowledge gaps as its findings were inadequate to be generalised to the entire land scape of Laikipia Area. Warurii's study had a lacuna in contextualising migration and settlement of the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area and its impact on the rise of the land question in Laikipia Area. It further had a lacuna on contemporary issues like land reforms and changes land use patterns in Laikipia Area. Wanyama's study on contribution of peace initiative policy to the wellbeing of households affected by natural resource-based conflicts in Laikipia North Sub-County has both knowledge and geographical gap.¹²²

Wanyama's study has a gap on studying the conflicts in Laikipia Area from the inter-ethnic perspective. It also has a lacuna on studying land as the key cause of conflicts in Laikipia Area. The finding centred on Laikipia North Sub-County and precluded the rest of the sub-counties in Laikipia Area. Mwenda explored complexities of Natural Resources conflict in Kenya: A case study of Laikipia County.¹²³ Mwenda's

¹²¹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

¹²²Wanyama J.B., *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

¹²³Ian Mwenda. *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

study has a gap on studying land as the root causes of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. It also has a lacuna studying the conflicts from the inter-ethnic perspective. There is, for these reasons, a lacuna on a historical study of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. Instructively, there is need to give inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area, a geo-spatial, institutional, socio-economic and anthropological historicity.

The view was not to re-invent the wheel but bring to attention knowledge gaps that exist in the study area. Further, the study offered valuable insights and offered comprehensive recommendations aimed at offering a scholarly solution to the endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts. The study traced how migration and settlement patterns of ethnic groups in Laikipia Area contributed to cross-border land conflicts in the pre-colonial. It also investigated how negative ethnicity, changes in land use and land tenure, ethnocentrism, colonialism and decolonisation led to the rise of the land question in Laikipia Area. Additionally, it examined inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia Area in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period. It further, assessed political machination, formation of militia, land buy-out policy, colonialism and post-colonial resettlement programmes regarding land influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Lastly, it evaluated the socio-economic impact of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. The land question and its influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts would be mitigated through access to land by the landless, fixing ancestral land claims and reducing pressure on land by creating alternative sources of livelihood will solve land issues in Laikipia Area. The study was carried out of Laikipia Area and the 1895 was considered as the watershed of the study.

1.3 Research Objectives

There were the general and specific objectives that guided this study. The specific objectives emanated from the general objective to give this study a broad and holistic perspective.

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective was to undertake a historical study of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1895.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Trace the migration and settlement of the ethnic communities and its influence on inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area up to 1963.
- ii. Investigate the dynamics impacting the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1992.
- iii. Examine inter-ethnic conflict trends in Laikipia Area since 1895.
- iv. Assess the influence of the land question on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992.
- v. Evaluate the socio-economic impact of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992.

1.3.3 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. What impact has migration and settlement of ethnic communities had on

inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area up to 1963?

- ii. Which dynamics have impacted the land question in inter-ethnic relations Laikipia 1895-1992?
- iii. What inter-ethnic conflict trends have been witnessed in Laikipia Area since 1895?
- iv. How has the land question influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992?
- v. What are the socio-economic impacts of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Numerous studies have been done on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area; however the historicity of the land question and its subsequent expression of inter-ethnic conflicts were not adequately historicized.¹²⁴ The view of this study was not to re-invent the wheel but rather historicize the conflict from geo-spatial, institutional, socio-cultural and economic perspectives triggering inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. In historical discourses studies often agree on what occurred but will differ on interpreting why and how the events occurred. Probing questions that arose in analysing these historical events was whether intrinsic or extrinsic dynamics caused the events. A critical analysis of events also involved a hierarchy of causes; indicating

¹²⁴F.K. Warurii. *Op. Cit.*, p. 19.

the major and minor causal factors. Through critical examination of various evidences available, different historians made various interpretations of the same events.¹²⁵

Cognizant of this, this study explored in-depth inter-ethnic land conflict causal factors and historical cleavages created overtime by several actors including government regimes since 1895.¹²⁶ They included factors enhanced by climate change like scarcity of land incubating inter-ethnic land contests in the rangelands, ranches and small holding plantations. It also unraveled more issues like the skewed land redistribution programmes compounded with countless other socio-economic and political forces leading to the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

The study will be very essential to the national government to develop credible land policies frameworks that will leverage the pitfalls created by rising population which is a critical factor in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The outcomes of this study will provide valuable insights on improving land use and redistribution strategies in Laikipia Area among the agriculturalist, ranchers and pastoralist groups of people.¹²⁷ It will also come in handy in advocating for diversification of sources of livelihood and streamlining traditional economic practices like pastoralism to align with modern land tenure systems and land use in Laikipia Area in a bid to ease pressure on existing limited land resource. The findings will also be instrumental in re-evaluating the County government of Laikipia's milestones in mitigating land conflicts arising from public land under their mandate on the basis of the new constitution dispensation. The findings of this study will enrich and broaden

¹²⁵Jerry H. Bentley, Herbert F. Ziegler, Heather E. Streets-Salter. *History of world civilization; volume 1: To 1500*. Boston: Mc Graw Hill, 2010, p. XVI.

¹²⁶I. N. Mwenda, *Op. Cit.*, p. 62.

¹²⁷Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg. *Research Methods: Methods and Techniques, 3rd Ed.* New Delhi: New Age publishers, p. 14.

the mastery of the genesis of the inter-ethnic land conflict in Laikipia Area with expanded perceptions of reaching a lifelong settlement.¹²⁸

The study will be fundamental in bridging the cultural prejudices expressed through ethnocentrism and other outdated cultural stereotypes that are hardened and manipulated to create psychological dynamics that trigger inter-ethnic land conflicts among the groups of people that occupy Laikipia Area. This study will be central in offering options on solving historical land injustices and the problem of landlessness in Laikipia Area.¹²⁹ This study will be helpful in solving the rampant problem of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons through weeding out rogue security offices, intensifying security patrols and fixing the porous border menace that gives leeway for the peddling of illicit arms.

The study will be helpful in re-viewing the viability of commercial ranching in Laikipia and offered varied insights on how this commercial enterprise can be cushioned from inter-ethnic conflicts arising from land contestations. The study notes the place of climate change as a huge trigger of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The study presents opportunity for both levels of government in Laikipia and Nairobi to address an entrenched culture of weaponising historical land issues by politicians for selfish political expediency to the detriment of unsuspecting voters.¹³⁰ The study offers insights to both levels of government to decisively save the tourism sector in Laikipia Area that is facing existential threat from the endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts. The study brings to light the problem of unemployment in Laikipia Area which renders young people vulnerable to recruitment as commercial morans by runaway criminal gangs. In the same vein, the study will be an imperative point of

¹²⁸Jerry H. Bentley *et. al.*, *Op.Cit.*,p. XVII.

¹²⁹I. N.Mwenda, *Op. Cit.*, p. 35.

¹³⁰F. K. Warurii. *Op. Cit.*, p. 95.

reference for the national government to consider censuring local dialect media houses that serve to fan the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. In conclusion, it demonstrated that a sustainable inter-ethnic conflicts resolution mechanism in Laikipia Area should re-consider and be centred on fixing the age old land problem.¹³¹ The study will contribute to the historiography of Laikipia Area, Kenya and beyond. It will further enrich future studies on peace and conflict studies in Masinde Muliro University and beyond on the nature of land generated inter-ethnic conflicts.

1.5 Justification of the Study

This study was justified in the academic, policy, and philosophical realms. Moreover, it was the basis for the formulation of legislation and other radical land policies in Kenya and beyond that offer viable interventions to historical land problems.¹³² Last of all, it was hinged on interpretivism philosophy put forward by Marx Weber.¹³³ Significantly, the study was important because in all the reviewed studies in the area by Warurii, Mwenda, Parcela and Wanyama there was a lacuna on historicisation of the land question and its influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.5.1 Academic Justification

This study added value to the historiography of Laikipia Area.¹³⁴ The outcome of this study deepened available findings and was of importance to researchers who endeavour to study and carry out complementary studies in the area of land and inter-

¹³¹D. Chakraborty. *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: Saurabh Publishing House, 2012, p.12.

¹³²Oliver Mugenda and Abel Mugenda. A. *Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Nairobi: Act press, 2003. p. 8.

¹³³E.H. Carr. *What is History*. New York: Vintage books, a division of Random House, 1961. p. 15.

¹³⁴Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg. *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Further, studies done on inter-ethnic relations and conflicts in Laikipia Area did not historicize the problem of land in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts which was the scope of this study. Studies done in Laikipia Area on land generated inter-ethnic conflicts were limited geographically; however, this study gave holistic depiction of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.5.2 Policy Justification

The study will be vital to the policy architects in appreciating the magnitude of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area and institute intervention measures.¹³⁵ The study will be foundational basis for the formulation of land policies which foster cohesiveness with a huge impact on socio-economic development of Laikipia as an emerging investment hub in Kenya.

1.5.3 Philosophical Justification

Research before modern research emerged was termed by philosophers as logical reasoning.¹³⁶ This implied that that any research was built on the philosophy on how nature is interpreted and generalised. This was logical curiosity and imagination to understand nature. Most research is premised on the hypothesis of how nature is viewed and how we can understand it in the best way. Since every perception of the world may be subjective, arguments among philosophers have existed throughout millennia.

This study applied interpretivism philosophy on the basis that dynamics triggering inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area were interpreted from the instrumentalist,

¹³⁵Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op. Cit.*, p. 26.

¹³⁶ Debashis Chakraborty. *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: Saurabh publishing House: Act press, 2012, p. 12

occupational and constructivist theoretical perspectives. This study interpreted how pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial land holding rights, migration and settlement, geo-politics and ethnocentrism triggered inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area

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1.5.3.1 Interpretivism philosophy

Interpretivism philosophy was a contrast to positivism.¹³⁸ This was a critique of the study of nature within the confines of laws and natural sciences alone. It presupposes that social sciences are distinct from natural sciences and its methods of study should consider the human relations with natural world. Interpretivism as a philosophy gained traction as a critique of the positivists' interpretation of the natural world. It gives a different measure of the natural world that is not inherent on generalisation of concepts based on laws or principles and empirical evidence like it is in the physical sciences.¹³⁹

Interpretivism emphasised common sense interpretation of the phenomenon. The theory was first propounded by Marx Weber 1864-1920, who argued that sociology is a science that interprets the human behaviour with the view of understanding the causative dynamics, course and the resultant net effects. Interpretivism proponents included Alfred Schutz and George Herbert Mead 1863-1931. The rise of the interpretivism proponents led to the emerging divergent dimensions of the philosophy into phenomenological interpretivism by Alfred Schutz, symbolic interactionism by George Herbert Mead and verstehen by Marx Weber.¹⁴⁰

Interpretivism philosophy was adopted because the study was qualitative in nature.

¹³⁷ Alan Bryman, James J. Teevan and James Bell: *Social Research Methods ; Canadian edition*. Toronto: Oxford University press; 2005, p. 8.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9

The philosophy was used to interpret how origin and migrations, ethnocentrism, changes in land use and tenure, colonialism and government inability to fix the land question contributed to the rise of the land question and its impact on the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts.

1.5.3.2 Interpretivism philosophy relevance in this study

In the interpretivism perspective the study applied a historical research design that generated qualitative data of the human behaviour among the ethnic groups living in Laikipia Area.¹⁴¹ The interpretivism interpretations of these human actions were confined on study's thematic questions from this study's theoretical framework. Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial land holding rights, geo-politics, ethnocentrism and economic value of land were interpreted as factors causing perennial inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. In broad-based spectrum findings on the historical inquiry into the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area were qualitatively generated through the historical research design and thematic analysis on the basis of this study's objectives.

Instructively, the interpretivism philosophy was handy in construing that the land use, land tenure, colonialism, proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the inability by the post-colonial regimes in the articulation mode of production theoretical sense of this study led to the cause, course and effect of the land question and its ramification in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895.¹⁴²

In the same vein, interpretivism philosophy was rudimentary in conceptualising anthropological patterns like primeval origin and the human settlement in Laikipia

¹⁴¹*Ibid*

¹⁴²*Ibid*

County as causal factors in the rise to land question and the expression of inter-ethnic cross border conflicts in Laikipia Area up to 1895.

Finally, interpretivism philosophy was elementary in identifying political machinations, cultural identities and symbols as well as the media in the instrumentalist theoretical sense of this study as the causal factors that led to the rise, course and net effects of the land question and its consequence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in Laikipia Area; this area was administered as Laikipia County. Laikipia County was one of the 47 Counties in Kenya.¹⁴³ It was also one of the 17 Counties in Kenya's Rift Valley region. During the colonial rule 1895-1963 Laikipia suffered a massive re-location of the indigenous ethnic groups by the colonial government. The alienated land was subdivided to establish settler farming. During the post-colonial era, the government resettled Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru in the area through the land buy out policy. This proposition created the land question among the indigenous ethnic groups who were unjustly re-located during the colonial era.¹⁴⁴ The study targeted the Maasai, Kikuyu, Pokot, Ogiek, Tugen, Ndorobo, Somali, Samburu, Abagusii, Turkana and Meru existing in the Sub-Counties of Laikipia Central, Kirima, Laikipia East, Laikipia North, Laikipia West and Nyahururu in Laikipia Area.¹⁴⁵ Respondents from all the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area were selected purposively from each of the Laikipia Sub-Counties. Laikipia was chosen because it is a multi-ethnic Area that has experienced land related conflicts stemming from ancestral land claims, colonialism and governments' land policies.

¹⁴³J.B. Wanyama, *Op.Cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁴⁴ Mwenda, I, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 13-25

¹⁴⁵Warurii. *Op.Cit.*, p. 24.

The period of the study was since 1895, it was chosen because in this year Kenya became a British protectorate and the British administration was imposed in Kenya and by extension Laikipia Area.¹⁴⁶ From the year 1895 onwards massive land alienation at the behest of the colonial regime ensued accompanied by moving of Maasai, Pokot, Ogiek, Tugen, Ndorobo, Somali and Samburu constituting the land question in Laikipia Area.¹⁴⁷ The study targeted the Maasai, Kikuyu, Pokot, Ogiek, Tugen, Ndorobo, Somali, Samburu, Abagusii, Turkana and Meru because based on the census report these were the major ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area. Lastly, since was chosen because the problem still existed.

The study investigated how ethnocentrism, geo-politics, colonisation, resettlement reforms, land buy-out policies and socio-economic value of land impacted the land question and triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. It traced how the migration and settlement patterns of the ethnic groups impacted on inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area up to 1963. It further investigated dynamics impacting the land question in Laikipia area since 1895. Moreover, it examined inter-ethnic trends in Laikipia Area since 1992; it further assessed how the land question was the main factor in stroking inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992. Lastly, it evaluated the socio-economic net effects of the perennial inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992. The study was conducted for six months between June and December, 2023.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The willingness to give vital data by the informants was another challenge especially where culture forbids sharing of such information. This challenge was handled by

¹⁴⁶Warurii. *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 24-56

explaining to informants the importance of this study as well as its relevance in seeking solutions to the historicity of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.¹⁴⁸

Moreover, an inter-ethnic land conflict in conflict prone areas is a theme discussed in fear of being reprimanded by the law enforcement officers or being exposed to the perpetrators of the inter-ethnic land conflicts. Furthermore, some of the respondents were victims of human rights violations. This challenge was tackled by providing an introductory letter and license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) as prove that this research was indeed an academic endeavour. The study avoided use of sensitive and political questions which would likely evoke emotions. The interviews were also overseen in a way that did not generate needless inputs and insights that were not aligned with this study's research objectives. The study was limited in terms of scope and covered only the ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area and the findings were not used to generalize inter-ethnic land conflicts in other areas.

1.8 Literature Review

This section reviewed existing inter-ethnic land conflict literature by various scholars across numerous disciplines globally, continentally, regionally, nationally and in the study area based on the study's objectives. The reviewed literature included books, papers published in referenced journals and theses.¹⁴⁹ The idea was to highlight the research gaps and illustrate how the present study exhaustively bridged them. The review process also centred on their vitality and how they were significant building blocks in the course of developing the present study. The highlighted gaps gave this

¹⁴⁸Chakraborty D., *Op.Cit.*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid*

study a justified authority. The reviewed literature were restricted on the subjects of migration and settlement, land question, inter-ethnic conflicts and its consequences with a framed reference of contextualising how the land question triggers inter-ethnic conflicts globally.

1.8.1 Migration and settlement of ethnic communities and its influence on inter-ethnic relations

The study on the, '*emergence of the Abagusii Diaspora in Kenya's South Rift, 1895-2007; opportunities and challenges*,' adopted the qualitative research design to identify the social evolution and migration patterns among the Abagusii before the colonial era.¹⁵⁰ It evaluated the Abagusii movement into the expansive South Rift at the height of colonialism in Kenya and during the post-colonial regimes. It finally highlighted the socio-cultural, institutional, political and economic positives and negatives of the Abagusii's experiences in the course of this geo-spatial shift.¹⁵¹ Achoki's study probed the emergence of the Abagusii Diaspora in Kenya's South Rift, 1895-2007; opportunities and challenges as its main question. Achoki's study was anchored on the historical materialist theory, the theory centred on social reality and economic organisation of a specific society.

Practically the theory examined how accessing forces of production stratifies the society along classes. It established that both the Abagusii and Logoli peopling South Nyanza and western Kenya respectively share oral tradition linking them to a Misri origin. Misri was presumed to be an area vaguely described to be northern Sudan bordering the expansive Sahara Desert on the Egyptian side. Both the groups left

¹⁵⁰Gladys Nyaboke Achoki, Kizito Muchanga and James Runaku. *Emergence of the Abagusii Diaspora in Kenya's South Rift, 1895-2007; opportunities and challenges*. In *Historical Research letter* vol 50, 2019, p. 25.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*

Misri on several accounts prominent among them is the endless invasion by the Ethiopian Hamites.¹⁵²

According to Achoki's study, in their downward movement, both the groups, settled on the foothill of Mount Elgon.¹⁵³ It was this place that most anthropologists refer to as the first dispersal point for the Western Bantu in Kenya and some of the Bantu in Uganda. The finding on the earliest migration patterns of the Bantu into the East African region was crucial to this study. This epic trek from Misri included the Ganda and Soga. After a momentary stop on the foothill of Mt Elgon, the Abagusii traffic headed South West along the course of River Nzoia.¹⁵⁴ The movement snaked to the shores of Lake Victoria in the 16th century and made a stop on the infamous Ramogi hills. It is at this place where the Luo displaced the Kisii before occupying the area instead. From here, the Abagusii movement went on to Alego, Gangu, Kisumu, Kano Plains, and Dunga before finally settling to their present settlements in Kisii, Kericho and Nyamira Counties. Oral account had it that the Abagusii moved away from Kano plains because the area had relative unfertile soils that could not support the growth of finger millet. Being a predominant peasant ethnic group that relied on land for subsistence farming, the Abagusii migration from the area is largely attributed to this factor.¹⁵⁵

In their course of migration and settling in the South Rift and South Nyanza, the Abagusii faced numerous challenges; their South Rift movement was thwarted by the fierce Kipsigis who altered their venture completely. Also, their determined expansion in the South and central Nyanza was massively frustrated by the Luo who

¹⁵²*Ibid*

¹⁵³Wanguhu Ng'ang'a, *Op. Cit.*, p. 312.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid*

¹⁵⁵*Ibid*

pushed them back and forth as manifested in their infamous displacement by the Luo at Ramogi hills. At the centre of their conflicts with the Luo and Kipsigis was land. Land for both ethnic communities was a critical force of production with cultural significance and its access was therefore hotly contested.¹⁵⁶ Besides, the rich history of inter-ethnic cross border contest over land in Nyanza and South Rift, Abagusii co-existed with both the Kipsigis and Luo during the peacetime. Harmonious relations during such times sparked a regional commerce that became the bedrock of a brooding inter-ethnic cross fertilisation of cultural facets including languages.

A study on intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon, Kenya 1945-2010 sought to identify the origin of land conflicts among the intra-ethnic groups of the Sabaot and offered solutions to the intra-ethnic land conflicts as its problem. Imbuye's study applied constructivist and instrumentalist theories to contextualise intra-ethnic relations and land use conflicts among the Sabaot of Mount Elgon.¹⁵⁷ It also used qualitative research design that basically involved interpretation of the behaviour of the intra-ethnic groups of the Sabaot in the manifestation of the land conflict between 1945 and 2010. Imbuye's study devoted a chapter on the origin, migration and settlement of the Sabaot intra-ethnic groups to give the land use cross-border conflict in the region a background from that era.¹⁵⁸ The study put forth the argument in the sense that as a proto-Kalenjin, the Sabaot cradle land was believed to be in the area between North and North West Lake Turkana, around Ethiopia or To approximated to be very close to Lake Baringo. From this origin, the group made a historic trek and peopled Mt Kamalinga before their movement went on to settle on

¹⁵⁶*Ibid*

¹⁵⁷*Ibid*, p. 18

¹⁵⁸*Ibid*, p. 43.

the North West of the slopes of Mount Elgon.¹⁵⁹ Most historians and anthropologists contend that Mount Elgon was the Proto-Kalenjin first dispersal point in Kenya. While the rest of the proto-Kalenjin left Mount Elgon, the rest of the Sabaot remained behind.

However, there were arguments and counter-arguments on the origin of the Sabaot as a wider group.¹⁶⁰ It was believed that no such ethnic subsets of the Kalenjin existed before the last decade of the 20th century. The government of Kenya adopted the name Sabaot for census purposes in what was commonly termed as an exercise for national expediency. From this preceding, it was certain that some of the Sabaot intra-ethnic groups had different origin from the proto Kalenjin ethnic groups. However, the rest of the Kalenjin group referred to the Sabaot as 'Kapkugo' meaning the place of grandfather. While this validated Mount Elgon as the migration and settlement of the proto Kalenjin dispersal point, it also confirmed the cultural bond between the Sabaot and the rest of the Kalenjin group.¹⁶¹ In their course of migration the Sabaot as a proto-Kalenjin engage in cross-border land conflicts with the communities they came into contact with including the Bukusu.

In the study *politics and nationalism in colonial Kenya, the case of the Babukusu of Bungoma District 1894-1963*, the place of Babukusu in the decolonisation politics of Kenya was probed.¹⁶² It analysed their valuable contributions to the origin and development of this cause as a distinct ethnic group in Kenya. Wekesa's study supplemented primary and secondary sources of data as its sets of methodologies for collection, analysis and presentation of its findings. Primary sources contained within

¹⁵⁹*Ibid*, p. 44.

¹⁶⁰Beatrice Imbuye, *Op.Cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁶¹*Ibid*, p. 48.

¹⁶²Peter Wafula Wekesa. *Politics and nationalism in colonial Kenya; a case of Babukusu of Bungoma district 1894-1963*, MA, Kenyatta University, 2000, p. 16.

written sources outsourced from archives and oral accounts. Secondary sources on its part comprised of data derived from books, journals, magazines, articles, theses, seminar papers and periodicals. Complementing the two was instrumental in managing biasness and prejudices in the study to avoid making subjective findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Wekesa's study was anchored on numerous and varied theoretical perspectives to give a holistic background of the *Babukusu* politics and nationalism in Kenya between 1894 and 1963. The theories were also tailored painstakingly to re-enact the contribution of the Bukusu to the rise of native African nationalism in Kenya during the great days of decolonisation.¹⁶³ The theories illustrated economic exploitation, economic evolution, and culture of dependency and indigenous native African socio-cultural and political facets as the key tenets and net effects of colonialism and anti-colonial forces in the Bukusu community. Wekesa's study applied modernism, dependency and post-colonial theories.

Wekesa's study devoted a chapter on the migration and settlement of the *Babukusu* to give a background of the origin and settlement of the ethnic group.¹⁶⁴ It further highlighted their role in the colonial politics including their seminar role during the great days of decolonisation in Kenya. In this sense, the study validated the Misri theory regarding the origin of the *Babukusu*. As a proto western Bantu, *Babukusu* account of their origin and migration points to Misri – the present reaches of Egypt. Even though, other studies illuminate the Misri settlement as part of their long trek from Congo basin. The Misri theory invoked the Afrocentric assertions of black

¹⁶³*Ibid*, p. 13.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 29.

Egypt before the Ptolemaic and Hyksos invasions.¹⁶⁵ This finding perhaps validated the most of the western Bantu oral account of the light skinned community repulsing and thwarting their northward trek. Even so, there has been contestation on the validity of the Misri theory and if indeed Misri implies the present Egypt. Misri theory was criticised on the grounds as a biblical distortion of African history or rather a Euro-centric interpretation of African history. However, other studies posit that before Hyksos, Ptolemy and Arab occupation of the Egyptian land, the earlier inhabitants were black. To this day, the southern reaches of modern Egypt were occupied by black population extending to areas of Sudan. Depending on the evidence and argument therefore, the Misri theory may not be a fallacy entirely.¹⁶⁶

When the northward trek of the *Babukusu* was decisively thwarted they made a southward movement to around Lake Turkana, Trans Nzoia, Silikwa, Webuye and eventually Mt Elgon before the Kalenjin invasion pushed them to Uganda.¹⁶⁷ In Uganda they wandered along Eastern Uganda in Embayi, Namarare and Bukaya before moving into Kenya. This finding was essential to this study on the origin and migration of Bantu and the Kalenjin in Laikipia Area. Mt Elgon remains a historic site in the course of migration and settlement of the Kalenjin into their present settlements.

Their later migration was around Ebwayi on the border of Kenya and Uganda and the area believed to be Amagoro, this settlement was dispersed by the fierce Teso into Western Kenya at the outset of the 19th century.¹⁶⁸ The migration and settlement of the Babukusu based on this study only got a permanent reprieve with the introduction

¹⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*

of European colonisation in western Kenya. This finding was crucial to this study especially on the impact of Europeans colonialism in Laikipia Area on the migration and settlement of the indigenous ethnic groups in the study area.

Wekesa's study points out that the genesis and course of the migration and settlement was informed by both external and internal pressure like it was the case in Misri by the light skinned Ethiopian Hamites and displaced in Uganda and Kenya by Karamajong and Teso. It was worth noting that the long and historic journeys were also made as a matter of survival for the entire ethnic group.¹⁶⁹ This finding was significant to this study especially on why the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area migrated from one point to another during the pre-colonial era.

Wekesa's study also argues that migration and settlement of the *Babukusu* had a lasting legacy on their diplomatic nature and the way they relate with other ethnic groups.¹⁷⁰ By the nineteenth century, this ethnic group had developed inter-ethnic diplomatic ties that hardened, solidified and evolved their socio-cultural and political institutions. This finding was vital to this study on how the pre-colonial inter-ethnic relations among the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area enriched their socio-cultural, economic and political facets. But, it is also worth noting that indigenous traditional structures ensured that the community's identity was preserved amid these inevitable cross-cultural exchange eras. This study therefore illustrated the cross-border land conflicts between the Bukusu, Teso, the Ethiopian Hamites and Kalenjin in the Bukusu course of migration and settlement.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid*, p. 34.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 63.

1.8.2 Dynamics impacting the land question in inter-ethnic relations

The land question was an age-old emotive issue world over across several generations.¹⁷¹ This question was exacerbated by skewed patterns of colonialism especially in third world countries, governments' inability to fix the historical issues, ethnocentrism fanned by outdated ethnic stereotypes, political machinations and more recently climate change. In Canada, as was historically the case in the United States, Eliot asserted that the primary conflict between the Indians and European settlers in Canada was traced to westward expansion.¹⁷² The Indians were displaced as settlement progressed from East to the plains and later to the Pacific. This created the land question in Canada that survived countless regimes. The finding on European displacement of the Indians in Canada was a remarkable milestone in this study.¹⁷³ The present study analysed European encroachments on the land in Laikipia and how this encroachment became part of the land question in Laikipia Area that survived for ages. Furthermore, the present study examined encroachment claims among the ethnic communities in Laikipia Area that somewhat had huge bearing to the development of the land question in Laikipia Area.

In Southern America, Nascimento *et.al* holds that Brazilian land issues became complex in the last fifteen years due to conflict over property rights resulting from friction among squatter peasants, multi-interest organisations and government.¹⁷⁴ Conflicts in this environment impacted negatively on agricultural activity within public and private land. The absence of a decisive legal framework on property rights particularly on land aggravated the land question in Brazil. The findings on conflicts over property rights among peasants, organisations and the government in Brazil were

¹⁷¹Beatrice Imbuye., *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

¹⁷²J.L. Elliot, *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

¹⁷³*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴Nascimento, S.E.V and Saes, M.S.M., *Op.Cit.*, p. 1

indispensable to this study. The present study unraveled how the friction over land rights among the ranchers, tribal peasants and governments impacted the land question in Laikipia Area.¹⁷⁵ The finding on the absence of a conclusive legal structure on land holding in Brazil was also essential to the present study. The current study found that land issues in Laikipia Area remained unresolved by both the colonial and post-colonial governments.

In the Far East, Sri Lanka endured a history of land related problems since collapse of colonialism.¹⁷⁶ Ranathilaka argued that policy makers had considered that land settlement should be based on ethnic composition rather than district ratio. Thus, Tamil peasants were typically thrown out of the schemes in areas they perceived as their traditional homelands.¹⁷⁷ The resultant migration of people from Sinhalese majority amounting to an alien encroachment into Tamil homeland was not justified with available historical evidence. Setting up a proper institutional framework without political influence to reduce ethnic discrimination over land or power, was vital for future stability and development of the country.

Nevertheless, after independence every political party in power had implemented colonisation programs in North East with lack of awareness and conciliation of the Tamil people.¹⁷⁸ The settlement program after independence overlooked pre-colonial land holding issues and entrenched the land problem further at the expense of the Tamil. The findings on colonial effects on the development of the land question in Sri Lanka were vital to the present study. This study delved into the impact of the colonial

¹⁷⁵*Ibid*

¹⁷⁶M.B Ranathilaka., *Op. Cit.*, p. 72.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 87.

legacy on the development of the land question in Laikipia Area.¹⁷⁹ Also, the colonial and post-colonial resettlement programs in Sri-Lank and its ramification were instrumental to the present study. The present study explored the history of the land resettlement and settlement programs in Laikipia Area during and after independence. It further assessed its far reaching imports to land question in Laikipia Area. Lastly, the findings on pre-colonial land holding issues were significant on Laikipia's pre-colonial land holding rights and overlooking them led to the build-up of the land question in Laikipia Area.

In Africa, Nasimiyu asserted that the pre-colonial land tenure system in Africa espoused collective title and redistribution of land.¹⁸⁰ Land matters were subject to clan system of patronage, thus, virtually the clan owned the land. The clan further subdivided the land to individual families, but, the kinsmen in the families subscribed to clan patronage regarding land crises and redistribution.¹⁸¹ Accordingly, land during the pre-colonial period was a common property.¹⁸² Therefore, land conflicts during the pre-colonial period were an ethnic responsibility. This finding was vital to the present study; this study examined the land question and inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts in Laikipia Area in the pre-colonial period.

Oviasuyi holds that most colonial regimes in colonial Africa created inter-ethnic conflicts merely for political expediency.¹⁸³ Herders and pastoralists contests over grazing fields and agricultural fields remain the earliest form of the land question and inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts in the pre-colonial Africa.¹⁸⁴ Racial re-categorisation

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁸⁰ Ruth Nasimiyu., *Op.Cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁸³ Oviasuyi, O, P and Uwadiae, J: *Africa and Ethnic conflict Management: A comparative study of Nigeria and South Africa. LWATI: A Journal of contemporary research* vol. 6(2); 2009; p. 252.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

of Africans to fit European stereotypes and hegemony was not only contradictory and incoherent but also induced conflict that was ethnic in nature that erupted during the post-colonial period.

Africa like any part of the world grappled with inter-ethnic land conflicts.¹⁸⁵ As observed earlier, the history of these conflicts dated back to the pre-colonial era. Asamoah's work on Nkonya-Alavanyo assessed the impact of these ethnic groups' conflicts on the Ghanaian internal security and general stability. The study applied qualitative research design to enact the ethnic conflict. Asamoah theorized the conflict from a symbiotic political theory perspective.¹⁸⁶ The work asserted that ethnic aggressions were driven by cultural factors including symbols, myths and language. Asamoah further asserted that, ethnicity and age-old hatred were attributable to the Nkonya-Alavanyo ethnic conflicts. These findings were very useful to the current study. The present study probed the nexus between ethnicity and the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Also, the finding on cultural aspects like symbols, myth and language as triggers of inter-ethnic conflicts between the Nkonya and Alavanyo in Ghana was essential to this study. The present study examined how such cultural features among the ethnic communities in Laikipia turned out to be the driving factors of inter-ethnic rifts with a huge contribution to inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Asamoah further found that, the Nkonya and Alavanyo inter-ethnic conflicts gravely led to the loss of lives and livelihoods.¹⁸⁷ Besides, the endemic conflicts paralysed institutional infrastructure and governments in the Volta region. This led to the rise of

¹⁸⁵ Asamoah, P.K.: *Ethnic conflicts: A threat to Ghana's internal stability*. Oslo: Master of Philosophy thesis; University of Oslo, 2014. p. 61.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

marauding ethnic militia. This state of lawlessness was a breeding ground for wanton abuse of the inalienable fundamental human rights to the affected victims who included women and children. This finding was central to the present study. This study assessed socio-economic and political impact of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. They included; the resulting humanitarian crises, the rise of lawlessness, loss of lives and livelihoods. Asamoah's work established that, government failure to address the root cause of these conflicts, had bred anarchy in the Volta region. The finding on half-heartedness of governments or somewhat general lack of ability to contain inter-ethnic land conflict between the Nkonya and Alavanyo in Ghana was central to this study. This study probed into why inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia persisted in spite of government intervention. It also did an impact assessment to ascertain government's effectiveness in containing escalating inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Further, the study reiterated that the main cause of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflicts in Volta region was land. The study found that cultural and economic significance of land between the two communities had also brought a wedge between Nkonya and Alavanyo in the Volta region.¹⁸⁸ The aspect on the economic value of land was also helpful to the present study. The present study examined the economic value of land in Laikipia Area as a trigger of inter-ethnic conflicts.

Arowosegbe examined the Hausa-Fulani, inter-ethnic conflicts in South-West Nigeria; the height of this age old conflict is land.¹⁸⁹ The problem of land in the area was traced back to the advent of colonialism in Southern Nigeria. Traditional African leaders donated the land in question to the Royal Niger Company ostensibly for company

¹⁸⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 54-56

¹⁸⁹Arowosegbe, J.O : *Ethnic Minorities and Land Conflicts: Social science research council | working papers*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan, 2017, p. 13.

colonial utility. When the company rule ended, the land in question was handed over to the British colonial government. Upon attainment of independence, successive Nigerian governments have been unable to develop the land.¹⁹⁰ This has created a leeway for a protracted conflict between the Hausa and Fulani over the ownership of the land.

These findings were imperative to the present study especially on the colonial land issues which also greatly affects Laikipia Area, especially the colonial land concessions between African leaders and British colonial agents that perpetually impact the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. It also informed on how post-colonial governments on the continental front in Africa, including Kenya failed to address historical land issues that presently contributed critically to the inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa. The current study investigated why past and present government regimes were incapable to conclusively end the periodical inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

In the study *factors influencing inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub-County* by Leley Johana Kipkemoi, the author sought probed the dynamics triggering inter-ethnic' conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub County as its main question and problem.¹⁹¹ Kipkemoi's study was premised on the following objectives; to assess the level to which economic dynamics have triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub-County. To determine the level to which political factors like role of political actors and underlying issues sparked inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub County. Lastly, to investigate how socio-cultural issues aggravated inter-ethnic conflicts in

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁹¹ Leley Johana Kipkemoi. *Factors influencing inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub-County*. Master's thesis, University of Nairobi, 2015, p.78.

Kuresoi North Sub County in Nakuru County.¹⁹² The socio-cultural, political and economic dynamics findings were very indispensable to this study; the present study probed how these dynamics led to the rise of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895.

Kipkemoi's study was anchored on the descriptive survey design; the design was appropriate because information was collected mainly through interviewing respondents in the study area. Kipkemoi's study was theorised on instrumentalism theory of inter-ethnic conflicts which was propagated by Karl Popper in 1965. The theory attributed to the perpetuation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County of the Nakuru County as the hand work of political elites. In this sense, political elites weaponised historical underlying issues to mobilised their ethnic groups into conflicts for their own political ends and convenience.

Kipkemoi's study further found that other than political instigations, cultural stereotypes were also a factor fashioning inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County. Voting patterns every electoral cycle was ethnic based and political affiliations drew ethnic lines, these dynamics intensified inter-ethnic animosity and aggravated inter-ethnic identities that created us versus them narrative and eventually inter-ethnic violence.¹⁹³ Kipkemoi's study also found that politicians' half-hearted response to inter-ethnic conflicts or failure to outrightly condemn both the insurgence and resurgence triggers inter-ethnic the perpetuation conflict. Half-hearted response of the political class is compounded with culture of spreading propaganda or half-truths aimed at balkanising ethnic groups within multi-ethnic composed societies.

¹⁹²*Ibid*

¹⁹³*Ibid*

Ethnicisation of Kenyan politics promoted ethnic bigotry, fuels animosity and pits the Kenyan ethnic groups against each other.¹⁹⁴ The widely held notion that the ethnic group that wins political power had more access to national resources made the electoral process in Kenya hotly contested along the ethnic lines especially the presidential elections. Lack of political hygiene also gave leeway for the propagation of propaganda – half truths or lies fashioned in dimensions to likely push ethnic groups in a heterogeneous societies to collide head on in inter-ethnic clashes. Leley Johana’s Study validated other studies in the area which established that politician’s indecisiveness and failure to act as peace actors escalated inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi. Politicians also peddled half-truths and propaganda that created ethnic animosity and the ensuing inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi.

The findings on the role of political actors in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub-County was crucial to this study; the present study probed the place of politicians and political intrigues in the rise of the land question and expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. In cases where inter-ethnic conflict intervention reverted to political solutions, politicians had the tendency of being naturally bipartisan and untrusted.¹⁹⁵ They gave subjective approaches and propositions that seemed to worsen or refuel the already deplorable situations. They also advanced ethnic nationalists sentiments and invoked subjective fundamental sentiments that continually rip multi-ethnic societies apart making inter-ethnic cohesion a mirage.

¹⁹⁴*Ibid*

¹⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 49.

Kipkemoi's study mainly revealed that inter-ethnic violence in Kuresoi Sub-County arose from massive pressure on land as a force of production.¹⁹⁶ Land as the study established was essential to both herders and crop cultivators and its access was a matter of survival. This finding was very instrumental to the present study on how land triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Kipkemoi's study further found that other potential threats to inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County of Nakuru County were traditional war songs, war weapons and revenge and poems. These songs were associated with initiation rites and they tended to reinforce retaliation and revenge as acts of valour. These songs and poems radicalised the community to be psychologically ready to take up arms or fight back in case of any external aggression or provocations.¹⁹⁷

This finding was essential to this study; this study explored how these aspects contributed to the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Kipkemoi's study further found that dowry burden and the culture of initiation as a rite of passage among the Kalenjins reinforced and radicalised young boys to engage in inter-ethnic conflicts as a cultural responsibility and duty to the community.¹⁹⁸ During the rites of passage boys were socialised to defend their community grazing land, raid cattle for dowry, and be on constant readiness to defend the territorial integrity of their community against what they perceived as external intrusion. It established that initiation as a rite of passage among the Kalenjin societies introduced boys into community warriors and defence systems against external aggression.¹⁹⁹ In this setting, the initiated boys were taught defence tactics and how to appropriately use and make lethal home-made weapons such as spear arrow and shields. This

¹⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 52.

indigenous weaponry assembly technology normalized the inter-ethnic conflicts culture and validated the occurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts among these ethnic groups as part of the community value system.

The advent of multi-party politics in 1991 Kenya ushered in a regrettable culture of inter-ethnic hostilities and confrontations to a scale never witnessed before in the Kenyan democratisation trajectory.²⁰⁰ These regrettable scenarios were ignited by the political class through systematic deceptive narratives of incitements, fanning of cultural stereotypes and arming their ethnic groups against the perceived antagonist ethnic groupings. The result was endless inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi North.²⁰¹ As a conflict-ridden area, Kuresoi North investment potential was on a free fall as investors shy away from investing in the region for fear of losing their lives and investments altogether.

Kipkemoi's study contended that natural economic resources and agricultural resources in their raw form had the prospect of generating inter-ethnic conflicts especially in states that wholly rely on primary production of goods.²⁰² The nature of such inter-ethnic conflicts arose from internal factors as these ethnic groups of people jostle to control these vital resources. This as earlier identified primarily explained why access to land in Kuresoi Sub-County remained a hotly contested issue between herders and crop cultivators. This finding was helpful in probing why access to land remains a bone of contention among the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. These inter-ethnic conflicts were expressed as a form of venting out historical cycle of marginalisation and deliberate exclusion from accessing vital natural resources in favour of the other ethnic groups.

²⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p. 50.

²⁰¹*Ibid*

²⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 42

Elders were a critical component of any inter-ethnic warfare. Indigenous systems of administration entrusted this cadre of people with the noble duty and responsibility to make peace or declare war.²⁰³ While inter-ethnic battlefronts were likely to be littered with youthful combatants in undeniable measure, it was elders who coordinated and gave tutorial fighting skills and survival tactics to be exercised in the battle fields. It is their wealth of experience that inspired the youthful generation to fight with passion and zeal. Besides the foregoing, elders were charged with the noble duty of cleansing warriors in cases where they shed human blood to set them free and their generations from misfortunes. Human blood across the ethnic divide among native African societies was considered sacred and anyone shedding it had to be cleansed by elders.

Kipkemoi's study recommended that a lasting solution to inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County lied in the following interventions; youth employment and suing politicians who incite the youth should be explored, this finding was very useful to this study.²⁰⁴ Employment index among the young population had an impact in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi. High levels of unemployment rendered young people vulnerable to be manipulated as combatants in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts. This is because the situation affected ability to meet their basic needs. They were forced to engage in violence to be able to remain financially relevant.²⁰⁵

The study also advocated for dialogue between warring ethnic groups in the study area. It further suggested inter-ethnic cultural and sporting events to be stepped up to

²⁰³*Ibid.*

²⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p. 57.

²⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 15.

foster cohesion among warring ethnic groups in Kuresoi Sub County.²⁰⁶ Moreover, it recommended that a universally acclaimed rite of passage should be emphasised to avoid barbaric cultures that serve as social institutions that breed and reinforce inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub-County. It concluded that politicians should be censored on weaponising unemployment, retrogressive cultures and historical land issues to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County of Nakuru County. Formal employment as a conflict intervention mechanism promoted cross-cultural interactions and ultimate multi-cultural and ethnic cohesion.²⁰⁷ Formal employment also reduced pressure attached on land as most vital natural resources for survival. High unemployment index rate among the youthful population made these groups of people vulnerable to manipulation by conflicts of actors. Idleness and inability to meet basic needs were major driving factors pushing the unemployed youth to engage in inter-ethnic violence.²⁰⁸

Pauperism created don't care syndromes and general destructive care free attitude, the thinking was that the massive economic sabotage orchestrated in their hands and ensuing conflicts doesn't affect their personal investments neither does it destroy their guaranteed good future in any way. In this sense, they had no material investments to lose as well as an opportunistic future to worry about.²⁰⁹ They hoped to destroy the key tenets of the prevailing economic fabric that based on their presumption discriminated them from being key economic actors. The study noted therefore that formal employment among the youth will made them optimistic and unavailable as tools or objects to be manipulated by the main actors of inter-ethnic

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p. 57.

²⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p. 45.

²⁰⁸*Ibid.*

²⁰⁹*Ibid.*

conflicts.²¹⁰ Their absence from the conflict scene was more likely cripple any inter-ethnic mobilisation and ultimate clashes. A legal mechanism was to be established to try and convict those found guilty of inciting inter-ethnic conflicts in Kuresoi Sub County in Nakuru County. In any futuristic sense, these stern litigation measures were to serve as a lesson to any other forms of mobilisation, funding and any form of incitement of inter-ethnic conflicts. Kipkemoi's study also recommended that heavy security deployments, intelligence gathering and stringent surveillance should be stepped up in inter-ethnic conflicts hot spots to be able to detect, intercept and nib in a bud any insurrection and retaliations before they escalated into full blown crises.²¹¹ This information was important to this work on the efficacy of security deployment to conflicts areas.

Kakai enacted an *inter-ethnic relations history of Bungoma, Mt Elgon, and Trans Nzoia districts*.²¹² The theoretical framework of the study was hinged on the sociological conflict theory. The sociological conflict theory was put forward by the legendary theorist Karl Marx. Kakai's study gave a geographical, demographic, and climatological landscape of the study area. It was upon this context that inter-ethnic relations in the study area occurred. Kakai's study found that cross fertilisation of ideas across the ethnic divide flourished, even though conflictual incidents were documented.²¹³ Kakai's study established that traditional avenues of inter-ethnic conflicts mitigation were applied during the *conflictual* periods. Sharing of circumcisers was also adopted as a peace initiative in Mt Elgon, Trans Nzoia and Bungoma.

²¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 57.

²¹¹*Ibid.*, 45.

²¹²Kakai, *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

²¹³*Ibid.*, p. 63.

Kakai's work was vital to this study in various ways. Of importance however, was that, the current study probed into inequalities to accessing land as the root cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. This study also adopted a climatological, demographic, and geographical approach in contextualising the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. This study also assessed how cross fertilisation of ideas during the inter-war period, enhanced cultural assimilation among the ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area. This study also assessed how ethnicity, general cultural stereotypes and prejudice influenced inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Basing on Kakai's inter-ethnic relations in Mt Elgon, Trans Nzoia and Bungoma were strained by various factors. These factors included ethnicity, colonialism, politics, culture, and cattle rustling.²¹⁴ Consequently, the study determined that land remained a key factor in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Trans-Nzoia, Bungoma and Mt Elgon. These findings were vital to the present study because the current study assessed the impact of colonialism, ethnicity, geo-politics and culture to the evolution of the land question in Laikipia Area.

Wasike's study assessed the impact of ethnic conflicts in Mt Elgon on the East African Community.²¹⁵ The study established that the ethnic conflict in Mt Elgon was a threat to the East African cohesion. These conflicts arose from intra and inter-ethnic dimensions to inter-states scales. This situation was a potential threat to the fragmentation of the East African federation.²¹⁶ It also potentially sabotaged concerted efforts to achieve a political federation in the East African region. This finding was key to the present study; this study weighed into the enhancing factors within the East

²¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 193.

²¹⁵Charles Wasike., *Op.Cit.*, p. 21.

²¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 33.

African region that incubated to the escalation of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Wasike's study further revealed that security agencies deployment in Mt Elgon was not a lasting solution to the endemic inter-ethnic conflicts in the region. This finding on security deployment ineffectiveness as an ideal conflict mitigation measure was significant to the present study.²¹⁷ The current study examined whether security operations in Laikipia Area were feasible conflicts' resolution instrument. Wasike's study further found that police presided over extra-judicial orders that served to abuse undeniable human rights to the victims; this was a necessary building element of the present study.²¹⁸ This included disobedience of court orders that largely provoked the formation of militia groups by the locals. Wasike asserted that evictions went on, in spite of court injunction orders, at the behest of security agencies a clear recipe for anarchy. This finding was fundamental in the course of developing this study. The present study assessed the link between the reign of lawlessness and implementation of the judicial pronouncements in Laikipia Area by various agencies.

Wasike's study claimed that diversification of sources of livelihood would eventually ease pressure on land use in Mt Elgon.²¹⁹ This was to be a welcome relief to agrarian ethnic groups that depended on land for sustainability. This finding on diversification of sources of livelihood was a substantial lifelong resolution to the sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.²²⁰ Land use in Laikipia Area was predominantly for cereal agriculture and pastoralism; easing up pressure on land in the study area relied profoundly on demystifying access to land as a matter of human survival. It

²¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 34.

²¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 57.

²¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 71.

²²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 77.

additionally found that corruption riddled the land allotment exercise in Mt Elgon. Government officials charged with the noble duty to resettle the affected families turned into rogue officials by corrupting the exercise.²²¹ They took advantage of this opportunity to grab land that had been hived off for resettlement of landless families in Chebyuk.

Wasike's study noted that private development on public land was evident in Mt Elgon.²²² Wasike's study further pointed out gender dimension in access to land. It noted that gender discrimination in land redistribution contributed heavily to the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts.²²³ It found that lifting of these cultural barriers would bridge disparities in access to land in Mt Elgon. It too finds that effective and efficient land policies should be instituted to guide issuance of allotment letters and title on public land ear marked for resettlement. Furthermore, it found that to combat Small Arms and Light Weapons illegal peddling required a joint effort of the East African Community. It asserted that inter-ethnic conflicts in East Africa should be solved by addressing historical issues that remained unresolved in the region.²²⁴ It stated that a stable and secure East African federation dependent wholly on inter-ethnic peace in the region.

Wasike's study was useful to this study in several areas. This study evaluated how land as a limited natural resource was the cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.²²⁵ The present study examined how corruption and government maladministration impacted in inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.²²⁶ The finding on cultural barriers

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 93.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

and stereotypes was vital to the present study. This study probed into the impact of cultural stereotypes and barriers to inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The finding on effective and efficient land policies was very useful to the present study. This study examined the impact of land policies in inter-ethnic conflict in Laikipia Area. The finding on illicit weapons was also instrumental to the present study. This study assessed the influence of proliferation of illicit weapons on inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Waithaka reinforced land as the chief cause of conflicts in Mt. Elgon.²²⁷ The study further identified ethnicity as the influencing factor in the occurrence of the ethnic conflicts in Mt Elgon. Additionally, the study found that the military was not sustainable in Mt Elgon. It established that an all-inclusive solution is the antidote to the perennial conflicts in Mt Elgon. Waithaka's study was instrumental to this study. This study examined how ethnicity influences inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Waithaka's finding on military intervention in Mt Elgon was also significant to this study. This study assessed the impact of government security forces deployment in Laikipia Area.

1.8.3 Trends in Inter-ethnic Conflicts

As earlier argued, human societies have grappled with inter-ethnic conflicts word over since dawn of time.²²⁸ Khamala reiterated that ethnic nationalism, ethnocentrism, and ethnic instigated conflicts were a global threat to multi-nationalism the world over. In Canada, there were protracted conflicts between ethnic Indians.²²⁹ The root cause of these conflicts arose from Indians displacements in what was popularly termed as

²²⁷Lucy Waithaka. *Ethnicity as an independent variable in the land conflict in Mount Elgon region*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2013.p. 47.

²²⁸Khamala., *Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

²²⁹Eliot,J.L.,. *Op. Cit.*,p. 177.

European westward expansion. These findings were instrumental to this study; the present study explored how the immigration of the Bantu ethnic groups and European contributed to the rise of the land question and its expression in inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

In Sri-Lanka conflicts have arisen between ethnic Tamil and Sinhalese.²³⁰ The Tamil alleged that Sinhalese infringed on their familial land during the aggressive westward expansion. The land issues fanning inter-ethnic conflicts were instigated by colonialism and the inability by the successive post-colonial regimes to fix the land question with finality.²³¹

Lyon conducted a study on solution for ethnic conflict: Democratic governance in Afghanistan; the study rooted for a steady government, entrenched democratic practices and institutions condensed in a constitutional order as a broad based antidote to recurrent inter-ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.²³² Lyon postulated that the absence of these key elements was the root cause of marauding organised militia, lawlessness, and inter-ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan. Lyon theorised his study on the practicability of the Michael Ignatieff's theory. The theory held that an inter-ethnic conflict does not occur naturally out of ethnic diversity in a heterogeneous ethnic society. Instead, it arose due to the absence of a concrete and responsive national institutional order and the general stability within the geo-political fronts. The finding on a viable government, vibrant democratic tradition and sound institutions hardened in a constitutional order was critical to the present study.

²³⁰MB Ranathika., *Op.Cit.*, p. 70.

²³¹*Ibid.*, p. 75.

²³²Lyon, P.D.S. *A solution for ethnic conflict: Democratic governance in Afghanistan*. Oslo: Oslo University: 2006, p. 301.

Lyon holds that sporadic ethnic unrest, if unchecked and nabbed in a bud, suffocated the critical arteries of effective states and led on to stateless societies and inevitable collapse of established national institutions and governments.²³³ Michael Ignatieff's theory further maintained that the gap created by these collapsing institutions and governing structures becomes a sole avenue and breeding grounds for the rise of marauding ethnic militia. The militias optimise the opportunity at their disposal to create organised networks of crime, illicit trade, and alternative structure that negates the gains of multi-nationalism and global fraternity. This happened at the expense of innocent victims who are subjected to unlawful systems and abuse of their inalienable fundamental human rights.²³⁴

Peter Lyon noted that those marauding militias exploited the cloud of fear in stateless societies to endear themselves to their ethnic groups, ostensibly as a calculative and protective strategy for group expediency. Fragments of these mushrooming outlawed ethnic militias created an inter-ethnic hegemony contest and animosity in heterogeneous societies.²³⁵ In addition, they crippled internal undertakings including the disruption of livelihood within the affected geographical sphere. These crises became the points of mobilization along ethnic lines; besides weaponization of natural resources including land to create tension and cycles of endless sporadic inter-ethnic unrest in the affected regions becomes the norm. The finding on the weaponization of resources in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts by the militia along ethnic lines was significant to the current study.²³⁶ The present study examined the weaponization of land in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Lyons study's finding of the rise of ethnic' militia in stateless societies was

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

²³⁴ *Ibid*

²³⁵ *Ibid*

²³⁶ *Ibid*

instrumental to the present study; this study assessed militarisation of land-based conflict as a far-reaching effect of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Lyon alluded that responsive, stable and independent democratic institutions and governments; instituted through a legal and policy framework that enjoy massive popular will, were the ideal solution to the decades long inter-ethnic strife in Afghanistan.²³⁷ In a broad based spectrum, this study largely attributed lawlessness and ethnic unrest and disintegration in Afghanistan to the absence of a stable government and institutions that enjoy massive popular national approval. Practically, a multi-ethnic government that enjoyed a considerable cross-cultural approval was a workable political solution to inter-ethnic turmoil in Afghanistan.²³⁸ This heralded robust inter-ethnic tolerance and interactions. The study interrogated the importance of the destroyed autonomous institutions in the stateless Afghanistan. It argued that the restoration of collapsed state institutions would enhance inter-ethnic peaceful co-existence. The restoration of these institutions provided the necessary legal and policy intervention avenues and mechanisms leading to inter-ethnic integration and a sustainable solution to the structural causes of the unrests.

Peter Lyon's work acknowledged the centrality of ethnicity in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan. To a certain degree, ethnicity was at the heart of inter-ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.²³⁹ However, the study was skeptical on absolute singular responsibility of ethnicity in the occurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts. The study affirmed that the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts is a nexus between ethnicity and other external factors. In sum, ethnicity was either weaponised or manipulated by external forces in the expression of violent conflicts. The finding that negative

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 306.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

ethnicity alone does not ordinarily prompt inter-ethnic conflicts was considerably relevant to the present study.²⁴⁰ This study established that negative ethnicity combined with other underlying intrinsic and extrinsic dynamics triggered inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The present study further interrogated other conflict triggers that combine with ethnicity to cause inter-ethnic conflicts. This work was handy in striking sustainable inter-ethnic land conflicts interventions in Laikipia Area. However, Lyon's study excluded contextualizing the conflicts in Afghanistan to this study's set objectives. The present study drew its conclusion on instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories, another gap in Lyon's study.²⁴¹

Inman's work titled, "*When national minorities become local majorities: Federalism, Ethnic politics and violent conflict*"; employed the quantitative methodology to examine ethnic groups in a federal government as a component of investigation in a specified year.²⁴² The application of the quantitative methodology by Inman was a gap that this study filled. The present study employed historical research design in gathering, analysing and presenting data on the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895.²⁴³ It similarly exploited the local insurrections by marginalized groups in a federal theory to details how local ethnic political affairs turned ferocious once intra-ethnic antagonism escalated. The finding on uprising by marginalized groups in a federal theory was rudimentary to the current study. This study evaluated marginalization of ethnic minorities from access to land and its redistribution in the study area. It further probed into how these inequalities triggered the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² Molly Inman. *When national minorities become local majorities: Federalism, Ethnic politics and violent conflict*. Maryland: University of Maryland, 2013, p. 55.

²⁴³ *Ibid*

Inman's study unraveled why federalism was not a sustainable intervention in suppression of mushrooming sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts.²⁴⁴ It also underscored why politicisation of ethnicity was a major threat to federal units and expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. It further debunked the futility of federal government's excessive response to the inter-ethnic conflicts in federal settings. The finding on the politicisation of ethnicity in federal confederation was critical to the current study. This study explored how the political class weaponised cultural homogeneity as a rallying factor in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The study found that creating room for local governments in federal systems to solve inter-ethnic conflicts in their respective federal units was the ideal intervention. The study also explored the reality that federalism to a varying degree limit the sprouting of inter-ethnic conflicts in settings where such insurrections are rife.²⁴⁵

It was imperative to note that, this study gave details on how the political discourse was divisive in resolving the widespread challenges of inter-ethnic conflicts.²⁴⁶ In fact, politicking was the nerve centre rightly observed as the chief architect of inter-ethnic conflicts; this finding was noteworthy to this present study. The study rooted for the presence of marginalized ethnic minorities in mainstream federal systems to rid out exclusion and embrace diversity, as part of the wider scheme to uphold fraternisation and inclusion in ethnic federal systems. The study further unraveled central government's unlawful excesses and combative interventions while mitigating inter-ethnic conflicts, which was fundamental to this study.²⁴⁷ The present study assessed the effectiveness of the national police and military deployment in Laikipia Area a government stringent measure to mitigate the conflicts. Even if Inman's contributed to

²⁴⁴*Ibid*

²⁴⁵Molly Inman, *Op. Cit*, p. 53.

²⁴⁶*Ibid*

²⁴⁷*Ibid*,. p. 54.

the enrichment of this study, land was not studied as the main cause of inter-ethnic conflicts, a gap which was filled in this study. Moreover, it did not give the historicity of the problem of land in respect to the present study's objectives, a gap which this study filled.

In Africa like the rest of the world, inter-ethnic conflicts were expressed since the pre-colonial era.²⁴⁸ Pre-colonial conflicts were a contest between ethnic herders who were mostly sophisticated in the military power and the crop farmers' ethnic peasants who were effortlessly displaced by the former. These were largely inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts before the colonial era across Africa. In Ghana, inter-ethnic conflicts occurred between the Nkonya and Alavanyo.²⁴⁹ The centerpiece of these endless conflicts was land ownership that stretches from the pre-colonial era cross border-conflicts. The Alavanyo-Nkonya inter-ethnic conflicts were augmented by cultural stereotypes, colonialism, political machinations and inability by the independent regimes in Ghana to fix the land problem with finality.²⁵⁰ These findings were crucial to this study especially how these factors contributed to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. In Nigeria, inter-ethnic conflicts were expressed between the Hausa and the Fulani.²⁵¹ At the centre of these endless vicious conflicts was land that has survived ages. This Land was initially handed over to the Royal Niger Company during the colonial days by the elders but remained undeveloped and contested to this day.

Within the East African region, inter-ethnic conflicts were experienced between the Hutu and Tutsi in DRC Congo's South Kivu region.²⁵² The land conflicts arose from

²⁴⁸Oviasuyi, O.P and Uwadiae. J. *Op.Cit.*, p. 252.

²⁴⁹Asamoah. P.K. *Op.Cit.*, p. 61.

²⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁵¹Arowosegbe J.O., *Op.Cit.*, p. 13.

²⁵²Gillian Mathys and Koen Vlassenroot: 'It's not all about the land': *Land disputes and conflict in the eastern Congo*. Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute prsp briefing paper 14, 2016, p. 5.

what the Tutsi termed as trust issues and blatant betrayal by the Hutu. At the height of the Rwanda crisis, the Hutu-Tutsi inter-ethnic conflicts spilled over to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Hutu grabbed the fleeing Tutsi land by breaching land concessions hurriedly made in the middle of the crisis.²⁵³ The Hutu-Tutsi inter-ethnic origin was in Rwanda. The underlying issues were skewed processes of land distribution and redistribution, socio-economic marginalization, political incitements and funding.²⁵⁴ The findings on the regional spillover of the Tutsi-Hutu inter-ethnic conflict were instrumental to this study.

In Kenya which was basically an Agrarian society by any description, there had been inter-ethnic conflicts between the Pokomo and Oromo in the Tana Delta.²⁵⁵ The conflict had been based on land use between herders and crop cultivators.²⁵⁶ The land use inter-ethnic conflict between the crop farming ethnic Pokomo and herding ethnic Oromo was crucial to this study. This study examined land use conflict between the ethnic herders and crop farming ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. In Nakuru, the ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Kipsigis were entangled in an inter-ethnic conflict triangle. The main cause of these conflicts was the land use contest between three communities pitting Kipsigis against Kisii and Agikuyu.²⁵⁷ The escalation of these conflicts was attributed to political incitements, limited land resources, and socio-economic marginalization and underlying land issues findings which were valuable to this study.

Ogalo Jacob Adipo's study '*a history of cross-border resource conflict persistence between the Pokot and Karamajong since 1850,*' investigated the factors triggering

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁵⁵ Kirchner K. *Conflicts and Politics in Tana Delta Kenya: An Analysis of the 2012-2013 clashes and the General and the General and presidential elections.* University of Leiden: African Studies Research, 2013. p.61.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

the perpetuation of the cross-border resource conflicts between the Pokot and Karamajong since 1850 as its main problem.²⁵⁸ Adipo's study was guided by the following objectives; it highlighted the Pokot and Karamajong pre-colonial conflicts. It examined the advent of British colonialism and eventual creation of the Kenya - Uganda borderline and its relation to the Pokot Karamajong resource contests since 1902. It assessed the origin and effect of the Pokot-Karamajong resource conflict persistence. It evaluated the adequate mitigation mechanism that guaranteed the management and prevention of the Pokot Karamajong resource conflict.

Adipo's study was based on two theories; the conflict theory by Obercall and Ubuntu African theory.²⁵⁹ Conflict theory presupposes the rise of ethno-territorial border conflicts as series of suspicious, divergent opinion on how to share border resources and underlying historical and cultural differences and the animosity between neighbouring communities.

Ubuntu African philosophy argued that the people of African descent can blend and coexist cohesively and apply their heritage in the mitigation of their ensuing conflicts.²⁶⁰ The socio-cultural, political and economic issues triggering the ethnic conflict could be managed as community economic resources on the principle that the Community wellness is the greater good of all. The theory emphasized that unity of purpose was strength and division of any nature was a weakness thus, communal capital was the key tenet of this theory.

²⁵⁸Ogalo Jacob Adipo. *A history of cross-border resource conflict persistence between the Pokot and Karamajong since 1850*. Maseno University: PhD History, 2017, p.5.

²⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 9.

Adipo's study applied the historical research design.²⁶¹ It also enabled the researcher to apply non-probabilistic sampling techniques like purposive and snowballing which were insightful in understanding the nature of the problem. These sampling techniques were crucial to non-random sampling of respondents of this study in Laikipia Area. Moreover, the technique gave the researcher the liberty to engage mostly knowledgeable Informants. The application of this methodology, non-probabilistic sampling techniques of purposive and snowballing were significant to this study. Validity of the data inherently relied on construct validity.²⁶² The year 1850 was appropriate as the starting point of the study for the reason that it helped to trace the inter-ethnic relation of these communities before the arrival of the British.

Adipo's study established that the conflict between the Pokot and Karamajong arose from their value of livestock.²⁶³ The socio-economic price and measure of wealth included bride price and measure of wealth. Both the Pokot and Karamajong were not involved in the creation of boundaries during the colonial era, thus remain a bone of contention between the two warring communities. The findings on the role of colonialism in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts between Karamajong and Pokot were critical to this study. This study examined how colonialism contributed to the rise of the land question and its effects in the expression of the inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Adipo's study further revealed that the arbitrarily created colonial boundaries became the focus of conflicts whenever one community crossed another boundary in search of water and pasture.

Internal issues triggering inter-ethnic conflicts between the Pokot and Karamajong included marginalization, harsh climate, value of cattle and the influences of

²⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 30.

²⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 18.

politicians.²⁶⁴ The findings on politicians' role in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts between the Pokot and Karamajong were crucial to this study. This study assessed the role of politicians in the rise of the land question and expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The finding on the colonial and political influence in the occurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts was significant to this study.

Adipo's study also explicated that the protracted inter-ethnic conflicts had a negative consequence on education; health and infrastructure. It also led to displacement of persons, destruction of property and disregarding of the pastoralist lifestyles by the section of the warring communities.²⁶⁵ The findings on the consequences of inter-ethnic conflicts between the Karamajong and Pokot were important to this study. This study examined the socio-economic, political and environmental consequences of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Adipo's study established that traditional methods of conflict resolution were applied by invoking the council of elders and using peace messengers. It made the following logical conclusion; conflicts persisted as a result of high demand for cattle as a social cultural and economic resources and intrusion into each other grazing land.²⁶⁶ It further concluded that boundaries created without the knowledge of the two communities remained an underlying issue pitting the two communities against each other.

Adipo's study established that the effects of the inter-ethnic conflicts between Pokot and Karamajong included widespread poverty, underdevelopment, and loss of lives and destruction of property on a massive scale. It further noted that both the colonial

²⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 182.

²⁶⁵*Ibid*

²⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 183.

and post-colonial government overlooked the traditional peace settlement mechanism. The preposition to overlook traditional peace settlement mechanism constrained efforts to achieve sustainable peace in the area.²⁶⁷ The inclusion or fusion of conventional and modern conflict mechanisms was essential to this study. The finding on the role of traditional leaders as actors in conflict resolution was helpful to this study. This study evaluated the role of traditional leaders and elders in peace building initiative in the interethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Adipo's study suggested that the young people in the conflict area should be included in the mainstream economy through jobs opportunities and income generating activities.²⁶⁸ This will make it hard for the masterminds of inter-ethnic conflicts to manipulate them because of idleness and desperations out of the hard economic times. The insights on widening socio-economic inclusion among the young people was contributory to this study especially on making them useful rather than remain idle and susceptible to manipulation by inter-ethnic conflict masterminds.²⁶⁹

In addition Adipo's study recommended to the government of Kenya and Uganda on the need to devise an electronic identification formula of registering cattle to further avert the escalation of cattle rustling in the troubled region. It also recommended that alternative sources of livelihoods should be emphasized to demystify overreliance on cattle.²⁷⁰ Water should be drilled in the area to help the two communities living in this arid and semi-arid environment access water.²⁷¹ Water sources remain contested areas due to the scarcity of this natural resource between the Pokot and Karamajong.

²⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 183.

²⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 184.

²⁶⁹*Ibid*

²⁷⁰*Ibid*

²⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 185.

Adipo's study suggested that both levels of government should upgrade the road infrastructure to spur economic growth in the area.²⁷² The road network should also facilitate easy movement of the security forces to effectively restore peace and security in the study area or be able to respond to the distress calls on time. Adipo's study additionally recommended that peace settlement process should include all communities' stakeholders in order to achieve a lasting solution.²⁷³ Adipo's study further recommended that the formal court system should be fused with the conventional court systems to build confidence among the locals who are deeply rooted in their culture.

Kennedy Agande Mkutu's study on pastoralist conflict, governance, and small arms in North Rift, North East Africa, explored the cases of the Karamojong in Uganda, as well as West Pokot, Dol Dol in Laikipia, and Baragoi in Samburu, Kenya. The research highlighted that the roots of underdevelopment and deliberate marginalization in these regions was traced back to the colonial era. During this period, the colonial regime favored individual landholding over community landholding. This preference disrupted traditional land management systems and contributed to the enduring issues of conflict, inequality, and poor governance in these pastoralist communities.²⁷⁴

Mkutu's study found out that the elders blessed raids and young people were the combatants.²⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, the same elders were the key actors in peace settlements. The findings on the elders two pronged role in the instigation and

²⁷²*Ibid*

²⁷³*Ibid*

²⁷⁴Kennedy Agande Mkutu: pastoralist conflict, governance and Small Arms in North Rift, North East Africa, and the cases of Karamajong, Uganda, West Pokot Dol, Laikipia and Baragoi Samburu Kenya. University of Bradford, 2005, p.9.

²⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 401.

mitigation of inter-ethnic conflicts were crucial to this study.²⁷⁶ Mkutu's study established that the policies conceived by both colonial and post-colonial regimes marginalized the pastoralists' communities. Besides, the colonial policies fashioned cleavages and resulting inter-ethnic conflicts. Further, inter-ethnic conflicts was arising phenomenon in the Horn of Africa caused by anthropological, geo-spatial, global warming and proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons peddled in this region to sustain colonialism, Cold War and World Wars through proxy conflicts and diplomatic alliances. Competing forces in the region were deployed and armed by protagonists in the Cold War to protect their interests. These arms not only served the interests of the developed nation but were also used to increase inter-ethnic hostilities within this region.²⁷⁷

The findings on the pivotal role played by the colonial regime in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts were instrumental to this study. Mkutu's study further established that the assumption that pastoralists face lifts lies in privatization of land holding and titling failed the test of time. Such policies were oblivious to the indigenous land tenure system that was productive in every sense. The finding on the disregarding of the traditional land holding systems as a trigger to inter-ethnic conflicts among the pastoralist communities was crucial to this study.²⁷⁸ Mkutu's study additionally found that massive insecurity in the pastoralist region compelled the government to arm vigilante groups to supplement its policing efforts.²⁷⁹ These firearms are at times misused for criminal purposes.

²⁷⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 407.

²⁷⁸*Ibid*

²⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 405.

In the study area, there had been inter-ethnic conflicts between herders and crop-cultivators in Rumuruti.²⁸⁰ The bone of contention was the competing interests over land use between the two sets of ethnic groups. Colonialism, drought, political intrigues and cultural aspects contributed substantially to the escalation of these conflicts that seem to recur sporadically.

1.8.4 Influence of the land question on inter-ethnic conflicts

Land had a huge influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts given the evidence generated by studies from countless scholars across the world.²⁸¹ This painted a compelling picture that arguably land and its influence in the expression inter-ethnic conflicts is a global phenomenon. Inter-ethnic land conflicts recurred with some degree of certainty in spite of multinational concerted intervention efforts that range from military, legal to legislations measures.

Gillian Mathys and Koen Vlassenroot studied the Hutu-Tutsi inter-ethnic land conflicts in South Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.²⁸² The conflicts in South Kivu arose from a broken agreement between the Hutu and Tutsi. The Tutsi accused the Hutu for betraying their land agreements at the peak of the Rwandan crisis. The Rwandan crisis in early 1990's had spill over effects in the Democratic Republic of Congo.²⁸³ The effects of the Rwandan crisis forced the Tutsi to flee South Kivu area entrusting the Hutu as the custodian of their vacant land. This finding was imperative on land concessions both in colonial and post-colonial era which overtime have been hardened into historical land injustices and are the backbone of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia County. Unfortunately, this was an avenue for the Hutu to

²⁸⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

²⁸¹Beatrice Imbuye., *Op.Cit.*, p. 100.

²⁸²Gillian Mathys and Koen Vlassenroot., *Op.Cit.*, p. 6.

²⁸³*Ibid*

impinge on the Tutsi ancestral land in South Kivu.²⁸⁴ The Hutu returned and found the Tutsi had occupied their land. This has been the main cause of the perennial inter-ethnic land conflicts in South Kivu between the Tutsi and Hutu.

Batware established that inter-ethnic conflicts witnessed in Rwanda, at the advent of the last decade of the twentieth century were caused chiefly by land.²⁸⁵ Batware's study found that Tutsi elites in Rwanda excluded the Hutu from accessing chunks of land in the Rwandan countryside. These glaring inequalities in access to land in Rwanda, was one of the factor that led to the violent outbreaks of inter-ethnic conflicts in Rwanda between the Hutu and Tutsi.²⁸⁶ The finding on land related cleavages created by the Tutsi elites in Rwanda were pivotal to the present study. This study was pre-occupied with land cleavages fashioned by the elites in Laikipia Area that have over the time triggered the development of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts.

Kenya has largely been affected by perennial, inter-ethnic conflicts.²⁸⁷ Many parts of the country were affected with inter-ethnic land conflicts. From the foregoing, there existed numerous studies in Kenya on the subject of inter-ethnic land conflicts. Kirchner explored an inter-ethnic land contest between the Pokomo and Oromo.²⁸⁸ Kirchner observed that the conflict fanned by politicians sparked from 2012 to 2013 in the Tana Delta in coastal Kenya. The epicentre of this conflict was the Kau farm in the Tana Delta. Agricultural Pokomo clashed with the pastoralists Oromo over the Kau farm. The Oromo made claims that Kau farm was their historic migratory route.²⁸⁹ The Pokomo on their part claimed that Kau farm was their ancestral land from which they

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*

²⁸⁵ Billy Batware., *Op.Cit.*, p.4.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*

²⁸⁷ Kirchner K., *Op.Cit.*, p. 9.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*

cultivated their crops and eked a living. This agricultural-pastoralists land-based conflict was very critical to this study. Laikipia area was similarly agrarian and pastoralist region. Moreover, the climatic conditions in Laikipia were equally semi-arid. The political factor in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts was similarly central to this study. The role of politicians in influencing inter-ethnic land conflicts was also studied in Laikipia Area.

Kipkemoi's study illuminated a Kipsigis, Kikuyu and Abagusii inter-ethnic land based conflict triangle.²⁹⁰ The hotbed of these conflicts was Kuresoi North Sub-County in Nakuru County. The Kipsigis maintain that land in Kuresoi was their familial land. They accuse the Abagusii and the Agikuyu for territorial intrusion. These factors influenced by political incitement led to perennial conflicts in Kuresoi North Sub County. These findings were important in studying inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The finding on territorial encroachment was reflected in Laikipia Area. Kipkemoi's study examined territorial land contests in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. This study also interrogated political influence as a factor in inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Imbuye studied intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot in Mt Elgon.²⁹¹ It explored intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot subset of the Kalenjin in Mt. Elgon from 1945 to 2010.²⁹² It delved into the Sabaot history and its net effect on land tenure and land use relations among the Sabaot sub clans in Mt Elgon Sub County. It also probed how these dynamics augmented inter-ethnic conflicts of a historic magnitude, resulting into mass loss of lives and property. Imbuye's study was built on constructivism and

²⁹⁰Kipkemoi, L. J. *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

²⁹¹Beatrice Imbuye, *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

²⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 17.

instrumentalism theories of inter-ethnic conflicts.²⁹³ Constructivist theory was advanced by Barth who opined that ethnicity is a resultant effects of social process as opposed to cultural, artificially created or recreated depending on the environment. Based on constructivists' interpretation, ethnicity in Africa and Mt Elgon among the Sabaot was a creation of the activities of missionaries and colonialism. It was these forces that fashioned its historicity and fluidity resulting in the creation of ethnic identities and in these case identities among the clans.²⁹⁴ In a broad-based spectrum, clan nationalism arose from the historic years of marginalization at the behest of the colonial authorities.²⁹⁵ This was largely disfranchising one clan over the other regarding distribution and redistribution of material benefits in socio-economic realms. Those who felt aggrieved by the colonial system at the expense of other clans regarding access to land resorted to violence as a form of expressing their grievances. This was a way of breaking them free from historic land marginalization.²⁹⁶ In the instrumentalism sense, inter-clan nationalism and protracted conflicts among the Sabaot in Mt Elgon was triggered by elites with a material reward motivation.²⁹⁷ These material rewards included land in Chebyuk phases one to three among other socio-political and economic opportunities.

Imbuye's study applied descriptive research design, the method was appropriate because the study involved interpretation of human behaviour in the intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon.²⁹⁸ It was also qualitative in the sense that non-numeric data on intra-ethnic among the Sabaot in Mt Elgon relations sparking

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

conflicts were presented. The findings of instrumentalism theory of inter-ethnic conflicts were instrumental to this study especially on colonial and political or elite dimensions.

Imbuye's study objectives included giving a geographical and historical background of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot before 1945. It assessed the extent of the impact of anti-colonial relations among the Sabaot within 1945 and 1963.²⁹⁹ It evaluated the intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot subset of the Kalenjin group in the post-colonial era within 1964 and 1992. It analysed the intra-ethnic instabilities arising from the Sabaot Sub-clans of Mt. Elgon and its resulting mitigation efforts between 1993 and 2010.

Imbuye's study established that the perennial conflict that occurred every election cycle was about land.³⁰⁰ The Sabaot intra-ethnic groups contested the ownership of land in what has been christened as Chebyuk phase one, two and three schemes. Imbuye established that the problem of land in Mt. Elgon stretched from the pre-colonial era.³⁰¹ The study conceptualised the conflict in a constructivism and instrumentalism theories of ethnic conflicts. It established that social forces like colonialism and introduction of missionary activities created structural conflicts and land problem in Mt Elgon. Imbuye's study established that Europeans made a permanent settlement in Africa among the native Africans. This was achieved through the alienation of land and ultimate displacement of peasants from their land.³⁰² Therefore, colonizing Africa was part of this wider strategy that in every sense symbolized European political grip and their economic lifeline.

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁰⁰Beatrice Imbuye., *Op. Cit.*, p. 33.

³⁰¹*Ibid*

³⁰²*Ibi.*, p. 66.

Imbuye's study further established that politicisation of ethnicity contributed hugely to the expression of intra-ethnic conflicts among the Sabaot in Mt Elgon.³⁰³ It also unraveled that previous government's inability to offer a lasting solution to the land problem in Mt Elgon, led to the rise of the ethnic based militia.³⁰⁴ An example of the ethnic' militia that arose in Mt Elgon was the Sabot Land Defence Force. Imbuye gave a holistic background upon which the conflict among the Sabaot intra-ethnic groups emanated. It gave an anthropological, geographical, and climatological overview among other factors that give the conflict a broad based background.³⁰⁵

Imbuye's study was vital to this work in numerous ways. To begin with, the politicisation of land in the manifestation of the conflict was a factor of inquiry to the present study. This study examined the role of politicians in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The theories of instrumentalism were also applied in this study. This study theorised the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area from the instrumentalism perspectives.³⁰⁶ This study also gave a holistic background upon which inter-ethnic conflicts arose in Laikipia Area. This included an anthropological, geographical, demographical and climatological backdrop upon which inter-ethnic conflicts rise in Laikipia Area. Imbuye's periodization of the conflict was also suitable to this present study. This study contextualized inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in a chronological and periodical manner. This was done through examining the conflict from both the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras.³⁰⁷

Imbuye's study recommended that governments should invest heavily in surveillance, information gathering and early warning systems in the inter-clan conflicts among the

³⁰³ *Ibid*

³⁰⁴ Beatrice Imbuye., *Op.Cit.* p. 35.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*

Sabaot in Mt Elgon.³⁰⁸ Such huge investment would destabilize any forms of insurgence, resurgence and counter-attacks. Intervention measures should be swift and timely to deny these organised militia groups the space to regroup, re-strategize and reorganize for counter attacks and launching of fresh attacks.³⁰⁹ It was also established that protracted inter-clan conflicts had psychological trauma on victims and survivors.³¹⁰ Counselors and psychiatrists should be readily available in local hospitals within Mt Elgon to help survivors and victims' recuperating from the effects of war and protracted armed conflicts. Imbuye's study further recommended that the central government should facilitate peace committees to have sessions even in the absence of conflicts in a normalized fashion as part of a sustainable conflicts mitigation strategy.³¹¹ A public awareness was necessary to induct women regarding their vital role in communities as agents of peace rather than merchants of violence. The focus on women was informed by the fact that these groups of people were the ones who bore the most brunt of any protracted war or armed conflicts.³¹²

Khamala's study on the crisis of gender shaped the Bukusu-Sabaot inter-ethnic identities in Mt Elgon.³¹³ The study explored a set of conceptualisation theories. They included primordial, constructivists, feminist and imperial theories. These theories demonstrated how biological ties, social forces like colonialism, cultural factors like patriarchy, and ethnic diversity reinforced inter-ethnic identities among the Bukusu and Sabaot in Mt Elgon.³¹⁴ It further established that a gender based hegemony fashions ethnic identities between the Bukusu and Sabaot in Mt Elgon. In this respect,

³⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 153

³⁰⁹*Ibid*

³¹⁰*Ibid*

³¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 154.

³¹²*Ibid.*, p. 154.

³¹³Khamala, *Op. Cit*, p. 36.

³¹⁴*Ibid*

the study found that gender was a key factor in fanning inter-ethnic identities and conflicts.³¹⁵ Women urged on men in the battlegrounds for the greater triumph of their ethnic group in the inter-ethnic conflicts between the Bukusu and Sabaot in Mt Elgon. These findings were fundamental to the present study; this study looked at how gender impacted inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Khamala's study further established that manipulation of cultural factors among ethnic groups by the elite led on to inter-ethnic conflicts among the Bukusu and Sabaot in Mt Elgon.³¹⁶ These cultural factors included unique symbols, myth and rituals. These findings were also relevant to the present study. This study assessed the effects of cultural stereotypes in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Mwenda explored *complexities of Natural Resources conflict in Kenya: A case study of Laikipia Area*.³¹⁷ Mwenda's study was anchored on resource scarcity, classical conflict and farming conflict theories. Resource scarcity theory propounded by Thomas Homer-Dixon postulated that when, natural resources are limited it creates a disdain in the state policies and provoked the conflicts. Classical conflict theory postulated that when cleavages arise in unfair distribution of resources in favour of the majority groups' conflict arise as propagated by Karl Marx.³¹⁸ Farming conflict theory argued that conflict arises from human thoughts and conveyed messages through inter-personal relations by forms of interpretation. Information or thoughts triggered conflict on the basis of the contextual messages they convey through their in-depth analysis by the respondents.

³¹⁵*Ibid*

³¹⁶*Ibid*

³¹⁷Tan Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

³¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 19.

Mwenda's study was centred on descriptive and analytical method of data collection. Both qualitative and quantitative data were generated and analyzed in the study.³¹⁹ It studied the complexities of natural resources conflicts in Kenya with Laikipia County as a case study. The study enumerated the various players, dialogues and claims behind the contemporary inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County. Mwenda's study further assessed the impact of the conflicts in Laikipia on county's natural wealth, sources of revenue of local group of people and conservancies. Lastly, it examined the significance of the conflict to the diplomatic relations between Kenya and Britain. The conflict in Laikipia eroded the multi-cultural cohesion in a multi-ethnic County.

This conspicuous disunity negated the county's rich potential in agriculture and tourism. The periodic conflicts in Laikipia led to loss of jobs in ranches as workers were laid off when ranches shut their operations as conflicts and invasion became unbearable.³²⁰ Armed gangs destroyed property, murdered wildlife and endangered lives of tourists.³²¹ Laikipia was very key to tourism in Kenya. Continued conflict in the County in the long run hurt the Kenyan tourism sector in term of revenue generations. Occasional displacement of the Bantu communities disrupted their livelihoods that is inherently crop farming.

The findings from Mwenda's study were vital to the present study as it helped to explore the question of numerous actors in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.³²² The impact of the conflict on natural wealth, source of revenue of the groups of people in Laikipia Area was also worthwhile to this study. The present

³¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 21.

³²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 65.

³²¹*Ibid.*, p. 66.

³²²*Ibid.*

study highlighted the magnitudes of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area on natural environment and sources of livelihood of the ethnic groups.

Wanyama assessed the impact of peace initiative policy to the good of the households affected by natural resource based conflicts in Laikipia North Sub-County.³²³ It evaluated the impact of opening up ranches for grazing for the pastoralist's welfare. It further examined the influence of accessibility of water to the wellbeing of households affected by natural resource conflicts in Laikipia North Sub-County.³²⁴ It additionally, assessed the economic impact of natural resource conflicts to the households recovering from conflicts in Laikipia North Sub-County.

Finally, it studied the impact of the initiative to safeguard and exploit natural resources sustainably to the welfare of the pastoral family units in Laikipia North Sub-County.³²⁵ The findings on natural resources conflict especially land, opening up the ranches to pastoralist and the impact of market viability in the conflict prone areas were central to this study. This study weighed into the consequences of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia on pastoralists and the disruption of the local value chains.

Fredrick Kariuki Warurii's study – *inter-ethnic conflicts, trends, causes, effects and interventions in Rumuruti division of Laikipia County, 1963-2010* sought to establish why endemic perennial patterns of inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti Division of Laikipia County persist, in this sense, it sought to probe why they persist in spite of intervention measures.³²⁶ It assessed their net effects on the people involved, the environment, food security and economic viability of the division this was essential to

³²³Wanyama, J.B., *Op.Cit.*, p. 37.

³²⁴*Ibid*

³²⁵*Ibid*

³²⁶Warurii, *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

this study.³²⁷ Significantly, it assessed the viability of conflict mitigation by engaging indigenous communities, the clergy and non-governmental actors whose findings were crucial to this study.³²⁸ It further evaluated the conflict trends between 1963 and 2010. It interrogated the origin and factors triggering inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti Division of Laikipia County which was central to this study. It assessed the net effects of these inter-ethnic conflicts on food security in Rumuruti division of Laikipia County. It gauged the impact of involving local communities, government institutions, clergy and on governmental pressure groups inter-ethnic intervention efforts in Laikipia County.³²⁹ Warurii study applied descriptive research design. The design was appropriate because data was generated through field interviews.

Warurii's study, theorized inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti Division using in'compability of plural society by Furnivall and Smith it employed the General greed versus grievances theory by Collier and Hoeffler to explain phenomenon.³³⁰ Warurii's study established that; conflicts were seen from the lenses of ethnic exclusion to accessing vital natural resources in Rumuruti. The conflict was also conceptualised from the economic greed perspective. Warurii's study established that a political order can solve inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti through equitable distribution of resources. Warurii's study further established that the cause of land problems in Rumuruti had roots in colonialism. Colonial land policies uprooted Africans from their ancestral land creating historical grievances that remain unresolved.³³¹ It also held that post-colonial governments were unable to fix the historical land problems in Rumuruti.³³²

³²⁷ *Ibid*

³²⁸ *Ibid*

³²⁹ *Ibid*

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³³¹ *Ibid*

³³² *Ibid*

Warurii's study unraveled that cattle rustling was institutionalised as a way of life in inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti. It similarly unraveled that negative ethnicisation and politicisation of underlying issues contributed to inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti.³³³

Warurii's study probed the root cause of inter-ethnic conflicts.³³⁴ It also explored the impact of intervention actors like religious groups, governments and civil society groups.

Warurii's study was useful to this present study in countless ways.³³⁵ The finding on ethnic exclusion to accessing natural resources was important to this study.³³⁶ This study examined the impact of exclusion of ethnic communities from access to land in inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. It also researched the impact of negative ethnicity to the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The finding on economic greed as the cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti was also vital to this study. This study evaluated the impact of land as an economic resource in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.³³⁷ The outcome on the colonialists' contribution to the land problem in Rumuruti was also valuable to this study. This study assessed the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia as Area a colonial legacy.

The finding on the effectiveness by post-colonial governments to fix the land problem in Rumuruti was also beneficial to this study. The present study probed the effectiveness and efficiency of post-colonial government agencies efforts to offer a lasting solution to the inter-ethnic land conflict in Laikipia Area. The finding on negative ethnicity and politicisation of underlying issues was similarly vital to the

³³³ *Ibid*

³³⁴ *Ibid*

³³⁵ *Ibid*

³³⁶ *Ibid*

³³⁷ *Ibid*

present study. This study explored the link between negative ethnicity and politicisation of underlying issues and how they contribute to inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Warurii's study recommended that victims of land alienation and unjust dispossession by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes in Rumuruti be compensated.³³⁸ The compensation programme was to be transparent and not be riddled with ethnic prejudices, stereotypes or bias whatsoever.³³⁹ Warurii's study recommended that sustainable peace in Rumuruti should also wholly target or be inclined to mopping up illegal firearms from civilian hands. It also recommended that the national government should re-invent its security strategy in Laikipia County.³⁴⁰ Police stations and security personnel deployment in the County should be up scaled.

Warurii's study also recommended that politicians and opinion leaders should be prevailed upon to stop mannerism and sentiments that serve as inflammatory gestures triggering inter-ethnic land conflicts in Rumuruti. It also vouched for both levels of government to conceive a radical marshal plan aimed at improving the infrastructure in Rumuruti. It further advocated that improved transport and communication networks will radically promote entrepreneurship and job opportunities in Rumuruti. It will also improve the mobility of security personnel in the event they are responding to distress calls.³⁴¹

Warurii's study also commended that effective and efficient policing of Rumuruti should be approached through government-community partnership. In this sense, community policing should be enforced through *Nyumba kumi* initiatives. District

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

³³⁹ *Ibid*

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*

peace committees should be given legal jurisdiction and their independence safeguarded to enhance a liberal working environment. Besides, its membership should capture differing interests and representation of the general public.³⁴² In addition, these structured and policy reforms should not preclude a clear and adequate funding programme for the district peace committee. It further suggested that community leaders and elders across the ethnic divide should adopt conscious inter-ethnic de-escalation awareness and intentional inter-ethnic cohesion among the multi-cultural communities residing in Rumuruti.

In the Parselelo Kantai study, *'In the grip of vampire state: Maasai land struggle in Kenya politics,'* the study established that the Maasai made two agreements with the British in 1904 and 1911 leading to their dispossession of the Laikipian plateau.³⁴³ The signing of the Anglo-Maasai treaty of 1904 strengthened the Anglo-Maasai relations even so; that did not alter the master and subject ties that bound them. The successful relocation of the Maasai to the South Rift Valley region enabled the colonial regime to establish settler farming in Central Rift Valley. However, feelings of Maasai discontent emerged later. Kantai's study elucidated that on 13th August 2004, the Maasai launched a return of their land campaign, a date relating with the first Anglo-Maasai agreement of 1904.³⁴⁴ They staged protests and finally presented their memorandum to both the Kenya and British governments. Mainly the Maasai wanted a return of their two million acre land in the former northern Maasai reserve. As a consequence of the Anglo-Maasai agreement, the Maasai as per the treaty had willingly exchanged their land in Central Rift in exchange for two reserves one

³⁴²*Ibid*

³⁴³Parselelo Kantai: *In the grip of vampire state: Maasai land struggle in Kenya politics*. Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group; In *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol. 1, No 1, 107-122; March 2007; p. 107.

³⁴⁴*Ibid*

located north of the Ugandan Railway and another South of it. This agreement was binding as long as the Maasai existed as an ethnic group.

Kantai's study established that The Maasai court case challenging the agreement was dismissed in 1913 on technical grounds. The court of appeal also upheld this ruling when the Maasai appeared as appellants. The 2004 agitation was the fourth time were Maasai complaining publicly since the historic Anglo-Maasai agreement of 1904. The first was in 1913, another was the petition filed in 1933/4 to the Kenya land commission and the 1962 petition at the second Lancaster House conference. Kantai's study postulated that the Maasai troubles may were reinforced by conspiracy theories founded by Thomson Joseph and Harry Johnstone who described the community as hostile and blood thirsty.³⁴⁵ It was these misconstrued observations that the British colonial agents relied on in handling the Maasai for effective colonisation of the Kenyan territory and the creation of the white highlands for white settlers.

Kantai's study further found out that in the 20th century, the Maasai were weakened to a massive degree by the rinderpest invasion, civil war and human diseases. The once mighty community degenerated into mercenaries at the whims of colonial authorities. Maasai re-location to the Loita country was met with devastating natural and artificial setbacks. They lost more than half of their livestock by the 1960s; prompting them to lodge complains to the colonial authorities in 1962.³⁴⁶

Kantai's study contended that in the Maasai petition at the Lancaster House Conference led by Justus Ole Tipis, the Maasai claimed seventy per cent of the white highlands as their ancestral land; Justus Ole Tipis was a Legislative Council member.

³⁴⁵*Ibid*

³⁴⁶*Ibid*

The colonial administration downplayed the Maasai claim. They ruled out the legality issues surrounding land basing on the Anglo-Maasai land Concessions of 1904 and 1911. However, they admitted that the colonial administration had moral obligation toward the Maasai.³⁴⁷ The import of this was that the Maasai willingly forfeited their Laikipia plateau for Loita County without coercion. All the post-colonial regimes were adamant on addressing Maasai petitions emanating from these concessions. This study was instrumental in understanding the Maasai course in the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.8.5 Socio-economic impact of the inter-ethnic land conflicts

Marachew Wubshet Mesfin's study focused on the impact of current armed conflict on micro, small and medium scale enterprises in Ethiopia.³⁴⁸ Mesfin's study examined the present conflict that impeded the country's progress in the economic and human losses realms. Mesfin's study further found out the critical aspects that affect the outcome of Micro, small and medium scale enterprises recovering from a post-conflict era and highlighted the key drawbacks bedeviling them in the Ethiopian space. It also investigated the net effects of armed conflict on income and employment levels of enterprise in Ethiopia. Similarly, it assessed the frequency and depth of the protracted armed conflict in Ethiopia on business in the regard of the managers control and enterprise control variables. Lastly, it established the extent of the armed conflict on effect between business types and their spaces of operations. The perennial conflict crippled business operations by affecting the flow of goods and services in conflict hotspot areas. These findings were essential to this study; the present study established

³⁴⁷ *Ibid*

³⁴⁸ Marachew Mesfin: *Impact of current armed conflict on micro-small and medium enterprise in Ethiopia*, Bahir Dar University: Master thesis; July, 2022, p. 6.

the impact of perennial inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area on local and global value chains and its shattering impact on small, medium and multinational enterprises.

Mesfin's study was based on dominant theory of firms with its main theoretical framework as profit maximizing, optimizing and non-optimizing theories.³⁴⁹ Mesfin's study applied survey design as its method of collecting data.³⁵⁰ This was complemented with a cross-sectional study through questionnaire and interviews. Mesfin's study found out that armed conflict stifles off markets' essential skills and unskilled labour through displacement and voluntary or commercial enlisting of fighters.³⁵¹ Labour was demobilized and its reintegration involved engaging ex-fighters and displaced persons in the enterprise sector. This finding was crucial to this study which established how the labour supply chain in the industrial and business sector in Laikipia Area was disrupted in the middle of inter-ethnic land conflicts.

Mesfin's study found out that Micro, small and medium scale enterprises were on the free fall as an aftermath of a protracted armed conflict in Ethiopia. Additionally, it noted that micro and small enterprise were more hit by the devastating armed conflict the medium enterprises. Further, Mesfin's study finds that protracted armed conflict had far reaching negative effects on enterprise and employment levels.³⁵² These adverse effects largely hit the production sector. In particular, the most affected sectors included labour supply, mobility of good and services, insecurity, decreased purchasing power, lawlessness and illegal tax regime. In the worst case scenarios, business shut particularly in urban areas as others shut for a while as the armed conflict persisted. These findings were essential as this study assessed the impact of the

³⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 56.

³⁵²*Ibid.*, p.63.

protracted inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area on micro, small and medium scale enterprises.

Mesfin's study recommended that a considerable monetary compensation to the micro, small and medium scale enterprises recovering from a prolonged armed conflict was appropriate in fixing their cash crunch and existential threats in the post-conflict era.³⁵³

This recommendation was crucial for a sustainable intervention on micro, small and medium scale enterprises recuperating from inter-ethnic land conflicts. Mesfin's study further recommended that a thriving enterprise is dependent on an enabling business environment that is stable and armed conflict free.³⁵⁴ Infrastructural threats should also be consciously eliminated to create an even business environment for the micro, small and medium scale enterprises to flourish.

Mesfin's study was vital on how the business environment was affected by inter-ethnic land conflict in Laikipia Area. Lastly, it recommended that deliberate investment particularly through government training centres was crucial in resuscitating micro, small and medium scale enterprise from total collapse.³⁵⁵ Training should focus on financial skills, management, technologies, production and reconstruction in order to sustain businesses in the middle of armed conflicts.³⁵⁶ Professional and technical techniques should also be realigned or reinvented and an injection of money into micro, small and medium scale enterprises recovering from the effects of a protracted armed conflict. These conflict recovery strategies on micro, small and medium scale enterprises recuperating from the effects of armed conflicts were vital in identifying

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.102.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid*

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*

which intervention is appropriate in the similar sectors in inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.

A study by Ndiwa evaluated the impact of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Mt Elgon on education.³⁵⁷ Ndiwa's study findings were on the impact of land conflict on education were helpful in the development of the current study; it theorised the conflict from a set of two complementing theories, the conflict theory and the scarcity theory. The two theories postulated that conflict emanates from limited access to land and land use in Mt Elgon.³⁵⁸ Ndiwa's study found out that the central issue in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Mt Elgon was land. These findings were consistent with the current study; Ndiwa's study focused on the land question as an independent variable in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Ndiwa's study further found that perennial conflicts in Mt Elgon had a critical effect on learners' enrolment, staffing and school infrastructure. It also found out that national government had not been responsive in resolving the land problem in Chebyuk. A lasting solution to the perennial conflicts would ensure uninterrupted schooling in the conflict ridden area of Chebyuk.³⁵⁹ Ndiwa's study was useful as it guided this present study in examining the far reaching ramification of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia to access to education. The area of concern was education and the general dispensation of the key essential services. It was also significant in assessing the effectiveness of the national government in solving inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

³⁵⁷S.M. Ndiwa., *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

³⁵⁸*Ibid*

³⁵⁹*Ibid*

Nyang'au Sabina Moraa's study assessed the effects of ethnic conflict on access and participation of children in primary education in Nakuru County, Kenya.³⁶⁰ Moraa's study aimed at achieving the following objectives; it evaluated the origin of the ethnic conflicts and its impact on access and participation of primary school going children in Nakuru County. It assessed the effects of physical displacement on access and participation of primary school learners in Nakuru County. The effect on education was contributory to the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia County. Moraa's study examined the impact of property destruction on access and participation of primary school pupils in Nakuru County. It established if ethnic politics influenced access and participation of primary school pupils in Nakuru County. Moraa's study found out the extent with which ethnic inequalities impacted access and participation of primary school pupil in learning in Nakuru County.

Moraa's study adopted the human needs theory by Burton.³⁶¹ The theory presupposed that those conflicts arose from unmet or inadequately fulfilled basic needs of groups and their members. Moraa's study employed descriptive research design. The design was appropriate in the sense that the instruments involved collected a large volume of data. Moraa's study found out that the root cause of conflicts in Nakuru County was attributed to competition over scarce and dwindling natural resources, favouritism, exclusion, and negative ethnicity, historical land injustices, ethnic politics and skewed distribution of resources.³⁶² The finding in Moraa's study was crucial to this study especially on how historical land injustices and limited land as a natural resources triggers inter-ethnic conflicts. Moraa's study

³⁶⁰Nyang'au Sabina Moraa: *Effects of ethnic conflict on access and participation of children in primary education in Nakuru County, Kenya*. Nairobi: Master of Education Degree; Kenyatta University, 2019, p.12.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 116.

further finds that the net effects of ethnic conflicts were grave, protracted ethnic conflicts led to disruption of academic calendar in schools, displacement communities, high level of school drop outs, absenteeism in schools and dismal performance of school's academic programs.³⁶³ It also led to loss of lives and livelihoods rape and caused bodily human harm which led to disability. Other far reaching consequences included torching of houses and destruction of properties. These findings on the consequences of inter-ethnic conflicts were crucial in contextualising the impact of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Ethnic politics was established as the root cause of ethnic animosity and entrenched hatred which had a direct bearing on learners' access to education in Nakuru County.

Moraa's study in addition established that political fundamentalism in form of politics of exclusion leads to unequal distribution of resources which hugely impact learners' access to education.³⁶⁴ A sizeable number of affected children in Nakuru County engage in crime including being combatants in these ethnic conflicts. The findings on the political underhand in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts were rudimental to this study. Further as an impact of the inter-ethnic conflicts in Nakuru County the escalation of ethnic conflicts affects parents' economic abilities to support learners effectively through the education system. The post ethnic conflict era heralds widened economic inequalities as victims of the ravaging conflicts recover from economic shocks.

The process of distributing resources to the victims was also termed as skewed along ethnic lines.³⁶⁵ These factors incapacitated parents' financial ability to adequately support their children access to quality education. The family unit suffered severed

³⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 117.

³⁶⁴*Ibid.*

³⁶⁵*Ibid.*

relationships as in some class, school going children were forced to take up parental responsibility.³⁶⁶ These were typical cases where both parents were killed in the conflict or were completely untraced. Such children were adversely disadvantaged from accessing quality education. The analysis of these inter-ethnic land conflicts effects in Nakuru County was crucial to this study.

Moraa's study recommended that trauma counseling should be available to persons recovering from ethnic conflicts.³⁶⁷ Historical land injustice should be addressed with finality to avoid further human carnage, loss of livelihoods and senseless destruction of property. Distribution of natural resources should stringently adhere to the rules of equality and equity to avert communities degenerating into lawlessness as some ethnic groups protest exclusion in the ugly forms of violence. The recommendation on trauma counseling, fixing of the historical land injustices and fair distribution of natural resources were essential to this study.

Bulasire Samson Owori's study *on the influences of inter-clan conflicts on socio-economic development in Mumias East Sub County of Kakamega County, Kenya* examined whether strategic coordination among stakeholders in the conflict mitigation led to a lasting peace among the conflicting clans in Mumias East as its main problem.³⁶⁸ It also undertook to assess the influence of inter-clan conflicts on socio-economic development in Mumias East.

Owori's study applied descriptive and cross-sectional research designs to collect and analyse the generated data. Owori's study was further guided by the following objectives; it examined the nature and extent of inter-ethnic clashes in Mumias East

³⁶⁶*Ibid.*

³⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 118.

³⁶⁸Bulasire Samson Owori: *Influence of inter-clan conflicts on socio-economic development in Mumias East Sub County, Kenya*. MMUST: Master Thesis, 2019, p. 5.

Sub County.³⁶⁹ It assessed the impact of inter-ethnic clashes on social economic progress in Mumias East Sub County. It evaluated the mechanism effected and the drawbacks involved in managing inter-ethnic clashes in Mumias East sub-County.

Owori's study was anchored on the inter-group contact theory and linear stages of growth theory. Inter-group contact theory brought together groups of people from heterogeneous settings. It improved inter-relation in multi-cultural societies.³⁷⁰ The linear stages of growth theory postulated that inter-clan clashes are more likely to affect more developed areas comparably to less developed areas.

Owori's study established that areas where the Abashitsetse and Abakolwe were predominant were more likely to experience conflicts. The two major clans allegedly marginalize the minority clans within their setting.³⁷¹ Owori's study further established that loss of job opportunities and widespread poverty pushed the victims into being perpetrators of inter-clan clashes in Mumias East. The dwindling fortunes of Mumias Sugar factory accelerated inter-clan conflicts. It increased pressure attributed to other available natural resources which became a contest among the clans existing in Mumias East.

Owori's study also established that married members of the family set up were more likely to engage in inter-clan clashes because of the heavy responsibility of taking care of their households. It also found out that education levels had a direct-bearing on the expression of inter-clan clashes. The prevalence of violence was high among the uneducated.³⁷² Further, it was established that young people within the age bracket of 21-30 years were more likely to engage in violence. They were easily

³⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁷⁰*Ibid.*

³⁷¹*Ibid.*

³⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 92.

manipulated by the politicians and other actors in the inter-clan conflicts. The political underhand in triggering conflicts was rudimentary to this study, this study analysed how politicians contribution to the land question and the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

The study also found out that Mumias East Society was patriarchal; pressure was mounted on men to own property as a sign of prestige and recognition in the society.³⁷³ This cultural sense attracted unhealthy competition on the limited natural resource. It was against this background that men were more engaged in the violence than women.³⁷⁴ The gender variable in the manifestation of conflicts was crucial to this study especially how either gender triggered the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Mumias East faces land grabbing menace by the major clans – Abashitsetse and Abakolwe rendering minority clans landless and triggering occasional inter-clan clashes.³⁷⁵

Owori's study recommended that anti-conflict strategies should be centered on the inter clan forums. These forums should incorporate all the conflict stakeholders. Natural and National resources should be distributed or redistributed equally with knowledge of the existing clan identities in Mumias East to avert inter clan conflicts.³⁷⁶ Income generation and employment opportunities should be prioritized especially among the young people to make their economic productive. This will stop their vulnerability as tools for manipulation by the conflict masterminds.³⁷⁷ Development, resources distribution and allocation should be considerate of gender parity. Deliberate efforts and affirmative actions should be applied to integrate

³⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 86.

³⁷⁴*Ibid*

³⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 84.

³⁷⁶*Ibid*

³⁷⁷*Ibid*

women into mainstream human resource grid.³⁷⁸ Locals and non-governmental actors should work cohesively and productively towards achieving a harmonious Mumias East society.

Owori's study further recommended that both levels of government should work together with the sole intention of putting together a legal, social and economic structural framework that work sustainably for the greater good of all the clans in Mumias East equitably and equally in resource allocation and redistribution.³⁷⁹ The County government of Kakamega should be more involved in promoting cohesion in Mumias East.³⁸⁰ The involvement of both levels of governments in conflict mitigation was rudimentary to this study. This study established how both levels of government should intervene in the age old inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area through their renewed obligations under the 2010 constitutional dispensation.

1.8.6 Summary of the identified gaps

Gladys Nyaboke's study was essential to this study; the tenets of the theory of historical materialism was used to contextualise how access to land or lack of it among the ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area became the point class formation and agitation for the review of land redistribution or distribution value system between herders and crop farmers.³⁸¹ Even so, the theory of historical materialism was not applied in this study. Nyaboke's study also adopted qualitative research design which was primarily the interpretation of human behaviour in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The findings on the migration and settlement of the Abagusii principally their Misri theory of origin was a significant building block in

³⁷⁸*Ibid*

³⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 167.

³⁸⁰*Ibid*

³⁸¹Gladys Nyaboke Achoki, Kizito Muchanga and James Runaku., *Op. Cit.*, p. 22.

analyzing the migration and settlement of the Bantu ethnic communities residing in Laikipia Area. Much as the study provided valuable insights to this study, it majorly centred on the Abagusii in Kericho, Nyamira and Kisii counties which precludes the Abagusii in Laikipia Area.³⁸² The objectives and the main questions of Nyaboke's study were diametrically not the same as this study's objectives and questions. The major findings were limited in addressing the problem of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Areaa gap which this study filled.

Eliot's study on the primary conflicts between Europeans and Indians in Canada as far as it was helpful to this study; however, the generalization of its findings on the complex issues surrounding the historicity of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area would be a fallacy.³⁸³ The nature of these findings differs from one case to another because of the varying ecological and continental variance.

Nascimento's study on Brazilian land crisis over property rights stalemate was critical to this study.³⁸⁴ However, by and large its findings and proposed recommendations were basically Brazilian in nature and their generalization in the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area was subjective in numerous realms. The socio-economic, ecological, institutional and political land matters generating inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area were diametrically disparate a gap which this study filled.

Asamoah uses Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict as a case study of why the inter-ethnic conflict persisted for decades despite numerous interventions for resolution, and the effect of the conflict on the communities involved.³⁸⁵ Asamoah's study further identified land as the cause of the conflict because of its economic and heritage value,

³⁸² *Ibid*

³⁸³ Eliot, J.L. *Op. Cit.*, p. 177.

³⁸⁴ Nascimento, S.E.V and Saes M.S.M., *Op.Cit.*, p. 4.

³⁸⁵ Asamaoh., *Op. Cit.*, p. 26.

which was important to this study; however, there was a lacuna on restricting the problem of land into a historical perspective a gap which this study filled.

Asamoah's study had a knowledge gap on conceptualizing the land conflict on the basis of instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories, but rather on symbiotic theory which contextualized inter-ethnic conflicts as a traditional/mythical cause against perceived enemies.³⁸⁶ The land problem was also limited to the Nkonya-Alavanyo communities, creating a lacuna on the inter-ethnic conflict among people living in Laikipia Area which was filled in this study. The findings on understanding the nature of inter-ethnic land conflict in the sub-Saharan Africa, the ineffectiveness factor of the political order to resolve the ethnic conflicts and the far-reaching impact of inter-ethnic conflicts added value to this work.

The findings by Arowosegbe on the development of the land question among the Fulani and Hausa were significant to this study.³⁸⁷ However, the historicity of the land question was a gap which was filled in this study.

By extension, Gillian Mathys and Koen Vlassenroot's study was instrumental to the present study, especially its findings on breached land arrangements between the Hutu and Tutsi.³⁸⁸ The present study probed similar breached land concessions in Laikipia Area which contributed to the development of the land question and the demonstration of inter-ethnic conflicts particularly the over a century old Anglo-Maasai land concessions. However, the study's historicity of the land questions in the South Kivu region is unsatisfactorily examined between the Hutu and Tutsi from the chronological and periodical dimensions a gap which this study filled.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁷ Arowosegbe, J.O., *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

³⁸⁸ Gillian Mathys and Koen Vlassenroot., *Op. Cit.*, p.13.

Batware's study was crucial to the development of this study especially on glaring discrepancies in land distribution and redistribution mechanism and how these cleavages sparked inter-ethnic land conflicts in Rwanda and by extension Kenya.³⁸⁹ However, its findings were inadequately concerned with studying the land problem from the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial lenses a gap which this study filled. There was a lacuna on how cultural factors like ethnic identities triggered the manifestation of inter-ethnic land conflicts which was filled in this study.

On its part, Imbuye's work illustrated the coming of Christian Missionaries and colonialists as a major factor in intra-ethnic relations in the region, the generation of the land question, and the flare ups of sporadic intra-ethnic conflicts among the Sabaot clans.³⁹⁰ While these aspects were important to this study, they were intra-ethnic based among and limited to the Sabaot people of the slopes of Mt Elgon. In as much as it identified land as the centre of intra-ethnic conflict, its glaring lacuna was illustrated from the inter-ethnic viewpoint that largely affects the inter-ethnic conflicts among the ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area a gap this study filled.

Waithaka's study was limited to the intra-ethnic conflict among the Sabaot as it overlooked the inter-ethnic in the Laikipia context a gap that this study filled.³⁹¹ Waithaka's study traced the land question from the pre-colonial era to the age of European Imperialism in Africa and its pervasion into the post-independence regimes as a build-up of the conflict. However, its generalization was a lacuna on the tenets of the instrumentalists, and articulations modes of production theories a gap that this study filled.

³⁸⁹Billy Batware., *Op. Cit.*, p 15.

³⁹⁰Imbuye., *Op. Cit.*, p. 14.

³⁹¹N.L Waithaka. *Op. Cit.*, p. 28.

Khamala's study in spite of its valuable insights to this study, its objectivity on adequately addressing the centrality of land as the cause of the inter-ethnic conflicts was a gap which was filled in this study. Its findings which were anchored on the Spivak's subaltern theory were diametrically divergent from the instrumentalism and articulation modes of production theorisation of ethnic conflict a gap which this was filled in this study.

Kakai's study emphasised political structuring and re-structuring of administration entities to the creation ethnic identities by the colonial hegemony.³⁹² Kakai established that; overtime, external forces like globalisation and democratisation in Kenya especially pluralism augmented inter-ethnic identities and tensions in Bungoma, Mt. Elgon and Trans-Nzoia. These findings were imperative to this work especially on the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts among ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area during the colonial period even though it had a gap on how they affected the genesis and flare up of the land question.³⁹³ Kakai's study additionally pointed out ethnicity, cattle rustling and land as the causes of the Bukusu-Sabaot inter-ethnic conflict, whereas it points out land as a factor in the conflict, it exhibits a lacuna on entirely probing the genesis of the land problem as an independent variable in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial contexts, a gap which this study filled.

Ndiwa's study highlighted land as the cause of the conflict in Chebyuk scheme and particularly its impact on education in Chebyuk; however, it was subjective to the Sabaot intra-ethnic conflict and oblivious to the inter-ethnic dimension a gap which was filled in this study.³⁹⁴ Explicitly, the gravity of this study was irrefutable; especially on the outcome of Mt. Elgon land clashes on education; however a gap

³⁹²Kakai. P. *Op.Cit.*, p. 24.

³⁹³*Ibid*

³⁹⁴S. M. Ndiwa. *Op.Cit.*, p. 14.

existed on examining the land question from the chronological and periodic lenses which was filled in this study. Its logical conclusions were restricted to the conflict and scarcity theoretical frameworks and a gap existed on capturing the concepts of instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories.

Wasike reinforced the issue of land as the main cause of the conflict, which was important to this study, but had a gap on chronological contextualisation of the land conflict from the historical perspective a lacuna that this study filled.³⁹⁵ The study adopted conflict system theory as a basis of its theoretical concept and therefore there was a gap on drawing its logical conclusion along the instrumentalism and articulations of modes of production theoretical framework, a lacuna filled in this study. Wasike's study devoted more on regional versus neighbouring states effects. Although, it recognized the grave effects of the conflicts, the impression is widened at the state level. It explored the impact of conflict in terms of its effects on the neighbouring states and the East African cohesion.

Evidently, Wanyama's study had a lacuna on the historicity of the land problem in Laikipia North Sub County.³⁹⁶ This was however the core concern of this current study and one that this study filled. Consequently, the research scope of this study was limited to Laikipia North Sub-County so it precluded other areas in Laikipia Area a gap which this study filled.

Marachew Wubshet Mesfin's study was objectively on the effect of armed conflict on micro, small and medium scale enterprise in Ethiopia.³⁹⁷ Land and how it influenced inter-ethnic land conflicts was not centrally studied a gap this study filled. Mesfin

³⁹⁵Wasike.G.,*Op.Cit.*, p.18.

³⁹⁶Wanyama. J.B., *Op. Cit.*,p. 8.

³⁹⁷Marachew Wubshet Mesfin.,*Op.Cit.*, p. 6.

study's objectives were centred on the armed conflict and its adverse effects on micro, small and medium scale enterprises, in this sense, they precluded land and inter-ethnic conflicts a gap which this study filled. Mesfin's study was theoretically anchored on dominant theory of firms with its key theories being profit maximizing, optimizing and non-profit theories the study therefore was not theorised in the instrumentalism and articulation modes of production theories of inter-ethnic land conflicts, a gap which this study filled.

Nyang'au Sabina Moraa's study on the effects of ethnic conflict on access and participation of children in primary education in Nakuru County, Kenya findings were limited to Nakuru County and may not be generalised to Laikipia Area.³⁹⁸ The study further anchored its findings and logical conclusions to the human needs theory by Burton and has a lacuna on the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories a gap which was filled in this study. The study was limited in studying the land question from the historical scope a gap which was filled in this study.

Warurii's study, in spite of its enormous contribution to this study, exhibited a gap on examining the problem of land as an independent variable a lacuna that was filled in this study. Its findings on why inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti persisted in spite of the concerted intervention measures were narrowed to Rumuruti and precluded other key divisions in Laikipia Area a gap which this study filled. The periodisation of inter-ethnic conflicts 1963-2010 were not within the pre-colonial and contemporary inter-ethnic dynamics in Laikipia Area which this study filled. The findings on the conflicts ramification on food security, human population, environment, formal education and economic opportunities in Rumuruti were crucial to this study however they were

³⁹⁸Nyang'au Sabina Moraa., *Op.Cit.*, p. 118.

limited to Rumuruti Division and were not be generalized as in the Laikipia County. Warurii's study further restricted its findings on the viability of both conventional and scientific methods of inter-ethnic resolutions to Rumuruti Division and left a gap on the entire Laikipia Area.³⁹⁹

Bulasire Samson Owori's study on the influences of inter-clan conflicts on socio-economic development in Mumias East Sub-County on viability of businesses, schooling and provision of other essential services by government institutions was crucial to this study even if its conflict presupposition is in the inter-clan perspective.⁴⁰⁰ Its findings on patriarchal and cultural facets influence in the expression of land conflicts were crucial to this study.⁴⁰¹ Also, crucial was conflicts impact on the socio-economic progress of Mumias East; these findings were useful in studying the socio-economic impact of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

However, Owori's study had identified gaps as follows; its socio-economic effects findings were limited to Mumias East and they were subjective in their generalisation in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area.⁴⁰² Owori's study applied descriptive and cross sectional research designs and had a lacuna on historical research design used in this study. Owori's study also grounded its findings on the inter-group contact theory and linear stages of group; in this theoretical sense had a gap on the instrumentalism and articulation modes of production theories used in this study. Further, Owori's recommendations were restricted to the Mumias East and their generalisations to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia were limitation that was filled in the present study.

³⁹⁹Warurii., *Op. cit.*, p.22.

⁴⁰⁰Bulasire Samson Owori., *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

⁴⁰¹*Ibid.*, p. 13

⁴⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 28.

Kirchner's study on the conflicts and politics in Tana Delta: An analysis of the 2012-2013 clashes and the General and presidential elections found that there was land use conflicts between the Pokomo and Oromo in the lower Tana basin.⁴⁰³ Kirchner's study established that political machinations were to blame for the occurrence of the sporadic conflicts between the two ethnic groups that recurred. The findings of this study were confined to the Oromo and the Pokomo therefore had a lacuna on being generalised to the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area a gap which this study filled.

Adipo's study on a history of cross-border resource conflict persistence between the Pokot and Karamajong since 1850 had findings grounded on the conflict and Ubuntu African philosophy and had a lacuna on being generalized on the instrumentalism and articulations of modes of production theories of this study a gap which this study filled.⁴⁰⁴

Adipo's findings on the colonial factor in the post-colonial expression of conflicts between Pokot and Karamajong were limited in that context and were not generalised in the land question and its influence in the inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area a gap which this study filled.⁴⁰⁵

Kennedy Agande Mkutu's study on pastoralist conflict, governance and small Arms in North Rift, North East Africa and the cases of Karamajong Uganda, West Pokot, Dol Dol and Baragoi presented findings that were limited in scope in the sense that they

⁴⁰³Kirchner. K., *Op.Cit.*, p. 61.

⁴⁰⁴Ogola Adipo., *Op.Cit.*, p. 5.

⁴⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 181.

had a lacuna on being generalised along the instrumentalism and articulations of modes of production theories of this study.⁴⁰⁶

In the Parselelo Kantai's study in the grip of the vampire state, the study grounded its findings on the limits of the Maasai land question and how it influences ranch invasions and the general Maasai uprising but had a lacuna on how land affected inter-ethnic relations among the diverse ethnic groups in Laikipia Area a gap which this study filled.⁴⁰⁷

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This sub-section focused on the theoretical framework of this study. It further underscored the theories' tenets, use and critique in the development of this study. The subsection also underpinned how the weaknesses of these theories were mitigated through collaboration these theories to achieve reliability and avoid biasness in the study. This sub-section also highlighted constructivist, occupational and conflict theories which were related to this study.

Constructivist theory was founded by Barth who argued that ethnicity and its influence in triggering inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa was a product of social forces like colonialism.⁴⁰⁸ Other proponents of the constructivist theory included Hobsbawn, Ranger, Anderson and Horowitz.⁴⁰⁹

Khamala upheld that constructivist proponents hold the opinion that European colonialists in Africa exacerbated ethnic identities among African civilizations as a control approach and as a reactionary strategy apparently to breed ethnic identities and

⁴⁰⁶Kennedy Agande Mkutu., *Op.Cit.*, p.35.

⁴⁰⁷Parselelo Kantai., *Op.Cit.*, p. 207

⁴⁰⁸ Andres Wimmer: *The making and unmasking of ethnic boundaries; A multilevel process theory* (Los Angeles: University of California; 2008); p. 972

⁴⁰⁹ Geoffrey Khamala., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 53-4

water down their impending insurrection for effective colonisation of the African continent.⁴¹⁰

Imbuye acknowledged that ethnicity and ethnic identities in a constructivist sense was expressed by socio-economic forces as opposed to biological cultural forces subject to extrinsic factors as the case of colonial imperialists in Africa.⁴¹¹ Constructivist took responsibility of the fact that ethnicity was flexible and unyielding.⁴¹² Ethnic groups were the integral part of the political and historic development.⁴¹³ In this strict sense, ethnic identities were collectively influenced for the eruption of ethnic warfare.⁴¹⁴ Imbuye further stated that; constructivists' account that the origin of ethnicity and ethnic identities in Africa was attributed to European imperialists in the 19th and 20th centuries.⁴¹⁵ The activities of colonialists in Africa stratified African ethnic groups and how it impacted on inter-ethnic land conflicts in the colonial and post-colonial Africa.⁴¹⁶

Occupational theory was propounded by Betwell Ogot; it presupposed food gatherers and hunters, herders and crop-cultivators migration and settlement patterns in the East Africans inter-lacustrine region.⁴¹⁷ In this hypothetical concept food gatherers and hunters were the foremost group of people to people the East African inter-lacustrine region.⁴¹⁸ These earliest settlement patterns of the food gatherers and hunters were consequently infiltrated, conquered, assimilated and annihilated by the

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-67

⁴¹¹ Beatrice Imbuye. *Op.Cit.*,pp. 34-78

⁴¹² *Ibid*

⁴¹³ *Ibid*

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid*

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid*

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid*

⁴¹⁷ Betwell Ogot., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 126-8

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid*

more advanced crop farmers with the help of iron technology mastery.⁴¹⁹ However, the more powerful herders' migration treks into the region overpowered the crop farmers displacing them effortlessly before the advent of colonialism in the region.⁴²⁰ Instructively, these pre-colonial interactions herald a cross fertilisation of ideas that hardened and enriched the socio-economic and political fabrics of these groups of people.⁴²¹ The basis of these early forms of pre-colonial inter-ethnic confrontation was land use cross-border conflicts between herders and crop farmers.

The conflict theory by Obercall presupposed the rise of conflicts was a series of suspicious, divergent opinion on how to share resources and underlying differences and the animosity between groups of people.⁴²² Classical conflict theory postulated that when cleavages arise in unfair distribution of resources in favour of one group at the expense of another conflict arise as propagated by Karl Marx.

However, this study was anchored on instrumentalism and articulation of mode of production theories of inter-ethnic conflicts.⁴²³ This was an anthropological, geo-spatial and institutional attempt to contextualise the historical study into the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area in those realms. The two theories were corroborated to give a broad based spectrum of the chronology and periodic progression of the land question and its impact in triggering the occurrences of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*

⁴²¹ *Ibid*

⁴²² Adipo, O.Y, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 9-15

⁴²³ Mugenda O. and Mugenda, A.G., *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

1.9.1 Instrumentalism theory of inter-ethnic conflicts

Instrumentalism was a theory that presupposed that inter-ethnic conflicts did not arise directly from the differences in ethnic identities.⁴²⁴ It held that inter-ethnic conflicts in heterogeneous societies only arose when these differences in ethnic identities were politicised or weaponised by conflicts actors to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts. Instrumentalism pioneers included Posen Barry, Horowitz Donald, Collier Paul and Anke Hoeffler.⁴²⁵ Post-instrumentalist theoreticians included Geoffrey Khamala, Paul Kwame Asamoah and Beatrice Imbuye.

Asamoah propounded that instrumentalism contend that ethnic identity was a usual ritual of radical mobilisation that results in the common quest of persons and group self-interests to the detriment of the other groups or people.⁴²⁶ Instrumentalists held that, ethnic groups share inborn identical social characteristics, which were critically manipulated to activate inter-ethnic conflicts. In the instrumentalism mind-sets, ethnicity was manipulated for political expediency, as cultural aspects are influenced purely to rally, communicate, and exploit at the expense of others. Instrumentalism rooted that cultural conflict does not originate from diversity in ethnic identities directly, but somewhat it comes out at the point when ethnic identities are exploited or manipulated to attain supposed group objective.

Alternatively, Khamala reiterated that the elite instrumentalists' are a select few who have mastered the art of weaponising cultural aspects.⁴²⁷ These cultural factors were the root cause of inter-ethnic conflicts. In this line of thought, the privileged few (elite) influenced the decisions of their ethnic groups by manipulating their cultural

⁴²⁴ Afa'anwi Che: *Linking instrumentalist and primordialist theories of ethnic conflict*. Xi'an Jiatong-Liverpool University, 2016, p. 2.

⁴²⁵ Afa'anwi Che, *Op.Cit.*, p. 2.

⁴²⁶ Asamoah, *Op.Cit.*, p. 29.

⁴²⁷ Khamala., *Op.Cit.*, p. 37.

homogeneity against another ethnic groups ostensibly for socio-economic and political expediency.⁴²⁸ Widely, Khamala reiterated further that elites in an ethnic group were to an undeniable degree responsible of ethnic based skirmishes. A clique of the chosen few with financial war chest puts themselves at the vantage position in a stratified society; they determined the ethnic group direction courtesy of the enormous resources they wield. This granted them fervent capability to classify and identify geo-political and economic cleavages in a society and sway subtly or otherwise their ethnic group toward taking certain standpoints including fashioning ethnic conflicts and the construction of ethnic identities.⁴²⁹ Consequently, ethnic groups can unite in political pursuit of their group interests.

This study, therefore, theorised cultural factors and influence by elites as contributing factors to the historical evolution of the land question and inter-ethnic conflict in Laikipia from an instrumentalism theoretical framework. The theory was useful in conceptualising how ethnic groups in Laikipia Area rallied around their ethnic aspects like their common migration and settlement, ethnocentrism, ethnic marginalization over land. This was compounded by changes in land use and tenure and ethnic bias in the governments' resettlement programmes in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.9.2 Instrumentalism Critique

Regardless of the compelling reasons that instrumentalism play a key role in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts and fashioning of ethnic identities, the theory inadequately ascertained how the materiality of land as an economic variable enhanced the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts among the ethnic communities in Laikipia Area

⁴²⁸ *Ibid*

⁴²⁹ *Ibid*

.⁴³⁰ Further, the Instrumentalism theory had a lacuna on the justifying changes of land use and land tenure in the economic sense as central issues that lead to the expression of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Nevertheless, the theory was convenient in the contextualising of the land conflict among the ethnic communities in Laikipia Area from the anthropological, geo-political and institutional perspective. The arguments were on the basis of politicisation of these factors along ethnic lines among the ethnic groups involved by conflicts actors.⁴³¹ This left a gap especially in situating the development of the land question and the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in the economic perspective. There was, therefore, need to supplement instrumentalism theory with the articulation of modes of production theory of inter-ethnic conflicts to give an anthropological, institutional and economic background of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.9.3 Articulation of modes of production theory

The articulation of modes of production theory was a neo-Marxist theory propounded by Banaji through his summarization of the Kautsky's agrarian question.⁴³² This theory became widely acclaimed in the 1980's. It combined concepts of the dependency perspectives with Marxist interpretation of accumulation within the spheres of production and the processes of class formation and class struggle.⁴³³ The theory was an alternative methodology to assess the unequal exchange, the division of labour and unequal development with its over emphasis on material accumulation.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*

⁴³¹ *Ibid*

⁴³² Banaji Jairus. 'Illusions about the peasantry: Karl Kautsky and the Agrarian question.' *The journal of peasant studies* 17, no. 2, 1990, p. 300

⁴³³ Gutkind Peter. 'Proletarianism in urban Africa.' *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Activist Association* 8, no. 3 (1978): p. 10.

It conceived modes of production as a construct which defines social relations and class formation in a capitalist society. Therefore, the relation between forces of production and the ensuing social or class relations forms the society's economic substructure.⁴³⁴ Unlike the classical Marxism, articulation of modes of production theory analysed capitalism differently on the basis of variations in economic substructure. The theory was useful in the reconstruction of this study. It conceptualised the materiality or the economic value of land as a factor in the rise of the land question and its influence on the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

Articulation of modes of production theory recognized accumulation of land and its commercial use as a form of capitalism through which social relations and classes were formed leading to conflicts in agrarian societies.⁴³⁵ The need to control land for both grazing and herding by the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area contributed to inter-ethnic land conflicts since 1992.⁴³⁶ Laikipia Area since the pre-colonial era was an agrarian society, with the modes of production relying on land as a factor of production.

In the pre-colonial era, accumulation of land which was largely communal led to social relation formation and inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts over land use. The colonial regime created an agrarian colony in Kenya that led to the dispossession of the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Somali, Ndorobo and Ogiek in Laikipia Area to create room for settler farming. This created the land question and its impact to the sporadic inter-

⁴³⁴F. Cooper. 'African and the world economy' *In African studies Review vol. 24 Nos 2/=3* London:OUP, 1981: p. 2.

