

**DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN CENTRES IN KENYA: THE CASE OF KEROKA
TOWN (1905-2018)**

RICHARD NYAKEBONDO MBETA

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
ARTS IN HISTORY OF JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY SEPTEMBER, 2022**

DECLARATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for an award of a diploma or conferment of a degree in any other university or institution.

Signature.....Date.....

Richard Nyakebondo Mbeta
Z152/4448/2012

Approval by supervisors

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors

Signature.....Date.....

Dr. Isaya O. Onjala, (PhD).
School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Signature; DECEASED Date.....

Dr. Maurice O. Kodiwo, (PhD).
School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear wife Rael Nyaboke, my beloved daughters Ruth Kerubo and Naom Bosibori and sons Shem Matoke and Enock Ondara.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of this research work is first and foremost attributed to the power and grace of God who has given me an opportunity and good health to work on it. I appreciate the tireless efforts of my supervisors Dr. Isaya Onjala, the late Dr. Maurice Kodiwo, and the late Prof. Mildred Ndeda of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) in guiding me through this work. They provided constructive suggestions that shaped this study to its final conclusion. I also recognize JOOUST lecturers at the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences who were in the forefront in giving me advice in the course of this study. I thank Mrs. Elmelda Mogoi for her moral and material support. She generously provided me with accommodation and meals whenever I was in Nairobi for research. My appreciation also goes to members of staff at the Kenya National Archives Nairobi and in particular Mrs. Marcella Bosibori Nyamongo and Mr. Richard Ambanyi who were friendly and helpful during research at the Archives. They provided me with all the relevant files. I appreciate the efforts of my beloved wife Rael Nyaboke for her sacrifice in supporting me morally and accommodating the challenges I encountered during research and the writing of this thesis. I recognize the contribution made by Mr. Momanyi Nyagwaya, the then headteacher Karantini S.D.A. Primary School in Masaba North Subcounty, Nyamira County for his support and encouragement. To my friends Mr. George Sagwe, Mrs. Phelister Mokaya, Mr. Isaac Motanya and others, I say *Asanteni Sana!* (Thank you very much)! I'm greatly indebted to all those who offered me assistance in whatever form, moral, intellectual and/or material in the course of this study.

ABSTRACT

The emergence and development of urban centres has been a major topic of study across the globe as urbanization continues to engulf most open and suitable spaces. The historical emergence of some major towns in Kenya has not been left behind. However, smaller towns which are equally important in understanding the complexities of urbanization in a nation still call for investigation. Keroka town having started as a social and cultural centre in the colonial period has become a rapidly growing urban centre. Therefore there was need to investigate the emergence and development of Keroka Urban Centre as a case study to understand the process of urbanization in Kenya's rural set-up. The objectives used to realize this were; i) to examine the emergence and growth of Keroka Urban Centre during the colonial period from 1905 to 1963, ii) to analyze the development of Keroka in the post-colonial period of 1963 to 2018, and iii) to establish the development challenges and impact of Keroka town on its residents and environs. The study adopted village magnet and ribbon models of urbanization theories to explain and interpret the data, as well as used historical research design to guide the study. A sample size of 46 informants was interviewed using purposive and snowball sampling methods. Qualitative data was collected by using interview schedules, focus group discussion guides, observation, and archival records for primary data, as research instruments. Quantitative data was obtained from secondary data sources. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic data analysis method while quantitative data was analyzed using simple statistical methods such as means presented in tables and graphs. The findings indicated that Keroka emerged in the colonial period as a social and cultural centre and continued to grow due to the economic and administrative activities of the colonial government. It developed over time due to population increase, road network, missionary work, introduction of western education and cash crops, increased business opportunities and security among other factors. The challenges the town faced included inadequate social amenities such as hospitals, schools, modern sporting grounds, and lack of major departmental offices to serve the residents. There was also congestion and rise of slums, lack of designated market space, and environmental degradation, boundary and resource conflicts among others. The study recommended that there should be expansion of other offices, such as, agricultural research, gender affairs, heritage and sports, as well as, industrialization in order to bring more services closer to the residents and the surrounding areas. Further, Keroka Cultural centre should be enlarged to enhance Gusii cultural activities. There should also be the enforcement of adequate legal framework in land development and proper urban centre planning.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBD -	Central Business District
CBO-	Community Based Organization
CS-	Cooperative Society
DOK-	Diocese of Kisii
EMCA-	Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act
FAO-	Food and Agriculture Organization
IDPs-	Internally Displaced Persons
JOOUST-	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
KERRA-	Kenya Rural Roads Authority
KNA-	Kenya National Archives
KNBS-	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KPHC-	Kenya Population and Housing Census
KURA-	Kenya Urban Roads Authority
LASDAP-	Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan
LATF-	Local Authorities Transfer Fund
NACOSTI	National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation
NEMA-	National Environmental Management Authority
NGOs -	Non-Governmental Organizations
NUPD-	National Urban Development Policy
OI -	Oral Informant
PRSP-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PUI-	Peri-Urban Interface
SDA-	Seventh Day Adventist
SPSS-	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
TCPD-	Town and Country Planning Department
UNCED-	United Nations Commission on Economic Development
WCED-	World Commission on Economic Development
WWI-	World War I
WWII-	World War II

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Urbanization is one of the most significant drivers of economic, social and physical change in many countries. Hope (2012) defines urbanization as the redistribution of populations from rural to urban settlements over a long time. He adds that the difference between urban and rural is that urban populations are larger, denser, and more heterogeneous compared to small, more sparse and homogeneous rural areas. Rapid urban population growth means an increasing demand for urban land mainly for urban housing and other urban land uses. The increasing demand affects the areas around the city which are usually referred to as peri-urban or urban hinterland.

Clark (1998) notes that the initial form of urban life started in the Middle and Near East in what is today Iraq around 3500 BC. In other words, the oldest urban communities known in history began approximately 6000 years ago and later emerged with the Maya culture in Mexico and in the river basins of China and India. By as early as the 13th century, the biggest cities in the world were the Chinese cities of Chang'an (today's Xi'an) and Hangzhou, which had over one million people. The city of London didn't reach one million people until the 1700s. However, until the 19th Century, inhibited by the limit of food supply and the nature of transportation, the size of the world's urban population remained very small with less than 3 percent of the world's population in urban places by around 1800.

According to Adom (2011), a town is a built up area with a name, defined boundaries and local government that is bigger than a village and smaller than a city. A city is a large human settlement which is larger than a town and is densely populated. The town as a subject provided a readily exclusive and defined area of study. There was a prevalent recognition that towns and cities were critical agents of historical change. Urban settlements were the centres of political change and conflict. They were the point from which civilization emerged. They were the origin of modernity.

Roey (2008) argues that there is a long practice of historical writing based upon a town or city as a major unit which goes back to the classical ancient past. This was an era between 8th Century BC and 6th Century AD which comprised the interlocking civilizations of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, commonly known as Greco-Roman world. In the medieval period, many large cities had chroniclers who recorded the privileges granted by

the charters, the actions of the civic elite and the key events associated with the city. This period was also known as the Middle Ages which lasted from the 5th to the 15th Century. It started with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and transitioned into the renaissance and Age of Discovery. In the early modern period (which lasted from 1500 to 1800), under the pressure of the renaissance humanism, historians such as Machiavelli and Guicciardini produced a fresh kind of urban history, the one that used the town as a microcosm through which to tell a political or moral tale. In the 18th and 19th centuries, studies of particular towns and cities increased swiftly.

According to the United Nations Commission on Economic Development (UNCED) report (2014), urban areas experience new opportunities and challenges in meeting their life needs and accommodating the land use changes. The biggest challenge being that there is strain on the existing natural resources such as land and infrastructure. Therefore, land in the urban areas becomes relatively expensive; particularly those that are located near paved roads. Even if that is the case, Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanizing speedily. Already, cities such as Lagos and Kinshasa include urban agglomerations of over 10 million residents (“megacities”), while Dar-es-Salaam, Johannesburg, and Luanda are projected to reach that size by 2030. This Rapid City growth in sub-Saharan Africa reflects trends across all developing nations. In 1950, most of the world’s main cities were in rich countries, but by 2015 nearly all were in low-income nations (Kessides, 2006).

It is estimated that in 1900 about 95% of Africa’s population south of the Sahara lived on proceeds from farming, hunting and gathering, cattle nomadism and fishing (Aase, 2003). This means 5% of the population was urban. In 1950 (the start of the independence period) in Africa, 14.7% of the continents inhabitants were urban. By 2000 the African urban population had risen to 37.2% and rose to 45.3% in 2015 (UN, 2002). The Nigerian city of Lagos that in 1963 had 665 000 inhabitants (Rakodi, 1997) and 8.7 million in 2000 became the world’s 11th city by 2018 with a population over 14 million. (UN, 2002). This indicates how the urbanization of most of Africa is moving quickly forward, especially south of the Sahara.

According to Cardesin (2002), the origin and development of towns from a historical perspective have been widely studied. However, in most countries, urban studies from a historical perspective are limited. Spanish cities and towns have been studied and between

1975 and 1990, 300 doctoral theses were produced from a historical perspective. These were produced by a wide range of disciplines such as; by early modern historians, economic historians, art historians, architects, and geographers. This took place when there was a prevalent theory that Spain was agrarian and rural until the 1960s. However, by the end of the 1980s economic historians considered cities and towns as driving forces for modernization, infrastructure, municipal services, leisure, and education among other functions. The present study adds to the historical urban studies in Kenya.

Paul (2010) wrote on the origin and development of Beaufort, a North Carolina town in America. It started in 1722 as a small village, not above 12 houses and as a port for unloading and discharging vessels. The inhabitants who seemed miserable lived on fish and oysters. In the 20th Century, the town continued to grow as Episcopal Church Schools were started and rail roads constructed. However, the First World War affected the growth of the town as many young people went to fight in Europe.

Apart from the Spanish and American towns, Adebayo (2012) studied two African cities, Nairobi in Kenya and Durban in South Africa. The study compares the growth and development of the two cities. The study provides that both cities' history is formed by colonial settler administrative and economic activity. Nairobi city was founded towards the end of the 19th Century as an administrative point for British colonial settlers. The British built the railway line to link Uganda and Mombasa on the Indian Ocean Coast of Kenya, for purposes of natural resource extraction (Anyamba, 2005). The moving of the railway headquarters from Mombasa to Nairobi by its chief engineer, Sir George Whitehouse resulted in the consequent growth of Nairobi as a commercial and business hub of the then British East African Protectorate (Situma, 1992). On the other hand, the city of Durban in South Africa is the first European settlement in Kwazulu Natal Province that was established in 1824 by British settlers. The British were concerned with the trading opportunities in the interior (Kuper, 1958). Urban growth in the city of Durban was encouraged by British settlers who after occupation established a fort north of the settlement in 1842. The fort in due course developed into 1200 yard square of ordinance land, squired into a grid iron sheet pattern at the market square (Davies, 1963).

Situma, (1992) studied the history of Nairobi; John, (1976) studied the history of Mombasa while Murunga, (1998) wrote on the evolution of Mumias into an urban centre where he

critiqued the Weberian approach to urbanization due to underdevelopment and uneven development. Murunga's study contends that there is no standard of determining an urban centre and that the people of Wanga had their own form of urbanism and avoids to be tied only to western definitions and standards. Kiruthu (2003) wrote on the history of Nyeri town and the African laborers which started around 1902 when Nyeri port was established by colonialists.

In Nyanza, there are a few studies on urban centres. Anyumba (1996) has studied Kisumu town's history of the built form, planning and environment. Further, Munge (2017) dealt with the emergence and growth of Kenyan towns and used Kisii as a case study beginning 1895 to 1963. Urban centres' history is significant as they continue to grow but whereas large centres have been studied' small urban centres have been overlooked and so it is easy for scholars to lose sight of what they were like in their early years. They are emerging faster than they are being studied. A number of urban centres have not been studied including those in Gusiiland. One of the urban centres that seems very vibrant and ought to be studied is Keroka, hence this study to investigate the history of Keroka urban centre. Nyatwongi (1997) did a study on the "Social-Economic Influence of Small Urban centres on their Hinterlands (planning section): A case of Keroka Town". He dealt with the day to day Social-Economic activities in 1997 and related them to the hinterland while the present study deals with the historical development of Keroka town since 1905. Preston (1979) suggested that the dynamics of urbanization and its relationship to social and economic change can only be discovered by exhaustive historical studies of individual urban centres during the process of development. Therefore historical investigation into the urbanization of Keroka urban centre is necessary to keep track of its emergence and socio-economic developments which has not been realized in any available study.

1.2 The Statement of the Problem

Urbanization brings about rapid economic growth, social, political and physical changes in many states. The evolution and development of cities, towns, and urban centres have been studied by scholars all over the world. In Kenya, few urban centres like Nairobi (Situma, 1992), Mombasa (John, 1976), Nyeri (Kiruthu, 2003), Mumias (Murunga, 1998) and Bungoma (Owuor, 1995) have been studied. In Kisumu and Kisii Counties, only Kisumu (Anyumba, 1996) and Kisii (Munge, 2017) have been covered. Majority of the urban centres remain un-studied. Urban centres' history is significant as they continue to grow but whereas

large centres have been studied, small urban centres have been overlooked and so it is easy for scholars to lose sight of what they were like in their early years. They are emerging faster than they are being studied. A number of urban centres have not been studied including those in Gusiiland. One of the urban centres that seems very vibrant and ought to be studied is Keroka having started as a social and cultural centre of the Kitutu and Nyaribari clans in the colonial period. This became a motivation to undertake this study to investigate the history of Keroka urban centre. Local level studies are usually significant since they contain details that may not necessarily be covered in broader studies. Developing urban centres such as Keroka are increasingly getting concerned over many issues due to rapid population growth and scholars need to study them. Keroka urban centre has particularly had long standing boundary and resource conflicts between the Kitutu and Nyaribari clans. These issues made this study an urgent concern for examining Keroka town as a rapidly growing urban centre despite the challenges. This study was also motivated by the unavailability of studies on this area investigating into the historical growth and development of Keroka as an urban centre hence a knowledge gap that this study filled. Whereas towns like Nairobi started in the colonial period as a transport and communication centre, Kisumu as a railway terminal, Eldoret as a frontier post office and Kisii as an administrative post, this study aims to examine the origin and history of the development of Keroka urban centre, the challenges it faced, and impact to the people and the area since 1905.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine the emergence and development of Keroka Urban Centre since 1905.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the emergence and growth of Keroka Urban Centre during the colonial period from 1905 to 1963.
2. Analyse the development of Keroka town in the postcolonial period from 1963 to 2018.
3. Establish the development challenges and impact of Keroka town on the residents and its surroundings from 1905 to 2018.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What led to the emergence and growth of Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial period from 1905 to 1963?
2. What were the major features of development in Keroka during the post-colonial period of 1963 to 2018?
3. What were the main development challenges and impact of Keroka town on the people within and around the town from 1905 to 2018?

1.5 Assumptions of the Study

The following premises helped the researcher to justify this study and consequently its findings.

1. Keroka urban centre emerged and grew due to the changing social, economic, and political trends spurred by the colonial system from 1905 to 1963.
2. Keroka town developed in the postcolonial period of 1963 to 2018 due to the economic and political changes spurred by the governments of the time.
3. The challenges Keroka town faced did not hinder its growth and as a result the town impacted greatly on the people and the area from 1905 to 2018.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study provides a point of reference among academicians, scholars and historians who wish to have knowledge on urban history and more so the history of urban centres in Kenya. The study therefore contributes to Kenya's urban historiography. It is expected that the results and lessons from the history of Keroka urban centre study will provide a significant guide to effective planning and management of urban development in our towns in Kenya and other countries. Local studies are usually significant since they contain details that may not be obvious in a major study. Keroka urban centre is a suitable ground for this study. The study findings remarkably provide relevant data for historians, town planners, and governments both local and national, in designing new policies for town management and administration.

1.7 Justification of the Study

Keroka urban centre emerged during the colonial period as a social, cultural and trade centre. Initially, Keroka just like most places in many parts of Kenya was known for agricultural and livestock keeping practices. It later became an important centre where laborers resided when the British established their base in Kisii and the settlers' habitation of the Kisii highlands of Nyansiongo Borabu. The study begins in 1905 when the British entered Gusiiland to take control over the Gusii community in western Kenya. In their response, the Abagusii resisted colonial rule. This gives insight on the influence of colonial administration establishment on Keroka urban centre's development. There is currently an increasing interest in urban areas as pertains to their development, planning, and land use change processes in major cities globally. Kenya is no exception because urbanization trends have been on the rise particularly in the areas surrounding or connecting major towns and cities. Uniquely, Keroka is an urban centre bordering two counties, Nyamira and Kisii, and at the same time two clans Kitutu and Nyaribari. This aspect provides fertile ground to analyse the growth pattern, challenges, and impact on its development, so as to be a basis of comparison with centres which might have such environmental location issues.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study of Keroka urban centre covered Keroka Township Location which consists of three sub locations namely; Kegogi, Bocharia, and Nyasore. Keroka Township location is at the border of Masaba North and Masaba South sub counties which lie in Nyamira and Kisii counties respectively. The study focused on the historical urban growth that had taken place within Keroka since 1905. In investigating the development of Keroka urban centre, this study was more interested in the growth trends and the factors that had driven the process of urbanization of Keroka, its challenges, and its impact on the people and the area since 1905. It also looked at other sections of development in terms of social services and physical infrastructure. Keroka urban centre was chosen for this study due to its unique location. It lies between two Gusii clans, Nyaribari and Kitutu, and also at the boundary of two former districts of former Nyanza province; Nyamira and Kisii which are currently Nyamira and Kisii counties. It has thus remained a contentious ground due to regular boundary and resource conflicts for a long time. It is also one of the major roadside urban centres in Gusii that emerged in the colonial period which has shown rapid growth.

The study covered a period from 1905 to 2018. In 1905, the British colonial administration set foot in Kisii. The Gusii people reacted by resisting bitterly but were finally defeated in 1907. 2018 marked the start of the 2nd and final five year term of the 4th president of Kenya-Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta. Two terms presidency of five years each were due to the repealing of section 2A of the Kenyan constitution by president Moi in December 1991 which enabled the introduction of term limits of the presidency. The term limits set were five years renewable once only.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

A limitation is some aspect of the study that will hinder the researcher from producing the required results but over which the researcher has no control. There were limitations in accessing information from various sources such as the attitude of respondents. However, respondents' consent was sought and the respondents were clearly explained the purpose of the study before data collection was done. Another limitation of the study was that urbanization is a process which takes place for a long time. It was not easy for the researcher to get old enough respondents who had transcended through the generation growth of Keroka as an urban centre hence the researcher in addition to oral interviews, used archival data and secondary data sources to get the relevant information on the origin and development of Keroka urban centre since 1905.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms and Concepts

- Urban Centre:** It is a built up area with human settlement created through urbanization. It can be a town or city. In this study urban centre means a town.
- Urbanization:** It is the spread of populations from rural areas to urban settlements over a long period. Urbanization occurs when the urban population grows at a faster rate than the rural population.
- Town:** It is a built up area with a name, defined boundaries and local government. It is larger than a village and smaller than a city.
- Growth of a town:** It is the process whereby an increasing percentage of population comes to live in an urban area.
- Development of a town:** It refers to growth of a town over a long time in relation to aspects such as transportation facilities, industries, safety of public, proximity to agricultural lands, availability of electric power and political, social, and cultural importance of a town among other aspects.
- Small Urban Centre:** Refers to an urban centre of a population between one thousand and fifty thousand.
- Medium urban centre:** Refers to an urban centre of a population between fifty thousand and one and one hundred thousand.
- Big urban centre:** Refers to an urban centre of a population above one hundred thousand.

1.11 Literature Review

This sub-section reviews some of the literature on urbanization and attempted to identify the gaps in the previous works. The review of the previous studies was done from the global, African and Kenyan perspectives based on the themes drawn from the specific objectives.

1.11.1 Global Trends in Urbanization

According to Hope (2012), urbanization is the process by which many people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities. Rural to urban migration means that people move from rural areas to urban areas. In this process the number of people living in cities increase compared with the number of people living in rural areas. A country is considered urbanized when over 50 per cent of its population lives in the urban areas. He adds that urbanization is the process by which rural areas become urbanized as a result of economic development and industrialization. However, demographically, the term urbanization denotes the relocation of populations from rural to urban settlements over time. It is important to acknowledge that the criteria to define what is urban may vary from nation to nation, which cautions us against a strict comparison of urbanization across the world. The basic difference between urban and rural is that urban populations live in larger, denser and more heterogeneous cities as opposed to small, more sparse and less differentiated rural places.

Kasarda (1991) observed that an urban area is a spatial concentration of people who are working in non-agricultural activities. The essential characteristic here is that urban means non- agricultural. Urban can also be defined as a fairly complex concept. Criteria used to define urban can include population size, space, density, and economic organization. Great Britain and some European countries were the first countries which became urbanized. They urbanized comparatively slowly, which allowed governments time to plan and provide facilities for the needs of rising urban populations.

Gilbert (1985) contends that urban growth and development in a regional framework has had various stages. The initial stage was a product of the mercantilist system with colonial towns dependent on a close connection with the imperial metropolis. As agencies of imperial expansion, colonial towns were deliberately conceived and planted to pave the way and direct more general settlement. In economic terms, these towns were centre pots for staples from their colonies for shipment to the mother country. A second stage was during the

commercial/industrial era of the 19th Century. It was characterized by increased regional and interregional development. The former colonial towns had now become concentrated settlements based on a mixture of trade and industry surrounded by hinterlands based on forestry, agriculture or fishing. A third phase was from the late 19th Century to the mid-20th Century, when manufacturing was taken as the key factor for urban growth. To this study, this literature indicates that towns and urban centres develop in stages at different times in history.

According to Michael (2009), over the past several millennia, all humans lived in small mobile groups that subsisted on wild plants and animal species. After sometime, a number of these farming societies transformed themselves into much larger, more complex social systems characterized by class inequalities and evolution of towns and cities started.

Jacobs (1961) pioneered thoughtful and accountable city design that would build not on the imaginary theories of city planners but on observations and records of city life. In her seminal work, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs observed how the complex dealings of multiple variables within cities affect residents' quality of life. For Jacobs, "health" cities are ones where the physical environment is organized in a way that strengthens social networks of streets and communities to encourage crime reduction and collective action. Her ideas have had persistent weight in urban design, criminology and political science. Urbanization continues as a strong global trend and the social problems Jacobs saw in the US cities in the 1960s persist in both the developed and developing world. Therefore, as urban areas keep on developing across the world, the prospect for innovative and thoughtful city design grows as well.

According to Martin (2006), Britain's urban genesis can be placed within the context of political developments that preceded the Claudian conquest. Towns were particularly seen as the product of military-supported colonial foundations that were the immediate demonstration of the post-conquest settlement and which provided a pattern for the consequent urbanization of the native cantons. Cities or towns were intended to be seats of power and were places where new communities elaborated new identities. As a result they were places where wealth was concentrated, transformed and transmitted. There are also arguments over the extent to which urban markets and institutions provided services to the

neighboring countryside. This literature shows that economically urban centres were places of concentration of wealth, places where such wealth was transformed and transmitted to other people.

Adekola (2009) argues that for long it was understood that West Africa had no past urban traditions because scholars specializing in urban studies were of the view that cities can only be developed and sustained if they meet criteria such as the one spelt out by Childe (1950). That an urban centre is one that satisfies the need for surplus food, monumental architecture, political authority, writing, mathematical sciences, art, raw materials, regular foreign trade, full time specialization and density of population. The assumption that a society must possess writing systems to satisfy criteria of urbanization and state formation negates the eligibility of most settlements in West Africa to meet the status of stratification. Yet contrary to Childe (1950), urban centres existed in West Africa prior to the development of writing in Europe or the Middle East. The attributes of urban centres listed by Childe, (1950) were only descriptively applicable to particular case studies in South West Asia, Europe, and America.

Beattie (2005) studied the history of Cairo, the capital city of Egypt. It is the largest city in the Middle East and Africa. It was founded in the 10th century by the Fatimid dynasty as a centre of political and cultural life. It has the oldest and largest film industries in the Arab world. It has the second oldest institution of higher learning Al Azhar University. Many international media businesses and organizations, such as, “The Arab league” have regional headquarters in the city. Before the capital was moved to Cairo, Fustat was the administrative centre. The Mamluks established Cairo as the capital of their dynasty in 1250. It remained an important economic and cultural centre. By the 16th century, it remained an important economic and cultural centre with high rise apartment buildings. This shows that towns have various functions such as being industrial, education, economic and cultural centres. On the basis of these facts, this study established that Keroka town grew to have such functions.

Bidandi (2015) dealt with the informal and formal changes of urbanization in Kampala from 1990 to 2013. The informal changes that explained Kampala’s unplanned urbanization in that period included unofficial administrative changes, unofficial political influence and political unrest caused by internal and regional civil wars. Other informal changes were the city’s attractiveness to job seekers, job makers and migrants from war raged areas and excessive rural poverty and underdevelopment. On the other hand, the formal changes which explained

Kampala's urbanization during the same period included official administrative changes, government political intervention, and implementation of the modernization agenda, legal framework and urban policy changes. From the reviewed literature it has been deduced that in the past, urban history has been used to tell a political or moral narrative. This has led to increase in the study of particular towns. Towns have been recognized to be agents of political change.

Hernaes (2003a) argues that with the Berlin conference of 1884/85 as a foundation, Africa was divided among the European powers as if it were a cake. By 1914, only Ethiopia and Liberia were left as independent nations. The rest of the continent was under British, French, Portuguese, German, Belgium, Italian, or Spanish control. It was to the interest of these powers that the continent had almost no urban population. The colonial powers had not started to invest much in its "pieces". A good example is Northern Nigeria that by 1900 had a population of about 10 million people. However she had a budget of 100,000 pounds, a military force of 2000 Hausa soldiers and 120 British officers to govern the enormous area.

Aase (2003:3) affirms that economic and administrative politics in Africa had a great consequence on urbanization. Significant export products of cash crops such as cotton, maize, tobacco, sugar, coffee, tea, palm oil, groundnuts, and minerals had to be transported to the harbor towns for export. For easy and bulk transportation to take place, railway transport was needed. To run the colony, administration and personnel was needed. The central administration was often placed in harbor towns but there was not developed any network of small and middle sized cities.

According to Rakodi (1997), during the colonial period, the economy grew at the same pace with cities. The colonial authorities started to reinforce the development policies that had suffered because of the 1930s depression. The depression had led to an economic downturn and unemployment due to the drop of prices of African export products. The Social services which were enhanced included the construction of primary schools, secondary schools and a few universities towards the end of the colonial period. Essential infrastructure such as harbors, electricity, grid and roads was additionally developed.

Stock (1995) indicates that new cities in Africa were also started in the post colonial period but not for the same reasons as in the colonial period. The seaport of Tema in Ghana was built

awaiting vast industrial growth. Later, new capitals were built motivated by the planned city of Brasilia in Brazil. This happened in Malawi (Lilongwe), Cote d'Ivoire (Yamoussoukro) and Nigeria (Abuja). The new capitals were meant to give the nations a 'fresh start'. They were supposed to be the beginning of a new golden future promised by the liberation politicians.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that like in the rest of the world, the African urbanization process was mainly influenced by economy. The colonial powers placed ports, roads, railways, and mines to economically designed places. The cities, both in colonial and post-colonial times were economically prioritized. People came to these places which finally became towns, for nationalistic pride, work, administration and social services.

1.11.2 National Trends of Urbanization

Table 1.1 shows Kenyan urban process. There is one Metropole which is Nairobi. It is supported by five main urban centres which are Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Eldoret and Thika. Other urban centres which spread throughout the country are in the hierarchy of municipality, town, urban, rural and market centres. Since independence in 1963, the country witnessed fast rate of urbanization averaging 6 per cent while the national population has been growing at about 3 per cent. The country urbanized quickly during the last five decades from 1960 to 2009 with urban centres accounting for 7.8 and 23.18 per cent of the population in 1962 and 2009 in that order.

Moseley (1974) attests that Kenya witnessed a key structural change in urban development from 1949 to 1999 (a period of 50 years). There were 34 urban centres in 1962 compared to 91 in 1979. The colonial rule controlled rural urban migration while the succeeding independent governments assured free movements thus migration. The country witnessed a rapid rate of urbanization between 1989 and 1999. During that period the number of urban centres increased from 139 to 276 compared to earlier periods as can be seen from Table 1.2 on the growth of urban centres in Kenya from 1948 to 1999. Keroka urban centre is one of the urban centres that grew rapidly within this period.

