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RELATIONS BETWEEN BORDER ZONE KAMBA AND SOMALI COMMUNITIES OF KITUI-TANA RIVER COUNTIES IN KENYA 1850-1963

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relations between the Kamba and Somali communities in Kenya from around 1850 to 1963. An analysis of these relations in the pre-colonial period was taken in an attempt to lay a foundation for assessing the relations in the colonial period. Colonial policies and their impact on the Kamba-Somali relations up to 1938 were investigated. Effects of the Second World War and decolonization process on the relations between Kamba and Somali up to 1963 were assessed too. The study argues that the initial settlement of both the Kamba and Somali communities in the area of study was majorly determined by environmental factors which in turn shaped the demand and supply of products and therefore relation between the two communities. With the onset of colonialism, relations between the two communities were heavily influenced by the policy of pacification which endeavored to create a rigid boundary between the two communities and so affected free interactions and trade. Later, during the Second World War and the period after the war, the relations between these two communities were characterized by tension, division, and suspicion. The trends of interaction were interpreted using constructivism and social inter-dependence theories. The study was justified in that it examined two communities instead of one and demonstrated trends that come from such dynamic interactions as contrasted with relations within one group. Literature on inter-ethnic relations was reviewed for sharper conceptualization of the study. Two research designs were used. These two included descriptive and historical research designs. Methodologically, a purposive sampling technique was employed. Snow-ball sampling technique was also used where knowledgeable informants referred the researcher to others who also had information about the study. Data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was verified against secondary information. Secondary data was obtained from books, journals, archives and newspapers.

Key Words: *Migration and Settlement, Colonial Rule, Colonial Policies, Second World War, Decolonization*

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INTRODUCTION

Identity crises are increasing at a very high rate in Africa. Many of these crises have their basis in ethnicity and ethnic relations. Ethnic relations can be defined and understood in the framework of colonial reconfiguration of pre-colonial cultures (Kakai, 2001:1). Both peaceful and violent expressions of these ethnic identities are possible.

In sub-Saharan Africa in particular, when two ethnic communities border each other as in the case of Kamba and Somali, there arises a lot of contestations, mainly over resources which sometimes lead to conflict and loss of life (Mc Ewen, 1971; Ben Arrous, 1996). The boundaries' meanings and values, which are connected to the historical context defining their emergence, development, and modification, have been the subject of contention rather than their actual placements. Many of the contemporary conflicts in Africa, according to Asiwaju (1985), have their origins in border regions. He argues that political disputes over borders are a major cause of the lack of integration, peace, and cooperation among neighboring communities. Boundaries everywhere are artificial and erratic in nature as Clapham (1996) argues. They keep on changing from time to time. A crisis arises in the process of shifting boundaries since many resources that are contested for by neighboring communities are natural and cannot be transferred from one place to another.

According to Berman (1998), pre-colonial communities were rife with conflict, instability, change and rivalry. The scourges of famine, war, and illness, he continues, devastated pre-existing communities and identities, caused people to relocate and also sparked the emergence of new communities among the survivors and refugees. It is evident from the background information above that there were times when interethnic relations were tense before colonialism. Berman (1998) continues to argue that, the colonial era is where current African ethnicities got their start. He does, however, point out that they both shared traits with pre-colonial societies and that colonialism's cultural, political, social, and economic influences significantly influenced their form, scope, and content.

According to Leys (1975:199), colonialism reinforced and divided ethnic groups by changing pre-colonial social norms. Colonial policies rewarded some towns while discriminating against others. Kakai (2000:82) argues that colonial control produced original terrains for conflicts, which were typically described in terms of ethnicity as in the case of Somali and Galla of Northern Kenya. According to Kisiang'ani (2003:1), colonialism brought new ways of existence to the previously distinct yet extraordinarily rich traditional African way of life. He adds that this new culture, which caused an ongoing identity crisis among Africans, had significant social, political, and economic repercussions.