⁴³⁵Kenyanjui, K: *The political economy of educational inequality: a study of the roots of educational inequality in Afri-MFM 1983=24* PhD diss. University of Nairobi, 1983; p. 11.

⁴³⁶Berman Bruce J., and John M. Lonsade, 'crises of accumulation, coercion and the colonial state: the development of the labour control system, 1919-1929.' *In Canadian journal of African Studies* 1980: 55-81.,p. 63.

ethnic conflicts experienced in the study area.⁴³⁷ The proposition by the post-colonial regime to resettle the Kisii, Agikuyu and Meru led to the formation of the class system among the land lords and the landless. This was the root cause of inter-ethnic land conflicts in the study area. The articulation of modes of production theory was therefore essential in conceptualising land as a factor of production in the agrarian economic substructure in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Laikipia Area.⁴³⁸ Land as a factor of production in this agrarian mode of production generated social relations that led to class formation among the ethnic groups that led to inter-ethnic land related conflicts over access to land holding in the study area.

1.9.4 Articulation of modes of production theory critique

Articulation of modes of production theory was indispensable in explaining why land was a factor in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.⁴³⁹ However, it could not sufficiently explain why these ethnic groups in Laikipia Area rally along ethnic lines to fight for the land holding rights in the study area. Therefore, complementing it with the instrumentalism theory gave a comprehensive argument on how land as a factor of production in this agrarian capitalism attracted ethnic solidarity for material expediency of the warring ethnic groups in the study area.

1.10 Research Methodology

This subsection underlined the methods applied in collecting and analysing data in this study. It was made up of the following philosophical underpinning and research paradigm, historical research design, research variables and study area. It further highlighted the target population, sample size and sampling techniques, data

⁴³⁷ *Ibid*

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*

⁴³⁹ *Ibid*

collection instruments, interview schedules, observation checklists and Focus Group Discussions. Finally, it underscored the reliability and validity of instruments, data analysis, data presentation and ethical consideration.

1.10.1 Philosophical underpinning and research paradigm

This section highlighted the relevance of historical research and knowledge which made it a distinct scientific inquiry. The sub-section underscored research approach and philosophical underpinning.

1.10.1.1 Philosophical underpinning

This study adopted phenomenological interpretivism as its epistemology. Interpretivism epistemological consideration is a contrasting epistemology to positivism.⁴⁴⁰ This was a critique of the study of nature within the confines of laws and natural sciences alone.⁴⁴¹ It presupposes that social sciences were distinct from natural sciences and its methods of study should consider the human relations with natural world.⁴⁴²

Interpretivism emphasised common sense interpretation of the phenomenon.⁴⁴³ The philosophy was first propounded by Marx Weber 1864-1920, who argued that sociology is a science that interprets the human behaviour with the view of understanding the causative dynamics, course and the resultant net effects.⁴⁴⁴

Interpretivism proponents included Alfred Schutz and George Herbert Mead 1863-1931.⁴⁴⁵ The rise of the interpretivism proponents led to the emerging divergent

⁴⁴¹*Ibid*

⁴⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁴³*Ibid*

⁴⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁴⁵*Ibid*

dimensions of the philosophy into phenomenological interpretivism by Alfred Schutz, symbolic interactionism by George Herbert Mead and verstehen by Marx Weber.⁴⁴⁶

Verstehen interpretivism was the foremost intellectual form of interpretivism which was grounded on the empathic understanding of human behaviour in the study of social sciences.⁴⁴⁷ Symbolic interpretivism on its part was anchored on the logic that appreciating others' perception gives self-concepts.⁴⁴⁸ This study, however, adopted the phenomenological approach of interpretivism which postulated that philosophers should make sense of their ideal perceptions without extrinsic influence of general laws that dictated the outcome like it is in the natural scientific inquiry.⁴⁴⁹ Land, ethnic and inter-ethnic was the phenomena in this study.⁴⁵⁰

1.10.2 Research Design

Kothari *et.al* described research design as an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that targets to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in formula. Therefore, the research design was historical design.⁴⁵¹

1.10.2.1 Historical Research Design

The design involved studying a problem that requires collecting information from the past events about land and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. It also involved the discovery and analysis of records, previous events, interpretation of trends in the attitudes or events of the past and generalisations from those past events regarding the

⁴⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁴⁴⁸*Ibid*

⁴⁴⁹*Ibid*

⁴⁵⁰*Ibid*

⁴⁵¹Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 13.

history of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.⁴⁵² The origin of a historical dialect as a unique method in the interpretation of nature was based on the method propounded by Ranke and recreated numerous later.⁴⁵³

The selected research design was appropriate in this study given the nature of historical evidence.⁴⁵⁴ Since the study of history cannot separate the object and action and cannot openly observe the past, the historical method was concerned with understanding human behaviour and their ensuing actions. History, being a study of the human mind, was engrossed in the thoughts and enthusiasms of the actors in history. The design which was qualitative in nature presented data not to their counts or measure but in non-numeric form on the basis of the study's objectives.

1.10.3 Research Variables

This study considered the ethnic communities living in Laikipia Area as the main units of analysis. In this study, they were studied on the basis of their pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial land holding grievances and how those claims impacted on inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. These data were useful in making generalisation on trends, attitudes and patterns of the land question and inter-ethnic conflict in LaikipiaArea.⁴⁵⁵ The land question was the independent variable while inter-ethnic conflict in Laikipia Areawas the dependent variable.

1.10.4 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Laikipia Area. The area was administered as Laikipia County. The county was one of the 47 Counties of Kenya situated along the equator in the defunct Rift Valley of the Republic of Kenya. Laikipia was a multicultural Area.

⁴⁵²Mugenda O. and Mugenda, A.G., *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

⁴⁵³Richard J. Evans. *Op. Cit.*, p 109.

⁴⁵⁴Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 14.

⁴⁵⁵Chakraborty. D.,*Op.Cit.*, p. 14.

The foreign nationals included Europeans who own seventy per cent of land in Laikipia in form of ranches and conservancies.⁴⁵⁶ Samburu, Boran, Kalenjin, Maasai and Turkana who were predominant pastoralist occupy the semi-arid and arid areas. The ethnic Gikuyu, Kisii and Meru occupy the arable and urban areas. The landscape of Laikipia Area was mainly a plateau situated between the Great Rift Valley on the western side, Aberdares, Mt Kenya and Massifs on the southern area. The North Western part of the country descends to the floor of the Great Rift Valley.

Laikipia Area was part of the extensive upper catchment area of River Ewaso Ngiro. Rivers emanating from the Aberdares and Mt. Kenya water basins all drained into Ewaso Ngiro they categorised as follows; Mt. Kenya catchment include Timau, Teleshwani, Sirimoni, Burguret, Naro Moru, Ontulili, Likii, Nanyuki and Rongani. The Aberdares system included Ewaso Ngiro, Ngobit and Moyok/ Mwiyo. Ewaso Ngiro end up into Lorian swamp before it goes underground and resurfaces in Somalia. The name Laikipia was derived from one of the Maasai subset called *Laikipiak*. Laikipia as Area was situated in the Central Rift Valley of Kenya covering nine thousand, four hundred and sixty two kilometres which is equivalent to one point six per cent of the land mass in Kenya.

The Laikipia Area Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022 affirmed that, the Area squats between latitude 0°18` South and 0 °51` North and in the middle of longitudes 36 degrees 11` and 37 degrees 24` East.⁴⁵⁷ In the defunct provincial administration disbanded with the promulgation of the Kenyan constitution 2010. Presently, Laikipia Area neighbours Samburu County to the North, Isiolo County to the North East, Meru

⁴⁵⁶Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 27.

⁴⁵⁷Laikipia County Integrated Development Plan C.I.D.P 2018-2022

County to the East, Nyeri County to the South, Nakuru County to the South West and Baringo to the West.

Rainfall in Laikipia Area was inadequate, with areas of Dol Dol and Mukogodo worst hit, Laikipia West and Nyahururu Sub Counties receive medium rainfall even though rain has been recently failing in Laikipia West.⁴⁵⁸ The amount of rainfall in Laikipia Area varied from region to region. But, the average annual rainfall range in the County is between 400 mm to 750mm.

By 1924, the area that was under colonial administration under the present Laikipia Area land mass was 3125 square miles, perhaps because Nanyuki was administered under the Aberdares division including Nyandarua.⁴⁵⁹ However, presently with the inclusion of Nanyuki the total land mass in Laikipia Area is 3,358 square miles. Even though another source indicates that Laikipia surface area was estimated to be 8.6961 km² area. Since the colonial era, a larger part of Laikipia Area was best suited for stock keeping.⁴⁶⁰ However, presently the area had become popular for the erection of conservancies for tourism enterprises, ranches and floriculture both by Europeans and other rich Kenyan individuals. The land at the higher altitudes and with higher escarpments and Aberdares possesses possibilities of Agricultural development.⁴⁶¹ Laikipia Area was largely a plateau which was a process of a build of lave flow and being a vast Area had a mixture of arable land and semi-arid and arid areas which support both animal husbandry and crop cultivation.

In 1924, agricultural farms were projected to cover around 190594 acres but the only land available was 6, 3301 acres due to the forest cover. The situation may have

⁴⁵⁸Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 93.

⁴⁵⁹KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁴⁶⁰*Ibid*

⁴⁶¹*Ibid*

drastically changed considering the net effects of climate change. Only Laikipia West was arable to some extent owing to recent failing and unpredictable weather patterns.⁴⁶² Largely, farming across the Area was premised on irrigation through tapping river waters to the nearest farms. Throughout the colonial period, the administration of Laikipia Area shifted periodically between Nyeri Division together with Meru, Embu and Fort Hall by 1922 and Northern Frontier Division by 1929.⁴⁶³

Laikipia Area had six sub counties namely Laikipia West headquartered in Rumuruti, Kirima administered from Ol Moran, Laikipia North headquartered at Dol Dol, Nyahururu whose headquarters are domiciled in Nyahururu and Laikipia East which is administered from Nanyuki.⁴⁶⁴ Plans are underway to move the administration of Laikipia Area from Nanyuki to Rumuruti. The Area was further divided into smaller administrative units called divisions. The following were divisional administrative units in Laikipia Area; Laikipia Central on its part had five sub counties namely Matanya, Tigithi, Sweet Waters, Munyaka and Lamuria; Laikipia North Sub County divisions included; Kirimon and Mukogodo while Laikipia West had only two administrative units Muhotetu and Rumuruti. Nyahururu Sub County on its part had three divisions namely Nyahururu, Marmanet and Gituamba whereas Kirima Sub County has Ol Moran, Ng'arua and Sipili. Finally, Laikipia East had only two divisional administrative units called Segera and Umande. Laikipia Area had three constituency electoral units, Laikipia East represented by Hon Mwangi Kiunjuri, Laikipia North represented by Hon Sarah Serem and Laikipia West represented by Hon Karani Stephen Wachira.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶²*Ibid.*

⁴⁶³KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1922 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁴⁶⁴Laikipia County Integrated Development Plan C.I.D.P 2018-2022.

⁴⁶⁵*Ibid.*

The region was endowed with scenic cliffs, gorges and riverine undergrowth. Owing to its various habitats, Laikipia hosted great quantities of wildlife, second only to Masai Mara National reserve in Kenya. The Laikipia County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022 noted that; it has a huge population of predators famous among them the ‘the big five’, with over 50 per cent of Kenya’s Black and White Rhinos, several elephants, about 25 per cent of the world’s Grevy Zebra, and a sizeable population of Wild Dogs.⁴⁶⁶ Elephants and Zebra were left marauding especially in Laikipia West Sub-County and residents calls to the Kenya Wildlife to tame them have remained futile for ages. Elephants pose a huge threat to human life and were mostly at the centre of human-wildlife conflicts. They broke into homes and destroyed crops and in worst case scenarios killed people. Notable wild life sanctuaries were Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, the yet to be fenced Laikipia Reserve, Sosian Ranch, Solio, Mt Kenya Wildlife Estate, Ol Pajeta among others.⁴⁶⁷ Mwenda asserted that Laikipian tourism potential was high; because of its assorted wildlife, tourism was a top commercial enterprise in Laikipia Area. Tourism attraction sites included conservancies, Thomson Falls, Laikipia Plateau reserve and Ol Pajeta.⁴⁶⁸

Enclosed by root, vegetable and flower farms and smallholdings agricultural farms mostly sustained by irrigation on river banks, Laikipia was the ideal place for the upcountry wheat growing, sheep rearing, polo playing, Timau ranchers, and more countless cottages and campsites. The area had very vibrant hospitality industry, where the most recent generation of white Kenyan settlers like to visit. For instance, there was the Trout Tree Eatery that sells trout fish, as well as the Settlers Stores which

⁴⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷Tan Mwenda.,*Op. Cit.*, p. 24.

⁴⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 37.

delivers all.⁴⁶⁹ Indigenous ethnic groups in the Area were Maasai, Pokot, Samburu, Kisii, Meru, Kikuyu, Ogiek and Tugen. But, the Kikuyu and Maasai are the pre-dominant ethnic communities.

Nomadic pastoralist way of life entailed frequent movement with their cattle. They were fond of putting up make shift houses because they were on constant movement with their cattle in search of water and pasture. Laikipia Area was an existing case proving that dry rangelands were not unproductive per se.⁴⁷⁰ Such areas could be sustainably reclaimed and put to use through the setting up of ranches and conservancies. Tourism had recently become Laikipia's mainstream economic investment for individuals, group ranches, County government, national government and foreign investors.

Besides, provision of employment and infrastructural face lifts, conservancies protected wildlife and especially endangered species that were near extinct. The rise of conservancies in Laikipia demonstrated the economic viability of dry rangelands as potential wildlife conservation areas and ecotourism. Endangered species of wildlife were protected and conservancies were ecosystems for thousands of wild animals. In the wildlife population, the Area was only second to Maasai Mara.⁴⁷¹ Laikipia Area ecosystem also was home to rare species of animals including Gravy's Zebras, Jackson's Hartebeest, black rhino and has the second largest elephant population in Kenya.

At the advent of colonialism in Laikipia Area, a section of the area which included Ngobit, Thomson falls and Rumuruti was initially administered as part of the Nyeri

⁴⁶⁹Wanyama.,*Op.Cit.*,p. 56.

⁴⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 48.

Division.⁴⁷² Laikipia, Meru, Embu, Fort Hall and Nyeri were amalgamated into one single administrative unit named Nyeri Division. The colonial government was committed in integrating Laikipia to the colonial economy in Kenya, by around 1923 bridges and culverts had been built on the Ngobit-Sugoroi River. More social amenities were provided by the colonial regime in the area ostensibly to boast white settler economy; by 1923 Rumuruti Gilgil road was under construction, Rumuruti was also connected to the telegraph from Nakuru. Dol Dol it was noted was occupied by a white settler who used to send Maasai messengers to Nyeri on foot – a distance of over 66 Kilometres. Mwenda noted that the Area had three major urban centres; Nanyuki to the southeast, and Nyahururu to the southwest and its capital is Rumuruti.⁴⁷³ The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2019 report, says that Laikipia County had five sub-counties, fifteen county assembly wards, fifty two locations. The sub-counties consist of; Laikipia Central, Laikipia East, Laikipia North, Laikipia West and Nyahururu. The electoral constituencies consist of; Laikipia East, West and North constituencies. Laikipia was home to varied ethnic communities comprising, the Maasai, Kikuyu, Samburu, Turkana, Meru and Europeans.

The physical headquarters of Laikipia Area were still domiciled at Nanyuki. Nanyuki was arguably a commercial metropolis in Rift Valley located North West of Mount Kenya along the (A2) road just at the extreme end of the railway branch from Nairobi. It was located far north of the Equator (0°01'N 37°04'E).⁴⁷⁴ The origin of the town was attributed to the activities of the British colonialists in Kenya in 1907. To this day, a number of these British nationals' descendants still live in Nanyuki. Nanyuki was

⁴⁷²KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁴⁷³Mwenda.,*Op.Cit.*, p. 25.

⁴⁷⁴*Ibid*

presently the leading airbase of the Kenya Air Force and an established training base of the British Army in the Horn of Africa.

Nanyuki airport was a core transport link and remains critical for air traffic contributing hugely to the development of commerce in the region. The airport provided a landing field with its diurnal booked air services from both Air Kenya and SafariLink flights that provide convenience for both business and tourism. There was the Nanyuki Club that boasts of a nine-hole golf course which also hosts the spectacular yearly horse-show. On the tourism realm, Nanyuki remained a tourism hub having the Mount Kenya Safari Club, which had in recent times been overhauled. It served as a tourists' attraction centre while in Nanyuki on their way to and from Mount Kenya.⁴⁷⁵

By 1961, on the brink of independence in Kenya, there were two electoral units in Laikipia Area , Laikipia in North Kenya and Ol Kalou in Rift Valley.⁴⁷⁶ By 1961, local authorities and municipal councils in Laikipia Area were Thomson falls urban district council, rural district council, the Laikipian district council, the Aberdares County council and African advisory councils. As earlier mentioned, Laikipia Area had three major towns namely Nyahururu, Nanyuki and Rumuruti.

Nyahururu remained one of the most important towns in Laikipia County.⁴⁷⁷ The town, Nyahururu was formerly Thomson's falls, named after the seventy-four metres tall falls on Ewaso Nyiro River, which originated from the Aberdares ranges and slithers through Lake Olbolosat – the only lake in Nyandarua County and the

⁴⁷⁵Laikipia County Integrated Development Plan C.I.D.P 2018-2022.

⁴⁷⁶KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1961 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁴⁷⁷*Sunday Nation*, March 18th 2018.

expansive central Kenya region.⁴⁷⁸ The river's name was derived from Maasai dialect which implied brown muddy river water.⁴⁷⁹ The river drained into the Lorian swamp before going underground, it resurfaced as River Lagh Dera in Somalia.⁴⁸⁰ River Lagh Dera eventually drained into River Jubba and then Jubba into the Indian Ocean.⁴⁸¹ Nyahururu was the highest town in Kenya at an imposing 7,742 feet.⁴⁸² Nyahururu previously served as the headquarters of the Nyandarua County before it was hived off to Laikipia County. The town had been at the centre of a protracted battle between Nyandarua and Laikipia Counties surviving ages.

The battle for Nyahururu and Nanyuki between Laikipia and Nyandarua Districts and currently Counties was as old as Kenya's independence. Throughout the colonial era, the Thomson falls was administered as part of Laikipia District.⁴⁸³ Nanyuki on its part was administered from the Aberdares District which was the present Nyandarua County. Attempts were made during the post-colonial regimes to sever Nyahururu from Laikipia and make it part of the Nyandarua County particularly by the political class. These efforts always triggered tension between the non-Kikuyu and Kikuyu in Nyahururu, non-Kikuyu massively rejected the idea citing imminent marginalisation if they were included into the central region and Nyandarua County which was predominantly Kikuyu.⁴⁸⁴ Most non Kalenjin in Nanyuki and Nyahururu preferred to remain in the defunct Rift Valley province, where their larger ethnic groups inhabit.

⁴⁷⁸Makali, Samuel; Boniface Kiteme (September 2005). *'The upper Ewaso Ng'iro basin, Kenya'* Network for water and sanitation from the original, retrieved on 31st August, 2023.

⁴⁷⁹Rough Guide (map) (9ed). 1: 900,000. Rough Guide Map. Cartography by world mapping project. Rough Guide, 2006. ISBN 1-84353-359-6.

⁴⁸⁰'A wreath for Ewaso Ng'iro' *Daily Nation*. Retrieved 31st August, 2023.

⁴⁸¹Makali, Samuel; Boniface Kiteme (September 2005). *'The upper Ewaso Ng'iro basin, Kenya'* Network for water and sanitation from the original, retrieved on 31st August, 2023.

⁴⁸²*Sunday Nation*, March 18th, 2018.

⁴⁸³*Sunday Nation*, March 18th, 2018.

⁴⁸⁴*Ibid.*

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics report indicated that Nyahururu town had an urban population of 36, 450.⁴⁸⁵

Nyahururu towered as a commercial nucleus for both Nyandarua and Laikipia Counties.⁴⁸⁶ Early settlers were enticed with the arable land nearby the town. One of the surviving colonial relics in Nyahururu was the Dutch architecture, largely associated with an influx of the Dutch settlers in Laikipia Area who were fleeing from South Africa at the height of the British and Boers crisis. It is the fleeing Boers who established Nyahururu town as a safe haven from the political uncertainties in South Africa. They established a school – Van Reinbeck, named after Jan Reinbeck who founded Cape Town in South Africa.

The school curriculum was in tandem with the Transvaal Education Department's curriculum.⁴⁸⁷ Besides, founding a school, the Dutch also put up a cemetery and a church. The Dutch Reformed Church later be transformed into the present African Inland Church.⁴⁸⁸ The sprawling of the town was credited to the building of the railway from Gilgil, which opened in 1929. Rt Hon Lord Delamare had a farm in Nyahururu. Delaware's brother-in-law Galbraith Cole also established a sheep ranch in the area. By 1946, the Thomson falls township layout was conceived laying the foundation for the establishment of Thomson Falls township.⁴⁸⁹ The town was once significant for timber milling as well as the currently collapsed National Pencil Company had an industrial unit in the vicinity. Presently, the town was a vital milk production centre and its environs were predominantly agricultural. Ol-Ngarua was

⁴⁸⁵Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019.

⁴⁸⁶*Sunday Nation*, March 18th 2018.

⁴⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁹KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1946, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

famed for maize production, whereas Shamata, which is located South of Nyahururu was a leading source of potatoes.⁴⁹⁰

Floriculture and cereal agriculture breathed life in Nyahururu. Suera Flowers for instance, was a pioneer in this venture. Some of the attractions to flower farming for the area included factors such as; the cool weather, availability of land, cheap labour and proximity to a well-developed infrastructure. Besides being a commercial centre, Nyahururu was home to several supermarkets such as Spears and Mugo supermarkets. The town benefited from financial services from mainstream banks such as; Kenya Women Microfinance Bank Limited, Equity bank, Kenya Commercial Bank, Family, Faulu Kenya, and ABSA Bank.⁴⁹¹

Rumuruti was another key town in Laikipia Area; Warurii asserted that Rumuruti was a town, 40 kilometres north along the Nyahururu-Maralal road. In spite of being less significant than Nyahururu and Nanyuki, Rumuruti was fundamental in Laikipia Area's administration, as it was designated to become Laikipia's County headquarters. Rumuruti served as the most significant town in Laikipia during the colonial era, at one point it served as the provincial headquarters of the Northern Frontier Province in 1929.⁴⁹² Rumuruti was first opened as a trading centre in 1911 with only one Indian shop as wellbeing first gazetted as the first colonial township in Laikipia Area in 1921.⁴⁹³ The township depended on water from River Uaso Narok; settlers in the area grew barley, flax, wheat, oats, and coffee with little success and on an experimental

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

⁴⁹² KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1929 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁴⁹³ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1912-1913 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

basis.⁴⁹⁴ By 1927, Rumuruti was still the only gazetted township in the entire colonial Laikipia County.⁴⁹⁵

A trading route from the Northern Frontier District through Rumuruti to the Rift Valley was also opened at the behest of the colonial administration. During the colonial period, the town served as the colonial headquarters of Laikipia Area. The Agikuyu used to peddle Indian corn and tobacco at the height of the colonial period.⁴⁹⁶

Rumuruti was finally gazetted as a township on 19th March 1921 by the colonial government. This facilitated the erection of latrines, Rumuruti-Nyeri road, and a wagon bridge over River Uaso Ngiro and a second class court. Upon establishment of the settler farms in Rumuruti, the main supply of labour was obtained from the Kikuyu reserve in the Nyeri district and Meru. Ten acres of swamp land in Rumuruti was also reclaimed by the colonial government. All farms in Rumuruti except five were settled by soldier settlement scheme; in the southern end of the district they grew wheat and flax. By 1922, the colonial government had connected Rumuruti by the telegraph from Nakuru in a bid to develop enabling infrastructure to hasten efficient and effective settler farming in the area.⁴⁹⁷

Rumuruti was predominantly peopled by pastoralists with roughly 500 livestock and 1,200 sheep and goats which were traded at the town's weekly livestock public sale. Informed by this potential the town conceived a master blue print to construct 200 million shilling meat processing plant in the heart of the Rumuruti town in 2013.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁴KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1925 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁴⁹⁵KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1927 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁴⁹⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁸Warurii.,*Op.Cit.*, p. 44.

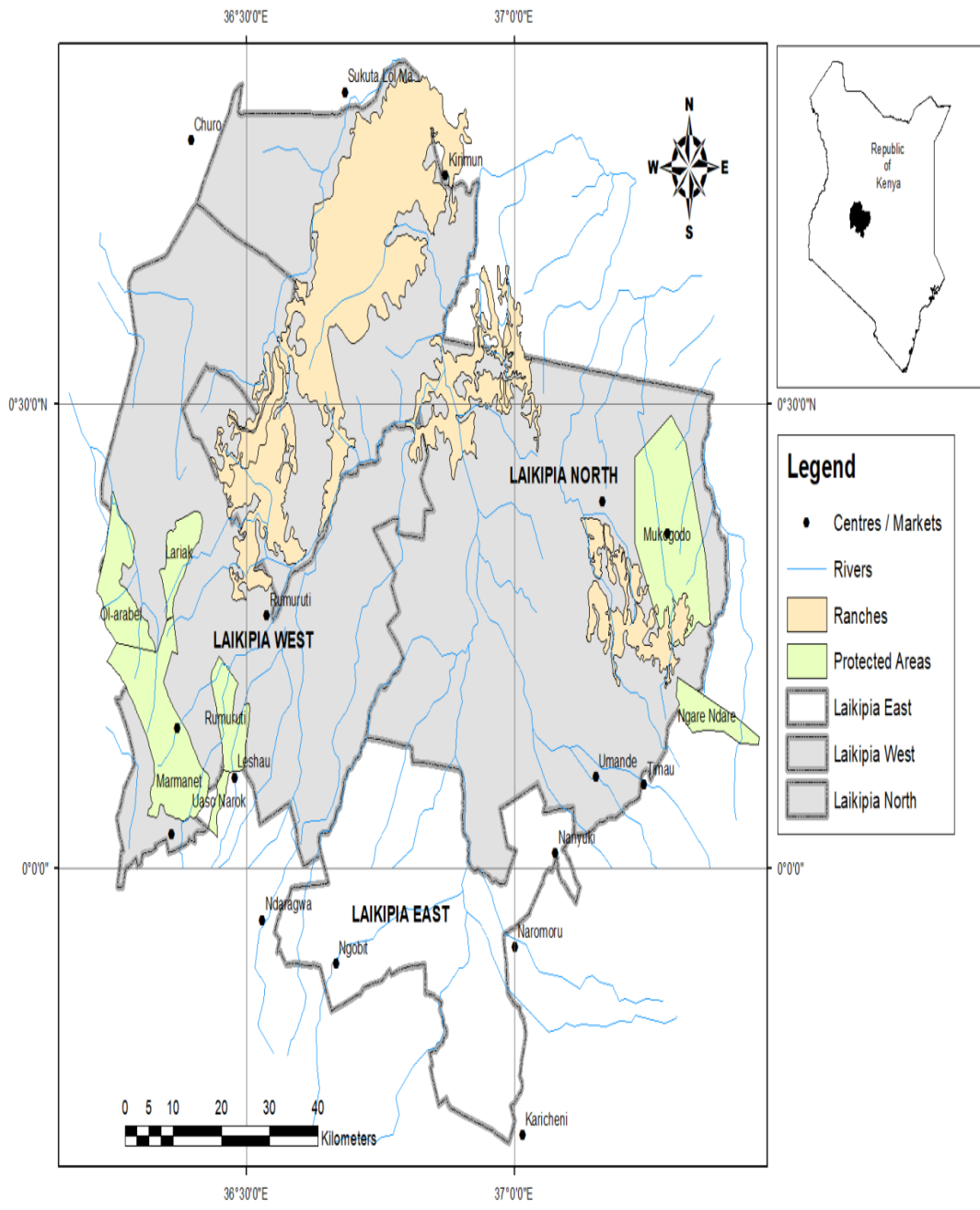


Figure 1.1 : Map of Laikipia Area

Source: GIS Lab, Kibabii University

The map of Laikipia Area was contributory in putting into perspective the key administrative areas and other important physical and artificial land marks that gave a geographical backdrop of a historical study of the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Maps were essential for the reason that they gave

geographical land marks including boundaries of certain administrative areas and physical areas overtime.⁴⁹⁹

1.10.5 Study Population

Laikipia County had a total population of 518,560 of which 259, 440 were males, 259,102 womenfolk and 18 intersex individuals.⁵⁰⁰

1.10.6 Target population

Mugenda and Mugenda defined target population as a population, from which a researcher desired to include in gathering information for their study.⁵⁰¹ The study's target population was made up of 27 elders, 12 political leaders, 9 youth, 13 farmers, 6 peace actors, 5 religious leaders and 7 government officials. The study targeted these categories of people in order to get a holistic perspective of the genesis of the land question and its resultant effect to the general population in the study area.

1.10.7 Sample size and sampling Techniques

A sample was a smaller group of subjects drawn from the population in which a given study was conducted for a purpose of drawing conclusions about the population targeted.⁵⁰² Purposive sampling method was used to sample knowledgeable respondents from a representative sample of 382 respondents based on Krejcie and Morgan who hold that in a population of more than 75,000 people and below 1,000,000, this sample size is appropriate.⁵⁰³ But, the study being qualitative reached

⁴⁹⁹Rampolla, M.L.; *A pocket guide to writing in History*, 6th ed., Boston: Bedford/St. Martin, 2010; p. 71.

⁵⁰⁰The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), 2019.

⁵⁰¹Mugenda and Mugenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 4.

⁵⁰²Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 35.

⁵⁰³ Krejcie R.V. and Morgan D.W. *Determining sample size for research activities Educational and psychological measurements*, 30, (1970): 609

saturation of data upon interviewing seventy nine respondents with four focus group discussions. They were drawn from elders, political leaders, youth, farmers, peace actors, religious leaders and government officials. The researcher with the help of the research assistants, categorized knowledgeable informers (Key informants) based on the objective of the study by means of purposive sampling. In case there were referrals to more informed informants, the researcher and the research assistant utilised the snow balling technique to get the exact participant for the study. The criterion for purposive sampling was age, occupation, ethnicity and region.⁵⁰⁴

The areas' cultural diversity was reflected in the sampling; the Maasai, Kikuyu, Samburu, Turkana, Meru and Europeans existing in the Sub-Counties of Laikipia Central, Laikipia East, Laikipia North, Laikipia West and Nyahururu in Laikipia Area. The aged people in the sub counties were given eminence for the reason that the study is historical in concept. In addition, the gender parity was reasonably factored. However, more males were sampled. This is substantiated by the fact that patriarchy is prominent among the communities living in Laikipia Area.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁰⁵ Warurii., *Op.Cit.*,p. 24.

Table 1.1: Respondents' background

Ethnicity	Numbers	Sampling Method
Elders	27	Purposive
Politicians	12	Snowballing
Youth	9	Purposive
Farmers	13	Purposive
Peace actors	6	Snowballing
Religious leaders	5	Purposive
Government officials	7	Snow balling
79 expected respondents		

1.10.8 Instruments of Data collection

This study was qualitative in nature and adopted the historical research design.⁵⁰⁶ This study employed both primary and secondary sources of information.⁵⁰⁷ Data collection instruments included; interview schedules and Focus Group Discussions.

1.10.9 Data Collection Instruments

Interviews were used to collect data based on the study objectives.⁵⁰⁸ The researcher used pens, notebooks and a tape recorder to note down respondents' versions. The study employed face-to-face interviews with elders, ranchers, political leaders, professionals, youth, County and central government administrators from the five sub-counties of Laikipia Area.⁵⁰⁹

1.10.9.1 Interview Schedules

An interview was an interchange of views between the two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest where the researcher attempted to understand the world from

⁵⁰⁶Mugenda, O. and Mugenda, A.G., *Op.Cit.*, p. 6.

⁵⁰⁷Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 17.

⁵⁰⁸Chakraborty, D.,*Op. Cit.*, p. 19.

⁵⁰⁹Mugenda, O. and Mugenda, A.G., *Op. Cit.*, p.10.

subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences.⁵¹⁰ The intention was to understand the phenomenon through the description and interpretation of the human experiences. Oral interview was useful in the reconstruction of the events that relied on memory or eye witness.

The open-ended interview technique was appropriate because this study adopted qualitative method design.⁵¹¹ Once a rapport was created and confidence guaranteed, certain confidential facts were conveyed that would or else escape the consideration of the researcher. A follow up was made on inappropriate or half-finished responses to particular questions and the researcher analysed the authenticity of the informant's data.⁵¹² Semi-structured interviews were reserved for informers in the target areas to acquire data for the study. The informants thus comprised the elders, political leaders, youth, farmers, peace actors, religious leaders and government officials.

1.10.9.2 Focus Group Discussions

This study employed four Focus Group Discussions. The Focus Group Discussion were used to capture data from informants such as; elders, political leaders, farmers and peace actors.⁵¹³ The size of focus group discussion groups was eight members. Focus Group Discussion was of same gender for confidentiality.⁵¹⁴ Age was considered for the reason that the study was historical; unavoidably the aged informants would be given preference due to their experience. These Focus Group Discussions were moderated by the supervisors and provoking questions were included to enhance discussions.

⁵¹⁰*Ibid*

⁵¹¹Chakraborty D., *Op. Cit.*, p. 21.

⁵¹²Rampolla, M.L., *Op. Cit.*, p. 72

⁵¹³Mugenda O. and Mugenda, A.G., *Op. Cit.*, p. 14.

⁵¹⁴Chakraborty D.,*Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

1.10.10 Data Collection Procedure

Once the researcher obtained an approval letter from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, a research authorization was acquired from the National Council for Sciences and Technology. A research authorization was also sought from the Laikipia County commissioner by informing the administrative officers of the intention and objectives of this study. The proposition to involve the County Commissioner allayed misconstrued reservations and created confidence among respondents in giving vital information. Consent from all participants was sought prior to the data collection exercise in the study area. The researcher administered the interviews with the help of three research assistants.⁵¹⁵ In order to permit respondents to open up and respond to the inquiries straightforwardly, the researcher tried as much as possible to create an atmosphere that was favorable to the informants. Primary and secondary data were corroborated and inconsistent data discarded. Collected data were analysed thematically based on study's objective.⁵¹⁶ Researcher's perspective was incorporated and information kept under lock and key within the reach of the researcher.

1.10.11 Historical sources of data

This study being historical in nature used both primary and secondary sources of data.⁵¹⁷ Historical evidence was derived from two broad sources of information namely primary and secondary sources.

1.10.11.1 Primary data

Primary sources comprised of first-hand knowledge for example eye witnesses and original documents. Qualitative primary sources included interviews and focus group

⁵¹⁵Chakraborty D., *Op.Cit.*, p. 13.

⁵¹⁶Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op. Cit.*, p. 17.

⁵¹⁷Rampolla M.L., *Op. Cit.*, p. 6.

discussion. Field research produced primary evidence by means of verbalized and transcribed interviews. Archival data (Annual Reports, handing over reports and administrative reports) were retrieved from the Kenya National Archives.⁵¹⁸ Formal government reports were retrieved from the Government Copier. Inquiry forms were used to collect evidence from a number of groups of informers. The use of interview as a tool of information gathering was appropriate owing to the expansive region of Laikipia Area . Verbal dialogues of more knowledgeable well-known informers saved time. Primary sources were primarily evidence generated by actors in the event or those who witnessed the events unfold. Primary sources were both oral and written sources. Census data, information from the Kenya National Archive and Documentation Services and oral interviews were the primary sources. The validation of data collection tools was scrutinized by supervisors to ensure they tested what they intended to test as guided by the research objectives.⁵¹⁹

1.10.11.2 Secondary data

Secondary sources were accounts of records which were prepared by someone who was not actually present to observe the event. This study corroborated primary and secondary data. These sources offered an easy analysis of the existing evidence in the reconstruction of this study. They also provided an opportunity of reviewing existing literature while cognizant of the methods and subjective interpretation by other studies.⁵²⁰

Secondary data was collected from sources that contained within hospital registers of patients admitted to the hospital as victims of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia

⁵¹⁹Chakraborty, D., *Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

⁵²⁰Rampolla, M.L., *Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

Area.⁵²¹ The technique involved the retrieving and thematically analyzing of data in registers, published books, periodicals, maps, theses, the mainstream media and finally accessible government policy documents on. It was for this reason, therefore, that this study complemented primary and secondary sources of information about the land question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

1.10.12 Reliability and Validity of the instruments

1.10.12.1 Reliability and Validity

Reliability was for the instruments and validity is for the information.⁵²² Validity was an amount of the unit to which the outcomes attained by means of the instrument characterizes the real phenomena under study.⁵²³ It was the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences. In the process of validating the data collected and testing the reliability of the used instruments, supervisors from the university were used to test the instruments and collected data. The proposition to use supervisors was due to their wide experience and hands on through guiding and supervising graduate students.⁵²⁴ They helped to ensure that the information gathered and instruments used were precisely effective on the basis of the objectives of the study.

⁵²¹Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

⁵²²Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 19.

⁵²³Chakraborty D.,*Op. Cit.*, p. 13.

⁵²⁴Kothari C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op. Cit.*, p. 19.



Plate 1: Supervisors, Prof. P.G Okoth and Rev. Fr. Dr. K.M. Lusambili, validating the research instruments

In sum, to ascertain if the instruments measured what they were intended and information gathered was consistent with the study objectives and questions, they were validated by the supervisors.⁵²⁵ The reliability and validity aspects comprised content, theory and methods.⁵²⁶ Instrumentalism and articulation of mode of production theories were corroborated to achieve validity and reliability in order to avoid bias in the study. Consequently, primary and secondary sources were corroborated to avoid subjective findings, bias, achieve reliability and validity in the study. Inconsistent responses from informants were corroborated with secondary sources to achieve reliability and validity. Data saturation was handled by aligning it with this study's objectives.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ *Ibid*

⁵²⁶ Chakraborty, D., *Op.Cit.*, p. 24.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*

1.10.13 Data Analysis

Verbal interviews were converted from the indigenous languages to English. Inconsistent responses from interviews were corroborated and analysed basing on the study's objectives.⁵²⁸ Collected information originating from both the primary and secondary sources was corroborated, inconsistent responses validated or invalidated. Data on the history of the land question and inter-ethnic land conflicts was thematically analysed based on the study's objects and researcher's insights were incorporated.⁵²⁹

1.10.14 Data Presentation

Qualitative data from interviews, Focus Group Discussions and observation checklists were presented in a narration method based on the study objectives and research questions.⁵³⁰ This made it possible for purposes of accuracy.

1.10.15 Ethical Considerations

These were sets of principles that guided research designs and practices. Once in the field, the researcher exhibited respect to the respondents, courtesy and avoided divulging into the unnecessary information that would have jeopardized the objectives of this study. Before beginning the data collection, the researcher ensured that the respondents understood the process in which they were engaging in.⁵³¹ Part of the introduction included clarification on why their participation was necessary, how their data was used and to whom it was reported to. Respondents were informed how data was thematically analyzed and shared to them through publications. Informants were assured that the collected data was essentially for academic work. The research

⁵²⁸*Ibid*

⁵²⁹*Ibid*

⁵³⁰Kothari, C.R. and Gaurav Garg., *Op.Cit.*, p. 27.

⁵³¹*Ibid*

assistants were duly inducted on research ethics and their role. The researcher was of high opinion on the persons' rights and looked after their particular interpretation. Informants were guaranteed of their civil rights and liberty to withdraw from the study at their own volition without any consequences. Information obtained from the respondents was voluntary and at no time was any respondent compelled to give information under duress.⁵³² The principle of anonymity was disregarded as counterproductive to the purported aim of this study. The study contributed to historical understanding and knowledge, validated participants' lives, contributed to democracy and facilitated socio-political transformation.⁵³³ From the foregoing arguments, therefore, anonymity had the potential of demoralising or degrading the research participants, thereby jeopardizing credibility and research participation.

1.11 Thesis Outline

This thesis has seven chapters: Chapter one provided the foundational framework of presenting the why, what and how of this study. It put into perspective the problem as a global phenomenon. It similarly contextualised the objectives and questions that guided this study. It furthermore reviewed existing literature and demonstrated the gap it filled besides pointing out the essentiality of the reviewed literature to this study. It further underlined essential methodologies that contained methods, theories and philosophical stand points that were elementary building blocks and validation grounds of this study. Finally, it established how data were collected, analysed and presented. It, on this basis, served as a substratum upon which the preceding chapters two, three, four, five, six and seven were anchored.

⁵³²*Ibid*

⁵³³Roux C.*Confidentiality and anonymity in Oral history research: the question of empowerment, autonomy and beneficence*. University of South Africa, XVII international oral history conference: Buenos Aires 2012, 2012, p.67.

Summarily, Chapter two traced the migration and settlement of the ethnic communities in Laikipia Area, and how it contributed to the genesis of the inter-ethnic cross border conflicts in Laikipia Area. Chapter three investigated dynamics such as migration and settlement, colonialism, decolonisation, land tenure, land use and post-colonial land policies that influenced the evolution of the land question in Laikipia Area. Chapter four examined the inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia Area. Chapter five assessed the factors that influenced the land question in Laikipia Area like the migration and settlement, colonialism, land tenure, land use, peddling of illicit fire arms, weaponization of land by politicians, youth unemployment, cultural stereotypes and customs, gender dynamics and post-colonial land policies triggers inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Chapter six evaluated the socio-economic impact of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area The chapter also discussed the conflict intervention mechanism in the inter-ethnic land conflicts Laikipia Area. Lastly, Chapter seven presented summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study. The chapter ended with suggestions for further research.

The next chapter, therefore, picked from this chapter and traced how migration and settlement of the ethnic communities impacted cross-border inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.

CHAPTER TWO

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN LAIKIPIA AREA UP TO 1963

2.1 Overview

This chapter picked from the previous chapter which was essential in establishing the structural framework of answering the why, what and how of this study. The chapter traces how the origin, migration and settlement of the Highland Nilotes, Plain Nilotes and Bantu groups of people in Laikipia Area. It further substantiates how emerging dynamics from these social evolutions and prehistoric human settlement patterns contributed to the genesis of inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area up. The chapter contextualises pre-colonial theories of origin and relations, origin migration and settlements of the high land Nilotes, plain Nilotes, Bantu and Europeans in Laikipia Area. It also analyses the inter-ethnic relations in the migration and settlement of ethnic communities in Laikipia Area.

2.2 Theories of origin and relations up to 1895

Material evidence adduced, analysed and interpreted by archaeologists and anthropologists throughout millennia validated the common theory that propagates Africa as the cradle of mankind.⁵³⁴ A focused group discussion in Dol Dol intimated that:

As a cradle of mankind the region including Laikipia was presumably first peopled by the hunters and gathering communities. The Yakku, Digiri, Wardei Darya, and Ndorobo were the first hunting and

⁵³⁴J. Kizerbo. *General History of Africa 1. Methodology and African Pre-History*. Nairobi: East African Educational publisher, 1990, p. 23.

gathering ethnic group to people Laikipia north and by extension the entire Laikipia region.⁵³⁵

However, these early settlement of the Yakku and Ndorobo was invaded by the arrival of the Maasai and Samburu in the area. The displacement of these food hunters and gatherers Yakku by the Maasai and Samburu was informed by the inter-ethnic border contest over land use as a force of production in the pre-capitalist modes of production. The need for land for hunting, food gathering communalism and quasi feudalism contributed to the cross-border inter-ethnic conflicts between herders, food hunters and gatherers. This was a tenet of the articulations of modes of production theory. The Mobilisation of the Yakku, Samburu and Maasai was on the basis of ethnocentrism which was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Warurii further argued that the earliest inhabitants of Laikipia Area were the hunters and gatherers Ogiek.⁵³⁶ This account was validated by an oral account which stated that:

Yakku lived in Mukogodo forest in Laikipia North relying on the forest for hunting and gathering wild fruits for survival. The presence and arrival of the Maasai in Laikipia County sparked an era of an indigenous commercial web that heralded cross fertilisation of ideas and the assimilation of the Yakku into the Maa nuclei.⁵³⁷

This study, therefore, holds that the hunting and food gatherers Ogiek, Yakku and Ndorobo were the earliest indigenous ethnic groups to settle in the expansive Laikipia Area up to 1895. The need to access land as a force of production by the Samburu and Maasai as grazing field compelled the latter to drive out, assimilate or displace former along ethnic lines. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study.

⁵³⁵Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁵³⁶Warurii, *Op. Cit.*,p. 54.

⁵³⁷Oral interview, Chenangat Mercy, interviewed in Nyahururu on 16th August, 2023.

Later, the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Tugen and Nandi moved into the area before displacing or assimilating the Ndorobo, Ogiek and Yakku like the case of the Maasai assimilation of the Yakku as a Maasai subset as well as Kalenjin assimilation of the Ogiek and Ndorobo as their subsets.⁵³⁸ From this perspective therefore food hunters and gatherers were the foremost group to arrive and settle in Laikipia Area before the Samburu, Maasai and the rest of the Kalenjin groups inhabiting the study area. Unlike the food hunters and gathering communities the Samburu, Maasai and the rest of the Kalenjin groups inhabited Laikipia plateau as a grazing field.

The Bantu entrance into Laikipia Area was traced to 1926 when they were recruited as labourers on white settler farms at the behest of the colonialism.⁵³⁹ The colonial regime created an agrarian mode of production based on land as a factor of production. Plantation farms and ranches were established by white settlers leading to the dispossession of African land which was in line with the articulation modes of production theory. As a result, they recruited labour of these ethnic African communities. An informant shared further that:

The Bantu ethnic groups that were recruited to offer labour on European settler farms in Laikipia County included the Kikuyu, Abagusii and Abaluhya from central Kenya and what was called Kavirondo. Prior to these ethnic Bantu settlements into Laikipia Area at the height of colonialism in Kenya, the ethnic Agikuyu made caravan voyages into Rumuruti to trade with Maasai in a pre-colonial indigenous commercial network.⁵⁴⁰

While supporting this account Warurii further avowed that this Bantu ethnic colonial labour force in Laikipia Area was later joined by Somali and Turkana.⁵⁴¹ However,

⁵³⁸ Oral Interview, Daniel Kimalelel, interviewed Dol Dol in on 16th August, 2023.

⁵³⁹ Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 52.

⁵⁴⁰ Oral interview, Wilfred Kariuki, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

⁵⁴¹ Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

Maasai, Nandi, Pokot, Tugen and Samburu were the earliest labourers in white settlers' farms before the Bantu were later recruited in masses.⁵⁴² These groups as a result were mobilised along ethnocentrism to ancestrally claim the Laikipian plateau as their territorial land in the development of the land question which was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory.

From the abovementioned, Laikipia Area was the epicentre of cross-fertilisation of cultures between hunters and gatherers, herders, cereal agriculturalists and Europeans as was established in the subsequent sections and chapters of this study. This was validated by occupational concept which was propounded by Bethwell Ogot⁵⁴³ and reinforced by the arguments put forth by the 20th century anthropologists like Wagner.⁵⁴⁴ The social-cultural and institutional milestones achieved by the cereal agriculturalists were hardened through a process of cross cultural diffusion of ideas expressed through warfare, trade, inter-marriage and assimilation by their more superior herders from pre-modern era. These arguments though labeled as bias and susceptible to racial prejudice, identify the Hamites and Semites as having substantially enriched the social-cultural and institutional facets of the Nilotic-herders before the latter's resultant influence on the cereal agriculturalist civilizations.

Primordial human movements and displacements were the earliest forms of inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area . Colonialism and anthropological ties created during the migration and settlement presented an opportunity for these communities to exploit land as a force of production for herding and plantation farming in the pre-capitalist and capitalist eras. The displacement of these ethnic groups and creation of

⁵⁴²Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

⁵⁴³*Ibid*

⁵⁴⁴G. Wagner, *The changing family among Bantu of western Kenya*: London: Oxford University press, 1949, p.12.

commercial labour on settler farms in the study area led to the rise and development of the land question along ethnocentrism. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

2.3 Origin, Migration and Settlement of the Highland Nilotes into Laikipia

Area up to 1963

The highland Nilotes originated from the Horn of Africa in an expansive southwestern point of the present Ethiopia.⁵⁴⁵ In this mountainous and forested setting, Eastern Cushites enriched substantially highland Nilotes' cultural and language facets through a network of interaction that bred cross fertilisation of ideas. The Eastern Cushites enduring legacies on the Highland Nilotes culture included; circumcision as a rite of passage and the age set system.⁵⁴⁶ A focused group discussion elaborated that:

From this area the highland Nilotes made their great trek southward into the East African region. The historical ties between the highland Nilotes and the Cushitic groups of people would again re-surface on the formers apparent occupation of western Kenya. This time, they mingled and absorbed southern Cushite who had established settlements in mountainous areas. It is at this point in their course of migration that the highland Nilotes settled in the counties bordering Laikipia County before making a westward movement.⁵⁴⁷ Apparently, this interaction between the southern Cushitic groups and Highland Nilotes led to the spreading of cultural facets like age set systems and circumcision which were originally southern Cushites

⁵⁴⁵ Robert Maxon. *East Africa*. West Virginia; West Virginia University press, 1986, p. 65.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵⁴⁷ An oral interview of an elders focused Group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

traditions. Age set system strengthened the institution of moranism among the highland Nilotes which was essential in their organised contestation for land as a force of production particularly as a grazing fields as they made settlement in Laikipia Area. This was in line with a tenet of the instrumentalism theory.

At the outset of the sixteenth century, the Kalenjin group – Nandi were still peopling the swathes stretching at the foot of the Rift Valley, to the East of these settlements stood Mount Elgon and the Cherang’ani hills.⁵⁴⁸ Here they made contact with western Bantu whom they enriched their socio-political institutions and rites of passage acquired from the Cushites.⁵⁴⁹ The Kalenjin as they were also called dispersed systematically into two distinct groups.⁵⁵⁰ One group made an eastward migration while the other made a south West Trek; the latter included the Nandi and Kipsigis while the former was made up of Elgeyo, Marakwet and Tugen. At this point in time, another sizeable section of these highland groups had settled in an area between Mount Elgon and Kenya. An elders focused group discussion expanded that:

The Elgon group of the highland Nilotes subset made a westward motion from the Rift Valley Highland and settled on the slopes of Mount Elgon. At this place the Highland Nilotes left behind one of its subset that settled on the slopes of Mt. Elgon and its environs referred vaguely as Sabaot.⁵⁵¹

Mt. Elgon became one of the dispersal points for the highland Nilotes as while a majority of the Kalenjin Subsets moved, the Sabaot remained behind. This pattern of migration would later end up in the region neighbouring Laikipia Area. The highland Nilotes entry into Laikipia Area was during the pre-colonial period because the areas

⁵⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁵⁴⁹Oral interview, Benjamin Lemaron, Nyahururu, interviewed on 18th August, 2023.

⁵⁵⁰Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p. 67.

⁵⁵¹Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

they settled neighbored Laikipia Area.⁵⁵² The Ndorobo and Ogiek settlements in Laikipia Area were traced to the pre-colonial era.⁵⁵³ Also, the highland Nilotes settled in Laikipia Area as labourers on white settler farms during the colonial era.⁵⁵⁴ This information was further echoed by the information from the Kenya National and Documentation services which stated that;

Even if, highland Nilotes like the Nandi, Tugen, Marakwet and Ndorobo were squatters on contract in Laikipia Area offering labour on contractual terms on white settler farms, their numbers were less compared to the Agikuyu who were eighty per cent of the colonial labour force in the Area.⁵⁵⁵

This study consequently reiterated that the Ndorobo and Ogiek settled in Laikipia in the pre-colonial era and these settlements were only disrupted by the dispossession of their land by the colonial regime. Even though, they were moved in the anticipation of creating white settlement in Laikipia Area, they retraced back to the area this time as labourers on settler farms or illegal settlements on crown land. Their displacement to create settler farms was in line with the tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

2.3.1 Migration and Settlement of the Pokot in Laikipia Area up to 1963

There was no Pokot settlement in Laikipia Area up to 1895; however, Pokot entry into Laikipia Area was attributed to the vacuum created by the Maasai exodus into the southern reserve.⁵⁵⁶ The presence of the Maasai in the area since the pre-colonial era prevented the Pokot from moving further south into Laikipia Area. Clearly, the point of contestation was land as a critical force of production. Both communities were herders so accessing land in Laikipia as grazing field was critical to both of

⁵⁵²Oral interview, Isaac Lengai, interviewed in Nanyuki on 18th August, 2023.

⁵⁵³Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p. 66.

⁵⁵⁴Oral interview, Samuel Tum, interviewed in Rumuruti on 21st August, 2023.

⁵⁵⁵KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁵⁵⁶KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911.

them this was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory. An informant account shed more light that:

In 1925, exactly twelve years since the last Maasai movement into the Southern country and reserve, the colonial authorities in Laikipia reported unusual incident of the Pokot and Suk marauding in the area. Being pastoralists Pokot often moved in search of water and pasture for their livestock in the pre-colonial era and their presence in Laikipia was a similar indication.⁵⁵⁷

Later as established pockets of the Pokot and Suk settlements were still visible in the northern part of Laikipia.⁵⁵⁸ The colonial authorities were really considerate regarding the nature of nomadic pastoralism that was the source of the Pokot livelihoods, in extreme and dire situations during dry spells they were often allowed to graze on unoccupied crown land.⁵⁵⁹ This colonial proposition created the land question in Laikipia Area as the Pokot refer to this grazing to claim that the area was their ancestral land.⁵⁶⁰ This study from this background holds that mobilisation along ethnic lines by politicians and other conflict actors in Laikipia Area invoked these historical ties in the creation of ancestral land claims by the Pokot. This was in line with the tenets of instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In 1931, for example, the Suk and Pokot were allowed by the colonial authorities to graze in the Churo triangle.⁵⁶¹ But regarding the present Pokot settlement in Laikipia Area an informant account explicated that:

Pokot make the highest number of the highland Nilotes in Laikipia County, they mainly inhabit Kirima Sub-County and Laikipia West. In the recent spate of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Ol Moran, the Pokot have

⁵⁵⁷ Oral interview, Hilda Waitheka, interviewed in Nanyuki on 20th August, 2023.

⁵⁵⁸ KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1927, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁵⁵⁹ KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1931, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁵⁶⁰ Oral interview, Salome Naipanoi, interviewed in Segera, on 21st August, 2023.

⁵⁶¹ KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911.

been at loggerheads with the cereal agriculturalists Bantu over what they term as systematic displacement from their familial land by the Bantu.⁵⁶²

From the preceding information therefore, this study holds that ethnic Pokot historical ties with Laikipia Area extends to the pre-colonial era. Land in Laikipia for this ethnic community was a useful force of production as a herding community. The colonial regime therefore created the cross-border conflict among the Pokot in Laikipia Area by establishing settler farms in the area. The resettlement of the ethnic Bantu in the area by both the colonial and post-colonial regime also escalated the development of the land question among the ethnic Pokot in Laikipia Area. The Pokot believed that they were to be settled in Laikipia Area instead of other ethnic groups by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes. The need to access land in Laikipia Area by the ethnic Pokot for grazing their cattle forms part of their entrenched ancestral land claims. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory applied in this study.

2.3.2 Migration and Settlement of the Tugen into Laikipia Area up to 1963

Tugen was one of the many subsets of the Kalenjin ethnic group. Tugen settlement in Laikipia Area like any other Kalenjin group dated back to the pre-colonial era.⁵⁶³ This account was reinforced by the information from the Kenya National Archive and Documentation services that explicated that Tugen settlement in the colonial period was reported on a settlement scheme in Lembus forest, they were squatting on a crown land alienated for forest reserve in 1917.⁵⁶⁴ Another Tugen population was located at Kamorra glades on another unalienated crown land in Laikipia Area.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶²Oral interview, Isaac Amari, interviewed in Gituamba on 17th August, 2023.

⁵⁶³Oral interviews of a political leaders focused group discussion in Rumuruti, interviewed on 18th August, 2023.

⁵⁶⁴KNADS, DO/ER/2/2/17 accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁵⁶⁵*Ibid.*

Basing on this information therefore, this study affirmed that the need by the Tugen to protect their land holding rights on ethnocentrism grounds in Laikipia Area was informed by their anthropological background in the area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Their earliest settlements in the area were traced to the pre-colonial era forming part of the inter-ethnic relations in the area.

2.3.3 Migration and Settlement of the Ndorobo in Laikipia Area up to 1963

By 1920, seven years after the last Maasai group were moved to the Southern reserve, there were three Ndorobo Villages squatting on unalienated land in Laikipia Area . The Ndorobo settlements cut across forest reserves and near the Samburu Southern border by 1923.⁵⁶⁶ In 1931, the Ndorobo were reportedly still squatting on unoccupied crown land between Uaso Narok and Uaso Nyiro Rivers in Laikipia Area.⁵⁶⁷ There was also no native reserve in Laikipia Area for any indigenous African ethnic group in Kenya around this time.⁵⁶⁸ Presently, the Ndorobo remained in Laikipia North as part of the indigenous ethnic communities.⁵⁶⁹ An oral account from elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol clarified that:

Ndorobo was one of the indigenous ethnic in Laikipia County whose settlement in the area was traced to the pre-colonial era. The colonial authorities discovered the Ndorobo population long after the other ethnic groups in the area because as food hunters and gathering community they lived in the forest.⁵⁷⁰

This study, therefore, held that the Ndorobo settlement into Laikipia Area dated back into the pre-colonial era. This was the reason why they held ancestral claim of land in Laikipia Area on anthropological and ethnocentrism grounds which contributed to

⁵⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁷KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1931, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁵⁶⁸KNADS,PC/RUP 4/3/1, Monthly Intelligence report, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁵⁶⁹Oral interview, Clinton Milo, interviewed in Lamuria, on 17th August, 2023.

⁵⁷⁰Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

the land question in the study area. The need to control land as a force of production by the Ndorobo was on the grounds that land enabled them to hunt and gather food for their survival. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

2.4 Migration and Settlement of the Plain Nilotes into Laikipia Area up to 1963

Plain Nilotes existed as a single group of people by the first millennium A. D.⁵⁷¹ However; they were divided into two inter-related groups. The Bari – whose migration and settlement is untraceable in East Africa – and the Teso-Maasai branch whose population patterns had strong presence in East Africa. The Teso-Maasai broke off into three near similar ethnic groups namely; Karamajong, Teso, Lotuko and Maasai. To substantiate this theory, the dispersal points for the Teso-Maasai were believed to be an area around Lake Turkana.⁵⁷² The plain Nilotes that inhabited Laikipia Area were the Maasai, Samburu and Turkana. The Maasai and Samburu were classified as belonging to the Maa group which confirmed their close anthropological similarity compared to the than the Turkana. All these Plain Nilotes were herders and their struggle to claim and control ancestral land holding rights in Laikipia Area along ethnic lines was driven by the material concept of land as a force of production mainly because they were predominant pastoralist. These were tenets of both instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theory. A focus group discussion of political leaders in Rumuruti confirmed that:

The Maasai, Turkana and Samburu lived in Laikipia County since the pre-colonial era. Maasai and Samburu settlements were notably disrupted during the introduction of white settlement in Laikipia County during the colonial era. The Maasai were move to Loita area but some retraced back to Laikipia to work

⁵⁷¹KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁵⁷²*Ibid.*

as herders on settler farms. Samburu were also moved to Isiolo but their settlement in Laikipia presently was evident with majority of them squatted on absentee land lord farms.⁵⁷³

This study therefore reiterated that plain Nilotes peopling Laikipia Area had a common origin; however the Maasai and Samburu links were established to have emerged from the same Maa nuclei. As a herding group their ancestral land claims in Laikipia Area emanated from the desire to control land as grazing field in their modes of production which was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

2.4.1 Migration and Settlement of the Maasai into Laikipia Area up to 1963

A great deal of literature had been reproduced regarding the Maasai as a distinct ethnic group.⁵⁷⁴ Even if, Maasai remained the most written about ethnic group in Kenya, much of their pre-colonial history remained unreconstructed. Maasai were irrefutably southern plain Nilotic of the larger plain Nilotic language group.⁵⁷⁵ An elder's focus group discussion in Dol Dol avowed that:

This group settled in the area around L. Turkana in their initial migration into Kenya. Their immediate neighbours around Lake Turkana were the Samburu to the East and the Karamajong to the West.

This study affirmed that the Maasai as a proto-plain Nilotes belonged to the Teso-Maasai branch of the Plain Nilotes. The study further contended that the Maasai belonged to the Maa group together with the Samburu with whom they shared numerous cultural features.

⁵⁷³An oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁵⁷⁴William Robert Ochieng. *An Outline History of the Rift Valley of Kenya, up to AD 1900*. Nairobi: East African Literature, 1975, p. 30.

⁵⁷⁵Wanguhu Ng'ang'a: *Kenya Ethnic communities; Foundation of the Nation*. Gatundu: Gatundu Publishers, 2006, p. 393.

2.4.1.1 Origin of the Maasai up to 1895

The origin of Maasai as a single ethnic group from their northern settlement before trekking south was vaguely referred to as Kieu.⁵⁷⁶ Kieu was believed to be the area between Northern Lake Turkana and lower Nile Valley. An elder's focus group discussion in Dol Dol elaborated that:

Maasai as a proto-plain Nilotes original homeland was lower Nile Valley north of Lake Turkana before their trek into Kenya in the 15th Century. Their first migration into Kenya was traced to Lake Turkana which was their dispersal point. From Lake Turkana they roamed the Uasin Gishu plateau and western regions of Kenya before settling in Laikipia area.⁵⁷⁷

This study upheld the lower Nile Valley origin of the Maasai as a subset of the Plain Nilotes. From there they trekked into Lake Turkana before moving to other parts of Kenya in the course of their migration and settlement.

2.4.1.2 Migration and Settlement of the Maasai into Laikipia Area up to 1963

At their point of origin in Kieu, the Maasai roamed their northern settlement, coming into contact with the Kalenjin and the Silikwa people. From Lake Turkana, the point where plain Nilotes dispersed, the Maasai traffics wandered South East and made settlement in the area east of the Rift Valley.⁵⁷⁸ Certainly from their northern migration the Maasai settled around Lake Turkana before dispersing to Rift Valley, Western Kenya before retracing to Rift Valley.

The Maasai settled in the area between Kilimanjaro, Mount Kenya and Taita Hills, here, they experienced a robust cross dissemination of culture and languages with the neighbouring Kikuyu, Kamba and Chagga. Besides, an informal web of commerce was entrenched between the herding Maasai and cereal agriculturalist neighbours,

⁵⁷⁶Wanguhu Ng'ang'a., *Op. Cit.*, p. 394.

⁵⁷⁷Oral interview an an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁵⁷⁸Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p.68.

exchanging farm products for livestock products. Sirikwa had adopted a mixed system of agriculture from their mixed parent generations.⁵⁷⁹ This study espoused that Maasai as an ethnic group originated from the lower Nile Valley before roaming into Kenya to areas of Rift Valley and Western regions of Kenya.

2.4.1.3 Maasai Clans up to 1963

Both the *Ilmaasai* and *Iloikop* subsets of the wider Maasai ethnic group were composed of several distinct clans. Clans that made up the *Iloikop* or *Kwavi* Maasai include; *Isampur (Iltiamus, Ilbaraguyu)*. The *Ilmaasai* clans include; *Ilpurko, Iloitai, Ildamat* and *Ilmoitani* – settling around Narok and the *ilkaputiei*, the *iloodo-kelani* and *Ilamatapo* peopling Kajiado area in Kenya. Instructively, from these cross-cultural interactions with the Sirikwa and the Bantu people, two subsets among the Maasai surfaced.⁵⁸⁰ An elder's focus group discussion in Dol Dol affirmed that:

The *Iloikop* or *Kwavi* Maasai, who practice mixed agriculture and the *Ilmaasai* who are exclusively pastoralists. The Maasai traditions associated some of the *Iloikop* with the Sirikwa, Ndorobo and the Seker. When these people were encountered and other pre-Maasai settlers in the highlands like the Kalenjins, Maasai assimilated some of them.⁵⁸¹

This study maintained that the migration and settlement of the Maasai led them into contact with some of the Bantu groups in Western and Rift Valley regions. Their interaction led to the cross fertilisation of ideas and inter-marriages that gave rise to new subsets of the Maasai.