Table 1.1: Growth of population of some urban centres in Kenya from 1969 to 2009.

Urban centre	1969	1979	1989	1999	2009
Nairobi	509,286	827,775	1,324,570	2,143,254	3,109,861
Mombasa	383,452	341,148	461,753	665,018	905,627
Kisumu	32,431	152,643	192,733	322,734	390,164
Nakuru	47,151	92,851	163,927	231,262	343,395
Eldoret	18,196	50,503	111,882	197,449	247,500
Thika	18,387	41,324	57,603	106,707	136,386
Machakos	6,312	84,320	116,293	143,274	150,815
Kitale	11,534	-	56,218	86,282	98,071
Meru	4,475	72049	94,947	126,427	132,749
Kericho	10,144	-	48,511	93,213	97,813
Kisii	6,080	29,661	44,149	65,235	85,222
Malindi	10,757	-	34,047	118,428	182,747
Karatina	2,436	-	5,554	126,337	158,362
Nyeri	10,004	35,753	91,258	101,238	111,187
Naivasha	6,920	-	34,519	158,678	178,898
Kakamega	6,244	32.025	58,862	74,115	93,170
Kitui	3,071	-	9,305	106,873	134,469
Bungoma	4,401	-	26,805	73,048	79,469
Kangundo	1,540	-	10,880	179,952	19,7342
Keroka	2,143	-	18,524	29,794	40,881

Source: Republic of Kenya, Central Bureau of Statistics. Kenya Population and Housing Census (KPHC) 1969, 1979, 1989, 1999 and 2009.

According to the GOK report (2002a), analyses of urbanization patterns in census reports, government documents, and social science have tended to use different minimum size criteria to define urban places. The 1957 Kenya National Census and most research publications during the 1960s used gazetted areas with a minimum size of 1,000 people to define an urban place. The 1970 Census and successive works, noting the uncertainty of classifying small towns and large villages, relied upon a definition of 10,000 people as the minimum criterion of an urban place. Rather than rely upon a simple urban-rural dichotomy, a size-of-place classification was used. Small towns' population was (1,000-4,999), medium size towns

(5,000-24,999) and large cities (25,000 or more) in the multivariate analysis of urban growth. Each town was coded to its exact population size at each census. This study was based on a general definition of “urban centre” as an area concentrated with a population over and above a thousand people. Keroka, having more than 40,000 people qualified as an urban centre for this study (KPHC, 2009).

Kenya is urbanizing rapidly (Kenya, 2008). Although an estimated 19 percent of the population lived in urban areas in 1999, urban population was estimated at 26 percent in 2007 and is projected to reach 60 percent by 2030. From the Kenya Vision 2030 (GOK, 2008), an impressive growth is predicted in the labor force that is urban in the next 20 years.

Mookherjee (1973) and Goldstein and Goldstein (1978) attest that original population size has been acknowledged as one of the principal variables, both hypothetically and empirically in the study of urban growth. Bigger cities have usually experienced faster rates of growth than smaller towns particularly in developing countries. The positive association between town size and consequent growth is explained by the comparative opportunities for expansion in towns with an established infrastructure. Not only are the government and the private sector most likely to invest resources in locations with the largest labor pool and the most diversified institutional framework, but also cumulative inertia usually favors expansion in larger urban areas. On the other hand, the attraction of growing markets and cheaper labor in smaller towns could cause a change in investment which would overturn the association between town size and growth. According to Midheme and Moulaert (2013), European countries urbanized comparatively slowly which gave governments time to plan and provide facilities for the needs of growing urban populations.

Ochieng (1990) observes that trade between the East African coast and the Mediterranean world that existed as early as the second millennium BC led to the establishment of urban centres. Between the 9th and 10th centuries, cities like Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu, and Pate rose during this early Islamic period. They gained great prominence following the decline of Mogadishu in the North and Sofala in the South in the 14th century. By about 1331, Ibn Batuta, describing his first visit to the Kenyan coast, stated that Mombasa was a large city abounding with bananas, lemon, and citron.

Gichuru (2002) in agreement notes that in Kenya during the colonial days, the British East African Company built a railway network from Mombasa to Uganda in 1899. This period allowed for the mushrooming of towns that would lead to the development of manufacturing industries thus encouraging rural-urban migration. The colonial administration forged with Nairobi as this was the central urban centre in the region that would harbor industries and would formally be Kenya's capital for colonial administration. In 1948, the colonial administrators designed a master plan in building a modern commercial centre with an industrial area that would have a vast network of roads and the construction of the African houses that would be for the African servants.

According to Situma (1992), Nairobi was a spot known to the Maasai natives and meant to them as watering place to which cattle could be taken. In 1896 the first European to come to Nairobi, Sergeant Ellis of the Royal Engineers, established a depot there with stores and stables for oxen and mules. It had grown from nothing to over a thousand inhabitants and an average increase of two thousand inhabitants per annum. By 1899, the Uganda railway had reached Nairobi and it was then decided to make it its headquarters. Nairobi consequently grew as a commercial and business hub of the then British East African protectorate.

Olima (2001) emphasizes that by 1900, Nairobi had assumed the function of Kenya's capital city though it was officially conferred in 1907. In 1926 Walton Jameson of Kimberley was called in as a town planning consultant to give Nairobi the first plan and zoning arrangements. In 1938, the council of Nairobi came up with a five year plan of the town but the Second World War (1939-1945) overtook the plan city before it could be put to effect. Nairobi then became the headquarters of the East African command and the base of the East African troops for the Abyssinian campaign, the Middle East and the Asiatic theatres of the war. This literature indicates that town planning is an important agent to a town's development but war or political instability can hinder that development.

Anyumba (1996) indicates that Kisumu is a port city in Kisumu County in the Western part of Kenya. The port was founded in 1901 as the main inland terminal of the Uganda railway and named Port Florence. Kisumu literally means a place of barter trade "sumo" where whites first settled. In the late 19th century Kisumu became a trading post attracting the Luo people as far as Migori and Siaya counties. On 20th December 1901, Florence Preston, the wife of the engineer, drove the last nail in the last sleeper by the shores of Lake Victoria. It

was then that the name “Port Florence” came into being. It was only called Port Florence for a year and it changed to its original name Kisumu- meaning a place to look for food. Kisumu was also privileged to host the first flight in East and Central Africa. By 1930s and 40s the city had become a top East African centre for commerce, administration and military installations.. Therefore, the history of Keroka urban centre adds knowledge to the history of the growth of urban centres in Kenya. This literature indicates that Kisumu started as a railway terminal and grew steadily into a city.

Murunga (1998) examined the development of Mumias into an urban centre. The study adopted and critiqued the Weberian Approach to Urbanization. Murunga asserted that the underdevelopment perspective of the urban centre was due to unequal exchange and uneven development. The study argues that there is no standard criterion of determining an urban centre and that the Wanga people had their own form of urbanism, so the question of urbanization had to be re-examined and defined beyond western definitional terms. The political-administrative imperatives of the institution of Nabongo and the attendant social-economic roles were the significant aspects that defined the capital of the Wanga kingdom. By 1860, Mumias as the capital of the Wanga Kingdom had evolved into a key aggregation of humans for social-cultural purposes in its urban evolution. This literature shows that some urban centres developed as political and administrative centres, as social and cultural centres and also due to merchant capital and trade.

Kiruthu (2003) in the history of Nyeri town provides that the town started around 1902 when Nyeri port was established by colonialists. The study argues that the colonial penetration denied the Africans of their land and the creation of forced labor altered the lives of many Africans as they were paid meager salaries leading to poverty. The study adds that western education imparted to Africans in mission schools enabled them to realize that the good lives the Europeans led was a result of exploitation of Africans which actually led to the spirit of nationalism.

Munge (2017) established that the initial name of the site where Kisii town was erected was known as *Getembe* due to the presence of *Emetembe* trees. The name later changed to *Getembe kia Gasuku*. Gasuku was the first interpreter of the British interpreters who came along with the British officials. Later having been occupied by the Whites, the natives named

it *Bosongo* meaning the place of whites. The town's name changed to *Boma* upon the establishment of the administration headquarters in March 1908. It became the administration centre for South Kavirondo district that comprised four communities namely – Luo, Kisii, Kuria and Suba. Kisii town grew due to agriculture, increase of population, settlement of non indigenous people like Swahili, Somalia, and Asian traders. Other reasons were the role of missionaries and the security of the town which catered for the safety of businessmen.

According to Obudho (1981), the process of urbanization in Kenya can also be attributed to non-African settlers. The period between 1930 and 1945 saw the expansion of railway branches and road networks. This led to the emergence and growth of urban centres where manufacturing industries were introduced. There was a strong tendency on the part of colonials to regard the urban centres as non-African areas, in which Africans came only to work temporarily as laborers. The colonial law emphasized that the African reserves were the proper places for Africans whose presence in towns was no longer required.

Table 1.2 shows the growth of urban centres in Kenya from 1948 to 1999. The 20 urban centres with population of over 99,999 accounted for 43 per cent of the urban population. The 102 of 276 urban centres with population sizes of over 19,999 accounted for 92 per cent of the urban population. Keroka urban centre fell under the population class of between 2,000 and 4,999 in 1969, (refer to Table 1.1 where Keroka had a population of 2,143 in 1969). Such urban centres had a rapid steady growth between 1948 and 1989 although there was a slight decline in 1999. Mireri, (2000) accounts for the turn down in the number of smaller urban centres to be explained in part by the apparent better opportunities that larger urban centres offered such as infrastructure, social services, employment, and business opportunities. Kenya witnessed fast rate of urbanization (about 6 per cent) since independence in 1963. The independence assured people freedom of movement which spurred high rate of rural urban migration. As a result, the urban centres were exposed to worsening and insufficient urban and environmental services. The greater part of the residents (over 60 per cent), lived in informal settlements that fell short of meeting humane habitation requirements. This could be due to the incapability of urban planning and development authorities to cater for basic needs of the rising population.

Table1.2: Growth of urban centres in Kenya from 1948 to 1999.

Population class	1948	1962	1969	1979	1989	1999
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Over 100,000	1	2	2	3	6	20
20,000-99,999	1	2	3	13	21	82
10,000-19,999	2	3	7	11	19	18
5000-9,999	3	11	11	22	32	23
2,000-4,999	10	16	25	42	61	51
100-1,999	-	-	-	-	65	82
Total	17	34	47	91	139	276

Source: Republic of Kenya, Central Bureau of Statistics, Kenya Population and Housing Census (KPHC) 1948,1962,1969,1979, 1989 and 1999.

Table 1.3 shows that before independence in 1963, the total urban population in Kenya was 597,800, which was 7.36%. After independence from 1969, the total urban population grew steadily up to 13,891,530 in 2018, a rate of 27.03%. This means that Kenya had a high and steady growth rate of urban population after independence.

From the reviewed literature, it can be deduced that Keroka, one of the urban centres in Kenya which started during the colonial period has not been given a historical study perspective despite its rapid and steady growth. This study therefore fills this knowledge gap.

Table 1.3: Total urban population growth rates in Kenya 1960-2018.

Year	1960	1969	1979	1989	1999	2009	2018
Total urban population	597,800	1,074,701	2,433,015	3,780,850	6,358,390	9,482,262	13,891,530
Growth rate	7.36%	9.85%	15.40%	16.49%	19.55%	23.18%	27.03%

Source: United Nations Population Division. World urbanization prospects 2018 revision.

1.11.3 Challenges of Urbanization

Urbanization process brings along very many challenges that take long to address. Caldeira and Holston (2008) observed that; industrial cities were complicated places to live in due to public health issues as a result of contaminated water and air and the spread of infectious diseases due to overcrowding. This additionally led to inadequate space for extension of houses, public utilities, and costly building materials, which could only be afforded by few persons.

In addition, the study conducted by UN-Habitat (2006), which also agrees with Harvey (2012), major problems of urbanization were identified such as; unemployment and under employment, shortage of residential housing and poverty which leads to malnutrition and illness. They further identified competition on limited resources, poor sanitation, and contaminated garbage as well as poor and inadequate water supply, air pollution as problems facing urbanization. These environmental problems expose the urban areas to various diseases like allergies, asthma, infertility, food poisoning, cancer and even premature deaths thus contributing to the enormous challenges facing urbanization.

Kenya (2008) report indicates that Kenya's rapid pace of urbanization is confronted by a shortage of urban infrastructure development. The housing sector in particular is faced with a myriad of challenges ranging from inadequate investment in housing and a low level of urban home ownership to weak enforcement of standards, codes and policies.

Ochieng (1990) noted that in 1962, there were a total of 34 towns in Kenya with more than 2000 people. In 1969 these had increased to 47. The percentage of Kenya's population in towns in the first national census of 1948 was 5.3 %. In the second national census of 1962, it was 7.8 % and in the third national census of 1969, it was 9.9 %. In 1948, Africans formed only 53 percent of the total urban population. In 1962, the percentage had risen to 64 % and in 1969 it rose to 81 %. This shows that African urban population continued to increase steadily as the number of urban areas continued to rise. Between 1950 and 1970, Nairobi's population rose from 110,000 to over 500,000. By 1983, the town's population had hit the one million mark while Mombasa was nearing 500,000 and Kisumu 125,000. The implication of these statistical data adds to the post colonial urban challenge in terms of planning and provision of essential services to all.

1.11.4 Impact of Urbanization

Of particular importance to this study is urban sprawl of Kisii urban centre that has led to the growth and expansion of many small urban centres. This is a motivation for a similar study in Keroka urban centre which has a link to Kisii urban centre and the proximate Nyansiongo agricultural settlement scheme which was occupied by European settlers during the colonial era.

Immigrant population resulting from rural- urban migration constitutes part of the residents of urban centres such as Keroka whose investigation is the basis for this study. The populations reside in this smaller town because it is cheaper in terms of rent value and proximate to the agricultural rural areas in addition to the availability of road transport to neighboring towns. Keroka is on the highway linking major towns such as Kericho and Kisii hence the need to investigate the influence of its location on its urbanization.

Most urban areas lack proper enforcement of regulation such as those of building standards that is manifested by non-adherence by residents in construction. It could be attributed to the lack of awareness or the location of the area.

Anyuro and Chege (2012) indicate that the major impact of the rapid growth of towns such as Eldoret in Kenya has been the mushrooming of informal settlements such as Huruma and Munyaka. They note that these informal settlements have emerged due to industrialization, population growth, and land tenure system, high level prices of land and high house rents.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

Grant and Yankson (2003) argue that most of the models tend to generalize the issue of urban expansion especially in the developing world. Two models, village magnet and the ribbon, were applicable to this study whose proponents were professor Petra Doan and Dr.Charles Oduro.

Keroka centre in this study area has acted as a magnet for fast development. This is because it continues to attract a lot of development owing to its location and proximity to Kisii and Kericho urban centres and the agriculture rich surrounding areas like Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme; hence it's increasing urban growth and development.

Ribbon development also causes overcrowding on the roadside as streets become narrow giving rise to accidents. Business operators scramble to take advantage of road frontage as the interior is left undeveloped causing wastage of valuable land. However, the theory helps in better transport facilities and provides easy access to goods and services (Kombe, 2005).

The development of Kisii-Kericho Highway coupled with the urban sprawl between the major towns greatly contributed to the growth of other urban centres. Keroka has developed along Kisii-Kericho-Nairobi road with development focused along the mainroad. The Keroka-Nyangusu-Kilgoris road networks also greatly contributed to the development of Keroka.

1.13 Methodology

This section deals with the research methodology which was used to carry out the study. This includes research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, pilot testing for reliability and validity, data collection and data analysis procedures.

1.14. Research Design

This study adopted a historical research design to investigate the origin and development of Keroka urban centre. This was appropriate because it allowed the collection of information on the development of Keroka urban centre since 1905. After gathering the information it was summarized, presented, and interpreted for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2004). The study took a historical research design by looking at Keroka urban centre's origin, growth, challenges, and impact on the people and the area since 1905. Qualitative approach used was useful for in-depth or detailed collection of data through oral interviews and focus group discussions which provided a narrative presentation of urban centre's origin, growth, challenges, and impact on the people and the area since 1905. This research design helped the researcher to plan in advance the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and techniques that could be used during analysis (Kothari, 2006).

1.15 Location of the Study

Keroka urban centre is in Gusiiland situated at the border of both Kisii and Nyamira counties (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). The study was conducted in Kisii and Nyamira Counties at Keroka Urban Centre. It is to the western part of Kenya in the former Nyanza Province, latitude $0^{\circ}46'37.61''S$ and longitude $34^{\circ}56'45.02''E$. The neighboring towns include; Sotik, in Kericho County which is 20.7 Km ENE; Nyamira, which is 23.4 Km N; Ogembo, in Kisii County which is 24.6 Km W; Litein, in Kericho County which is 34.7 Km NE and Oyugis, in Homa Bay County which is 37.8 Km NW. The area under study is along the Kisii-Kericho-Nairobi Highway. Its existence is mostly attributed to the development of the Highway. Keroka is located 30-40 minutes' drive from the Kisii County headquarters. It is approximately 27 Km from Kisii town. Gusiiland is 500 to 700 feet above sea level and therefore has a cool climate. Gusiiland consists mainly of long, gently sloping hills, a few ridges and escarpments which are a characteristic of Keroka area. There are swamp streams and rivers running between the green hills. Annual rainfall is more than 2030 mm (80 inches), (LeVine and LeVine, 1966). Keroka Urban Centre is located between two constituencies, Nyaribari Masaba of Kisii County and Kitutu Masaba of Nyamira County.

The urban centre has grown mostly along the road giving it a linear human settlement pattern. The centre appears to be expanding to the peripheral areas of Keroka. It serves a rich and wide agricultural hinterland touching both Nyamira and Kisii counties. The hinterland has fertile soils and sufficient rainfall throughout the year. Keroka's hinterland is therefore

ideal for agriculture thus encouraging agriculturally related business at Keroka urban area. The entrance of the urban centre is filled with informal structures on both sides of the road, clearly encroached on the road reserves. Most of the structures are for commercial activities such as shops, workshops, and food stalls. The main bus stop is also located at the entrance of this centre. Further along the Kisii-Nairobi road, there are more commercial structures and residential buildings, both high and low rise. More land is being converted to residential developments as a result of the growing population as well as urban sprawl. This has gradually led to increased land use changes from agricultural land use to commercial and residential.

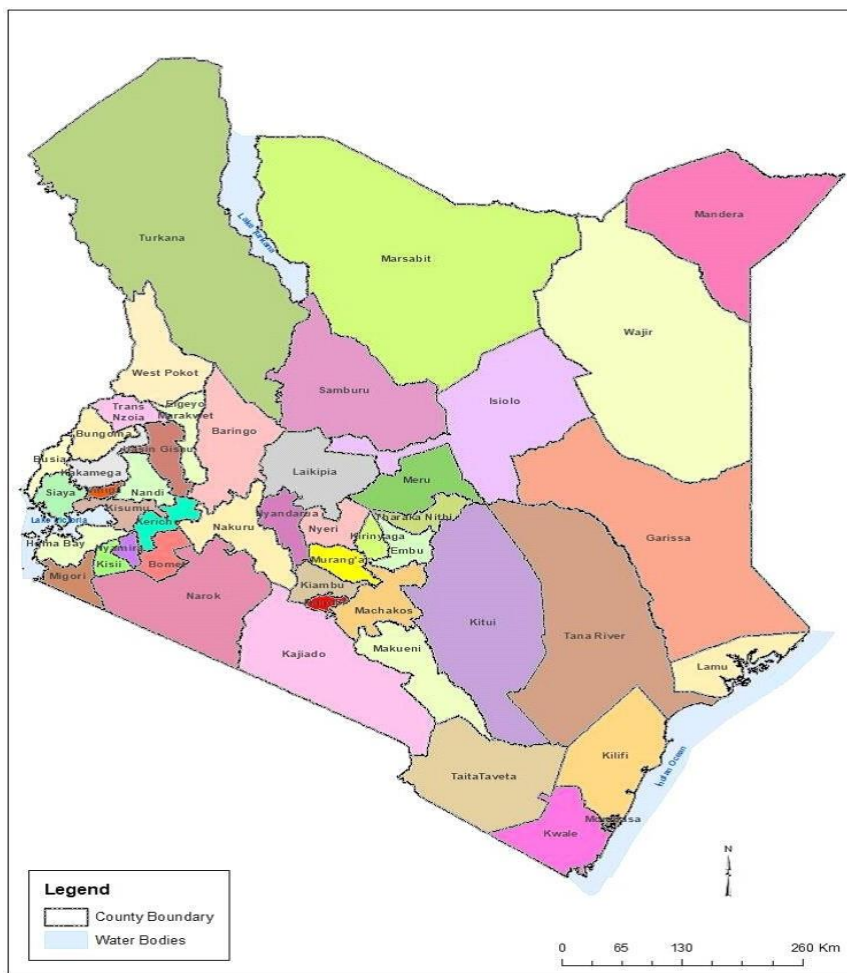


Figure 1.1: Map of Kenya showing the 47 counties with Keroka town falling between Kisii and Nyamira counties.

Source: [http://www.google.co.ke/map/Kenya counties](http://www.google.co.ke/map/Kenya%20counties)

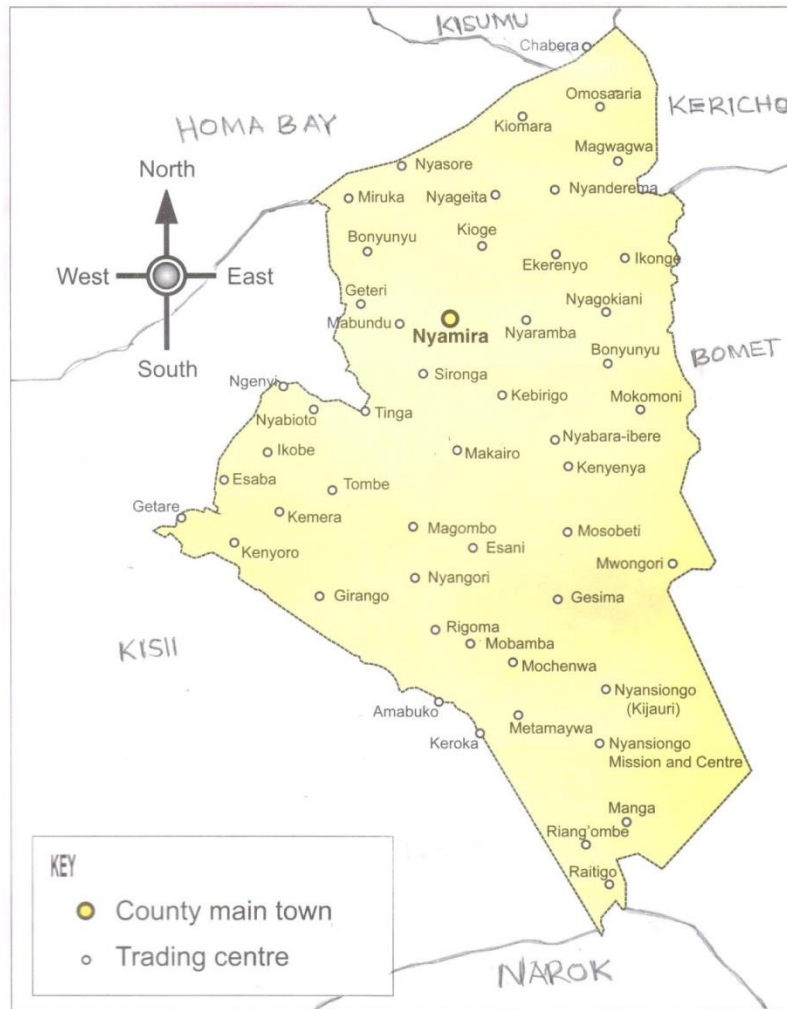


Figure 1.2: Location of Keroka town, between Kisii and Nyamira counties' boundary.
Source: Nyamira County Public Works 2014.

1.16 Target Population

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, objects or events that have common observable characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The population of Keroka Urban Centre in 2009 was 40,881 based on the Kenya Population and Housing Census (2009). The target population was adult men and women above 18 years. It was drawn from the entire population in which inferences were made. The other groups who formed the crucial group of our respondents also included those who might have stayed or worked at Keroka, community elders, business operators, and administrators (former and current).

1.17 Sampling Procedure and Sample size

Due to the large population at Keroka town, it was necessary for the researcher to use sampling techniques. The study used purposive and snow-ball sampling techniques. Elders were purposively selected due to their age and knowledge on Keroka urban development since 1905 to be able to get the most accurate and reliable data. A sample size of between 10 and 30 percent is representative of the target population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). However, in historical studies what matters most are the reliability and validity of the information given and not the number of respondents. Those identified for interview were 100 respondents. However, because of repeated responses, which indicated saturation point using the snowball sampling strategy, only 46 respondents were captured in the final list of informants who were interviewed.

This was complimented with snow-balling technique where the researcher was not familiar with the most suitable respondents. This means that the researcher asked the respondents purposively selected to identify other people who could provide useful information to him. The method was intended to expose the researcher to various stakeholders who had different experiences with the issue under study. Besides that, three Focused Group Discussions were formed for detailed discussion on various thematic issues under research. Specific sessions for elderly men, women, and the youth were held to get information from the different categories of the urban population at Keroka town. Each focus group discussion session comprised of 8 persons in the discussion. The three sessions selected the participants from the three sub locations of the town that make Keroka Township Location which are Bocharia, Kegogi, and Nyasore. The groups were guided by questions drawn from the main research objectives which they discussed and made summaries thereafter. The data was subjected to validation for the sake of accuracy on the information given.

1.18 Research Instruments

Research instruments are tools used in the collection of data on the phenomenon of the study. For the purpose of obtaining a comprehensive historical picture on the emergence and development of Keroka urban centre since 1905, the study applied both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Qualitative method was applied to get narrative information and obtain detailed information since the interviews were flexible enough for interrogation purposes. Quantitative method was obtained from secondary sources for numerical or statistical data wherever it was needed such as numerical growth of urban

population in various census reports, from text books and the internet. Based on the research problem and objectives, both primary and secondary data sources were used. Primary data was collected by use of interview schedules, and focus group discussion guides as well as archival records by visiting the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi. Archival sources included Colonial Record Books, Provincial and District Annual Reports and Confidential Reports. These sources were instrumental in examining the development and urbanization trend of Keroka town since 1905. Quantitative data were drawn from secondary data sources for statistical information on trends of Keroka urban development. No questionnaires were used apart from secondary sources with relevant statistical information.

Secondary data was sought from documentary sources of published or non-published literature which included journals, articles, textbooks, theses, dissertations, abstracts, conference and seminar papers, policy and research reports and from relevant internet sources. The different data types helped in affirming the validity and reliability of the information collected on the background, historical development trends, challenges and, impact of Keroka urban centre on the residents, challenges facing the growth of Keroka and possible recommendations that could help to solve the challenges. Libraries visited for secondary sources were; Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Library, the British Institute of Eastern African Library at Kileleshwa in Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta Library at the University of Nairobi, Post-Modern Library of Kenyatta University, National Library at Kisii town and Kisii University Library.

An interview schedule was used to collect data. The interview schedule had a list of questions used for oral interviews of the informants (Appendix II). The questions were pegged on data needs established earlier directed by the research objectives and questions. Interviews for this study sought to engage the elders who were residents or those who might have migrated to other places but had been in Keroka and had the desired information for the study. They were referred to by other elders through snowball method of selecting respondents for data collection. They had been in Keroka for over five decades and therefore they were likely to offer a better understanding on the growth and development of Keroka since 1905. The interviewee was expected to provide a better and clear understanding on the development of Keroka, challenges and impact of urbanization of Keroka on the residents. Notes were carefully taken from the interviewees. Informal interviews were mostly used to capture the growth pattern, challenges and, and impact of the urbanization of Keroka. The

data that was collected from the interviews captured a good part of the qualitative data on the subject of study.

Focus Group Discussion, using the guide was conducted to substantiate the responses acquired in the interview schedule. Focus Group Discussion questions are shown in Appendix VIII. Previous photographs and those taken during field study of Keroka urban centre were used as physical evidence or illustrations for explaining the origin and growth of Keroka town and the associated changes in the growth pattern of Keroka over time. The photographs were used to illustrate the exact conditions of physical infrastructure and gave a clear view of land uses and infrastructural changes that had taken place at Keroka Urban Centre.