On every continent, there are numerous interethnic relationships. Romanucci (1995) asserts that the preservation of boundaries is a sign of ethnic connections. Some groups have felt marginalized as a result of this. The Kurds in Turkey and the Serbs in Bosnia serve as two examples of how this has caused friction in the various areas.

In Kenya, individuals have coexisted, intermarried, and traded with one another, but there have also been ethnic clashes in various regions of the nation. The primary goal of this study was to examine the interethnic interactions between two ethnic communities that share a border in Kenya. Simultaneously, the study sought to contribute to the existing recommendations and novel strategies for averting explosive encounters in the study area. Constructivism and Socio-interdependence theories were applied from a historical viewpoint to bring fresh information to the body of current knowledge.

Statement of the Problem

Inter-ethnic relations are a global phenomenon wherever two or more ethnic communities share boundaries. These relations are also a historical phenomenon, developing and changing in response to both the physical and social environment. Such automatic interaction has always taken the form of social, cultural, and economic cooperation as well as conflicts due to competition over resources. Manifestations of such relations in Africa have been a response to different agencies and variables that have shaped such relations.

With the arrival of colonialism at the start of the 20th century, African communities were given a new social-political framework and intercommunal interactions were redefined. This study focused on two ethnic communities in Kenya namely the Kamba of Kitui East sub-County and Somali of Bura sub-County. Inter-ethnic relations are better informed by historical study. There is therefore need for a systematic analysis of trends of relations that occurred before the advent of colonialism through colonial period in Kenya. A brief overview of pre-colonial relations between the two communities was analyzed. To investigate the effects of the colonial policy of divide and rule on the interactions between the two ethnic groups, historical relations from the colonial era were presented. The objective was to analyze pre-colonial relations between the two communities and how these relations were interfered with by the colonists and colonial policies during the colonial era. This study also looked at how the Second World War affected the relationships between the Somali and Kamba communities both during and after the conflict.

Objectives of the Study

The study specifically addresses the following objectives:

- To establish the determinants of migration and settlement of the Kamba and Somali communities and their relations before 1895.
- To analyze the establishment of colonial rule, its policies towards the Kamba and Somali, and how these influenced the relations between the two communities before 1939.
- To assess the impacts of the Second World War and decolonization process on the relations between the Kamba and Somali communities from 1939 to 1963.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Around the world, there is a wealth of literature on ethnicity and interethnic relations. The Oxford English Dictionary first included the word "ethnicity" in 1972, although the word "ethnic" had been used in English since the fourteenth century. (Green, 2005). The phrase was first applied to non-Christians, non-Jews, Gentiles, and Heathens. Over time, its derogatory connotation changed. The immigration union of northern or western European heritage was referred to by this term in the United States during the 20th century (Eriksen, 1993). As anthropologists attempted to grapple with the discoveries of the proper definition of ethnicity, its significance in the social sciences increased. This study was contended with the definition below.

“Ethnicity is the end result of an ongoing historical process that is always both ancient and new rooted in the past and constantly engaged in creation” (Berman, 1998:1)

Ivo Banac (1992) discusses interethnic interactions in connection to the reasons of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. He contends that President Josif Tito got worried on conflicts occurring when Montenegrin and Croat people were opposed to unity as early as 1948. In fact, there was a sense of unease about Yugoslavia's

future in the early 1970s. The Serbian government complained about the constitution in 1977. It used Tito's passing in 1980 as a cue to start dismantling the federalist era (Banac, 1992: 1085-1093).

Banac contends that by 1991, as communism started to collapse in Eastern Europe and the opposition won elections in Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and the Yugoslav People's Army were increasingly isolated and determined to fight further confederation. War broke out as soon as Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in June 1991, and the Serbian Cultural Weekly published an obituary for Yugoslavia. The previous study found that ethnic friction and conflicts do not start off immediately, but instead develop over time. This was a key aspect which helped in studying the relations between Kamba and Somali.