During the course of the Maasai pre-colonial movements; they came in contact with the highland Nilotes.⁵⁸² This contact generated a paradigm shift in their military and

⁵⁷⁹Wanguhu Ng'ang'a., *Op. Cit.*, p. 394.

⁵⁸⁰Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p.68.

⁵⁸¹Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁵⁸²Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p.68.

cultural spheres as they acquired new ideas that hardened and enriched their traditional way of life. The Maasai oval shields and the culture of male circumcision were argued to have originated from these ancient interactions.⁵⁸³

This study, therefore, reiterated that by 1895, Maasai population had settled in the North and Central Rift Valley; however they remained a stateless society and unterritorial owing to their nomadic nature. Maasai were more established socially, politically and economically in the 19th century. The land they occupied was approximated to be five hundred miles from southern to the northern border. It was also about one hundred and fifty miles from the western to the Eastern border. The northern border was Lake Sukuta two miles south of Lake Turkana. Their Southern border stretched to Lenjoge near Kiteto some fifty miles south of Kibaya in Tanzania.

The Maasai settlement spread as far as the area between Nyandarua range and Kilimanjaro along the plains neighbouring Rift Valley region.⁵⁸⁴ The presence of the Maasai settlement in the region was evident by the Maasai loaned words among the Chagga, Gweno, Taita and other Bantu communities peopling the region. Maasai was one of the largest ethnic communities peopling Laikipia Area.⁵⁸⁵ While their population was sparsely spread in all the six Sub-Counties in Laikipia Area, the Maasai predominantly live in Laikipia North where they own community trust land in Laikipia North.⁵⁸⁶ The Maasai living in Laikipia Area were previously classified on a regional basis in the past; there were the Nyeri, Laikipia and Naivasha Maasai.⁵⁸⁷ Laikipia Maasai was a group of the Maa group that settled on the Laikipia plateau in

⁵⁸³ Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁵⁸⁴ Ehrest Christopher: *Southern Nilotic History*. Evanston: Northwestern University press, 1971, p. 53.

⁵⁸⁵ Wanguhu Ng'ang'a., *Op. Cit.*, p. 369.

⁵⁸⁶ Oral interview, Lekorere Lekwakwayi, interviewed in Segera on 20th August, 2023.

⁵⁸⁷ KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

the course of their migration and settlement before their settlement was interjected by the introduction of colonial rule in the region.⁵⁸⁸ This was the same group that was moved as a consequence of the Anglo-Maasai agreements of 1904 and 1911 to Loita region in southern Rift.⁵⁸⁹

In 1950's, the Maasai were employed in Laikipia as herdsmen, during this same period, the Abaluhya, Ameru, Abagusii and Agikuyu were hired to offer domestic services in white settlers households.⁵⁹⁰ A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti agreed that:

This was one of the avenues for the Maasai to retrace their northern settlements in Laikipia County. The Maasai as an ethnic group claim that Laikipia ancestrally was their land which was unfairly dispossessed at the behest of the colonial regime.⁵⁹¹

This study held that the Maasai resettled into Laikipia Area long after they were moved to the South Rift Valley by the colonial regime. They resettled back as labourers on Europeans farms during the colonial era in Kenya. They held were influenced along their ethnic identities to view Laikipia as their ancestral land that was unfairly alienated by the colonial authorities to establish European settlement in the area. The resettlement of the Maasai from Laikipia to the Southern Reserve was informed by the need to exploit land as a force of production which was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory. In addition, the Maasai ancestral land claim in Laikipia Area was driven by the fact that the ethnic group survived on land for grazing their livestock. Land to them was a critical force of production in their pastoralism modes of productions.

⁵⁸⁸ Oral interview, Oscar Ole Kulet, interviewed in Muhotetu, on 20th August, 2023.

⁵⁸⁹ Oral interview, Shales Oleserani, interviewed in Segera, on 20th August, 2023.

⁵⁹⁰ Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 46.

⁵⁹¹ An oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

2.4.2 Migration and Settlement of the Samburu into Laikipia Area up to 1963

Anthropological evidence buttressed with linguistic characters validated Samburu, Maasai and Njemps as a proto-Maa.⁵⁹² This study stressed that the Samburu, Maasai and Njemps belong to the Maa nuclei of the proto Plain Nilotes in Laikipia Area. A farmers' focus group discussion reinforced this by elaborating that:

Their historic separation between these communities occurred during the Maasai great trek Southward into Central Kenya. By the close of the 16th century the Njemps and Samburu had split from the Maa nucleus to become the northern Maasai. The Samburu took the northern turn while the Njemps peopled the area on the shores of Lake Baringo.⁵⁹³

It was for that reason that this study emphasised that Samburu, Maasai and Njemps belonged to the Maa group before the 16th century. From this period a split leading to their break away from the Maa occurred and they became what were known as the northern Maasai. Samburu socio-cultural and customs value were similar to the Maasai and there was only a slight variation in the language.

Samburu were later displaced from the area squatting on the western side of Lake Turkana by both the *Loosekelai* Maasai and the Turkana. They were pushed to El Barta, where a confrontation between the Samburu and Borana left the Borana displaced from the area.⁵⁹⁴ The Samburu filled the vacuum left by the fleeing Borana and settled in the area. The Laikipian Samburu was the third group to separate from the main Maa group.⁵⁹⁵ They settled on the Laikipian plateau in the present Laikipia Area. The last group to break off from the Maa main group were the Loogolala or the Lumbwa peopling the southern region of the extensive Rift Valley.

⁵⁹²Wanguhu Ng'ang'a., *Op. Cit.*, p. 396.

⁵⁹³Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

⁵⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁵*Ibid.*

Samburu population in Laikipia Area was scattered in all the six Sub-Counties but the majority are in the East and West.⁵⁹⁶ At the advent of colonialism in Laikipia Area, the Samburu tried to occupy vacant land left by the relocated Maasai but they were repulsed to the North by the colonial regime.⁵⁹⁷ Samburu droves into Laikipia were attributed to the external pressure exerted on them by the Turkana in the North.

The Samburu and Turkana rivalry in the Northern Kenya perennially spilled over into Laikipia where the two ethnic groups clash over Laikipian rangelands.⁵⁹⁸ During the colonial period, the Samburu occupied the northern part of Laikipia Area but they often impinged on the unalienated crown land.⁵⁹⁹ By 1923, the Samburu were living north of Laikipia District but they often trespassed into the Laikipian unalienated crown land.⁶⁰⁰ Consequently, Samburu migrated and settled on Laikipia plateau. The plateau was ideal owing to their pastoralism lifestyle; land in the area was used for grazing this was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory. It was this land use as their force of production in their pastoralism mode of production that informed their ancestral land claims in Laikipia Area on the basis of their migration and settlement. This led to the creation of the inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia Area.

2.4.3 Migration and Settlement of the Turkana into Laikipia Area up to 1963

In the pre-colonial era up to 1895, Turkana hardly occupied Laikipia Area.⁶⁰¹ But, they consequently exerted pressure on the Samburu over their land use contest in the North.⁶⁰² These resultant pressures that involved an armed inter-ethnic cross-border land use conflict in the north often pushed the Samburu to occupy the northern part

⁵⁹⁶Oral interview, Leitiko Salanga, interviewed in Segera, on 19th August, 2023.

⁵⁹⁷KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁵⁹⁸Oral interview, Winfrey Peresian, interviewed in Rumuruti, on 22nd August, 2023.

⁵⁹⁹KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1906-1911, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶⁰⁰KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1923, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶⁰¹Oral interview, Leitiko Salanga, interviewed in Segera, on 19th August, 2023.

⁶⁰²KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

of Laikipia area as their safe haven. However, a few Turkana settled in Laikipia as labourers in search of wage labour during the colonial era. An oral account intimated further that:

Over the time, the Turkana moved into Laikipia County to occupy the vacant land in search of water and pasture for their livestock. Turkana population in Laikipia County was spread out in Laikipia West, East and Central Sub-Counties.⁶⁰³

This study acknowledged that while the Turkana did not migrate and settle in Laikipia during the pre-colonial period up to 1895 they have over time contested for land in Laikipia Area for grazing. Being pastoralist, land was useful to them as a force of production in their modes of production this was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. Also, ranchers leased them grazing field at the expense of other ethnic groups. The Turkana interest in land in Laikipia contributed to the cross-border inter-ethnic land conflicts in the area.

2.5 Origin, Migration and Settlement of the Bantu Groups of People in Laikipia Area up to 1895

Available evidence indicated that there were no Bantu migration and settlement into Laikipia area up to 1963. The origin of Mount Kenya Bantu was traced to the four Thagicu divisions of the East African Bantu, estimated to be around the second millennium.⁶⁰⁴ Three of the divisions later moved and settled around Mount Kenya. The Thagicu group pre-colonial treks brought them into contact with the southern Cushites.⁶⁰⁵ An elder's focus group discussion in Dol Dol elaborated that:

Whilst, they readily absorbed some of this southern Cushite, these interactions brought forth lasting cross

⁶⁰³Oral interview, Hezekiah Ndung'u, interviewed in Ol Moran, on 20th August, 2023.

⁶⁰⁴Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p. 72.

⁶⁰⁵*Ibid*

cultural facets like male circumcision and age set systems hitherto Cushitic customs. Originally, the Bantu did not observe age set system and circumcision they only acquired these customs through their interaction with the southern Cushite.⁶⁰⁶

This study held that the Mount Kenya Bantu were the highland Bantu subset of the Bantu language group in Kenya. They originated as a Bantu single group from an area vaguely described as Congo basin. From there they moved to Eastern Uganda when they split into two groups leading to the formation of Eastern and Western Bantu.

There was convincing evidence indicating a cross fertilisation of ideas between the Kikuyu and the early Egyptian civilisation.⁶⁰⁷ The early Gicande writing technology by the Kikuyu in Kenya was a reproduction of the early Egyptian writing technology. This sparked a re-view of the general notion that associated the Agikuyu with the Shungwaya dispersal point – an area vaguely believed to be between Rivers Juba and Tana where the hostile Oromo displaced Eastern Bantu.⁶⁰⁸ Bantu speaking people were certainly the foremost group to occupy the Mount Kenya region.⁶⁰⁹ These early settlements were traced back to the first millennium during the Iron Age. Oral tradition had it that, they came from the northern direction of Mount Kenya.⁶¹⁰ A political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti stated that:

The Bantu settlements in the South and East of the slopes of Mount Kenya bordered the Southern Cushite, by the 12th century. The generalisation of all Eastern Bantu to the Shungwaya origin by most historians and anthropologist was cast in doubt. Only the Meru have

⁶⁰⁶Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁶⁰⁷J. Kizerbo., *Op.Cit.*,p. 21.

⁶⁰⁸J. Forbes Munro: *Migration of the Bantu speaking people of Eastern Highlands; A reappraisal*. The *Journal of African Histor* : Cambridge University press, 1967, p. 27.

⁶⁰⁹*Ibid*

⁶¹⁰*Ibid*

their oral tradition corroborating with the Shungwaya origin.⁶¹¹

A re-look into the Agikuyu socio-cultural evolution and migration trace linked them to Egypt. The Egyptian traces in their culture were acquired informally from a different group that was culturally inclined to the *Misri* theory. This study affirmed that while it was a subject of further inquiry it was possible that the Agikuyu migration trek interacted with Egyptians or learnt the writing technology from a second ethnic community that learnt first-hand from the Egyptians.

The pastoral Maasai had a huge nomadic influence on the Bantu groups populating East of Mount Kenya.⁶¹² The geo-spatial conditions in this dry background forced these Bantu people to shift into small autonomous groups that moved from one point to another for pasture, water and other natural resources. A multitude of factors informed the second migration of the Mount Kenya Bantu mid-way into the fifteenth century.⁶¹³ The direction of these human traffics was south of the mountain. These intrinsic and extrinsic factors included; the southern area had arable swathes with reliable rainfall, population pressure and internal feuds compounded with the Oromo raids.⁶¹⁴ This study therefore held that the southward movements gave rise to three sets of the Bantu groups peopling Mount Kenya region, the Embu and Mbeere peopling Mount Kenya East; Chuka and Tharaka on the northern slopes and lastly the Kikuyu occupying South and East of Mount Kenya.

⁶¹¹Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023

⁶¹²J. Forbes Munro., *Op. Cit.*, p. 24.

⁶¹³Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁶¹⁴*Ibid.*

2.5.1 Migration and Settlement of Agikuyu in Laikipia Area up to 1963

As earlier established, there were no Agikuyu settlements in Laikipia Area up to 1895. The Agikuyu settlement into Laikipia Area was largely traced to their first movement into the area at the behest of the white settlers, who recruited them as labourers on their farms.⁶¹⁵ In 1920 in the colonial Laikipia, there were eighteen Kikuyu families squatters registered as a consequence of the Resident Native Ordinance.⁶¹⁶ A political leader's focus group discussion in Rumuruti reinforced that:

Up to eight per cent of African menial labour on white settlers' farms in Laikipia was offered by the Kikuyu. The Kikuyu were considered as hard workers and loyal to their colonial masters. Even so, at times labour supply in the white settlement farms in Laikipia County experienced shortages especially during the emergency. Many labourers had deserted farms for fear of being reprimanded during screening or heeded the Mau Mau calls to desert settler farms.⁶¹⁷

This study held that the Agikuyu migration treks did not settle on Laikipia plateau during the pre-colonial era up to 1895. But, their first settlement in the area was traced to the colonial era when they sought labour on settler farms. Consequently, historical account illuminated that the Kikuyu community had contact with Laikipia Area during the pre-colonial and colonial eras.⁶¹⁸ The Agikuyu peddled Indian corn, tobacco and *Kibuyus*; they also passed through Rumuruti enroute to Baringo and Ravine to trade their merchandise. Later on a trading route from Northern Frontier District through Laikipia to Rift Valley was officially opened by the colonial government in 1912 to facilitate this inter-community commerce.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹⁵KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1906-1911, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶¹⁶KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1920 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶¹⁷Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁶¹⁸KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 28th June, 2023.

⁶¹⁹*Ibid.*

As earlier asserted, the Agikuyu were mostly preferred for colonial labour in Laikipia County because of the proximity of their settlement to Laikipia as well as their loyalty and hardworking nature in the fields. In 1923, there were 95 native families' squatters on contract in Laikipia Area.⁶²⁰ In 1924, native population in Laikipia Area included the Kikuyu but there was no Kenyans reserve for any indigenous ethnic community having moved the Maasai to the southern Reserve in Loita.⁶²¹ From the foregoing, the colonial regime shaped the land question in Laikipia Area by creating an avenue for the Agikuyu to make settlement in Laikipia Area in the colonial era. This subject was discussed into details in the next chapter. The land question was created on the ethnocentrism grounds arising from ancestral land claims by the Samburu, Maasai, Tugen, Ndorobo, Pokot, Somali and Ogiek who claimed that the ethnic Agikuyu impinged on their ethnic territories. This was based on the tenet of the instrumentalism theory of this study.

In 1925, the Kikuyu population residing as labourers on contract on settler farms in Laikipia Area increased substantially.⁶²² Around 1930, Kikuyu were the most populous Africans living in Laikipia on labour contract; they had borrowed their indigenous value system. A party of Kikuyu elders for many years decided disputes amongst members of their tribe as part of their indigenous conflict resolution mechanism.⁶²³

At the height of the Mau Mau activities in Laikipia Area, many native Kikuyu moved out of Laikipia before or after the screening process out of their own volition as the

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*

⁶²² KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1925, accessed on 28th June, 2023.

⁶²³ KNADS/PC/RU 4/3/1, Monthly Intelligence Report, 1935-1942 accessed on 29th June, 2023.

colonial authorities stepped up its efforts of weeding out the Mau Mau elements.⁶²⁴ A sizeable number was also instructed by the Mau Mau militants to remain behind to aid the militants' activities in Laikipia Area. Mau Mau screening was done by the colonial government in 1953, the aim of the security exercise was to weed out Mau Mau elements from the general native population in Laikipia Area.⁶²⁵

In 1955, Kikuyu women were involved in the inter-tribal marriages in Laikipia Area than any other ethnic group in the area.⁶²⁶ That same year also, members of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru ethnic groups returned to Laikipia from their reserves ready to provide labour on farms.⁶²⁷ In 1956, 22,000 Kikuyu, Embu and Meru men, women and children left Laikipia to the reserve by reparation or violation.⁶²⁸ In 1956, 675 men and their families were returned to the reserve by the colonial authorities.

The following year in 1957, the demand for Kikuyu labour in Laikipia Area was very high following their mass exodus from the area as a result of the stringent measures employed by the colonial regime aimed at containing Mau Mau in Laikipia.⁶²⁹ The colonial government conceived three strategies that compelled the Kikuyu resume offering labour in Laikipia Area. In the first scheme members of the Kikuyu ethnic group were recruited by the District Officer sent from Laikipia from their reserve in Nyeri. In the second scheme, a nomination formula was applied whereby those recruited to join the labour force in Laikipia were subjected to a rigorous vetting process ostensibly to avoid elements of Mau Mau returning to Laikipia. The last scheme involved bringing to Laikipia ethnic Kikuyu from Marigat camp as labourers

⁶²⁴KNADS,DC/LKA/1/4, 1953, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁶²⁵*Ibid.*

⁶²⁶*Ibid.*

⁶²⁷*Ibid.*

⁶²⁸KNADS/, *Annual report 1956, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁶²⁹KNADS/Annual report 1957, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

on settler farms in Laikipia Area. As a result, in 1959, most of the other ethnic groups in Laikipia Area were laid off in favour of the ethnic Kikuyu; the argument was that they were not as hard working as the ethnic Kikuyu labourers on settler farms. That also included the Meru and Embu collectively known as Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru.⁶³⁰ Kikuyu movement into Laikipia was controlled even if the ethnic group remained terrified because of the ensuing emergency.

This study, therefore, reiterated that the colonial activities created room for the ethnic Agikuyu to settle in Laikipia Area and access to land holding in the area. These avenues were the colonial labour recruitment, colonial land reforms like the Sweynnerton Plan, colonial settlement schemes referred to one million acre scheme and the post-colonial land buy-out policy adopted by the first post-colonial regime in Kenya which was a consequence of the colonial land alienations.

2.5.2 Migration and Settlement of the Meru in Laikipia Area up to 1963

The Meru belonged to the Eastern Bantu group whose oral tradition pointed their origin to Shungwaya.⁶³¹ The Meru were among the native ethnic communities recruited by the colonial regime to offer labour on Europeans farms during the same period in 1920's and 1930's.⁶³² A political leader's focus group discussion in Laikipia Area expounded that:

Meru migration into Laikipia Area was during the time like ethnic Agikuyu at the behest of the colonial regime. They were recruited to offer labour on settler farms together with other ethnic communities. Their numbers were not as high compared to the ethnic Agikuyu on settler farms. After independence the ethnic Meru also acquired land through the land buy-

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶³¹ J. Forbes Munro., *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

⁶³² KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1920, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

out policy by buying shares from land buying companies.⁶³³

This study, therefore, reiterated that migration treks of the Meru did not settle on the Laikipia plateau. Their first settlement into the area was established to be during the colonial era when they were recruited to offer labour on settler farms. Their settlement in the area therefore raised the land question among the Maasai, Pokot, Tugen, Somali, Ndorobo and Samburu along ethnic identities who claimed that they settled on their ancestral land. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory of this study.

2.5.3 Migration and Settlement of the Kisii in Laikipia Area up to 1963

This study established that the Kisii did not settle in Laikipia Area up to 1895. However, the Kisii first settled in Laikipia Area during the colonial period as part of the labourers recruited from Kavirondo in 1922.⁶³⁴ Even so, their numbers were very minimal compared to the Agikuyu who formed almost ninety five per cent of the colonial labourers on white settler farms. A farmers' focus group discussion in Ol Moran affirmed that:

Ethnic Kisii reside in Kirima Sub-County in Laikipia Area where a whole village is named Kisii Ndogo. The colonial regime therefore created an opportunity for the Kisii to settle in Laikipia County through their recruitment to offer colonial labour, colonial settlement schemes and post-colonial land buying companies.⁶³⁵

This study maintained therefore that Kisii like other ethnic Bantu first settlement into Laikipia Area was during the colonial era. They first settled in the area to offer labour on European settler farms. Furthermore, they acquired land in Laikipia Area during the post-colonial era through the land buy-out policy adopted by the post-

⁶³³Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁶³⁴KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶³⁵Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

colonial regime. Their settlement in the area created the land question on ethnocentrism grounds since the Ndorobo, Maasai, Turkana, Ogiek, Pokot and Samburu maintained that they settled on their ancestral land. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory of this study.

2.6 Migration and Settlement of the British and Boers in Laikipia Area up to 1963

This study established that there were no European settlements in Laikipia Area up to 1895. The first European to visit Laikipia Area was the Scottish explorer Joseph Thomson in 1883, from this visit Nyahururu was named after him so was the Thomson falls in Nyahururu town.⁶³⁶ This was reinforced by Leitiko Salanga; the respondent reiterated that until recently Nyahururu was referred to as Thomson in honour of Joseph Thomson the Scottish explorer.⁶³⁷ However, white settlers' arrival in Laikipia Area was around in 1920, years after the last batch of the Maasai was relocated to the Southern reserve.⁶³⁸ By the end of March 1920 only eighteen farms had been occupied while by March 1921 fifty eight settlers had settled in Laikipia.

When the wind of independence became inevitable, Afrikaners farmers in Ol Kalou, Ol Arabel and Leshau areas left the country over the uncertain future in the independent Kenya.⁶³⁹ This was corroborated with an oral account which intimated that upon gaining independence majority of the Europeans sold their land to the indigenous Kenyan ethnic communities and left the country in fear of the post-colonial political uncertainties.⁶⁴⁰ A farmers focused group discussion in Ol Moran reiterated that:

⁶³⁶Warurii. F. *Op. Cit.*, p. 22.

⁶³⁷Oral interview, Leitiko Salanga, interviewed in Segera, on 19th August, 2023.

⁶³⁸KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911, retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

⁶³⁹KNDS, DC/LKA/1/11, Annual report Laikipia District, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁶⁴⁰Oral interview, Leitiko Salanga, , interviewed in Segera on 19th August, 2023.

Not all European settlers in Laikipia left upon independence. Moreover, European settlers later bought land in Laikipia and run commercial enterprises that included ranches, conservancies and floriculture during the post-colonial regime. But, recently with increased ranch invasions some fled the area for fear of being attacked.⁶⁴¹

From the above mentioned therefore the colonial regime created the land question in Laikipia Area by alienating native African land. This was done through contested land concessions like the Anglo-Maasai treaties of 1904 and 1911 which resulted into the movement of the ethnic Maasai to the Loita Area. In addition, the colonial regime also moved Samburu and Somali and restricted the indigenous, Pokot, Tugen and Ogiek from accessing Laikipia during the colonial period which escalated the land question in Laikipia Area on ethnocentrism grounds. The contest over land arose from its use as a factor of production by both European settlers and indigenous ethnic communities in modes of production. This was in line with the articulation modes of production theory.

2.7 Migration and Settlement of the Cushitic Somali in Laikipia Area up to 1963

The Cushite originated from Arabia before moving and settling in the North Africa and later in the Horn Africa.⁶⁴² An informant restated that even if the Somali population was significantly low, a few Somali lived in Laikipia Area since the pre-colonial era.⁶⁴³ Shortly after the Maasai had been moved into their southern reserve, Somali inhabited the area around Uaso Nyiro.⁶⁴⁴ The Somali were also notable traders in Laikipia Area in the early 1920's.⁶⁴⁵ This study, as a result, noted that Laikipia Area was inhabited by the Somali during the pre-colonial period. As

⁶⁴¹Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

⁶⁴²Betwell Ogot., *Op.Cit.*, p. 122.

⁶⁴³Oral interview, Leitiko Salanga, interviewed in Segera, on 19th August, 2023.

⁶⁴⁴KNADS, AG/19/22, *Removal of Somali from Laikipia, 1915-1928* Retrieved 26/6/2023 .

⁶⁴⁵KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1,1920, retrieved on 26th August, 2023.

pastoralist they depended on land as grazing fields in their pastoralism modes of production which was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory.

This Somali were often referred to as the Laikipian Somali. The colonial authorities accused the Laikipia Somali of impinging on both unalienated crown land and private land in Laikipia Area. These Somali movements were coming from the neighbouring Samburu County; by 1925 Laikipia Somali presence in Laikipia Area was strongly felt.⁶⁴⁶ A political leaders focused group discussion in Rumuruti indicated that:

Somali blatantly rejected the colonial suggestion to move to Somalia or Ngare Ngare; they also further declined to vacate both the unalienated crown land and private farms in Laikipia. The House of Commons put pressure on the colonial authorities in Kenya to use military action against the defiant Laikipian Somali. Somali squatters were also to be moved from Rumuruti Township and Laikipia farms. Their moving livestock infected other stocks with East Coast Fever.⁶⁴⁷

This study contended that Somali settlement in Laikipia Area was interrupted by the colonial authorities. They tried to access land in Laikipia Area as grazing field for their livestock. The move by the colonial authorities to resettle the Somali to Somalia or Ngare Ngare was understood as a proposition that created opportunity for white settlers to exploit land in Laikipia as a factor of production. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory of this study.

At long last, the colonial government successfully moved the Laikipian Somali into quarantine or Isiolo reserve. However, by 1950's, the indigenous ethnic communities that inhabited Rumuruti divisions were the Somali and Turkana. Presently Somali

⁶⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁷Oral interview of political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

reside around Mutara in Laikipia West Sub County.⁶⁴⁸ From the foregoing therefore, the colonial regime created the land question in Laikipia Area by moving the Laikipian Somali from Laikipia Area to create room for settler farming. Ancestral land claims by the ethnic Somali were driven by the need to control land as a factor of production which was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory. Land among the ethnic Somali was grazing field in their pastoralism modes of production.

2.8 Chapter Summary

As noted earlier, migration and settlement of the ethnic groups in Kenya, the Horn of Africa and the larger Great Lakes region marked the earliest documented forms of inter-ethnic cross border conflicts. This was evidently reconstructed a great deal by both archaeologists and anthropologists. Inter-ethnic cross border conflicts of migration and settlement arose from the need to control land as a factor of production in their pre-capitalist agrarian modes of production. Land use was either for grazing for herders or crop growing by cereal agriculturalist this was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory applied in this work.

Oral tradition corroborated with archaeological findings and interpreted by historians agreed with the version that hunters and gatherers were the earliest language group to have settled and lived around the East African region. These hunters and food gatherers were effortlessly displaced, assimilated and annihilated by more powerful cereal agriculturalists mastering the iron technology. Cereal agriculturalist displaced the food hunters and gathering ethnic groups to be able to utilise land as a factor of production in their pre-capitalist modes of production. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory.

⁶⁴⁸Oral interview, Snr. Chief Samuel K. Tum, interviewed in Rumuruti on 23rd August, 2023.

Cereal agriculturalist's grip on this region was short lived as an invasion by more aggressive herding communities pushed them back and forth until the advent of European Imperialism put an end to this repetitive pattern. In Laikipia Area, the Yakku, Ogiek and Ndorobo hunters and food gatherers were the earliest group of people to occupy the area. The entrance of the Samburu and Maasai into the area led to the displacement, assimilation and annihilation of the Yakku, Digiri, Wardei Darya, Ogiek and Ndorobo. The inter-ethnic cross border conflicts in Laikipia Area arose from the migration and settlement patterns of the Samburu and the Maasai settled on the Laikipian plateau until they were adversely affected by colonialism. The need to control land for grazing by both Samburu and Maasai led them to displace or assimilate the Yakku, Digiri, Wardei Darya, Ogiek and Ndorobo in Laikipia Area, this was in line with the articulation modes of production theory. Land among the Samburu and Maasai was a critical factor of production in their pastoralism form of capitalism as ethnic groups. They therefore coalesced along their ethnic homogeneity to displace or assimilate the Yakku, Digiri, Wardei Darya, Ogiek and Ndorobo in the area. This was in line with the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

The colonial administration created the land question in Laikipia Area by moving the Maasai to Loita and restricted the Samburu and Somali to Isiolo to create room for settler farming in Laikipia Area which was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. The Somali, Ndorobo, Ogiek, Pokot and Tugen suffered a similar fate of restricted movement in Laikipia as the Samburu. The land question was created through this proposition that survived to this day.

The establishment of settler farms in Laikipia Area became an avenue for the Bantu to live and work in Laikipia Area. The Bantu communities that were recruited to offer colonial labour in settler farms included Agikuyu, Meru, Kisii, Luo and Abaluhya. These groups made settlements in Laikipia Area as consequences of the Resident Native Squatter Ordinance of 1918; Sweynnerton Plan, One Million Acre settlement schemes and land buy out policies. The Agikuyu mostly moved into Laikipia Area for the second time during the post-colonial regime following the land buy out policy adopted by the first post-colonial regime in Kenya. From the foregoing the colonial regime proposition to recruit ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii created the land question along ethnic identities. This was in line with the tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The land question was further aggravated by the Kikuyu, Meru and Kisii who claim that they legally purchased land in Laikipia Area soon after independence either individually or through land buying companies. The indigenous ethnic communities also faulted the government's land policy that allowed rich individuals and Europeans to legally own up to seventy per cent of land in Laikipia Area to their detriment. The ethnic Kikuyu, Meru and Kisii were rallied along their ethnicity to assert their land holding rights in the area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Absentee land lords were another dynamic in the development of the land question in Laikipia. Most of the land owners remained absent and their land unfenced raising questions on their whereabouts. This also became an avenue for the landless people and ethnic pastoralist groups in Laikipia Area to squat on those vacant lands besides laying claim on them as their ancestral lands which were unjustly dispossessed. The

Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek, Ndorobo, Pokot, Tugen and Turkana were mobilised along their ethnic identities to claim that unoccupied land as their ancestral land. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The next chapter, therefore, picked from this and examined how changes in land use, land tenure, colonialism, and governments' inability to fix the land problem by adopting the land buy out policy, gender dimensions, political dynamics and ethnic identities led to the rise of the land question in Laikipia Area.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DYNAMICS IMPACTING THE LAND QUESTION IN INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN LAIKIPIA AREA 1895-1992

3.1 Overview

This chapter picks from the previous chapter that captured how the origin, migration and settlement of ethnic communities in Laikipia Area shaped cross-border inter-ethnic land conflicts in the region. This chapter further puts into context how variables like changes in land use, land tenure, colonialism, and governments' inability to fix the land problem, gender dimensions, political dynamics and ethnic identities led to the rise of the land question in Laikipia Area since 1895.

3.2 The Influence of Ethnicity and Cultural Stereotypes on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1895-1992

By 1895, only Maasai, Ndorobo, Tugen and Samburu inhabited Laikipia Area. Ethnic groups were marked and categorised on the basis of their cultural set of norms, practices and structural entities which gives them a unique identity.⁶⁴⁹ The origin of negative ethnicity in Africa and particularly Laikipia Area was traced to pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era.⁶⁵⁰ This study therefore held that colonialism and the struggle to control land as a factor of production in Laikipia Area was aggravated by negative ethnicity in the mentioned epoch.

⁶⁴⁹ Lawrence Murugu and Smokin Wanjala. *When the constitution Begins to Flower. Volume 1: Paradigms for constitutional change in Kenya*. Nairobi: Claripress publishers; 2002, p. 239.

⁶⁵⁰ McWilliams, *Op. Cit.*, p. 270.

The ethnic nature and diversity of the native Africans in Kenya was a critical factor during the great days of decolonisation.⁶⁵¹ Africans in Laikipia Area around 1945 toward independence in particular had to unite irrespective of their cultural heterogeneity in order to achieve their independence. The colonial regime had exploited these existing diversities and autonomous organisations by widening the gaps between these ethnic groups or exacerbated these divisions by design through the divide and rule policy that assured them effective and efficient colonial occupation. This colonial legacy was an obstacle to overcome in order to achieve African unity in Kenya which was a pre-requisite for the fight against colonialism.⁶⁵² Successively, through urbanisation, labour employment on settlers' farms, Christianity and political awareness campaigns by ex-soldiers, African solidarity became a reality albeit the then prevailing setbacks. A farmers' focus group discussion in Ol Moran expounded that;

These boundaries were drawn hastily without any regard to the existing ethnic composition by the colonial administrations. While the boundaries created colonies that became modern day nation states in Africa, they divided African communities in Laikipia County down the middle and pitted one ethnic community with another.⁶⁵³

As a result, this study contended that negative ethnicity in Laikipia Area even though would be traced to the pre-colonial period; it was escalated through the colonial policies since 1895. These colonial policies included the creation of artificial boundaries and favouritism in allocation of natural resources including land to different ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. The Maasai, Ndorobo, Tugen, Samburu, Pokot and Turkana developed negative ethnicity against the Kikuyu, Meru and Kisii

⁶⁵¹Bethwell A Ogot and Ochieng, William Robert. *Decolonisation and Independence in Kenya 1940-93*, Nairobi: East African Education publishers, 1995, p. 113.

⁶⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁶⁵³Oral interview of a farmer's focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

for settling in their supposed ancestral land. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. They blamed both the colonial and post-colonial governments for creating policies towards and after independence that enabled the Kikuyu, Kisii and Meru to settle in Laikipia instead of considering them. This study also noted that competing interest to control land in Laikipia by these sets of communities emanated from the value of land as a factor of production in their agrarian modes of production. This dynamic potentially led to the development of the land question in the study area. This was in line with the tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study.

In addition, by 1945 negative ethnicity toward independence in the colonial era in Laikipia Area was bridged through political consciousness, indoctrination and campaigns by educated elites. It became the general notion, that loyalty to the nation was more necessary than loyalty to the ethnic group. This unity of purpose that transcended ethnic concepts, identities and psychological barriers emerged and became the new synergy for African liberation in Kenya and Laikipia from the chains of colonialism.⁶⁵⁴ A farmers' focus group discussion in Ol Moran expounded that:

In a broad based spectrum, to achieve the solidarity of Africans in the fight against colonialism, multitudes of sheltering barriers were surmounted. These barriers and general inferiority complex among Africans were buttressed by massive illiteracy among Africans in Kenya. Illiteracy coupled with pre-existing notions of European superiority remained the greatest obstacles that hindered and slowed down African liberation struggle. Illiteracy had generally chained Africans into the inferiority complex mind-sets and conditioned

⁶⁵⁴Bethwell A. Ogot and Ochieng William Robert., *Op. Cit.*, p. 114.

them to the thinking that an armed insurrection against colonialism in Kenya was near impossible.⁶⁵⁵

It was, therefore, the position of this study that the rise of educated African elites became a turning point in the decolonisation of the African mind in Laikipia Area. After several years of colonial administration and westernisation, African elites emerged among those who acquired western education.

These new crop of Africans shaped the Africans consciousness in the pursuit to end colonial marginalisation and exploitation of Africans in 1940's. Even though, western education ill-prepared Africans to rational and proactive revolutionary thinking in concept and practice, ironically this same basic and inadequate education became the basis upon which African liberation ideologies and literacy were nurtured.⁶⁵⁶ Mission educated Africans morphed into the cornerstone of African liberation agents and ultimate voices of change. It is against this background that Kenya and the rest of African states got independence from the white minority rule and nationalist who had advocated for liberation were in charge of the reign of power. A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki elaborated that:

But, soon after independence, the muzzling and militarisation of the democratic space, negative ethnicity reared its ugly face into young African nations including Kenya. Deep rooted negative ethnicity became the genesis of secession quests and practically remained the greatest threat to nation building and nationhood. The steady rise of this regrettable culture of exclusion and struggle for relevance on the basis of ethnic orientation resulted into sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts ranging from political intolerance to full blown civil hostilities across Africa. Ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii acquire land in Laikipia although the land buyout policy conceived by the post-colonial regime in Kenya.

⁶⁵⁵Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

⁶⁵⁶Bethwell A. Ogot and Ochieng William Robert., *Op. Cit.*, p. 114.

Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo, Tugen and Pokot claimed they should have been resettled in the area instead.⁶⁵⁷

It was on this basis that this study noted that post-colonial Kenyan regime shaped negative ethnicity in Laikipia Area by resettling the Meru, Kikuyu and Kisii in Laikipia Area. This created the land questions among Maasai, Samburu, Tugen, Pokot and Ndorobo who claimed on ethnocentrism perspective that land in Laikipia Area was their familial land. Land as earlier stated was hotly contested because it was a critical factor of production in these ethnic groups' agrarian modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The era after independence in 1963, negative ethnicity bred ethnic leaders who derived their authority from their respective ethnicities regardless of their capacities and their campaign platforms relative to the pressing needs of their respective societies.⁶⁵⁸ This new order catalysed negative ethnicity and pushed ethnic tolerance to the extreme limits. Cohesiveness in ethnic heterogeneous societies became unsustainable especially when inclusion and diversity made no sense when it should.⁶⁵⁹ A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti explained further that:

That the rise to power an ethnic leader meant greater opportunities to his or her ethnic group gained currency including land redistribution. Corruption and economic inequalities thrived to the detriment of the marginalised ethnic groups which responded with subtle resistance or sheer jealousy altogether. In Laikipia County in the post-colonial regime leaders like Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki and Kihika Kimani helped

⁶⁵⁷Oral interview of a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁶⁵⁸McWilliams, *Op. Cit.*, p. 270.

⁶⁵⁹*Ibid.*

the ethnic Agikuyu on ethnic grounds to acquire land in Laikipia Area. They used their political influence in government to achieve this.⁶⁶⁰

For that reason, this study affirmed that politicians fashioned the land question in Laikipia Area by protecting the interests of their ethnic groups in access to land holding as a factor of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

This study further held that even if negative ethnicity was rife in Laikipia Area documented evidence illustrated a flourishing Commerce between the Maasai and Agikuyu at the advent of colonial rule.⁶⁶¹ Nyandarua – later renamed Aberdare Mountain by the Europeans – offered the serenity of these vital networks of trade. The Kikuyu by their source of livelihood nature traded their farm merchandises with Maasai farm products.

Kikuyu traders were organised in caravans of between 30 and 200 men presumably for security reasons. In addition, language was an important medium of transaction; Kikuyu caravan leaders were compelled by the nature of their roles to learn Maasai language for easy communication and commercial concessions. These indigenous trading networks contributed to the development of the land question in Laikipia Area.⁶⁶² It was also on this ground that the ethnic Maasai argued based on ethnic identity that land in Laikipia Area ancestrally did not belong to the Agikuyu and their presence in the pre-colonial era was specifically for trade. This was in line with the tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

⁶⁶⁰Oral interview of a political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁶⁶¹Christopher Leo., *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

⁶⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 30.

This study also noted that colonial era up to 1963 created another opportunity for the different African ethnic communities in Laikipia Area to interact on settler farms. As previously noted, Kikuyu were mostly preferred for the provision of labour on European farms in Laikipia Area.⁶⁶³ The preference of the Kikuyu over other native ethnic groups was informed by the fact that they were more hard working than any other indigenous ethnic group. Life in the labourers villages was however not smooth, non-Kikuyu native Africans were not willing to stay together with the Kikuyu in the same villages during this period.⁶⁶⁴ An elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol added that:

This colonial policy became the window for the ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia County; this was made possible through the effects resident native squatter ordinance of 1918, the Sweynnerton Plan, one million acre settlement schemes and the post-colonial land buy out policy. The colonial regime disregarded the pre-colonial land holding rights in Laikipia County and oversaw the settlement of the ethnic Agikuyu in Laikipia.⁶⁶⁵

These settlements were referred to the Samburu, Maasai, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo and Tugen as impingements on their ancestral land and contributed to the escalation of the land question in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Negative ethnicity and its related identities in the Laikipia Area political landscape were tools that were manipulated to rally the Maasai, Samburu, Tugen, Pokot, Turkana and Ndorobo ethnic groups in the escalation of the land question in Laikipia Area. The competition over land as earlier stated between the African ethnic groups in Laikipia was hotly contested because it

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid*

⁶⁶⁵ An elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

was a factor of production in their pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production. This was in line with the articulation modes of production applied in this study.

3.3 The Influence of Changes Land Use on the Land Question in Laikipia

Area 1895-1992

Before 1895 land was broadly implied to mean several things in Laikipia Area. It was a territory, place of interment, area of settlement, productive soil and place of the ancestors. Land use in the pre-capitalist African societies was categorised into crop cultivation fields, salt licks and herding points. There were also bushes and forest areas some which served as sacred places. Bushes and forests were also sources of timber and herbal medicine.⁶⁶⁶ This study therefore reiterated that land use in Laikipia Area from the colonial and post-colonial era had both socio-cultural and economic significance as a factor of production. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory applied in this study.

From a broad perspective, these many and varied land use among these pre-colonial native Africans peasants; justified the place of land as a critical natural resource and force of production. Moreover, it is these social-cultural and economic value attached to land that triggered the rise of the land question in the area since 1895.⁶⁶⁷ In the pre-colonial era, land use in Laikipia Area was basically for grazing, salt licks, forests, herbal resources, abode of ancestors and gods. Further an informant accounts added that:

Pre-colonial land use in Laikipia Area was basically for hunting, gathering and grazing. Indigenous ethnic communities like the Yakku, Digiri, Wardei Darya, and Ndorobo hunted wild game and gathered wild fruits in

⁶⁶⁶Peter Benedict Odhiambo Ndege., *Op.Cit.* p. 7.

⁶⁶⁷*Ibid*

the forest before they were either assimilated or dispossessed.⁶⁶⁸

This study, therefore, reinforced that during the pre-colonial era land was a critical force of production for both the food gatherers and the herders who lived in Laikipia Area . It is, as a result, the genesis of the rise of inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts between this groups based on ethnocentrism stand points. This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Ancestral land claims arose from their interaction during their migration and settlement in the area.

In the colonial period, land use in Laikipia included, European who owned huge scale farming holding of eight per cent of the district and the zone of Mukogodo whose populations were cattle farmers. The colonial land use in Laikipia District also included forest reserve.⁶⁶⁹ This study noted colonial land use in Laikipia Area was a consequence of the colonial land legislation enacted during the colonial era. Further to that, the colonial regime created two forest reserves by 1920, one eight miles to the south of the station while the other neared the southern boundary of Laikipia District.⁶⁷⁰ The creation of the forest reserves during the colonial era went on, in 1923, a forest station was established at Kampi Simba by the colonial authorities.⁶⁷¹ By 1925, the gazetted crown forest reserve in Laikipia Area encompassed a massive area approximated to be 176363 acres. In 1932 alone, the colonial forest department in the area made revenue of Ksh. 592.50 primarily from the sale of 7, 271 trees in Laikipia. The Laikipia division weekly diary reports that forests were planted and maintained in the areas of Igwamitti and revenue generated through logging.⁶⁷² Further, land was also hived off from the forest reserves for private developments

⁶⁶⁸Oral interview, Daniel Kimalelel, interviewed in Dol Dol on 16th August, 2023.

⁶⁶⁹KNADS, *Laikipia Forest Division – Annual Report*, FOR/1/59, 1932, retrieved 26/6/2023.

⁶⁷⁰KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶⁷¹KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1923, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶⁷²KNADS, *The Laikipian division weekly diary*, FOR/1/19, 1943, retrieved 26/6/2023.

like the case of the Marmanet forest on plot no. 4424 in the Thomson area.⁶⁷³ In this subdivision also the western boundary was altered to avoid a boundary feud over the median line of the swamp by the commissioner of local government, lands and settlement.⁶⁷⁴ In the Aberdare area, land was set aside from the forest reserve no. 5176 from Aberdare no. 4424/R, the South of the Laikipia reserve no. 4542/R to settle the Ngobit land row between the Topsham and Mecaca Ltd.⁶⁷⁵ An informant elucidate further that:

The creation of forest reserves during the colonial period in Laikipia Area during the colonial era interfered with the food gatherers and hunting ethnic communities. They relied on forest land for their survival besides they were also restricted from living or moving into these forest reserves. Moreover, the colonial authorities subdivided the forest land by to create more land for European settlement in the area.⁶⁷⁶

From the preceding discussion, it was instructive to note that the colonial regime embarked on with the exploitation of the forest reserve to create room for private development by either individuals or limited companies during the colonial period. They also used timber from this forest cover for the construction of colonial administration structures. Even if, they set up regulatory authorities and controlled the wanton destruction of the forest cover by Africans ethnic groups in the area the exploitation of the forest cover contributed to the rise of the land question. Communities like the Ndorobo and Ogiek that relied on land as a factor of production in their food gathering and hunting livelihoods were affected from eking their living. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory. This also

⁶⁷³KNADS, *Alienation of Forest Reserves – Marmanent, application for addition to forest reserve, 1932-1940*, BN/20/21, retrieved on 27th /6/2023.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁵KNADS/ *Alienation, Forest reserves, South Laikipia Forest reserves* , BN/20/24, retrieved on 27th /6/2023.

⁶⁷⁶Oral interview, Daniel Kimalelel, interviewed in Dol Dol on 16th August, 2023.

led to the rise of the land question from their ethnocentrism perspective that their ancestral land was unfairly alienated which was in line with the instrumentalism theory.

Another essential land use in Laikipia Area was ranching and conservancies. The origin of ranching and conservancies in Laikipia Area was traced to the initial dispossession of the indigenous pastoralists' communities from their ancestral land between 1904 and 1919. White settlers were interested in setting up ranches in Laikipia Area from the outset of establishment of white settlement in the region.⁶⁷⁷ In furtherance of this information from the Kenya National Archive and Documentation services indicated that:

Conway Harvey, a white settler in Laikipia wrote to the colonial department of land in 1925 requesting the colonial authorities to make land affordable in Laikipia. The affordable land would make it possible for establishing ranches in Laikipia North and West. The colonial authorities' response indicated that a committee would be set up to look into the matter. Even though, the constituting of the committee somehow delayed it was approved to be appointed on 16th June, 1925. It was composed of the following white settlers and colonial agents; Rt. Hon. Delamare, Hon. Capt. J.E. Coney and Resident Commissioner, Rumuruti.⁶⁷⁸

From the previous information, therefore, this study maintained that colonial decision to subdivide land in Laikipia Area to create settler ranches created the land question in the area. The change of land use in the area from the previous grazing to ranching created discontent among the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Tugen, Ogiek and Ndorobo who insisted that they lost ancestral land in the process along their ethnic identity. This was a tenet of the tenet of instrumentalism theory. The land question

⁶⁷⁷KNADS, *Ministry of lands*, BN/66/9, 1925-1926, retrieved on 26/6/2023.

⁶⁷⁸*Ibid.*

emanated from the land use for both European settlers and the African ethnic groups in Laikipia as a factor of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study.

Private ranches and conservancies consisted of up to seventy percent of the land mass in Laikipia Area.⁶⁷⁹ Most of these ranches and conservancies were owned by foreign nationals. Tourism and livestock keeping besides crop farming therefore were major economic activists in the expansive Laikipia Area with a wide local and foreign market.⁶⁸⁰ Ranchers formed companies, partnerships or cooperatives with the radical plan of putting to use the chunks of land in Laikipia Area taking advantage of these unclaimed dry lands for commercial prospects.⁶⁸¹ Beef farming was a lucrative enterprise in Laikipia Area. Ranches like Ol Jogi, Solio and Borana reared beef breeds that provided meat for foreign and local markets. Besides beef farming, numerous wild conservancies and ranches in the Area promoted ecotourism.⁶⁸² This study established that Lord Delamare was one of the notable ranchers in Laikipia Area during the colonial era.

Lord Delamare abandoned 21,400 acres of Ndaragua farm to get 63, 095 acres of land in Laikipia land. Ndaragua farms according to the colonial reports were not suitable for small settlers. Lord Delamare kept a stock of sheep in the area amidst public outcry. Based on complaints reports from fellow European settlers, it was a case of tracks of public land being bartered with private land. Rich and influential European settlers were taking over suitable unalienated public lands for their unsuitable private lands. It was later christened the Laikipia land scandal, where land

⁶⁷⁹Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 36.

⁶⁸⁰Oral interview, Ivy Chenangat, interviewed in Munyaka on 17th August, 2023.

⁶⁸¹Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 36.

⁶⁸²*Ibid.*,p. 37.

in Laikipia valued 5,000 pounds was being exchanged with lands in Kericho valued at 50,000 pounds.⁶⁸³

Besides ranching and forestry, colonial land use in Laikipia Area included crop cultivation to a remarkable degree.⁶⁸⁴ Cultivation of wheat, flax and potatoes was reportedly doing well around Thomson falls. Maize plantation in particular was being cultivated around Wamba in 1940. White settlers formed the Laikipia Farmers Association in 1922 which was split into three branches – Rumuruti, Ngobit and Thomson falls.⁶⁸⁵ Farmers Association were responsible for presenting white settlers grievances to the colonial authorities in Laikipia and Nairobi – the colonial headquarter.⁶⁸⁶

The land mass under maize and pyrethrum production increased in 1950's, following years of trials and experimentations.⁶⁸⁷ These trajectories also attracted a rise in the prices of land in Laikipia Area. In the same vein, attempts were made by the colonial regime to fully support settler farming in Laikipia Area.

Part of the myriad challenges that farmers faced in Laikipia Area in 1950's were heavy rains in 1951 whose net effect was massive soil erosion. The colonial government also build 23 dams in 1951 and experimentation of new seeds of wheat and barley was done in Ol Joro and Orok.⁶⁸⁸ This study established hence that Colonial land use in Laikipia area was exclusively for large scale farming for the white settlers to a magnitude of eighty per cent, forest reserve and an area for the herding community called Mukogodo. Land was an important factor of production in

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁴ KNADS/ *Monthly Intelligence Report*, DC/MRL /1/1/1 1935-1936, retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁶⁸⁵ KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1, 1922, accessed on 26th June, 2023.

⁶⁸⁶ Oral interview, Abdi Mumen, interviewed in Segera on 13th August, 2023.

⁶⁸⁷ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/2, 1951 annual report, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

the agrarian colonial capitalist economy in the established of ranches and settler farms in Laikipia. The subdivision of this alienated crown land to create settler farms generated the land question in the region as claims of lost ancestral land emerged among the indigenous ethnic groups in the area. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production applied in this study.

Post-colonial land resettlement policies in Kenya adopted by the Jomo Kenyatta in 1960's and 1970's ushered in a new land use in Laikipia Area.⁶⁸⁹ Land in Laikipia became a resettlement zone for the landless Kenyans from majorly the Kikuyu ethnic group and other Bantu groups in Kenya. Further, large scale and community group ranching by the white settlers and the community thrived.⁶⁹⁰ A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki reiterated that:

Tourism and wildlife conservancies majorly by European foreigners emerged in the Area. Colonial and post-colonial land use changes in the study area from the pre-colonial grazing to industrialisation, urbanisation and conservancies presented challenges to herders. Their grazing fields that they freely roamed diminished and became restricted areas in light of private and public developments. The result was scarcity of pasture, as a desperate measure herders resorted to ranch invasions to survive.⁶⁹¹

From the preceding observation, this study maintained that the biggest threat to pastoralism as a bedrock of livelihoods in the arid and semi-arid areas was a drastic paradigm shift in land use. The changes heralded by these phenomena led to massive loss of hitherto grazing areas to private and public developments. Urbanisation, residential settlement, floriculture and erection of conservancies were the notable

⁶⁸⁹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 37.

⁶⁹⁰Mwenda, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

⁶⁹¹Oral interview of a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023

threat factors to pastoralism as a socio-economic enterprise.⁶⁹² A respondent account expounded on this that policies aimed at preserving pastoralism as a socio-cultural and economic practice among the herding ethnic communities should zero down on shifting patterns of land use. Prolonged drought occasioned by shifting weather patterns due to global warming lead to shortage of water and pasture in the rangelands. This state of affairs prompted pastoralist migrations to the urban areas in search of water and better market of their livestock. But, besides drought shocks among the herding societies, formal employment was another incentive likely to attract literate herders to urban areas.⁶⁹³

For that reason, this study held that these shifting of environment by herders triggered by emerging land use dynamics came at a cost, among its downsides were displacement of herders that threatened the lifeline of pastoralism as a practice due to urban development, animal poisoning because of their exposure to the sewerage system and the garbage disposal menace. Subsequent privatisation of the traditional pastoral areas led to the creation of fenced enclosures, the squatter question among the pastoral ethnic communities, herder immobility and erection of conservancies in the semi-arid rangelands. The need to preserve pastoralism as a mode of production among the herding communities led to rise of the land question in the area. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. Herders rallied along ethnic identities to protest the loss of their ancestral land during the colonial and post-colonial regimes which was in line with tenets instrumentalism theory. On the effects of changes in land use in the colonial era, pressure attached on land use in

⁶⁹²Walter Magero, *et. al.*, *Factors influencing migration and settlement of pastoralists in Nairobi City, Kenya*. Retrieved ; 4th September, 2023.

⁶⁹³Daniel Kimalelel, Oral interview, interviewed in Dol Dol on 14th August, 2023.

Laikipia Area led to massive deforestation in the areas of Marmanet; farmers substantially encroached on the water catchment areas.⁶⁹⁴

3.4 The Influence of Changes Land Tenure on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1895-1992

Land tenure system up to 1895 was interpreted differently by various scholars. Meek was one of the proponents of the communal land tenure system in the pre-colonial period.⁶⁹⁵ This study propounded that in the communal land tenure system the clan held land in trust for the rest of the members of that particular clan. As such, issues of land including internal or external hostilities over access and redistribution of land were handled exclusively by the clan.

However, in some instances communal land holding was not an exclusive case in the pre-colonial Africa. There were instances of private land holding in the pre-colonial Africa. Individual accumulation of land went hand in hand with the accumulation of women and children as sources of labour in these peasant agrarian societies in the pre-colonial Africa.⁶⁹⁶ This study espoused that while private landholding was not widely practiced in Laikipia Area but this land tenure system pre-colonial African was prevalent in the pre-colonial Africa. The study further acknowledged that land holding systems were critical because land in these pre-capitalist African societies was a factor of production for both pastoralist and crop farmers. In the study area, the rise of the land question among the Ndorobo, Maasai, Turkana, Pokot, Ogiek and Samburu stemmed from communal land ownership tenure system. Being predominant pastoralist land tenure among these ethnic groups was basically communal.

⁶⁹⁴Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 34.

⁶⁹⁵C.K. Meek., *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

⁶⁹⁶Peter Benedict Odhiambo Ndege., *Op.Cit.*,p. 2.

This study held that it was erroneous to dismiss land tenure system among the nomadic pastoralists' ethnic groups. Even though, land tenure system among such ethnic groups was largely altered by their frequent movements for convenience their land tenure systems was basically communal land tenure systems. The clan, therefore, in a customary land tenure system was the custodian of customary land rights.⁶⁹⁷ An elder focus group in Dol Dol shed light on land tenure among the herders in Laikipia County that:

Through its established structures, the clan council distributed and redistributed land within its jurisdiction. In sense, the onus to develop structures to defend against external intrusion naturally developed from this concept and mind-set of collective proprietorship.⁶⁹⁸

This study basing on the preceding affirmed that land tenure system among the pastoralist community in Laikipia Area was communal. The significance of land as a force of production in their agrarian modes of production led to the establishment of land tenure systems among these ethnic groups. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production used in this study.

Colonialism from 1895 to 1963 in led to a paradigm shift in land tenure and the creation of the land question in Laikipia Area.⁶⁹⁹ There was a paradigm shift in the land holding rights in Laikipia; the initial transition involved a shift from customary land tenure to leasehold tenure under crown and private land holding right during the colonial era.⁷⁰⁰ This enabled the colonial regime to settle white settlers in Laikipia. Majority of these foreigners had a 999-year leasehold spanning from around 1919.⁷⁰¹

This study established that this act of the colonial regime to change land tenure

⁶⁹⁷Wafula, S. *Op.cit.*, p. 20.

⁶⁹⁸Oral interview of an elders focus group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁶⁹⁹Oral interview, Sereti Lesoito Abigael, interviewed in Segera on 12th August, 2023.

⁷⁰⁰Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*,p.37.

⁷⁰¹*Ibid.*

created the land question in Laikipia Area because land was a critical force of production. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study.

From 1963 to 1992, the post-colonial regimes in Kenya adopted leasehold and freehold under private, public and community land holding rights in the post-colonial era. In this regard, this study established that the post-colonial regimes also disregarded the pre-colonial land holding rights in Laikipia Area in their land distribution and redistribution mechanism. This proposition contributed to the land question among the Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek who lost their ancestral land as a result of these shifts in land tenure. These skewed post-colonial land redistribution led to landlessness and limited grazing fields among the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Ogiek, Somali and Ndorobo in Laikipia Area. The act by the post-colonial regime to settle the Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii through the land buy out created the land question in Laikipia Area. The Samburu, Pokot, Somali, Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek and Ndorobo were rallied along their ethnic identities that these settlements were impinged on their ancestral land. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory used in this study.

3.5 The Influence of Political Dynamics on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1895-1992

From 1920's during the colonial era the Agikuyu ethnic group was more politically enlightened than the pastoralist groups.⁷⁰² This study contended that pressure on land associated with African reserves and the land buyout policy pushed most of the ethnic Agikuyu to buy land in Laikipia through the land buying companies. The ethnic Agikuyu were motivated by their political elites who were in power after

⁷⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 59.

Kenya attained independence from the reigns of the colonial regime. In furtherance of this, an informant account reinforced that politician Dixon Kihika Kimani and Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki were very influential in mobilising the ethnic Agikuyu to buy land in Laikipia Area through land buying companies and cooperatives.⁷⁰³ This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory used in this study.

This study affirmed that this was when the government adopted the land buy-out policy as a programme to resettle landless Kenyan peasants who had been unjustly dispossessed of their land at the outset of colonial regime in Kenya. Fredrick Warurii affirmed that such companies included the Laikipia West Company limited, the Mathira land buying company, Kieni land buying company and Matukanio land buying company limited which were co-ordinated by Dixon Kihika Kimani who later became a member of parliament for Laikipia West constituency during the post-colonial era.⁷⁰⁴ An informant account elucidated that:

The adoption of the land buy-out policy and the failure to return the alienated land to the original ethnic groups who were unjustly dispossessed from these lands by the colonial regime led to the build-up of the land question in Laikipia Area. The Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Ogiek, Pokot and Ndorobo contested the loss of Laikipia as their ancestral land to ethnic Gikuyu, Meru and Kisii.⁷⁰⁵

This study noted from the foregoing discussion that the huge influences of politician Dixon Kihika Kimani in aiding the ethnic Agikuyu acquire land in Laikipia Area through the land buying companies contributed to the land question. Other Bantu groups that bought land in Laikipia Area through the land buying companies included Abagusii, Abaluhya and Ameru. Even so, the Agikuyu owned major shares

⁷⁰³Oral interview, Michael Ekai, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

⁷⁰⁴Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.

⁷⁰⁵Oral interview, Peter Muthee, interviewed in Segera on 13th August, 2023.

in the companies that bought land in Laikipia Area. Laikipia West Member of parliament Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki took advantage of the Jomo Kenyatta presidency to help the ethnic Gikuyu foothold in Laikipia West to the detriment of the ethnic Nilotic pastoralists in the Area.⁷⁰⁶

This study avowed that during the Jomo Kenyatta regime a Kikuyu, Embu and Meru ethnic pseudo group named Gikuyu, Embu and Meru was established. This ethnic solidarity enabled them to fight for their land holding rights and access to various opportunities in government besides allocation of national resources in favour of their ethnic groups. This move led to radicalization of the Kenyan politics including Laikipia along ethnic lines. The *Uhuru na kazi* slogan enforced by the Jomo Kenyatta regime soon after independence was a wider ploy to conceal the regime preference attached to the GEMA in resources appropriation in Kenya including land holding in Laikipia.⁷⁰⁷ This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory used in this study.

During President Daniel Arap Moi era 1978-2002 he dismantled Gikuyu, Embu and Meru association and solidified Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu association. The formation of KAMATUSA was a sigh of relief to the Kalenjins and plain Nilotes in Laikipia County, the Agikuyu who supposedly enjoyed state protection in land holding in the area were left exposed.⁷⁰⁸ This study affirmed that the contest to control land in Laikipia Area during the post-colonial regime by both herders and crop farmers was informed by the usefulness of land as a factor of production. The land question was thereby created in form of ancestral land claims by ethnic Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Tugen, Ndorobo, Ogiek and Turkana.

⁷⁰⁶Oral interview, Aggrey Ekeno, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

⁷⁰⁷Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 63.

⁷⁰⁸Oral interview, Richard Lemaiyian, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

3.6 The Influence of Colonialism on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1895-1963

Up to 1895 African societies were characterised by a twofold world of realities.⁷⁰⁹ On one hand was a peaceful neighbourliness and on the other inter-ethnic cross-border conflicting neighbours over land, cattle among other issues that almost severed inter-ethnic relations among the protagonists. But, the penetration of European powers and eventual establishment of colonialism in Africa marked a turning point in the history of indigenous ethnic group in Africa.⁷¹⁰ This study refuted the Eurocentric view that colonial regimes in Africa created buffer zones among warring ethnic groups that served as momentary reprieve. This subsequently ended the frequent migration and settlement of these ethnic groups across Africa.

Modern world commerce in both theory and reality before 20th centuries was characterised by the Slave trade and the concept of colonial acquisition overseas.⁷¹¹ European colonial race in Africa within this era was triggered by a multitude of factors. Key among these dynamics included the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871 that led to eventual unification of Germany and its sudden colonial race interests in Africa, prospects in Congo by various European powers and the urge to rival the emerging British colonial empire in Africa.

Italy had interests in the Horn of Africa in the territories of Tripoli and Abyssinia. France recovering from a huge humiliation in the Franco-Prussian and under pressure to pay war reparations desired an African empire from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red

⁷⁰⁹Berman, J.B., *Op. Cit*, p. 312.

⁷¹⁰*Ibid*

⁷¹¹Tracey J Kinney: *Conflict and Cooperation; Documents on modern global history*, Second edition , New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 40.

sea.⁷¹² It was also be stressed, that public opinion in Europe was relevant in compelling Europeans powers to acquire colonies in Africa.⁷¹³ This study submitted that, that explained why Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlin were lauded by both the press and the court of public opinion for their aggressive colonial expansion in Africa.

Technically, after being knocked out of North America and the Caribbean – the principal sources of the raw materials for the robust European industrial sector then – European powers turned to Africa as their next source of raw materials for their flourishing industries and market for their industrial products frontier. In this established global capitalism, Africans provided largely unskilled labour and were markets and the European powers ripped off huge profits out of this value chains.⁷¹⁴ This study argued that colonialism was a form of capitalism mode of production which relied on the exploitation of land as a factor of production at the expense of African labour and market. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production applied in this study.

Britain, France, Portugal and Spain established their colonial empires in Africa, which chained the African groups of people to a cycle of land alienation, exploitative forced labour, oppressive tax regime and inculcation of western value systems at the expense of the indigenous Africans cultural concepts and ideologies.⁷¹⁵ This foreign order went on uninterrupted until the rise of African nationalism soon after the end of the Second World War, when dissenting voices increasingly took centre stage in the quest for African liberation from the yoke of colonialism. European settlers in Kenya

⁷¹²*Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷¹³*Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷¹⁴McWilliams, *Op. Cit.*,p. 280.

⁷¹⁵*Ibid.*

were particularly attracted by land as a factor of production. The colonial administration made efforts to encourage European settlers to come to Kenya in order to establish an agrarian colonial economy as a form of capitalism mode of production. Most of these European settlers were ex-soldiers who settled in Kenya to develop land to enable the colonial government earn revenue from their settler farming for effective and efficient administration of the colony.

Land was exploited in Kenya during the colonial era 1895-1963 for white settlers' personal enterprise and production of raw materials for industrialisation in Britain.⁷¹⁶

This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. This study avowed that in this established global capitalism, Africans provided largely unskilled labour and were markets as the European powers ripped off huge profits out of this value chains. Land was central in the creation of the agrarian economy characterised by massive dispossession of African peasants from their land. Based on this study, the origin of the land question in Africa was not the introduction of colonialism but ancestral land claims originating from migration and settlement that arose from cross-border conflicts in the pre-colonial period. In this regard, colonialism only escalated pre-existing land issues among the Africans.