Observation was also used to collect data. Such data included physical infrastructure that showed development and expansion of Keroka town and the physical challenges that faced the town. Other aspects observed were the town residents, traders, and business activities at Keroka.

1.18.1 Reliability

The main issue of reliability is addressing the consistency of the instruments in relation to what they intend to measure. Colleagues, advisors, and experts in the field of history were consulted during the development of the instruments. Moreover, the instruments were pilot tested on 5 respondents who were not used in the study but had similar criteria for those sampled to trace the origin and development of Keroka Urban Centre since 1905 to ensure the reliability of the instrument. One of the reasons for conducting a pilot study was to give advance warning on where the main project study could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods and instruments were inappropriate or could be too complicated. The reliability of the instrument was reached by a second administration of the questions by comparing the responses given to those of the first (Best and Kahn, 2002). The respondents were advised not to bother to recall what they responded on the prior administered pilot test and asked to respond as they truly felt about the items on the questionnaire. The researcher did everything to foster the good response rate and to minimize the unintentional bias during pilot testing (Brown and Dowling, 1998). Any significant variations in the respondents' responses were observed and items that had discriminative power were modified and used for the actual data collection.

1.18.2 Validity

Best and Kahn (2002) say that the items of the instrument should represent a significant aspect of the purpose of the investigation. That is, if the items constructed were in line with the stated objectives. Content validity was established after consultations and discussions with the research supervisor.

1.19 Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter was obtained from the Director of Post Graduate Studies of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (Appendix VII). Then permission was sought from the National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), (Appendix IV). A letter was sought from Kisii County education office for permission to visit residents for the purpose of research (Appendix VI). The respondents were then invited for introduction, familiarization and to explain to them the purpose of the study. Then their consent to participate in the study was sought. Taking into account the sampling procedure and the time scheduled as well as the nature and content of the question guide, the researcher indulged the services of three research assistants. On the involvement of the research assistants, their personal characteristics, educational level and knowledge of the urban centre (native to the area and speakers of the local language-Ekegusii) were considered. In addition, during the survey, the researcher accompanied or made follow ups on the field assistant in order to coordinate as well as to cross-check their works to ensure data validity. In order to maintain the quality of data that was collected, meetings were held with the research assistants after the end of each visit to discuss issues raised from the data collected. The information from the interviews was cross-checked with the respondents in a follow up session where data was authenticated.

1.20 Data Analysis

The main focuses of analysis were the interview schedules and archival data which were analyzed in an effort to establish the varied trends of development, challenges, strategies and impact of urbanization of Keroka since 1905. Quantitative data was got from secondary information such as population and census reports while others were from archival data. It was analysed using simple statistical methods such as mean (average) and percentage and presented using tables. Qualitative data obtained from oral interviews, Focus Group Discussions, as well as archival information was analysed using thematic data analysis

method in respect to study objectives, literature review, and historic period. Narratives and thematic technique were used for the analysis of the qualitative data based on the field notes, sketches, interviews, and using archive data as well as photographs. Analysis and comparison of the different opinions was done to ensure that accurate data was fixed into the findings of this study to generate themes and sub themes in line with the specific objectives. Conclusions were drawn from the findings based on thematic areas as per the study objectives and recommendations proposed. Narratively, the work was chronological in terms of chapters to get the historical growth, challenges faced, possible interventions, and impact of Keroka urban centre in different historical periods.

1.21 Ethical Considerations

An application to undertake this research, which involved human subjects, sought approval from the relevant authorities. These included Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) (Appendix VII), the National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (Appendix IV), Kisii County director of education (Appendix VI), assistant chiefs and Keroka market officials. Accordingly, the consent of all participants prior to the commencement of the study was obtained. Coolican (2009) gives three categories of getting informed consent from a respondent:- right of privacy of the respondent, adherence to professional honesty and protecting the respondent from harm. The researcher met participants in places of their comfort to discuss the purpose of the research, the expected time commitments, and the procedure for the research activities and sought their informed consent.

A guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity was given to all participants in reporting the information provided for the study. Further, they were assured that pseudonyms will be used in all documents and transcripts, and any participant was free to opt out at any stage of the research at leisure (UNICEF, 2010). Best and Kahn (2002) add that the researcher has the responsibility to keep the subjects who give information safe by not revealing their identity on all records.

Data obtained was stored securely during research collection, compiling and throughout the research period. Respondents were informed of the nature of the study and allowed to choose whether to participate or not to participate. Respondents were informed of their involvement in the study which would be voluntary. The respondents chose for themselves when or where to participate. The respondents were assured that the information they provided was to be

kept strictly confidential. This helped to avoid fears and suspicions that could come in the minds of the respondents and enhanced their cooperation for the study.

1.22 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a background to the study on the development of Keroka Urban Centre since 1905. The objectives, research questions, and research premises were generated. The study covered a period from 1905 to 2018. Uniquely, being a cross border urban centre of Kisii and Nyamira counties, with associated challenges, it was necessary to examine Keroka Urban Centre to find out its growth pattern and factors influencing it, its challenges, and impact on the people and the area. It was hoped that the study findings would provide relevant data for historians, town planners, and governments, both local and national to help design new policies for town management. Literature was reviewed to find out how different scholars have dealt with the subject of urbanization. It was affirmed that Keroka, a colonial urban centre had not been studied on a historical perspective despite its rapid growth, a knowledge gap which this study filled. The theories used for this study were the village magnet theory and the ribbon theory. The study used historical research design to guide the research. Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used to select informants while interview schedule, focus group discussion guide and archival records assisted in collection of primary data. Secondary data sources were useful especially in providing both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic data analysis method which yielded information for the subsequent chapters of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF KEROKA URBAN CENTRE DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD FROM 1905 TO 1963

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the origin and development of Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial period have been discussed. For better understanding of the origin and growth of the urban centre, the chapter has first given the historical background of the Abagusii people. This has been done by tracing their original home, their migratory movements to their present home and their social, economic, and political setup before 1905. The social, economic, and political aspects of the Abagusii led to the origin and subsequent development of Keroka Urban Centre. The establishment of colonial rule and the Gusii response before 1905 has also been briefly examined. The Mumbo and Sakawa protest movements and the calamities in Gusii (1918-1920) are covered and the impact of colonial agriculture on the Gusii and how all these influenced the emergence and development of Keroka Urban Centre. This chapter also highlights the indicators of the development of Keroka Urban Centre and the underlying factors (1921-1939). World War II (1939-1945) and its impact on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre are analyzed. The development of Keroka Urban Centre after World War II (1945-1963) is also discussed.

2.2 Historical Background of the Abagusii

The Abagusii are a Bantu speaking people who are found in the western part of Kenya. They occupy Nyamira and Kisii counties which are the former Nyamira and Kisii districts in the former Nyanza Province. According to Akama and Maxon (2006), the existing myths as narrated by Gusii elders indicate that they originated from a mystical place called “Misiri” whose exact location is not known. The elders simply state that “this was a far off- place that was situated in a north westerly direction from the current Gusii homeland”. Ochieng, (1974) further stipulates that according to the Abagusii tradition, Mogusii was the founding father of the Abagusii community. His wife was known as Nyakomogendi. Mogusii was the son of Osogo. Osogo is believed to have been the son of Moluguhia, son of Kigoma, son of Riabaka who was the son of Kintu. The Gusii elders further indicate that Kintu first inhabited the “big river valley in Misiri” (presumably the River Nile valley in Egypt). It was this man who led the migration of the community from “Misiri” to Mt. Elgon. In this region, the Abagusii appear to have lived for three to four generations before dispersing finally to various

destinations. The Gusii elders further observe that Moluguhia, Mogusii's grandfather had sons who became the founders of the various Baluyia clans who now inhabit southwestern Kenya. The elder sons of Moluguhia were Osogo and Mogikoyo. The Abagusii, Abakuria, Abalagoi, Abasuba, and other related communities became descendants of Osogo. The Agikuyu, Aembu, Ameru, the Kamba, and other related communities are believed to belong to Mogikoyo's ancestry line. By the 18th century, the Abagusii sources indicate that their ancestors had moved along the course of River Nzoia and settled around the eastern shores of Lake Victoria. Mogusii and his wife Nyakomogendi died at Kisumu. Due to severe famine, drought and plague, the ancestors of the Abagusii left Kisumu for Kano plains in search of food and a better home (Akama and Maxon, 2006).

Schoenbron (1998) stipulates that linguists and anthropologists have provided a relative chronology for the dispersal of Bantu speakers from the West African region. After 3000 BC, the first stage of expansion began. They had knowledge of root crop cultivation and pottery making and thus were able to move southwards to the wetter Congo basin. The spread of Bantu speech to east Africa was aided by the domestication of plants and animals and use of iron technology. The use of iron tools greatly increased agricultural production and encouraged the opening up of more virgin land for agricultural production and establishment of new settlements. It was a gradual process that took many centuries. Nevertheless, the interaction between peoples speaking different languages and following different cultural traditions played a great part in the emergence of the Gusii and the Bantu speaking groups of the Lake Victoria region as distinct language and ethnic entities.

Akama and Maxon (2006) indicate that clusters of families eventually settled in the Kano plains. They were initially of hunting expeditions in search of wild game and fishing. The folk tales further say that the leaders of the initial Gusii family units that settled in Kano plains were sons of a great family patriarch called Mogusii, hence the origin of the name Abagusii. Mogusii is said to have been brother to Moragoli, the founder of the Maragoli community. Both Mogusii and Moragoli died in Kisumu. The names of the sons of Mogusii were Mosweta, Mochorua, Mobasi, Monchari and Mogisero. It is the names of these Gusii patriarchs that have been handed down in Gusii genealogy. The main Gusii clans derive their names from these patriarchs. That is, Abasweta clan the founder is Mosweta, Abagirango clan the founder is Mochorua, Ababasi clan the founder is Mobasi, Abanchari clan the founder is Monchari, and Abagisero clan the founder is Mogisero. The Abasweta constituted

the largest Gusii clan. The sons of Mosweta include; Ntindi, Oibabe, Mosigisa, Osiango, Mosamaro, and Morangi. From the descendants of Mosweta, the current Gusii groups have evolved; the Kitutu, Nyaribari and Machoge.

Ochieng (1974) asserts that by the mid 18th century the population of both the Gusii and the Luo living in the Kano plains had increased beyond available resources. Consequently, there was need for dispersal to surrounding virgin areas of Eastern and Southern Nyanza region. Due to pressure on available resources to sustain them, family and inter-clan rivalry among the Gusii increased. Also inter-ethnic conflicts between the Gusii and their Luo neighbors intensified as each group attempted to acquire an adequate supply of existing sustenance resources. It was within this broad social- economic context that the Gusii clans started to send messengers to explore the possibility of establishing new frontier settlements in the highland region situated in the southeast of Kano. The urgency to disperse to the adjacent high altitude areas was accelerated when the Gusii for the first time came into direct contact with the aggressive Isiria Maasai raiders coming from the Kamagambo lowlands to the southeast. The arrival of the Maasai completely destabilized existing social-cultural harmony between the Gusii and their Luo neighbors. The Maasai raiders could make swift night-time attacks surrounding whole family villages, burning down houses and granaries, killing anybody who dared to challenge them and capturing their livestock. The Maasai culturally believed that all cattle wherever they were, were their birth right. When the Gusii warriors attempted to make counter attacks to repulse the enemy, they found their cumbersome long spears to be no match for the Maasai bows and arrows that they manipulated and used at a distance. Consequently, for the sake of their self- preservation, the Gusii had no other option but to seek refuge in the rugged Manga escarpment and the adjacent hills.

They passed through present Sotik, Gelegele, and Ikorongo locations before eventually settling in the present Transmara West subcounty at a place called Nyangarora (named after a famous military leader Ngarora who was killed by the Maasai raiders in the locality). However, most of the Gusii families under the leadership of Oisera (who took over from his father Ngarora) retraced their way back into their original settlements in the Manga-Isecha-Nyagoe triangle. By early 19th century most of the Gusii families were once again clustered around the Manga escarpment to the East, the Nyagoe forest to the South and Isecha-Rangeny area to the North and eventually moved to the area around Keroka (Ochieng, 1974; Keraita, O.I. 24th Oct.2017)

Another version indicates that Mogusii, the father of Abagusii with his brothers moved on to Mount Masaba (Mount Elgon) along River Nzoia where they noticed that their large group had lessened in number. While crossing river Nzoia a baby girl was born and named Kwamboka – which means crossing. From Mount Elgon Abagusii moved to Gesero (Bungoma) where their grandfather Osogo (Onsongo) died due to old age and was buried at Mt. Elgon. The migration continued through Siaya to Bisumu (Kisumu) where they constructed and lived in round small huts (ebisumu). They experienced some hostility from the Luo, which made them to cross Ekemunto (flat marshy area) of River Nyando where a baby girl, Kemunto was born. Their great grandmother (Kimanyi Konyakoomogendi) died at Gesumwa where she had been left behind under care of servants while the rest of the community moved on. Another version says that she died at Ekerubo Ekenerwa (Ahero), Kano plains hence the name Kerubo. Mogusii had five wives: Bonareri, Nyaboke, Bosibori, Bwari and Mokeira. These were his grandparents: Mogusii was son of Osogo who was son of Kalmeri who was son of Kigoma. Kigoma was son of Ribiaka who was son of Kintu or Mtu (Mondo) Bantu. Their mother was known as Kimanyi, Konyakoomogendi (a real walker or mover). Mogusii had the following brothers: 1. Luhya 2. Gekoyo (Kikuyu) 3. Momeru (Meru) who was a twin brother to Mogusii 4. Omorwanda 5. Matagaro, whose descendants died. 6. Ong’eta (Suba) Motende (Kuria/Watende) and Mokamba (Kamba) were their nephews. From Kano plains they moved on to Sondu by Risonto (Sondu River). This area was densely covered by emeraa a type of shrub, so the Abagusii named Moraa girl children born in this region. They came up to Masosa (Miruka/Riochanda) by The Sondu river’s side of Gusii to Kabianga (denial – where their animals started dying in great numbers) forcing them to move on to “tureti ya abagaka present day Buret. After that they moved to Ondicho (Kericho), Mosoti (Sotik) where Mogusii the Abagusii’s grandfather died. They continued to Erungu (Olengurwa), Makuru (Nakuru), where one group followed their brother Gekoyo to Nyakongiti (Gilgil), Rikobu (Kinangop), Ebate (Abardares), to Sagero (Mt Kenya), then back to Ombaso (Naivasha), Ring’orong’oche ria makere (Longonot). A second group followed the Momeru all the way to Tigana (Thigania – meaning parting ways) where Abagusii and Abameru parted ways (Akama and Maxon, 2006).

A third group went south to Emara (Mara) through kerubo kia maronga kingaero (Narok), to Kiligoris towards Bongoro (Tanganyika). While at the present Tanzanian boundary with Kenya, Abaikwabe (Kipsigis) became hostile to them forcing them to move to Migori

leaving the Abatende/Kuria behind. They also moved further to Karungu, Shindo where the Abasoba (Suba) remained. In their last movements, they left Shindo and moved to Homa Bay where it is claimed that Omache the husband of Monchari died. Leaving her with three sons namely: 1. Onyando (ancestor of Abanyando) 2. Keire (Abakeire) and 3. Omariba (Abamariba). After his death Monchari was inherited by omorwa roche (Luo) called Chwanya with whom they were blessed with three children namely: Rachwonyo, Nyaanda and Chamwaa. From Homa bay Abagusii migrated to Tamache (Tabaka) then settling at Nyagoenani/Inani. It is believed that the Abagusii traditional wedding anklets, ebitinge started while they were at Nyagoenani where they started Abagusii emegiro and traditions also they broke into three main groups. Finally they scattered with majority settling at present day Marani (Bogetutu), Manganse (Chache) practicing farming and livestock keeping. They lived in one big village led by clan elders who sought out disputes and guided the community in basic matters such as; how to detect time by using shadows facing the sun. Morning was known by if the shadow was right behind someone facing the direction of sunrise. Noon time, when the shadow was directly under one while Evening when the shadow is in front of one while facing the direction of sunrise. The position of the shadow guided them on what greeting to apply. Whenever they thought of moving to a new place, they first sent chindoti (spies) ahead to check whether it was safe or conducive for them (Ochieng, 1974).

On the social organization of the Abagusii, Kenani (1986) states that the Abagusii living in a distinct ecological environment, holding similar cultural values, same language, social practices and the recognition that they belonged to a common ancestry (Mogusii), felt that they were one and the same people (*abanto abamo*). They were divided into clans. Maxon (1989) affirms that the Gusii socio-economic organization consisted of a number of territorially defined related clans. They were intergrated with a number of surrounding clans to form sub-tribes such as the Kitutu, Nyaribari, Bassi, Majoge, North and South Mugirango, Wanjare and Mukseru which had distinct territories. Each clan claimed it's descent from the ancestor-Mogusii. The Gusii kept their cattle in highly fortified villages called *ebisarate* due to their significance in the Gusii economic life (Maxon 1989). The cattle villages were guarded by young unmarried Gusii men. The young men's task also included launching of cattle raids. The men resided in *ebisarate* (cattle villages) in order to guard their livestock against theft. The Abagusii practiced circumcision of both boys and girls. They practiced

intermarriage between clans where polygamy was greatly accepted. Marrying from the same clan was prohibited. The homestead head was therefore supposed to treat all his wives and sons equally and to share all the available family resources such as land and livestock impartially amongst all his children without showing any form of partiality

Hakanson and Le Vine (1997) indicate that the Gusii practiced division of labor along gender lines. Elderly men were responsible for providing leadership and guidance. Young men looked after family and clan cattle and provided military defense against any form of external aggression. Women were supposed to be involved in land cultivation, weeding, and the performance of household chores. Men performed laborious tasks of clearing land and cutting down the woody vegetation. There were principal rules that ensured land ownership and usage rights for a specific lineage. First, was the general reverence for the ancestral spirits. The perceived presence of the ancestral spirits in the land that had been given to their living offspring regulated against any unfair capture or occupation of the land that belonged to a particular clan. The other approach was the creation of a fence around the land that legally belonged to a particular homestead or lineage.

Bosibori narrates that the Abagusii believed in the existence of a supernatural being whom they referred to as *Engoro*. *Engoro* was the original progenitor and source of life and prosperity. He directed the destiny of man and his well being. *Engoro* could bring health or disease, food or famine, peace or war, drought and rain or storm. He is said to have lived in the sky and was not visible. The Gusii believed that *Engoro* observed man's activities through the sun (*Erioba*), moon (*Omotienyi*) and the stars (*Ching'enang'eni*). Individuals had direct access to God through prayer which could be done at any place and any time. Sacrifices were offered by the family head. Animals which were given as sacrifices included chicken, goats, sheep or bulls depending on the magnitude of the problem (Bosibori O.I. 2nd Nov.2017).

According to Mocheche, Keroka urban centre was a social and cultural centre before 1905. It was a place for wrestling sports which took place between physically fit and strong men of the Nyaribari clan versus the Kitutu clan. Those who won the game could be given prizes at stake, for example a bull. Dances involving women and newly initiated girls who were well decorated with beaded costumes took place at Keroka. A man with experience played for

them the Abagusii traditional eight stringed musical instrument called *Obokano* (Mocheche, O. I 3/112017).

Figure 2.1 shows how *Obokano*, the Abagusii traditional instrument was played. This was to express happiness after crossing from childhood stage to adulthood and relaxation after a long stay in house confinement after initiation. *Ribina* dance also used to take place at



Keroka. This involved women clothed in traditional attire (skins and beads) dancing to pray to god (*Engoro*) to bring rain after a long spell of drought. They were mostly led by a traditional rain maker named Iriasi. Iriasi was believed to have special powers to pray to God to bring rain as he was believed to be a hermaphrodite (both man and woman). The participants were called to the occasion using a horn (*egetureri*). In this dance people danced in various styles using *obokano* rhythm. One of the styles was *entaburuta*. Here participants jumped up and shook their shoulders following the rhythm of the song that was sung. Another one was *chigicha* style. Here dancers quickly twisted and shook their shoulders. The third style was *okoiyeria amareko* where dancers shook their shoulders in a rhythm to the tune of *obokano*. The fourth style was *sungusia* where dancers shook their hips slowly in a rhythm. Such regular and annual social and cultural activities hastened the urban centre's development (Mocheche O.I.3/11/2017).

Figure 2.1: A man playing *Obokano*.

Source: File photo, Mocheche (O.I.3/11/2017).

Akama and Maxon (2006) attest that economically, after managing to adapt to the existing climatic and ecological conditions of the high altitude areas of the Gusii highlands region, the

Gusii evolved two main modes of land acquisition. These were inheritance and rule of capture. Inheritance applied when an individual acquired land through becoming a beneficiary owing to the fact that the land originally belonged to their parents or husbands. Absolute capture and occupation of virgin land was necessitated by enmity and poor relationship that existed between Gusii people and their neighbors, especially the Maasai and Kipsigs. The intensity of this hostility was manifested in the no man's land that separated the Gusii from their war-like neighbors.

Economically, Bosibori affirms that the Abagusii practiced mixed farming. They practiced cultivation of subsistence crops such as millet and sorghum and livestock husbandry by keeping animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats. They made iron implements such as knives and hoes and weapons such as spears and arrow heads. They hunted wild animals for meat and also gathered wild fruits such as *Chinsobosobo* (sweet yellowish orange wild fruits), *Chinkenene* (dark / black / blue wild fruits) and *Amabera* (guavas). Hunting was done by young energetic men and boys. They hunted buffaloes (*Ching'era*), gazelles (*Chingabi*), rabbits (*Ebisusu*), anti-bears (*Chiguto*), porcupines (*Ebirongo*), and elephants (*Chinchogu*). Apart from food, wild animals were also hunted for their hides and skins which were highly valued for making shields and costumes for song and dance. The hides and skins were also sold to the neighboring Luo community. Lions' and leopards' skins were used for ceremonial purposes (Bosibori O.I. 2/11/2017).

Omwoyo (1990) attests that various birds were trapped or killed using sling shorts. This was mainly the work of young boys. Birds like weaver birds (*Amachore*), doves (*Amaruma*), ducks (*chingware*), and others fell victim of traps. The Abagusii women also gathered wild vegetables which included spider flower (*Chinsaga*), black night shade (*Rinagu*) and East African spinach (*Ototo*). Others included edible fungus with stems and round tops such as *Amoba* (mushrooms). However, the kind of food that was hunted was not enough to satisfy people. It only supplemented to their diet. (Omwoyo, 1990; Bosibori, O.I. 2nd Nov. 2017).

Nyanchoka noted that the Abagusii practiced trading activities among themselves and neighboring communities such as the Luo to obtain what they did not have. The main mode of trade was barter trade. Among the Gusii themselves, finger millet could be exchanged for implements such as hoes, axes, knives and spear heads. Grains could also be exchanged for animals such as goats and sheep. With the neighboring Luo community, the Gusii exchanged

grains for pottery, baskets, mats, fish, and salt from the Luo. As the trade increased, periodic border markets were established. Fixed meeting places developed around the borders which later became market centres and later developed into towns (Nyanchoka, O.I. 13/11/2017).

Concerning the political organization of the Abagusii, (Maxon, 1989) states that the Gusii did not have a centralized political structure. The Gusii clans only united to defend themselves against external aggression or against other Gusii clans in case of war. Prominent men within the clan could assume leadership to resolve disputes. There existed powerful and wealthy men who took part in community decision making particularly in judicial proceedings. Mayer (1951) confirms that the Gusii political organization was based on a lineage system (*ebisaku*), starting with the smallest unit, the homestead (*enyomba* or *omochie*) to the sub clan or clan level. The clan was made from several related families. The clan was ruled by a council of elders called *Abagambi* who maintained law and order and presided over social ceremonies such as initiation, marriage, and worship. There were strong kinship ties and shared solidarity among people belonging to the same clan. All clan members, especially men (warriors) were supposed to be always ready and prepared to protect their resources such as land and livestock as a united group. There was supposed to be no prolonged animosity, conflict or physical confrontation among people belonging to the same clan. The injuring or shedding of blood of people belonging to the same clan was considered a taboo and could result in serious consequences to the offenders including the payment of a big fine in the form of cattle. For example, in cases involving the murder of a person belonging to the same clan, the offender could be banished and ostracized from the clan.

Akama and Maxon (2006) observed that Gusii judicial matters were first handled at the homestead level by the patriarchal founder of the homestead (*Omogaka bwa omochie*). The Gusii homestead was made up of the head of the family, his wives, married sons, their wives, and other unmarried children of the homestead. The head of the family commanded a lot of authority over those people. All members of the homestead were supposed to abide by the orders and guidance of the family patriarch. These included guidance on issues which were judicial, economical, social and political. The disputes settled by the family patriarch involved usage of family resources such as land and payment of bride wealth. Patriarchs from large polygamous families who solved disputes amicably were highly respected and perceived as men of great wisdom.

Onsongo (2005) affirms that the Gusii also had informal courts called *Etureti*. This was the second level of handling judicial matters. *Etureti* was made up of highly respected elders of the sub clan. They were perceived as role models whose behavior and conduct was supposed to be emulated by other members of the community especially the young men. They should have also been successful in settling various disputes in their respective homesteads. Their level of wisdom as people who could make impartial and wise judgements on disputes involving the whole sub clan was also considered. *Etureti* had authority to impose specific fines commensurate to the nature of the offense. They had the authority to publicly reprimand the offender. The elders used their traditional authority to invoke a case or take an oath (*emuma*), to oblige the culprit to pay the required fine. The court proceedings were usually held in public under the shade of specific types of trees that had ritualistic value to the Gusii people such as *omotembe* (sacred) tree. The complainant and the defendant were both supposed to be present during the hearing of the case.

2.3. Introduction and Consolidation of Colonialism

Before the establishment of colonial rule, ethnic groups that lived in Kenya existed as political entities. Written accounts suggest that the idea of Luo, Kalenjin, Abaluhya, or Gusii identities came into currency in the colonial period. According to Ogot (1972), the Kenyan communities were already all contained by each other in a complex, independent human world by the end of the nineteenth century. There were no watertight ethnic categories. Numerous clans, lineages, and sections of clans expanded and contracted, gaining and losing members. The migration of segments or absorption by other ethnic groups produced considerable complexity. New communities and new languages were often the result. Therefore the colonial idea of “tribe” as an isolated and closed group is certainly a myth and ultimately a racist concept.

Colonization of Kenya by Britain was a culmination of a process which had begun many years before the motivational underpinnings of the British exploration of East Africa by A.T. Matson (KNA, MSS/10/98). There are two competing but interrelated theories, which explain the process that led to the establishment of colonial rule in Kenya. One theory is economic in nature and the other is humanitarian.

According to the humanitarian theory, the British turned their attention to East Africa in the eighteenth century. The reason for this attention was to launch a crusade against slave trade. The British, who had abolished slave trade in 1807 in their country and slavery in 1833 in their plantation colonies, preached legitimate commerce in natural and manufactured goods and forced Seyyid Said to sign several anti-slavery treaties (in 1822, 1845 and 1873) which at first circumscribed and finally abolished slave trade altogether in East Africa. To compensate Seyyid Said for his loss of revenue in slave trade, the British persuaded him to enter into legitimate agreements in legitimate commerce with Western powers. Britain signed a trade treaty with Zanzibar in 1839. It is their crusade to end slave trade that British became heavily involved in Zanzibar affairs and, eventually, as the dominant European power in East Africa in general and Kenya in particular (Ochieng,' 1992).

The second explanation of why Britain came to colonize Kenya is economic in nature. In fact, it is disputed that Britain got interested in East Africa because it was against slave trade. According to Ochieng' (1992), "there is substantial controversy among historians over causes of the abolition of slave trade and the relationship between abolitionist movements and the broader trends within the world economy and capitalist society. The abolition of slave trade crusade coincided with the industrial revolution in Europe.