According to Mazrui (1969), the two revolutions in communications and identity explosion have made it easier for ethnic interactions that result in tensions and wars to spread across the globe. He compares the Scottish desire to gain further independence from Britain to the Nigerian Biafra war, which took place between 1967 and 1970. According to Mazrui, who represents Nigeria, the history of Biafra and the Igbo ethnic group is also a tale of the demise of Nigerian nationality. He goes on to say that only in the context of history could such a decline be comprehended. Mazrui and Tidy (1984: 203-207; 219-222) also illustrate the depressing impacts of the Biafra conflict in Nigeria and the relations between the ethnic Hutu and Tutsi factions in Burundi and Rwanda, respectively. This work's major concern was also identification.

Nigeria's ethnic relations are chronicled by Rotimi Suberu (1993) from 1914 to 1993. He contends that numerous ethnic suspicions, tensions, and wars were prompted by the need to unite the Christian Igbo, the religiously communal Yoruba, the Muslim Hausa-Fulani, and the other ethnic groups into a one nation. He emphasizes how the smaller minority populations believed they were being ignored by the larger Nigerian community. He argues that the ensuing ethnic divide in Nigeria following independence was the cause of the fall of the First Republic, the installation of military rule in 1960, and the 1967–1970 Biafra War. The scope of this study is extensive because it covers all of Nigeria's ethnic groups. However, this study was only focused on two counties in Kenya that are next to one another.

There are works that have been done on Somalian ethnic relations. Only two are examined here though. Since pre-European times, Somali clan ties have had a history, according to Duale (1994). He names the major clans as the Hawiye, Digil, Dir, Rahanweyn, Darod, and Isaaq. These clans occasionally viewed one another with suspicion or hostility. In this book, Dualeh's primary focus is on how Said Barre used inter-clan intrigues to split up the hitherto tranquil Somalia. Ethnic relations in Somalia are discussed by Schracder (1993: 13-17). He contends that the crisis in Somalia was not resolved by the toppling of the Said Barre regime.

The Hawiye made the error of unilaterally installing Ali Mohamed as president, which exacerbated the feudal dynamics. When the Somali National Movement (SNM) declared the former British Somaliland to be an independent territory to be known as the Somaliland Republic in May 1991, tensions between the Hawiye United Somali Congress (USC), the Isaq-dominated Somali National Movement (SNM), and the Ogaden-dominated Somali Peoples Movement (SPM) worsened. However, the inter clan fighting in Southern Somalia never stopped disturbing the tranquility. The breadth of the latter studies on Somalia was constrained. The two works were crucial in motivating and challenging future views on the gathering of empirical data in the field, nevertheless.

According to Mazrui (I969 a), occasionally the weight of precedent allowed for the resolution of disputes. For instance, the experience of prior conflicts among the ethnic groups in Kenya appears to have improved the

ability to identify points of commonality between them on later occasions of similar tensions. The author goes on to say that understanding reciprocal dependence may help societies with strained connections resolve disputes. Finally, Mazrui suggests that ethnic groups who may have been at odds with one another could resolve their differences through the development of a common philosophy.

Soja (1968:11) claims that when discussing ancient methods of resolving disputes in Kenya, groups of people who were linked to one another formed an appearance of togetherness as a result of links that did not follow traditional kinship patterns. Although links did not always preclude internal strife, the author continues, they did offer a framework for cooperative measures against external foes. Due to the likely pre-existence of cultural ties among residents of Kitui-Tana River counties, Soja's opinions were helpful to the study. A supra-ethnic value system is deemed necessary in Kenya by Aseka (1994:6-12) as a means of averting ethnic rivalries and mistrust. He contends that a supra-ethnic democratic philosophy would serve the interests, needs, expectations, objectives, and ideals of our country as a whole.