European imperialism and colonialism in Africa and the rest of the world was re-examined differently depending on the background of the critic.⁷¹⁷ Afrocentric scholars evocatively termed this practice as the worst injustice to the black race besides slavery and slave trade since the dawn of time.⁷¹⁸ However, justification of the 19th and 20th century European imperialism and settlement in Africa was made by Eurocentric thinkers. European settlement in Africa and the dispossession of peasant

⁷¹⁶Durrani, S. *Never Be Silent*, *Op.Cit.*, p. 22.

⁷¹⁷Christopher Leo., *Op. Cit.*, p. 34

⁷¹⁸Walter Rodney, *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

African communities from their land was justified on the grounds that some of the land lay idle and undeveloped. It was also argued that European settlement pacified the African continent by creating buffer zones between traditionally warring ethnic groups.⁷¹⁹ From the foregoing, as earlier asserted this study affirmed that claims by Europeans that occupation of Africa created buffer zones among warring ethnic groups in Africa were unfounded and racist in concept and practice.

The presumption that Europeans were superior to Africans in every single dimension from technology, morality to intellectual capacity dominated the colonial era from the outset.⁷²⁰ Initially, little or nothing was known about African groups of people, but this did not restrain Europeans from forming these predisposed mind-sets. African value systems founded and supported by indigenous institutions were termed as uncivilised in every Eurocentric sense of word. One such Eurocentric misconception was the thinking that native Africans were good for nothing lazy folks.⁷²¹ However, colonial agents and white settlers knew first hand, the effectiveness and efficiency of Africans in colonial Kenya in the provision of manual labour on settlers' farms and other colonial duties. This study avowed that these racist undertones were unfounded and baseless. African ethnic groups during the pre-capitalist era were socio-economically organised as hard working ethnic groups in their pre-modern modes of production. Pre-colonial commercial networks hence arose from the surplus they produced which enabled them to acquire items that did not generate locally.

⁷¹⁹*Ibid*

⁷²⁰Konrad Adenauer, *Op. Cit*, p. 25.

⁷²¹Jacques Depelchin. *Silence in African History; Between the Syndromes of Discovery and Abolition.*, Dar es salaam: Mkuki na Nyota publishers, 2004, p. 125.

African societies in Kenya resisted the construction of the Ugandan Railway and other colonial installations.⁷²² These were based on the fact that they valued land across the ethnic divide. The pre-colonial wars of resistance among the selected ethnic communities in Africa were largely about protecting their ancestral land against foreign intrusion. Interestingly, traditional African seers like Sendeiyo, Wang'ombe and Koitalel Kimnyole had discerned this forcible alienations and eventual foreign imperialism.⁷²³ This study affirmed that the protection of land against colonial intrusion by a section of African ethnic groups was as a result of the need to protect it as their factor of production along their ethnic identities. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. Most of these African ethnic groups depended on land as a factor of production in their agrarian modes of production.

As colonial rule took root in Africa, Kenya as one of the British colonies in Africa transformed into a settlers economy.⁷²⁴ European settlers, mainly British nationals and Boers from South Africa, acquired crown land in the fertile Kenyan highlands through lease or buy out policies from the colonial authorities in Kenya by 1919. European settlers population in Kenya within the colonial period was then roughly estimated to be fifty thousand British nationals and Boers.⁷²⁵ They grew wheat, barley, flax, and maize in settler farms in highlands and practised ranching in dry rangelands. White settlement and colonial administration heralded a system of

⁷²²Konrad Adenauer., *Op. Cit.*, p.21.

⁷²³*Ibid.*

⁷²⁴McWilliams, *Op. Cit.*, p. 130.

⁷²⁵*Ibid*

European domination to the detriment of the indigenous Kenyans that established a stratified society based on racial lines.⁷²⁶

This study avowed that Kenyans ethnic groups were blatantly discriminated against in the socio-economic spheres. The colonial government and European settlers between 1895 and 1963 continually ripped off their cheap labour in a systematic global value chain at the behest of global capitalism supported by colonialism. The state of affairs escalated the pre-existing land question among the Kenyan ethnic groups since land was at the centre of colonialism which was a form of capitalism.

In the political realm, indigenous Kenyans were consciously denied the democratic right of universal suffrage as European minorities ruled over African majorities in elective system of governance characterised by racial exclusion of the Kenyans.⁷²⁷

This study acknowledged that colonial rule in Kenya 1895-1963 deprived ethnic Kenyan groups of their democratic right during the colonial era. Both the colonial government and white settlers were reluctant to grant Kenyan majority rule. Even as they appeared to soften their stance overtime, they preferred a multi-racial system of government and Kenyan society. This was to guarantee European settlers the opportunity to survive in a post independent new Kenya. This proposition by the European settlers was also premised on the fact that land in the Kenya as natural resource was a factor of production in the colonial agrarian economy.

In their form of agrarian capitalism, European settlers in colonial Kenya 1895-1963 exploited land resource in an agrarian form of capitalism as a mode of production in the colonial Kenya. In furtherance of this Mamdani agreed that the entrenchment of colonial rule in Africa and by extension Kenya altered the African indigenous

⁷²⁶*Ibid*

⁷²⁷*Ibid*

production relations to certain degree.⁷²⁸ This study propounded that while its production levels were sustained by the new settler economy, the new model aimed at growing capital to the advantage of the colonial authorities and European settlers. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study.

The restriction of the Kenyan ethnic communities into African reserves by the colonial regime from 1904 was informed by the following; to systematically create space for settler farming, divert the African ethnic groups mind-set from regrouping to seek self-determination and finally to create a labour force by design on European settler farms.⁷²⁹ This study reiterated that the colonial regime and European settlers in Kenya espoused to retain land holding in Kenya because it was a significant factor of production in their mode of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. In a nutshell, as earlier stated both European settlers and the colonial authorities relied on the exploitation of land in their capitalism mode of production.

To guarantee European settlers ready and cheap manual labour, the colonial government conceived a squatter system policy in 1918.⁷³⁰ It was a legal system that was painstakingly tailored to compel Africans in Kenya to provide cheap labour effortlessly.⁷³¹ The legal provision also in its length and breadth sustained the European settlers a firm grip on exclusive land holding rights in the *white* highlands.⁷³² However, the Resident Native Squatter Ordinance was ratified in 1918 to give native Africans in Kenya considerable reprieve on accessing land in the white

⁷²⁸Mamdani, M: *Politics of class formation in Uganda*. London: Heinemann, 1976; p. 138

⁷²⁹Lawrence Murugu and Smokin Wanjala.,*Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

⁷³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁷³¹*Ibid*

⁷³²*Ibid*

highlands.⁷³³ This study affirmed that the Resident Native Squatter Ordinance contributed to the rise of the land question in Kenya. It became a window for some ethnic communities to settle in the former *white* highlands which had been alienated from other ethnic groups. An elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol elaborated that:

A government censured labour contract was carved out between the European settlers and Africans. The contractual terms permitted the native squatters to trade their labour to temporal portion of land offered by their employer in the European highlands. Eventually Africans who ancestrally did not own land in the Kenyan highland got an opportunity to settle in those areas. This was at expense of those ethnic groups that were initially moved from these highlands for to create room for European settlements.⁷³⁴

From the foregoing discussion, the provision of the Resident Native Squatter Ordinance gave the opportunity to Africans to settle in the Kenyan highland during the colonial era. These ethnic groups subsequently acquired land through the Sweynnerton reforms and other land resettlement programmes during and after the colonial rule in Kenya.

The colonial regime in Kenya 1895-1963 further cemented ethnic divisions among the ethnic groups in Kenya by employing divide and rule policy manifested through favouring one ethnic group over the other.⁷³⁵ Direct appointments of colonial agents pitted one community against the other. African communities were divided between loyalists and rebels.⁷³⁶ This study acknowledged that divide and rule policy was a long term strategy as earlier discussed to stop Africans from readily rallying together against colonialism. Colonisation in Kenya was marked by the altering of the

⁷³³ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁴ Oral interview, an elders focused group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁷³⁵ Lawrence Murugu and Smokin Wanjala., *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid*

customary land holding rights, enactment of new labour laws and practices which were skewed along the racial, ethnic, class, clientilism, internationalism and patronage. The Christian concept of work and individualism in relation to accumulation of forces of production guided the colonial masters operating in Kenya. In this new mode of production land defined both the citizen and subject. This contributed to the escalation of the land question in Kenya as a factor of production in this colonial economic substructure. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

In Laikipia Area, little was known about it and generally the Northern Frontier district until 1905 when the explorer called Teleki and Lord Delamare visited the area.⁷³⁷ By 1906, Laikipia Area was part and parcel of the provincial headquarters in Naivasha.⁷³⁸ For effective and efficient colonial commerce, the colonial authorities introduced the first coin in the colonial Laikipia in 1907. Based on the colonial reports around 1907 Maasai's were living around Rumuruti, a group of Rendille chiefs headed by Ol Le Sarge visited Rumuruti to make consensus with the Maasai.⁷³⁹ Maasai relied on Oloibon for socio-cultural and political directions, they frequently consulted them in times of distress and otherwise. Oloibon healed sick cattle and foretold or predicted the rain.⁷⁴⁰ From the foregoing, it was the position of this study that the Maasai had established settlement in Rumuruti before the introduction of colonialism in Laikipia.

⁷³⁷KNADS/ PC *Northern Kenya*, retrieved on 27th /6/2023.

⁷³⁸KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1906-1911 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁷³⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁰*Ibid.*

In 1907 also there was severe drought and famine in Kikuyu land that had a ripple effect in Laikipia.⁷⁴¹ The colonial government tried to solve this famine by establishing irrigation schemes in Rumuruti.⁷⁴² An informant account cited and masterminds of the land question argued on this basis that Rumuruti and by extension Laikipia Area was ancestrally Maasai ethno territory this was in line with the instrumentalism theory of this study.⁷⁴³ Land in Laikipia during the pre-colonial era was predominantly occupied by the Maasai loosely referred to as the Laikipia Maasai.⁷⁴⁴ From the foregoing therefore, this study held that the Agikuyu settlement neighboured Rumuruti which was a Maasai settlement before and the advent colonial rule in Kenya.

The colonial regime soon after began alienated Africans land in Laikipia to create room for European settlement. An informant account expounded that:

In order to guarantee European settlers' chunks of the fertile Laikipia reserve the colonial government conceived a plan to move the indigenous Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Somali and Ndorobo out of Laikipia Area. The movement and restriction of these indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia County created the land question. The most affected were the Maasai who were historically relocated on the basis of a contentious treaty from Laikipia in Central Rift Valley to Loita in the south Rift Valley.⁷⁴⁵

This study established that the pre-colonial African settlement in Laikipia at the time colonialism was being introduced in the area was abruptly disrupted through land concessions and forceful movements of African ethnic groups in the area. This was a colonial wider scheme to exploit land resources as a factor of production. The movement of the Ogiek, Somali, Ndorobo, Samburu, Pokot and Maasai in Laikipia

⁷⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁷⁴²*Ibid.*

⁷⁴³Oral interview, Ronald Kalomut, interviewed in Nanyuki on 19th August, 2023.

⁷⁴⁴Mwenda, *Op.Cit.*,p. 53.

⁷⁴⁵Oral interview, Jacob Leken, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

Area escalated the land question. For the case of the Maasai, the land concessions between Maasai elders and European agents in 1904 and 1911 – otherwise called Anglo-Maasai agreements – led to the displacement of the Maasai from the Laikipia plateau. Laikipia area following these concessions became part of the designated colonial white highlands.

Maasai movement from Laikipia to Loita region or reserve was the subject of public debate and politics from 1908 onwards.⁷⁴⁶ This study affirmed that it was the Laikipian Maasai that was moved from Laikipia, but there were also the Nyeri and the Naivasha Maasai. The movement of the Maasai to Loita reserve was not unanimously approved. It was clear that division emerged over that movement. Chief Legalishu was on record opposing the movement of the Maasai to the Loita area on accounts that the area was relatively small and had insufficient water. However, Chief Masikondi was open to the idea and was loyal to the colonial regime; in fact his children were among the first Maasai to receive western education. It was remarked by a colonial agent that the Maasai had traded a paradise in the Central Rift Valley in the colonial Kenya for an inferno in the South Rift Valley region. This was after they finally agreed to be relocated to Loita area during the second Anglo-Maasai agreement of 1911. It was also mutually agreed between Maasai elders and the colonial agents that the Maasai would retain the reserves as the grazing fields, a concession that was never recognised in the later years of colonisation of Kenya. Instead, Laikipia Area which was also an ancestral land for the Samburu, Turkana, Ndorobo, Ogiek, Somali and Pokot was alienated and subdivided by the colonial regime for the establishment of European settlers' farms.⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴⁶KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1906-1911 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁷⁴⁷KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1906-1911 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

Therefore, the last Maasai group to leave Laikipia for the Southern reserve or Loita left on 26th March, 1913, Laikipia therefore became a vacant unalienated crown land to be subdivided to settlers on leasehold terms.⁷⁴⁸ An elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol shed more light to this that:

From 1913 throughout the colonial era, the Maasai were restricted to forty thousand kilometres square of the southern Loita grasslands. Their former land in Laikipia was officially dispossessed and alienated for white settlement in the region. As European settlement in Kenya gained traction, in the 19th century, chunks of African land were alienated in the Kenyan highland and christened as the *white* highlands.⁷⁴⁹

As earlier indicated, this study acknowledged that the dispossessing of the Maasai ethnic group from their perceived ancestral land between 1904 and 1911 formed the bed rock of what is popularly known as the land question and the historical land injustice in Laikipia Area. The colonial regime which started off the unjust alienation of land never corrected the initial mess which was inherited by the post-colonial regimes. The alienated land became the present ranches conservancies and forest reserves. Ranches and conservancies were largely owned by European nationals and affluent Kenyans.

It was imperative to note that the Maasai northern reserve was disbanded upon successful moving of the Maasai from Laikipia into the Loita area with the blessings of Lenana the Maasai Loibon. In 1911 therefore, the northern fertile Maasai reserve was officially closed and the southern Ngong reserve stretched to put up with the new Maasai population.⁷⁵⁰ An informant account clarified that the Northern Maasai reserve in Laikipia Area stretched from Oleipei to the northern reaches of Mukogodo

⁷⁴⁸KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1912-1913 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁷⁴⁹Oral interview, an elders focused group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

⁷⁵⁰KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

forest before the Maasai were re-located to the southern reserve.⁷⁵¹ More to that, before moving the Maasai to Loita Area , the colonial government under the leadership of the Provincial Commissioner in Naivasha called Hobley, added Solidai, Serogeri and Kenia valley on the Maasai northern reserve.⁷⁵² This study reiterated that this proposition created the land question on an ethnocentrism grounds as the Maasai rallied along their ethnic identities to claim their unfair dispossession off from their ancestral land. This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory used in this study. The Maasai claimed that this happened at the behest of the colonial regime through treacherous Anglo-Maasai agreements of the 1904 and 1911. A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti expounded that:

Before the colonial regime moved the Maasai from Laikipia, they were allowed to cross the River Ewaso Ngiro between January and April to be able to seek for pasture and water for their livestock across the river. The police patrolled Maasai movements from as far as Mombasa through a particular boundary. The thinking was to put all the Maasai in one country – the Loita reserve in Ngong South Rift Valley.⁷⁵³

From the foregoing discussion, the colonial regime wanted to maintain cordial relations with the Maasai amid their impending re-location. This was demonstrated in their gesture to allow them to access pasture across River Ewaso Ngiro between January and April during the drought. Information from the Kenya national archive and documentation services further propounded that after successful relocation of the ethnic Maasai to the Loita area, colonial government embarked on subdividing land in Laikipia Area for white settlement after the Maasai had been successfully moved

⁷⁵¹Oral interview, Hilda Waitheka, interviewed in Lamuria on 20th August, 2023.

⁷⁵²KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

⁷⁵³Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

to Sotik and Lemek Valley in the South Rift.⁷⁵⁴ Mr J. D Charter was among the European settlers who were allotted chunks of land for settlement in Laikipia. He applied to the commissioner of local government, land and settlement expressing his interest in the unalienated crown land in Laikipia adjacent to the Northern Uasin Ngiro. The commissioner of land's response to Mr J. D. Charter was that it had not settled on a clear land subdivision formulae of land in question. The uncertainty was whether the land would be disposed as a single block or subdivided into blocks.⁷⁵⁵

Besides the Maasai relocation, around this time, Somali inhabited the area around Uaso Nyiro.⁷⁵⁶ These Somali were often referred to as the Laikipian Somali. The Somali entry into Laikipia Area almost coincided with the moving of the Maasai from the area by the colonial authorities. The colonial authorities accused the Laikipia Area Somali of impinging on both unalienated crown land and private land in Laikipia Area. These Somali movements were coming from the neighbouring Samburu County; by 1925 Laikipia Somali presence as earlier noted in Laikipia Area was strongly felt. They blatantly rejected the colonial suggestion to move to Somalia or Ngare Ngare, they also further declined to vacate both the unalienated crown land and private farms in Laikipia.⁷⁵⁷ A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti explained that:

The House of Common put pressure on the colonial authorities in Kenya to use military action against the defiant Laikipian Somali. Somali squatters were also to be moved from Rumuruti Township and Laikipia farms. Their moving livestock infected other stocks with East Coast Fever. Finally, the colonial

⁷⁵⁴KNADS, *Gracing facilities*, BN/66/7, 1926-1933 retrieved on 26/6/2023.

⁷⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁶KNADS, AG/19/22, *Removal of Somali from Laikipia, 1915-1928* Retrieved 26/6/2023

⁷⁵⁷*Ibid.*

government successfully forced the Laikipia Somali into Isiolo quarantine.⁷⁵⁸

From the preceding argument, this study affirmed that the relocation of the ethnic Somali in Laikipia Area in 1920's created the land question in the area. The Somali being predominant pastoralist were exploiting land in Laikipia as their factor of production as grazing field. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The colonial government continued with the subdivision of land in Laikipia Area after the successful exit of the Maasai in the region.⁷⁵⁹ Attempts by the Samburu and the Laikipia Somali to fill the vacuum left by the Maasai were thwarted by the colonial government.⁷⁶⁰ European settlers were given a green light to develop crown lands in Laikipia in return they paid the colonial government rent as per the crown land ordinance.⁷⁶¹ More crown land was auctioned to the European settlers between 1930 and 1931 for the highest bidder in Laikipia District. Land issues involving allotment and complains arising from general subdivisions were handled by the commissioner for local government, lands and settlement.⁷⁶²

European settler farming in the colonial Laikipia begun in 1919 a few years after the last group of the Maasai had been moved.⁷⁶³ Areas of Leshau and Aberdares were best suited for stock rearing even though wheat farming was practiced there to some remarkable degree. Coffee was first grown in Laikipia in 1931; it was grown in sheltered places like Ol Arabel.⁷⁶⁴ An oral account further explained that for effective

⁷⁵⁸ Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁷⁵⁹ KNADS, BN/2/18, *Subdivision – Laikipia*, L.R. NO. 6397 MR. D.A. SMITH, 1930-1931.

⁷⁶⁰ KNADS, AG/19/122, *Removal of Somalis from Laikipia*, 1915-1928.

⁷⁶¹ KNADS, BN/2/18, *Subdivision – Laikipia*, L.R. NO. 6397 MR. D.A. SMITH, 1930-1931.

⁷⁶² KNADS, BN/2/25 *Subdivision, Laikipia*, L.O.2454.

⁷⁶³ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1, 1929, accessed on 29th June, 2023.

⁷⁶⁴ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1, 1931, accessed on 30th June, 2023.

colonialism before and after moving the indigenous ethnic groups out of Laikipia Area the colonial government constructed roads, connected telephones lines, build administration installations, established municipals and county councils. In addition, it developed schools, health centres, police stations and cells and subdivided land for white settlement and forest reserves.⁷⁶⁵

This study established that in 1910, the colonial government started to construct a road from Gilgil to Rumuruti to connect Laikipia to the outside world. The alienation of land by the colonial regime to build public roads in Laikipia Area created the land question. Trade also flourished around Laikipia, sheep, cattle and farm products were mostly exchanged among the Somali, Agikuyu, Maasai and Samburu. Somali in particular brought cattle to exchange them with sheep, while the Agikuyu traded farm products with animals' products. Poll tax was first introduced in Laikipia in 1910.⁷⁶⁶

A police cell was established in Rumuruti to detain those who breached the travel policy and other minor offenders. However, offenders serving long prison terms were referred to Nairobi for imprisonment. There was a rising need to establish schools for settlers and native African children in the colonial Laikipia Area to offer western education more especially to the native African children.⁷⁶⁷ Between 1910 and 1911, a branch of the Inland African Mission was established in Rumuruti most of the Maasai were not willing to convert to Christianity except chief Masikondi sons. Education during the colonial period was mostly offered by the Christian

⁷⁶⁵Oral interview, Hilda Waitheka, interviewed in Lamuria on 20th August, 2023.

⁷⁶⁶KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

⁷⁶⁷KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1925 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

Missionaries, but initially mission centres served as makeshift schools for the native African converts.⁷⁶⁸

Chief Masikondi's sons were among the first Africans in Laikipia to receive western education through the Inland African Mission.⁷⁶⁹ It was not until 1919, when a small school was set up in Rumuruti specifically for the European settlers' children. The colonial government continued to develop and facilitate the provision of social services in Laikipia Area.⁷⁷⁰ In 1929, a post office was set up in Rumuruti Township to offer postal services to the entire colonial Laikipia Area. These developments enabled the colonial authorities and European settlers to send and receive correspondences to the colonial office in Nairobi and beyond. Laikipia and Samburu were administered together in 1940. In 1947, the Turkana and Northern Frontier District were merged to give rise to Northern Frontier Province.

As an influx of European settlers in Laikipia Area continued between 1930 and 1931 two more private schools were established in the colonial Laikipia to offer education to European settlers' children. The colonial government promoted Education in Laikipia Area by establishing schools in the region both for the African and European children.⁷⁷¹ Initiatives to meet the rising demand for schools led to the establishment of more schools in the region by the colonial government. By 1946, Mr. Levet's school near Thomson falls continued to flourish.⁷⁷² Between 1954 and 1955 the colonial government through the local government approved the establishment of Sosian School-Rumuruti and McIntyre C.C.M School in order to

⁷⁶⁸ Oral interview, Hilda Waitheka, interviewed in Lamuria on 20th August, 2023.

⁷⁶⁹ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1912-1913 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁷⁷⁰ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1929 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

⁷⁷¹ KNADS, *Aberdares County Council/ Laikipia District Council committee meeting 1954-1955*, JA/1/228 retrieved on 26/6/2023

⁷⁷² KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1946 retrieved on 27/6/2023

ensure the rising population of children within the area towards access to education. By 1961 there were thirty nine schools in Laikipia County as was demonstrated in table 3.1:

Table: 3.1 Schools in Laikipia Area by 1961.

Schools	1959	1960	1961
Aided primary schools	30	35	34
Primary schools	2	4	5

Source: KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1961 retrieved on 27/6/2023

From table 3.1, this study held that the colonial regime created the land question in Laikipia Area by alienating African land to establish schools and other social facilities. This land was a factor of production as grazing fields for the ethnic groups that were moved from the area. The Maasai, Somali, Ndorobo, Ogiek, Samburu and Pokot have rallied along their ethnic identities to claim their ancestral land that was unfairly alienated by the colonial regime. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory applied in this study.

The colonial government also initiated the telephone line in 1953 to link up the Aberdare region to the mainstream colony and as part of the wider plan to develop infrastructure to support settler farming in the region.⁷⁷³ By that same year, the colonial government had recruited tribal police in the forest reserve to contain illegal logging, trespassing and squatting by native Africans in Laikipia Area.⁷⁷⁴ Shortage of water in Laikipia Area was an age-old problem, acute water shortages in Laikipia during the colonial period persisted.⁷⁷⁵ In 1931, the colonial authorities made a massive proposition to tap water from the Narok River and piped it around Laikipia. Besides, Kenya police, tribal police and units of the Duke of Wellington combined

⁷⁷³KNADS/ *Manpower, list of reservists, 1953*, AH/19/98/ retrieved on 26/6/2023.

⁷⁷⁴KNADS, DC/LKA/1/4 Annual report 1953, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁷⁷⁵KNADS, *selection of township sites Laikipia northern Kenya*; 1914 retrieved on 26/06/2023.

efforts to maintain law and order in Laikipia Area during the colonial period.⁷⁷⁶ This study established that the beefing up of the security in the forest reserves during the colonial era was stop illegal settlement in the area by African ethnic groups that depended on forests land as their factor of production. This study additionally avowed that African ‘natives’ who lived in Laikipia Area during the colonial period after the movement of the Maasai in the area were either labourers squatting on settler farms on contract or illegal squatters living on unalienated or alienated crown land mostly forest reserves. It was against this background that this study reiterated that the land question arose from moving indigenous ethnic groups from Laikipia Area and alienation of their land to set up European settler farms, schools, hospitals, forest reserves, roads and government installations.

3.6.1 Colonial Land Policies and their Implication on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1895-1963

From 1895, the colonial government instituted colonial land policies that ultimately established a settler economy hinged on natural mineral resources, ranching and plantation agriculture in Kenya.⁷⁷⁷ This study established that in a bid to lure British settlers to Kenya, the colonial government assured them of cheap labour and alienated African lands. As previously stated, land was a critical factor of production in colonial Kenya because the colonial economy was based on agrarian form of capitalism. Land was exploited for European settlers benefit and production of agricultural raw materials for industries in Europe. This was a tenet of the articulation and modes of production theory applied in this study.

⁷⁷⁶KNADS, DC/LKA/2, annual report 1951 retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

⁷⁷⁷Konrad Adenauer. *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

The enacted colonial land policies included the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1896 gave the British colonial regime authority to control unoccupied land by any government in East Africa.⁷⁷⁸ It also empowered the British colonial regime to negotiate, buy or conquer land in East Africa. As an import of this provision, this study held that the British colonial imperialists made the Anglo-Maasai agreements of 1904 and 1911 which led to the disinheritance of the Maasai from land holding in Laikipia Area. In furtherance of this Warurii's study established that in the 1904 Maasai-British agreement, the Laikipia reserve was created to settle the Maasai in Laikipia and Ngong.⁷⁷⁹ The 1911 Maasai-British agreement heralded a radical shift in the Maasai occupation of Laikipia plateau. As per the agreement, all Maasai were moved and reunited to a more vast Ngong reserve in the southern Rift to co-exist. The 1911 Anglo-Maasai treaty was also necessitated by the increasing number of European settlers in Laikipia Area.⁷⁸⁰ From the foregoing as a consequence of the Foreign Jurisdiction act the land question was created in Laikipia Area by relocating the Maasai to create room for European settlement and farming. This was informed by the fact that land was a factor of production for settler farming during the colonial era. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

To move the Laikipian Maasai from Laikipia to the Loita area in the South Rift, the colonial authorities mooted a land exchange in Sotik, Lemek and Laikipia.⁷⁸¹ European settlers in Sotik and Lemek gave up their chunks of land and in exchange

⁷⁷⁸Peter Benedict Odhiambo Ndege., *Op.Cit.*, p. 21.

⁷⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷⁸⁰Guyo Chepe Tun. *Firepower won't restore trust among Kenya's warning Laikipia communities*, Institute for security studies, 3rs November, 2021.

⁷⁸¹KNADS/AG/22/78 *Application for land at Laikipia exchange with farms at Sotik and Lemek Valley*, 1914-1919, date retrieved 26/6/2023.

they were allotted land in Laikipia besides monetary compensations. Ultimately the resettlement of the Maasai in Sotik and Lemek valley in the South Rift attracted a legal tussle in 1913.⁷⁸² This study established that in the ensuing legal battle, the ruling was in favour of the colonial authorities at the expense of native or indigenous Maasai who had petitioned a fraudulent dispossession of their communal land in Laikipia. However, the Maasai did not contest the court ruling in any appellate court. This gave the colonial authorities the leeway to proceed with land allotment to European settlers in Laikipia Area. This was clearly demonstrated in the telegram send by Belfield to C.O no. 1963 dated 6th May, 1914.⁷⁸³

In 1894 the Indian land acquisition act was promulgated that laid ground for the alienation of land for the construction of railway and public installations.⁷⁸⁴ It was the position of this study that the consequence of the ratification of this law was the alienation of land in Laikipia area for the construction of roads, schools, health centres and other government installations. Further to this the information from the Kenya National Archive and Documentation Services stated that in 1897 legislation Europeans were legally allowed to own land in Kenya for a 21-years renewable lease.⁷⁸⁵ This provision was ratified in the anticipation of an influx of European settlers to Kenya and by extension Laikipia Area.

The colonial land surveys of 1904 in Central and Central Rift Valley including Laikipia led to land alienation, sub division of land to European settlers, land fragmentations and dispossession of the ethnic Gikuyu and Maasai peasants from

⁷⁸²KNADS/AG/22/249 *Exchange of land – Laikipia and Kericho* 1927-1929, date retrieved 26/6/2023.

⁷⁸³*Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁴Pius kakai. *Op.Cit.*, p. 38.

⁷⁸⁵KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

their ancestral lands.⁷⁸⁶ The Agikuyu woes escalated when the colonial authorities confined them into a Nyeri reserve. An oral account expounded on this that:

Life in the reserve was unbearable for the ethnic Agikuyu to the extent that it compelled this population to move into Laikipia as labourers on settler farms in 1920's and 1930's. These activities of the colonial regime that led to the creation of the land question in Laikipia Area.⁷⁸⁷

From the foregoing arguments, therefore, this study affirmed that the Agikuyu movement into Laikipia created the land question in the area. These were their earliest traceable settlements in the area; they later benefited from the colonial and post-colonial land resettlements schemes in Laikipia Area.

The East African Order in council of 1898 permitted the commissioner to sell and lease land to Europeans, as a consequence of this provision this study held that European settlers were leased land in Laikipia Area from around 1919. These colonial land policies systematically alienated land from the indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. This created the land question because land was a factor of production for both European settlers and indigenous African ethnic groups. This was a tenet of the articulations of modes of production theory applied in this study.

In 1904, the British introduced a policy to settle African on 'native' reserves.⁷⁸⁸ This study established that these African reserves were formed on the basis of their ethnicity. They later became the administrative units known today as locations and districts. Moreover, the created the land question in Laikipia Area. A Maasai reserve was created in Laikipia North but was later disbanded as a consequence of the 1911 Anglo-Maasai agreement. The Maasai were denied the opportunity by the colonial

⁷⁸⁶Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

⁷⁸⁷Oral interview, Hilda Waitheka, interviewed in Lamuria on 20th August, 2023.

⁷⁸⁸Pius Kakai., *Op. Cit.*, p. 99-104.

government to exploit land in Laikipia as a factor of production in their pastoralism modes of production. This move escalated the land question in Laikipia Area among the Maasai as claims of dispossession of ancestral land in Laikipia gained ground.

In 1915, the Crown Land Ordinance was enacted.⁷⁸⁹ This study acknowledged that as the import of this colonial land policy African reserves were rendered as the integral part of the crown land. As an effect, all the indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia became landless at the mercy of the crown. Later, this study further established that the promulgation of the Resident Native Squatter Ordinance of 1918 enabled the ethnic Agikuyu access to land holding in Laikipia Area in exchange of their labour. This move disregarded the pre-colonial land holding rights which were the basis of the land question in Laikipia Area. As a result of these developments, the Maasai became more concerned and as the elder's focus group discussion in Dol Dol expounded:

The ethnic Maasai presented a petition to the Morris Carter Land Commission of 1932/34 against their unfair dispossession from Laikipia plateau as a consequence of the Anglo-Maasai concessions of 1904 and 1911. The commission however ruled that Africans had no claims on land at all.⁷⁹⁰

From the foregoing observations, this study stated that after the Maasai realised that they were duped by the colonial regime in the both first and second Anglo-Maasai agreements of 1904 and 1911, they made efforts to contest these concessions through legal avenues. Even if they did not challenge the court ruling of 1913 they remained dissatisfied and in 1932/34 they presented their grievances before the Carter commission. The Maasai wanted to reclaim their land in Laikipia Area because it

⁷⁸⁹Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 53.

⁷⁹⁰Oral interview, an elders focused group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

was an important factor of production in their pastoralism mode of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

In 1954, the Sweynnerton Plan was conceived and adopted.⁷⁹¹ The wider scheme was to include Africans in the socio-economic mainstream space in colonial Kenya after years of deliberate exclusion. As a ramification of the policy, for the first time in the colonial Kenya, Africans were granted individual land ownership and green light to grow cash crops by the colonial regime.⁷⁹² This study admitted that the Sweynnerton Plan in 1950's became another window for the rise of native African farmers on private land holding tenure. In colonial Kenya land enclosure and consolidation became the rallying call for the pioneer African farmers during the colonial era. Efforts were aimed at integrating Africans ravaged by colonial land policies into mainstream agricultural farming in Kenya. The Sweynnerton Plan, land registration of 1959, Resident Native Squatter Ordinance of 1918, Anglo-Maasai land concessions of 1904 and 1911 enabled the ethnic Agikuyu to access to land holding in Laikipia Area at the expense of the ethnic Maasai, Turkana, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo. They were registered as land holders in Laikipia Area during the land registration programme under the Sweynnerton Plan. These colonial land policies in Kenya created a land question in Laikipia because land was a critical factor of production for both crop farmers and herders. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. In furtherance of this a political focus group discussion in Rumuruti stated that:

In 1950's, there was a rush by the ethnic Gikuyu to move into Laikipia to take over land left by white settlers who were leaving the country over their uncertain political future on the brink of independence.

⁷⁹¹*Ibid.*

⁷⁹²Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 58.

The ethnic Maasai, Turkana, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo owing to their pastoralism livelihood and conservative nature did not imagine that land could be bought or owned individually. As a result, the ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii became land holders in Laikipia Area.⁷⁹³

From the preceding arguments, the ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru took advantage of the political climate toward independence and anticipated European settlers' migration out of the Country to acquire land in Laikipia Area. The ethnic Maasai, Turkana, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo were uninterested because they never imagined land could be sold or bought as well as they believed that land in Laikipia was automatically their ancestral land. A land holding rights contests then emerged in form of the land question between those who claimed their ancestral land in Laikipia and those who claimed they legally bought the land. This was because land was a force of production for both herders and crop farmers this was in line with the articulation modes of production theory.

3.7 The Influence of Decolonisation on the Land Question in Laikipia Area

1920-1963

Colonialism from 1895 to 1963 heralded a new system of resource distribution and allocation.⁷⁹⁴ At the centre of it; as earlier affirmed this study established that colonialists exploited ethnic division by favouring one ethnic group at the expense of another in resource allocation including land holding in colonial Kenya. The resultant of such skewed resource distribution and redistribution was the creation of

⁷⁹³Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁷⁹⁴Tracey J Kinney, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

the land question in Kenya.⁷⁹⁵ Land since the pre-colonial area was a critical force of production and its appropriation on the ethnic lines generated inter-ethnic relations.

Kinney expounded on this that the long-term effects were socio-economic inequalities during the colonial period survived to this day.⁷⁹⁶ The colonial administration across Africa consciously discriminated Africans' progress in the social, political and economic realm. The colonial regime in Africa argued that it was unnecessary to uplift Africans in the areas of education, trade, property holding and inclusion in the democratic practices when they had no desire or interests. In addition, their inclusion in this mainstream colonial political economy in Kenya would have presented competition or hurt European investments in Kenya.⁷⁹⁷

However, a farmers' focused group discussion in Ol Moran argued differently that:

The focus for the agitation against colonialism in Kenya was the quest to include the native people in national issues and their subsequent inclusion into the mainstream colonial economy including access to land holding. Their desire to be at centre of determining the course and fate of their country united different ethnic groups together in national political outfits that were the vessels to attain self-determination.⁷⁹⁸

From the foregoing discussions, this study affirmed that claims by the colonial government that Africans in Kenya was not interested with socio-economic and political inclusion in the colonial Kenya were unfounded and baseless. To get rid of agrarian colonial capitalism that favoured European settlers and the colonial regime to the detriment of Africans, Kenyan ethnic groups had to forge unity of purpose. Somewhat colonial maladministration and oppression of the African through the enactment and implementation of draconian policies coupled with urbanisation

⁷⁹⁵Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 18.

⁷⁹⁶Tracey J Kinney, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

⁷⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁸Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

served to solidify them into African solidarity. This unprecedented union became the ideal ground for the rise of African nationalism in Kenya. But, soon after independence this established national fabric became fluid and seemed to have been built on the quick sand as the demons of negative ethnicity permeated Kenya's governance structure, public service and political order.

The earliest form of anti-colonial sentiments by Africans in Laikipia District arose from employer-employee conflicts over labour pay in Laikipia District.⁷⁹⁹ Even if there was no any documented official trade union in Laikipia, an illegal trade union known as the farmers workers union operating from Nanyuki advocated for a revision of workers' pay to a hundred shillings per month. Unofficial Kiama presented African grievances in 1925 regarding the remuneration status of the wage labour they rendered on settlers farms.⁸⁰⁰ Five strikes were reported on European settler farms by the African labourers but none was effective. In 1929, Labour unrest was reported on settler farms in Laikipia Area more especially among the Agikuyu labourers. It was documented that these group of labourers were influenced to desert settler farms and stop offering labour services at the same time.⁸⁰¹ This study affirmed that the exploitation of African labour during the colonial era went hand in hand with the exploitation of land as a natural resource. African labour was exploited for in agrarian modes production during the colonial era. Alienation of African land was also established as a wider scheme to create a labour force for the exploitation of land as a factor of production in the colonial modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production applied in this study.

⁷⁹⁹KNADS/*Annual report 1951, Laikipia District*, DC/LKA/1/2.

⁸⁰⁰KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911.

⁸⁰¹KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1 report 1929 retrieved on 27/6/2023.

Around 1946, Kenya African Union activities in Laikipia Area increased.⁸⁰² Political focus group discussions in Rumuruti expanded on this that:

Kenya African Union operatives reportedly incited Africans mainly from the Agikuyu descent to stop offering labour on white settler farms in Laikipia County. Ex-Soldiers who served in the Kenya African Rifle took advantage of the Kenya African Union popularity around 1946 to ignite the alienated African land question in Laikipia. They also demanded African representation in the colonial legislative council. Mau Mau activities in Nyandarua and Nyeri had a spill over effect in Laikipia leading to strained relations between white settlers and native Africans more so the Kikuyu, Meru and Embu.⁸⁰³

This study held that Mau Mau activities in Laikipia Area were driven by African protest against the colonial exploitation of their ancestral land which was their pre-colonial factor of production. Mobilisation of African therefore was understood as a form of protesting the unjust alienation of their ancestral land in Laikipia Area and in central Kenya.

Mau Mau activities increased in Laikipia Area in 1953 as marauding members of Mau Mau attacked settler farms and those deemed to be sympathizers of the colonial regime.⁸⁰⁴ Most of the Mau Mau members were of the Kikuyu ethnicity; their activities forced the colonial regime to carry out a screening exercise in Laikipia to flush out Mau Mau elements. At the outset of Mau Mau screening an exodus of the Kikuyu from the settler farms was noted, this turn of events had a far reaching ramification on provision of labour on European settlers farms.

⁸⁰²KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1946, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁰³Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁸⁰⁴KNADS/*Annual report 1952, Laikipia District /DC/LKA/1/4* retrieved on 27/06/2023.

Mau Mau activities in Laikipia Area intensified amid the royal visit in Kenya by Princess Elizabeth and her fiancé Prince Phillip in 1952.⁸⁰⁵ On 30th June 1952, Mau Mau adopted and carried out the policy of intimidation, forceful oath giving and murdering of Africans who were not yielding to their recruitment activities and rituals.⁸⁰⁶ As earlier stated, it was the position of this study that Mau Mau was an uprising to protest the unjust alienation of land by the colonial regime and exclusion of Africans from exploiting land which was the basic force of production to both crop farmers and pastoralist.

Early 1960's heralded intensified political activities and setting up of political parties' branches and offices in Laikipia Area.⁸⁰⁷ In 1961, there were attempts to establish a branch of the Kenya Land Freedom Army in the Ol Kalou area.⁸⁰⁸ The Kenya African National Union which was formed in March 1960, had an operational branch in Laikipia by 1961.⁸⁰⁹ In 1960, Kenya African National Union established branches at Thomson falls, Rumuruti and Ol Kalau; in a reactionary gesture Kenya African Democratic Union also opened branches in Thomson Falls, Rumuruti and Ol Kalau.⁸¹⁰ A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti expounded on this that:

The officials of Kenya African National Union in Laikipia County included Stephen Macharia and Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki who were the Chair and the Secretary respectively. Kenya African Democratic Union similarly had an office in Laikipia but was closed up for lack of enough funds around the same time. Kikuyu influence in Kenya African National Union and statements made regarding land that all

⁸⁰⁵KNADS/DC/LKA/1/3 Royal visit, retrieved on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁰⁶KNADS, 1952 annual report, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁰⁷KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1960, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁰⁸KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1946, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁰⁹KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1961, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸¹⁰KNADS, 1960 annual report, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

highlands belonged to the Agikuyu, aroused concern among the Kalenjins on the farms.⁸¹¹

From the foregoing arguments, this study established that having settled in Laikipia Area as labours on settler farms, the Kikuyu had gained interest and foothold of land. This gave the Agikuyu the confidence to access land as a factor of production through the activities of Mau Mau. The rivalry to control land as a factor of production pitted the ethnic Agikuyu and Kalenjin along their ethnic identities. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory of this study.

The political events that unfolded in 1960 shaped radically the general environment in Laikipia Area. The lifting of the state of emergency by the colonial authorities ushered in a new wave of freedom and anxiety. The Lancaster House conferences held in London to chart the political future of Kenya and fully represented by the Africans in Kenya was another source of euphoria. The Maasai through Justus Ole Tipis raised ancestral land claims and other European settlement areas but the outcome of the conferences downplayed the Maasai interests.⁸¹² This study affirmed that the dismissal of the Maasai's ancestral land claims arose during the Lancaster House conference of 1962 led to the construction of the land question. It created a window for other ethnic groups to access to land holding rights in Laikipia Area.

As earlier stated sensing that European settlers would soon leave Kenya, Kikuyu started trooping into Laikipia in anticipation of occupying the European settlers land in the area. Around this time also, a cloud of fear erupted among European settlers who grew concerned about their uncertain future in Laikipia in the event of the impending Kenyan independence in Kenya. This ethnic Agikuyu trooping to Laikipia

⁸¹¹Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁸¹²KNADS, 1960 annual report, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

Area was claimed by the Ndorobo, Samburu, Pokot, Maasai, Turkana and Ogiek as impinging on their ancestral land which was their factor of production.

As a result, toward independence the Samburu, Maasai, Pokot, Turkana, Ndorobo and Ogiek supported Kenya African Democratic Union with its federalism ideology.⁸¹³ In that same political upheavals ethnic Bantu – Gikuyu, Embu and Kisii identified with Kenya African National Union with its unitary ideology.⁸¹⁴ This study recognized that federalism propagated by Kenya African Democratic Union was construed by pastoralist to imply it would assure them of their ancestral land holding by fixing the historical land injustices. Unitary ideology on its part advanced by Kenya African National Union implied that land holding in Laikipia was open to any indigenous ethnic groups regardless of the pre-colonial land holding rights. The failure by the post-colonial regime to address the historical land issues in Laikipia Area as examined in the subsection through federalism as anticipated by the pastoralist ethnic groups led to the creation of the land question.

3.8 The Influence of Post-independent Governments' Inability to fix the Land Issues on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1963-1992

Uniformly, Afrocentric scholars agree that Africa suffered a political tragedy soon after independence.⁸¹⁵ Systematic muzzling of independent institutions and militarisation of political governance became the new order. Independence giants who had seized power through a popular initiative from the colonial regimes, consciously and blatantly destroyed the parliamentary system that offered checks and balances necessary to stop dictatorial excesses in the young nation states in Africa.⁸¹⁶

⁸¹³Oral interview, Everlyn Wambui, interviewed in Dol Dol on 20th August, 2023.

⁸¹⁴Oral interview, Snr Chief Samuel K. Tum, interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

⁸¹⁵Konrad Adenauer. *Op. Cit.*, p. 267.

⁸¹⁶*Ibid.*

They also eliminated democratic competitions and muzzled the opposition as the alternative voices of governance. The ultimate resultants of these dictatorial predispositions were political tragedies in the forms of imperial presidency and militarised democracies across Africa as two thirds of African nation states shifted to one party system and totalitarian regimes supported by militaries. Dictatorship, repressive regimes and bad governance was not just suddenly introduced in the young independent states in Africa including Kenya. In a careful, slow and systematic political precision, policies and laws were enacted that over time achieved this governance shift.

At independence, most African states inherited government structure adopted on the brink of independence, particularly the parliamentary systems headed by the prime ministers. These prime ministers were subordinate to the parliament that had political legitimacy to terminate their tenure on gross-violation of the constitution. However, these parliamentary systems were revised by these leaders who through constitutional amendments that allowed themselves to become presidents and elected directly by the people. The parliamentary systems were replaced with executive presidential systems that were able to manipulate parliament and extend term limits.⁸¹⁷ These new repressive regimes in Africa failed to fix the land question that as widely expected.

After suffering a series of land alienations and economic marginalisation during the colonial period 1895 to 1963, Kenyans were optimistic that the Kenyatta regime at independence would fix the issue of landlessness in Laikipia Area.⁸¹⁸ This study held that the Kenyatta regime instead adopted a resettlement programme that legally or

⁸¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁸¹⁸Konrad Adenauer. *Op. Cit.*,p. 21.

illegally denied African pre-colonial land rights and claims. The Kikuyu for example were resettled in Laikipia to the detriment of the Laikipian Maasai who suffered treacherous Anglo-Maasai land concessions that displaced them from the area.

The post-colonial government in Kenya in 1960's and 1970's adopted the land buyout policy that became an avenue for both individual squatters and registered cooperatives to buy these lands in Laikipia. In Laikipia Area, buying companies like Lariaka estate and Muhotetu were formed.⁸¹⁹ Squatters were also sold shares to buy land in Laikipia Area especially in Lariaka area. After independence whites sold their land on willing buyer willing seller.⁸²⁰ Gikuyu were able to mobilise resources and bought land in Rumuruti. Pastoralists did not realize that land could be bought most of them were not cognizant of the free market economy that the post-colonial regime had adopted. An informant account elaborated further:

Muhotetu is an acronym of locations from the central province in Nyeri, Muho for the Muhoya and Tetu – for Tetu divisions of the defunct Nyeri district. They bought land in Gatundia through land buying companies. Rumuruti farm was called Ndurumo Farms It was bought by a company called Laikipia West farmers These land buying companies used shares from several people to form a company. For the Ndurumo farm one share was equivalent to five acres. All the new settlers were the Agikuyu from Nyeri.⁸²¹

From the foregoing observations, this study acknowledged that the ethnic Agikuyu took advantage of the land buy-out policy adopted by the colonial regime to acquire land in Laikipia Area as their force of production. This led to the escalation of the land question as the Gikuyu claimed that they legally bought land in Laikipia Area while

⁸¹⁹ KNADS, *Laikipia D.A. C, Divisional land control board minutes, 1968-1976*, BX/2/84, retrieved on 27th /6/2023.

⁸²⁰ Oral interview, Snr Chief Samuel K. Tum, interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

⁸²¹ Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

the Ndorobo, Samburu, Pokot, Maasai, Turkana and Ogiek insisted that land was their ancestral land.

Gikuyu entry into Laikipia went on during the post-colonial regimes.⁸²² They bought land through land buying companies in 1960's and 1970's during the Kenyatta regime.⁸²³ However, they renamed parts of Laikipia with names of the regions they moved from, such names include Thome, Kagaa, Maundu ni Meri and Kiamariga.⁸²⁴ This as was previously noted became a bone of contention with the indigenous Nilotic pastoralist who claimed that the move was meant to disinherit them their ancestral land which remained a thorny issue in the perennial inter-ethnic land conflicts in the Area . This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

3.9 The influence of Absentee Landlords on the Land Question in Laikipia Area 1963-1992

An emerging twist on the land question in the Laikipia Area was the increased squatting on the absentee landlords' land by the pastoralists.⁸²⁵ This study established that after acquiring land in 1960's and 1970's through land buying companies, the ethnic Agikuyu mostly did not settle or develop these lands immediately. Also, these lands were not entirely arable. An oral account elaborated further on this that:

Attempts to grow crops were met with frustrating resulting prompting them to abandon them. Pastoralist then took advantage of these empty lands and squatted on them. The absentee land lord's question then arose in Laikipia County.⁸²⁶

⁸²²Oral interview, Diana Njoki, interviewed in Sipili on 20th August, 2023.

⁸²³Oral interview, Liz Njeri, interviewed in Ng'arua on 20th August, 2023.

⁸²⁴Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

⁸²⁵Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*,p. 37.

⁸²⁶Oral interview, Allan Leshan, interviewed in Lamuria on 19th August, 2023.

From the preceding observations, this study affirmed that pastoralist took advantage of the vacant land to squat and graze their livestock, since this situation stretched for decade's pastoralist squatting on this unoccupied laid claim that these were their ancestral lands. The Pokot, Turkana, Samburu and Mukogodo Maasai ethnic pastoral groups hitherto constrained from grazing on the Laikipia Plateau by the colonial regime currently live in and graze their livestock on these abandoned lands whose owners have been missing for years. These illegal occupations on unoccupied land in Laikipia the study established were as a result of the essentiality of land as a factor of production among these pastoralist communities. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production applied in this study.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The primordial inter-ethnic commerce between the Maasai and Agikuyu formed part of the earliest forms of the land question in Laikipia Area. The ethnic Maasai were rallied on this ground to argue that the ethnic Agikuyu impinged on their ancestral land which was their factor of production. Maasai held that initially the Agikuyu were visiting traders in Laikipia County and their settlement in the area during the colonial and post-colonial era was an intrusion on their ancestral land. Land in Laikipia for the Maasai was their useful factor of production their pastoralism economic substructure. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

The preference of the ethnic Agikuyu on provision of colonial labour in settler farms in Laikipia created the land question. This European settlers preference became the opportunity for the ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia County. This opportunity was created through colonial land reforms like Native Squatter Ordinance of 1918, Sweynnerton plan, and one million acre settlement schemes. The

ethnic Agikuyu took advantage of the land policies along their ethnic identities during the colonial and post-colonial periods to settle in Laikipia and exploit land which was a factor of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Ethnic Maasai, Samburu, Tugen, Pokot, Turkana, Ogiek and Ndorobo rallied along ethnic identities to claim Laikipia as their ancestrally their land. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory of this study. This created the land question from the ethnocentrism perspective. They protested changes in land use and tenure which systematically diminished land for grazing a factor of production in their economic substructure. The need to exploit land as a factor of production during the colonial era contributed to the escalation of the land question in the area. The colonial regime created the land question by moving indigenous ethnic communities to establish settler farming. The Somali, Samburu and Maasai, Ogiek, Ndorobo were out of Laikipia County and through land reforms in the later days of colonialism that settled ethnic Agikuyu in Laikipia Area. This was to enable the European settler to exploit land in the area as a factor of production in the agrarian colonial economic substructure. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The change of land use in Laikipia from the traditional grazing fields to settler farms, ranching, conservancies, urbanization and plantation agriculture created the land question from 1895-1992. This was done during the colonial and post-colonial era without due regard to ancestral land holding rights by the Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek, Tugen, Pokot, Ndorobo, Somali and Turkana. These communities were denied the opportunity to exploit land as their factor of production in their pastoralism modes of production.

The colonial regime 1895-1963 disregarded the pre-colonial land tenure system. This policy mistake was inherited by the post-colonial regimes. As a consequence of this policy mistake, the Samburu, Maasai, Pokot, Ogiek, Ndorobo and Somali were disinherited from land holding in Laikipia Area. This contributed to the rise of the land question. These ethnic groups experienced diminished land for grazing fields which was a crucial factor of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory.

Influential politicians like Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki and Dixon Kihika Kimani influenced ethnic Agikuyu to acquire land in Laikipia in 1960's and 1970's Area through the land buying companies. These acts by political leaders created the land question from the ethnocentrism perspective. Politicians influenced the ethnic Agikuyu to access land in because it was their important factor of production in their economic substructure. This was in line with the tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

Ethnic political groups like GEMA, KAMATUSA and Mungiki were formed along ethnic lines to protect both ethnic Agikuyu and Nilotic groups from land holding in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. GEMA and Mungiki protected the interest of ethnic Agikuyu land holding whereas KAMATUSA protected the interests of the Nilotic groups land holding Laikipia Area. This contest over land was informed by the need to exploit land as a factor of production in their modes of production.

The colonial alienation of the land in Laikipia Area to establish schools, settler farms, hospitals, forest reserves and other government installations created the land question. It led to the dispossession of the Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek, Tugen, Pokot,

Ndorobo, Somali and Turkana from their ancestral land in Laikipia Area. Colonial land policies also dispossessed Maasai from land holding in Laikipia County. This created the land question because land as grazing fields was their factor production in their economic substructure. This was in line with the tenet of articulation of modes of production theory.

Decolonisation split the ethnic Nilotes and ethnic Bantu into two camps. The Nilotic group – Samburu, Maasai, Pokot, Turkana and Ndorobo supported KADU while the ethnic Agikuyu and Meru supported KANU. The ideals of federalism propagated by KADU were widely supported among the Nilotes in the sense that it guaranteed them return of their alienated land during the colonial era. The ethnic Bantu supported the unitary ideals of KANU ostensibly to access land holding in Laikipia Area. The need to reclaim ancestral land by the Samburu, Maasai, Pokot, Turkana, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo was as previously stated for the reason that land was their factor of production. This was in line with the articulation modes of production theory.

The inability to fix the land question through the federalism system after independence escalated the land question in Laikipia Area. It was widely expected that the colonial regime would return back land to the Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek, Tugen, Pokot, Ndorobo, Somali and Turkana but instead land was commercialized. As a result, the land question was created because land was a critical factor of production Laikipia for both herders and crop farmers.

The land buy-out policy adopted by the post-colonial regime in Kenya created the land question in Laikipia Area. The policy led to the settling of Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii instead of Samburu, Pokot, Maasai, Somali and Ogiek as was widely held. The preceding created the land question that persists to this day. This was because the

Samburu, Pokot, Maasai, Ndorobo, Somali and Ogiek wanted to exploit land as a factor of production as grazing fields in their pastoralism economic substructure. This was in line with the tenet of articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

Land left vacant by those who acquired land through the land buy out policy in 1960's and 1970's and fled or left the land undeveloped because of insecurity contributed to the land question in Laikipia Area . Nilotic herders who ancestrally laid claim to this land squat on these empty swathes of land as land owners remain unknown this led to the creation of land question. These illegal settlements by the pastoralist were as a result of the essentiality of land as a factor of production in the pastoralism modes of production.

The next chapter developed from the preceding and examined inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia Area since 1895. It was based on sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts between herders and cereal agriculturalists mobilised along their ethnic identities.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT TRENDS IN LAIKIPIA AREA SINCE 1895

4.1 Overview

This chapter examines how sporadic inter-ethnic relations trends in Laikipia Area during the pre-colonial and colonial era among herders and cereal agriculturalist from an ethnocentrism perspective affected inter-ethnic trends. It also explores inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia Area Since 1895. It advances the view that inter-ethnic conflicts in a broad-based perspective were expressed through the manipulation of the aspects of ethnic homogeneities by the conflict actors. Aspects like language, symbols, traditional institution of moranism, migration and settlement were reasons for ethnic mobilisation in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

4.2 Background of Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since the Pre-colonial Era

Conflict as previously stated was described as a misunderstanding between two or more people over an issue or issues that had the like hood of bringing disparity, hostility and fighting among them.⁸²⁷ This study emphasized that inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area were an expression of desire to protest against marginalization as a form of social change. However, the violence involved was unjustified and culpable to criminal prosecution. Inter-ethnic conflicts among the pastoralists and farmers stemmed from marginalization, institutional failure leading to land grabbing, political machination and inability by the post-colonial regimes to solve

⁸²⁷Tara Bahadur Thapa. Impact of conflict on Teaching learning process in schools. In *Academic voices; A multi-disciplinary journal*, ISSN 091-1106, volume 5, No. 1, 2015. p. 73.

the land question with finality.⁸²⁸ As a result of the resultant, cleavages conflict actors manipulated ethnic identities like language, symbols, traditional institution like moranism, migration and settlement to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Ethnic groups were rallied on ethnocentrism grounds to violently take arms against different ethnic groups by conflict actors since 1895.

The nature of most inter-ethnic conflicts since 1895 emanated from scarcity of natural resources which was worsened by prolonged droughts.⁸²⁹ This study affirmed that the conflicts in Laikipia were further aggravated by political incitement, underlying historical land issues, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, limited natural resources, rise in population, rigid nature of pastoralists to adopt other sources of livelihoods and cultural stereotypes.

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992 often recurred in the areas of Rumuruti, Ng'arua, Marmanet, Sipili, Ol Moran and Mukogodo divisions.⁸³⁰ Access to natural resources like land which was a factor of production in Laikipia Area remained an age-old major cause of most conflicts world over.⁸³¹ Land as a factor of production for both herders and crop farmers was at the centre of these conflicts mostly expressed in the inter-ethnic dimensions.⁸³² This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. Conflict actors mobilised ethnic groups along their ethnic identities to violent fight over the control of land in the area. These were mostly politicians who took advantage of the electoral

⁸²⁸Jennifer Bond. A holistic approach to natural resource conflicts: The case of Laikipia Kenya. In a *journal of Rural Studies*; 2014, p. 121.

⁸²⁹Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia interviewed in Rumuruti on 18th August, 2023.

⁸³⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 79.

⁸³¹Jon Barnett, Destabilising the environment – conflict thesis . In *British International studies association; Review of international studies*; 2000, p. 272.

⁸³²Oral interview, Richard Ng'ole, interviewed in Kirimon on 16th August, 2023.

cycle to incite to violence their ethnic groups along ethnic lines. A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki gave more details on this that:

Almost around the election period in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2017 and 2021 politicians weaponised a range of issues along ethnic lines to rally their ethnic groups against others. This was always their wider strategy to galvanize their ethnic vote for their political gain. Incidences of politicians peddling small arms and light weapons in the area were noted. Politicians were also viewed as guardians of the ethnic interests making them agents of peace or inter-ethnic conflicts.⁸³³

From the foregoing discussion, this study held that politicians were the major actors in inter-ethnic conflicts since 1992. Politicians took advantage of the electoral cycle to manipulate ethnic identities to their advantage in the pretext of guarding their ethnic interests. The study also established that in some incidences politicians were responsible for the peddling of small arms and light weapons which encouraged inter-ethnic attacks and counter attacks. An oral account elaborated further that this weaponization of ethnicity for political expediencies was a colonial legacy across Africa and the rest of the developing countries in the global south.⁸³⁴

The colonial regime 1895-1963 exploited inter-ethnic identities among the ethnic groups in Africa as a divide and rule strategy to sustain their exploitation of natural resources in Africa. Be it as it may, most of the political entities in the post-independent nation states in Africa were products of political mobilisation along ethnic identities to create ethno-geopolitical spaces.⁸³⁵ These ethnic groups rallied together in their quest for their independence of Africa from the chains of colonialism even though these ethnic differences soon emerged after independence.

⁸³³ Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁸³⁴ Oral interview, Francis Wambua – Laikipia Branch chairman of the Kenya Red Cross society (KRCS), interviewed in Rumuruti on 23rd August, 2023.

⁸³⁵ Burnell P. Randall and Rankner L., *Op. Cit.*, p.139.

This study further established that inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia were not entirely inclined to electoral violence every election cycle. These clashes also involved pastoralists and crop cultivators every often and they were more severe during the dry spell between January and April. Besides clashes over the control of land as grazing field and water points by both crop farmers and agriculturalist ranches leasing also contributed to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County. An elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol expounded on this that:

Grazing leases remained one of the issues fueling the clashes. Ranchers who recently allowed pastoralists to graze on the ranches and conservancies were accused of favouritism. Maasai claimed that ranchers favoured distant Turkana over them regarding grazing leases in ranches and conservancies.⁸³⁶



Plate 2: A section of an elders farmers' group discussion in Dol Dol showing the researcher the Maasai group ranches invaded by the Samburu in Mukogodo conflicts

Basing on this information this study established that inter-ethnic conflicts arose from the ethnic rivalry over ranch leasing. Ranchers favoured the Turkana over the

⁸³⁶Oral interview, an elders focused group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

Maasai and Samburu provoking conflicts mobilisation along ethnic identities in the contestation over land as a factor of production.

The media which was widely held as a potent tool in the unification of ethnic groups and exposing of the rot and injustices contributed to the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992.⁸³⁷ Local media stations that reported in the local dialects were used to inflame conflicts along ethnic identities in Laikipia. This study held that this development negated the media sanity and professionalism as a voice of social justice and inter-ethnic cohesion in the modern society.

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons in northern Kenya had a ripple effect in the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992.⁸³⁸ This study held that actors in the inter-ethnic conflicts i armed their ethnic groups along their ethnic identities to attack or counter members of other ethnic groups on the basis of ethnic solidarity. This study established that the peddling of small arms and light weapons went on without the intervention of the security agencies. In some incidences, security personnel were compromised by criminal elements to sell them fire arms and ammunition or to allow the ferrying of these weapons through the police road blocks and checks.

This study affirmed that inter-ethnic conflicts were expressed since 1992. As previously asserted, these inter-ethnic conflicts arose from the manipulation of ethnic identities like language, origin, migration and settlement, culture and symbols in the common pursuit of a collective goal by the ethnic group involved. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

⁸³⁷Warurii Fredrick., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 89-94

⁸³⁸John Kamau. People, power and politics. *Sunday Nation* February 19, 2023.

4.2.1 Inter-ethnic Cross-border Conflicts in Laikipia Area up to 1895

Inter-ethnic cross border conflicts in Laikipia Area during the pre-colonial era arose from conflicts of migration and settlement.⁸³⁹ This study established that the earliest groups to settle in Laikipia were the Yakku and Ndigiri who lived in the area surviving of hunting and gathering. Another ethnic group known as the Wardeia arrived into the area migrating from Ethiopia. In shedding more light on these, an elders' focus group discussion in Ol Moran explained that:

Wardeia was a Cushitic ethnic group from Ethiopia that arrived in Laikipia Area after the Yakku. Initially, this settlement led to territorial conflicts with the Yakku and Ndigiri but later the Yakku were assimilated and adopted the Wardeia language. This language and the people still existed in Laikipia North even if they were absorbed as the Maasai sub-ethnic groups.⁸⁴⁰

From the foregoing this study held that the conflicts between the Wardeia Darya, Ndigiri and Yakku were the earliest forms of inter-ethnic cross border conflicts in Laikipia Area. This was an ethno-territorial arising from diversity in cultures, origin and beliefs between these groups. This study further avowed that like other pre-colonial societies, these ethnic groups interacted during the peacetime and leading to the cross fertilisation of cultures. As consequence of this, the Yakku adopted the Wardeia Darya language which was not originally their language. Besides the language, this study recognised that the Wardeia Darya spread the culture of circumcision and age set system among the Yakku and the Ndigiri in Laikipia Area.⁸⁴¹

⁸³⁹Oral interview, Daniel Kimalelel, interviewed in Dol Dol 16th August, 2023.

⁸⁴⁰Oral interview of a farmers focus group discussion in Ol Moran interviewed on 26th August, 2023.

⁸⁴¹ *Ibid*

In 1790 the Maa speaking groups migrated and settled in Laikipia Area.⁸⁴² This was in line with the occupational concept advanced by Betwell Ogot postulating that food gatherers and hunting ethnic groups were the foremost groups to inhabit the East African region.⁸⁴³ In this line of thought, being more advanced and organised, the Maa group – the Maasai and Samburu – effortlessly displaced and assimilated the Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya. This study established that before the Yakku were assimilated as one of the Maasai clans, they engaged the Maasai in territorial conflicts in the pre-colonial era.⁸⁴⁴ It was therefore the position of this study that the emergence of the Maa group in Laikipia was as a result of the ethno-territorial conflict in the Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya. These ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities to contest for an ethno-territorial space in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. A political leaders' focus groups discussion added that:

The migration of the Maasai and Samburu into Laikipia Area encountered the Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya who had already peopled this area. Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya tried to resist their occupation of the area because they hunted and gathered in this area for their survival. Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya resistance could not stop the more powerful Maasai and Samburu who wielded more power and were more armed than Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya.