The reasons for the establishment of British rule in Kenya have been well documented by historians. Among them are the desire for markets for manufactured goods and raw materials for British industries. In the decades before colonial rule in Africa, Europe greatly increased her industrial and economic capacity, while Africa seemed to have been almost static (Ochieng,' 1992:60). The European economy was producing more goods than the Europeans could use. Over production of goods led European nations like Germany and France to increase their commercial interests in East Africa. By about 1870, the visible vigorous German and French commercial and imperial interests in East Africa awoke the British from their political lethargy (Ochieng,' 1992). Thus, it can be argued that it was a result of the industrial revolution in Europe that European nations scrambled for African countries because they needed raw materials for their industrial ventures, as well as, markets for their finished industrial products. Ochieng' (1992) notes, for example, that

Europe needed markets for her industrial products. Colonies were also profitable because they provided investor and traders with cheap labour and cheap goods. Thus, the Industrial Revolution was decisively the major factor that led Europe to conquer Africa... The industrial revolution began in Britain

because Britain was the first country, in the world, to organize industries on the factory system, using power-drive machinery, and also because she was the wealthiest country that could afford to finance scientific research.... The Industrial revolution which started in the mid-1790s continued into the nineteenth century, by 1870, Britain was still the greatest industrial nation, though by then Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, the U.S.A. and Russia had also developed their industries.... It was discovered that Africa could supply many of these raw materials... (Ochieng,' 1992: 55-56)

Maxon (1992:63) has alluded to the same reason provided by Ochieng' by stating that "as Colony of Britain, Kenya was expected to provide raw materials for industrial Britain while affording a captive market for the latter's manufactured goods". Similarly, Ndege (1992:93) has emphasized the economic theory as the dominant explanation for the reasons why Britain came to colonize Kenya. Ndege states that:

The colonization of Kenya was essentially an economic plan which was conceived and executed by Britain following the kneil of laissez-faire capitalism in the nineteenth century (Ndege, 1992:93).

From 1871, a movement to have colonies abroad started in Germany and the appetite spread to other European nations including Britain. In 1881, the German colonial office was formed and within the quarter of the nineteenth century the slow process of European penetration of the African continent was first affected through explorers, traders, missionaries, and concession hunters (KNA, MSS/10/98). Kenyanjui (1992:112) has reiterated the influence that the European visitors to Africa had in the colonization process. He notes that

European settlement was conceptualized by European travelers, missionaries, and imperialists. During their travel and missionary work, European regarded uninhabited lands as 'no man's land' and therefore free for settlement and exploitation by European settler-farmers (Kenyanjui, 1992).

Reports that these early European visitors fed back to their respective countries gave way to a scramble for colonies which threatened to pitch European nations militarily against each other. This potential for conflict was only reduced through a series of bilateral and multi-lateral agreements, which culminated into the Berlin conference of 1884-1885. The year 1886 witnessed the Anglo-German treaty signed between Britain and Germany over colonization of East Africa. Following the Heligoland treaty of 1990, Britain took possession of Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar (Ochieng,' 1992).

Britain did not set out to colonize Kenya right away but, following the deliberations of the Berlin conference and the subsequent treaties, which were signed between Britain and

Germany, Britain sent the Imperial British East African Company to secure and administer Kenya and Uganda on its behalf (KNA, MSS/10/5; A history of East Africa by A.T. Matson). The company, which had been formed in 1887, began administering Kenya and Uganda in 1888 after signing a treaty with Zanzibar (Foran, 1962).

IBEACo began its mission to develop trade into the interior of Kenya and into the Uganda kingdom from Mombasa. The company had expanded its influence into Uganda by 1889. However, its success was short-lived as the Company found operating costs far beyond its ability. The company sought assistance from the Foreign Office in London. The Foreign Office accepted to take over Uganda in 1893 and, in 1895 took charge of East Africa, Kenya included. East Africa and Uganda protectorates were administered by the foreign office in London. Kenya was then known as the British East Africa Protectorate. This name was changed to Kenya in 1920 (Foran, 1962). Kenyanjui (1992:112) has asserted that “with the declaration of protectorate over Kenya in 1895, the lobbyists for European settlements in the country stepped up their propaganda”.

Kenya was declared a British protectorate in 1895 thus facilitating a fast inflow of the British in the country. By 1920, the Gusii and the Maasai witnessed an influx of Europeans who were alien to them. More so, they alienated the Maasai land which caused disharmony among the Kenyan ethnic groups (Saitoti, 1980). From the onset, the majority of the people of Kenya, including the Abagusii, Nandi, Kipsigis, Bukusu, Marakwet, Kabras, and Bunyala resisted the establishment of the British rule. They wanted to safeguard their ways of life and independence. Heroic resistance by ethnic groups in western Kenya towards the establishment of British rule is well documented by scholars (Nyasani, 1984; Wandiba, 1985).

With the setting in of colonial rule, Matson (1958) indicates that the Uganda Protectorate was declared in July 1894 by the British. This marked the start of colonialism. The area east of Lake Victoria as far as Naivasha became under the British control. Gusii became part of the Eastern Province of the Uganda Protectorate. The closer administrative station was at Kisumu. Between 1894 and 1902, Gusii was included in Uganda’s Eastern Province.

Ogot (1963) observed that the Abagusii reaction to the British settlement in Gusiiland was both of collaboration and resistance. The weaker Abagusii sub tribes collaborated while the stronger ones resisted. Ombati, leader of the Abagisero clan initiated contact with the British in Kisumu. When the Abagisero heard about the British and their military prowess, they decided to appeal to them to for help against the Abagetutu who wanted to subdue them. Ombati led a delegation to Kisumu in November 1900. They did not get any help since the railway line was far from them. From this time, the Abagisero maintained contactswith the British in Kisumu and were to be the Gusii clan most friendly and willing to accomodate the British. As a reward to his royalty, Ombati was made chief by the British. Nyamosi of Majoge, whose country had been torn by civil strife since 1902, visited Karungu in 1904 with overtures for friendships. The larger Abagusii sub tribes like the Kitutu and Nyaribari remained rebellious.

History of Kisii District (1907) *KNA/DC/KSI/3/4*, attests that it was not until the transfer of Eastern Province to the East African protectorate in March 1902 that the Gusii were to have closer contacts with the British administration. The larger area transferred was soon divided into two, Kisumu and Naivasha. Gusii highlands fell within Kisumu. In 1902 and 1903 the colonial British administration moved closer to the Gusii with the establishment of administrative posts among the neighboring people. In May 1902, a station had been opened among the Kipsigis at Kericho. In early 1903, a post was established among the Luo at Karungu on the lakeshore. With the opening up of the posts, these people were brought under British administration and protection. British officials were now in a better position to conquer and subdue the Gusii. The British launched a military expedition in 1905 whose aim was to assist in the selection of a suitable site to establish a colonial administrative post in Gusii country.

Nyanza report (1905-06) *KNA/PC/NZA/1/4*) indicates that the Gusii resisted the British when they entered their land. Ochieng (1974) attests that Moraa Ngiti, a freedom fighter in Gusii launched opposition against the British colonialism. She was a medicine woman who treated the sick, especially the Gusii warriors who could be injured in war. She offered to give warriors medicine “so that the bullets could turn into water”. She advocated for the murder of Northcote who was a British Assistant District Commissioner. She advised the Gusii to violently expel the British. Moraa conspired with her step son Otenyo Nyamaterere to kill Northcote. Under the influence of beer and medicine given by Moraa, Otenyo ambushed and

speared Northcote as he rode on a mule. Moraa mobilized people to expel the British as unrest grew in Kitutu, Nyaribari, and Bonchari against the British colonialism. However, this incident did not deter the British from occupying Gusiiland.

According to Ochieng (1974), Gusiiland was conquered and subdued by the British under Northcote and R.W. Hemsted who were District Commissioners of Ugaya District within which Gusiiland was to be included. The two whites visited Gusii highlands and chose a site for the administrative post in an area known to the Gusii as Getembe (current Kisii town). The area was close to the borders of the lands inhabited by the Abanyaribari, Abagetutu, and Abanchari. It was fairly centrally located in the Gusii highlands as whole. This site was moreover well supplied with water by two streams. The British commissioners, Sir Charles Eliot, and his successor sir Donald Stewart worked tirelessly to see Gusiiland brought under British rule. Sir Donald Stewart viewed Gusiiland as a potential area for European settlement as the region had ideal environmental conditions. That is, it had cooler temperate climate with abundant rainfall and fertile alluvial soils. Therefore, it was in 1905 when the Gusii people had direct contact with the British. By 1908, the Gusii had completely been subdued and put under British colonial administration although resistance continued in the form of “Gusii revolts” until 1914. These events made the history of the Abagusii to have an acute turn as it later changed the social, economic, and political life of the Abagusii. The two Gusii clans, the Kitutu and Nyaribari settled at Keroka as they found the area had water, that is, it had a stream with clean water and many springs around. Keroka area had adequate green pastures for their livestock and fertile soil for the growth of the Gusii staple crops – millet, sorghum and potatoes. In the highlands, the Abagusii settled away from hostile climatic conditions which did not support their main way of live as land tillers. Keroka actually proved to be a place of great value for the settlement and survival of the two Abagusii clans. The establishment of colonial rule in Gusii and her neighbors such as the Kipsigis and the Luo influenced the development of urban centres such as Kericho, Karungu, Kisii and Keroka.

2.5 World War I (1914-1918) and its impact on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre

On the commencement of World War I, young men had been deceived into going to Kisii station to cut grass. On arrival, they were apprehended and sent in large numbers to carrier

corps. Those who saw the men being led away compared the event to that of slave caravans. The men conscripted into carrier corps were overworked and under-paid (KNA/DC/KSI/3/2/1, 1914). The first lot of Kisii men recruited into carrier corps began to arrive by 1914 and 1915. The war was declared in August 1914. The Germans proceeded with their intention to seize the Uganda railway. The Kisii District Commissioner (DC) puffed up security of the district to guard the Anglo-German border. On 11th September 1914, a Germany force entered the British territory owing to the fact that the DC and his troops were uninformed. The DC therefore withdrew his police. The British later returned in full force to rescue the station.

According to informants, the Abagusii were sent outside the district to work due to their unruly conduct. There, they did heavy work with little pay. Most people, especially men went missing while many of them who were taken to war died. Between 1914 and 1916, 21,684 men were sent out of the district to work within a period of 18 months. This was an average of 1,215 men per month for 18 consecutive months. A total of 42,888 men were enlisted for labor between 1914 and 1918 from the district. Most men were hired by force. Young men were rounded up during sport meetings or trapped in their huts at night. The war ended with flowing back of war veterans. These war returnees came home with better education and skills which accelerated the spirit of nationalism.

2.6 Mumboism and Sakawaism Reaction to Colonialism and the Calamities in Gusii 1918-1920

The investigation on the worship of Mumbo 1907-1924 indicated that Mumbo was a spirit which was revealed in the form of a snake. Nobody had ever seen Mumbo. It was claimed that the end of the world was nearing and that the world would be dark. This led to the buying of many lamps to encounter the impending darkness. The coming of the Europeans was foretold and people were discouraged from cultivating their crops and at the same time eat up all their female stock. Animals that were to be offered as sacrifices to Mumbo were to be white in colour (KNA/DC/KSI/3/2).

According to Brooks (1970), Sakawaism also opposed colonialism in Gusiiland. Sakawa was a Gusii prophet who predicted the coming of the white men. He used to collect his followers at the site of present-day Kisii town and tell them where the police lines, hospital, offices and even where churches would be built. He lit fires in a long line in order to show where electric poles and lights would follow. He also prophesied that the Gusii warriors would be disarmed by the white strangers, if they showed resistance. He also said that these white people would stay and later leave for their country. All these prophecies became true. Sakawa who was born around 1840 disappeared mysteriously in 1902. It is believed that he died on one late November night, but when people came the following morning to bury his body, they did not find it. Some people believe he ascended to the sky and that he will come back one day. Indeed in 1921, many of the Gusii were expecting his return. Whatever happened to his body is not known. Two years after the death of Sakawa, the British arrived in Gusiiland. The Gusii had forgotten that Sakawa had warned them not to oppose the white men. When the Gusii warriors took their spears and arrows (inferior weapons) to defend their independence, many were killed by the British who were using superior weapons (the guns) to fight. Sakawaism began under Bonareri, a woman prophetess who gained a massive following due to her calls for expulsion of the colonizer. By 1954, Sakawaism and Mumboism had declined. However, these religio-political movements which resisted European colonialism aroused nationalistic feelings in urban centres in Gusiiland such as Keroka.

2.7 The Impact of Colonial Agriculture on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre

The introduction of cash crop cultivation considerably altered sexual division of labor by increasing household labor time requirements for women. As argued by Tordoff (2002), it is the women who spent most of the time nurturing cash crops, therefore reducing their commitment to subsistence crops which were under their control. Besides, the patriarchy controlled proceeds from cash crop farming and expected wives' food crop cultivation to meet all family needs as was the case in pre-colonial period.

In the first few decades of colonial rule in Kenya, forced labor was legalized and widely used. Immense supplies of labor were required to lay the foundation of the colonial economy under which rail lines and roads had to be built and dams and bridges constructed. Such labor was

used at Nyansiongo White Settlement Scheme near Keroka where tea, pyrethrum, and maize were grown in large scale. Forced labor was also used to build roads and bridges connecting Keroka and other urban centres such as Kisii. For many, it was an act of benevolence necessary for people deeply mired in idleness and indolence. To the colonials, it was part of the “white man’s burden” in the service of their civilizing mission. (Ochieng, 1992; Openda O.I. 01/11/2017)

Ochieng (1992) pointed out that by 1914; private land ownership had been introduced by the colonial administration. It was the main solution to the perceived non optimal land use practice among the Gusii. It was emphasized as an efficient mode of land management that could stimulate productivity. It was actually meant to justify the unequal land ownership practice that characterized colonial land policy. In this policy, European settlers were allowed to own large tracks of land while most African communities were sent away to the so called native reserves where land was limited. This led to the setting up of the Nyansiongo white settlement scheme adjacent to Keroka urban centre.

Wolff (1974) notes that the pressures of the first World War made matters worse as additional labor had to be secured for military forces and carrier corps. More repressive labor legislation was passed and for the first time a documentation system was introduced in 1915 which was later to be known as the infamous Kipande registration system. In 1917 the government resorted to recruitment through armed raids in order to increase the diminishing ranks of carrier corps. However, settler farms and corporate plantations relied on resident or ‘squatter’ labor. Settler farmers had realized that the squatter system was one way of keeping a ‘free’ cheap labor force and countering the problem of perennial labor shortages.

2.8 Development of Keroka (1921-1939)

In the interwar years of 1921 to 1939, the Gusii households continued to use family labor to produce their own subsistence and commodities for the new markets established under colonial rule. The main new technology adopted during this time was the utilization of hoes produced in Europe in place of the traditional implements used for turning the soil. In the white settlement scheme of Nyansiongo Borabu, 3 kilometres from Keroka, the new hoes made digging, planting, and weeding of crops easier and faster (Ochieng, 1992; Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017) Nyabuti adds that new crops were introduced during this period as a result of state action and also as a result of market prices. Examples of such crops were maize and

wheat. They were made available to Gusii households by distributing seeds through colonial chiefs and headsmen (Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017).

Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme had large tracks of land and therefore maize was grown in large scale as can be seen in Figure 2.2. Nyabuti Denis worked in the settlement scheme as a farm manager for thirty years.



Figure 2.2: Maize plantation at Nyansiongo Borabu 1939

Source: File photo, Nyabuti (O.I.4/11/2017).

Kerubo, an elder who had stayed in Keroka for 50 years but now lives in her rural home at Mochenwa Geta attested that;

During a market day which was usually on a Sunday, as men brought in cattle, sheep and goats for sale, the local women also brought foods for sale at the market. Such foods included sweet potatoes, sugarcane, boiled maize with cobs and wimbi porridge. As people ate the boiled maize, they threw the maize cobs in the market place. The market place finally became full of maize cobs piled up all round making the place to be named *Nyabiemba* meaning a place of maize cobs. That makes the origin of the name *Nyabiemba* which was the original name of Keroka urban centre (Kerubo O.I. 23/10/2017).

This information from Kerubo indicates that the place grew symbolic to what went on in the centre. Respondents further indicated that the indigenous Abagusii people initiated more activities to the growth of the place.

Inquiring the role of Indian settlers, one leader, Oginda, had this to say;

The Indians found the place strategic for their business as people could meet there periodically for open air market (once in a week-on Sundays). The Indians built their shops adjacent to the market. They sold commodities such as bed sheets, blankets, sufurias, plates, cups, umbrellas, and soap among others (Oginda, O.I. 2/11/2017).

From this finding it can be deduced that the Indians coming with more commodities for sale meant also more people would move to the centre for business ventures. This was agreed to by a business person who had stayed in the area for over 40 years that the growth of the town sprouted rapidly later when the then senior chief Musa Nyandusi constructed a flour milling machine followed by another flour milling machine by James Nyambega at the Keroka market by 1922. Many other semi permanent business structures were established by other Indians, Nubians and the local people, the Abagusii.

Nyabuti hinted that the continued use of money economy in the 1920s led to the faster growth of the urban centre. The money currency of Indian rupees introduced in Gusii as early as 1900 was slowly changing to British shilling. The inhabitants at the centre along with the exchange of goods for goods (barter trade) also used shilling coins and notes for buying and selling commodities. In the Abagusii community a man born in 1921 was named *Manoti* meaning when paper money (shilling notes) was first used. A person born in 1922 was named *Nyasiringi* meaning when shilling coins arrived in the community. Previously Indian rupees were used as mode of currency. As Keroka urban centre developed, the use of shilling coins and shilling notes accelerated trade leading to its faster development (Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017)

The process of urbanization in Keroka centre has over time been affected by sizes of settlements. Keroka area before the coming of the Europeans was a small village occupied by few indigenous Abagusii residents. One respondent, Nyabuti, asked of the origin of Keroka identified and said that;

By 1925 Keroka had become a small centre with three Indian shops which later increased to six, by then owned by Indians, Goans, Nubians and locals. The Indians had moved from Kisii town and settled in this centre as businessmen

which its original name was *Nyabiemba*. *Nyabiemba* was located on a hilly ground which was a market for buying and selling livestock once in a week (Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017).

Later in around 1926, in an effort by the colonial government to open up the rural areas for trade and agriculture, narrow murrum roads were constructed. One of them passed from Sotik white highlands to Kisii town through Keroka. This is when the Abagusii named a generation called *Nyabara* meaning those born when the first all-weather roads were constructed across the community.

Another factor for the growth of Keroka urban centre was the coming and settlement of investors both foreign and local. These included the Europeans who established agricultural farms around Keroka urban centre in 1927 for dairy farming, poultry, maize, and beans. The products from the farms which included milk and eggs were sold to people through Keroka urban centre. Also business started by the Indian and Goan traders at Keroka accelerated the growth of the centre. The Kikuyu and Maragoli later joined the centre between 1944 and 1946 in trade affairs making it a cosmopolitan centre.

Table 2.1: Non-native traders in South Kavirondo in 1933

Traders	Men	Women	Total
Goan	3	1	4
Indian	179	98	277
Arab and Abyssinian	30	10	40
Total	212	109	321

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/1/3, 1924-1932

Table 2.2 shows the population of non-native traders in 1933 in South Kavirondo (where Kisii was included). By 1933, the Indian traders at Keroka had increased to ten with over twenty emergent African traders owning shops at the centre (Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017).

The provision of security by setting up a police post in 1927 led to the urban centre's development. The residents of the urban centre and the people around were now assured of their security as they conducted their business. The rural urban migration made the population of Keroka urban centre to swell to high levels. People moved in to look for business and job opportunities. This led to Keroka urban centre's rapid growth.

In 1929, a trained agricultural officer was stationed in Gusiiland. The decade of the 1930's witnessed the introduction of coffee which was a high value cash crop that could bear the cost of transport and still bring profit to the grower. The introduction of these new crops, which were maize, wheat and coffee grown at the white settlement scheme of Nyansiongo Borabu sprouted trade at Keroka as migrant labor that worked in the Nyansiongo Borabu farms resided at Keroka which is three kilometres away from the farms.

Further inquiry on the origin of the name Keroka another elder, Nyanchoka, had these to say;

By 1930 many people had been attracted to the small market and the market place became small. The market was situated on the boundary between the Nyaribari location whose chief was the senior chief Musa Nyandusi and the Kitutu location whose chief was called Ooga Gichana. The chiefs decided to enlarge the market by clearing a bushy flat land that was down the slope. The flat land was bushy with vegetation plants called *Emeroka*. These bushes of *Emeroka* plants were cleared through the efforts of the two chiefs to pave way for a larger market place. As the market was moved to the newly cleared land, the name of the market therefore changed to Keroka-derived from *Emeroka*,

which are indigenous plants used to demarcate boundaries in the Abagusii community (Nyanchoka, O.I. 13/11/2017).

Findings from the analogy established that the name Keroka given to the area was significant either to the activities carried out in the area or the physical features of the area, vegetation for this case. From the statements it was deduced that the area started from a very small point. Land use at the time was peasant farming by locals. Gradually the area started to grow to become a small town with various activities taking place.

The work of missionaries in the 1930's and 1940's also accelerated the development of Keroka urban centre. KNA/ DC/KSI/1/3, 1924-1932 indicates the population of missionaries in South Kavirondo by January 1933 which was mainly inhabited by the Luo, Kisii, Abasuba and Abakuria. They were 13 men, 12 women, and 9 children making a total of 34 missionaries. The Christian Missionaries established mission schools in Gusii. Their main aim of establishing schools was to spread the Christian religion, civilize the Africans apart from propagating the literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Literacy was to be a stepping stone to convert Africans to Christianity.

Table 2.2: Major post primary mission institutions in Gusiiland between 1943 and 1955

Type	Name of school	Sponsor	Location
Intermediate	Nyabururu	Roman Catholic Church	Kitutu
Intermediate	Amasago	Roman Catholic Church	Nyaribari
Intermediate	Itibo	Pentecostal Assemblies of God	Kitutu
Intermediate	Itierio	Swedish Lutheran Mission	Wanjare
Intermediate	Nyanchwa	Seventh Day Adventist	Nyaribari
Intermediate	Sengera	Seventh Day Adventist	Kitutu
Intermediate	Gesusu	Seventh Day Adventist	Nyaribari
Intermediate	Magena	Seventh Day Adventist	Machoge
Intermediate	Motagara	Seventh Day Adventist	North Mugirango

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/5/3, South Nyanza Gazetteer 1943-1955

Pastor Ogero asserted that the Christian missionaries started the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) churches and schools around Keroka in 1939. The SDA mission schools started

around Keroka include Nyambaria Boys high school, Ibacho high school, Nyankoba high school, and Nyanturago high school among others. They are a proximity distance of one to two kilometres from Keroka Central Business District. This was an extension from Nyanchwa at Kisii town which was the Headquarter of the SDA Church which was started by missionaries in 1912. Ichuni Parish of the Catholic Church was started in 1941 at Keroka which was an extension from Nyabururu around Kisii town in 1911. Catholic mission schools which were established around Keroka include St. Charles Lwanga Ichuni girls, St. Paul's Gekano Boys high school, St. Teresa's Gekano Girls high school, St. Danes Eronge secondary and St. Cyprian Biticha secondary among others. This made many residents of the Abagusii community in the centre to switch from the traditional worship of *Engoro* (God) to get converted to Christianity. It also made many people to live in or around Keroka urban centre to get closer to worship areas. This led to inflow of population at Keroka which also boosted trading activities at the centre. Conversion to Christianity was regarded as a way of civilization as the habit of dressing slowly changed from skins to clothes; traditional worship was slowly diminishing thus getting replaced by Christianity while traditional whole foods were slowly getting mixed with processed ones. Christian songs were slowly being mixed with Traditional songs (Ogero, O.I. 14/11/207).

The religious leader, Ogero, also observed the role of religion in the growth and development of Keroka. This he observed and said that;

The work of missionaries accelerated the development of Keroka urban centre. While the S.D.A. Church started at Keroka in 1939, Ichuni Parish of the Catholic Church was started in 1941 at Keroka. This made many people to live in or around the centre for worship services thus trading at or getting services from Keroka market (Ogero, O.I. 14/11/2017).

According to Bogonko (1977), European gospel songs were translated into Ekegusii. This translation was the work of Beavon (the then Nyanchwa station head) assisted by two Abagusii early Christian converts who were pastor Nathaniel Nyanusi and Abel Nyakundi. The songs were used widely to spread the gospel in Gusii and specifically at Keroka urban centre with their sweet melodies.

2.9 World War II (1939-1945) and its Impact on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre

Just like WWI, WWII had far reaching implications on the Gusii and Keroka urban centre in particular. According to Dower (1986), the war was sparked off by the territorial ambitions of the then Germany Chancellor Adolf Hitler, thus spreading from Europe into Africa and the rest of the world. Though it began in 1939, for the Africans the war began in 1935 with Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. During this war, the African soldiers were conscripted both by British and Italians. At the centre was Hitler's attempt to regain the Germany colonies of Alsace and Lorraine lost to France after WWI. Also in Africa, the Germans had lost all their colonies which were Rwanda, Burundi, Cameroon, Namibia and Togo.

Jeffreys and Anderson (2005) indicate that African soldiers (Askaris) served overseas as far as Burma, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Africans made about 100,000 fighters in the Burma campaign alone which were mainly Battalion and Divisions from Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF). The Burma campaign was the longest land campaign fought by the British in WWII. The soldiers enlisted from and returning to the rural areas got involved in local rather than territorial conflicts. African soldiers experience in the war was characterized by low levels of pay, food rations, poor conditions of service and racial discrimination. This kind of scenario accelerated anti-colonial sentiments after the war in East Africa, Kenya and in particular Gusii and Keroka urban centre. The Abagusii servicemen who fought in WWII were not recognized in the post war period as they were not adequately compensated for their war services.

According to Were and Nyamwaya (1967), the Second World War (1939-1945) caused panic among the Abagusii and more so those who stayed at urban centres such as Keroka as they could be easily reached for capture. Those outside the district started coming back home while those inside the district ran away into the bush to hide. This is because they might have feared compulsory recruitment for the war as carrier corps. The fear proved to be true as the first recruitment of manpower was started through force and propaganda.

In 1940, the conscription for the East African Military Labor Services (EAMLS) started. In 1941, it was followed by the "the assisted recruiting" for important civil activities. This put a strain on labor resources of the district as the work load and tasks of the Abagusii women increased. While a total of 98,000 Kenyans participated in the Second World War the final contributions of the Abagusii are put at 10,000 policemen and slightly a greater number of

compulsory civil laborers. In the extension of the colonial policy in producing enough food for the war effort, many cattle were taken away from the Abagusii while agricultural production was expanded (KNA DC/KSI/I/4).

The forceful recruitment of men into the military was to satisfy the wartime necessities. Able bodied men who did not get absorbed into the army were redirected to pluck tea leaves at the Kenya Tea Company in Kericho while others were sent to Macalder mines in South Nyanza (Momanyi, 1996). Women whose husbands had been recruited as military officers suffered the most. Married women's labor and decision making expanded leading to the emergence of female headed households that was a function of irregular remittances from their husbands (Silberschmidt, 1999). These female headed households were left under care of the fathers-in-law and brothers-in-law. Those who found it intolerable returned to their natal homes. Songs had been composed asking women to be cautious of military returnees. It was thought that ex-world war soldiers had contracted deadly diseases overseas. The songs stigmatized the wives of returnee soldiers who however lived with their husbands, even though with fear of contracting imaginary diseases. Such songs also mocked the ex-conscripts.

One such song is as follows, and was sang by Nyakerario.

Ekegusii

English Translation

Solo: Nyaboکه nagokania*2

Nyaboکه I cautioned you*2 Nyaboکه

nagokania aee omoyoo

Nyaboکه I cautioned you oh dear

Nyaboکه nagokania*2 ndero

Nyaboکه I cautioned you*2 now

Chorus: Iraneria

Chorus: Repeat the same

Solo: Omomurao'miritari*2

The young military man*2

Omomura o' miritari nare noborwaire

The young military man had a disease

Nare noborwaire arusia atisababa

He has a disease he brought from Addis Ababa

Chorus: Iraneria

Chorus: Repeats the same

(Nyakerario, O.I.25/10 2017)

Addis Ababa is mentioned in the song because many of the ex-conscripts had been to Ethiopia during the Second World War. The capital city is Addis Ababa. Wars and diseases formed materials from which songs were composed. Such songs were sang at Keroka urban centre and its environs after WWII.

The coming of the 2nd World War in 1939 to 1945 held back the expansion of coffee planting as the colonial state gave priority to the production of food crops in aid of the war effort. The period was marked by higher prices, increased marketing facilities, and improvement of roads in Gusii. This greatly spurred the production of maize that became a major export from the Kisii highlands especially the Nyansiongo settlement scheme near Keroka (KNA/DC/KSI/7/1, 1943).