⁸⁴²Jacqueline Wanjiku, Isaac Tarus and Dorothy Nyakwaka. Pastoralism and the struggle for survival in Laikipia. *International Journal of Geo-politics and Governance*. (2) 1, p. 4.

⁸⁴³Betwell Ogot., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 102.

⁸⁴⁴Oral interview, Adoket Benjamin, interviewed in Tigithi on 15th August, 2023.

From the preceding arguments, the Maasai and Samburu were not the first ethnic groups to settle in Laikipia Area. To maintain foot hold of land as a factor of production in the pastoralism modes of production they had to displace and assimilate the Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya. This was the earliest ethno-territorial cross-border conflicts mobilised along ethnic identities during the pre-colonial period.

The ethnic Maasai and Samburu settlements were not without an ethno-territorial challenge from the Pokot.⁸⁴⁵ Due to overpopulation, famine and epidemics in their present settlements the Pokot wanted to settle in Laikipia Area around 1850. However, their settlement into the area was met with resistance from the Maasai who were mobilised along their ethnic identities to protect Laikipia as their ethno-territory.⁸⁴⁶ This was a tenet on the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. This study as result held that the mobilisation of the ethnic Maasai to prevent Pokot settlement along their ethnic identities was because they wanted land as their factor of production. Both ethnic groups were pre-dominant pastoralists who were interested with land in Laikipia as grazing fields in their pre-capitalist pastoralism modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. The culture of circumcision and age set system supplied both the Pokot and Maasai with warriors who defended their groups along ethnic lines.

⁸⁴⁵ Bolling M. An Outline of pre-colonial Pokot history. *Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere: Schriftenreihe des Kolner instutus fur Africanistik*, (ISSN 0178-725X). p. 75.

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid*

4.2.2 Inter-ethnic Relations during the Colonial Era 1895-1963

During the colonial era, frequent conflicts were experienced between the ethnic Agikuyu and Maasai in Rumuruti before Maasai were relocated to Loita area.⁸⁴⁷ A Kikuyu market was established in Rumuruti to avoid their frequent conflicts with the Maasai. Maasai complained that Kikuyu were fond of stealing their stock, while Kikuyu claimed Maasai frequently stole their farm products. To avoid these inter-ethnic conflicts between the Kikuyu and Maasai to escalate into full blown conflict, the colonial administration restricted the Agikuyu movements into Laikipia through obtaining travel permit from Rumuruti.⁸⁴⁸ A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti expounded that:

The feeling among the Maasai was that the colonial regime was creating an avenue for the Agikuyu to impinge Maasai ancestral land. They felt that the colonial regime was acted as a protection for the Maasai settlement in Rumuruti. The Agikuyu settlement in the area was also a threat to their grazing space which was critical in their pastoralism modes of production.⁸⁴⁹

Based on this information, it was the position of this study that inter-ethnic conflicts between the ethnic Maasai and Agikuyu during the early days of colonialism in Kenya were ethno-territorial contest. The Maasai wanted their ethno-territorial space which was the crucial factor of production in Rumuruti from the Agikuyu settlements.

Inter-ethnic conflicts later emerged during the decolonisation days. These conflicts were expressed through political activities in the area. Kenya African Union organised a rally in June 1952 in Laikipia Area that had remarkable bearing on the

⁸⁴⁷KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1, retrieve on 27/7/2023.

⁸⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁹Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

Kikuyu attitude toward the colonial regime and their continued provision of labour to European settlers' farms in the region.⁸⁵⁰ This study established Kenya African Union ignited political consciousness among the ethnic Agikuyu and ignited an ethnic nationalism among them against colonialism along their ethnic identity. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. As a result of the Kenya African Union radicalisation, the Kikuyu formed the Mau Mau militia during the colonial period for socio-political and economic expediency.⁸⁵¹ An elders' focus group discussion in Dol Dol explained further that:

In Laikipia Area, Mau Mau operatives recruited members and indoctrinated them through oathing. This was ostensibly to break both the Christian and ethnic barriers that were supposedly a major hindrance to African unity and subsequent nationalism. The ethnic Agikuyu mostly identified with Mau Mau as an ethnic uprising against the colonial authorities. This sense of entitlement put them at logger heads with the ethnic Kalenjins in Laikipia County.⁸⁵²

This study, thus, held that the ethnic Agikuyu identified with the activities of Mau Mau as their uprising against the colonial regime. This was particularly because the origin of Mau Mau was largely in central Kenya an area that suffered land alienation during that period. The ethnic Agikuyu identified with Mau Mau along their ethnic identities as a protest against colonial maladministration. The Agikuyu pride and sense of entitlement as the African ethnic group leading anti-colonial crusade escalated animosity between and the Kalenjin ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti shed more light on this that the ethnic' Kalenjin accused the Agikuyu for claiming to evict the European settlers in

⁸⁵⁰KNADS/ DC/LKA/1/3 / *Annual report 1952, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁸⁵¹KNADS/*Annual report 1952, Laikipia District /DC/LKA/1/4* retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁸⁵²Oral interview, an elders focused group discussion in Dol Dol interviewed on 16th August, 2023.

Laikipia when Laikipia was ancestrally not their ethno-territory.⁸⁵³ Be it as it may, Mau Mau activities escalated during this decolonisation period. They targeted European settlers; they invaded and left a trail of destruction on these farms.

Mau Mau operatives attacked, vandalised and plundered the farm owned by H.M.N Fogg, other similar raids occurred at Deighton Downs.⁸⁵⁴ The same group threatened Kikuyu labourers offering labour on European farms with dire consequences and commanded them to abandon them.⁸⁵⁵ They also embarked on an elimination operation for those considered to be witnesses in the case against Mau Mau, in 1952 a witness was murdered in cold blood. To contain further flare up of the Mau Mau skirmishes, a curfew was imposed in Ol Joro Orok, Marmanet and Narok wards.⁸⁵⁶ From the foregoing, this study held that the ethnic Agikuyu were rallied along their ethnic identities to join Mau Mau as an uprising against the European settlers land holding in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Agikuyu activities under Mau Mau threatened other African ethnic groups in Laikipia who viewed the Agikuyu as a threat to their ethno-territorial space. By this time, the population of the Agikuyu in Laikipia County was huge resulting from their presence in the area as labourers on European settler farms.

As Mau Mau activities heightened in Laikipia, colonial African agents most colonial chiefs tried to reverse the gains made by Mau Mau among the Africans. Senior colonial Chiefs Waruhiu and Nderi organised anti-Mau Mau rallies in Rumuruti to counter rising MAU MAU popularity in the region. The colonial government conceived a military action to neutralise the Mau Mau menace in region that

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁶ KNADS/ Annual report 1952, Laikipia District, DC/LKA/1/3 retrieved on 27/06/2023.

threatened to paralyse colonial operations including the European settler farming in the region.⁸⁵⁷ Operation Jock Scott was therefore launched to weed out Mau Mau operatives.

The arrest of Mau Mau leaders in 1952 inflamed the insurrection further, more Europeans homes and farms were attacked by persons believed to be adherents of Mau Mau.⁸⁵⁸ On 22nd November, 1952 Meikles John Commander was killed and wife almost murdered.⁸⁵⁹ In 1953 Mau Mau activities flared up in Laikipia County, Mau Mau thrived on intimidation and bullying native Africans to give vital information regarding the activities of the colonial authorities and those native Africans deemed to be white settlers and colonial regime collaborators.⁸⁶⁰ Mau Mau operatives majorly of the Kikuyu descent operated from the Aberdares and Mount Kenya forested areas from where they rained havoc in the entire region including. Information from Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services shed more light on this that:

The Kikuyu is endeavouring to set up a new form of society with Mau Mau oath. Women may not have inter-course with men who have not taken the oath and vice versa. Mau Mau should not talk or eat with non-Mau Mau who are called uncircumcised ones or unclean persons. Persons who are known to be anti-Mau Mau are ostracized and threatened and every means is being used to bring them over to Mau Mau.⁸⁶¹

From this observation, the study reiterated that the ethnic Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic identities by anti-colonial actors in central Kenya and by extension Laikipia County to protest European settlement. Aspects like traditional Agikuyu oathing rituals, language, symbols and beliefs were manipulated by the Mau Mau

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁰ KNADS,DC/LKA/1/4, 1953, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁶¹ KNADS,DC/LKA/1/4, Annual 1953, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

operatives to rally the ethnic Agikuyu against colonialism. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The activities by the Agikuyu and their numbers send feelings of discomfort among other African ethnic groups who were gripped with the feelings of marginalisation by the ethnic Agikuyu.

Anti-colonial campaign divided Africans in Laikipia County between those who supported Mau Mau and those who were against Mau Mau activities and campaign. The year 1954 saw intensified clashes between Africans deemed to be collaborators of European settlers and those who were resisting in support of Mau Mau or had been recruited as militants by the illegal group.⁸⁶² These incidents were attributed to the rise of marauding Mau Mau operatives in Laikipia Area the previous year, 1953. The colonial authorities resorted to launching operation hammer the following year 1955 to be able to decisively crush Mau Mau related insurgence in the study area.⁸⁶³ This study affirmed the division among Africans during the Mau Mau days were not based on ethnic lines although this was not the objective of this study. The division were based on Africans who viewed labour services on European farms as an economic avenue for progress and those who viewed this practice as a form of exploitation. A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti reiterated that:

Kenya African Union Political leaders together with educated Africans in Laikipia Area across the ethnic divide, spread the idea of African unity through Mau Mau. Even if, other ethnic groups viewed Mau Mau as a Agikuyu uprising they joined Mau Mau or subtly supported its agenda. The divisions that existed were between Mau Mau loyalist and those deemed to be traitors.⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁶²KNADS/, *Annual report 1954, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁸⁶³*Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁴Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

This study as previously stated, reiterated that although Africans were mostly divided between Mau Mau loyalist and traitors, other ethnic groups viewed Mau Mau as a Kikuyu uprising. Mostly the ethnic Kalenjin developed cold relations and suspicion with the Agikuyu activities.

In 1955, several Mau Mau activities were reported as were conflicts between loyal Kikuyu who were anti-Mau Mau and Mau Mau operatives.⁸⁶⁵ Mau Mau uprising appeared like an ethnic Agikuyu insurrection.⁸⁶⁶ The uprising divided Agikuyu ethnic group into moderates and rebels. Moderates fought alongside the European settlers against the rebels.⁸⁶⁷ During the dreadful days of the emergency, these moderates grabbed rebels land with the blessing of colonial government as rebels were in the hide outs in Aberdares and Mount Kenya fighting the colonial regime.

In Ol Joro Orok, on European farms, loyal Kikuyu labourers and the European settlers killed six *terrorists* confirmed to be members of the Mau Mau gang on their own initiatives. An indication that there were Agikuyu and other African labourers on European settler farms in Laikipia District who vehemently opposed the activities of Mau Mau and its objective to displace European settlers from alienated land in Laikipia County. In the same year, a plot to return the ethnic Kikuyu to the reserve was completed, but still there was a labour shortage on the settler farms after many Kikuyu had moved away at the height of Mau Mau screening.⁸⁶⁸ Most of the residents living and working in Laikipia County in 1955 supported the colonial government's stringent measures to contain Mau Mau, including Africans on

⁸⁶⁵KNADS/ DC/LKA/1/3, *Annual report 1955, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023

⁸⁶⁶Robert Maxon., *Op. Cit.*, p. 253.

⁸⁶⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁸*Ibid.*

European settler farms.⁸⁶⁹ There was also a notable support for the United Country Party as compared to the Federal Independence Party in the area in 1955.

African unrests were also reported on settler farms in Laikipia in 1956, the Kipsigis and Nandi were revolting against the colonial regime.⁸⁷⁰ No major Mau Mau violence was witnessed in 1957, however there were incidences of Nandi unrest but they were contained before they escalated into full blown crises by the colonial authorities. In that same year, Mr Cyril Norman, a veterinary livestock officer at Rumuruti was murdered.⁸⁷¹ This study established that the need by the ethnic Kalenjin to mobilise along their ethnic identities against the colonial regime was a reactionary move against Mau Mau which was largely viewed as an ethnic Kikuyu cause. This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The ethnic Kalenjin were therefore mobilised along their language, symbols, beliefs, origin and migration based on their oral tradition in the manifestation of their anti-European settlement in Laikipia Area.

The rise of Mau Mau insurrection at the height of the decolonisation days left many European settlers in the region counting losses.⁸⁷² To make their demands known and addressed by the colonial government, Mau Mau sympathizers resorted to an arson spree. They razed down crops on settler farms as a way of expressing their frustration to the colonial regime besides demanding for independence and the unconditional return of their alienated land.⁸⁷³ As previously stated, this study affirmed that the activities of Mau Mau militia threatened the labour supply on the settler farms; workers were either targeted or heeded militia orders to boycott providing labour

⁸⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁰KNADS/, *Annual report 1956, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁸⁷¹KNADS/, *Annual report 1957, Laikipia District*, retrieved on 27/06/2023.

⁸⁷²KNADS/ *Manpower, list of reservists 1953*, AH/19/98, Retrieved on 26/6/2023.

⁸⁷³*Ibid*

services on settler farms. As a result police protection was necessary to protect both lives and property on these largely deserted farms. In most cases, Africans were mobilised along their ethnic identities in the expression of the anti-European settlement.

By 1958, Mau Mau operative activities were never reported outside the Aberdare and Mount Kenya forest.⁸⁷⁴ Their activities were limited in those forested areas which largely served as their hideouts and military base throughout the insurrection period. Within that same year, there was a colonial government operation dubbed Guinea fowl carried out to weed out *Kiama kia Muingi* in Laikipia Area. In the run up to independence, European settlers were inclined to the idea of a multi-racial Kenyan society as a post-colonial national political philosophy.⁸⁷⁵ It was for this reason that the New Kenya Group that propagated this ideology remained the most popular political outfit among European settlers in Laikipia Area y on the verge of independence in Kenya.⁸⁷⁶ But, a peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki explained further on this that:

Even if European settlers were involved in the Kenyan politics towards in the late 1950's, they were highly concerned about the next direction of the political situation in Kenya. Most of them were contemplating or arranging to leave the country with the growing African freedom. African unrests on European settlers farms in Laikipia also contributed their growing fear and anticipation to leave the country. But, the New Kenya Group was largely supported by European settlers in Laikipia Area.⁸⁷⁷

This study recognized that European settlers were interested in supporting the New Kenya group because it supported land holding rights for the European settlers.

⁸⁷⁴KNADS, Annual 1953, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁷⁵KNADS, annual report 1959 , accessed on 29th June, 2023.

⁸⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁷Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

However, the events of Mau Mau got both the European settlers and the colonial government worried. European settlers mostly Boers and British nationals were unsure of their future land holding rights in the independent Kenya. As a result, they started contemplating disposing off their land and leaving the country for their safety.

Unrest in Laikipia Area continued even after the state of emergency was lifted in 1959. In 1961, an ethnic rag tag believed to belong to the Agikuyu was hugely linked with rampant insecurity and thuggery.⁸⁷⁸ That same year, members of the Kikuyu Welfare Association were arrested and incarcerated by the colonial authorities for running an illegal court against the colonial laws in Kenya.⁸⁷⁹ The mobilisation of ethnic Agikuyu in Laikipia through Mau Mau against European settlers was invoked by the colonial land alienation and political marginalisation. As previously explicated the ethnic Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic identities through the manipulation of aspects like language, traditional oaths and beliefs in the manifestation of Mau Mau violence against European settlement. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The Kikuyu who formed the bulk of the colonial labourers made claims that invoked inter-ethnic land consciousness in Laikipia Area at the height of Kenya African Union and Mau Mau activities in the area.⁸⁸⁰ Claims that all the highlands belonged to the Kikuyu were not well received by the non-Kikuyu communities in Laikipia District especially the Kalenjin groups. In the run up to independence in Kenya, animosity between Kikuyu and Kalenjin flared up at the height of the 1961 elections.⁸⁸¹ The ethnic animosity between the Agikuyu and Kalenjin were

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁰ KNADS/ *Annual report, Laikipia District 1951* / DC/LKA/1/2.

⁸⁸¹ KNADS, DC/LKA/1/1/11, annual report 1960, retrieved on 26th June, 2023.

manipulated for political expedience.⁸⁸² As a result of these escalating tensions during the colonial era, the Kalenjin living in Laikipia Area requested to be allowed to carry arms particularly in Leshau/Ndaragua area.⁸⁸³ This study maintained that both the ethnic Kalenjin and Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic lines to defend land holding rights in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. A political leaders' focus group discussion in Rumuruti explicated further on this that:

The assertion made by the ethnic Agikuyu toward independence that all land in the Kenyan highlands belonged to them angered the ethnic Kalenjin in Laikipia Area. The statement was interpreted to mean that they were laying claim on land holding. The result was inter-ethnic heightened tensions between the ethnic Agikuyu and Kalenjin.⁸⁸⁴

It was, thus, the position of this study as earlier reiterated that both the ethnic Agikuyu and Kalenjin were mobilised along their ethnic identities to defend their land holdings rights in Laikipia. The ethnic Kalenjin in particular were ready to take their arms against the ethnic Agikuyu in order to defend land as their ethnic territory. This was based on the Kalenjin oral traditions and legends that pointed that Laikipia was their ethno-territory during the pre-colonial era. These oral tradition and legends were manipulated by conflict actors to rally the ethnic Kalenjin to defend their land holding rights in Laikipia Area.

⁸⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸⁸³KNADS,DC/LKA/1/1, 1961, accessed on 27th June, 2023.

⁸⁸⁴Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

4.2.3 Inter-ethnic Relations during Jomo Kenyatta Era 1963-1978 in Laikipia Area

President Jomo Kenyatta took over power in 1963 immediately after independence until he died in 1978. During this period the ethnic Agikuyu through GEMA took loans to acquire land in Laikipia through companies in 1960's and 1970's.⁸⁸⁵ They took advantage of the land buy out policy adopted by Jomo Kenyatta regime to acquire their commercial land holding rights in Laikipia Area. In this Jomo Kenyatta era also, it was alleged that the GEMA made alliance with the Ngoroko militia group in northern Kenya to scare the ethnic Kalenjin and assure the Agikuyu land holding rights in the defunct Rift Valley province in Kenya including Laikipia Area.⁸⁸⁶

4.2.4 Inter-ethnic Relations during President Daniel Arap Moi Era 1978-2002

President Daniel Arap Moi era started in 1978 after he succeeded President Jomo Kenyatta; it heralded another era of intensified inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The electoral cycle envisioned in our constitution became an avenue for the opportunistic politicians to incite one ethnic group against another.⁸⁸⁷ Inter-ethnic conflicts became predictable before or after the electioneering period. In most cases, pastoralist were incited to illegally graze on private lands, ranches and conservancies to gain political capital at the expense of trails of human carnage and blatant destruction of property. Daniel Arap Moi era exposed ethnic Agikuyu and other Bantu groups to the Nilotic pastoralist attacks and displacements. This was made worse because of the political differences between Hon Dixon Kihika Kimani and the then

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid*

⁸⁸⁶ Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p.12-25.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

President Daniel Arap Moi.⁸⁸⁸ A political focus group discussion in Rumuruti elucidated more on this that:

The electioneering period in Laikipia Area between 1992 and 2022 during the President Daniel Arap Moi era experienced inter-ethnic conflicts and tensions. During the 1992 inter-ethnic clashes the ethnic Agikuyu were majorly evicted from their homes by the Maasai, Samburu and Pokot. The government responded by deploying more police officers in the area. The same clashes recurred before and after the 1997 General elections with the ethnic Agikuyu bearing the blunt of evictions.⁸⁸⁹

It was, hence, understood by this study that the conflict actors weaponised aspects of ethnic identities during the electioneering period to influence inter-ethnic clashes in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The ethnic Agikuyu were evicted from their homes on the basis of their language, beliefs, symbols, migration and settlement patterns.

It was noted that the Kenya African National Union used an informal elite group known as Youth for KANU (yk92) to carry out repressive activities against the perceived opposition regions after section 2A of the Kenyan constitution was repealed.⁸⁹⁰ The logic behind the formation of this group of youth was to ensure Kenya African National Union retained power in the general elections in 1992. The results of these activities were widespread inter-ethnic conflicts and the culture of post-election violence was formally entrenched in our electoral cycle. This study held that aspects of ethnic identities like language, symbols, legends, beliefs, migration and settlement patterns were exploited in the manifestation of inter-ethnic conflicts for political expedience in 1992 and 1997.

⁸⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁸⁸⁹Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁸⁹⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.

The 1997 and 1998 inter-ethnic conflicts were experienced in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Marmanet, Sipili and Ng'arua. The Pokot, Maasai and Samburu were mobilised on the basis of their ethnic identities to evict the Agikuyu and Kisii from their homes. Ol Moran was a very volatile area in 1997 and 1998 inter-ethnic conflict involving ethnic Pokot and Gikuyu.⁸⁹¹ Lives were; the main problem was a contest over a boundary and fight over water resources. The Pokot alleged that the Kikuyu intruded to their territory because the Pokot still held that land was communal. Gikuyu were forced to flee from their homes in the ensuing clashes; those who fled never returned.⁸⁹² A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki affirmed that:

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Ol Moran in 1997 were intense. Visibly agitated Pokot targeted ethnic Kisii and Agikuyu in the area. They forcefully drove their herds of animals on their private lands, burnt their homes and evicted them.⁸⁹³

This study as stated affirmed that the conflict actors manipulated aspects of ethnic identities among the Pokot like language, beliefs, legends, migration and settlement to incite them against the Kisii and Agikuyu. This was based on the tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In 1998, inter-ethnic conflicts were witnessed between ethnic Samburu and Agikuyu in Rumuruti. Political leaders focus groups discussion in Rumuruti affirmed that the Samburu organised along their ethnic identities attacked ethnic Agikuyu and torched their houses.⁸⁹⁴ The mobilisation of the ethnic Pokot along their ethnicity in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts against the Agikuyu was as a result of the manipulation of aspects of ethnic identities like beliefs, origin and migration rallied

⁸⁹¹Oral interview, Steve Biko Ochieng, Acc 3 - DCC Office, Kirima Sub- County, interviewed in Ol Moran on 18th August, 2023.

⁸⁹²*Ibid.*

⁸⁹³Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁸⁹⁴Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

the Pokot together in their ethnic offensive against the ethnic Agikuyu. As a result of these spates of inter-ethnic conflicts, the ethnic Agikuyu were forced to form Mungiki along their ethnic lines to protect themselves against inter-ethnic attacks from the Samburu and Pokot in Laikipia Area.

The 1999-2000 inter-ethnic conflicts in Ol Moran pitted the Pokot and Samburu; Pokot felt the Samburu had impinged on their ancestral land as they fought for water and pasture for their livestock.⁸⁹⁵ This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Samburu invaded in government security attires in what was obviously a camouflage attack. The Pokot took arms almost immediately and the rest was a vicious inter-ethnic conflict in Ol Moran. It was so tragic that casualties were many. A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki avowed that:

In the 1999-2000 inter-ethnic conflicts the Samburu and Pokot clashes were witnessed in Ol Moran. The Pokot were the first to attack Samburu settlements in the area. They were heavily armed with reports indicating that they acquired fire arms from Southern Sudan. The attacks lasted for months with both groups attacking and counter attacked each other.⁸⁹⁶

From the preceding observations, this study maintained that inter-ethnic conflicts in Ol Moran between the Pokot and Samburu were on the basis of their ethnic identities. Conflicts actors manipulated ethnic identity aspects like language, beliefs, legends, origin and settlement patterns to incite the Pokot against the Samburu. In their retaliation attacks the Samburu were driven by the need to defend their ethno-territory along the ethnocentrism and ethnic pride. Their institutions of moranism became their lines of ethnic defense as each community took pride in these cultural institutions of ethnic defense reinforced by age set systems.

⁸⁹⁵Oral interview, Steve Biko Ochieng, Acc 3 - DCC Office, Kirima Sub- County, interviewed in Ol Moran on 18th August, 2023.

⁸⁹⁶Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

4.2.5 Inter-ethnic Conflicts during President Mwai Kibaki Era 2013-2017

President Mwai Kibaki came to power in 2002 after a euphoric win that ended Kenya National African Union forty years rule in Kenya. Kenyans across the ethnic divide were optimistic of socio-economic inclusion. However, the *Mungiki* related atrocities which were felt in Laikipia Area since the President Daniel Arap Moi era continued during the Mwai Kibaki era.⁸⁹⁷ The sect or militia group rose from years of political and economic sidelining of the ethnic Agikuyu 1990's. It was also formed on the idea of protecting the ethnic Agikuyu from frequent attacks from the Samburu and Pokot in Laikipia Area.

Mungiki carried out violent activities in Rumuruti divisions. The Mwai Kibaki regime had risen to power with sharp criticism of the Moi regime.⁸⁹⁸ However, soon the Mwai Kibaki regime was blamed for the same tricks explored by the Moi regime. It was also widely believed among the Samburu, Maasai and Pokot that the Kibaki regime protected the interests the ethnic Agikuyu in Laikipia Area .⁸⁹⁹ *Mungiki* gained strength and even introduced a tax system during this regime that most Kenyan hoped would solve endemic inter-ethnic conflicts Government complicity was widely conceived and associated with safeguarding the interests of the Agikuyu ethnic groups. The Samburu, Maasai and Pokot accused the Kibaki regime for failing to solve the underlying issues and instead subtly supported *Mungiki* activities in Laikipia Area.⁹⁰⁰

A political leaders focused group discussion in Rumuruti elaborated more on this that:

Having felt protected by the Daniel Moi regime, the Pokot, Samburu and Maasai accused the Mwai Kibaki regime of protecting the ethnic Agikuyu and *Mungiki*. *Mungiki* operations were restricted to Rumuruti,

⁸⁹⁷Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 70.

⁸⁹⁸Oral interview, Seremetitei Leterimoriti, interviewed in Segera on 12th August, 2023.

⁸⁹⁹Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 70.

⁹⁰⁰Oral interview, Wilfred Kariuki, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

Ng'arua, Sipili and Marmanet. They targeted Samburu, Maasai, Pokot and Turkana settlements in those areas.⁹⁰¹

This study affirmed that the ethnic Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic identities to form *Mungiki* in order to protect their interest in Laikipia Area. Aspects of Agikuyu ethnic identities like language and traditional oathing rituals were manipulated by conflicts actors to rally the ethnic Agikuyu to form *Mungiki*. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The presidential elections in Kenya in 2007 were hotly contested as political alignments in took ethnic lines. Every faction meant socio-political and economic advantage of one ethnic group over another.⁹⁰² In Laikipia Area Nilotic pastoralist and Bantu agriculturists were divided between Orange Democratic movement and the Party of Nation Unity.⁹⁰³ Nilotic Pastoralists supported the former while the Bantu the latter, following post-election violence that erupted in 2007/08 inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia escalated.⁹⁰⁴ A political focused group discussion in Rumuruti shed more light on this that:

In the run up to the presidential generation in Laikipia County the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek supported Orange Democratic Movement leader Raila Amolo Odinga. The Kikuyu, Meru and Kisii on their part supported Mwai Kibaki of the party of National Unity. The declaration of Mwai Kibaki re-election as the winner of the presidential elections sparked inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Inter-ethnic clashes were reported in Rumuruti, Sipili, Marmanet, Ol Moran and Ng'arua areas of Laikipia West. Pokot, Turkana, Pokot and

⁹⁰¹Oral interview of a political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁹⁰²Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 75.

⁹⁰³Oral interview, Ekiru Levi, interviewed in Do Dol on 20th August, 2023.

⁹⁰⁴Oral interview, Rachael Kimani, interviewed in Segera on 20th August, 2023.

Tugen targeted the ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru in the ensuing inter-ethnic clashes.⁹⁰⁵

From the foregoing discussion, this study established that the ethnic Pokot, Turkana, Pokot and Tugen targeted the ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru along ethnic identities in 2007 and 2008 inter-ethnic violence that were experienced in Laikipia West. Perpetrators of these inter-ethnic clashes mobilised Pokot, Turkana, Pokot and Tugen along the ethnic lines to attack the Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii in the area. They took advantage of the pre-existing cleavages to incite these ethnic groups along ethnic lines.

⁹⁰⁶ A coalition of the Tugen and Turkana clashed with the ethnic Agikuyu leading to the loss of twenty-five people and more than eight thousand displaced.⁹⁰⁷ This was in line with tenets the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Rumuruti was widely affected by post-election violence in 2007/2008. This was after President Mwai Kibaki was controversially declared re-elected in December 2007.⁹⁰⁸ These Rumuruti spates of violence were politically instigated. The mobilisation along their ethnic identities to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts between the Tugen and Turkana on one hand versus the Agikuyu on the other was in line with ethnocentrism and manipulations of aspects of ethnic identities. The striking of a political deal between Orange Democratic and Party of National Unity deal through the Kofi Annan led mediation and the entrenchment of the National Accord in the national constitution ushered in relative peace in Laikipia Area.⁹⁰⁹ There was a visible sense of belonging and shared prosperity among both the Bantu and pastoralist Nilotes who felt part of government. This was after the Orange Democratic Movement Raila Amolo Odinga

⁹⁰⁵ Oral interview of political leaders focus group discussion in Rumuruti interviewed on 23rd August, 2023.

⁹⁰⁶ Oral interview, Paul Thairu, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

⁹⁰⁷ Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 75.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁹ Oral interview, Delilah Nasieku, interviewed in Nanyuki on 21st August, 2023.

joined the government and became the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya. A peace actors' focus group discussion in Nanyuki explained that:

After a grand coalition government was formed and Raila Amolo Odinga named Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya a wave of opportunism led to relative calm in Laikipia West. The Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek assumed that the coalition government will solve underlying issues in Laikipia Area. Normalcy and peace resumed in the conflicts hot spots areas as victims of inter-ethnic clashes were supported by relevant institutions to recover amid the huge losses incurred.⁹¹⁰

Consequently, this study held that the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek were mobilised along their ethnic lines to vote for Orange Democratic Movement. In the same vein, the Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru were rallied along their ethnic lines to vote for the Party of National Unity. Both ethnic groups were rallied along their ethnic identities to fight for their interests in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Another wave of conflicts in Laikipia Area during the President Mwai Kibaki regime was ranch invasions and illegal herding on private land. Ranch invasions were more common since 2006; pastoralists targeted ranches mostly owned by foreign nationals.⁹¹¹ Besides, they also invaded private lands owned by small land holders especially during the dry spell between January and April from 2006 to 2012. An oral account expounded on this that:

Herders illegally grazed on private farms for small land holders. The human carnage and massive destruction of property that muddle these violent attacks is a clear indication of a hidden cause being pursued by

⁹¹⁰Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁹¹¹Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 32.

pastoralist groups. This trend almost spread in all parts of Laikipia Area.⁹¹²

Thus, this study affirmed that Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek were rallied along their ethnic identities to illegally herd on the Meru, Kisii and Meru private farms. It was a form of protesting underlying issues in Laikipia Area along ethnic lines. This was in line with the tenets of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

4.2.6 Inter-ethnic Conflicts during President Uhuru Kenyatta Era 2018-2022

President Uhuru Kenyatta's tenure as the fourth president of the Republic of Kenya started in 2013 and ended in 2017. Between 2011 and 2017, there were violent clashes between herders and farmers on one hand and herders and ranchers on the other side.⁹¹³ This study confirmed that the violence happened when herders drove their herds into farms, ranches and conservancies between 2006 and 2021. The violent clashes were as a result of the failed rains that resulted into a mad rush for water and grazing resources in the affected areas. The Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek were rallied along their ethnic identities to invade farms belonging to the Kisii, Meru and Agikuyu. They rallied against aspects of ethnic identities of the Kisii, Meru and Agikuyu like language, symbols, beliefs, origin, migration and settlements to invade their private farms. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Another wave of ethnically mobilised attacks on ranches happened within the tenure of President Uhuru Kenyatta. Herders mostly the Pokot, Turkana and Maasai invaded ranches destroying properties and killing European settlers. On 31st March 2017,

⁹¹²Oral interview, Faith Adalet, interviewed in Nyahururu on 18th August, 2023.

⁹¹³*Drought, Violence and politics inside Laikipia's cattle war*, International crisis group, 20th July 2022.

armed ethnic Pokot attacked Mukutan Lodge owned by an Italian national. They brutally murdered the owner Kuki Gallmann and his daughter.⁹¹⁴ In a incidental similarity that month, armed pastoralist invaded Sosian ranch in what seemed like premeditated wave of attacks.⁹¹⁵ They murdered a white manager Tristian Voorspuy in a widely condemned cold murder by the European media.⁹¹⁶ They also set on fire the private lodges in rage. On 29th January 2018, armed pastoralists attacked the Sosian ranch. They raced down the lodges in an ambush attack that lasted two days.⁹¹⁷ This study maintained that the Pokot were mobilised along their ethnic identities to attack ranches by conflict actors. Aspects of ethnic identities like age sets system, beliefs, origin, migration and settlement based on oral tradition were driven to rally them against European ranchers in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In 2021 – herders invaded crop farmers around Marura area. In 2022, the violence took a circumstantial turn; it happened against the backdrop of an unprecedented two year drought, the longest spell in the region’s history.⁹¹⁸ This study held that pastoralists’ conflicts involved the Samburu against the Maasai on one hand and the Samburu against the Pokot on the other. The Turkana were used by either of these protagonist ethnic groups to gain an upper hand on grazing fields. Adverse dry climatic conditions in Isiolo and Samburu Counties forced the pastoral Samburu in this region to invade farms in Laikipia Area in search for water and pasture during the infamous dry spells of between January and April.⁹¹⁹

⁹¹⁴Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 33.

⁹¹⁵Oral interview, Haggai Ewoi, interviewed in Lamuria on 19th August, 2023.

⁹¹⁶Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*,p. 34.

⁹¹⁷Oral interview, Beatrice Gunay, interviewed in Dol Dol on 18th August.

⁹¹⁸Oral interview, Haggai Ewoi, interviewed in Lamuria on 19th August, 2023.

⁹¹⁹Guyo Chepe Tun: Firepower won't restore trust among Kenya's warning Laikipia communities, *Institute for security studies*, 3rs November, 2021.

Ethnic Samburu, Pokot and Maasai were mobilised by conflict actors along their ethnic identities to attack the Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru in 2017, 2018 and 2021. Aspects of ethnic identities like age set system, language and beliefs were manipulated to instigate ethnocentrism among the Pokot, Maasai and Samburu leading to their inter-ethnic clashes. This study further noted that spates of inter-ethnic conflicts around the electioneering period turned into illegal grazing on private land. The ethnic Kisii, Meru and Agikuyu small land holders' crops were invaded and destroyed by large herds of cattle. This was in line with the tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. An informant account shed more light on this that:

Toward the general election in Kenya in 2022, illegal grazing was very rampant in Lamuria, Rumuruti and Segera around the election period in 2022; Samburu came to illegally graze on farms with thousands of cattle, sheep while others hire land. There was propaganda during the election time that Samburu illegal grazers were waiting for Raila Odinga to win the 2022 presidential election then they take over the land in Laikipia Central.⁹²⁰

Basing on the foregoing, this study upheld that illegal herding on Kisii, Agikuyu and Meru were mobilised along ethnic lines. The Pokot, Maasai and Samburu were rallied against their language, beliefs, origin, migration and settlement by conflict actors to invade their private farms.

In 2021, there was a Pokot uprising in Ol Moran, which started with Pokot illegally grazing on Gikuyu and Kisii crops.⁹²¹ The latter felt disrespected and resorted to the clashes as well as protested publicly. Pokot intrusion persisted with the single message of reclaiming their ancestral land unfairly alienated. The clashes emptied in

⁹²⁰Oral interview., Teresa Mukundi, chief Lamuria Location, interviewed in Lamuria on 16th August, 2023.

⁹²¹Oral interview, Eve Nduta, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

a severe measure and the government declared the area disturbed and dangerous.⁹²² The security deployment included Rapid Deployment Unit and Kenya Defense Forces. Army barracks were established at Ngoisosu and Magadi. The deployment also included General Service Unit. Pokot torched houses in Kisii Ndogo and several security officers were killed.⁹²³ From the preceding, this study held that the Pokot were rallied along ethnic lines by conflict actors to attack the Kisii and Agikuyu in Ol Moran. Aspects of the Pokot ethnic identities like age set systems, traditional oathing rituals, language, origin, migration and settlements were manipulated by conflict actors to incite the Pokot against the Kisii and Agikuyu in Ol Moran.

4.2.7 Chapter Summary

Inter-ethnic conflicts were not entirely inclined to electoral violence every election cycle. These clashes also involved pastoralists and crop cultivators every often and they were more severe during the dry spell between January and April since 1992. These crop farmers and herders were mobilised along their ethnic identities by conflict actors in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. Aspects of inter-ethnic identities like oral tradition, beliefs, languages, origin, migration and settlement were manipulated by conflicts actors in trigger inter-ethnic clashes in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory used in this study.

Inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts in Laikipia Area witnessed during the pre-colonial era arose from migration and settlement. Ethnic related violence was also observed at the tail end of colonialism in the years 1957 and 1961. The Moi era ushered in more violent inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992 and 1997. Inter-ethnic conflicts also persisted during the Mwai Kibaki regime in 2007 and 2008 which were largely triggered by

⁹²²Oral interview, Ruth Muthoni, interviewed in Sipili on 20th August, 2023.

⁹²³Oral interview, Joan Haden, interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

post-election violence. The Uhuru Kenyatta regime was also affected with inter-ethnic conflicts in 2017, 2021 and 2022. Inter-ethnic conflicts hot spots included Ol Moran, Mukogodo, Marmanet, Sipili, Ng'arua and Rumuruti. In the expression of these inter-ethnic conflicts, actors in the conflicts manipulated ethnic identities to incite one ethnic group against the other over the pre-existing cleavages. Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen, Ogiek, Kisii, Meru and Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic identities in the expression of this inter-ethnic conflicts. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, beliefs and traditional oathing rituals were manipulated by conflicts actors to rally these ethnic groups against each other. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

During the colonial era, frequent conflicts were experienced between the ethnic Agikuyu and Maasai in Rumuruti before the Maasai were relocated to Loita region. The expression of these inter-ethnic conflicts between the Maasai and Agikuyu was based on ethnocentrism. The Maasai and Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic identities in the expression of these inter-ethnic conflicts. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Ethnocentrism arising from intrusion on the Maasai ethno-territory by the Agikuyu led to the manifestation of these conflicts. Language, ethnic symbols, origin, migration and settlement based on oral tradition were exploited by the conflict actors to rally the ethnic Maasai against the Agikuyu in Rumuruti during the pre-colonial period.

The ethnic Agikuyu mobilised along their ethnic identities in Laikipia to join Mau Mau in 1950's as an entity against European settlement. This mobilisation was invoked by the colonial land alienation and political marginalisation. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, ethnic symbols, beliefs and traditional rituals were

manipulated by conflict actors to rally the ethnic Agikuyu against the European settlers. The Kikuyu-Kalenjins conflicts toward independence in 1961 arose from the colonial activities which favoured the ethnic Agikuyu at the expense of the Kalenjins in Laikipia Area. The ethnic Kalenjin felt marginalized and their interests by the ethnic Agikuyu. They rallied along their language, beliefs, origin and migration based on oral tradition in their expression of violence against ethnic Agikuyu. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The Pokot were rallied along their ethnicity against the ethnic Agikuyu in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in 1997/1998 in Ol moran and Rumuruti. This mobilisation along ethnic identities was orchestrated by politicians and other influential conflicts actors. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Frequently illegal grazing on private farms by herders were mobilised along ethnicity identities. Politicians and conflict actors influenced the ethnic Pokot along their ethnic identity to vote and express violence against the Agikuyu on ethnic lines. Aspects of ethnic identities like the traditional institutions of moranism, language, beliefs and legends were manipulated to rally the Pokot against the Agikuyu.

The ethnic Agikuyu were rallied along ethnic identities through *Mungiki* in 1997 to safe guard their land holding rights in Laikipia Area. The mobilisation along ethnic identities largely fuelled by conflicts actors and geo-politics was to protect their threatened ethnic land holding rights. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, beliefs and traditional oathing rituals were manipulated by conflict actors to mobilise the ethnic Agikuyu to join *Mungiki*. *Mungiki* was formed to fight for the interests of the Agikuyu along their ethnic lines.

Herders were mobilised along ethnic identities to fight over grazing fields and water sources in Mukogodo and Ol Moran in 1992, 1992, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022. This mobilisation along ethnic identities to fight over limited natural resources was driven by ancestral land claims and ethnocentrism. Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen and Ogiek were rallied along their ethnic identities in the manifestation of these inter-ethnic conflicts. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, beliefs and traditional oathing rituals were exploited by conflicts actors to rally Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Ndorobo, Tugen, and Ogiek to invade the Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii.

The Pokot were mobilised along ethnic identities to evict ethnic Agikuyu and Kisii in Ol Moran in 2017, 2018 and 2021. This mobilisation was a form of protesting years of marginalization, changes in land tenure and land use during the colonial and post-colonial era. The Pokot targeted the ethnic Agikuyu and Kisii on the basis of their ethnic identities like language, beliefs, origin and migration. The land question together with mobilisation along ethnic identities influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area, the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

INFLUENCE OF THE LAND QUESTION ON INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICTS IN LAIKIPIA AREA SINCE 1992

5.1 Overview

In a widened interpretation, this chapter assesses the influence of the land question on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992. This assessment was holistically on the basis of ethnic identity and social interactions exacerbated by a multitude of factors. The factors included ravaging poverty intensified by protracted drought, marginalisation through historical land injustices, institutional insufficiencies, climate change and humanitarian factors like land use.

The nature of inter-ethnic land conflicts was also influenced by mind-sets of legitimacy on account of primordial human settlements and perceptions of rights to protect threatened natural resources. Beneath these causal factors, was an element of high level of illiteracy and lack of conscious efforts to include actors and general stakeholders into sustainable mitigation programmes tailored to end the perennial culture of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. This section therefore examines how geo-politics, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, changes in land use, rising population, cultural aspects like moranism, pastoralism and cattle rustling, media and inadequate land reforms policy influenced the land question and in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts.

5.2 The Influence of Politicisation of Land Question on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

Resource distribution across the country had a ramification on the intensity of presidential competition in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2017 and 2022.⁹²⁴ The general presumption was that whoever takes over the presidency had the advantage of benefiting his or her ethnic group at the expense of others. This was aggravated by system of unequal distribution of natural resources including land and becomes the genesis of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Kenya. Ethnic clashes in Laikipia area took a political twist in 1990's, violence that broke out before the general elections were meant to displace the ethnic Agikuyu and other Bantu communities who visibly supported the opposition political outfits.⁹²⁵ An informant account further reiterated that:

The motive was to deny presidential contenders Mwai Kibaki and Kenneth Matiba chances of getting twenty five per cent of presidential votes in the defunct Rift Valley Province and dispossess them from land holding in Laikipia Area. But, the displacement of the ethnic Agikuyu from Marmanet, Sipili, Ng'arua, Rumuruti and Ol Moran was intended to deny them land holding rights.⁹²⁶

From the preceding findings, this study found that the Agikuyu were targeted on their ethnic lines to displace their land holding rights in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This was because land was a critical force of production for both cereal agriculturalist and crop farmers. These were tenets of both the articulation of modes of production and instrumentalism theories applied in this study. The political competition was about winning political power in order to be in position to control land which was an agrarian capitalist

⁹²⁴Lawrence Murugu and Smokin Wanjala., *Op.Cit.*,p. 239.

⁹²⁵Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 71.

⁹²⁶Oral interview, Delilah Nasieku, interviewed in Nanyuki on 21st August, 2023.

society. As a result, Bantu were largely aligned to the opposition politics while the pastoralist Nilotes subscribed to the Kenyan African National Union ideologies led by Daniel Arap Moi the second president of Kenya in 1992 and 1997.⁹²⁷ This study upheld that the ethnic groups supported different political parties on ethnic lines. The expectation was that the parties in question if they won political power would protect their land holding rights. Land holding rights were politicised in Laikipia Area in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This was because land was a factor of production in their agrarian modes of production which was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory used in this study. A peace actors' focused group in Nanyuki explained more on this that:

Politics and politicians were fond of escalating the land grievances electoral cycle by whipping the historical land emotions among the pastoral ethnic communities in the region. Politicians incited herders in 2017, 2021 and 2022 to invade farms, ranches and conservancies claiming they sit on their ancestral land in Laikipia Area.⁹²⁸

From the foregoing discussion, this study espoused that politicians weaponised land along the ethnic lines because land was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders. Politicians took advantage of limited pasture and historical land issues for political capital. They incited herders to illegally graze on private lands or drive their livestock into ranches and conservancies in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 land related inter-ethnic conflicts. They invoked underlying land issues that remained unresolved as a rallying call for the herder's lawlessness. This pattern has been predictable and consistent every election cycle in Laikipia Area.⁹²⁹ Mwenda expounded on this by stating that the last decade saw a flare up of inter-

⁹²⁷Drought, Violence and politics inside Laikipia's cattle war, *International crisis group*, 20th July 2022.

⁹²⁸Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁹²⁹Oral interview, Cynthia Motialo, interviewed in Lamuria on 21st August, 2023.

ethnic conflicts before and after the electioneering period. Politicians had the tendency of devising propaganda as campaign strategy to scare away perceived opponents from certain ethnic groups.⁹³⁰

The strategy also included weaponization of land by evoking ancestral land claims and historical land injustices for political expediency in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 inter-ethnic land conflicts.⁹³¹ This study maintained that the Maasai, Pokot, Tugen, Ogiek, Samburu, Ndorobo and Turkana were mobilised along their ethnic lines by conflict actors to evict the Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru because land was their factor of production as grazing field in their pastoralism modes of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Politicians ignited the land question to gain political mileage at the expense of the human and socio-economic involved in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 inter-ethnic land conflicts.⁹³² These were senseless acts of impunity by these selfish politicians who wanted to win political power by all means possible. Politicians did anything possible to ensure they gain political capital. They went to the pastoralist places of origin and incited the Samburu, Pokot, Turkana and Maasai to go to Laikipia and reclaim their ancestral land.⁹³³ An oral account elaborated on this further that:

Politics was a major factor in the conflict. The conflicts were ignited by politicians with vested interests. In a practical sense, they fanned inter-ethnic conflicts to intimidate voters. In Ol Moran Pokot intimidated non

⁹³⁰ Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*,p. 46.

⁹³¹ *Ibid*

⁹³² Oral interview, Jackson Mutoro, NEMA County Director, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

⁹³³ Oral interview, Samuel. K. Tum Chief Rumuruti, interviewed in Rumuruti on 14th August, 2023.

Pokot in the area. They evicted them and coerced them to vote in a certain direction.⁹³⁴

This study held that politicians manipulated aspects of ethnic identities like language, beliefs, origin, migration and settlements to ignite land related inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The violence occurred in Ol Moran, Marmanet, Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Sipili and Ng'arua in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. These were avenues of winning political power and also ensure that their ethnic groups exploited land as a factor of production in Laikipia Area.

Politicians lied to communities that evictions will expand their grazing territories – former Rift Valley Regional coordinator George Natembeya in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 inter-ethnic land conflicts.⁹³⁵ This study established that certain politicians were set to grab the land once evictions were successful. Cattle that illegally grazed on ranches and conservancies did not belong to the herders. These cattle were spotted being driven out of conservancies and ranches to Samburu, Isiolo and Baringo. This was because they wanted to exploit land as a factor of production for their personal enterprise. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

Some politicians notoriously propagated ethnic profiling and practically fanned ethnic hate in order to sway the voting patterns to achieve a selfish interest. This fanned land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021.⁹³⁶ This study supported that most of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts experienced in Laikipia in the present and in the past stemmed from the activities of these crops of political leaders. They fashioned stolen ethnic land narrative as their

⁹³⁴ Oral interview, Cynthia Motialo, interviewed in Lamuria on 21st August, 2023.

⁹³⁵ Loise Macharia; *STAR NEWSPAPER*; Land - thirsty politicians to blame for Laikipia conflicts – Natembeya, 9th September, 2021.

⁹³⁶ Habel Nyamu: *Recollections, An eye witness account of Kenya's Journey from colony to multi-party democracy*. Nairobi: Longhorn publishers, 2010, p. 156.

hidden card to rise to power against a certain perceived constituency within their electoral area in Ol Moran, Marmanet, Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Sipili and Ng'arua. They pointed out cleavages created after years of land marginalisation and isolation of their ethnic groups to whip emotions to win political capital. However, their vested interests ultimately served them at the expense of their general ethnic groups. There were certain incidences where voters of a certain ethnic group were coerced to vote a certain way, by use of threats. This was especially so if those ethnic groups were perceived as aliens who impinged on the host ethnic groups land. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

These politicians acted in cohort with other ethnic elites in rallying their ethnic groups along ethnic lines. In most cases, elites were depicted as educated, informed and strategists but in some cases were decision makers who did not possess those attributes.⁹³⁷ This study upheld that they funded inter-ethnic conflicts with the view of reclaiming land as their factor of production. This was executed by manipulating ethnic groups' identities like language, symbols, beliefs, traditional oathing rituals to trigger inter-ethnic clashes.

The constitutional process of delimitation of electoral units ended up stroking negative ethnicity and inter-ethnic land conflicts Ol Moran, Marmanet, Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Sipili and Ng'arua.⁹³⁸ This was done through creation of political instigated ethnic boundaries that ended up reinforcing deep seated psychological factors of us against them in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 inter-ethnic land related conflicts. An exception was noted in urban areas even though ethnicity still reigned supreme in such areas. Laikipia West and East constituencies

⁹³⁷Richard F. Hamilton and Holger H. Herwig: *Decision for war, 1914-1917*, Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 15.

⁹³⁸*Ibid.*,p. 102.

were dominated by ethnic Agikuyu elected leaders.⁹³⁹ Herders claimed that these constituencies were created ostensibly to politically protect the ethnic Agikuyu land holding.⁹⁴⁰ This study held that the creation and revision of political boundaries was manipulated by conflict actors as an ethno-territorial justification of land holding rights. This was because land was a force of production for both herders and crop farmers in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. Conflict actors manipulated ancestral land claims and historical land claims to incite land related conflicts on the basis of ethnic identities. Ethnic identities became points of rallying ethnic groups together in their quests to fight for their land holding rights as a force of production.

Ethnicisation of politics in Kenya resulted into the creation of ethnic power barons or cartels among the political class in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 inter-ethnic land conflicts.⁹⁴¹ These leaders ruled with impunity surprisingly with the express authority from their electorates. They oversaw destruction of institutions and deprived their own people fundamental liberty including socio-economic inclusion. Courtesy of this system of ethnic patronage, runaway corruption and impunity, these leaders served endless terms by weaponising historical land issues and negative ethnicity by hoodwinking and exploiting uninformed electorates. Be it as it may, an informant account elaborated more on this that:

Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki, Kihika Kimani and Maina Njenga emerged as political figures that influenced or protected the ethnic Agikuyu land holding. These leaders used political power to help members of their ethnic groups to acquire land in Laikipia Area.⁹⁴²

⁹³⁹ Oral interview, Dinah Teraia, interviewed in Nyahururu on 21st August, 2023.

⁹⁴⁰ Oral interview, Cynthia Motialo, interviewed in Lamuria on 21st August, 2023.

⁹⁴¹ Konrad Adenauer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

⁹⁴² Oral interview, Dinah Teraia, interviewed in Nyahururu on 21st August, 2023.

This study, thus, held that there were exceptional cases of politicians helping members of their ethnic groups to acquire land. However, such efforts were taken advantage of by other politicians to create political narratives for political capital. The Maasai, Pokot, Tugen, Ogiek, Samburu, Ndorobo and Turkana were incited that politicians like Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki and Kihika Kimani helped the Agikuyu to impinged on their ancestral land in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 land related inter-ethnic conflicts. Land was politicised by politicians across the political divide because it was a force of production for both herders and crop farmers. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

5.3 The Influence of Militianisation of the Land Question on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

Ethnic militia were formed as strategies to safeguard land holding in the leading to the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. These happened in the 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 land related inter-ethnic conflicts. The agrarian Kikuyu in Kenya suffered the most under the colonial regime. In central Kenya and Laikipia areas, the European settlers preferred their cheap labour over other indigenous Kenyans in settler plantations in Laikipia Area. They were considered hardworking and loyal colonial labourers.⁹⁴³ Peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki explained further that:

The Agikuyu community also suffered wanton alienation of their land to establish colonial settler economy and crown lands in Central Kenya. As one of the biggest communities in Kenya, the Agikuyu were the foremost community in Kenya to launch an armed insurrection against colonial rule in Kenya. They

⁹⁴³Oral interview, Samuel. K. Tum Chief Rumuruti, interviewed in Rumuruti on 14th August, 2023.

formed a faceless and underground movement vaguely referred to as Mau Mau in 1940's.⁹⁴⁴

This study held that the primary objective of Mau Mau outlawed movement was to preserve the Kikuyu culture, send away European settlers in central Kenya and demand for the unconditional return of alienated Kikuyu land from the colonial regime and European settlers in central Kenya and by extension central Kenya. Mau Mau activities extended to Laikipia Area in the settler farms in 1950's. They wanted their land returned because it was a factor of production as in their modes of production. They were rallied along their ethnic identities like language, belief and traditional oathing rituals to form Mau Mau to fight for their land holding rights in Laikipia as their factor of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

To fully secure the ethnic Agikuyu foothold, the Kenyatta regime made alliance with *Ngoroko* armed militia in 1970's.⁹⁴⁵ This study established that the group was used to scare the Kalenjin uprising in Laikipia Area against the ethnic Agikuyu. This was because land was a factor of production for both herders and crop farmers in their modes of production. They were rallied along their ethnic identities in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The ethnic Agikuyu formed *Mungiki* to fight for their land holding rights in Laikipia Area in the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1997, 1998, 2007 and 2008. They were mobilised along their ethnic identities like language, traditional oathing rituals and beliefs to fight for their land holding rights. *Mungiki* operated in from 1997 to safeguard ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia Area. This was because land for

⁹⁴⁴Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁹⁴⁵Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 63.

the ethnic Agikuyu was their factor of production in the economic substructure as predominant crop farmers.⁹⁴⁶ This was in line with the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study. A political leaders' focused group in Rumuruti shared more this that:

The *Mungiki* ethnic sect was involved in the inter-ethnic clashes that took place in Rumuruti and Ng'arua. The sect had developed networks that included an established tax regime that operated alongside government systems. *Mungiki* was more strengthened during the Kibaki regime; it was believed the Kibaki regime subtly supported *Mungiki* operations.

This study held that the ethnic Agikuyu were mobilised along their ethnic Agikuyu to defend their land holding rights in through *Mungiki*. This happened in the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1997, 1998, 2007 and 2008 in Rumuruti, Ng'arua and Sipili. This was a reaction move against the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot and Turkana who were rallied along their ethnic identities like language; age set systems, symbols, traditional oathing rituals and traditional institutions like moranism to attack ethnic Agikuyu. Land was contested because it was a factor of production as grazing fields for the pastoralist and planting fields for crop farmers in their economic substructure.

5.4 The Influence of the Land Buy-out Policy on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

The commercial acquisition of land by the agriculturalist the ethnic Bantu on the brink of independence and later on was the root cause of pastoralist agitation and expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in the Area.⁹⁴⁷ The pastoralist claimed that both the colonial and post-colonial governments disposed of their ancestral land to the highest bidder to their detriment. Endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts expressed in

⁹⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁹⁴⁷Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.

Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007 and 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022 emanated from this deep rooted fact and that was handed down from one generation to another.⁹⁴⁸ Pastoralist communities who were the indigenous ethnic groups' hold that they lost their land to the ethnic Bantu groups through the land buy out policy adopted by the post-colonial government in Kenya after independence. An oral account further explicated that:

Most of the land mass in Laikipia Area was under European settlement. European settlers who decided to leave for fear of political uncertainty in the post - colonial dispensations sold land to land buying companies and cooperatives on a willing buyer willing seller basis as a post-colonial free market policy. Beneficiaries of land buying companies' cooperative purchased land as individual portions; among this group some have settled others did not.⁹⁴⁹

From the preceding discussion, this study held that the land buy out policy adopted by both the colonial and post-colonial government fashioned the land question in Laikipia Area along the ethnic lines. Therefore, it created an ethnic wedge of identity between the Bantu ethnic groups that bought land in Laikipia and the pastoralist ethnic' groups that missed out leading to the perpetual inter-ethnic conflict expressed.⁹⁵⁰ This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. This led to the Maasai, Pokot, Turkana, Samburu, Ogiek, Ndorobo, Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii to rally along their ethnic identities to fight for their land holding rights. This was because land was a factor of production in Laikipia Area for all those ethnic groups.

⁹⁴⁸Oral interview, Samuel. K. Tum Chief Rumuruti, interviewed in Rumuruti on 14th August, 2023.

⁹⁴⁹Oral interview, Joshua Marete DCC Laikipia Central, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

⁹⁵⁰Oral interview, Clarise Letisha, interviewed in Kirimon on 21st August, 2023.

As a reactionary move, perpetually pastoralist graze illegally and squat on absentee land lords farms as a form of protesting historical injustices meted on them.⁹⁵¹ It was also instructive to note that those who were unable to acquire land in Laikipia through the land buying policy arrangement were rendered landless.⁹⁵² It was this historical bitterness and feeling of marginalization that explains violent scenes of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.⁹⁵³ These sporadic land related inter-ethnic conflicts occurred in Rumuruti, Marmanet, Sipili, Mukogodo, Ng'arua and Ol Moran in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022. President Daniel Moi and Mwai Kibaki's regimes tried to solve the land problem through issuance of title deeds to the landless but mostly the beneficiaries were internally displaced persons.⁹⁵⁴ It was against this backdrop that this study held that the land buy out policy influenced inter-ethnic conflicts. The ethnic groups that were disadvantaged from their land holding rights through the land buy out policy vented out their frustration through land related inter-ethnic conflicts. They rallied along their ethnic identities like language; age set systems and traditional oathing rituals in the manifestation of land generated inter-ethnic conflicts. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

5.5 The Influence of Post-colonial Governments' Inability to Fix the Land Question on Inter-ethnic Conflicts Laikipia Area since 1992

At the outset of independence in 1963, Kenyans were highly charged with expectations. They anticipated that the post-colonial regime would oversee socio-political and economic reforms that would guarantee them back their ancestral lands

⁹⁵¹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.

⁹⁵²Oral interview, Prisca Natasha, interviewed in Segera on 21st August, 2023.

⁹⁵³Oral interview, Clarise Letisha, interviewed in Kirimon on 21st August, 2023.

⁹⁵⁴Oral interview, Gabriela Kwamboka, interviewed in Matanya on 19th August, 2023.

lost at the height of colonialism in Kenya.⁹⁵⁵ However, this study held that cleavages and inequalities along ethnic lines experienced during land resettlement programmes after independence in 1960's and 1970's divided Kenyan on the basis of inclusion and exclusion even if this was not anticipated. As a result, ethnic groups that were excluded from land holdings rights resorted to fighting for their space and relevance through violence and political supremacy. Peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki shed more light to this that:

Politician Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki the Laikipia West Member of Parliament MP 1963-1978 used the Kenyatta regime to assure the ethnic Agikuyu foothold in Laikipia to the disadvantage of the Nilotic ethnic communities. In Laikipia Area sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts arose from unequal distribution of natural resources including land since independence. These endemic inter-ethnic conflicts pitted herders and cereal agriculturalist in unending conflicts.⁹⁵⁶

Thus, this study held that skewed land redistribution which was deeply entrenched with its origin pointing to the unfair alienation of pastoral land by the colonial regime. Successive post-colonial regimes remained silent on addressing these underlying phenomena that potentially threatened to disrupt normalcy and remained the root cause of pastoralist uprising in Laikipia Area. These endemic land related inter-ethnic conflicts occurred in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022 in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Sipili, Ng'arua, Mukogodo and Marmanet.

In the case of the Maasai for example, every petition made to both the colonial and post-colonial governments to regain their land since the colonial days turned out futile and often their plea to the government fell on deaf ears.⁹⁵⁷ They tried both the legal means and combative means with little if any success, at the end most of the

⁹⁵⁵Odinga Oginga., *Op. Cit.*, p. 253.

⁹⁵⁶Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

⁹⁵⁷Ian Mwenda. *Op.Cit.*,p. 41.

time the government managed to protect the white ranchers and crop farmers in the ensuing conflicts.⁹⁵⁸ In 2004, a year marking a century after the first Anglo-Maasai agreement, the Maasai staged an uprising to protest years of delayed justice in they termed as unfair dispossession from their ancestral land. They invaded private farms and ranches destroying crops with their large herds of livestock. Initially, the unrest started in Laikipia north but spread to other parts of the Area.⁹⁵⁹ This study, therefore, avowed that the failure by the post-colonial regimes to fix the land question was a major factor in expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. Maasai, Pokot, Turkana, Samburu, Ogiek and Ndorobo were rallied along their ethnic identities to like moranism, age set system, language and traditional oathing rituals fight for their land holding rights. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. This was because land was a force of production as grazing fields in their pastoralism modes of production in Laikipia Area.

5.6 The Influence of the Culture of Cattle Rustling and Banditry on land

Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

Cattle rustling and the culture of banditry contributed to the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022.⁹⁶⁰ It was used as an avenue to replenish grazing fields after long periods of biting droughts. This was majorly during the dry spell of January and April in areas of Rumuruti, Mukogodo, Ol Moran, Sipili, Marmanet and Ng'arua. Banditry went hand in hand with invasion of reserved pasture of the attacked ethnic community. An informant account expounded on this that:

⁹⁵⁸Oral interview, Fred Nderitu, interviewed in Dol Dol on 20th August, 2023.

⁹⁵⁹Ian Mwenda. *Op.Cit.*, p. 53.

⁹⁶⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 82.

Such conflicts were common between the Samburu and Maasai in Mukogodo area almost every drought season. Samburu from their community land in Isiolo invaded Maasai reserved pasture in Mukogodo leading to inter-ethnic clashes between the two communities.⁹⁶¹

From the preceding argument, this study held that the Samburu were rallied on their ethnic identities to invade the Maasai reserved land as pasture fields. This was because it was a factor of production in their economic substructure. This was in line with both the tenets of instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

5.7 The Influence of the Culture of Moranism on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

Moranism was a factor in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022.⁹⁶² It was rife every season of rite of passage among the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek and Ndorobo. It was established that after every initiation cycle, initiates had to prove their ability to defend their community by invading another community. Initiates belonged to an age set that was coordinated as a unit in cases of raids and counter-raids. It also served as a military base of the ethnic group. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. An informant account explicated more on this that:

During such instances a lot happens, young boys are compelled to participate and, in some cases, they are fished out of their homes. Upon graduating into morans they become the combatants as this is noble duty to defend the community against any form of intrusion. Morans were used in the expression of inter-ethnic

⁹⁶¹Oral interview, Julia Nosim, interviewed in Segera on 21st August, 2023.

⁹⁶²Oral interview, Gabriel Kwamboka, interviewed in Matanya on 19th August, 2023.

land conflicts among the Samburu, Pokot and Maasai in Laikipia Area.⁹⁶³

From the foregoing, this study held that the culture of moranism among the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ogiek and Ndorobo was exploited along ethnic identities. This was in the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This was because land was a force of production in their modes of production in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

5.8 The Influence of Disgruntled Civil Servants on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

In order to remain afloat and regain the International Monetary Funds and World Bank financial lending criteria in the midst of a struggling economy, the Moi regime was conditioned to undertake very painful structural adjustment programmes in 1990's.⁹⁶⁴ Scores of the senior civil servants services were prematurely terminated in what became popularly known as the golden handshake and retrenchment schemes of the civil servants. An informant account shed more light on this that:

The victims of this unforeseen government policy returned to the villages frustrated with lots fragile and classified government information regarding the land question in Laikipia Area. They shared this vital information to their ethnic groups' especially the government ethnic bias in solving the land question in Laikipia Area.⁹⁶⁵

This study held that such classified government information became the point of ethnic mobilisation and inter-ethnic land conflicts in 1992 and 1997. For the reason that land in Laikipia Area was a factor of production for both herders and crop farmers and its access and appropriation was contested. These were the tenets of both

⁹⁶³Oral interview, Kirob Caleb, interviewed in Matanya on 16th August, 2023.