2.10 Developments in Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre after World War II (1945-1963)

Momanyi (1996) indicates that WWII made the Abagusii soldiers to be exposed to many experiences and great consciousness of the outside world which they later brought back home such as the inducement to appeal for educational opportunities. WWII veterans and the Abagusii educated elite played an important role in agitating for independence. Colonial education became an important element to voice the people's dissatisfaction due to the brutality of the colonial government. Thus colonial education stimulated anti-colonial African nationalism. The factors behind this spirit of nationalism included literacy skills which increased unity at the national level, legalization of forced labor, the general wind of

change across the continent in favour of independence and the natural desire for freedom. Using these experiences, they were able to instigate, pressurize, and petition the colonial government to introduce the necessary reforms like the provision of more educational opportunities and inclusion into job opportunities. The war veterans returned home and shared their experiences with their people, especially about matters of nationalism. They were able to form and join Parties like the Kisii Union (KU) and work with others formed in other parts of the country to fight for independence.

The introduction of western education led to the faster development of Keroka urban centre in the late 1940s. The literacy levels increased as the people who went to school learnt arithmetic and how to read and write.

It is important to note that Nyanza Province was inhabited by the Abagusii, the Luo and the Kuria. Table 2.3 shows that education had become popular after the Second World War. This was through the efforts of the colonial government which used chiefs with the assistance of mission churches' leaders who asked their faithful to take their children to school. Therefore the number of children going to school increased. The influence of western culture was further felt through formal education as many children were registered in both primary and secondary schools.

Table 2.3: School Attendance Nyanza Province (1947)

Primary standard	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Boys	43,673	18,873	12,521	7,314	6090	1,714
Girls	16,279	7,841	3,705	1,749	815	224
Secondary	1	2	3	4	5	6
Boys	682	532	60	71	-	-
Girls	86	40	-	-	-	-

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/1/14

Education boosted trade as communication between the different races at Keroka in either English or Kiswahili was made easier. This was due to the establishment of primary schools such as Nyanturago SDA, Gesusu SDA, Ibacho SDA, Metamaywa SDA, Amabuko DOK and Riabore DOK. After independence in 1963, many secondary schools had got established

in and around Keroka and these included Nyanturago, Gesusu, St. Charles Lwanga Ichuni Girls, St.Stephen High School Keroka, and Masaba High School Keroka. The urban centre is of late a home of Kisii University campus and Keroka Institute of Technology.

On the white man’s education, Openda had these to say;

In addition, the white man’s education led to the faster development of Keroka urban centre in the late 1940s. Education boosted trade as communication between the different races such as the Africans, Indians and Whites at Keroka in either English or Kiswahili was made easier. There was increased enrolment of pupils in both primary and secondary schools in or around Keroka. This led to a large population getting services from the urban centre (Openda, O.I. 1/11/2017).

In the post WWII period, there were several agricultural changes that led to the growth of Keroka Urban Centre. According to Lonsdale (1964), the colonial government initiated the Swynnerton plan in 1954. R.I.M. Swynnerton was a colonial Assistant Director of Agriculture who introduced reforms in land tenure and agriculture that also affected the Abagusii and in particular Keroka Urban Centre. In his plan, the traditional communal ownership of land was abolished. Acquisition of individual title deeds of land was recommended. This was meant to enable farmers to secure loans for self development. The plan also offered extension services, provision of credit to farmers and processing and marketing of produce. With the implementation of this plan, the output of cash crops such as pyrethrum, coffee and tea were improved. Bennet (1963) adds that seeds were availed to African farmers in the 1950s as cooperatives for marketing of the produce were formed. Tea was first introduced in Gusiland in 1957. Men ventured to dominate in the management of cash crops and to control its income.

Crop production underwent drastic changes after the Swynnerton plan of 1954 and the Gusii peasants took advantage of the plan to expand commodity production.

Table 2.4: Maize and Wimbi yield in Acre bags and price per bag 1955/1961

Food	Yield per Acre bags		Price per bag in Ksh.	
	1955	1961	1955	1961
Maize	6	9	25.80	22.30

Wimbi	4	4	30.50	27.75
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Source: KNA/DC/KSI/1/23, 1961

However, Maize and Wimbi were reduced to the position of mere food crops and their place taken by more valuable cash crops such as tea, coffee, and pyrethrum. Hence the decline of Maize prices from Ksh. 25.80 a bag in 1955 to Ksh. 22.30 in 1961 while that of Wimbi dropped from Ksh.30.50 to Ksh. 27.75 over the same period as can be seen from Table 2.4.

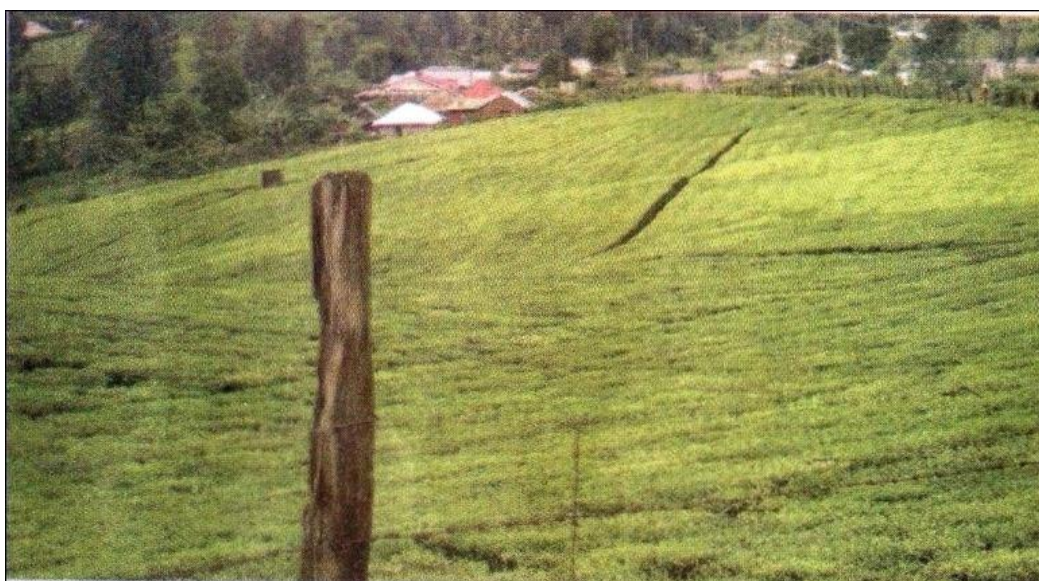


Figure 2.3: Tea plantation at Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme, 1960.

Source: File photo, Keraita (An agricultural inspector in colonial times), (O.I. 24/10/2017).

Tea was mostly planted in plantations as can be seen from Figure 2.3. Coffee was also planted in large scale. This is due to the valuable returns they provided as confirmed by Keraita James, a former Colonial Agricultural Inspector.

Pyrethrum was introduced to the Gusii households in the 1950's. Over the next two decades, Gusii became the leading producer of pyrethrum in Kenya grown by small scale farmers. In the decade that followed (1960's), extensive plantings of tea were undertaken. Tea became the most important high value crop grown in the Gusii highlands from the 1960s, especially in the Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme. Tea farming gave consistent returns to the

grower. The nearby urban centre being Keroka about 3 kilometres away, laborers in the tea farms resided in the centre. The introduction of cash crops, that is, tea, pyrethrum, and coffee along with the new breeds of dairy cattle and poultry led to the formation of Masaba Cooperative Union at Keroka. The union coordinated 29 Cooperative Societies (CS) in Gusiiland such as Keroka, Gesima, Rigoma, Magombo, Esani, Motagara, Birongo, Nyamasibi, and Kiamokama. The union collected the farm produce from the societies, transported them for processing, looked for market, and paid the farmers. Through the union, the societies provided farm implements for the farmers. This hastened the pace of development of the urban centre.

In an effort by the colonial government to promote both trade and crop production in Gusiiland, there was increased interest in constructing many roads in order to open up Gusiiland to the outside world. The Kisii-Keroka road as shown in Table 2.5 had become a major road connecting the two urban centres to Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi. This major road facilitated the growth of Keroka Urban Centre.

Table 2.5: Road network in Gusiiland by 1955 (in miles).

Road	Miles
Sondu to Ikonge	10.4
Chemosieto	1.1
Kisii to Nyangusu	24.8
Kisii to Ekerubo	16.0
Kisii to Keroka	17.0

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/5/3, 1943-1955

KNA/DC/KSI/2/1, (1961) indicates that African courts were spread in South Kavirondo locations. The Kisii Court of appeal was set up in 1950. There were other Locational African courts. By July 1961; there were two main African courts at locational level. One was at Manga and the other was at Gesima. Manga African court was responsible for the western parts of North Mugirango location and Kitutu. Gesima was responsible for the Eastern parts of North Mugirango location, Kitutu location and Nyaribari location. In 1962, the Gesima African court was relocated to Keroka in Kitutu location due to easy communication to Keroka and its centrality in the location. Kitutu location was the largest administrative unit in

the highland which was led by Chief Zachariah Angwenyi. The location centre was at Manga by then. Manga and Gesima market centres have, however, since stagnated while Keroka urban centre has shown rapid growth mostly due to the relocation of the court and the Kisii-Nairobi main road. This is in line with the ribbon theory which indicates that development follows major roads which link an urban centre and other major towns.

The white settlers readily needed skilled and unskilled labor for crop production at the adjacent Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme who found residence at Keroka. At the same time the growing number of Indian and Goan traders accelerated the expansion of Keroka urban centre. Many emergent African traders participated in open air market trading as they eventually also established shopping premises. Table 2.6 that follows indicates some of the popular townships, trading centres and markets in Gusiiland by 1955.

Keroka township as indicated in Table 2.6, which was in Nyaribari Location by then and 17 miles (about 27 Km) from Kisii town, was one of the major trading centres in Gusii on which Sunday was the official market day.

Table 2.6: Important trading centres in Gusii; per location (1955)

Market centres	Location	Market days	Miles (from Kisii township)
Kisii township	Kitutu	everyday	-
Ogembo	Machoge	Sunday	18
Nyangusu	Bassi	Tuesday	30
Bunyunyu	North Mugirango	Wednesday	16
Keroka	Nyaribari	Sunday	17
Riana	Wanjare	Wednesday	10
Igare	Bassi	Wednesday	15
Nyamache	Bassi	Sunday	23
Nyacheki	Bassi	Sunday	35
Kenyenyanya	Machoge	Wednesday	24
Magenche	Machoge	Sunday	32
Mogonga	Machoge	Sunday	22
Riosiri	South Mugirango	Sunday	19
Keumbu	Nyaribari	Thursday	8
Marani	Kitutu	Wednesday	11
Kebirigo	North Mugirango	Thursday	22

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/5/3, South Nyanza Gazetter 1943-1955

In healthcare, traditional treatment with the use of herbs was widely provided at Keroka urban centre especially in the colonial and precolonial times. Mina, a former traditional doctor who has now handed the career to her daughter pointed out that “although modern medicine has been brought by the Whites for the cure of diseases, traditional medicine is paramount for the treatment of diseases as far as the Abagusii are concerned”. Mina continues to stipulate that traditional doctors got their medicine from different types of plants and herbs which had original and highly concentrated medicine in them. Ailments that were treated include coughs, chest pain, malaria, stomachaches, abdominal pains, backaches, headaches, diarrhoea (*ogosaa*), barrenness (*obogomba*), impotence, sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis and gonorrhoea, epilepsy (*endurume*), asthma (*egekuba*) and sore

throat (*emioyo*) among others. Mina adds that for example *omonyangateti* herb was used to cure chest, joint and muscle pains, headaches and rabies. The roots, barks, leaves and fruits of various herbs were prepared in various ways such as drying, burning to produce ash (*Obosaro*), crushing or boiling to produce medicine as shown in Figure 2.4. During recovery, a patient was fed with *wimbi* porridge (*erongori*). An animal such as a goat or sheep was slaughtered and the patient fed with the offal (*amase*) and its soup (*omosori*). Traditional treatment became popular at Keroka and beyond as it improved the people's health. Herbal medicine cured many diseases which made people to come from far and wide to seek for treatment. This significantly contributed to the urban centre's development (Mina O.I.23/10/2017).



Figure 2.4: Herbal medicines for sale at Keroka town by an herbalist, 1962.
Source: File photo, Mina (A traditional doctor), (O.I. 23/10/2017).

2.11 Conclusion

It has been established that the colonial development of Keroka Urban Centre (1905-1963), was accelerated by a number of factors. These included the coming of investors both foreign and local, the work of missionaries, the introduction of western education, cultural sports and dances at the urban centre, the introduction of cash crops and the provision of security. The

introduction of Christianity led to the introduction of new culture and concentration of population at Keroka Urban Centre due to the establishment of new churches at the urban centre. Formal education led to the start of education institutions at and around Keroka and improved communication due to introduction of new languages, English and Kiswahili among different ethnic groups. Road transport also got improved at Keroka. Traditional healthcare similarly accelerated the urban centre's development in the colonial period.

The introduction of cash crops such as tea, coffee and pyrethrum, the several agricultural changes that took place and the establishment of co-operative unions at Keroka led to the urban centres steady growth. The growing number of Indian and Goan traders coupled with the establishment of Christian churches and education institutions at Keroka increased population which led to the growth of trade at the urban centre thus increasing urban development.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF KEROKA TOWN IN THE POST COLONIAL PERIOD (1963-2018)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the development of Keroka town after Kenya gained her independence from the British in 1963. In this postcolonial period unprecedented development was witnessed at Keroka Urban Centre. This chapter examines Keroka's rapid growth in population, economy, political, and social spheres during this period.

3.2 Keroka Urban Centre Development (1963-1978)

Rutten and Owuor (2009) noted that Kenya gained her independence from the British in 1963. Jomo Kenyatta became Kenya's first prime minister up to 1964. In 1964 he was elected as president, the position he held until his death in 1978. After independence, the new government under President Jomo Kenyatta worked using the motto of "*Harambee*" meaning pulling together and that none was to be left behind. His main agenda was to eradicate ignorance, disease, and poverty. He therefore advocated for the establishment of schools, hospitals and improvement of the economy. Through the 1960's and 1970's, the Kenyatta government embarked on a process of Africanisation of the economy. Land bought from the white farmers with money from the British government was subdivided for occupation by landless, unemployed, and progressive farmers. Land was also sold to state owned ventures and to wealthy African families. Such land included the Nyansiongo Borabu White settlement scheme which is about 3 kilometres from Keroka Urban Centre.

Yaro explained that African merchants, businessmen, and politicians took over the settlement scheme from the whites. After independence, still people from different parts of Gusii sought wage labor at Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme which was now under the new African management. Most of these laborers still sought residence and essential services such as shopping, flour milling, and food items from Keroka market. Among the popular people in Gusii who substituted the whites and owned farms at Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme include; former ministers such as James Nyamweya, Lawrence Sagini, Makone Ombese, Andrew Omanga, Professor Sam Ongeri, Professor Maranga, former Provincial Commissioner Zachary Ogongo, former *Maendeleo ya Wanawake* chairperson Wilkister Onsando and former nominated Member of Parliament Catherine Nyamato. Businessmen

who owned farms at Nyansiongo Borabu settlement include Nyandigisi, Okenye and Nyachere among others just to mention a few (Yaro, O.I. 23/10/2017).

Keroka urban centre also became a beneficiary of improvements in the education and health sector. After independence in 1964, Keroka was allocated a health facility known as Keroka dispensary to give medical services to the residents and the people in the hinterland areas of the urban centre. Keroka dispensary started as a Health Centre in 1964 in the government's effort to eradicate disease. The establishment of Keroka healthcare facility improved the residents' health in the urban centre. The new health technologies established at Keroka such as the use of laboratories to examine patients and detect diseases overtook the use of traditional medicine although it continued to be used but to a lesser extent. It grew into a district hospital in 1997 with modern equipment in Masaba Subcounty. The medical development in the health sector played an important role in the prevention and cure of diseases. This led to a steady development of the urban centre. The presence of Keroka Sub County Health Centre was a remarkable health transition that transformed mortality in the area. Infant mortality in the region declined greatly. As malaria control efforts such as distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor residual spraying, and malaria drugs increased, malaria-related mortality decreased by over 50 percent. Thus, the mortality declines without an equivalent fertility transition increased population growth, pressured rural economies, and spurred rural to urban migration which was a native characteristic to Keroka urban sprawl (Annual Medical Report, 1974).

Omao attested that to improve transport, the road network was tarmacked in 1965 to connect Kisii town through Keroka to Nairobi. In 1970, electricity, telephone, and postal services were installed in the urban centre. With such infrastructural developments, many immigrants seeking employment in the settlement scheme of Nyansiongo Borabu settler farms sought residence at Keroka urban centre, which is 3 kilometres from the settlement scheme. This led to the increase of population at the urban centre. The African business class had increased to above 100 shops compared to the Indians traders whose shops had increased to 15. Many shops were semi permanent. By that time the urban centre had three flour milling machines which served many people at the centre and Keroka hinterland (Omao, O.I. 13/11/2017).

Omwenga observed that apart from the missionary schools that were started in Gusii before independence like Nyabururu Girls' High School, Sironga Girls' High School, and

Nyambaria Boys' High School. *Harambee* Mixed Day secondary schools were started around Keroka in the 1970s. These included Metamaywa, Ibacho, Nyankoba and Mochenwa in the government's efforts to eradicate ignorance (Omwenga, O.I. 25/10/2017).

According to Mosioma, in the 1970s most shops at Keroka urban centre were mainly semi-permanent which mostly sold household items. This time most shops were owned by Africans, mostly the Kisii's and Kikuyu's, who had ventured into business as indicated on the infrastructural development of Keroka in the 1970s. One of the flour milling machines at Keroka then was owned by senior chief Musa Nyandusi. Figure 3.1 shows some of those shops and a flour milling premise in the middle (Mosioma, O.I. 25/10/2017).

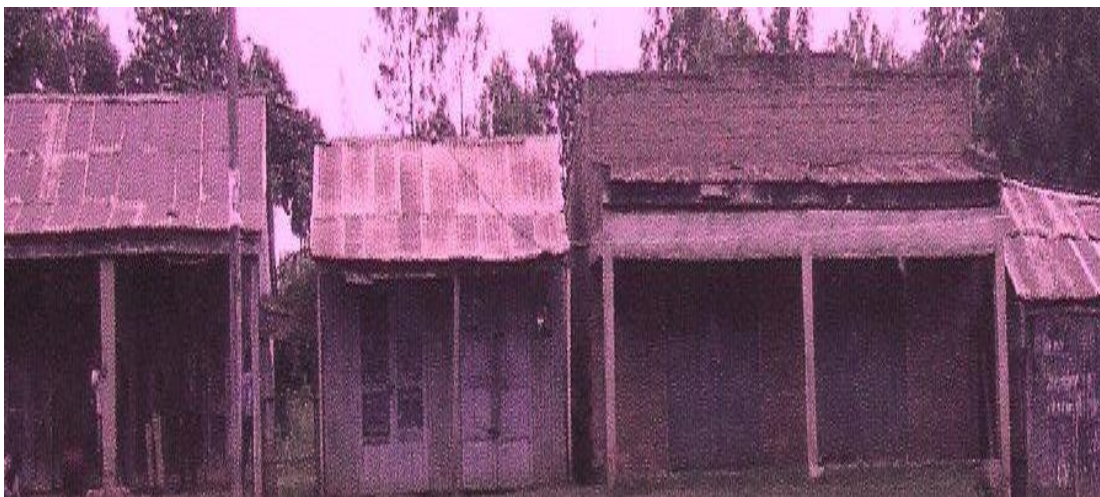


Figure 3.1: Keroka Semi-permanent shops, 1970s.

Source: Archive Photograph, Keroka Urban Council

3.3 Development of Keroka (1978-2000)

Mesa noted that President Moi (1978-2002), laid emphasis on the practice and development of Kenya's varied cultural activities. This led to the establishment of a cultural centre at Keroka in the 1980's. The cultural centre harbored offices of a traditional museum of Abagusii items used in the old days as can be seen in Figure 3.2. The items were kept in a traditional mud, round grass thatched hut. They included the Abagusii musical instrument called *Obokano*, musical drums, grinding stones (used for grinding finger millet and sorghum grains), gourds and calabashes, the Abagusii traditional three legged stool and the carving of Otenyo Nyamaterere. Otenyo was a Gusii freedom fighter who resisted the British colonizers by wounding Stafford Northcote commonly called *Nyarigoti* by the Abagusii. Northcote was a District Commissioner who was wounded by Otenyo by using a spear on 11th January 1908 (Akama and Maxon, 2006). To a large extent, this led to the attraction of tourists at the centre as it became a cultural resource centre (Mesa, O.I. 04/11/2017).



Figure 3.2: Keroka Cultural Centre, 1980.

Source: Archive Photograph, Keroka Urban Council 1980.

Bisieri observed that by 1983, the centre had been provided with piped water, an improvement which went along with electricity and tarmacked road which had come earlier in the Kenyatta era. Residents working in the Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme and workers of schools and tea factories around preferred to reside at Keroka where they could get social services. A distinctive social attribute of this area was its habitation by migrant labor that sought employment in tea factories such as Nyansiongo (Kijauri), Kiamokama and

Nyankoba. Workers who worked in the then Kisii District Hospital facility and other interior place health facilities like Ichuni, Masimba, Mochenwa, and Rikenye resided at Keroka. Other immigrants sought residence at Keroka but worked as casual laborers in settlement schemes of Nyansiongo, Simbaut, Kineni, Tinderet, Manga and other surrounding agricultural areas as cultivators or tea plucking in the pursuit of better living conditions. Keroka Urban Centre became a transit point and a convenient base within which new inhabitants from rural locations resided (Bisieri, O.I. 14/11/2017).

Makori attested that decreasing land rents at Keroka urban centre in comparison to towns such as Kisii made the Keroka urban centre the residential choice of many middle-income urban residents. They might have preferred to incur higher transport costs but enjoy cheaper and often more spacious accommodation than in the main towns of Kisii, Kericho, and Sotik. This is supported by Narain, (2010) that the resulting mix of the “urban” and “rural” migrants often alters the social composition of an urban area and has several implications for both economic activities and demand for local resources. Immigrant population constituted part of the residents of Keroka. They resided in Keroka and worked elsewhere because it was cheaper in terms of rent value. More permanent residential buildings were put up in the 1980s (Narain, 2010; Makori, O.I. 2nd Nov. 2017).

By 1985 permanent business premises had been established at Keroka. Most of the premises had a linear pattern as they were built along the sides of the Kisii-Keroka-Kericho main road as can be seen in Figure 3.3. Most of the traders did their business in the open air market. No high rise buildings had been erected by then. Most of the adjacent land to the urban centre was still agriculturally used.

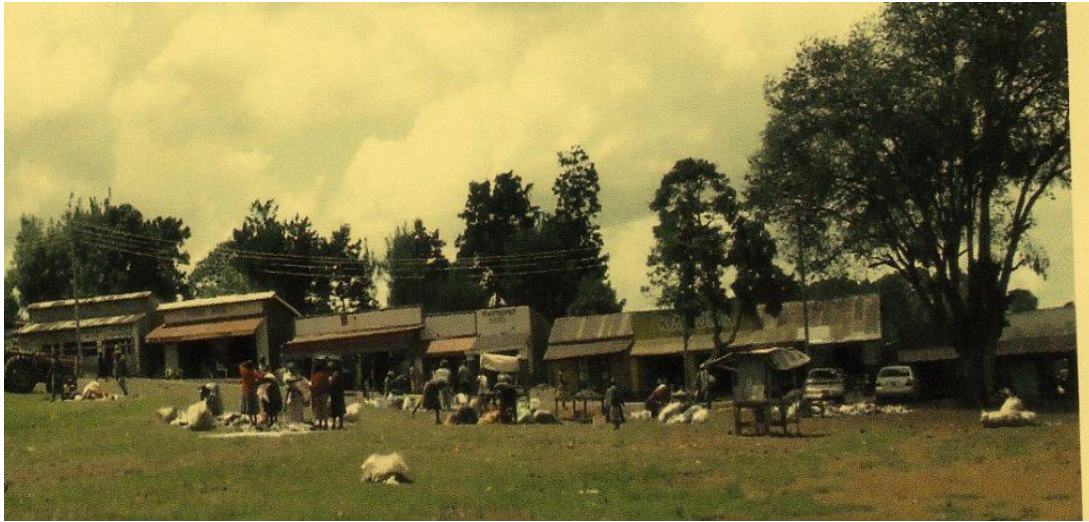


Figure 3.3: Some Permanent Business Premises at Keroka urban centre, 1980s
Source: Archive Photograph, Keroka Urban Council 1985.

Compared to Busia’s expansion in the 1980s, the concentrations of populations in Keroka resulted in massive social re-ordering as old ways of living became irrelevant and new ones emerged in the face of new sets of survival and relational imperatives. Keroka transformed into a natural centre of social and economic exchange and activity. New social hierarchies and value systems emerged; new patterns of marginalization and empowerment also emerged. Accordingly, what would be madness in other contexts became a normal practice in the urban centre. “Social misfits” fitted in while wearing mini-skirts, kerb-crawling, body painting and piercing, and all those things the village pastor feared, became the normal order of the day at Keroka town. In other words, order and disorder became relative twins, and devil or no devil, somehow coexisted in the new society (Hope 2013, Ondong’a, O.I. 14/11/2017).

Tora observed that as it is centrally located in both Kisii and Nyamira counties, people moved into the town searching for employment and business opportunities. Commercial activities increased at the urban centre. Business in the marketing of agricultural goods increased. This involved such goods as vegetables, fruits such as bananas, oranges, and pineapples, and grains such as millet, sorghum, maize, and beans (Tora, O.I. 26/102017).

Mosoti attests that by 1987, many big retail shops had been established at Keroka. Other infrastructures that were improved during this time include restaurants, lodgings, bars,

cyber cafes, music shops, photocopying services, timber yards, carpentry shops, hardware shops, wholesale shops, and supermarkets. Modern banks such as Cooperative Bank and Commercial Bank were started due to increased commercial activity. The informal sector traders such as hawkers, tailors, and used cloth sellers increased (Mosoti, O.I. 25/10/2017).

3.4 The Factors which influenced the Growth of Keroka Urban Centre (2000-2018)

The respondents were asked to give factors which led to the fast growth of Keroka urban centre in the 21st century. The responses are given in Table 3.1. The factors which were given include business opportunities, affordable land, proximity to other towns, hospitality, affordable housing, good transport and communication and the coming of immigrants.

Table 3.1 Factors which led to the fast growth of Keroka urban centre in the 21st century

Factors influencing growth	Business	Land	Proximity to other towns	Hospitality	Housing	transport and communication	Immigrants
Responses	6	4	2	2	2	1	3
Total respondents	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Percentage	30%	20%	10%	10%	10%	5%	15%

Source: Researcher (2017).

This information is represented in the pie chart – Figure 3.4. The data shown in Table 3.1 indicated that Keroka town in the 21st century largely developed as a result of business opportunities. The population that was involved in business was 30%. The immigrants were 15% which reveal that the indigenous population was 85%. Good transport was 5%, especially due to the main Kisii-Nairobi Highway. Affordable land was 20%, proximity to other towns 10%, and the local people’s hospitality took 10%.

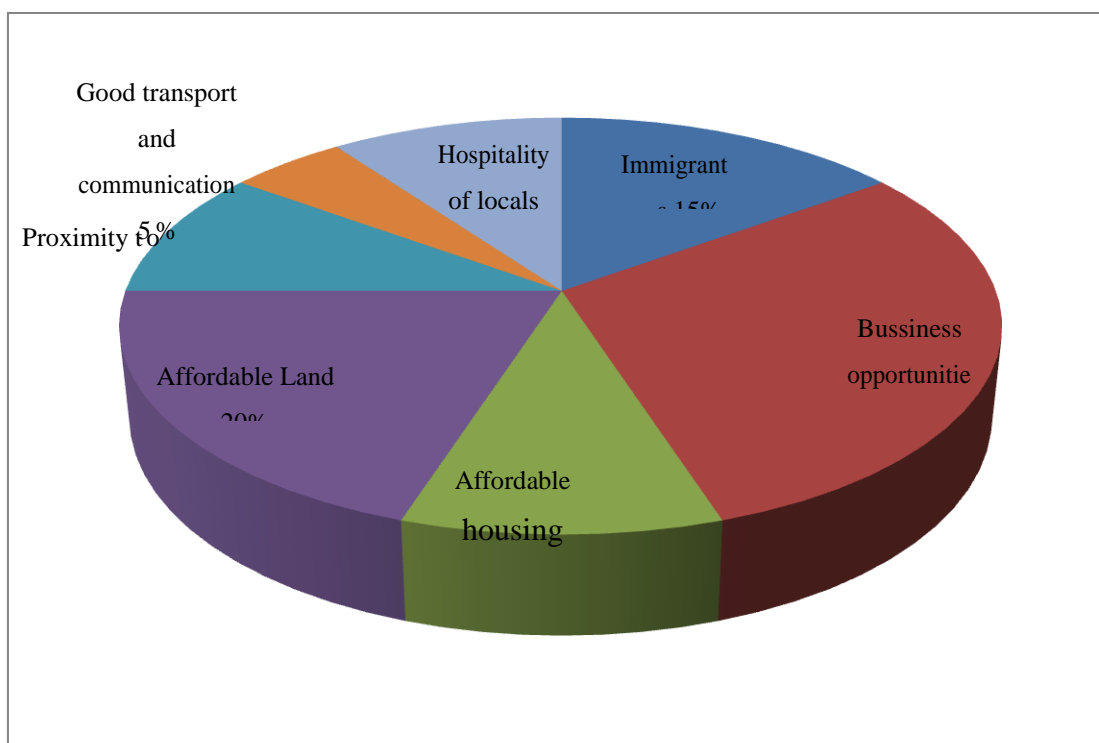


Figure 3.4: Factors which Influenced the Growth of Keroka Urban Centre in the 21st Century

Source: Researcher (2017).

Keroka urban centre experienced one of the high growth rates of population approximately well above 2.81% per annum according to 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census (KPHC). In 2009, Keroka urban centre had a population of 40,881 up from 2,143 in 1969 (see Table 1.1). Since its foundation, Keroka town had shown rapid growth within Kisii and Nyamira counties, despite being an urban centre along the road in the region. This high rate of population increase in the centre was mainly attributed to the coming of immigrants from other areas of the county in search of job opportunities, economic revival, fair land rates and costs, service provision, infrastructure and institutional availability among others (KPHC 2009; Omundi, O.I. 13/11/2017).

Mesa notes that this was also influenced by the Kisii and Nyamira counties' high population growth rate, which is at 2.81 per cent per annum. There was also an influx of people working in other proximity distance areas who preferred to stay in Keroka and its environs where there was less congestion and accessibility with the main road running through the centre. The study further established that the number of people that accessed the centre for its services was more than twice the resident population. There were approximately 5 members

per household in the urban centre placing this at about 8,400 resident households. The growing population was continually putting pressure on the existing infrastructural and service facilities hence there was a need to plan for the continuous growth and expansion of the centre (Mesa, O.I. 04/11/2017).

Socially, Keroka was a multi-cultural residence in the 21st century as a number of Kenya's ethnic groups coexisted at the urban centre. These included: Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kamba, and Kisii among other ethnic groups. The residents were aware of their neighbors and interacted quite well.

Nyakundi observed that by 2010, Keroka market had greatly expanded. However it was located along the main road thus lacking enough space for the business activities and traffic at the same time as can be seen in Figure 3.5. Compared to Keroka market in the 1980s (Figure 3.3), the 2010 market at Keroka had numerous big business premises, many traders and activities. Infrastructure such as market sheds had improved. Grocers, used cloth sellers and hawkers had significantly increased (Nyakundi, O.I. 01/11/2017).



Figure 3.5: Keroka Market in 2010.

Source: Archive Photo, Keroka Urban Council.

Makori attests that the main economic activities at Keroka in the 21st century could broadly be classified into three. These were commercialized trading, farming activities, and formal employment. The low and middle-income residents earned a monthly income of between Ksh. 10,000 and 20,000 with higher estimates to other undisclosed income earners. The development of Keroka as an urban centre brought a rise in incomes and living standards. Urbanization became synonymous with overcrowded informal settlements, congestion, overloaded infrastructure, and high costs of living. Keroka had the power to promote industrialization because the populations created demand for products and facilitated innovation. More demand and innovation, in turn, helped move the economy towards more productive industries as it led to the establishment of cottage industries like the jua kali artisans, coffee processing plant, the nearby tea factories at Nyankoba, Nyansiongo, Kiamokama, and the Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC) collection and storage points (Makori, O.I. 02/11/2017).

Makori adds that the urban centre in the 21st century represented an interface of natural resources with both agricultural and urban productive sub-systems. Keroka was characterized by both agricultural and urban productive sub-systems as manifested by agricultural production and urban land uses in the centre such as those of high rise residential and commercial buildings. First, the environment was predominantly a place of conflictor competition which existed in between new (urban) and traditional (rural) land uses. This

conflict could be seen to have physical and socio-economic dimensions. There were conflictive land uses between urban and rural land uses in Keroka manifested by the competition between whether to hold on to agriculture or convert to other uses for profit purposes (Makori, O.I. 02/11/2017).

By 2018, many high rise buildings had been established at Keroka for commercial, and residential purposes depicting great development of the urban centre compared to previous periods as can be seen in Figure 3.6. The town had enormously expanded towards the hinterland slowly converting the adjacent villages into an urban area. This agrees with the village magnet theory which postulates that urban development is attracted to pre-existing villages that already have basic levels of critical services so that, eventually, these pre-existing villages become the nuclei of the fast-growing town (Grant and Yankson 2003, Mocheche, O.I. 3/11/2017).



Figure 3.6: Keroka Town Land uses 2017.

Source: Researcher (2017).

Yaro observed that the fringe environment at Keroka was predominantly a place of conflict or competition which existed in between new (urban) and traditional (rural) land uses. This conflict could be seen to have physical and socio-economic dimensions. There were conflictive land uses between urban and rural land uses in Keroka manifested by the competition between whether to hold on to agriculture or convert to other uses for profit

purposes. Secondly, it was implied that the outer limits of the urban zone would be a function of maximum daily commuting distances into Central Business District (CBDs) of the urban area. Keroka town was a centre from where daily commuting was done into neighboring urban centres such as Kisii, Kericho, and Sotik. This was determined by the means of transportation available for large portions of the population. At Keroka chaotic land-use patterns were found, strip commercial development and inadequate (or lack of) recreational facilities (Yaro, O.I. 23/10/2017).

Historically, structural triggers whipped into motion several one-time dormant forces that resulted in the migration of people into spots with physical, economic, or strategic specificities that made them attractive and sustainable as human settlements. Such triggers could be the discovery of valuable minerals in an area as was the case of Johannesburg. It could also be the establishment of an administrative centre such as in Arusha in Tanzania, or the development of a port such as Kisumu on Kenya's Lake Victoria shores. In 2007, Keroka became a district administrative centre as the head quarter of Masaba District. Keroka, being a border town between Nyamira County and Kisii County unfortunately became a bone of contention with each county claiming ownership, latest in 2013. (Hope, 2013; Maranga, O.I. 03/11/2017).

Bikundo observes that in the 21st century, a step in the economic development of Keroka town, many more branches of modern banks were established at Keroka making it strategically attractive for business investors given its wide hinterland. Keroka's hinterland touches both Nyamira and Kisii counties. Those banks included the Cooperative Bank of Kenya, Kenya Commercial Bank, Equity Bank and Post Bank among others. It became a cosmopolitan centre having grown into a 24 hour business hub. Many bus companies and other passenger service vehicles operated from Kisii town through Keroka to other major Kenyan cities and towns such as Kericho, Nakuru, Nairobi, Mombasa and vice versa (Bikundo, O.I. 1/11/2017).

These unprecedented rates of urbanization could be linked to massive migratory movements as well as to natural growth, challenging urban planning and thereby causing environmental problems with far reaching effects (Rakodi, 1997).

3.5 Conclusion

During the postcolonial times especially between 1963 and 2000, Keroka Urban Centre grew economically as the number of investors and immigrants increased at the centre. Along with the improvement of infrastructure and buildings from temporal to permanent, business premises at Keroka increased. As electricity, telephone, and postal services were installed, the business class increased retail shops and flour milling premises. Other infrastructure improved included restaurants, cyber cafes, Jua Kali artisans which included welding and carpentry, wholesale shops, and supermarkets. To combat disease, Keroka government health facility was started followed by private hospitals and clinics. To eradicate ignorance, many secondary, and primary schools both government and private sponsored were started in, and around Keroka during this period.

Politically, Keroka grew from a rural trading centre, to a county council, then to an urban council up to a town council. Keroka continued to be a cultural centre with the establishment of cultural offices. Migrant labor who settled at the centre to work in the nearby crop plantations, factories, and towns led to increased population.

Keroka urban centre experienced a high population growth rate of about 2.81 per annum at the start of 21st century. This was attributed to the high entry of immigrants searching for job opportunities, service provision, better infrastructure, and educational opportunities in institutions of higher learning. Keroka therefore became a multicultural residence harboring many ethnic communities who coexisted at the urban centre. The Nairobi-Keroka-Kisii mainroad coupled with the improvement in electricity supply greatly contributed to the growth of the urban centre due to quick transportation of goods and provision of services. This increased the economic activities at the urban centre such as commercialized trading, farming activities in the immediate hinterland and formal employment. The economic improvement led to better infrastructure at the urban centre such as high rise commercial and residential buildings. At the same time modern banks got established at Keroka due to the attraction of many business investors.

A number of factors influenced the growth of Keroka Urban Centre in the 21st century period especially between 2000 and 2018. These included varied business opportunities, affordable land, immigrants attracted by affordable housing and business opportunities, good transport and communication and hospitality of the locals.

CHAPTER FOUR: URBANIZATION CHALLENGES AND ITS IMPACT ON KEROKA RESIDENTS (1905-2018)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter dealt with the challenges that faced Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial era 1905-1963 and post colonial era 1963-2018. The chapter also examined the impact of Keroka town on the people and the area both in the colonial and post colonial periods since 1905.

4.2 Challenges of Keroka Urban Centre in the Colonial Era (1905-1963)

Before their settlement in Gusii highlands and Keroka in particular, the Abagusii encountered some problems. They encountered hostile groups who were either also migrating or had settled in certain areas. The Kalenjins and Maasais were a threat to the Abagusii during migration. They frequently attacked the Abagusii, stole their livestock, and even killed them. The Abagusii responded by moving away. The Abagusii mostly moved away from various places where crops failed or infested with diseases. There was crop failure in Kabianga. There was also high population in areas of settlement such as the Kano plains as the Abagusii population had rapidly grown. This made it difficult for them to meet their food needs as the land would not produce sufficient food to meet the needs of the population. When in Kano plains the place was frequently dry or flooded during rainy seasons thus advancing non favorable climatic conditions (Ochieng, 1974).

Maxon (1989) highlights that to escape the hostile invading groups, the Abagusii sought refuge in safe areas. Gusiiland seemed to be safer from the invading warlike communities of the Kalenjins, Kipsigis, and Maasai raiders. The topography of the land presented it as a suitable hiding vantage ground. From here it was easy to distant-view an approaching enemy who they would attack and destroy before further advances to their territory. This encouraged more consideration for settlement. The proximity position of Keroka from the border was necessary for the indigenous people to protect their borders from inter border wars without much travel. Crop failure in Kabianga and high population in areas of settlement as they migrated, forced the Abagusii to retreat to Gusiiland. To address the harsh climatic conditions, that is drought and floods at the Kano plains, the Abagusii opted to move to high grounds to avoid the frequent floods. Migration became a common phenomenon in search of extra land to settle the quick increasing population, to find agriculturally productive lands so

as to produce crops such as potatoes, sorghum, and millet for their nourishment. This, they found in the Kisii highlands where they settled away from the hostile climatic conditions which did not support their main way of life as land tillers.

In the next two decades in their settlement at Keroka from 1905 the Nyaribari and Kitutu clans still continued with the rearing of livestock and growing of indigeneous crops such as potatoes, sorghum, and millet. The conflicting situation between the two clans emerged at Keroka in 1929. In an effort by young men from both clans to obtain dowry for marriage, cattle theft between the two clans at Keroka became rampant. This was worsened by the large number of animals, above twenty, which were traditionally needed for a young man to pay as bride wealth in order to get married. Despite the disagreements, intermarriage was practiced between the two clans-the Kitutu and Nyaribari. Grazing land also became a borne of contention as the livestock could be grazed either into the interior of the Kitutu clan or Nyaribari clan. This was a major concern as far as the official boundary was concerned. Water sources could also be shared between the two clans but there was a scramble for water especially for watering animals during the dry season.

To solve the interclan rivalry, elders from both clans, Kitutu and Nyaribari, could occassionally meet at Keroka to make peace. When the Europeans entered the land with new roofing materials, new improved structures were made of mud but iron roofed. Later on permanent business premises were erected. When formal education was started, communication among the different ethnic communities at the urban centre was made easier which was either in English or Kiswahili. As time went by, traders at Keroka urban centre got used to the monetary system of using the British shilling which was replacing the Indian rupees for buying and selling goods. The foot paths were later improved into murrum roads though they were narrow and usually muddy during rainy seasons. Bicycles and handcarts continued to be used for transportation before the introduction of vehicles that made transportation much easier and faster. The colonial administration set a police post at Keroka in 1927 to provide security for the businessmen. The Kisii District Commissioner's annual report of 1929 indicates that the Kisii marriage custom was revised by elders chaired by the D.C in regard to payment of bride wealth. Stock theft was done due to the high bride price that was being paid by the Kisii which was mostly above twenty heads of cattle and several goats. The elders unanimously agreed that bride price was to be at three female stock, one

bullock, and six goats. Having drastically reduced the bride wealth, no young man would be expected to steal in order to get married (KNA/DC/ KSI/1/3, 1929; Keraita, O.I. 24/10.2017).

4.3 Keroka Urbanization Challenges in the Post Colonial Period (1963-2018)

Keroka Urban Centre lacked enough clean and safe water for drinking and other domestic purposes at the start of independence in 1963. Most Keroka residents got water from wells, nearby streams and springs. This meant spending a lot of time looking for water and travelling long distances during the dry season to get water. At the same time the urban centre experienced inadequate electricity supply. Apart from the town centre, most business premises and residential houses lacked electricity. At night most residents plunged into darkness posing insecurity in the urban centre (Omambia, O.I. 27/10/2017).

Omwenga observed that Keroka Urban Centre witnessed poor conditions of sanitation after independence. There was lack of enough toilet facilities. There were also poor and non-consistent garbage collection procedures. This led to environmental degradation as people used the nearby bushes as toilets. On the other hand, Keroka had poor housing conditions. Most residents were not able to construct favorable permanent residential houses. This led to an increase in shanty houses with no lighting system, no water supply and no toilet facilities. The poor drainage system led to floods during the rainy seasons. This made the living conditions deplorable (Omwenga, O.I. 25/10/2017).

Nyabuti agreed that Keroka Urban Centre residents experienced poor healthcare soon after independence. The only health facility which was Keroka health centre served both the residents of Keroka Urban Centre and people from its wide hinterland. This led to congestion at the health centre. The condition was made worse by the inconsistent supply of drugs from the government. Nevertheless the urban centre lacked enough social amenities such as schools, social halls, and restaurants. Visitors coming to the urban centre could not get enough rental rooms for accommodation. This condition posed a major challenge to its development (Nyabuti, O.I. 4/11/2017).

Keraita noted that boundary disputes also emerged again in 1965 between the Abagetutu and Abanyaribari clans at Keroka. The government defined the boundary after independence which was recognized by the two clans. However, in 1965 as the murrum road from Kericho-Sotik-Keroka-Kisii was being tarmacked; the actual boundary between the Kitutu and

Nyaribari clan at Keroka was disrupted. The road now passed right at the centre of the town which was not the case previously. The Nyaribari clan recognized the road as the new boundary while the Kitutu clan only recognized the previous demarcation which passed at Nyaribari, a few metres from the main road (Keraita, O.I. 24/10/2017).

Keraita attested that the boundary disputes at Keroka seemed to persist after independence. To solve the problem Keraita suggested a proper redefinition of boundaries and peace making by council of elders at Keroka from both clans; Kitutu and Nyaribari and in many other parts of Kenya in general where such conflicts may be experienced. More electricity supply was extended to areas beyond the town centre by the government. This improved security at night and business at the urban centre. This led to the opening up of cyber cafes, salons, photocopier services, welding and carpentry services and music stores. These services improved the economic status of Keroka urban centre (Keraita, O.I. 24/10/2017).

Yaro noted that Keroka Urban Council increased the number of vehicles meant for the collection of garbage two decades after independence. Regular garbage collection was therefore possible. The council built toilet facilities. Drainage patterns were reconstructed but needed regular maintenance. This fairly improved sanitation although the challenge persisted as the population at the urban centre increased (Yaro, O.I. 23/10/2017).

Gitongori observed that in the health section, private hospitals such as Gucha Hospital and private health clinics such as Omwabo Medical Clinic were started in the 1990s. This helped ease congestion at the only government facility at the centre and provided more health services. In the education sector, Private secondary schools such as St. Augustus Mixed Secondary school- Keroka and Masaba High School-Keroka were started. Private primary school academies such as Brilliant Academy, St. Kizito Academy, and Mwalimu Academy were also started. These schools increased educational opportunities and provided educational services at Keroka and beyond (Gitongori, O.I. 24/10/2017).

Ondong'a observed that Keroka town especially from 2000 was faced with various challenges. One of them was land scarcity. Land scarcity led to the exorbitant land rates, rents and buying cost. Inadequate social amenities like health centres were a challenge to the inhabitants in the urban centre. The available public facilities were strained and unable to

meet the demands of the residents. There was high business levy and poor infrastructure (Ondong'a, O. I. 14/11/2017).

The consequences of urban growth and development process in urban areas of Kenya are on a rampant increase due to the influence of urban sprawl and population increase in big towns and such is the case for Keroka urban centre. Given that most of the urban areas are outside the limits of control of urban authorities, the planning and regulation guidelines were poorly adhered to and enforced at Keroka. This process of urban sprawl infringed on previous agricultural land use in the urban area. However, there was inadequate provision of infrastructural and service facilities at Keroka.

Congestion and housing were major challenges at Keroka Urban Centre in the 21st century. This was because more people lived in very poor structures and those who were affected most are those ones who earned little incomes, and therefore lived in slums that were overcrowded and congested in terms of shared facilities. Poverty is an enormous problem in African cities. The urban poor face myriad challenges such as health risks due to poor living conditions and overcrowding, livelihood risks from vulnerable employment, external shocks from events such as natural disasters that excessively affect them and governance risks as they do not receive adequate policy attention. Africa also has some of the world's most unequal cities such as Johannesburg in South Africa. Inequality not only leads to an unequal provision of services and limited access to opportunities for the urban poor, but also contributes to high crime rates and high levels of insecurity event on urban centres such as Keroka. (Gabriela-Rico, 2017; Nyakundi, O.I. 1/11/2017). For the housing to be effective in cities and urban centres things like water, electricity, sanitation, quality of construction and drainage should be taken into account but this also depends on the social classes (Milan, 2003).

The bill of rights in the current constitution of Kenya stipulates adequate housing as a basic right for every Kenyan (GOK, 2010 a). Despite this right being deeply entrenched in the highest law of the country, its realization is difficult owing to many factors. These factors include lack of a proper operationalization framework for the county's land laws and housing policies and the complexity presented by the fact that close to 60% of the urban population already live in developments exhibiting informal settlement characteristics (UN-Habitat, 2006). These developments are identified as inadequate forms of housing.

Consequently, the right of access to adequate housing was more often than not associated with access to water, sanitation and refuse collection. Yet this was a service that was very rare in Keroka's informal settlements in the 21st century. Poor administration from local authorities led to commercialization of these services, making them very expensive for residents living in Keroka. Such scenarios qualified as core infringements to the informal settlement resident's right to not only adequate housing but also to access to basic services (Makori, O.I. 02/11/2017).

Since 2000, the business people at Keroka had set up structures that had occupied space along the road. Even the bus stop space had been occupied forcing matatus and vehicles to stop on the road in order for passengers to alight or board. This had narrowed the space left for transportation and introduced a lot of conflict between the road users, vehicles, motorcycles and the informal commercial structures. Uncontrolled physical development was evident in the haphazard manner in which buildings and development was done without regard to design standards and regulations. It was further made worse by the habitation of incomplete buildings and poor location of buildings next to each other leaving no space between them. Some of the flats constructed did not even have access to reliable water sources to support the use of septic tank and sewerage connection. This had been caused by rapid growth and expansion of the population that demanded urban housing. This was a health and environmental safety hazard (Okioma, O.I. 23/10/2017).



Figure 4.1: Part of Keroka town showing the challenge of Uncontrolled Physical Development, 2017.

Source: Researcher (2017).

The main drivers of population increase have been the upward trend in rural-urban migration and natural population increase over the years (Hope, 2012; Hope, 2013). The incoming population had greatly impacted on the housing provision with the housing sector characterized by an increasing demand and low supply. These findings were in consonance to K'Akumu and Olima (2007), noting that Keroka's growth had taken place without any definite urban development framework. Syagga, (2011) adds that the complex housing production and settlement pattern there had been a rudimentary enforcement of housing construction standards and accompanying infrastructure and services. The resultant pattern had been a mixture of housing models ranging from high-rise and tenement developments to informal settlements, which housed the middle and low-income populations respectively. These developments were manifested in unplanned growth depicting urban sprawl, congestion and property development in excess of the carrying capacity of available infrastructure (Kimani and Musungu, 2010). More importantly, the housing policies and governance structures continued to shape housing production and service provision. The past decades had seen implementation of various efforts and strategies to improve the housing situation in big urban centres like Nairobi with little or no attention to small centres like Keroka.

It was realized that when rapid urbanization occurred, many of the new residents of Keroka urban centre were unofficially living in informal slums and shanty houses that had inadequate or nonexistent public services. Authorities did not plan for or provide adequate

infrastructure for the escalating populations. Figure 4.2 shows the socio- economic and spatial challenges of Keroka in the 21st century.



Figure 4.2: Spatial Challenges of Keroka in the 21st Century.
Source: Researcher (2017).

Onsarigo notes that the commercial sector in Keroka was informal and characterized by small scale business owners and jua kali industries. There was also conflictive land property ownership issues arising out of pressures from informal settlers, private developers and large tenants leading to dual systems (informal and formal). Demographic processes underlined border development. These included organized land invasions; planned expansions of the fringe to “swallow” existing rural villages; speculative subdivision of farmland near the centre and re-settlement of displaced inhabitants especially the post election violence victims of 2007/2008 (Onsarigo, O.I. 25/10/2017).

Maranga observed that programs like the Local Authorities Transfer Fund (LATF) introduced in 1999/2000 as a grant from the central government to equip Local Authorities with means to provide their citizens with basic services; and the Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan (LASDAP) introduced in 2001 as a tool to promote participatory planning and budgeting, did not result in much improvement in the housing conditions or the related basic services. This was due to the inter-county and inter-community conflicts and disputes in which neither Nyamira County nor Kisii County took responsibility of the needs of the people of Keroka especially when resources such as monetary had to be factored (Maranga, O.I. 3/11/2017).

Water supply and sanitation problem was also identified by most respondents as being acute since 2000. It was established that despite the area being surrounded by fresh water streams, they had been rendered unsuitable for safe use due to the congestion in the town that led to poor sanitation and pollution. Most urban dwellers had three main concerns with water: access, cost and quality. They complained about the limited access to water points, which were often located far from their houses. Some landlords rationed water such that it was only available on specific days of the week and at specific times. For many years, Keroka had not had clean water as most collected water came from nearby streams and rivers with other inhabitants getting it from rain guttered tanks, wells, or boreholes. The Kenyan government in 2007, admitted that access to water dropped to as low as 20 per cent in the settlements of the urban poor where half of the urban population lived, a situation that lately had encroached Keroka urban centre. This was a tragic situation given that Keroka fell far below the estimated defined minimum water per capita requirement. This was a limitation especially for people who had children and would require high amounts of water and those who wished to establish highly water dependent industries in Keroka. However, those who had access decried the high cost of buying water for domestic and commercial use. This was costly especially relative to the residents' income levels (Water and Sanitation and Program, 2008; Maranga, O.I. 3/11/2017).

Not much had been done by the county governments of Kisii and Nyamira in Keroka in the past to improve water provision to urban poor. In 2003, the Water Act 2000 was implemented to pave way to water reforms including privatization of water services. However, this had not improved the situation in Keroka urban; it only made water services more expensive than neighboring areas. In Keroka, for example, the cost of water was two times higher than that paid by people in high-income areas like Kisii urban that was served by the Gusii Water and Sewage Company (National Water Strategy, 2014).

Okemwa noted that since 2000, rivers in Keroka urban area and lack of sanitation and sewerage systems had a dramatic impact due to the increasing population at the urban centre. People used the rivers to dispose off all their wastes from homes, institution, and commercial businesses. Wastewater from human settlements contained organic material and nutrients while institutional wastewater such as from the university, Keroka tertiary college and schools contained many different types of toxic pollutants. These made the water unsafe for

humans to use for many purposes including drinking and other domestic uses (Okemwa, O.I. 13/11/2017).

Kemunto observed that by 2017, the provision of water and sanitation services to Keroka urban area still presented critical challenges. The increased demand for water from the growing population placed added stress on already stretched resources. In and around Keroka, water was commonly in short supply and subject to increasing competition by different users. Urbangrowth led to increasing demand for water for institutional and domestic use, which conflicted with the small scale agricultural demands around the area (Kemunto, O.I. 13/11/2017)

Bisieri observed that wastes and environmental degradation was yet another 21st century challenge at Keroka urban centre. The sanitation condition in Keroka was wanting and was caused by lack of a clear waste disposal and management of waste. It was further worsened by the fact that there was no regulation or direct authority in management of Keroka area. This had resulted in poor solid waste management and sanitation conditions. Solid and liquid waste was improperly disposed in Keroka and this led to a lot of air and land pollution. Keroka's environmental degradation had affected land, water, air and ecosystem due to increased demands on resources (Bisieri, O.I. 14/11/2017).

Figure 4.3 shows the solid waste dumping site at Keroka in the 21st century. Since the beginning of the 21st century, Keroka urban centre's solid waste management was inefficient or non-existent. Solid waste management means the proper collection, transfer, recycling and disposal of all the solid material thrown away, including plastics, paper and cardboard, food wastes and electrical wastes. It also includes domestic, hospital and institutional wastes which often contain pathogens as well as hazardous and toxic chemicals, which need specialcare.



Figure 4.3: Keroka Dumping Site, which is one of the environmental hazards
Source: Researcher (2017).

Monibi notes that at Keroka Urban Centre, waste often ended up in illegal dumps on streets, open spaces, wastelands, drains or rivers. This was a frequent problem in the urban area. Residents found it convenient for dumping wastes because of the availability of open space and ease of access leading to pollution of water which was used as a source for drinking water. Sometimes the wastes were collected and taken to legalized waste disposal sites but these were not always properly managed to protect water bodies. The combustion of solid waste created yet another environmental problem. When people wanted to get rid of the wastes they would burn them in their backyards if there was no collection system (Monibi, O.I. 2/11/2017).

Makori pointed out that those human activities in the 21st century that were not controlled through appropriate infrastructure led to the damage of the natural environment. This damage increased with larger populations. Inadequate sewer facilities led to polluted water, unregulated growth led to houses being built in environmentally sensitive areas and a lack of gas or electricity led to intensive cooking with wood fires, something that seriously compromised air quality. Population increase, which was higher in places with lower education levels and less empowered women in Keroka made these problems worse than

there was in places where people had above average level of education and where women were more empowered (Makori, O.I. 2/11/2017).

Nyanchera attested that air quality in Keroka was getting poorer as a result of air pollution from many different sources especially since 2000. These included: advancing vehicle exhausts, smoke from domestic fires, diesel-powered generators, dust from increased construction works and streets. Poor air quality had a significant impact on the health of many residents as well as leaving a damaging layer of dust on plants, buildings and other surfaces (Nyanchera, O.I. 14/11/2017).

Tora observed that lack of improved sanitation facilities, including toilets, showers, and sewage disposal was hazardous to the urban dwellers at Keroka in the 21st century thus encouraging down stream bathing, open trenches, or bushes defecation that polluted the water catchments and sources. With the rapidly growing population in Keroka, access to adequate sanitation was getting to nightmares characterized with the population which had sheer pit latrines. Even when toilet facilities were available, people complained that they were not conveniently located, that they were unclean, or that using them at night posed a security risk. Children were especially vulnerable to inadequate toilets because they lacked access to household keys which unlock the community toilets. The toilets were built by the Local Market Authority while some were built by individual households, landlords, or institutions of learning (Tora, O.I. 26/10/2017).