⁹⁶⁴Oral interview, Lotuw Stephens, interviewed in Gituamba on 19th August, 2023.

⁹⁶⁵Oral interview, Cherotich Musa, interviewed in Sweet Waters on 16th August, 2023.

the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

5.9 The Influence of Changes in Land Use on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

The changes in land use from the traditional grazing to ranching, conservancies, settler farming, crop farming and urbanisation over time led to inter-ethnic land conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022.⁹⁶⁶ The most contemporary land use issue was the fact that ranches and conservancies consume more than half of land in Laikipia while the local ethnic communities were left with about thirty percent of the land mass to share. An oral account elucidated more on this that:

Landless people in Laikipia Central historically complained the large amount land ranches and conservancies occupy to their detriment. There was agitation that land was to be hived from these ranches to settle landless people.⁹⁶⁷

This study therefore avowed that periodic pastoralist invasion of the ranches since 2006, was a form of venting out bitterness resulting from historical land injustices against them by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes in Kenya. It was also because they were denied to exploit land which was their factor of production.⁹⁶⁸ This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. They resorted to lawlessness as a desperate measure after years of aborted legal redress and general consensus besides series of the underlying realities and concerns. Statistically, large-scale ranchers owned half of the land mass. In total,

⁹⁶⁶Oral interview, Tomitom Viola, interviewed in Nyahururu on 17th August, 2023.

⁹⁶⁷Oral interview, Joshua Marete DCC Laikipia Central, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

⁹⁶⁸Oral interview, Cherotich Musa, interviewed in Sweet waters on 16th August, 2023.

Laikipia Area had forty-three ranches covering half of the county's land area.⁹⁶⁹ About thirty of these ranches belonged to companies and individuals ostensibly for tourism and beef farming. About thirteen belonged to group ranches in Laikipia North.⁹⁷⁰ Most of the land lords in Laikipia were Europeans. They have farmed in this area for years. However, some of the land lords acquired land recently after they settled in the area from Europe and United States of America.⁹⁷¹ However, on the contrary County government official argued that ranches acted as a buffer zone between warring ethnic groups. They allowed neighbouring communities to access water and control illegal grazing.⁹⁷² From the preceding this study held that changes in land tenure led to the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. The adoption of private and developed denied herders grazing fields denying them land which was their factor of production in their modes of production. They were therefore forced to rally along their ethnic identities to fight for their land holding rights.

Land was at the centre of the 2022 pastoralists' invasion of the private farms, ranches and conservancies in Laikipia North, Laikipia Central, Laikipia West and Kirima.⁹⁷³ This study held that the local ethnic groups mainly the Samburu and Maasai were rallied along their ethnic identities to claim that this was their ancestral land, which has since been occupied by Europeans and rich individuals owning conservancies, ranches and commercial plantations. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

⁹⁶⁹Oral interview, Zebedee Kariuki, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

⁹⁷⁰Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 53

⁹⁷¹Jason Burke. Inequality, drought and the deadly fight for precious grazing land in Kenya, *Guardian*, 3rd May, 2017.

⁹⁷²Oral interview, Ekwam Nabos, interviewed in Nanyuki on 14th August, 2023

⁹⁷³*Drought, Violence and politics inside Laikipia's cattle war*, International crisis group, 20th July 2022.

Most of the lands in Laikipia East and Nyahururu had titles; this explained why inter-ethnic land conflicts were minimal compared to other regions.⁹⁷⁴ But there were occasional herders and crop farmers' confrontation in Segera in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2022. Patrick Muli explained further on this that:

Around election period, the most common Land conflicts were expressed through herders illegal grazing in ranches, conservancies and private land. It was believed to be politically motivated, such incidences happened in Segera and Umande.⁹⁷⁵

This study affirmed that herders scared away crop farmers in order to create a floor for their livestock. This was because they wanted to exploit land as their grazing fields as such it was their factor of production. They rallied along their ethnic identities to illegally graze on private crops as a form of protest as ethnic groups. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In Mukogodo area, there was a history of the Maasai-Samburu inter-ethnic land use conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2021 and 2022. Samburu often invaded the forest which was green; they collided with the Maasai who believed that ancestrally Mukogodo was their forest and had a cultural duty to defend it. Samburu invasions also strayed into Maasai community grazing reserves in Mukogodo area.⁹⁷⁶

Daniel Kimalelel further elaborated more on this that:

Mukogodo was also a Samburu corridor used to ferry stolen cattle. Initially, Mukogodo was Yakku's source of livelihood as hunters and food gatherers. But, their assimilation by the Maasai and the invasion of Samburu besides its gazettelement as a forest reserve made the forest contested.⁹⁷⁷

⁹⁷⁴Oral interview, Patrick Muli, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

⁹⁷⁵*Ibid.*

⁹⁷⁶Oral interview, Grace Wairagu, National Land Commissioner county coordinator, interviewed in Nanyuki on 11th August, 2023.

⁹⁷⁷*Ibid.*

This study established that these clashes over land use led to Samburu - Maasai led land conflicts in Laikipia North in Mukogodo. This was because land as grazing field for both Samburu and Maasai was a factor of production in their pastoralism modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

5.10 The Influence of the Media in the Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

The influence of vernacular media stations in triggering inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area was established in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2021 and 2022 . This was regrettable because the media was seen as tool for socio-economic and social justice crusade in the society. This was particularly rampant among radio stations that reported in vernacular.⁹⁷⁸ An informant account explained further on this that:

Media houses that reported in indigenous languages in Laikipia County concealed vital information to the security agencies and also fuelled or incited inter-ethnic conflicts in the Area. Vernacular radio stations incited their ethnic groups during the 2007/2007 inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti by highlighting historical land issues in Laikipia Area.⁹⁷⁹

This study, thus, upheld that the incitement by the vernacular media led to the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia. Conflict actors used the media to manipulate aspects of ethnic identities in the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. Aspects of ethnic identities like language; age set systems, beliefs, symbols, origin, migration and settlements were manipulated by conflict actors to create ancestral land claims. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied

⁹⁷⁸Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

⁹⁷⁹Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC – Laikipia West, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

in this study. These claims incited ethnic groups to violently fight for their land holding rights in Laikipia Area. Land to these ethnic groups was a factor of production in their crop farming and pastoralism modes of production. So, its appropriation on contested at ethnic level based on the pastoralist way of life. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

5.11 The Influence of Ilemi Triangle, Small Arms and Light Weapons on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area were largely inflamed by the prevalent peddling of illicit fire arms in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2021.⁹⁸⁰ The origin of these small arms and light weapons was contradicted but the multiple sources theory points to Sudan and Kenya police service and the Kenya Defence Forces.⁹⁸¹ The Kenyan security apparatus aided and abetted proliferations of these illicit firearms through colluding with criminals ferrying these weapons at the border points, on police road blocks or were compromised to trade their ammunitions for material gain.⁹⁸² This study established the inability by the security apparatus to stop peddling of firearms escalated inter-ethnic conflicts. Conflict actors acquired these arms to arm their ethnic groups during their attacks and counter-attacks. An informant account expounded of this further that:

Frequent spates of inter-ethnic land violence, runaway banditry, both cultural and commercial moranism created an environment of fear in the Area. It was against this backdrop that access to small arms and light weapons in region is highly desired.⁹⁸³

⁹⁸⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 92.

⁹⁸¹Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC – Laikipia West, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

⁹⁸²Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 90.

⁹⁸³Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC – Laikipia West, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

Thus, this study maintained that proliferation of small arms and light weapons led to the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts. The Ilemi triangle on the border of Kenya and Sudan was pointed as a major source of these fire arms. The intrigues of Ilemi triangle ensured constant armament of the Turkana who perpetually fight the Dassanetch and Toposa in Kapoeta East County of the Republic of South Sudan. The triangle was contested between Kenya and Sudan and both countries are yet to agree on the official borderline around this triangle. Weaponization of ethnic Turkana Dassanetch and Toposa was a strategy by both Kenya and Sudan to protect the territory integrity against intrusion.⁹⁸⁴

Ilemi was part of Kenya since the colonial days but was represented on the map with dotted lines. However, the Moi regime in 1988 instructed cartographers to substitute dotted line with a straight line.⁹⁸⁵ This study established that this proposition was opposed vehemently by the republic of Sudan which was then including the territory of South Sudan. Even though, then this Ilemi region was under the leadership of the rebels. In February 1989, the government of Sudan accused Kenya of attempting to grab 6,220 square kilometer of their territory in a reactionary move, Robert Ouko the foreign Minister then reiterated that Ilemi triangle was in Kenya. This degenerated into a diplomatic row leading to the recalling of the Sudanese envoy back to Khartoum. The position of Sudan government was adamant; they insisted that their boundary in the Elemei region followed the East-west line ratified in 1914 by the British colonial agents of Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. The Elemei triangle covers the Loitikipi plain on the west and the open plain on the east. It also covered the entire

⁹⁸⁴John Kamau. People, power and politics. *Sunday Nation* February 19, 2023.

⁹⁸⁵Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC – Laikipia West, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

Lokwama Moru Range. Arguably, these are good grazing grounds and fertile areas for pastoralist contest.⁹⁸⁶

By 1947, Ellemi area had seven police posts under the King's Africans Rifles, they were there literally to protect the Turkana after a deal between Kenya and Sudan was brokered in 1928.⁹⁸⁷ John Kamau expounded on this further that:

For those seeking to understand the history of illicit weapons in northern Kenya, Ellemi is regarded as the birth place of modern militarization. The contested area is crucial for the pastoralists due to availability of pasture and water.⁹⁸⁸

This study, thus, held that the armament of the ethnic Turkana to fight the Dassenetch and Toposa in Sudan contributed to the inter-ethnic conflicts as these weapons were proliferated to Laikipia Area.

Besides the Ilemi triangle, the socio-economic significance attached to cattle among the pastoralists' communities became the point of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the dry land rangelands. After severe drought that often caused cattle fatalities, the herding communities in the dry land rangelands were compelled by circumstance to carry out raids to replenish the shortfalls. These resultant trends arose from an entrenched socio-economic culture that largely relied on the livestock and its products. Raids were only fruitful with continual availability of adequate weapons.⁹⁸⁹

Illicit peddling of small arms and light weapons posed a threat to the general global stability.⁹⁹⁰ This study held that this was made possible through sophisticated

⁹⁸⁶John Kamau., *Op.Cit.*,p. 25.

⁹⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁸John Kamau., *Op.Cit.*,p. 25.

⁹⁸⁹*Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁰Pius Male. *Dynamics of world peace*, Eldoret: Amecea Gaba publication, 2009, p. 211.

technology in addition to the appetite by governments and multi-international companies to procure and make small and light arms weapons. Pastoralists were heavily armed with small arms and light weapons which they easily acquired from the troubled northern Kenya.⁹⁹¹ This study avowed that peddling and access to these rifles complicated and negated multi security agencies efforts in conflicts interventions in these land related inter-ethnic conflicts. Criminal gangs were in most cases more armed than the security enforcement officers deployed to pacify the region. The gun culture among the Turkana stretched from the pre-colonial ivory trade at the height of slave trade in the region. The Turkana acquired arms from the trading with ivory during these pre-colonial indigenous commercial networks.⁹⁹²

Communities which were armed by the government since independence to police the border still held these weapons. This study affirmed that through this policy mistake a gun culture was created in 1960' and a whole generation has grown up with guns. Most scholars agree that the inter-ethnic violence accelerated during and after the electoral cycle and soon after circumcision rites during even years.⁹⁹³ An oral account explained further on this that:

The Turkana traded cattle for fire arms from Ethiopia as early as 1910. The British disarmed the Turkana at the end of first world war and also dispossessed them their livestock as a consequence the community became bitter and poor. They acquired the rifles when Italians re-launched an onslaught on Ethiopia in 1930's under Benito Mussolini of National Fascist Party. The Common rifle they acquired from this historic invasion was the Austrian Steyr and the World War I guns.⁹⁹⁴

⁹⁹¹Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 51.

⁹⁹²*Ibid.*

⁹⁹³John Kamau., *Op.Cit.*, p. 25.

⁹⁹⁴Oral interview, Ronald Kalomut, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

Consequently, this study affirmed that the British armed the Turkana to fight the Italian expansion into Kenya during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1930. Efforts by the British to disarm the Turkana after they started launching attacks on the defenseless Pokot and Marakwet bore little fruits. Upon independence the entire Northern Kenya did not have a police Station. The Jomo Kenyatta regime in 1970's conceived a policy to enlist Kenya police reservist in all border districts including northern Kenya. The Pokot for the first time got an opportunity to own guns through this programme.⁹⁹⁵

Idi Amini had started a military base at Soroti allegedly to extend the Ugandan border to Naivasha. Upon his overthrow, the Pokot dashed to the house and made away with all arms.⁹⁹⁶ It was projected that the base had fifteen thousand guns and two million pounds of ammunitions. Pokot progressively became heavily armed. These arms included Ak47 assault rifle, the World War II Hecker and Koch G-3 army rifles. A triangle of endless gun fights was entrenched among the Turkana Pokot and Karamajong.

In 1984, operation Nyundo was launched by President Daniel Moi under the commandship of General Joseph Nkaiser.⁹⁹⁷ Despite the Gunman Carnage and massive loss of property involved in what came to be known as Lotiriri massacre, the brutal operation did not succeed to solve the arms problem. Since 1980s a gun trade flourished in the northern Kenya with Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia as the main theatres of this illegal trading network. Guns were mostly traded with Cattle, for one

⁹⁹⁵John Kamau., *Op.Cit.*, p. 25.

⁹⁹⁶Oral interview, Ronald Kalomut, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

⁹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

bull you sell you get rifles. Gun buying Centres were common in northern areas of Loima hills and Ilemi triangle where gun merchant traded their wares in open.⁹⁹⁸

The disarmament of Turkana and Pokot was also cautiously executed because of the volatile nature of the region. If they disarmed the Turkana and Pokot they exposed them to an easy attack from the Toposa and Jie in the region. Also, several efforts to disarm the Pokot and Turkana were insignificant because they re-acquired the firearms from the gun black market in Sudan from 1980's to date.⁹⁹⁹

This study held that ethnic groups rallied along their ethnic identities to acquire firearms to defend their land holding rights in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017, and 2021. Land to them was a critical factor of production in their crop farming and pastoralism modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, beliefs, age set systems, traditional oathing rituals, origin, migration and settlement were manipulated by conflict actors. They manipulated in order to acquire fire arms in the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

5.12 The Influence of the Rising population on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

Another twist to the perennial land related inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 was the ever-changing trends in human demographics.¹⁰⁰⁰ The population was subsequently rising overstressing the ability

⁹⁹⁸Oral interview, Aaron Mepukori, interviewed on 19th August, 2023.

⁹⁹⁹John Kamau., *Op.Cit.*, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰⁰Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 42.

of the available land to accommodate the resultant population.¹⁰⁰¹ The rising human population in Laikipia overstretched the limit of available resources and food security. Limited resources including land became the points of competition for its access as a matter of survival. This also explained violent inter-ethnic outbursts and systematic patterns where herders invade ranches, conservancies and private land for the small holding crop farmers since 2006.¹⁰⁰² An informant account explained further on this that:

Increased population has increased pressure on land for farming and grazing which has led to degradation, pollution and soil erosion. This has immensely contributed to reduced productivity of land use to soil erosion, increased food insecurity, depletion of water resource and increased pollution compounding issues of frequent fluctuations in temperature, wind speeds, increased humidity and reduced surface area as a result of increased conflict arising from competition for inadequate resources.¹⁰⁰³

This study, thus, affirmed that ethnic groups were mobilised along ethnic identities to violently clash over land use due to the rising population. This was because more than half of the land was used as conservancies, ranches and private land. The Pokot, Samburu, Maasai and Turkana rallied along their ethnic identities to defend their land holding rights. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Land to them was a factor of production as grazing land in their pastoralism modes of production.

¹⁰⁰¹ Oral interview, Richard Lemaiyan, interviewed on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁰² Ian Mwenda, *Op.Cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁰³ Oral interview, Richard Lemaiyan, interviewed on 18th August, 2023.

5.13 The Influence of Colonialism on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895

The Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo and Ogiek form the bulk of the original indigenous groups that were unfairly dispossessed land by the colonial authorities. They developed a culture of invading conservancies, ranches and private land as a protest move to vent out their historical grievances that span for decades in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Pastoralist strongly believed that ranches, conservancies and private land existed to the detriment of their livestock. Upon independence in 1963 most of the white settlers left the white highlands which included Laikipia. Most of the pastoralists expected to regain their ancestral land as an inalienable right on the basis of the pre-colonial land holding policy.¹⁰⁰⁴

However, politics and vested interests would characterise the Jomo Kenyatta regime between 1963 and 1978 resulting into a skewed land redistributions and distribution policy that ended up benefiting certain ethnic groups at the expense of the pastoralist in Laikipia Area.¹⁰⁰⁵ Initially, these disgruntled ethnic groups did not protest this deliberate marginalization and irregular land allocation in the guise of settlement programmes. But over time diminishing grazing fields and acute shortage of water for the livestock ignited their pursuit to reclaim what is presumed their ancestral land. The ethnic Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo and Ogiek were mobilised along ethnic identities to invade ranches and private farms as a form of venting out historical land injustices.¹⁰⁰⁶ This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

¹⁰⁰⁴Oral interview, Patrick Muli, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁰⁵Ian Mwenda., *Op.Cit.*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁰⁶Oral interview, Patrick Muli, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

This study acknowledged that the Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo and Ogiek were rallied along their ethnic lines in the manifestation of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, age sets systems, origin, migration and settlement were manipulated by conflicts actors in their fight to reclaim their ancestral land which was unfairly alienated by the colonial regime. This resulted into land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. The conflicts were experienced in the areas of Ol Moran, Sipili, Marmanet, Ng'arua, Mukogodo and Rumuruti. Land for grazing was their factor of production in their pastoralism economic substructure.

5.14 The Influence of Influx of Pastoralists from other Areas on Land Related Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992

Laikipia Area attracted pastoralists from Baringo, Isiolo and Samburu who habitually moved to graze into the area during the dry spell between January and April. Their movement into the region pitted them in a tensional relation with the local crop farmers and herders in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. These occasional conflicts contributed to the inter-ethnic land use conflicts.¹⁰⁰⁷ Patrick Muli Deputy County commissioner Laikipia East explained further on this that:

Herders from other counties frequent Laikipia East during the infamous dry spells between January and April. Their presence ignites confrontation with the Local herders and crop farming communities who decry invasion on their grazing and farming fields respectively.¹⁰⁰⁸

This study, therefore, maintained that the inter-ethnic conflicts between ethnic herders who habitually invaded Laikipia during the dry spell and with the indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia were instigated along ethnic identities. Land was contested

¹⁰⁰⁷Ian Mwenda.,*Op.Cit.*,p. 44.

¹⁰⁰⁸Oral interview, Patrick Muli, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

because it was a factor of production in their pastoralism economic substructure. These were tenets of both instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

5.15 The Influence of the Maasai Cause on Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Not so long after the Maasai had been successfully moved to the Loita in the southern reserve, out of discomfort in the southern reserve did they lodge petitions against this move expressing their desire to return to Laikipia plateau.¹⁰⁰⁹ As earlier noted in 1913, the Maasai through Ole Njogo and others petitioned the Attorney General and the East African protectorate against unfair alienation of their land in Laikipia plateau. Nevertheless, this law suit was ruled against their favour on technical grounds arising from the import of 1904 and 1911 Anglo-Maasai land concessions.

The Maasai historically sought several legal redresses in attempts to express their displeasure through the legal avenues. However, these spirited attempts often flopped in the corridors of Justice. In 1932, they also presented their grievances to the Cater Commission of inquiry into land but their concerns were never addressed.¹⁰¹⁰ During the second Lancaster House Conference the British-Maasai agreement was discussed but the Maasai interests were never conclusively agreed.¹⁰¹¹ After suffering historical setbacks in a bid to reclaim land in Laikipia area, the resorted to land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. An informant account shed more light on this that:

¹⁰⁰⁹Ian Mwenda,. *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

¹⁰¹⁰Oral interview, Peter Nasenyema, interviewed in Rumuruti on 21st August, 2023.

¹⁰¹¹Ian Mwenda, *Op. Cit.*, p.78.

In 2004 young educated Maasai elites formed an Osiligi revolution meaning hope to protest the expiring of 99 lease of Maasai land. The group was led by Mali Kaunga. They included ranches but the government reaction was brutal. About five were shot dead and while others were arrested and imprisoned.¹⁰¹²

In 2004, the Maasai uprising in Laikipia was informed by the 1904 Maasai-British agreement that alienated their ancestral land in Laikipia. Backed by the pressure groups, the Maasai staged a protest.¹⁰¹³ They called for compensation among other raft of demands. The government responded by deploying security forces which acted with brutality. However, as an effect of community land act of 2016, the Maasai group ranches have been given community land to manage in Laikipia North.¹⁰¹⁴

Thus this study affirmed that the Maasai were rallied on their ethnic identity to take up arms to fight for their ancestral land in Laikipia Area. Aspects of Maasai ethnic' identities like age set systems; language, origin, migration and settlement were manipulated by conflict actors in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. Land for the Maasai was a factor of production in their modes of production. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

5.16 The Influence of Absentee Landlords on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Pastoralists were squatting on absentee landlords' farms in Laikipia. Part of the reason that attracted illegal settlement and invasion of private land was that some of the absentee land lords did not fence their undeveloped land.¹⁰¹⁵ This gave herders

¹⁰¹²Oral interview, Micah Lemashon, interviewed in Lamuria on 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰¹³Oral interview, Brown Ereng, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰¹⁴Oral interview, James Ekitela, interviewed in Dol Dol Son 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰¹⁵Oral interview, Monica Muthoni, Assistant County Commissioner 1, Laikipia East, interviewed in Nanyuki on 12th August, 2023.

the liberty of making illegal settlement and turning these private lands their grazing fields in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Herders mostly ethnic Samburu, Turkana and Pokot squatting on absentee land lords farms in Laikipia Area claim that the land ancestrally belonged to them. Absentee landlords remained anonymous and missing because of the spate of insecurity in the region. Herders frequently invaded these farms for settlement and grazing. Another reason for the absentee landlords was that some of the land buying companies did not process land titles for their members.¹⁰¹⁶

This study also established that some also had fake directors who swindled members their prospective investments. Cases of pending land registration were rampant which persisted for years. Most of the squatters, squat on absentee landlords' farms. European settlers did not have freehold titles; their land was in lease hold titles. Land buying companies were supposed to apply to the government to change leasehold titles to the freehold title. Quite a number of those land buying companies did not apply to change this land holding tenure. The application process was slow and susceptible to corruption. Cases of fake titles and double allocations were high leading to illegal settlements. This study therefore Samburu, Turkana and Pokot were rallied along their ethnic identities to illegally squat on absentee land lords lands. This was because land was a factor of production in their modes of production. This was in line with the tenets instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

5.17 Chapter Summary

Laikipia West and East constituencies were created ostensibly to politically protect the ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia Area. This ethnicisation of politics was

¹⁰¹⁶Oral interview, Lucy Cheptoo, interviewed in Lamuria on 17th August, 2023.

based on ethnocentrism and the desire to acquire political protection for land holding rights. This proposition led to land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Land was contested by the ethnic Agikuyu because it was their factor of production in their modes of production. This was in line with the tenets of instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theory.

Politicians incited herders to illegally graze on private lands or drive their livestock into ranches and conservancies since 2006. They invoked underlying land issues that remain unresolved as a rallying call for the herder's lawlessness and agitation toward cereal agriculturalist. They rallied herders along their ethnic lines to defend their land holding rights because land was their factor of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Politicians weaponised land as their political card to rise to power by inciting ethnic groups in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. They manipulated cleavages generated after years of land marginalisation and isolation of their ethnic groups to whip emotions to win political capital. The politicisation of the land question through ancestral land claims, unjust dispossession of land during the colonial era and the skewed government settlement during the post-colonial era were exacerbated by ethnocentrism and geo-politics that arose from years of pastoralist marginalisation. This led to the manifestation of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This was because land to these ethnic groups was their factor of production as crop farmers and pastoralism in their modes of production.

Politicians like Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki and Kihika Kimani were the political stalwarts that influenced or safeguarded the ethnic Agikuyu land allotment in Laikipia Area. The foregoing contributed to the rise of the land question through the

marginalisation of the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Ndorobo, Ogiek and Somali from land holding. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. It was done through mobilisation to buy land shares through land buying companies. This was the basis of the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. Land for all these ethnic groups was a factor of production as crop farmers and pastoralist in their modes of production which was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The ethnic Agikuyu were mobilised along ethnic identities to assert their land holding rights in Laikipia through formation of *Mungiki* and Mau Mau. Mobilisation in this sense was aimed at safeguarding their ethnic territory supported by conflicts actors who facilitated the ethnic militants. Land to the ethnic Agikuyu was their factor of production as crop farmers in their modes of production. The Jomo Kenyatta regime used *Ngoroko* militia to politically safeguard ethnic Agikuyu land holding. The preceding was on the basis of ethnocentrism and geo-politics. The militia scared Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Ndorobo and Ogiek from evicting the ethnic Agikuyu from Laikipia Area. This led to the expression of land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.

The pastoralist accused both the colonial and post-colonial governments for disposing off their ancestral land to the highest bidder to their disadvantage on the brink of independence and long after. This mobilisation along ethnic identities by the Samburu, Maasai, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo to violently protest the commercialisation of their ancestral land was on the basis of historical land claims, geo-politics and skewed post-colonial land settlement programmes. They rallied on their ethnic identities to defend their ancestral land holding rights through the

expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Land to them was a factor of production as crop farmers and pastoralist in their economic substructure. These were tenets of the articulation of modes of production theory and instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The ethnic Pokot, Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo and Ogiek were rallied along their ethnic identities to invade ranches and private farms since 2006. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. This was a form of venting out historical land injustices which was driven by ancestral land claims, changes in the land tenure and use, skewed post-colonial land settlements policies and unjust dispossession from their land holding at the advent of the introduction of colonialism. Land to these pastoralists was a factor of production as grazing fields in their modes of production.

This chapter analysed the influence of the land question in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. The next chapter therefore picked from this chapter and it examined the socio-economic impacts of the sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992.

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE INTER-ETHNIC LAND CONFLICTS ON LAIKIPIA AREA SINCE 1992

6.1 Overview

This chapter evaluates the impact of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. These impacts were studied from social, political, environmental and economic fronts on the basis of this study's instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories. The chapter further analyses the peace building initiatives and the mechanisms put in place in the inter-ethnic land conflicts.

6.2 Impacts of Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1992

In general impacts of inter-ethnic land conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 were numerous; they were listed as follows; ethnic hostilities, massive deaths, loss of livelihoods, poor health including mental wellness, environmental destructions, collapse of the family institution, rise of criminal gangs, prostitution and high rates of sexually transmitted diseases and an acute food shortage crisis, inevitable human traffics and unbearable refuge volumes.¹⁰¹⁷ This study held that these inter-ethnic impacts were as a result of manipulation of ethnic identities. Aspects of ethnic identities were weaponised by conflict actors to defend land holding rights. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The interest of land as a natural resource was because it was a factor of production for both crop farmers and pastoralist.

¹⁰¹⁷Konrad Adenauer., *Op. Cit.*, p. 32.

6.3 Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area on both Levels of Governments Since 1992

It was established that both the County and the national governments were involved in managing inter-ethnic land conflicts.¹⁰¹⁸ However, in some instances the national government was indicted for the rise of the land question and its influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. The foregoing eroded trust in both levels of governments' commitment to end land related perennial inter-ethnic conflicts. An informant account explained further on this that:

The Moi regime subtly supported the Tugen, Pokot, Turkana and Maasai through the formation and operations of KAMATAUSA. The Kibaki regime protected the ethnic Agikuyu land holding by remaining indecisive in dismantling *Mungiki*. In addition, the Jomo Kenyatta regime was indicted for its skewed land distribution and redistribution mechanism like the land buy out policy that disregarded pre-colonial land holding systems in Laikipia Area.¹⁰¹⁹

This study established, accordingly, that the land buy-out policy of 1960's and 1970's under the influence of the ethnic Agikuyu politicians ensured ethnic Agikuyu acquired chunks of land to the detriment of the ethnic pastoralist. Both levels of government were unable to solve the land question and its influence on inter-ethnic conflicts with finality.¹⁰²⁰ As a result, land related perennial inter-ethnic escalated which paralysed government operations in Rumuruti in 1992, 1997 and 2007/8 due to inter-ethnic conflicts between the ethnic Agikuyu and the alliance of Samburu and Pokot. However an informant account clarified on this that:

The government was also constrained to effectively maintain law and order and decisively end inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti, Ng'arua, Ol Moran, Mukogodo,

¹⁰¹⁸Jennifer Bond., *Op.Cit.*, p.121.

¹⁰¹⁹Oral interview, Richard Ng'ole, interviewed in Kirimon on 16th August, 2023.

¹⁰²⁰Oral interview, Emmanuel Musto interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

Sipili and Marmanet divisions of Laikipia Area. Poorly developed infrastructure, the hilly and rocky terrain were key factors that presented logistic nightmares to security operations.¹⁰²¹

This study noted that the government efforts to contain land related inter-ethnic conflicts were hampered by poor infrastructure and the landscape of the area. However, half-hearted response by government to distress calls by victims of inter-ethnic clashes in was misconstrued as complicit. Militia groups and other perpetrators of this violence acted with impunity and left a trail of untold atrocities against members of particular ethnic groups in mobilized attacks. It was widely conceived that the government was biased towards imperceptibly supporting the ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii access to political power and natural resources in the region including land in 2007/8, 2017 and 2021. This was the same case in 1992 and 1997 against claims of the Moi government aiding and abetting the ethnic Turkana, Maasai, Pokot and Ndorobo land holding in Laikipia Area.¹⁰²² This was in line with the tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

This contributed immensely to the rise of commercial Moranism among the youth, where young people were recruited at a fee to join militia groups that heightened inter-ethnic conflicts in the region.¹⁰²³ Spates of endless insecurity occasioned by inter-ethnic conflicts compelled the formation of vigilante groups by ethnic communities like Mungiki in 1997. Rather than stick to its primary mandate of defending life and property, the governments turned into predators that preyed on the very people they need to protect.¹⁰²⁴ Be it as it may, the national government and County intervention efforts in the perennial inter-ethnic conflicts were noted by this

¹⁰²¹ Oral interview, Emmanuel Musto interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰²² Oral interview, Korole Dandio interviewed in Segera on 12th August, 2023.

¹⁰²³ Oral interview, Haggai Ewoi, interviewed in Lamuria on 19th August, 2023.

¹⁰²⁴ Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

study. The contestation over land was as result of its value as a factor of production for both the crop farmers and pastoralist communities. Ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities to lay blame on governments' favouritism to land holding rights in Laikipia Area. These were tenets of the articulation of modes of production and instrumentalism theories applied in this study. As land related inter-ethnic conflicts escalated both the national and county governments were constrained in dispensing their essential services in the conflicts hot spot areas of Marmanet, Sipili, Ng'arua, Rumuruti and Ol Moran.

6.4 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Landlessness and Absentee Land Lords in Laikipia Area since 1992

There was no sustainable legal policy framework through legislation or litigation to address land distribution gaps in Laikipia Area. The colonial regime created landlessness through policy mistakes like Resident Native ordinance of 1918, Sweynnerton Plan and resettlement schemes like one million acre scheme.¹⁰²⁵ This study upheld that the failure by the post-colonial regime to correct these policy mistakes through radical reforms as expected created landlessness in Laikipia Area since 1992. Political elites in post-colonial regimes protected their ethnic groups land holding, instead of fixing the land question with finality. This was because land was a factor of production of both crop farmers and pastoralist. They intended to protect their ethnic groups to exploit land as a natural resource in their modes of production to the detriment of other ethnic groups. An informant account expounded on this that:

This problem of landlessness in Laikipia rendered a sizeable population unproductive. The aggrieved ethnic groups were mobilised along ethnic lines by their elites

¹⁰²⁵Leo Christopher., *Op. Cit.*, p. 23.

to violently protest their exclusion from land holding in Laikipia Area.¹⁰²⁶

This study, thus, held that the ethnic groups who lost land in Laikipia as a result of these policies resorted to inter-ethnic violence along ethnic identities in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Spates of insecurity occasioned by sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts forced those who had acquired land through this contested schemes to flee creating the absentee land lord question. The mobilisation along ethnic lines to invade vacant land in Laikipia was for the reason that land was a factor of production in their modes of production. Herders impinged on these vacant lands building temporal Manyatta structures as they moved from one point to another in search of water and pasture. Further to this, occasional invasions and illegal squatting on absentee land lords' farms were largely attributed to the unfenced swathes of land that lay idle and unoccupied. These illegal settlements and grazing were also rampant toward general elections indicating that they were politically instigated.¹⁰²⁷ This was in line with the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

6.5 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Culture of Pastoralism Since 1992

Pastoralism as a thriving economy in semi-arid rangelands faced a multitude of existential challenges since 1992.¹⁰²⁸ This study established that these changes were created by the colonial establishment of European settlers farms through land alienation of the native pastoralist. The challenges bordered around change in land use, land tenure system, private development and urbanization that were oblivious to the survival of this practice which is a cultural heritage as well as a source of

¹⁰²⁶Oral interview, Haggai Ewoi, interviewed in Lamuria on 19th August, 2023.

¹⁰²⁷Oral interview, Moses Gazemba, interviewed in Dol Dol on 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰²⁸Oral interview, Salama Goiden, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

livelihood to most of the herding communities in Laikipia Area. An informant account explained further that:

The colonial regime threatened the existence of pastoralism as a source of livelihood by resettling ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru in Laikipia Area. This resettlement was done through the Resident Native Ordinance of 1918; Sweynnerton plan of 1956, one-million-acre resettlement scheme and land buy out policy.¹⁰²⁹

Thus, this study noted that the post-colonial regimes inability to fix the land problem and adopting the land buy out policy that disregarded the pre-colonial land holding threatened the existence of pastoralism.

Further, the traditional herding areas were increasingly diminishing with the rise in population, ranches, conservancies, plantation farms and private developments arising from urbanization. Limited pasture and scarcity of water in the rangelands compelled pastoralists to migrate to urban areas. Drought led to spatial resource variations compelling pastoralist to practice herder mobility which involved tracing or retracing certain grazing reserves or water points in the middle of ravaging droughts.¹⁰³⁰

But this old survival practice was severely threatened by both public and private development on the hitherto grazing rangelands.¹⁰³¹ Other coping techniques included selective choice of breeds which could withstand harsh climate and adoption of mixed farming, while the former was gaining traction, the latter remained unpopular as many pastoralist harbours little or no interest in embracing cereal agriculture as their alternative source of livelihood.¹⁰³² In the colonial period,

¹⁰²⁹ Oral interview, Moses Gazemba, interviewed in Dol Dol on 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰³⁰ Oral interview, Elijah Tokodi, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰³¹ Oral interview, James Sing'aru, interviewed in Dol Dol on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰³² Oral interview, Isaac Lengai, interviewed in Nanyuki on 18th August, 2023.

bullocks were sold to manage grazing areas by Maasai.¹⁰³³ Even so, most recently as previously asserted pastoralist drought adaptation and mitigation approaches were threatened by the effects of climate change and numerous other artificial and natural factors that endangered the survival of this age-old enterprise.¹⁰³⁴ The threatened grazing fields by ethnic herders triggered politically instigated inter-ethnic conflicts between ethnic herders and ethnic cereal agriculturalists on the basis of ancestral land claims. This study therefore noted that changes in land use and its influence on inter-ethnic conflicts impacted on the existence of pastoralism as a practice. Pastoralist faced diminished grazing land which was a factor of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

Pressure put on land for grazing, crop farming, ranching, setting up conservancies and human settlement led to soil erosion and land degradation in Laikipia area since 1992.¹⁰³⁵ This infiltration of the environment threatened water catchment areas, leading to endless cycles of famine and drought and rising temperatures.¹⁰³⁶ An informant account clarified further on this that:

Segera used to be a dense forest. But the infiltration of land buyers led to the wanton destruction of hitherto virgin vegetation for private development. Maasai and Samburu were culturally an environmental conservancy's community. It was a taboo for the Maasai and Samburu to cut down trees, because they were animal feeds and sources of fresh air. They conserved and protected them against any perceived predator. But that was not the case to other ethnic

¹⁰³³KNADS/DC/LKA/1/1 1906-1911 accessed on 26th June, 2023.

¹⁰³⁴Oral interview, Faith Wangechi, interviewed in Nanyuki on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰³⁵Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁰³⁶Oral interview, Sereti Lesoiti, interviewed Segera on 16th August, 2023.

groups started settling in the area and foreign nationals buying land in Laikipia area.¹⁰³⁷

Consequently, this study held that wanton destruction of trees left the land bare triggering soil degradation on a massive scale and prolonged drought as a result of desertification.



Plate 3. Researcher interviewing the Deputy County Commissioner for Laikipia Central Joshua Marete

¹⁰³⁷Oral interview, Joshua Marete DCC Laikipia Central, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

This study established that another environmental impact of land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 was diversion of river water upstream.¹⁰³⁸ As a solution to this, a water rationing formula was conceived. In addition, National Environmental Management Authority maintained it stopped permitting projects on ranches until a policy framework was established to control over use of natural resources.¹⁰³⁹ This study affirmed that land related inter-ethnic conflicts had an impact on the environment. Competition for land as a factor of production for both crop farmers and pastoralist in their modes of productions led to destruction of the vegetation cover and diversion of river water upstream. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

6.6 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Internally Displaced Persons in Laikipia Area since 1992

Increased waves of inter-ethnic land conflicts resulted into the internally displaced persons in the following years 1992, 1997, 2007/8, 2017, 2021 in Laikipia Area.¹⁰⁴⁰

The numbers steadily rose until Non-Governmental Organisations and other donor partners in the region reverted to pressuring the Kenyan government to be transparent and accountable on ensuing inter-ethnic conflicts. These displacements consisted of members of particular ethnic groups mostly Kikuyu, Kisii and Meru who were forcefully evicted from their homes based on their ethnic identities. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. An informant account added more on this that:

¹⁰³⁸Oral interview, Joshua Marete DCC Laikipia Central, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

¹⁰³⁹Oral interview, Jackson Muturo, County Director of NEMA interviewed in Nanyuki on 15th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁴⁰Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 69.

At the height of inter-ethnic conflicts, mostly the pastoralist communities displaced the Bantu ethnic groups who became internally displaced persons. Internally displaced persons were rendered economically inactive citizens. The affected families were left at the mercy of humanitarian interventions by various philanthropists and humanitarian agencies. They were unable to significantly generate incomes for the sustenance and personal socio-economic mobility. They technically found refuge in schools, church compounds and shopping centres where they were temporarily sheltered.¹⁰⁴¹

This study, thus, affirmed that Non-governmental organisations were at the forefront of trying to empower inter-ethnic land conflicts victims in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 through income generating projects. Some of the income generating activities initiated included tree and fruit nursery projects and fruit farming. This was as a result of losing land which was their factor of production in their economic substructure. They were evicted from their land on the basis of their ethnic identities like language, beliefs, symbols, origin, migration and settlement. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The government's repressive scheme against sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 attracted the attention of idle jobless and unschooled young people. They resorted to the use violence as a means of attaining material benefits in the middle of the resulting hard economic times as consequences of the inter-ethnic conflicts.¹⁰⁴² This study affirmed that it became the genesis of the formation of ethnic vigilante militia groups that turned into organised ethnic groups mobilised along ethnic identities to assert their land holding rights. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. This was a result of the

¹⁰⁴¹Oral interview, Fred Nderitu, interviewed in DoI DoI on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁴²Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 125 .

essentiality of land as their factor of production in their various modes of production.

A peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki expounded further on this that:

Mungiki was formed to fight against perceived ethnic Agikuyu exclusion from economic opportunities including land and growing political marginalisation by the government of the day. The group at the outset disguised itself as a cultural renaissance crusader with close links to the Tent of Living God of Ngonya wa Gakonya.¹⁰⁴³

This study, thus, maintained that *Mungiki* was formed along Agikuyu ethnic identities as an impact of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. It was formed to defend Agikuyu land holding rights. Land for these communities was a factor of production in their crop farming modes of production. Recruits underwent oathing ceremonies meant to solidify their allegiance, inspire courage at the same time bind them to the ethnic groups cause against their perceived enemies. In a reactionary tactic, the ethnic herders strengthened their traditional ethnic military institution of moranism along ethnic lines to counter the *Mungiki* wave.

The culture of moranism socialised boys to be hostile against external aggression in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. It was against this background that boys mainly from the Pokot, Maasai and Samburu were mobilised along ethnic identities by conflict masterminds in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area.¹⁰⁴⁴ This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

An informant account elaborated on this further that:

The rise of marauding gangs and the Kenya police reservists in the post-election violence in 2002 triggered a vigorous Moran alertness and rigorous training. The moran culture became more entrenched and idolized

¹⁰⁴³Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023

¹⁰⁴⁴Mwenda Ian., *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

especially among the Nilotes as the community's first line of defense in the wake of inter-ethnic conflicts. Unemployment, abject poverty and idleness has made the youth susceptible to manipulation by the financiers and masterminds of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.¹⁰⁴⁵

From the preceding this study held that the culture of Moranism among Pokot, Maasai and Samburu was strengthened as a result of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts. This culture was reinforced to produce warriors to defend their land holding rights in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Grazing land was their factor of production in their pastoralism modes of production therefore it explained their need to secure it. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

6.7 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Security Deployment in Laikipia Area Since 1992

As earlier noted the national government was faulted for insecurity and recurring inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Police posts were sparsely populated in a vast area; security personnel response to distress calls was also hampered by poor road network and communication hitches because of lack of network. Schools were sparsely distributed leading to high illiteracy rates.¹⁰⁴⁶ In most cases, security apparatus were overwhelmed had inadequate financial and material apparatus needed to contain inter-ethnic conflicts from escalating. The overwhelmed government security officers were backed up by Kenya Police Reservist in the region.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Oral interview, Sereti Lesoiti, interviewed in Segera on 16th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Oral interview, Ole Gachira Ben, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

The Kenya Police Reservists were poorly remunerated.¹⁰⁴⁷ As a result they were forced to hire their rifles to the ethnic militia who were mobilized along ethnic lines. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Bandits and ethnic militia operating were heavily armed and used highly sophisticated firearms compared to less sophisticated weapons used by the security agencies. This study established that the disarmament operations overseen by the national security agencies were done selectively. While the Samburu and Turkana surrendered their firearms or were forcefully disarmed by the state, Pokot were exempted or disarmament operations in their areas were not as intensive which invoked the widely held concept of government protection.

6.8 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Food Security in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 led to food insecurity. Due to insecurity farmers were unable to concentrate on tilling their farms. In several cases, pastoralist, forcefully and illegally grazed on farmers plantations.¹⁰⁴⁸ This study held that illegal grazing and forceful evictions were mobilized along ethnic lines with the intention of reclaiming their ancestral land unjustly dispossessed during the colonial and post-colonial era. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Land was contested because for the herders it was their factor of production in their economic substructure.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

6.9 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Transport in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 paralysed the transport systems. Roads remained insecure with frequent attacks and roadblocks were mounted by marauding ethnically mobilized gangs. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. A peace actor focus group discussion in Nanyuki shed more light to this that:

This adversely affected delivery of necessary food and medical supplies by various humanitarian agencies in conflict hot areas. These included Mukogodo, Ol Moran, Rumuruti, Ng'arua and Sipili in 1992, 1997, 2007/8, 2017 and 2021. Roads were blocked by criminal gangs who harassed motorists and robbed them their valuables.¹⁰⁴⁹

As a result, this study held that land related inter-ethnic conflicts affected the transport sector. This was after the armed ethnic groups defending their land holding rights blocked roads as they targeted members of the rival ethnic groups. Land was at the centre of these conflicts because it was a factor of production for the crop farmers and herders in their modes of production. These were tenets of the instrumentalism theory and articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

6.10 The Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Human Carnage and General Effect to the Population in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 left a trail of women nursing rape and other sexual assaults. The atrocities were committed by mobilized ethnic gangs against victims of the rival ethnic groups. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. There were also cases

¹⁰⁴⁹Oral interview, a peace actors focus group discussion in Nanyuki interviewed on 17th August, 2023.

of mysterious disappearances of persons who permanently went missing without trace. Besides, the family fabric which was a key component of a stable society was ripped apart as family members were physically separated from one another.¹⁰⁵⁰ An informant account shed more light on this that:

Women and girls were more affected by the escalating inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Whilst more men are killed in the conflict than women, women also bore the brunt of the conflicts for the reason that they are more at risk to human rights abuses than their male counterparts. Marauding gangs mobilised along ethnic lines and sexually assaulted women and girls in conflict hot spot areas of Mukogodo, Sipili, Marmanent, Rumuruti, Ng'arua and Ol Moran in 1992, 1997, 2007/8, 2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁵¹

Consequently, this study avowed that both men and women were tortured and their human rights abused on the basis of their ethnic identities. They were targeted as threats to land holding rights in Laikipia Area as a factor of production in their modes of production.

Pastoralists' families decried that the government and ranch owners applied extra-judicial measures in executing trespass cases. Victims were shot and killed on the spot by both police and ranchers something locals were unhappy about. The conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 led to the breakdown of the socio-economic fabric and massive human migration to safer areas. Even through the international media attention was drawn on the murder of foreign nationals like Gallmann and Voorspuy, most victims killed in those clashes were Kenyan farmers. Security officers also responded by killing several herders who had illegally drove

¹⁰⁵⁰ Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 105.

¹⁰⁵¹ Oral interview, Teresa Wachuka Mukundi, interviewed in Lamuria on 14th August, 2023.

tens of thousands of their cattle into privately owned farms, ranches and conservancies.¹⁰⁵²

Kenya Red Cross society projected that approximately nineteen thousand internal displaced persons were documented in both Laikipia East and West in the 2007/8 inter-ethnic conflicts.¹⁰⁵³ Ethnic Pokot gangs mobilised along ethnic lines in 2021, displaced hundreds, torched fifty homes and stole five hundred animals at the height of inter-ethnic conflicts in Ol Moran belonging to the Agikuyu and Kisii.¹⁰⁵⁴ The 2022 clashes involved about thirty five deaths by September 2021.¹⁰⁵⁵

This study held that conflict in Laikipia eroded the multi-cultural cohesion in a multi-ethnic in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. This conspicuous disunity negated the county's rich potential in agriculture and tourism. The periodic conflicts in Laikipia led to loss of jobs in ranches as workers were laid off when ranches shut their operations as conflicts and invasion became unbearable. Armed ethnic gangs mobilised along ethnic identities destroyed property, murdered wildlife and endangered lives of tourists. Occasional displacement of the Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru ethnic communities along ethnic lines disrupted their livelihoods that was inherently crop farming. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The ethnic mobilisation to displace ethnic Bantu from land holding was instigated and facilitated by conflicts actors along ethnic lines. Mobilised gangs along ethnic lines targeted members of the rival ethnic groups over land holding rights because land was their factor of production in their economic substructure.

¹⁰⁵²Oral interview, Sereti Lesoiti, interviewed in Segera on 12th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁵³Oral account, Faith Adalet, interviewed in Nyahururu on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁵⁴Kipsang Joseph: Tackle the root causes of Laikipia clashes once and for all, *The Standard* 12, 2021.

¹⁰⁵⁵Drought, Violence and politics inside Laikipia's cattle war, *International crisis group*, 20th July 2022.

European nationals who owned ranches, conservancies and lodges in Laikipia area indicted the Kenyan government for its half-hearted response which resulted into losses amounting to millions of shillings since 2006. The series of ranch attacks and the murder of some of them rattled made some of them to flee the country for their safety.¹⁰⁵⁶ This study held that ranch owners were targeted by conflict actors over land holding rights. This was because of the significance of land as factor of production for the herders in their economic substructure.

6.11 Impact of Land Related Inter-ethnic Conflicts on Kenya, Britain and Western European Countries Relations Since 1992

Kenya enjoyed robust relations with Britain since the colonial days. It was on this account that Prince William visited Laikipia in 2018 and visited British Army Training Unit in Kenya in Nanyuki as a demonstration of the British ties in Laikipia. Earlier in what seemed like a British future royal bond with Kenya and particularly Laikipia, Prince William – the first in line to the United Kingdom monarchy – proposed to Kate Middleton at a long cabin in Laikipia in 2010.¹⁰⁵⁷

Since the initial ranch invasions in 2006, the conflict in Laikipia strained the British-Kenyan diplomatic ties. This threatens the Kenya shillings ten billion investments on British Army Training Unit in Kenya by the British government which contributed about six point seven five billion in Laikipia on rent and Leases. An estimated ten thousand British soldiers underwent training in Olmaisor in Sossian and Ol Daiga every year. The arid temperatures were said to be ideal for their kind of training. British Army Training unit in Kenya channeled about two billion into Nanyuki's economy inform of rates, licenses and fee. The British Army Training Unit in Kenya

¹⁰⁵⁶Oral interview, Adelite Ayla, interviewed in Nyahururu on 17th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁵⁷Jason Burke: Inequality, drought and the deadly fight for precious grazing land in Kenya, Guardian, 3rd May, 2017.

was also responsible for the construction of roads, schools and creation of employment in the area.¹⁰⁵⁸

Despite the foregoing, the murder of foreign nationals got the attention of the European media and posed a threat to the robust relations that exist.¹⁰⁵⁹ On 5th March 2017, Tristian Voorspuy – a British-Kenyan Safari guide was brutally murdered. In April 2017, ethnic Pokot were mobilised on along ethnic lines killed Kuki Gillman and his daughter.

The British High Commissioner blamed the attacks on incitement by politicians. At the height of the Laikipia attacks on ranches the British government issued a travel advisory against Kenya. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson expressed his concern over these conflicts in his visit to Kenya in March 2017. British envoy called on the Kenyan government to restore law and order.¹⁰⁶⁰ This study maintained that attacks on foreign nationals mobilised along ethnic lines were protest over land holding rights in Laikipia area . Land for the herders attacking foreign nationals was their factor of production in their modes of production.

6.12 Conflict Resolutions in the Inter-ethnic Land Conflict in Laikipia Area

Since 1992

Conflict prevention was a crisis mitigation approach geared toward silencing the gun and the devastating consequences of a protracted inter-ethnic land conflicts.¹⁰⁶¹ It saved communities and civilians at large from the vicious experiences of inter-ethnic

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁰ Jason Burke; Inequality, drought and the deadly fight for precious grazing land in Kenya, *Guardian*, 3rd May, 2017.

¹⁰⁶¹ Pius Male Ssentumbwe. *Dynamics of world peace*. Eldoret: Amecea Gaba publication, 2009, p. 211.

land conflicts and the ensuing ravaging trauma in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. It was therefore, a needful option in light of endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts.

The last decade of the 20th century recorded an upward trend in inter-ethnic land conflicts globally. This was a shift from the hitherto inter-state conflicts in a century acclaimed as the most violent century in the human civilisation since the dawn of time.¹⁰⁶² As a systematic response strategy to these massive inter-ethnic conflict outbursts, the United Nations devised peace keeping as part of its immediate conflicts prevention blue print and action plan. Even though preventive diplomacy was a widely acclaimed strategy of preventing conflict as a primary measure, other forms of action were preventive disarmament, humanitarian actions and peace building efforts enforced to prevent conflict. Preventive diplomacy was handy in enabling the international community to proactively deal with violence in states degenerating into lawlessness, terrorism hubs and corridors of peddling small arms and light weapons. It was a quick response to crises before they escalated further.¹⁰⁶³

In essence, preventive diplomacy was the application of practical nonaggressive measures to avert inter-ethnic land conflicts cleavages from blowing up into violent conflicts.¹⁰⁶⁴ It also facilitated peaceful inter-ethnic land conflicts resolutions. Besides, diplomacy's place in shaping multi-national foreign relations and bilateral trade concessions across the world, it is vital in mitigating inter-ethnic land conflicts world over.¹⁰⁶⁵ In a widened scope, diplomatic avenues include; military intervention,

¹⁰⁶²*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁰⁶⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁵Allen Sens Peter Stoett: *Global politics*, Allison: Nelson College indigenous, p. 240.

threatening and intimidating warring parties toward achieving a cease fire, restoring law and order and finding a sustainable solution to the conflicts.¹⁰⁶⁶

There were varied and several diplomatic techniques employed in conflict mitigation in Laikipia area since 1992. They were signaling, bargaining and negotiation and third party negotiation. In signaling, the objects, willingness and contentious issues were expressed through communication. These communications included written and oral speeches, declarations and face to face talks.¹⁰⁶⁷ Bargaining and negotiations by and large, entailed concerted efforts to strike a compromise between warring groups. It involved the givens and taken from both sides and aims at drawing up acceptable settlements by both sides of the conflicts divide. In bargaining and negotiation several tactics are involved.¹⁰⁶⁸

From the foregoing the diplomatic process aimed at reaching a compromise that is widely receptive to all the protagonists in conflicts. Inter-ethnic land conflicts experienced in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 2007/8, 2017 and 2021 in the areas of Mukogodo, Sipili, Rumuruti, Ng'arua, Marmanent and Ol Moran were mitigated through various preventive diplomatic mechanisms by various peace actors and agencies. This strategies included dialogue, disarmament, humanitarian action and peace building efforts.

6.13.1 Multi-Sectorial Intervention in Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area

Since 1992

As mentioned in the previous section, several actors were actively involved in ending perennial inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008,

¹⁰⁶⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁷*Ibid*

¹⁰⁶⁸*Ibid*

2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁶⁹ They included the national government intervention, County governments, Non-Governmental organisations, community leaders and elders and church leaders.¹⁰⁷⁰ This study held that since the conflicts were mobilised on the basis of ethnic identities they engaged affected ethnic groups with the aim of finding a sustainable solution. Conflicts preventive mechanism revolved around land because its influence in the conflicts as a factor of production in different ethnic groups modes of production. This was in line with the tenets of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

6.13.2 National Government Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

The national government lacked the appropriate mechanism to end the conflicts in Laikipia in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁷¹ All the ethnic communities in Laikipia were not satisfied with government inconsistent efforts to resolve the Laikipia conflicts conclusively. The President Daniel Moi regime intervened in the perennial inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992 and 1997.¹⁰⁷² The national government involved the provincial administrators through the Kenya African National Union youth league – who acted as a paramilitary and the Kenya police reservist were all involved in the conflict mitigation. Besides, regional leaders and litigation was used as conflict mitigation actors and strategies.¹⁰⁷³ At the tail end of the President Daniel Moi regime, the government tried to fix the squatter problem in Laikipia area.¹⁰⁷⁴ President Moi issued Land titles to internally Displaced persons.

¹⁰⁶⁹Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 114.

¹⁰⁷⁰Oral interview, Ekiru Levi, interviewed in Dol Dol on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁷¹Kibisu Kabatesi, Brutality won't settle Laikipia conflicts; The Star Newspaper, 17th September, 2021.

¹⁰⁷²Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁷³Oral interview, Esinyen Wycliffe, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁷⁴Oral interview, Moses Gazemba, interviewed in Dol Dol on 17th August, 2023.

Even, so it failed to address the historical land injustices and issuance of title deeds was just a knee jerk reaction.¹⁰⁷⁵

At the outset of President Mwai Kibaki regime in 2013, Free Primary Education and the general political stability became an indicator for the massive national government approval rating and good will among the residents in Laikipia area.¹⁰⁷⁶ This background of opportunism contributed hugely to multi-ethnic cohesion and co-existence. The young people dropped weapons for both formal and informal employment and other government initiatives that aimed at empowering the young people with necessary skills to self-sufficiently survive.¹⁰⁷⁷

In 2004 the community policing programme was conceived in Laikipia area.¹⁰⁷⁸ Its composition put into account the ethnic diversity and the fact that inter-ethnic conflicts were instigated by various actors. It worked toward restoring lasting peace among warring ethnic groups in the area. District Peace Committees were also set up in 2009 as a conflict intervention strategy in the area.¹⁰⁷⁹ At the height of the inter-ethnic land conflicts, district peace committees were also formed to try and work out a sustainable solution to the endemic conflicts.¹⁰⁸⁰ These committees involved elders and other key stake holders in peace settlement and sustainable mitigation mechanism.¹⁰⁸¹ The district peace committees were constituted to include stakeholders from warring ethnic groups. This inclusion was informed by the fact that those conflicts were mobilised along ethnic identities. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

¹⁰⁷⁵Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁷⁶Oral interview, Brown Ereng, interviewed in Segera on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁷⁷Oral interview, Peter Nasenyema, interviewed in Rumuruti on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁷⁸Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁷⁹Oral interview, Gideon Githinji, interviewed in Kirimon on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁸⁰Oral interview, Daniel Kimalelel, interviewed in Dol Dol on 16th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁸¹Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 74.

The district committees worked with local communities and non-governmental actors.¹⁰⁸² Other inter-ethnic conflict mitigation actors included local chiefs, their assistants, the Kenya Police Service, the clergy and the court system.¹⁰⁸³ This study upheld that unresolved problem of internally displaced persons was revisited by the Kibaki regime. The Kibaki regime issued more land titles to internally Displaced Persons in a bid to end the squatter question but by the time of leaving office in 2013 the problem still persisted in Laikipia area.

The government overtime beefed up security in the conflict hot spot areas. The government deployed a contingent of multi-agency security personnel reinforced by the police reservists to restore normalcy.¹⁰⁸⁴ In the most recent incidences, the military was involved in the police led operations. This is a spirited attempt to deal decisively and conclusively with sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts.

Government security deployment during the Kibaki regime in Laikipia area included the Kenya police service, General Service Unit, rapid deployment Unit, anti-stock theft unit, Kenya Wildlife Service wardens and the Kenya Defence Forces. Kenya police reservists included civilian Kenyans who volunteered to be part of the policing strategy by complementing the national security agencies. The programme was first conceived in Kenya in 1948, it was enacted through the 1988 Act but presently its operations are guaranteed under the Kenya Police Service Act.¹⁰⁸⁵

In 2021 the President Uhuru Kenyatta regime came up with a raft of measures to end perennial inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.¹⁰⁸⁶ A new police division was

¹⁰⁸²Oral interview, Gareth Gichuru, interviewed in Sweet Waters on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁸³Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁸⁴Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC - Laikipia west, interviewed in Rumuruti on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁸⁵Fredrick Warurii., *Op.Cit.*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁸⁶Brian Okoth; How Matiang'i plans to end Laikipia violence; *The Standard*, September 10, 2021.

created at Ol Moran headquartered in Kirima and elite police training college proposed to be set up in Laikipia to combat perennial inter-ethnic conflicts. The ministry of interior, national coordination and internal security created Kirima Sub-County, with its headquarters in Ol Moran as a conflict intervention measure.¹⁰⁸⁷ This was to help in information gathering, early inter-ethnic land conflict warning systems and quick responses in the event of distress calls.

The Government promised to send a group of surveyors to expedite the land titling problems and engage other ministries and agencies on how to handle the contested conservancies. The government provided humanitarian assistance to the victims of the Laikipia conflicts, provided security in schools to ensure their effective resumption and also investigated politicians inciting and funding violence in Laikipia.¹⁰⁸⁸

From the foregoing, the national government used the wrong strategy in finding a lasting solution to the endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. Every warring ethnic group in the conflicts in Laikipia laid ancestral claim on land. A military solution was not appropriate in solving generations land claims. The contextualisation of the conflict as banditry by the media and the government was ill conceived. Banditry as a practice would not have included evicting locals and burning schools. These were ethnic clashes and invasions on private property were intentional and form of protests. The association of these conflicts to banditry was a ploy by the national government to evade fixing the historical land question. Ultimatums and punitive security operations were established to be temporary measures and were not sustainable strategies. Issuance of title deeds to landless was

¹⁰⁸⁷Drought, Violence and politics inside Laikipia's cattle war, *International crisis group*, 20th July 2022.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

faulted as biased along ethnic lines as claims of favouritism and government protecting certain ethnic groups took root. Government intervention measures should have centred on fixing land issues which was the root cause of inter-ethnic conflict because of its significance as a factor of production.

6.13.3 County Government Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 2013

As a significance of the promulgation of the 2010 constitution, County governments were entrusted with the obligation of handling community resources including land that were heretofore under the oversight of the national government.¹⁰⁸⁹ An informant account elaborated on this that:

The County government of Laikipia engaged actors like donors, faith-based organizations and grass root leaders within Laikipia in reclaiming range lands affected by drought and overstocking. However, the local communities felt that the County government did not adequately address the land issues with finality.¹⁰⁹⁰

This study reiterated that efforts by the County government were in adequate in addressing land issues. Addressing land issues was important because it was the cause of inter-ethnic conflicts their factor of production in their economic substructure.

Land redistribution and compensation remained a contentious issue more than a decade after the introduction of devolution.¹⁰⁹¹ The inability to solve the land question with finality gave for room for inter-ethnic masterminds to have the leeway to mobilize their ethnic groups along their identities to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts.

This nature of mobilisation to assert land holding rights in Laikipia area was driven

¹⁰⁸⁹Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 38.

¹⁰⁹⁰Oral interview, Hezekiah Ndung'u, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁹¹Ian Mwenda., *Op. Cit.*, p. 39.

by the desire to reclaim ancestral land as a factor of production lost during the colonial era. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

6.13.4 Community Leaders and Elders Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land

Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Community elders had a two pronged role in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area in in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁹² On one hand, they were the key pillars upon which inter-ethnic cohesion or peace within this multi-ethnic society was established. On the other, they were the ethnic mouthpiece and nerve centres that declared and endorsed endless inter-ethnic conflicts. Community leaders and elders were actively involved in the district peace committee in a bid to find a lasting solution to the endemic inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area.¹⁰⁹³

This study, thus, affirmed that even if elders incited inter-ethnic conflicts, they were engaged to restore peace. Elders were engaged on resolving underlying land issues for the reason that land as a factor of production was the main issue in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. Land was a force of production in crop farming and pastoralism economic activities for all ethnic groups. This was a tenet of the articulation of the modes of production theory applied in this study.

6.13.5 Religious Groups Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Both Christians and Muslims in Laikipia area spread the message of peace and unconditional love during the war time in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and

¹⁰⁹²Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 117.

¹⁰⁹³Oral interview, Hezekiah Ndung'u, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

2021.¹⁰⁹⁴ They also offered solace, counseling victims and also religious centres served as safe havens sheltering homeless victims who had been internally displaced during the inter-ethnic conflicts.¹⁰⁹⁵ They also provided food, water and clothing to the victims of inter-ethnic conflicts in the area.¹⁰⁹⁶ A catholic non-profit organisation called CARITAS – an international charity operated in Laikipia area since 1992.¹⁰⁹⁷

It had programmes aimed at empowering communities through socio-economic inclusion focusing on poverty alleviation among victims of inter-ethnic land conflicts. The non-profit entity sheltered survivors of inter-ethnic land conflicts by supplying them food, clothing, shelter and medical essentials.¹⁰⁹⁸ This study avowed that religious groups assisted victims of land related inter-ethnic conflicts. These people were victims of these land skirmishes because as a natural resource land was a factor of production for both herders and cereal agriculturalist.

6.13.6 Non-Governmental Organisations Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Non-governmental intervention in Laikipia area essentially was on the humanitarian conflict preventive intervention in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.¹⁰⁹⁹ Humanitarian conflict preventive mechanisms and socio-economic inclusion among the ethnic groups in Laikipia worked to a varying degree in ending sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts in Rumuruti area.¹¹⁰⁰ African Medical and Research Foundation was presence was felt.¹¹⁰¹ The humanitarian agency concentrated on sanitation,

¹⁰⁹⁴Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁹⁵Oral interview, Fredrick Chisia former DC - Laikipia west, interviewed in Rumuruti on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁹⁶Oral interview, Hezekiah Ndung'u, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁹⁷Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 125.

¹⁰⁹⁸Oral account, Michael Ekai, interviewed in Lamuria on 18th August, 2023.

¹⁰⁹⁹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, p. 122.