Mosoti observed that poor farmers and landless people moved to Keroka urban centre in search of work and an improved standard of living. However, they often found themselves living in poverty in the urban centre and unable to find work. Since employment levels were related to levels of economic activity and development of infrastructure, it wasn't surprising that Keroka, like many shanty towns, had high levels of unemployment. The economic base of such a centre was dwarfed by the numbers of people. With such a surplus of willing workers, the situation drove wages down, meaning that even when a poor person had a job, it paid very little (Mosoti, O.I. 25/10/2017).

Omambia attested that the process of urbanization at Keroka in the 21st century had positive as well as negative economic and social changes. The positive effects included economic development, and education. However, it placed stress on existing social services and

infrastructure. Crime, prostitution, drug abuse, and street children were all negative effects. Also there was lack of social support for children in school and home by their hard-working, usually poor parents. Inadequate income, overcrowded housing, and poor living conditions created a fertile ground for the development of violence. Violent crime was more visible in Keroka urban than in rural areas and it affected people's everyday life, their movements and the use of public transport. Crime creates a sense of insecurity in inhabitants. This unsafe feeling separated residential areas into higher-income and lower-income groups, which reduced the sense of community and formed areas with unrelated incomes, costs and security levels (Omambia, O.I. 27/10/2017).

The post election violence victims of 2007/ 2008 in Kenya led to the setting up of Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) camps at Keroka town. This led to a lot of congestion at the centre and skyrocketing of crimes. The problem of post election violence in Kenya is said to be anchored on the reintroduction of multiparty democracy. (Brown, 2001) noted that before 1991, Kenya was effectively a one party state. Opposition parties were prohibited supposedly to promote unity in the Kenyan society. The reason behind this argument was that Kenya would be more united under a one party state. In December 1991, President Daniel T. Arap Moi allowed the reinstatement of multiparty government by repealing article 2A of the constitution which had made the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the only authorised party in 1982. With the opening up of political space to opposition parties, Kenya took initial steps towards becoming a mature democracy. In many ways the new era in Kenyan politics revealed the centrality of ethnicity politics and electoral contests. Posner, (2007) observed that "the shift to multiparty rule has caused more ethnic conflict to be carried out in the name of different kinds of identities". Ake, (1993) expressed concern on the impact that multiparty democracy could have in ethnically divided African countries. He noted that "as Africa democratizes, there is concern that the liberties of democracy will set free ethnic conflicts whose embers are forever smouldering in Africa and destroy the delicate unity of African countries". Instead of creating an environment that would allow for quality opposition, the reintroduction of multiparty politics in Kenya instead gave rise to political parties that were aligned to specific groups which divided the ethnic groups even more.

There was also lack of a designated market centre at Keroka. Access to and ownership of land was greatly skewed in favour of the politically, economically, and socially powerful

members of the society and those in authority. This was the case at Keroka especially from 2000. This trend had worsened the gap between the rich and poor and was spatially manifested by contrasts of dingy areas situated side by side with posh gated communities (K'Akumu and Olima, 2007; Omwenga, O.I. 25/10/2017).

The study established that urban growth processes at Keroka were often characterized by irregular allocation of plots and corruption by politically-connected individuals at the expense of the public poor. It was the powerful members of the society who participated in land acquisition and development (GOK, 2004; Syagga, 2006; Klopp, 2000). In addition, the individual land allocation in low-income housing at Keroka ignored the effects of market pressures such as displacement, rebuilding and price pressures that reinforced the socio-economic inequality which subjected the poor to deeper poverty once they succumbed to illogical decisions of the market trends. Chapter eleven on devolved government gives power to self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in making decisions affecting them (GOK, 2010 b; Omwenga, O.I. 25/10/2017).

The regulation of land use and citizen participation in local development matters had particularly been brought closer to the people through the devolved system of governance in Kenya since 2010. Accordingly, the County Government Act (GOK, 2012) established modalities and platforms for citizen participation in planning and development process within decentralized units. On its part, the Urban Areas and Aities act (GOK, 2011) provided governance principles and rights of participation by residents in local development affairs. These provisions, if adequately enforced by the state and relevant planning organs, they present opportunities for harnessing innovative ideas by residents of urban centres such as Keroka, through their active participation in the urban development process.

Yaro noted that the linear development pattern at Keroka Urban Centre had focused all commercial and residential activities along the road and therefore there was no designated shopping centre or central market space where residents could access goods and services. This was caused by the fact that Keroka grew as a result of sprawl effect and there was no planning intervention undertaken to control its growth and expansion. This had resulted in congestion in the centre as well as traffic conflict along Kisii-Keroka-Nairobi road (Yaro, O.I. 23/10/2017).

Boundary and resource disputes were another problem that erupted again in the 21st century at Keroka especially after the promulgation of Kenya's new constitution on 27th August 2010 which enabled the formation of county governments. There had been standing boundary disputes between the Nyaribari clan and the Kitutu clan at Keroka since 1920. Latest in the year 2013, the dispute erupted again with each county, Nyamira and Kisii, demanding to collect revenue from the business premises and traders at Keroka. The conflict was made worse by the formation of county governments of Kisii and Nyamira in accordance with the new constitution of 2010, where each county government targeted fertile areas of revenue collection. Keroka town proved to be such an area. Urban centres attract various functions which are necessary for the proper functioning of an urban settlement. Keroka town having developed many functions attracted both Kisii and Nyamira counties given the fact that it was situated right at the boundary of the two counties (Kimani and Musungu, 2010; Ondong'a, O.I. 14/11/2017).

A lot of urban research appears to suggest that urban contexts almost invariably lack effective regulation and municipal service delivery leading to contradictions. Macharia, (2003), for instance has observed that lack of regulations have entrenched and perpetuated many antagonisms. He argues that if an urban area is not a public policy priority and its residents not officially recognized, they will not participate in formal decision-making. Keroka urban centre lacked proper enforcement of regulation such as those of building standards that were manifested by non-adherence by residents in construction. It could be attributed to lack of awareness or the location of Keroka in an area that has no straight management and administrative authority as it was a midst Nyamira and Kisii counties with Nyaribari and Kitutu Abagusii Sub clans laying claim on the area. The scramble for the area was a bone of contention from both the local leaders in the area and counties all alike.

These disputes had dragged all local and national leaders alike into finding a lasting solution. Service delivery in the town remained wanting with the evil and wrongs apportioned to either of the unwilling contenders contrary to the desire to collect revenue from traders in the area. Carol (2001:245) describing the growth of the city of Phoenix, USA, observes the same tendency and concludes that "changes in the boundaries between city and country often occur in discontinuous leaps, rather than a smooth and steady process of outward expansion"

Keraita noted that the Kisii-Keroka-Nairobi road was a major road connecting the centre to Sotik road then to Bomet/Narok and Kericho/Nakuru hence to Nairobi. In addition to lack of

specified section for a market; the area was facing many traffic problems from the different land uses occurring in the area especially since 2000. This was in terms of pedestrians' congestion, space contestation by the other road users and informal commercial activities and lack of dedicated pedestrian walkways. Informal commercial activities had invaded the available space along road reserve. These activities obstructed pedestrians and vehicle movements. Poor road condition mostly during the rainy seasons made the footpaths impassable making the main road congested and risky for the users from motorbikes and vehicles. Solid wastes were sometimes dumped along the sidewalks creating an aesthetically unappealing environment (Keraita, O.I. 24/10/2017).

Lack of land in Keroka had stalled county projects, with Governor James Ongwae's mega city project having to be put on hold. County Communications Director Machuka Maseme says: "We have to consolidate pieces of land to get the 100 acres required for the project." But residents doubt the project will ever be realized. "Where will they get that land? Who will agree to be relocated far away from town?" Asked Ms Mary Bosibori, a resident of Keroka. But Mr. Machuka said there is nothing much they could do about regulation of land use, "because land is not devolved". With the shortage of land for development, investors were therefore forced to buy land from the neighboring area/county.

Within this reality, the growth of Keroka Urban Centre faced four broad challenges that were:

- (i) Rapid growth of populations with low levels of economic activity based on inadequate physical and human capital.
- (ii) Low density, sprawl, and informality in urban fringes that intensified poverty among the populace in the centre.
- (iii) Weak coverage of basic infrastructure services notably water, energy, and sanitation, which made it difficult to improve welfare in either urban or neighboring rural environments.
- (iv) Weaknesses of institutions of administration and overall planning capacity from both the national and county governments of Kisii and Nyamira that had dominated the boundary disputes, market location site and struggle for basic resources.

Monibi, a business operator at Keroka town indicated that the 21st century challenges could be managed through improvement of infrastructure to better the living standards of the residents. There was also need to educate the public to enable the residents to actively participate in making development policies. Proper planning would save the town from haphazard infrastructures. Improved security would maintain peace and foster business activities at Keroka. The redefinition of boundaries would address the long standing boundary disputes while improving housing and proper refuse collection and disposal would foster a hygienic urban environment (Monibi, O.I. 2/11/2017).

Magoma noted that more services needed to be improved at Keroka in the 21st century. She suggested specialized services like supermarkets, improved road conditions, banking services, book stores, health services, and a proper market for food. The efficiency of the institution responsible for governance whose members are the chief and sub-chief needed to be improved. Their main roles should be local administration and conflict resolution as well as passing information to the people on behalf of the county government (Magoma, O.I. 14/11/2017).

Bikundo argued that the economic activities at Keroka Urban Centre in the 21st century were mainly informal and these included retail kiosks, eating points, fruit and vegetable vendors, carpentry, garages, salons and M-pesa shops along Kisii-Nairobi road. The services provided in these facilities, however, were far much below the standard. The eating places were in the open air, with exceptional cases of temporary sheds. The hygienic levels needed to be improved.

From the study findings, business operators in the centre had noted that in the 21st century there were certain challenges to the provision of these services such as water rationing, occasional blackouts, and unreliability of electricity. There was also lack of sanitary facilities. To improve the situation, the county governments should explore ways to supplement the already existing sources of water, and improve sanitary facilities like public toilets.

The study further established that the main livelihood sources at Keroka especially since the year 2000 included self-employment in commercial activities and formal employment within the neighborhood. The major water supply at Keroka in the 21st century was from nearby water streams and many residents depended on the rain collected water and wells or boreholes

whose safety was doubted making Keroka averagely poor in water and sanitation conditions generally. There were certain advantages that Keroka had in the 21st century as a result of its proximity to the Kisii University- (Keroka Campus), Keroka Technical Training Institute and other learning institutions like Masaba, Ichuni Girls Secondary school as well as a variety of public and boarding primary schools. Business operators considered the presence of these institutions as a big advantage to their operations (Kerubo, O.I. 23/10/2017).

Expansion of basic services like the provision of infrastructure and public services were considerably cheap and more efficient in the urban centre. However, the size of new populations typically constituted a substantial burden for already stretched county budgets. The result was that in some cases, service coverage had been declining, notably with regard to water supply. Adequate investments, whether public or private, as well as inadequate provision of basic services does not deter the migration of people to the centre; neighborhood population will just come for the chance of getting these services (Gitongori, O.I. 24/10/2017).

However, due to its economic growth and wide hinterland Keroka witnessed an increased number of investors who set up business leading to the construction of improved infrastructure. Figure 4.5 shows the improved infrastructure at Keroka in the 21st century. Infrastructure in Keroka was characterized by paved roads, power generation, high rise structures, and access to potable water. Access to electricity reached only 16 percent of area inhabitants, compared with 41 percent in other developed towns like Kisii main urban area. However, this was an improvement compared to previous periods. There was Investment in roads and improved traffic management.



Figure 4.4: Keroka Town's Infrastructure, 2017
Source: Keroka Town Council.

While urbanization can speed up economic transformation and foster broad based growth, it can also lead to persistent poverty and unsustainability if not properly managed. The most important negative externalities of Keroka urbanization in the 21st century were congestion, pollution, and concentration of people and assets in areas prone to pollution and natural hazards. If left unregulated and in the face of poor planning, the benefits of cities could be overshadowed by their costs. Premature mortality linked to air pollution was one such consequence. In Keroka, matter pollution was fairly low though the dangers associated with untreated sewage, contaminated water sources, and road accidents were occasionally encountered. These were all preventable with basic infrastructure investments (Hope, 2012; Yaro, O.I. 23/102017).

In line with the World Development Report 2009 (World Bank 2009), a strategy to promote efficient urbanization should be targeted to the high density level at Keroka urban centre in the 21st century. More specifically, the strategy should focus on land market efficiency, connectivity, and targeted interventions to deal with problems arising from pollution, congestion, and concentration of people in vulnerable areas.

One critical dimension of a response to the challenges was economic planning. That was an indispensable tool for the generation of economic growth and jobs, as well as the delivery of services to the poor. This included sound development planning and urban land use planning. Another dimension was infrastructure - with electricity and transport given the highest priority - to alleviate urbanization pressures and bottlenecks to development (Hope, 2013; Keraita, O.I. 24/10/2017).

4.4 Legal Provisions on Land Use which if adhered to will address Keroka Urban Land challenges

The Constitution of Kenya 2010: The Constitution of Kenya was promulgated on 27th August 2010 and forms the basis of all other laws in Kenya as it is the highest law of the land. Chapter Six Section 60 (1) gives the principles under which the provisions on land use and management are made. They include just, well-organized, sustainable and productive

management of land resources, right to the use of land; and further states that these principles will be implemented through national land guidelines

Under the same section, the constitution provides for the formation of a National Land Commission (NLC) which is to “check and have oversight responsibilities over land use planning all through the country” and “conduct research related to land and the use of natural resources, and make recommendations to the suitable authorities”. Article 60, Section 1, covers matters on land and states that land; “shall be held, used and managed in a manner that is equitable, efficient, productive and sustainable, and in accordance with the principles of equitable access to land; security of land rights; sustainable and productive management of land resources; transparent and cost effective administration of land; and sound preservation and protection of economically sensitive areas”

This study came up with the conclusion that to address Keroka urban challenges to finality through utopia, adherence to the above legal provisions with and by all concern institutions without favoritism, bias, corruption, or inclinations to self justifications will yield to well planned land utilization, planning and developments that are compliant to the set standards. Keroka being a youthful urban centre will be salvaged from languishing in the common urban centre challenges. The cure is adherence to set statutory regulations and policies.

4.5 Impact of Keroka Urban Centre on the People and the Area in the Colonial era (1905-1963)

Keroka urban centre continued to be a social and cultural centre after 1905. Traditional sports, wrestling and dances such as *ribina* continued to take place at the urban centre (Mocheche, O.I. 3/11/2017).

The study established that in colonial era especially starting 1905, Keroka became a business centre where indigenous people, the Abagusii and the then non-indigenous communities such as the Luo (neighbors to Abagusii) met periodically for business and trade. The trading activities were mostly done in open air. Cereals such as millet and sorghum could be exchanged for iron tools such as hoes, knives, and arrow heads, or animals such as goats, and sheep. Money economy continued to be used in Gusii during this period along with barter trade. The informants ascertained that after settlement at Keroka, the Abagusii built (*ebisarate*, cattle villages) starting 1905 from where they could guard their animals. At

Keroka they also formed a defense army to defend themselves against attack from external aggression especially from the neighboring Kipsigis. At Keroka they got involved in the cultivation of their indigenous crops especially potatoes, sorghum and millet. The clan elders could meet at Keroka when there was need to make peace especially when there were interclan disputes between the Kitutu clan and Nyaribari clan (Ochieng, 1974).

As far as transportation is concerned, Keroka area was largely remote during this time although the colonial government had constructed narrow roads connecting market centres such as Kisii and Keroka. Roads, just like the Kenya-Uganda railway were built by the colonial government so as to facilitate the transport of raw materials from the interior parts of East Africa to rail terminus, then to the coast before transporting them to Europe. They were also meant to ease colonial administrative functions and not actually to facilitate African movement. Though human portage still remained the principal mode of transport in Gusii and in particular Keroka urban centre, new transport agents in form of bullock carts and wagons were introduced. They were mostly confined in urban centres and largely used by non-Kisii traders and colonial administrators (Choti, 1996).

Animal transport, which were mainly donkeys were also used in carrying harvested grain and trading goods to and from markets and trading centres such as Keroka. Donkeys were introduced in the second half of the 19th century by the coastal Arab and Somali traders. Bicycles were imported into Gusiiland in 1914 and used widely at Keroka urban centre. About 40 bicycles were sold that year mainly to sons of chiefs and headmen. The rapidly improving roads in the region made the use of bicycles possible especially between 1914 and 1923. Many foot paths were cleared and rivers bridged. For example a stable bridge over the Kuja River connecting Kisii and Keroka was constructed around 1920 with wattle poles. Table 4.1 shows the commonly used transport systems in South Kavirondo District by 1919.

Table 4.1: Commonly used transport systems in South Kavirondo District by 1919

Transport system	Owner	Stations of operation
One wagon	Mr. G. Gethin	Kisii-Homa Bay
One wagon	Captain Le Breton	Kisii-Kendu Bay
Twenty-two, two wheeled carts	Indian traders	Mostly between trading Centres
One, two wheeled cart with six oxen	Government	Kisii-Kendu-Bay
One mule, two half bred Catalonian donkeys	Government	General <i>safaris</i> for government Officers
Human portorage	Anybody	General journeys

Source: KNA/DC/KSI/1/2, 1913-1919

The police post started at Keroka in 1927 provided security to the businessmen and this improved trade at the centre. The missionary work between the 1930's and 1940s of starting churches, spreading the gospel, building schools and encouraging people to go school at and around Keroka greatly developed the urban centre. In this colonial period Keroka urban centre became a residential centre for the laborers working at the White settlement scheme of Nyansiogo Borabu which was about three kilometers from Keroka. At Nyansiongo Borabu settlement scheme, crops such as tea, pyrethrum, and maize were grown in large scale by the White settlers.

4.6 Impact of Keroka Urban Centre on the People and the Area in the Postcolonial period (1963-2018)

Mina established that Keroka urban centre became a medical centre with the setting up of Keroka health centre after independence in 1963. Although traditional medicine still existed at Keroka, this new medical technology boosted the health sector. The availability of new health equipment improved health of the residents. Keroka continued to be a transport and communication centre with the tarmacking of the Nairobi-Keroka-Kisii road in 1965. There was also improvement in electricity installation at Keroka and its environs in the 1970s. Keroka continued to be an educational centre with the increase in the number of secondary schools and primary schools established at Keroka between 1963 and 2000. The urban centre also continued to be a cultural centre with the building of a cultural museum in the 1980s which to a great extent became a tourist attraction. Keroka urban centre became a residential centre for workers working in the health and education sectors at Keroka and its environs.

Migrant labour working at Nyansiongo Borabu agricultural settlement scheme where tea and maize are grown in large scale also resided at Keroka. During this period, Keroka grew into a 24 hour business centre with improved infrastructure such as restaurants, cyber cafes, wholesale shops, supermarkets, carpentry, and hardware shops among others. Border disputes continued to disrupt peaceful coexistence during the tarmacking of the Kisii-Keroka-Nairobi main road in 1965 (Mina, O.I. 23/10/2017).

At the start of the 21st century especially from 2000, Keroka Urban Centre had a high population growth rate which was over 2.81 per cent per annum according to the Kenya Population and Housing Census 2009. The increased population led to congestion and housing challenges. This in turn led to the emergence of slums, unemployment and high crime rate. With the increased population and congestion in the 21st century, sanitation, food storage facilities, and drinking water quality at Keroka became poor, with the result that inhabitants were exposed to a wide range of unhygienic conditions

Mesa noted that as an administrative centre in the 21st century, especially since 2007, Keroka became the headquarter of Masaba District, where government offices of various departments such as agriculture, education, judiciary, security and planning among others were located. Keroka continued to be a multicultural residence with the increase of Kenya's ethnic communities that coexisted at the centre such as the Kisii, Luo, Kikuyu, Kamba, Maasai, Kalenjin, Luhya and Turkana among others. During this period, Keroka became an expanded business centre with improved infrastructure such as high rise buildings, roads and electricity. Keroka also became a social centre by harboring the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of the 2007/2008 post election violence victims in Kenya for two years before they later resettled elsewhere. Border conflicts again erupted at Keroka in 2013 during the devolution period with each county, Nyamira and Kisii, seeking to control revenue collection from traders at the urban centre (Mesa, O.I. 4/11/2017).

Omwenga noted that in the 21st century, Keroka was characterized by substantial land use conversion mainly from undeveloped to residential as well as the introduction of mixed uses (e.g. location of residential and commercial uses in a single building). While the residential land use had extended into the undeveloped land and facilitated the lateral growth of Keroka, the mixed uses were concentrated along the main Kisii-Nairobi road and in the unplanned streets. Despite the emergence of mixed uses, none of the house owners acquired permit

before effecting the changes in the use of their buildings. This indicated the extent of non-compliance to planning regulations which was a threat to orderly and sustainable physical development. The negative impact of such illegal conversion included traffic congestion and poor sanitary conditions. The actors involved in the physical development in Keroka included the private landlords, traditional leaders, town planning department, educational institutions, and religious buildings. Due to high population, Keroka had experienced high levels of unemployment, underemployment, and urban poverty. Bad behaviors such as theft, rape, drug abuse, alcoholism, and high crime rate had been witnessed (Omwenga, O.I. 25/10/2017).

Mosioma argued that since 2000 the physical expansion of Keroka had not spared the areas which were earmarked as unbuildable areas. Physical development had extended and encroached on economically sensitive areas such as rivers, streams, waterlogged areas and open spaces. Developers (house owners) disregarded the likely negative socio-environmental consequences such as flooding, spread of water related diseases and extinction of the natural habitats. The study further unearthed that virtually none of the areas earmarked for auxiliary land uses like education, public open space, and sports grounds among others had been utilized for such purposes.

Most of such areas had been changed into residential use as a result of non-adherence to planning regulations, uncoordinated land allocation by the traditional leaders (chiefs) and weak enforcement mechanisms. The great effect of this was the current pattern of physical development which could be described as “monotonous development” dominated by residential buildings (Mosioma, O.I. 27/10/2017).

4.7 Conclusion

The urban challenges in the postcolonial period included lack of enough clean and safe water for drinking and domestic use, lack of electricity in most business and residential areas, poor sanitation, poor housing conditions, poor health care, lack of enough social amenities, and boundary disputes. The 21st century challenges that faced Keroka town included wastes and environmental degradation, congestion and housing challenges, land scarcity, lack of infrastructural services, lack of designated market centre and also a continuation of boundary disputes.

On the impact to the people and the area, Keroka continued as a cultural centre where traditional sports, wrestling and dances such as *ribina* were held in the colonial period. It also became a business centre, a security centre, and a Christian centre with the establishment of new Christian churches. It was also a residential centre for laborers working in the White settlement scheme of Nyansiongo Borabu. In the postcolonial times especially between 1963 and 2018, Keroka Urban Centre grew economically as investors and immigrants increased at the centre. Along with the improvement of infrastructure and buildings from temporal to permanent, business premises at Keroka increased. As electricity, telephone, and postal services were installed, the business class increased retail shops and flour milling premises. Other infrastructure improved included restaurants, cyber cafes, Jua Kali artisans which included welding and carpentry, wholesale shops and supermarkets. Keroka town became the headquarter of Masaba District in 2007. It remained a contested area due to boundary and resource conflicts with the formation of devolved county governments in Kenya in 2013. As an administrative centre, Keroka town greatly improved as a security, judicial, cultural, social, healthcare, education, and trade and transport centre in the 21st century period. On one hand, Keroka gained improved infrastructure while on the other hand its high population led to congestion, overcrowding and slum areas, unemployment, high crime rate and deterioration of social services. The growth of Keroka urban centre inhibited the growth of other small urban centres linked to it while its infrastructural expansion encroached into unbuildable waterlogged areas.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study was anchored on three objectives as stated in section 1.3. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and presents conclusions drawn from the findings. The chapter ends with recommendations for future work based on some gaps the study identified.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study used village magnet and the ribbon model theories. The village magnet theory postulates that urban development is attracted to pre-existing villages that already have basic levels of critical services. The study established that before colonial rule, Keroka area was a cultural centre where traditional sports, wrestling and cultural dances were held. The indigenous inhabitants, the Abagusii, kept livestock and engaged in crop growing such as millet and sorghum. Two Gusii clans, the Abagetutu and Abanyaribari lived next to each other at Keroka. This influenced trade at the urban centre which took momentum when transportation was improved with the coming of the Indians, Goans, and Whites. The activities which took place at Keroka made the area ripe for a market as the existing villages slowly turned into a market place and eventually into an urban centre. This influenced the use of the village magnet theory in this study.

The ribbon theory was also used in this study. This theory holds that the peri-urban development follows major roads linking the urban area to other cities and surrounding rural areas. The study established that the Whites started a settlement scheme at Nyansiongo Borabu three kilometres from Keroka. For easier movement and transportation of crops and farm products, a murram road was constructed from Kericho to Kisii town through Keroka. The immigrants and laborers working in the settlement scheme resided at Keroka. With the improvement of the road which finally became a major highway connecting Kisii-Keroka-Kericho-Nairobi, Keroka Urban Centre grew both in population and infrastructure as business investors such as the Indians, the Kikuyu, the Luo and the indigenous Gusii settled at the centre. Keroka urban centre has since taken a linear development pattern due to this major highway.

521 Objective 1: The First Objective was to examine the Emergence and Growth of Keroka Urban Centre during the Colonial Period from 1905 to 1963.

The study found out that Keroka had grown as a result of a variety of reasons over time. The migration of Abagusii in ancient times characterized by the presence of suitable crop farming, factors of climate, good fertile soils, and adequate rainfall led to settlement of Abagusii in this place. Whereas the Abagusii settlement at Keroka faced adverse effects from other migrating communities to the area, the conduciveness superseded the adversities to the settlement of the Abagusii clans in Keroka. The settlement of the British in the nearby Nyansiongo Borabu and Sotik highlands just 3 kilometres from Keroka contributed greatly to the growth and development of Keroka Centre. It became a residential centre for those involved in various activities in the highlands. Laborers found safety at Keroka Centre away from the Kalenjins who were having frequent conflicts with the Abagusii due to land resource in the area. Keroka also acted as an operation base for the British who owned the settlement scheme area.

The British deployed Northcote as the first District Officer in 1907 who established colonial rule in Gusiiland. He appointed chiefs, Assistant chiefs, and headmen for easier administration. The chiefs implemented all government policies. The colonial government also introduced Hut tax and Poll tax from 1907 when it was first collected. During WWI (1914-1918), Gusii men were captured to participate in the war more especially those who stayed in or near urban centres such as Kisii and Keroka as they could be easily ambushed and taken away for recruitment. This led to the disruption of Gusii family socio-economic and political structures. It was established that the Mumbo and Sakawa protest movements resisted colonialism in Gusiiland. Cash crop farming introduced in Gusiiland led to male labor migration that went to work in settler farms which led to the increase of women's work load at home.

Population increase in the centre dictated the need for business opportunities. This was to meet the need for the commodities needed by the inhabitants and dwellers. Starting with humble structures the area grew and continued to develop as a business centre. With other contributing factors like availability of medical facilities and educational institutions plus the Kisii-Nairobi highway, Keroka steadily grew into an urban centre.

It was established that the development of Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial era (1905-1963) was accelerated by a number of factors. These included the coming of investors both foreign and local, the improvement of road network, the work of missionaries, the introduction of western education, cultural sports and dances at the urban centre, the introduction of cash crops, and the provision of security. With other contributing factors like availability of a medical facility as Keroka Health Centre and educational institutions spurred with the Kisii-Nairobi highway, Keroka steadily grew.

The introduction of cash crops such as tea, coffee and pyrethrum, the several agricultural changes that took place and the establishment of co-operative unions at Keroka led to the urban centres steady growth. The growing number of Indian and Goan traders coupled with the establishment of Christian churches and education institutions at Keroka increased population which led to the growth of trade at the urban centre thus increasing urban development.

5.2.2 Objective 2: The Second Objective was to analyze the Development of Keroka Urban Centre in the Postcolonial Period of 1963 to 2018.

During the post colonial times 1963–2018, Keroka Urban Centre grew economically due to the arrival of investors and immigrants at the centre. Along with the improvement of infrastructure from temporal to permanent premises, Keroka developed in many aspects. Electricity, telephone, and postal services were installed. The business class increased retail shops and flour milling premises. Other infrastructure included restaurants, cyber cafes, Jua Kali artisans which included welding, and carpentry. Wholesale shops and supermarkets were also started during this period. To combat disease, Keroka government health facility was started followed by private hospitals and clinics. To eradicate ignorance, many secondary and primary schools, both government and private sponsored, were started in and around Keroka.