¹¹⁰⁰Oral interview, Aynu Mercy, interviewed in Rumuruti on 17th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰¹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 123.

nutrition and basic training on inter-ethnic land conflicts victims on proper and safe hygienic practices.¹¹⁰² Other Community Based Organisations included Mwangaza Muungano Tree Nursery, Nyuki and Mwireri whose community projects aimed at promoting socio-cultural cohesion among the many and varied ethnic communities.¹¹⁰³ An oral account explained further that:

Many NGOs were involved in conflict mitigation through humanitarian conflict resolution and prevention through the facilitation of the District peace committees and socio-economic inclusion. The St Martin Catholic Church in Nyahururu facilitated these District Peace Committees. They included Volunteer Service Organisation, RE-INVENT; CARITAS as earlier stated they facilitated the District Peace Committee. They also promoted inter-ethnic cohesion and cultural tolerance through public awareness. They further trained herders and farmers to co-exist peacefully. In addition, herders were prevailed upon to embrace farming.¹¹⁰⁴

Thus, this study held that inter-ethnic humanitarian conflict prevention mechanism and conflict mediation processes targeted the warring ethnic groups. These warring ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities in the expression of inter-ethnic land related conflicts in Laikipia Area. Land was at the centre of these inter-ethnic conflicts because it was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

¹¹⁰²Oral interview, Chenangat Mercy, interviewed in Nyahururu on 19th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰³Oral interview, Dishon Mwangi, interviewed in Nanyuki on 15th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰⁴Oral interview, Steve Biko, ACC 3, Kirima Sub County, interviewed in Ol Moran on 18th August, 2023.

6.13.7 Red Cross Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Red Cross was involved in the humanitarian conflict intervention in Laikipia Area at the height of inter-ethnic conflicts in Ol Moran in the year 2021. Volunteers including basic first aid trainers and Life support and Red Cross action team, were thoroughly trained teams. They carried the Red Cross Emblem which was mostly reflectors. The Red Cross created the warm and hot areas. Survivors were stabilized before referring them for further medication in medical facilities. Stabilization included wound dressing, stopping bleeding and referrals. There were decomposed and mutilated bodies strewn in the conflict hot areas. The bodies were taken to the morgues and their counts recorded.

The teams carried out psychosocial Support to inter-ethnic land conflicts survivors in Ol Moran, Rumuruti, Marmanet, Ng'arua, Sipili and Mukogodo. They also gave out personal effects in form of blanket, and soaps. Red Cross, worked exclusively as a humanitarian conflict intervention agency.¹¹⁰⁵ This study upheld that Red Cross officials intervened to help victims of land related inter-ethnic skirmishes. Land generated inter-ethnic conflicts because it was contested by both herders and crop farmers as a factor of production in their modes of production.

6.13.8 Water Resource Authority Intervention in Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 2013

One of the causal factors of land related inter-ethnic conflicts was scarcity of water resource use among ranchers, herders and cereal agriculturalist in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.¹¹⁰⁶ Water Resource Authority intervened in several

¹¹⁰⁵Oral interview, John Jacob Waichuhi, interviewed in Nyahururu on 16th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰⁶Oral interview, David Akoth, Hydrologist, interviewed in Nanyuki on 15th August, 2023.

ways; it restrained illegal abstractors especially during dry spells – illegal persons who diverted river water for their personal use including irrigation and domestic use. WRA also permitted legal abstractors in accordance to the prescribed guidelines.¹¹⁰⁷

Water Resource Authority sensitized Water Resource Users Association which included stakeholder's association in water catchment. Water Resource Authority collaborated with Water Resource Users Association to enforce the Water Act 2016 and water regulation rules of 2021. Water Resource Authority issued irrigation restriction during the dry spell to ensure that water flow to the respective confluences. Water Resource Authority and Water Resource Users Association prepared rationing programmes for legal abstractors during the dry spell and enforced it to avoid and prevent water conflict among different water users.¹¹⁰⁸ This study affirmed that Water Resource Authority and Water Resource Users Association collaborated to mitigate land related inter-ethnic conflicts. They were a result of competition over land reserved as water points which was useful in their modes of production.

6.13.9 Dialogue Intervention in the Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

Through dialogue it was recognized that inter-ethnic conflict was a product of ethnic mobilisation along ethnic identities in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021.¹¹⁰⁹ In 2013, the Pokot and Samburu brokered a truce at Matumanyu which resulted into relative peace between the two ethnic groups. An oral account affirms that:

¹¹⁰⁷Dishon Mwangi, Hydrologist interviewed in Nanyuki on 15th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰⁸Oral interview, David Akotha, Hydrologist, interviewed in Nanyuki on 15th August, 2023.

¹¹⁰⁹Fredrick Warurii., *Op. Cit.*, pp. 116.

State officers have also been actively involved in mediation and arbitration between and among warring ethnic groups in Laikipia area. State officers engage local leaders, elders and the clergy in a wider scheme to achieve sustainable peace.¹¹¹⁰

This study reiterated that elders and community leaders from warring ethnic groups were involved in brokering truces. These concessions were centred on land which was contested on ethnic lines because it was a factor of production for the herders and crop farmers in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

6.13.10 Chapter Summary

Dynamic changes in land use and land tenure system were an existential threat to pastoralism which was a key source of livelihood in the arid and semi-arid areas. These shifts were occasioned by private development, settler farming, urbanization, ranching and conservancies initiated by colonialism and escalated in the post-colonial era. The net effects were herders' migration to urban areas, overstocking and illegal trespassing on private and public properties as a desperate resort. This happened at the height of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. This was because land was their factor of production for the pastoralist in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

In most cases, the Meru, Agikuyu and Kisii ethnic groups were widely displaced by the Samburu, Maasai, Turkana and Pokot along ethnic identities. This occurred in

¹¹¹⁰Oral interview, Hezekiah Ndung'u, interviewed in Ol Moran on 20th August, 2023.

1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021 inter-ethnic land conflicts. Internally displaced persons became economically disabled and wholly depended on humanitarian aid. They were sheltered in schools, churches and shopping centres as inter-ethnic land conflicts ensued. Non-governmental organisations came in handy and initiated income generating projects aimed at empowering them in the middle of their financial crises. They were displaced the Meru, Agikuyu and Kisii by Samburu, Maasai, Turkana and Pokot in order to control land which was their factor of production in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

Idle and jobless Kenyans took advantage of government repressive measures of combating inter-ethnic land conflicts to join the ethnic based vigilante groups for material reward. The formations of ethnic vigilante groups were along ethnic identities. This transpired during the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. *Mungiki* was formed to fight against marginalization of the ethnic Agikuyu from land holding in Laikipia area. The rise of militia gangs and escalation of insecurity arising from inter-ethnic land conflicts led to the hardening of moranism among the Nilotic pastoralist as their ethnic first line of defense. The hardening and constant mobilisation of the morans in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts was on the basis of ancestral land claims, ethnocentrism and geopolitics. The unemployed young people were manipulated along ethnic lines to defend land holding rights because land was a critical factor of production for both herders and crop farmers. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

The government's half-hearted response to inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area was misconstrued as complicit. This was experienced during the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. The governments of the day supported the ethnic groups of the president in power against the rest of other indigenous ethnic groups. The logic was to aid those protected ethnic groups have an upper hand in accessing land and other natural resources over the rest of the indigenous ethnic groups. These notions sparked counter attacks and escalated inter-ethnic land conflicts. The government was accused of complicity by favouring certain ethnic groups to exploit land as factor of production in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

Laikipia area was inadequately covered by security personnel. Police posts were in some areas sparse and far apart. Some of these areas were rocky, hilly with scrubs vegetation and were sparsely populated. Such areas became criminal hideouts and the inadequate security personnel impeded their swift response to distress calls leading to the escalation of inter-ethnic land conflicts. This was a factor at the height of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. The Kenya Police Reservists were poorly remunerated making them to strike compromise with criminal gangs. They lend their fire arms to criminal elements mobilised along ethnic identities in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in order to survive. Inadequate policing enabled ethnic groups to mobilise along ethnic lines to defend their land holding rights because land was their factor of production in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

The disarmament exercises even though brought momentary reliefs but was largely faulted. It was established that while Samburu and Turkana surrendered their guns or were recovered by the government with excess force, the Pokot did not surrender their firearms. The state machinery, however, did not recover them with the similar zeal applied while disarming the Turkana and Samburu. This reinforced the notion that the government supports the Pokot against other indigenous ethnic groups. This notion was widely held during the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Endless inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area led to food insecurity in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. The sporadic conflicts pitted cereal agriculturalist against herders. The fleeing or displaced crop farmers were unable to concentrate on their farming activities which contributed hugely to food insecurity. This was because land for crop farming was a factor of production in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

Inter-ethnic land conflicts paralysed the transport system and made human and cargo traffic a nightmare in the conflicts hot spots. This was the case at the height of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. There were occasional roadblocks and frequent ambush attacks on travellers by the marauding gangs mobilised along ethnic identities. This affected movements of people and goods to their respective destination within the area and beyond. Protracted inter-ethnic land conflicts had far reaching ramification to the population. They included rape, abductions that led to permanent disappearance and broken

families upon which stable communities are built. These atrocities were committed by gangs who were mobilised along ethnic identities to defend their land holding rights as a factor of production in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

The escalations of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area posed a grave threat to formal education. Endless inter-ethnic land conflicts led to closure of schools and high rates of school drop outs. School drop outs especially among boys became susceptible to manipulation by inter-ethnic land conflict masterminds as hired, coerced and voluntary combatants. This happened at the height of the land related inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. Young boys were mobilised along ethnic identities to defend their land holding rights as a factor of production in their economic substructure. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The national government intervened in the sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts in 1992, 1997, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2021. National government intervention included use of provincial administration, District Peace Committee, issuance of title deeds, community policing programme, use of the KANU youth league, security forces deployment, involvement of community stake holders like the church, elders and leaders. The government intervention was cognizant of the mobilisation along ethnic lines in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts. In this regard, government led dialogues, negotiations and consultative interventions involved stakeholders from warring ethnic communities with the aim of finding sustainable peace. Land was at the centre of inter-ethnic mitigation efforts because it was a

contested factor of production among the herders and crop farmers in their modes of production. These were the tenets of the instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study.

The next chapter therefore was built on this chapter that examined the socio-economic impact of sporadic inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992. It gave the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Overview

This chapter pin points the major aspects of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895 in the realms of periodisation and chronology. The major findings were derived qualitatively through the historical research design. Both primary and secondary sources were adopted and data analysed thematically on the basis of the qualitative research. Periodisation and chronological dimensions were expressed through probing the land problem and its ensuing inter-ethnic conflicts from the colonial and post-colonial eras. Based on the findings, conclusions were drawn and recommendations provided.

7.2 Summary of Findings

The basis of this study was to undertake a historical study of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. The major findings of this study were derived qualitatively through the historical research design and analysed thematically on the basis of the specified objectives.

7.2.1 Migration and Settlement of Ethnic Communities and their Influence on Inter-ethnic Relations in Laikipia Area up to 1963

Laikipia Area was occupied by the Yakku – a hunting and gathering ethnic group before the area was occupied by the herding ethnic Maasai. Yakku were later assimilated or annihilated by the Maasai herders in line with the occupational concept which presupposed that herders' socio-economic and political advancement buttressed with the traditional military technology enabled them to effortlessly displace the crop cultivators and hunters and gatherers in the East African inter-

lacustrine region. These pre-colonial cross-cultural interactions between the Yakku and Maasai formed the initial forms of the cross border inter- ethnic conflicts over land use in Laikipia Area with both laying claim to Laikipian plateau as their ancestral land. These ancestral land claims influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area because land was a factor of production to both crop farmers and herders. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The migration treks of the greater Maa nucleus made pre-historic settlement on the Laikipia plateau. The foregoing gives both the Samburu and Maasai an anthropological ground to claim the whole landscape of Laikipia Area as their ancestral land. This argument of which ethnic group settled in Laikipia first was the root cause of the manipulation of cultural homogeneities and identities of the ethnic groups by conflicts masterminds superficially for rent seeking, ethnic cause and vested interests. Land was contested because it was a factor of production for grazing and crop farming for all the ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The entry of the ethnic Agikuyu, Ameru and the rest of the ethnic Bantu communities into Laikipia Area was first traced to the establishment of the white settler farms. These ethnic groups constituted the labourers recruited on white settler farms. Statistically, the ethnic Agikuyu formed the bulk of this colonial labour force to an estimated ninety per cent of the total labourers on white settler farms. It was against this background therefore that the colonial regime and post-colonial regimes allocated the ethnic Agikuyu land in Laikipia Area through the Squatter Ordinance, Sweynnerton Plan and settlement schemes. The ethnic Agikuyu and Meru also took

advantage of the post-colonial land buying policy to form land buying cooperatives and companies which became their commercial enterprises used to acquire former white settlers land. This fashioned the land question that persist to this day. Ethnic herders claimed that the colonial and post-colonial regimes in Kenya aided and abetted the Agikuyu, Ameru, Kisii and the rest of other Bantu communities to impinge on their ancestral land in Laikipia Area. The preceding led to the escalation of the land question. It also influenced inter-ethnic conflicts because land was their factor of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

The Kalenjin and other herding groups occupying Land in Laikipia Area moved into the area because of their proximity to Baringo and Turkana Counties. They used to move into the area temporarily during the pre-colonial era in search of water and pasture for their livestock. A group of the Kalenjin and other pastoralists were also employed on settler farms as labourers during the colonial period. The land question was therefore generated. The Kalenjin and other herding ethnic communities hold that Laikipia was their ancestral land basing on their historical ties with Laikipia Area stretching into the pre-colonial era. They accessed land in Laikipia because it was their factor of production as pastoralist in their modes of production. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory.

European ties in Laikipia Area were historically traced to the Joseph Thomson adventurous tour in 1883. But, it was not until early 1920's when white settlers began settling in Laikipia Area. This was after the colonial administration successful alienation of the crown land and re-location of the last group of the Maasai to the Loita Area. European settlers at this point bought land in Laikipia Area on leasehold

tenure for commercial enterprise. They set up ranches, conservancies, and mostly recently floriculture.

On the brink of independence from 1959 and soon after in 1963-1964, out of the cloud of fear that gripped most white settlers and the political uncertainties some sold their land in haste while a few remained behind. Most recently, Europeans have bought chunks of land in Laikipia for commercial ventures like ecotourism, conservancies, floriculture and ranching. It was believed that up to seventy per cent of land in Laikipia Area was held by Europeans and rich Kenyan individuals in government and private sectors. The colonial administration created the land question in Laikipia Area through moving the Maasai, Samburu, Ndorobo, Ogiek, Somali and Pokot out and imposing white settlers on the Laikipia plateau. Land was contested because it was a factor of production for herders in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

The rise of the land question in Laikipia Area therefore emanated from the following; first, the earliest forms of migration and settlement that led to cross-border conflicts during the pre-colonial. Second, the occasional movement of the Kalenjin and other herders like Turkana into Laikipia during the dry season in the pre-colonial era and their subsequent employments on settler farms during the colonial. Third, the recruitment of the ethnic Agikuyu, Meru, Kisii and other Bantu groups as labourers on white settler farms during the colonial era in Laikipia Area. Four, the leasing of the alienated crown land to the white settlers on lease hold tenure by the colonial regime after the successful relocation of the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Somali, Ogiek, Ndorobo and Turkana out of Laikipia. Five, the inability by the post-colonial governments to decisively fix the land question in Laikipia Area with finality and its

skewed land reforms and redistribution mechanisms like land buy out policy that were designed to favour certain ethnic groups. Lastly, the colonial land policies like the squatter-master ordinance of 1918, land reforms like Sweynnerton plan and one million settlement schemes that disregarded pre-colonial land holding in Laikipia Area. Land was contested because it was a force of production for both herders and crop farmers in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

7.2.2 Dynamics of the Land Question in Inter-ethnic Relations in Laikipia Area 1895-1992

After the Maasai were successfully re-located to the Loita reserve, the chunk of land in Laikipia was left vacant. Samburu from Isiolo and Marsabit moved into this area but the colonial authorities repulsed them and constricted them into Isiolo where an African reserve for the Samburu was created. This move by the colonial authorities created the land question and its influence on the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. These communities claimed that they were unfairly displaced from their ancestral land in Laikipia by the colonial regime to settle white settlers instead. As a result, majority of these herders from the ethnic Samburu, Maasai, Ndorobo, Tugen, Turkana and Pokot inhabiting illegally occupied absentee Land lord land in Laikipia East, West, Central and Kirima Sub-Counties. These illegal settlements were informed by historical land injustices that saw these indigenous herders disinherited this land in favour of ethnic Agikuyu, Meru, Kisii, white settlers and ranchers. This was also because land was a factor of production for these pastoralist ethnic groups in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

Primordial indigenous commerce between the Kikuyu and Maasai within Laikipia Area around Rumuruti and its environs led to the development of the land question. The basis of this contest was anchored on the concepts where the Maasai hold that Agikuyu were just visitors in Laikipia Area. They visited the area in trade caravans to sell their wares to the Maasai. These pre-colonial trading network heralded a cross fertilisation of ideas through inter-marriage, assimilation and language loan words between the ethnic Agikuyu and Maasai. The Maasai and Agikuyu contest over land in was for the reason that land for grazing and crop farmers was their factor of production in their modes of production. This was in line with the articulation modes of production theory applied in this study.

Politicians fashioned the land question through manipulation of the cultural homogeneities of the indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia Area. They invoked anthropological concepts like the origin and migration to fashion claims that ancestrally belongs to the Maasai, Samburu and most of the pastoralist groups peopling Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. These inflammatory assertions morphed into ethnic animosity and pitted ethnic pastoralist, against Bantu and European ranchers and the build-up of the land question and its resultant influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. The contest over land by both herders and crop farmers was essentially because land was a force of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The preference of the ethnic Agikuyu in the recruitment of the labourers on settler farms with the notion that they were loyal and hardworking created the land question in Laikipia Area. This became the window for the Agikuyu to settle in and as an

import of the Master-Squatter Ordinance of 1918; they were allowed to settle in Laikipia in exchange for their labour on settler farms. The Agikuyu population was massively high compared to any other native ethnic group in Kenya with their statistics approximated to be ninety per cent of the native Africans labourers in Laikipia County. The foregoing validated the presupposition that the colonial regime created ethnic identities through their colonial activities in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

Further, it was worthy to note that these colonial labour relations created a bond between the ethnic Agikuyu with at the behest of the colonial regime. Even during the dreadful days' of the emergency and screening their settlement in Laikipia had been regularised. On the brink of Kenyans independence in the late 1950's an influx of the ethnic Agikuyu was recorded moving into Laikipia in anticipation of inheriting fleeing or migrating white settlers' land. It was against this backdrop that the colonial regime created the land question by creating policies that enabled the ethnic Agikuyu access to land holding as a factor of production. Land before the colonial era was used for grazing among the pre-capitalists herders in Laikipia Area. This was a tenet of articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The radical shift in the land use from the pre-colonial grazing to ranching, conservation and private development during the colonial and post-colonial eras led to the development of the land question. Urban development, private development, creation of ranches, forest reserves, white settler farms and conservancies has overtime threatened the existence of nomadic pastoralism which was a primordial practice among herders peopling Laikipia Area. Land tenure changes from the pre-colonial customary land tenure especially among the pastoralist communities to

private land under lease hold, freehold during the colonial and post-colonial period led to the development of the land question in Laikipia Area.

Land tenure by the colonial and post-colonial regimes created the land question in Laikipia Area. The ethnic pastoralist from their traditional concept and rigid cultures did not embrace private land tenure, this conservative nature led to their exclusion from land holding. The cleavages created by the foregoing went on to escalate land claims by herders through unfair dispossession and their outright exclusion from land distribution and redistribution in Laikipia Area under the colonial and post-colonial regimes. Changes in Land use denied the herder opportunity to exploit land as their factor of production in their modes of production prompting them to rally along their ethnic identities to protest. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The preference of the ethnic Agikuyu over other ethnic pastoralists for colonial labour recruitment under the guise of their loyalty and hard work was a colonial ploy to divide native African ethnic groups and significantly contributed to the land question in the area. This became an opportunity for the ethnic Agikuyu to settle in Laikipia Area especially as a consequence of the Resident Natives Ordinance of 1918 where they traded their labour for settlement, the Sweynnerton land reforms and one-million-acre settlement schemes. These ethnic Agikuyu never left Laikipia from their initial movement into the area to offer colonial labour in settler farms, they only temporarily left during the screening days at the height of the emergency in 1950's and returned after colonial censorship had calmed down. Besides the Agikuyu, the Kisii, Meru and Abaluhya also made significant settlements. The foregoing informs the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot and Ndorobo claim that Laikipia is

their ancestral land and they were unjustly driven out by the colonial and post-colonial administrations to the advantage of the ethnic Kikuyu, Kisii and Meru. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The proposition led to a land contestation between the ethnic herders and crop farmers for the reason that land was their factor of production.

African unity was fluid before and at the advent of the colonial regime. But, overtime urban life, western education, colonial labour on settler farms, spread of Christian religion and political awareness hardened Africans together in the quest for political liberty. The unprecedented unity of purpose by the Africans was affixed to the belief that African political independence would automatically fix the historical land issues in Laikipia Area. However, these expectations were never met as the post-colonial regimes in Kenya inherited the skewed land distribution and redistribution programmes from the colonial regime. The post-colonial regime created the land question by resettling the ethnic Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru through the land buy-out policy instead of redistributing the Laikipia plateau back to the indigenous pastoralist communities. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The failure by the post-colonial regime to fix the land question with finality in Laikipia Area led to contestation over land by crop farmers and herders as a factor of production in their modes of production.

Politics was an underlying factor in the creation and escalation of the land question in Laikipia Area. Toward independence majority of the ethnic pastoralists inclined to the Kenya African Democratic Union ideologies of Majimboism. Majimbo or federalism was conceived as a solution in fixing the land question in Laikipia Area. The ethnic Bantu mostly Agikuyu supported Kenya African Nation Union with its

unitary government ideology. The unitary ideology meant a unified country and assured the Agikuyu, Kisii and Meru land holding in what was perceived to be an alien territory that was Laikipia. The failure to fix the underlying land issues through the political solution in the post-independent dispensation led to the escalation and entrenchment of the land question among herders, crop farmers and ranchers. Land was a factor of production for both herders and crop farmers in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory.

In addition, political honchos like Dixon Kihika Kimani and Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki mobilized the ethnic Agikuyu to acquire land in Laikipia Area through the land buy-out policy. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. At this point in time pastoralist rooted in their conservative culture held strongly the belief that land cannot be sold as a property because it was God given. This created a wide gap in the access to land resource between herders and Bantu communities in Laikipia Area who are majorly farmers in the interior and business people in urban areas. The land question also persisted as handwork of the political class who formed ethnic caucuses like KAMATUSA, GEMA and Mungiki to protect their ethnic interest in land appropriation. These ethnic caucuses fanned and ingrained the land question along the ethnic lines even deeper by devising the us versus them narrative in the land appropriation instead of offering a sustainable solution to the land question in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

7.2.3 Inter-ethnic Conflict Trends in Laikipia Area Since 1895

During the pre-colonial era the ethnic Maasai were mobilised along their identities to stop Pokot settlement in Laikipia Area along their ethnic identities was because they wanted to land as their factor of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism

theory applied in this study. As a result, the two groups engaged in endless cross-border conflicts over land use. Both ethnic groups were pre-dominant pastoralists who were interested with land in Laikipia as grazing fields in their pre-capitalist pastoralism modes of production. The culture of circumcision and age set system supplied both the Pokot and Maasai with warriors who defended their groups along ethnic lines. This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The inter-ethnic cross-border conflicts between the Wardeia Darya, Ndigiri and Yakku were the earliest forms of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. This was an ethno-territorial arising from diversity in cultures, origin and beliefs between these groups. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The emergence of the Maa group in Laikipia was as a result of the ethno-territorial cross-border conflict in the Yakku, Ndigiri and Wardeia Darya. These ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities to contest for an ethno-territorial space in Laikipia Area. These ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic lines

Gikuyu-Maasai inter-ethnic conflicts were occasional in Rumuruti during the colonial days. The Agikuyu accused the Maasai for stealing the food stuffs while the Maasai counter accusation was that the Agikuyu stole their livestock. These conflicts reduced when Agikuyu market was set up by the colonial regime in Rumuruti. The Agikuyu and Maasai were mobilised along their ethnic identities by conflict actors to clash. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In the run-up to elections in 1961, there were inter-ethnic conflicts between ethnic Agikuyu and ethnic Kalenjin in Laikipia Area. The conflicts arose from ethnic Agikuyu assertion that all highlands belonged to them including the Laikipian plateau. The ethnic Kalenjin and Maasai were mobilised along their ethnic identities

by conflict actors in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. In the Mukogodo division, historically, Maasai fought the Samburu since 1992 invasions into the forest during the dry spell between January and April. The Samburu were heavily armed than the Maasai and this explained their constant invasions. Maasai held that it was their noble obligation to conserve and preserve Mukogodo forest. But, Samburu made the forest their corridor to move stolen cattle and grazing fields. In the process they also impinged on the Maasai community land and particularly land reserved for future grazing in the Maasai community land. The context of the perennial Maasai-Samburu conflict in Mukogodo was as a result of the manipulation of aspects ethnic identities by conflicts actors. This was a tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

In 1992 and 1997 there were inter-ethnic conflicts in Rumuruti, Ng'arua, Marmanet and Ol Moran. The idea was to displace the ethnic Agikuyu from land holding in Laikipia Area and intimidate the ethnic Agikuyu voting pattern to deny Mwai Kibaki and Kenneth Matiba twenty five per cent of the presidential vote in the vote rich expansive Rift Valley region. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory of this study. Besides, it was an attempt by the pastoralist groups to re-capture their so called unjustly alienated land by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes in Kenya. These mobilisations were along ethnic identities which were manipulated by conflict actors.

In Rumuruti inter-ethnic conflicts were expressed between ethnic Agikuyu against Samburu and Pokot. Conflict actors manipulated ethnic identities of these warring ethnic groups in the occurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts. The ethnic Agikuyu formed *Mungiki* in 1997 as their ethnic militia to guarantee them foothold on landholding in

Laikipia Area County against the perceived dispossession threats from ethnic pastoralists. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The 2007/8 inter-ethnic conflicts pitted ethnic Bantu against ethnic pastoralist Nilotes along their ethnic lines. Conflict actors manipulated their aspects of ethnic identities in the manifestation of inter-ethnic skirmishes. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Nilotes supported Orange Democratic Movement whose win would guarantee them repossession of their ancestral lands in Laikipia while the Bantu supported Party of National Unity whose win would assure them land holding rights.

Ethnic pastoralists were rallied along their ethnic identities since 2006 to invade ranches, conservancies and private lands belonging to ethnic Bantu and Europeans during the dry spells between January and April. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. On 31st March, 2017 the Pokot invaded Mukutan lodge and killed the Italian rancher Kuki Gallmann and his daughter. That same month ethnic herders also invaded Sosian ranch and killed a British-Kenyan safari guide Tristian Voorspuy that same year.

The reason was that ranches occupied their ancestral land that was unfairly dispossessed at the behest of the colonial regime in Kenya. Ranch invasions happened around election period so it was established to be politically activated. For instance, in the run up to the 2022 general election illegal grazing on private farms was rampant. Politicians took advantage of the historical land question to mobilize and instigate ranch invasions by manipulating the ethnic identities of their ethnic groups for political capital.

7.2.4 The Land Question Influence on Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia Area Since 1992

The radical shift in land use triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, and 2021. These inter-ethnic conflicts occurred in Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Marmanet, Ol Moran, Ng'arua and Sipili. The rise of urbanization, ranches, forest reserves private land and the setting up of conservancies threatened pastoralist grazing space and the existence of the practice itself. The preceding invoked ancestral land claims along ethnic identities arising from colonial dispossession and post-colonial disregard of the pre-colonial land holding rights. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The ethnic pastoralists were incited or compelled along ethnic lines to invade private land, ranches, and conservancies and evict ethnic Bantu in protest for impinging on their ancestral land. This happened from 2006 to 2021, land was contested because it was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders in their modes of production. This was in line with the articulation of modes of production theory applied used in this study.

High prevalence of joblessness and idleness among the youth triggered inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, and 2021. It made them susceptible to misuse by inciters who manipulated them along their ethnic identities as ethnic combatants' grouped against the other ethnic groups. The jobless youth also took advantage of government measures like formation of vigilante groups to join ethnic militia that were formed by inter-ethnic masterminds as reactionary moves to counter government backed vigilante groups. Mungiki arose in 1997 out of the notion that the ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia Area was threatened. Such cleavages or threats were fashioned by elites or politicians. The rise

and hardening of Mungiki provoked the ethnic pastoralists groups to re-strengthen their traditional moranism institution in readiness for an eventual inter-ethnic land clash. These ethnic groups contested over land as grazing space and crop farming. Land in this case was their factor of production in their modes of production. The mobilisation along ethnic identities to fight for land holding rights was for the reason that land was their factor of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The Government's halfhearted response to ending inter-ethnic conflicts and fixing the land question with finality became a trigger to inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, and 2021 . The Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Arap Moi and Mwai Kibaki governments witnessed the formation of ethnic groups like GEMA, KAMATUSA and Mungiki without taking a decisive action to disband and eliminate their mobilisation along ethnic lines that ended up jeopardizing ethnic integration and escalation of the land question and its influence in the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. GEMA, KAMATUSA and Mungiki mobilised the ethnic groups in Laikipia along their ethnic identities in the build-up to the land question and the manifestation of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. The general notion that the leader of the ethnic group that assumes power assured its ethnic group land holding took root. GEMA for instance ensured the ethnic Agikuyu access to land holding and an advantage over access to natural resources over the ethnic pastoralists' communities.

The formation of ethnic groups like KAMATUSA during the Moi era was followed by the disbandment of GEMA to serve the same cause as the latter – to protect the interest of the pastoralist ethnic communities in resource allocation including land.

Land related inter-ethnic conflicts were experienced in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, and 2021 in the areas of Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Marmanet, Ol Moran, Ng'arua and Sipili. It also reverberated during the Kibaki regime 2002-2013 when within the very power of the government; Mungiki committed a series of atrocities in Laikipia area in the pretext of Gikuyu cultural renaissance. However, it subtly fought for ethnic Agikuyu land holding rights and threats of political marginalization in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. There were therefore compelling reasons to indict various government regimes for subtly escalating the progression of the land question and its exerting pressure on the expression of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Land was at the centre of inter-ethnic conflicts because it was a factor of production for the herders and crop farmers. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

The post-colonial underdevelopment policies bred the genesis of the land question and its expression to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. As earlier noted Land related inter-ethnic conflicts were experienced in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018, and 2021 in the areas of Mukogodo, Rumuruti, Marmanet, Ol Moran, Ng'arua and Sipili Laikipia Area was an expansive as earlier established but was poorly policed. Police stations were far apart in a rocky, hilly and dusty terrain which became the safe haven for criminal elements and masterminds of inter-ethnic land conflicts. The road network and communication infrastructure were poorly developed by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes giving law enforcement officers a nightmare and inability to swiftly respond to distress calls. While conceiving the idea of police reservist by the national government was ideal, it was unsustainable because of their poor remuneration which stretched their integrity

making them to compromise with criminal elements. This sort of compromise for convenience involved renting out their fire arms and ammunitions to the criminals at a fee. The need to acquire firearms was to defend land as a factor of production among the herders and crop farmers. This was a tenet of the articulation modes of production theory applied in this study.

The national government complicit in the expression of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area stretched into the disarmament exercise. The interest of the government to protect certain ethnic groups was because land was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders. The national government protected the Pokot over the Samburu and Turkana on the basis of their ethnic identities. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The government disarmament of the Pokot was never as punitive and intensive as those of Samburu and Turkana leaving the latter with arms to orchestrate inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. As a result, land related inter-ethnic conflicts were experienced in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, and Mukogodo area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021.

7.2.5 Socio-economic Impact of Inter-ethnic Land Conflicts on Laikipia Area

Since 1992

Perennial inter-ethnic land conflicts resulted in food insecurity in Laikipia Area since 1992 because land was a factor of production. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. Mostly ethnic Bantu were displaced by pastoralist making them unproductive because they were predominantly crop farmers. The resultant of the foregoing was food insecurity as the displaced farmers

lived in internally displaced camps in schools, churches and market centres for their safety.

Inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Marmanet, Sipili and Mukogodo area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 led to the transport paralysis resulting into the breakdown of the movement of people and goods. There were several and varied road blocks mounted by ethnic militia targeting members of specific ethnic groups at the height of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. In some instances marauding ethnic gangs executed road ambushes as they targeted members of particular ethnic groups they deemed were rivals in land holding in Laikipia Area. The foregoing affected the movement of people and cargo in Laikipia Area and beyond. Transport paralysees were as a result of mobilised ethnic groups along their ethnic identities to defend their land holding rights as their factor of production in their modes of production. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory of this study.

Long-drawn-out inter-ethnic land conflicts had far reaching consequences in Laikipia Area in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Marmanet, Sipili and Mukogodo area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. The age old inter-ethnic conflicts led to rape, abductions or even permanent disappearances of individuals and the breakdown of the family fabric through painful separations. The outlined consequences were orchestrated by ethnic militia under the influence of conflicts actors' targeted victims of a particular group on the basis of ethnic identity.

Perennial inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia posed a massive threat to the provision of basic education to learners in Laikipia Area in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Marmanet, Sipili and Mukogodo area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. Primary and

secondary schools were occasionally shut down at the height of the height of inter-ethnic conflicts. Learners and teachers whose ethnic identities were targets were forced to abandon schooling or relocated to safer havens. Schools also in inter-ethnic conflict areas in Marmanet, Ol Moran, Ng'arua and Mukogodo shut down completely as the conflicts intensified. Learners in worst case scenarios transitioned into combatants as the ethnic conflict masterminds manipulated them to achieve their outcome. Provision of education was affected for the reason that ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities to defend land as their factor of production as herders and crop farmers.

The national government intervention in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in Rumuruti, Ol Moran, Marmanet, Sipili and Mukogodo area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 was in varied and numerous ways. Both the post-colonial regimes made use of the provincial administration, District peace committee, issuance of title deeds, community policing programme, use of the youth leagues, security forces deployment, and participation of community stake holders like the church, elders and political leaders in the mediation process. The government made efforts to consider ethnic diversity through involving inter-ethnic land conflicts stakeholders along their ethnic identities. Land was also factored in the conflicts intervention because of its relevance as a factor of production for both herders and crop farmers. This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study.

7.3 The significance of instrumentalism and articulation of modes of production theories applied in this study

The land question and its influence on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County was a

product of political machinations. Politicians influenced cultural homogeneities and anthropological tenets of the ethnic Maasai, Samburu and Pokot to flare up the land question and the ignition of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Cultural facets like the institution of moranism, legends and language patterns became tools for manipulation by inter-ethnic masterminds to fashion a narrative of marginalization, ancestral land claims and government protection of certain ethnic groups along ethnic lines. This was in line with the instrumentalist theory of this study.

The ethnic Maasai, Samburu and Pokot were incited by politicians to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area to displace ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii along the ethnic lines. The formation of Gikuyu Embu Meru Association (GEMA) and Mungiki were ostensibly formed to assure ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia County. In a reactionary move, Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu association (KAMATUSA) and the traditional institution of moranism were formed and strengthened to ensure ethnic pastoralist land holding in Laikipia Area.

Political figures like Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki and Dixon Kihika Kimani influenced ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia Area through the land buy out policy adopted by the post-colonial regime. This created an ancestral land claim by the ethnic Pokot, Samburu, Maasai and Ndorobo in what they refer to as systematic disinheritance from their ancestral and by influential politicians to the advantage of the ethnic Agikuyu.

The colonial regime created the land question in Laikipia Area that overtime led to inter-ethnic land clashes this was in line with this study's articulation modes of production theory. In this sense, the Anglo-Maasai land concessions of 1904 and 1911, at the behest of the colonial regime that unjustly alienated the ethnic Maasai from the fertile Laikipia plateau in exchange for the unfavourable Loita area in south Rift

Valley. The movement of the Maasai was to create room for white settler farming in Laikipia Area. This proposition created the land question that survived to this day.

The colonial government remained adamant and refused to address the unpopular Maasai relocation proposition in the Maasai petitions of 1913, 1932/4 and 1960. This act of high-level land concessions between Lenana and the British colonial agent termed as an act of fraud was contested to this day and its unfair terms have permeated the Maasai historical fabric and legends as a historic act blatantly disinherit them land holding in Laikipia Area . Besides the Maasai, the colonial regime also moved the Samburu, Pokot, Somali and Ndorobo from Laikipia Area during the colonial era ostensibly to reserve room for white settlement. The preceding informs the latter's ancestral land claims in Laikipia that forms the bedrock of the land question in the Area. The inability by the post-colonial regimes to address these Anglo-Maasai land concessions and ancestral land claims by indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia was the root cause of ranch invasions and inter-ethnic land conflicts.

The colonial regime preference of the ethnic Agikuyu in offering colonial labour became the initial window for the ethnic Agikuyu land holding in Laikipia Area. The ethnic Agikuyu through this colonial policy occupied what the ethnic Maasai, Samburu and Pokot claim to be their ancestral land through colonial land reforms like Resident Natives Ordinance of 1918 and Swynnerton Plan of 1950's and one million acre settlement schemes. The preceding created the historical land claims by the ethnic Maasai, Pokot, Ndorobo and Samburu who insisted that their land was unfairly redistributed and distributed by both the colonial and post-colonial regimes. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory of this study.

The activities of the colonial regime like changes in land tenure and land use

dismantled the primordial land holding systems that in the long run tended to alienate the ethnic Pokot, Maasai, Samburu and Ndorobo their ancestral land in Laikipia Area. This was in line with the articulation modes of production theory of this study. Primordial legends of origin and settlement of the Samburu and Maasai indigenous ethnic groups in Laikipia forms the bedrock of the land question and its far-reaching ramifications in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area. From the instrumentalist theoretical perspective of this study the Samburu and Maasai who were predominant nomadic pastoralists were the earliest to settle in Laikipia Area after displacing and assimilating indigenous ethnic group like the hunting and food gathering Yakku. Ethnic Maasai and Samburu displaced and assimilated the Yakku before making settlement that was massively interrupted by the introduction of colonialism in the area. In addition to the foregoing the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area were contests between herders' ranchers, food hunters and gatherers. As a result, the two theories complemented to give a broad-based context of the land problem and its influence to the sporadic occurrences of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area in a plethora of anthropological, institutional, socio-cultural and economic realms.

7.4 Conclusions

Ancestral land claims arising from migration and settlement led to the rise of the land question that triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. Anthropological concepts like the primordial origin and settlement of the ethnic groups in Laikipia were manipulated to generate the land question between the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Tugen, Ndorobo, Ogiek and Turkana and Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii on accounts of who first peopled the expansive areas. This was in line with

the instrumentalism theory of this study. This was also manipulated by the conflict actors to trigger endless inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area because land was a factor of production for both farmers and herders.

Changes in land use and land tenure during the colonial and post-colonial era, geopolitics, ethnocentrism and skewed resettlement programmes by post-colonial regimes contributed to the rise of the land question in Laikipia Area. The colonial paradigm shift in land use and land tenure systems unjustly alienated Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Tugen, Ndorobo, Ogiek and Turkana mostly pastoralist from their ancestral land through the colonial land policies which became the origin of the age-old land question in Laikipia area since 1895. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study.

The inability by the post-colonial regimes to address these historical land injustices became the reason Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Tugen, Ndorobo, Ogiek and Turkana ethnic groups waged sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts to violently protest years of neglect and conscious marginalization by the post-colonial regimes in favour of the ethnic Agikuyu, Meru and Kisii. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study, the land related conflicts occurred in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. Land was contested because it was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders in their modes of production.

There were inter-ethnic conflicts in pre-colonial era, colonial era and post-colonial era. During the colonial era conflicts were witnessed in 1957 and 1959. There were also inter-ethnic conflicts during the following regimes; Moi era between 1992 and 1997, Kibaki era in 2007/8 and 2017 and finally the Uhuru Kenyatta era in 2021 and 2022. The Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Ogiek, Turkana, Ndorobo, Agikuyu, Meru and

Kisii were rallied along their ethnic identities by conflict actors in the expression of these conflicts. Aspects like language, symbols, traditional rituals like oathing, beliefs, origin and migration arising from oral tradition were manipulated by conflicts actors to rally ethnic groups against each the other. This was in line with the tenets instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Ogiek, Turkana and Ndorobo strengthened their traditional institution of moranism to attack other ethnic groups or defend themselves against other ethnic groups since the pre-colonial era. The Agikuyu on their part were forced to form Mungiki in 1997 as an operative to defend themselves from the attack from other ethnic groups during the Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta regimes.

The Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Ogiek and Ndorobo took up arms to defend their land holding rights in Laikipia Area. They insisted that colonialism; changes in land use and tenure, land buy out policy and government resettlement programmes and inability to fix the land question with finality led to their loss of ancestral land holding rights in Laikipia Area. Land was the main cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. Politicians' and the media manipulated ethnic identities, gender dimensions, skewed post-colonial land distribution and redistribution anthropological patterns like primordial human settlements and the age-old culture of moranism in the fashioning of the land question. They incitement sporadic inter-ethnic conflicts in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021 that arose from land contestation in Laikipia Area. The land titles issuance to the landless and the post-colonial land reforms as well as government resettlement programmes like land buy out policy were established as dynamics that intensified inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia Area . Conflicts masterminds pointed out cleavages in the foregoing along the ethnic identities to fashion the narrative of some ethnic exclusion and government

protection of certain ethnic groups at the expense of others. This was in line with the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Land was at the centre of these inter-ethnic conflicts because it was a factor of production for both crop farmers and herders in Laikipia Area.

Inter-ethnic land conflicts had far reaching consequences in Laikipia Area in 1992, 1997, 2007, 2008, 2017, 2018 and 2021. These were loss of lives and livelihood, ravaging famine, collapse of institutions, lawlessness, and trauma and break down of the social and moral fabric. Further, endemic inter-ethnic land conflicts had far reaching consequences on education, environment, Laikipia's potential as a tourist hub, human carnage and forcible translocation and also hurt the British-Kenyan relations. Conflict masterminds manipulated ethnic identities to trigger inter-ethnic land conflicts. This was a tenet of the instrumentalism theory applied in this study. Inter-ethnic land conflicts mitigation measures applied in Laikipia Area were assessed and found inadequate. Government punitive expeditions were misconstrued as targeting certain ethnic groups at the expense of addressing the historical land issues. These land related inter-ethnic socio-economic consequences arose from the need to access land as factor of production along ethnic identities.

In general therefore; the general objective of this study was to undertake the historical study of the land question in relation to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895. The land question was a factor causing inter-ethnic conflicts worldwide. Banaji Jairus in his book *illusions about peasantry and Agrarian question* alluded that land as a factor of production creates social relations.¹¹¹¹ This was a tenet of the articulation of modes of production theory applied in this study. It is on this basis that land was the independent variable in this study. Based on Barry Posen

¹¹¹¹ Banaji, J., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 17-36

and Anke Hoeffler weaponization of changes of land tenure, land use, colonialism and Geo-politics along ethnic identities led to inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area.¹¹¹² This was in line with the tenet of instrumentalism theory applied in this study. The land question was the major cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area. It was triggered by changes in land use, ethnocentrism, ancestral land claims, colonialism and government resettlement programmes. Access to land, fixing historical land claims and reducing pressure on land by creating alternative sources of livelihood will fix land issues in Laikipia Area. Land was contested by herders and crop farmers on ethnic lines as a force of production in their modes of production. Ethnic groups were mobilised along their ethnic identities to defend their land holding rights. Aspects of ethnic identities like language, age set system, ethnic symbols, beliefs, traditional oathing rituals, origin, migration and settlements patterns were manipulated by conflicts actors to trigger inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area . This was the knowledge gap this study filled in relations to other studies in the study area.¹¹¹³

7.5 Recommendations

Both levels of Government should address historical land injustices and ancestral land claims in Laikipia area since 1895. Claims by the Maasai, Pokot, Samburu, Ogiek and Turkana were to be addressed.

Dynamics that have contributed to the rise of the land question in Laikipia area since 1895 should be addressed. These dynamics included changes in land use, land tenure and ancestral land claims.

The pressure related to land as the chief cause of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1895 should be addressed. Both levels of governments should work

¹¹¹² Che, A., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 32-58

¹¹¹³Mwenda, (2018). *Op. Cit:* Warurii, (2015). *Op. Cit:* and Wanyama, (2020). *Op. Cit.*

collaboratively to create alternative sources of livelihoods. This will reduce pressure attached on land as a key source livelihood.

Both actors in the peace initiative should intensify their inter-ethnic cohesion. Public awareness should focus on the impact of ethnic diversity to the political economy of Laikipia area.

Perpetrators human of human rights abuses in Laikipia Area since 1992 should be arrested and prosecuted. Victims of perennial inter-ethnic conflicts should be compensated and offered psycho-social support.

7.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Despite the scholarly efforts to bridge the existing lacuna, this study was limited in its objectives to explore other fundamental problems that emerged in the course of this study. The identified areas for further research were critical to a cohesive inter-ethnic existence of the diverse ethnic groups living in Laikipia area and Laikipia's sustainable development as a commercial and tourist hub in the region.

A study on their migration and settlements the Yakku, Ogiek and Ndorobo patterns from their point of origin to their present settlements in Laikipia area remain a lacuna to be filled.

A study on how colonialism, institutional reforms, geo-political, land holding rights from the pre-colonial to the present contributed to the political economy of Laikipia area remain a gap to be filled.

A study on how these ethnic communities coped with this inter-ethnic conflicts trauma and their resilience to recover from these perennial clashes is gaps that need to be filled.

A study on how land as a natural resource contributed to the political economy of Laikipia area in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era remained unexplored.

A study on the influence of inter-ethnic land conflicts on food security would be handy in providing insightful remedies on climate mitigation and food security in Laikipia Area.

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LIST OF RESPONDENTS

S/N O.	Name	Sex	Age	Place interviewed	Ethnicity/ Designation	Interview Date	Status
1	Aaron Mepukori	M	50	Nyahururu	Maasai	19/08/2023	Politician
2	Abdi Mumun	M	72	Segera	Somali	13/08/2023	Businessman
3	Adelite Ayla	F	73	Nyahururu	Turkana	17/08/2023	Elder
4	Adoket Benjamin	M	23	Tigithi	Pokot	15/08/2023	Student
5	Allan Leshan	M	74	Lamuria	Maasai	19/08/2023	Businessman
6	Aynu Mercy	F	40	Rumuruti	Turkana	17/08/2023	Teacher
7	Beatrice Gunay	F	49	Dol Dol	Turkana	18/08/2023	Farmer
8	Benjamin Lemaron	M	78	Nyahururu	Maasai	18/08/2023	Institutional member
9	Brown Ereng	M	34	Segera	Turkana	18/08/2023	Politician
10	Chenang at Mercy	F	56	Nyahururu	Pokot	19/08/2023	Politician
11	Cherotich Musa	M	49	Sweet waters	Pokot	16/08/2023	Herder
12	Clarise Letisha	F	60	Kirimon	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder
13	Clinton Milo	M	75	Lamuria	Maasai	17/08/2023	Elder
14	Cynthia Motialo	F	73	Lamuria	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder
15	Daniel Kimalelel	M	60	Mukogodo	Yakku	16/08/2023	Herder
16	David Akotha	M	52	Nanyuki	WRA Hydrologist	15/08/2023	WRA Hydrologist
17	Delilah	F	77	Nanyuki	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder

	Nasieku						
18	Diana Njoki	F	73	Sipili	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
19	Dinah Teraia	F	75	Nyahururu	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder
20	Dishon Mwangi	M	30	Nanyuki	WRA Hydrologist	15/08/2023	WRA Hydrologist
21	Ekiru Levi	M	59	Dol Dol	Turkana	20/08/2023	Farmer
22	Ekwan Nabos Levi	M	39	Nanyuki	CECM infrastructure, lands, roads, housing and urban development	14/08/2023	CECM infrastructure, lands, roads, housing and urban development
23	Elijah Tokodi	M	40	Lamuria	Maasai	18/08/2023	Religious leader
24	Emmanuel Musto	M	76	Rumuruti	Pokot	17/08/2023	Elder
25	Esinyen Wycliff	M	61	Lamuria	Turkana	18/08/2023	Elder
26	Eve Nduta	F	70	Ol Moran	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
27	Everlyn Wambui	F	71	Dol Dol	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
28	Faith Adalet	F	45	Nyahururu	Turkana	18/08/2023	Politician
29	Faith Wangechi	F	60	Nanyuki	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Pastor
30	Fred Nderitu	M	55	Dol Dol	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
31	Gabriela Kwambo ka	F	75	Matanya	Kisii	19/08/2023	Elder
32	Gareth Gichuru	M	73	Sweet Waters	Kikuyu	20/82023	Elder
33	Gideon Githinji	M	71	Kirimon	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
34	Grace Wairagu	F	45	Segera	National Land commission – Laikipia County coordinator	11/08/2023	National Land commission – Laikipia County coordinator

35	Haggai Ewoi	M	56	Lamuria	Turkana	19/08/2023	Religious leader
36	Hezekiah Ndung'u	M	76	Ol Moran	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
37	Isaac Amari	M	71	Gituamba	Maasai	17/08/2023	Elder
38	Isaac Lengai	M	65	Nanyuki	Maasai	18/08/2023	Pastoralist
39	Jackson Muturo	M	52	Nanyuki	NEMA County Director	15/08/2023	NEMA County Director
40	Jacob Leken	M	66	Segera	Maasai	18/08/2023	Pastoralist
41	James Ekitela	M	40	Dol Dol	Turkana	17/08/2023	Farmer
42	James Sing'aru	M	70	Dol Dol	Maasai	18/08/2023	Pastoralist
43	Joan Haden	F	56	Rumuruti	Turkana	17/08/2023	CBO leader
44	John Jacob Waichuhi	M	28	Nyahururu	Red Cross volunteer	16/08/2023	Red Cross volunteer
45	Joshua Marete	M	55	Lamuria	DCC Laikipia Central	14/08/2023	DCC Laikipia Central
46	Julia Nosim	F	43	Segera	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder
47	Korole Dandio	M	42	Segera	Samburu	12/08/2023	Herder/Businessman
48	Krop Caleb	M	58	Matanya	Pokot	16/08/2023	Ex. Councillor
49	Liz Njeri	F	78	Ng'arua	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder
50	Lotuw Stephen	F	61	Gituamba	Pokot	19/08/2023	Retired Army officer
51	Lucy Cheptoo	F	48	Lamuria	Pokot	17/08/2023	Trained Teacher
52	Micah Lemashon	M	72	Lamuria	Maasai	18/08/2023	Politician
53	Michael Ekai	M	50	Lamuria	Turkana	18/08/2023	Religious leader
54	Monica Muthoni	F	39	Segera	Assistant County Commissioner 1, Laikipia East	11/08/2023	Assistant County Commissioner 1, Laikipia East
55	Morgan	M	74	Rumuruti	Kisii	21/08/2023	Farmer

	Moochi						
56	Moses Gazemba	M	79	Dol Dol	Turkana	17/08/2023	Elder
57	Moses Njihia	M	46	Ol Moran	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Teacher
58	Ole Gachira Ben	M	70	Lamuria	Samburu	14/08/2023	Village elder
59	Oscar Ole Kulet	M	72	Muhotetu	Maasai	20/08/2023	Farmer
60	Patrick Muli	M	52	Nanyuki	Government official	11/08/2023	DCC Laikipia East
61	Peter Muthee	M	55	Segera	Kikuyu	13/08/2023	Shoe shiner
62	Peter Nasenyema	M	71	Rumuruti	Turkana	18/08/2023	Religious leader
63	Richard Lemaiyian	M	45	Segera	Maasai	18/08/2023	Religious leader
64	Richard Ng'ole	M	75	Kirimon	Pokot	16/08/2023	Village Elder
65	Ronald Kalomut	M	30	Nanyuki	Maasai	19/08/2023	Politician
66	Ruth Muthoni	F	54	Sipili	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Doctor
67	Salama Goiden	F	70	Segera	Turkana	18/08/2023	Farmer
68	Salome Naipanoi	F	70	Segera	Samburu	21/08/2023	Elder
69	Samuel K. Tum	M	58	Rumuruti	Snr Chief Rumuruti division	17/08/2023	Snr Chief Rumuruti division
70	Seremetitei Leterimoriti Caroline	F	55	Segera	Samburu	12/08/2023	Crop farmer
71	Sereti Lesoito Abigail	F	60	Segera	Samburu	12/08/2023	Business lady
72	Shales Olesereni	M	70	Segera	Maasai	20/08/2023	Elder
73	Stephen Biko Ochieng	M	28	Ol Moran	ACC 3 Kirima Sub County	18/08/2023	ACC 3 Kirima Sub County
74	Teresa Wachuka	F	51	Lamuria	Chief Lamuria	14/08/2023	Chief Lamuria

	Mukundi				Location		Location
75	Tomitom Viola	F	47	Nyahururu Division	Pokot	17/08/2023	CBO leader
76	Wilfred Kariuki	M	67	Lamuria	Kikuyu	14/08/2023	Village elder
77	Winfrey Peresian	F	92	Rumuruti	Maasai	22/08/2023	Elder
78	Zebedee Kariuki	M	27	Ol Moran	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Student
79	Hilda Waitheka	F	79	Lamuria	Kikuyu	20/08/2023	Elder

LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION RESPONDENTS

S/NO	Identification	Name	Focus Group	
1	LC1	Kwemoi Kiproop	Peace actors	17 th August 2023
2	LC 2	Eli Juma	FGD	
3	LC 3	Victor Limareng		
4	LC 4	Alice Ktum	Nanyuki	
5	LC 5	Amos Pkutat		
6	LC 6	Anne Rutto		
7	LC 7	Geoffrey Lekaldero		
8	LC 8	Simon Leleruk		
9	LC 9	John Leokono	Elders FGD	
10	LC 10	Leleruk Lesuuda	in	
11	LC11	Lenairoshi Anne	Dol Dol	
12	LC12	Lelechukula Michael		
13	LC 13	James Kibet		
14	LC 14	Milca Chepkemboi		
15	LC 15	Benjamin Kipkirui		
16	LC 16	Alex Kipturus		
17	LC 17	Enock Arap Ngetuny	Farmers FGD	26 th August 2023
18	LC 18	Tobias Koinet	Ol Moran	
19	LC 19	Kennedy Legishon		
20	LC 20	Moses Lolkeru		
21	LC 21	Geoffrey Naengop		
22	LC 22	Lankenua Olesereni		
23	LC 23	Joseph Naeku		
24	LC 24	Miriam Nalutuesha		
25	LC 25	Elizabeth Kathambi	Political	23 rd August 2023
26	LC 26	Jacob Mutembi	leaders FGD	
27	LC 27	Edward Muringi	Rumuruti	
28	LC 28	Milton Bundi		
29	LC 29	George Kareri		
31	LC 31	Linus Kagema		
32	LC 32	Charles Thwara		

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Letter of Introduction

Bradley Barasa Namunyu

P.O. Box 190,

Kakamega

bradbarasa@yahoo.com Dear respondent,

REF: REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH EXERCISE

I am a Doctor of Philosophy in History candidate at Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology in the department of Social Science Education. My topic of research is titled; ‘A Historical Study of the Land Question in Relation to Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia area since 1895’

The objectives of this study were to; trace the migration and settlement of the ethnic communities and its influencing on inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1963, investigate the dynamics impacting the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1992, examine inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia area since 1895, assess the influence of the land question on inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992 and evaluate the socio-economic impact of the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992.

I humbly ask for your consent and insightful inputs that will be valuable in writing my doctoral thesis. The collected data will be generated exclusively for academic purposes, your discretion and inalienable rights will be paramount. Kindly accept to offer your candid participation toward this noble academic cause that will go a long way into offering valuable insights in this persisting phenomenon.

Yours faithfully,

Bradley Barasa Namunyu

REG NO: HIS/H/01-70282/2021

APPENDIX II: Consent Form for the Respondents

Consent follow to allow the use of photographs and verbatim from the respondents.

I am requesting for your permission to use your photos and responses verbatim in this s study.

If yes

I..... (Respondents name) allow the use of my
photographs and responses verbatim in this research study on this day
..... (Day and date)

If no

I (Respondent name) do not allow the use of
my photographs and verbatim in this research study on this
day..... (Day and Date)

Signature of the Respondent.....

APPENDIX III: Interview guide

Section A: Demographic data

Gender.....

Marital Status:

Religious Attachment:

Year of Birth:

Origin:

Name of Group:

Sub-County of residence

Section B: Thematic Questions

Guiding Research question: What influence has migration and settlement of ethnic communities had on inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1963?

What is your ethnic group?

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Describe the migration and settlement of ethnic groups into Laikipia area up to 1963?

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How did the origin and migration of ethnic communities in Laikipia area impact inter-ethnic relations up to 1963?

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Section C:

Guiding Research question: Which dynamics influenced the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area since 1895?

How did ethnocentrism influence the land question among ethnic communities in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

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How changes in land use did during the colonial and post-colonial era influenced the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1963-1992?

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How changes in land tenure did from the communal tenure to leasehold and freehold during the colonial era influenced the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1963?

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How did changes in land tenure from the leasehold to freehold to freehold, leasehold and communal hold during the post-colonial era impact on the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

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How did geo-politics in Laikipia area influenced on the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

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How did colonial rule influence the land question among ethnic communities in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1895-1963?

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How the post-colonial government land policies did influenced the land question in inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area 1963-1992?

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Section D:

Guiding Research question: What inter-ethnic conflict trends have been witnessed in Laikipia area since 1895?

What were the inter-ethnic cross-border inter-ethnic trends in Laikipia Area up to 1895?.....

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What were the inter-ethnic relations trends in Laikipia during the colonial era 1895-1963?

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What were the inter-ethnic conflicts trends in Laikipia area during the post-colonial era since 1895?

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Section E:

Guiding Research question: How has the land question influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia Area since 1895?

How ancestral land claims arising from migration and settlement did influenced inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1895?

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How the colonial legacy that dispossessed land holdings of the ethnic groups did influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

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How the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Laikipia area did influenced the land question and triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

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How the post-colonial land did polices and settlement programmes influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

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How geo-politics on land matters did influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since1992?

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How did ethnocentrism on land holding rights triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

Section F: *What were the socio-economic impacts of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?*

What were the socio-economic impacts of inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

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What were intervention mechanisms legal or otherwise applied in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

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APPENDIX IV: Focus Group Discussions Guide

What is your ethnic group?

How did origin and migration of ethnic communities in Laikipia area and its influence on inter-ethnic relations up to 1963

How ethnocentrism did influenced the land question among ethnic communities in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

How changes in land use did during the colonial and post-colonial era influenced the land question in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

How changes in land tenure did from the communal tenure to leasehold and freehold during the colonial era influenced the land question in Laikipia area 1895-1963?

How did changes in land tenure from the leasehold to freehold to freehold, leasehold and communal hold during the post-colonial era impacted on the land question in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

How did geo-politics in Laikipia area impacted on the land question 1895-1992?

How the colonial rule did affected the land question among ethnic communities in Laikipia area 1895-1963?

How has the post-colonial government land policies influenced the land question in Laikipia area since 1963?

How the ancestral land has claims arising from migration and settlement influenced inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia area up to 1963?

How has colonial legacy that dispossessed land holdings of the ethnic groups in Laikipia area influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area 1895-1992?

How has the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Laikipia area influenced the land question and triggered inter-ethnic conflicts since 1992?

How the post-colonial land has policies and settlement programmes influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1963?

How has geo-politics on land matters influenced inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

How has ethnocentrism on land holding rights triggered inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

What are the socio-economic impacts of inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

What are the conflicts intervention mechanisms legal or otherwise applied in the inter-ethnic land conflicts in Laikipia area since 1992?

APPENDIX V: Glossary of Terms in Local Dialects

- Laikipiak* : A Maasai sub-ethnic group
- Ol Pejeta* : A Maasai word for a place where grass is burnt
- Yakku* : An indigenous hunters and gathering community assimilated by the
Maasai
- Ewaso* : A Maasai word meaning a place of plenty water
- Lamuria* : A Maasai name for a n eating spot
- Engare Ngiro* : A Maasai word for dirty water
- Naro Moru* : A Maasai word meaning a place of dark rocks
- Keitoltol* : Something that moves like water
- Ingwesi* : A Maasai sub tribe
- Ildikiri* : The ancestor of the Somek/Sebei
- Muhotetu* : A Kikuyu acronym for Muhoya and Tetu - Nyeri areas
- Lonuruti* : Maasai in origin Corrupted to Rumuruti, avoiding the Aberdares on
the way to Nakuru
- Loogolala* : Lumbwa – the last group to break away from the Maa nuclei
- Iligisi* : Hope

APPENDIX VI: Letter from Directorate of Post-Graduate Studies



MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

Tel: 056-30870
Fax: 056-30153
E-mail: directordps@mmust.ac.ke
Website: www.mmust.ac.ke

P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

Date: 3rd May 2023

Bradley Barasa Namunyu
HIS/H/01-70282/2021
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Mr. Barasa,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your PhD. Proposal entitled: '*Land Question and Inter-ethnic Conflicts in Laikipia County since 1850*' and appointed the following as supervisors:

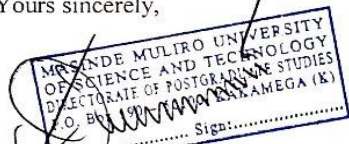
1. Prof. Pontian G. Okoth - MMUST
2. Rev. Fr. Dr. Kizito L Muchanga - MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Social Arts and Social Sciences Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Social Science Education. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of three years from the date of registration to complete your PhD thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.






Yours sincerely,



Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP

DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

APPENDIX VII: NACOSTI

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 788486	Date of Issue: 15/May/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Mr., BRADLEY Barasa NAMUNYU of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Laikipia on the topic: Land Question and inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County since 1850 for the period ending : 15/May/2024.</p>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/23/25895	
788486 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code 
<p>NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.</p>	
See overleaf for conditions	

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way:
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
Innovation(NACOSTI),
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Telephone: 020-4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

**APPENDIX VIII: Research Permit from the Ministry of Interior and National
Administration of Laikipia Area**

**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR & NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**



Telephone: Nanyuki 31268
Fax: 062-2031874
Email: cclaikipiacounty@yahoo.com
When replying please quote

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
LAIKIPIA COUNTY
P.O. BOX 11-10400
NANYUKI

Ref. No. CC.ED.12/14/VOL.II/(170)

31st July, 2023

Deputy County Commissioners
LAIKIPIA

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION - BRADLEY BARASA NAMUNYU

The above named person has been granted necessary reeseach approval by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct a research in Laikipia County. The research topic is "**Land Question and Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County since 1850**" for the period ending 15th May 2024.

Kindly exten to him all the necessary support that he may require from your office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. M. Kanyiri', enclosed in a circular scribble.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
LAIKIPIA

J. M. KANYIRI
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
LAIKIPIA

cc
Bradley Barasa Namunyu
HIS/H.01-70282/2021

**APPENDIX IX: Research permit from the Ministry of Interior and National
Coordination Nyahururu Sub-County**



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Telegrams: 'Districter Nyahururu'
Telephone: 065-2022100
Fax:
Email: commissionernyahururu@gmail.com
When replying please Quote

DEPUTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NYAHURURU SUB COUNTY
P.O BOX 2003 - 20300
NYAHURURU.

NHR/ED/12/8 VOL.I/93

23rd August 2023

**All Assistant County Commissioners
Nyahururu Sub County**

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – BRADLY BARASA NAMUNYU

The above named person has been granted necessary research approval by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct a research in Nyahururu Sub County, Laikipia County. The research topic is **“Land Question and Inter-ethnic conflicts in Laikipia County since 1850”** for the period ending 15th May 2024.

Kindly accord him all the necessary support required from your office.


A. K. MITEMA
DEPUTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NYAHURURU SUB COUNTY



Copy to:

Bradley Barasa Namunyu