Politically, Keroka grew from a rural trading centre, to a county council, then to an urban council and latest to a town council. Keroka continued to be a cultural centre with the establishment of cultural offices in the 1980s. Migrant labor who settled at the centre to work in the nearby crop plantations at Nyansiogo Borabu, nearby tea factories of Nyansiongo and Nyankoba, and to work in the nearby urban centres, led to increased population.

Keroka Urban Centre experienced a high population growth rate of about 2.81 pe annum in the 21st century especially from 2000. This was attributed to the high entry of immigrants searching for job opportunities, service provision, better infrastructure, and educational opportunities. Keroka therefore became a multicultural residence harboring many ethnic communities who coexisted at the urban centre. The Nairobi-Keroka-Kisii main road coupled with the improvement in electricity supply greatly contributed to the growth of the urban centre due to quick transportation of goods and provision of services. This increased the economic activities at the urban centre such as commercialized trading, farming activities in the immediate hinterland, and formal employment. The economic improvement led to better infrastructure at the urban centre such as high rise commercial and residential buildings. At the same time modern banks were established at Keroka due to the attraction of many business investors.

5.23 Objective 3: The Third Objective was to establish the Development Challenges and Impact of Keroka Town to the Residents and its Environ from 1905 to 2018.

The Gusii in their migration faced various challenges which included high population, inter-clan rivalry, unfavorable weather conditions such as drought and floods, diseases and external attacks from neighbors like the Maasai and Kalenjins. In overcoming the challenges during their migration, the Abagusii found refuge in the Gusii highlands to escape from the invading communities. The Abagusii also avoided floods at the Kano plains. Migration helped them to get new areas such as Keroka to settle the increasing population and get fertile lands to grow their indigeneous crops such as potatoes, sorghum, and millet.

The study established that the challenges that faced the urban centre from 1921 to 1963 included original poor structures, the language problem when foreign races such as the Indians and Whites arrived. There was also poor transport, insecurity, and lack of market sheds when the urban centre originally started.

On the other hand Keroka Urban Centre faced various challenges during the postcolonial era. Keroka's urban infrastructure witnessed rapid deterioration especially roads, water and sewerage systems. The infrastructures did not cope with the population growth and was therefore overused or overcrowded and thus unable to guarantee the expected quality life. Healthcare and education facilities such as hospitals and schools were inadequate and therefore this led to congestion. Other services were similarly in pathetic state, for example

persistent water shortages, limited sewerage system coverage, uncollected garbage, and poor public health. Some factors that were responsible for the above scenario included inadequate and skewed resource allocation for the construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of the facilities, poor contractual work, rapid urbanization, high population growth, and adverse weather conditions. Other urban challenges during this time included, lack of enough clean and safe water for drinking and domestic use, lack of electricity in most business and residential areas, poor sanitation, poor housing conditions, poor health care, and lack of enough social amenities. All these, were as a result of population increase and the problem of boundary disputes.

In the 21st century, especially from 2000, Keroka town faced various challenges which included the problem of water supply and sanitation, wastes and environmental degradation, congestion and housing challenges, land scarcity, lack of social amenities, lack of infrastructural services, lack of designated market centre, and boundary disputes. Urban planning, infrastructure, and services were generally poor in Keroka due to lack of efficient implementation systems. In addition, Keroka Urban Centre had no up-to-date physical development plans. Most of the existing Keroka urban physical development plans were prepared in the 1960/70s and very few of them have been revised to cope with rapid urban growth.

To address the 21st century challenges, the informants suggested strategies such as adequate institutional and legal framework of land development, proper urban centre planning and public participation in plan preparation that should be encouraged to enable residents understand the dynamics of physical development. The state institutions such as the physical planning department should be well resourced to help them examine building permits and undertake routine patrols to curtail unauthorized developments. There should be proper management and enforcement of laws, improving water and sanitation conditions, and housing. Infrastructure should be improved and a place for a market designed. The public should be educated to enable proper participation in town development. Proper refuse collection and disposal needs to be done to provide a hygienic urban environment. County and clan boundaries should be redefined to avoid social, economic, and political conflicts at Keroka.

On the impact of Keroka Urban Centre to the people and the area since 1905, the study established that from 1905 the footpaths at Keroka were improved into murrum roads though they were narrow and usually muddy during rainy seasons. Bicycles which were first introduced in Gusii in 1914 and handcarts were used for transportation before the introduction of vehicles that made transportation easier. When the Europeans entered the land with new roofing materials, new structures were made of mud but iron roofed. Later on permanent business premises were erected. When formal education was started the communication was made easier as most locals could then speak, read, or write in English, or Kiswahili. The colonial administration set a police post at Keroka in 1927 to provide security for the businessmen. The historical growth of the town had demonstrated that, unlike most other towns in Kenya, Keroka's growth was so much due to the colonial influence and its surrounding. During this time, Keroka area was used for indigenous crop production such as millet, sorghum and potatoes and livestock rearing. It was a cattle village, *egesarate*, where men stayed to guard their livestock from theft. It was a trade centre between the Kitutu and Nyaribari clans. It was also a social and cultural centre where wrestling sports and *ribina* dance took place. Keroka continued to be a cultural centre with the Abagusii meeting at the urban centre for cultural activities. As a trade centre, non-indigenous communities, especially, the Indians and the neighboring Luo community, joined to trade with the Abagusii at Keroka. Security of businessmen was improved with the establishment of a police post in 1927. Keroka became a residential centre of migrant labor working in the agricultural white settlement scheme of Nyansiongo Borabu near Keroka since it is just about 3 kilometres from the settlement scheme. Missionary work of starting churches and schools at and around Keroka led to a faster growth of the urban centre in the colonial period.

Keroka Urban Centre's impact to the people and the area in the postcolonial period of 1963-2000 is that the town continued to be a medical centre. The government established Keroka Health Centre which provided health services to the residents and people from the hinterland. It improved as a transport and communication centre with the tarmacking of the Kisii-Keroka-Kericho-Nairobi Highway. Movement of goods and people became easier and faster. Keroka also continued to be a cultural centre with the establishment of a cultural museum at Keroka in the 1980s. This improved the Gusii cultural activities. It also became a residential centre of migrant labor, a trade and business centre, and an education centre thus improving the peoples' welfare in the area.

The study established that on the impact of the growth of Keroka Urban Centre on the people and the area in the 21st century, Keroka became an administrative centre in 2007 having been elevated to be the headquarter of Masaba District. As transportation centre, the town greatly increased mobility and efficiency in delivering goods and people. The socio-economic activities improved at Keroka with improved connectivity and spread of electricity at the urban centre in the 21st century. Keroka urban centre became a cosmopolitan business hub harboring many business communities which included the Indians, Kikuyu, Luo, Kalenjins, Maasai, and the Gusii among others. Another impact was that Keroka continued to be an educational centre with the establishment of Kisii University Keroka campus and Keroka Institute of Technology. Keroka also became a medical centre from the post colonial period leading to the elevation of Keroka health centre to a subcounty hospital in the 21st century. Gucha private hospital was among other medical clinics established in the 21st century. Keroka Urban Centre also continued to be a security and judicial centre with the police station getting elevated into a police division in the 21st century thus improving security.

On the negative side, Keroka inhibited the growth of other smaller centres linked to it in the 21st century. In the 21st century, the development of Keroka Urban Centre led to the buildup of waste materials and poor air quality from exhaust fumes and motorists, lack of adequate employment opportunities and high population. Keroka development led to increased urban poverty and inequality which led to the rise of slum and squatter populations. Also due to high population at the urban centre, Keroka development led to adverse social effects of higher levels of crime and violence such as theft, robbery, and murder. Due to poor planning, Keroka Urban Centre development led to traffic congestion, lack of designated market centre, and haphazardly organised infrastructure in the 21st century.

5.3 Conclusion

Sites that were used for social, cultural, economic, and political purposes in the past became important centres after the establishment of colonial rule. Despite the numerous challenges of urbanization, it was still possible for a town like Keroka to develop. Its presence affected the entire locality. Its survival to date shows that with appropriate triggers, any urban centre can expand to greater heights inspite of challenges. Towns also develop over time with clear indicators of that development.

Urban areas such as Keroka are developing owing to increased population growth and urban infrastructural expansion. It is important that we realize these are key areas of development. They therefore require proper attention in terms of planning, because if not properly done, this would result in informal settlements which big towns are already struggling to contain.

This study established the challenges that faced Keroka town such as uncontrolled development, lack of a designated market or community centre and environmental degradation that resulted from this situation. Suggested recommendations included proper enforcement of regulations, establishment of a community centre as well as improvement of sanitary conditions that were aimed at guiding the growth and development of Keroka as an urban centre. The main lessons learnt from this study included preparation of a land use plan and its proper enforcement and participatory approach in planning.

In a nutshell the study identified that urbanization is a good thing because, first, it brings together economic and human resources that stimulate the economy through the development of business, science, technology, and industry. It is also a good thing as it is more cost-effective and efficient to supply facilities such as fresh water and electricity to a concentrated population in an area compared to the scattered rural population. Moreover the concentration of people and resources lead to more readily available amenities such as education, health, social services and cultural activities in urban areas. Urban living is linked with higher levels of literacy and education, better health, lower fertility and a longer life expectancy. With better communication and transport networks, social and cultural barriers can be overcome.

Though, in contrast to the fore stated, urbanization can be a bad thing. This is because rapid and unplanned growth in urban areas was associated with inadequate housing, water, and sanitation which more often lead to health problems. Urbanization was further associated with adverse environmental effects such as reduced water quality, a build-up of waste materials and poor air quality. Moreover, urbanization contributes to increasing urban poverty and inequality; rise in slum and squatter populations, adverse social effects such as higher levels of crime and violence and a lack of social support of social structures like families.

5.4 Recommendations

The study enlists the need for proper urban centre's planning as stipulated in the county governments act and devolution act in line with the relevant clauses in the Kenya Constitution 2010. This study found out that the boundary disputes were more of a cultural and political problem and hence the need for talks to go on among the community elders, scholars and political class to tame the almost escalating animosity among the Kitutu and Nyaribariclans and to a large extent the two Gusii counties, Nyamira and Kisii. The study also observed the need for proper re-definition of Keroka Urban Centre boundaries to avoid clan and county conflicts and enhance responsibility to service provision.

There should be explicit recognition of community land through proper public land administration. The government should reserve public land in support of communal priority projects like market centres. Only until then, can there be realized the provisions of the housing policy of 2004, which hold the government accountable in streamlining land acquisition and adoption of appropriate tenure systems to secure the urban needs (GOK, 2004). More importantly, the move will not only be in line with the constitutional rights of access to adequate services by all citizens, but will also go a long way in solving the problem of settlements in the urban centre and across the country.

Haphazard physical development in Keroka needs to be checked through strong institutions. The state institutions should be well resourced to help them examine building permits, undertake routine patrols, and engage with community members in their efforts to curtail the unauthorized developments which have characterized the urban areas. This can be applied in Keroka through ensuring that the Kisii and Nyamira counties' Physical Planning departments are well resourced and staffed so as to be able to actively guide the development of Keroka urban area to avoid haphazard physical development.

There is need for authorities especially the county governments to embark on continuous and intensive public education on the processes involved in carrying out physical development. Stakeholders, especially the business community, local authorities, and developers should be sensitized on their roles in ensuring orderly physical development. Some of the residents and business operators in Keroka are unaware of the processes that are involved in carrying out development therefore this should be able to promote public education to disseminate this information to the public.

Public participation in plan preparation should be encouraged to enable the residents understand the dynamics of physical development. With this in mind, the case in Keroka should lay emphasis on consulting the public and the community in the planning process and dispute resolution.

The study recommends addition of other major departmental offices such as agricultural research, gender affairs, heritage and sports as well as industrialization in an attempt to bring more services closer to Keroka town residents and other people in the hinterland. Keroka cultural centre should also be enlarged to boost Gusii cultural activities and attract more tourists to the town.

Due to rapid population growth, the study recommends increased supply of key community facilities that the centre holds inadequate such as lack of enough schools and health facilities as well as recreational facilities. This has resulted in the residents having to access these services from other areas like Kisii. The provision of these facilities should therefore be increased so that the residents can get access to them within Keroka centre.

There was incompatibility of land uses in Keroka especially on the area near the road which had resulted in traffic conflict and congestion between vehicles, road users and commercial activities operating on the road reserves. There was therefore need to integrate land use patterns and transport network in the centre. One of the recommendations is to redesign and upgrade Kisii-Nairobi Highway which cuts through the centre since it lacked pedestrian walks, street lights, storm water drainage, and street furniture such as benches, traffic barriers, traffic signs, bus stops, and taxi stands. This would be designed and implemented in such a manner that it would ensure compatibility of the transport network with the adjacent land uses. It would at the same time focus on improving drainage and sanitation in the centre.

The study established that there was lack of a community centre in Keroka town which should have a community or shopping/market centre. This had resulted in ribbon development and congestion. It identified that there should be an establishment of a community/shopping centre that would incorporate pertinent community facilities that were not present in Keroka. A community centre should accommodate commercial activities as well as community facilities that are important to the residents living in the area. This would ensure that there was provision of necessary community facilities and that there was less

congestion as even commercial activities would be accommodated within the community centre.

There was an uncontrolled development situation in Keroka that had resulted in poor living standards and non-adherence to proper building standards such as lack of building lines. Proper enforcement of building standards and design by the County Government planning department should be undertaken in order to curb the haphazard nature of development in the centre. This would ensure that residential buildings were constructed in line with the requirements and that physical infrastructure such as water and septic tanks were adequately provided.

Based on the findings, the study established the need for upgrading of informal to formal commercial activities along the main Kisii-Nairobi Highway through the establishment of formal business spaces to relocate the informal traders. The locations would have to be strategic, since these businesses relied on strategic positioning to maximize profits. It would also require intensive re-organization of land uses along the highway so as to observe the road standards required and offer traders a proper location of their businesses.

The study recommends that high rise buildings should be designed and constructed with places of parking vehicles below the buildings in order to curb traffic congestion at the urban centre and ease the housing problems. To address housing issues, the study also recommends that locals and authorities should use low cost construction methods such as interlocking bricks and prefabricated housing to help in curbing growth of informal settlements by reducing the time for construction as well as rent paid by the tenants. In addition, reforming licensing requirements in the counties and in Kenya by reducing the processing time as well as decreasing the costs would increase the size of the formal construction sector while reducing the costs of housing construction.

5.5 Further Research

The study of Keroka on the subject of historical development, challenges, and impact on settlement has not been exhaustive. For one to fully understand the whole process of urbanisation and changes associated with it; the following are considered as key areas for further research. First, further research should be done on the influence of infrastructural development projects on urbanization and rise of informal settlements in other countries with

growing slums. The research should find out possible ways to mitigate the growth and expansion brought by infrastructural development projects. This will show if this research has a universal application.

A study should also be carried out to find out whether eradication of these informal settlements can be possible, and if not, whether they bring any economic value to the urban centres they are located in. Further research should also be done on the causes and effects of inter-clan conflicts in Kenya, a case of Gusii clans at Keroka since 1914 with the intention of looking for lasting solutions on how border conflicts can be avoided in Gusii and in Kenya.

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(B) Primary Sources

(i) Archival Source

The following is a list of Kenya National Archives (KNA) “files available at the Kenya National Archives” in Nairobi. They provide vital information on the developments in Gusii and Keroka urban centre during the colonial period. They form a source of Archival materials in understanding the origin and development of Keroka Urban Centre. Before independence, Gusii was part of South Kavirondo District and Nyanza province in which the report comes from.

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KNA/DC/KSI/3/4. History of Kisii (1907). KNA/DC/KSI/3/2. Histories and customs 1907-1924. KNA/DC/KSI/1/1. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1908-1912. KNA/DC/KSI/1/2. Kavirondo District Annual reports, 1913 -1923 KNA/DC/KSI/1/2. South Kavirondo Annual Reports, 1913-1919

KNA/DC/KSI/3/2/1. Assistant Provincial Commissioner to the Chief Secretary 17 December 1914.

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KNA/DC/KSI/1/4. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1933-1939. KNA/DC/KSI/3/1. Labor South Kavirondo District.

KNA/DC/KSI/2/1. South Kavirondo Annual Reports KNA/DC/KSI/7/1. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1943. KNA/DC/KSI/5/3. South Nyanza Gazette, 1943-1955 DC/KSI/1/7. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1944.

KNA/DC/KSI/1/8. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1945.

KNA/DC/KSI/1/14. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1947.

KNA/DC/KSI/5/3. Memoranda for PC and DC’S, 1945-1955. KNA/DC/KSI/1/23. Annual Reports South Kavirondo, 1961.

(ii) Field Interviews

The following information provides the list of Oral Informants (O.I.) who were interviewed during field research. Pseudonyms were used for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity. The information is tabulated in terms of dates of interview, name, gender, age, place and time of the interview of each informant.

S/No	Date	Name	Gender	Age(Yrs)	Place	Time
1	23/10/2017	Yaro Francis	M	82	Riabore	8.30am
2	23/10/2017	Kerubo Truphena	F	88	Geta	10.30am
3	23/10/2017	Mina paskariah	F	92	Geteri	2.30pm
4	23/10/2017	Okioma Nyangoya	M	75	Mochenwa	4.00pm
5	24/10/2017	Keraita James	M	80	Metamaywa	8.25am
6	24/10/2017	Moraa Milkah	F	74	Keroka	11.25am
7	24/10/2017	Gitongori Joseph	M	73	Matangi	1.45pm
8	24/10/2017	Kemuma Elizabeth	F	85	Machururiati	3.30pm
9	25/10/2017	NyakerarioSalome	F	83	Keroka	8.40am
10	25/10/2017	OmwengaCharles	M	40	Riomanga	10.40am
11	25/10/2017	Onsarigo Yabesh	M	71	Riomanga	12.00pm
12	25/10/2017	Mosoti Meshack	M	55	Keroka	2.30pm
13	26/10/2017	Ong'ayo Tom	M	70	Matangi	9.20am
14	26/10/2017	Tora Peter	M	74	Riomanga	11.20am
15	26/10/2017	Bonareri Lucy	F	45	Keroka	12.10pm
16	26/10/2017	Mokune Agnes	F	69	Mochenwa	2.40pm
17	27/10/2017	Omambia Jones	M	63	Embaro	8.00am
18	27/10/2017	Nyanchama Salome	F	68	Magombo	11.10am
19	27/10/2017	Mosioma Richard	M	54	Kineni	2.00pm
20	27/10/2017	Nyangoya John	M	54	Isoge	4.00pm
21	01/11/2017	Bikundo Erick	M	82	Keroka	9.00am
22	01/11/2017	Nyaboke Yunes	F	50	Embaro	11.00am
23	01/11/2017	Nyakundi Joseph	M	53	Mochenwa	2.00pm
24	01/11/2017	Openda Shem	M	86	Keroka	4.00pm
25	02/11/2017	Monibi Otworu	M	75	Keroka	9.30am

26	02/11/2017	Makori Peter	M	56	Embaro	11.30am
27	02/11/2017	Oginda John	M	90	Mosobeti	2.30pm
28	02/11/2017	Bosibori Rusaria	F	87	Gesima	4.30pm
29	03/11/2017	Mocheche Joyce	F	81	Keroka	9.15am
30	03/11/2017	Maria Elizabeth	F	76	Embaro	11.15am
31	03/11/2017	Nyanduko Agnes	F	75	Metamaywa	2.15pm
32	03/11/2017	Maranga Paul	M	73	Mochenwa	4.15pm
33	04/11/2017	Nyabando George	M	78	Karantini	9.10am
34	04/11/2017	Mesa James	M	58	Nyabogoye	11.10am
35	04/11/2017	Nyabuti Denis	M	88	Karantini	2.10pm
36	04/11/2017	Onchomba Reuben	M	70	Embaro	4.10pm
37	13/11/2017	Omundi Thomas	M	69	Embaro	9.05am
38	13/11/2017	Omao Alfred	M	62	Mochenwa	11.05am
39	13/11/2017	Nyanchoka Rachel	F	75	Isoge	2.05pm
40	13/11/2017	Kemunto Linet	F	55	Kineni	4.05pm
41	13/11/2017	Okemwa Henry	M	46	Magombo	5.00pm
42	14/11/2017	Ogero Mose	M	78	Mochenwa	9.20am
43	14/11/2017	Magoma Rose	F	56	Keroka	11.20am
44	14/11/2017	Nyanchera Jane	F	54	Geta	1.30pm
45	14/11/2017	Bisieri Mary	F	68	Karantini	3.30pm
46	14/11/2017	Ondong'aEvans	M	72	Nyabogoye	5.00pm

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Amasaga-</i>	Temporary corporate workinggroups
<i>Ching'enang'eni-</i>	Stars
<i>Chinsoni-</i>	Gusii morallaw
<i>Chinyomba-</i>	Houses
<i>Ebisaku-</i>	Abagusii lineagesystems
<i>Ebisarate-</i>	Cattlevillages
<i>Egesangio-</i>	Working group in a merry goround
<i>Emonga-</i>	Place of land belonging to the familypatriarch
<i>Emuma-</i>	Oath
<i>Encharaya Oino-</i>	Famine caused byOino
<i>Endaya enchogu-</i>	The stomach of theelephant
<i>Engoro-</i>	Almighty God. The causer of allcauses
<i>Enyamumbo-</i>	Mumboism
<i>Erioba-</i>	Sun
<i>Etureti-</i>	Gusii informal courts
<i>Kabianga-</i>	Where everythingrefused
<i>Nyabiemba-</i>	Got from corncobs
<i>Okobasa-</i>	Marrying without the procedure of bride wealthpayment
<i>Omochie-</i>	Homestead
<i>Omonyaisaga-</i>	Host of corporate group
<i>Omoroka-</i>	Anindigeneous plant used to demarcate boundaries in Gusii
<i>Omotembe-</i>	Indigeneous sacred tree inGusii
<i>Omotienyi-</i>	Moon
<i>Ribina-</i>	Gusii female traditional dance meant to ask God to bringrain
<i>Ritongo-</i>	Gusii (African) court

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. I am pursuing a Master's degree in History. I am therefore carrying out a study on; Development of Urban Centres in Kenya: The case of Keroka Town (1905-2018).

The question guide attached is intended to analyze the origin and development of Keroka Urban Centre since 1905. I have identified you as one of my respondents. Your responses will be very important to this study as it will shed light on how the urban centre has evolved and developed over time.

You are requested to answer all questions to the best of your knowledge. The information provided will be treated confidentially and used only for the purpose of this study.

Thanks in advance. Yours sincerely,

SIGN.....

Richard N. Mbeta

11. Which labor policies were articulated by the colonial system in Gusii and what effect did they have on the development of Keroka Urban Centre?
12. Briefly comment on WWI (1914-1918). What impact did it have on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre in particular?
13. What influence did the Mumbo and Sakawa protest movements have on the Gusii's opinion on colonialism during the colonial period?
14. What impact did colonial agriculture have on the Gusii and Keroka Urban Centre?
16. Previously, Keroka used to be just an open air market. When were Keroka Urban Centre premises first erected?
17. Were there any foreign races at Keroka? If yes, who were they?
18. Who were the shopkeepers and how many shops were there?
19. Which commodities were sold in those shops?
20. In your opinion, was there any linkage between the colonial government and the development of Keroka?
21. Which factors led to the development of Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial period 1905-1963?
22. What significant developments took place at Keroka Urban Centre in the colonial period (1905-1963) in relation to:-
 - Agriculture
 - Education
 - Health services
 - Missionary work/Religion
 - Transport and communication
 - Infrastructure /buildings
 - Security
 - Any other factor not mentioned above
23. Briefly comment on WWII (1939-1945). What impact did it have on the Gusii and Keroka urban centre in particular?
24. What developments took place at Keroka in the post WWII period (1945-1963)?

(II) The Development of Keroka Urban Centre in the Postcolonial period (1963-2018)

25. What key indicators showed Keroka Urban Centre development in the Kenyatta era (1963-1978)?
26. What indicators showed Keroka urban centre development in the Moi era (1978-2000)?
27. What factors led to the rapid development of Keroka centre in the 21st century?
28. Kindly, do you think there is any influence of nearby towns on Keroka growth? If yes which ones?
29. Kindly, given a chance, which areas would you give priority attention to Keroka Urban Centre development?
30. As an elder who has witnessed the growth of Keroka, do you have any photographs taken at different times to show the growth differences? If yes, please may I see them?

(III) Development Challenges and Impact of Keroka Town to the Residents and its Environs (1905-2018)

31. What challenges did Keroka Urban Centre face in its development in the colonial period 1905-1963? How were they mitigated?
32. What challenges did Keroka town face in its development in the postcolonial period 1963- 2018? Which interventions have been taken to solve the problems?
33. What was the impact of Keroka Urban Centre to the people and the area in the colonial period 1905-1963?
34. What was the impact of Keroka town to the people and the area in the postcolonial period 1963-2018?


APPENDIX III: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Explain the origin of Keroka Urban Centre.
2. Explain meaning of 'Keroka'.
3. Describe the social, cultural, economic or political activities which previously took place where Keroka Urban Centre is currently established.
4. Discuss the role of the non-indigenous people such as the Indians in the emergence and development of Keroka Urban Centre.
5. Examine the role of colonial government in the development of Keroka Urban Centre.
6. Explain the salient developments that have taken place in the growth of Keroka since 1905.
7. Discuss the factors that led to these developments since 1905.
8. Identify the challenges which Keroka Urban Centre has faced in its development in the colonial (1905-1963) and postcolonial (1963-2018) periods.
9. Explain the possible interventions that have been taken to solve the challenges facing Keroka residents in the respective historical periods.
10. Discuss the impact of the development of Keroka Urban Centre on Keroka residents and its environs in the colonial and postcolonial periods?
11. Explain the usefulness of photographs taken at Keroka Urban Centre at different periods that may show the growth patterns since 1905?


APPENDIX IV: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
6. This License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this License including its cancellation without prior notice.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
PERMIT**

Serial No.A **16109**

CONDITIONS: see back page

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. RICHARD NYAKEBONDO MBETA
of JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY, 0-40200 KISII, has been
permitted to conduct research in Kisii
County

on the topic: AN INVESTIGATION INTO
HISTORICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING
URBANIZATION PROCESS IN KENYA: A
CASE OF KEROKA URBAN CENTRE SINCE
1920

for the period ending:
10th October, 2018


.....
Applicant's
Signature

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/89073/19410
Date Of Issue : 11th October, 2017
Fee Received : Ksh 1000




.....
Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

APPENDIX V: NACOSTI RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: 020 400 7000,
0713 788787,0735404245
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/89073/19410**

Date: **11th October, 2017**

Richard Nyakebondo Mbeta
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University
of Science and Technology
P.O. Box 210-40601
BONDO.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*An investigation into historical factors influencing urbanization process in Kenya: A case of Keroka urban centre since 1920*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kisii County** for the period ending **10th October, 2018**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kisii County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kisii County.



APPENDIX VI: COUNTY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department for Basic Education

Telegram: "EDUCATION"
Telephone: 058-30695
Email address: cdekisii@gmail.com
When replying please quote

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KISII COUNTY
P.O. BOX 4499 - 40200
KISII.

Ref: CDE/KSI/II/8/78

Date: 17th October, 2017

Richard Nyakebondo Mbeta
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University
P O Box 210-40601
BONDO

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Following your research Authorization vide your letter *Ref. NACOSTI/P/17/89073/19410* to carry out research in Kisii County, this letter refers.

I am pleased to inform you that you can carry out your research in the County on "*An investigation into historical factors influencing urbanization process in Kenya. A case of Keroka urban center since 1920*" for a period ending 10th October, 2018.

Wish you a successful research.

Dr. William Sugut
County Director of Education
KISII COUNTY.



APPENDIX VII: UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
Office of the Director

Tel. 057-2501804
Email: bps@jooust.ac.ke

P.O. BOX 210 – 40601
BONDO

Our Ref: Z152/4448/2012

Date: 11th September, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RICHARD NYAKEBONDO MBETA – Z152/4448/2012

The above person is a bona fide postgraduate student of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences pursuing a Masters of Arts Degree in History. He has been authorized by the University to undertake research on the topic: *“An Investigation into Historical Factors Influencing Urbanization Process in Kenya; A Case Study Of Keroka Urban Centre Since 1920”*

Any assistance accorded to him shall be appreciated.

Thank you.

Prof. Beatrice Anyango

DIRECTOR, BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