Similar ideas are held by Manundu (1994:10), who argues that people of different ethnic backgrounds in the nation should develop a feeling of community as a result of their shared economic, political, and cultural interests. Manundu goes on to say that once people had a sense of purpose and belonging, they wouldn't feel threatened by changes in wealth and power because more power equality between ethnic groups makes the nation a better place rather than causes conflict. The works of Aseka and Manundu helped this research search for social prophylaxis, which focused on more effective strategies to reduce inter-ethnic conflicts, suspicions, and tensions in the region.

Theoretical Framework

Inter-ethnic relations studies have traditionally relied on various methodologies to analyze the dynamics between communities. Modernization theory, for instance, views borders as means of separation and control, presupposing that African boundaries are extensions of Western European borders. This approach often marginalizes border communities and fails to consider their complex relationships. Similarly, the dependency and underdevelopment thesis emphasize the external economic forces that shape Africa’s development, focusing on the influence of industrially developed states. While insightful for understanding international relations, this theory was not useful for this study, as it overlooks the local dynamics between border communities. The Marxist theory, which focuses on class conflict, also proved unsuitable due to the absence of a strong class consciousness in the case of the Kamba and Somali communities.

In contrast, the study utilizes Constructivism and Social Interdependence theories, which offer a more relevant framework for understanding the Kamba-Somali relationship. Constructivism emphasizes the historical malleability of ethnic identities, recognizing that ethnicity is shaped by specific geographic and temporal conditions. This theory aligns with the study’s focus on migration, settlement, and interaction between the two communities. Social Interdependence theory, proposed by Harold Kelly and John Thibaut, explains that social exchanges between individuals or groups involve both benefits and costs, leading to either cooperation or conflict. This theory is particularly useful in examining how the socio-economic benefits and challenges arising from Kamba and Somali interactions shape their relationship over time, providing a deeper understanding of their historical and ongoing coexistence.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized both descriptive and historical research designs to gather and analyze data. Descriptive research was chosen due to its ability to collect qualitative data on people's views, beliefs, and behaviors,

while historical research provided a framework for analyzing the data with a focus on historical trends and changes. The study was conducted in the border zones of Kitui East Sub-County and Bura Sub-County, areas known for their high levels of interaction between the Kamba and Somali communities. The target population included individuals aged 65 years and above from both communities, with a sample size of 40 informants, equally divided between the Kamba and Somali groups. Snowball sampling was used to identify knowledgeable informants, and data was collected through structured oral interviews and archival research from the Kenya National Archives.

Data collection involved both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through oral interviews with the selected informants, while secondary data was sourced from published and unpublished works, including books, journal articles, and archival materials. The data was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis techniques to draw conclusions and identify key trends. Ethical considerations were central to the study, with approval obtained from relevant authorities, and participants were assured of confidentiality and informed consent. The researcher ensured that all data was handled with integrity, and the findings were based on reliable and verified sources, enhancing the authenticity and relevance of the study's conclusions.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS ON PRE-COLONIAL MOVEMENT, SETTLEMENT, AND SUBSEQUENT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KAMBA AND SOMALI COMMUNITIES BEFORE 1895

Migration and Settlement of the Kamba

Several narratives explain the origin of the Kamba. The Kamba creation narrative and folklore come first. The Kamba community holds that a man and a woman were created by their god, Mulungu, and that they were then placed on the rock Nzaui in Makueni County, where their footprints as well as the imprints of their livestock can still be seen today. These two gave birth and multiplied to form the Kamba community (Mutua, O.I.: 2023). According to Lambert (1992), the Galla population drove the Kamba, Kikuyu, and Embu from Shungwaya, which is located close to the Kenyan border with Somalia, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Munro (1975: 8) dismisses Lambert's claim by contending that no coastal tradition records Kamba, Kikuyu, or Embu's presence in Shungwaya. Lambert's account of Kamba migration lacks enough evidence and therefore it was not used to explain the migration of Kamba in this work. Additionally, Andrews proposes that the Kamba people and other eastern Bantu communities originated in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo and crossed the Tanzanian border to move to East Africa. Before continuing their migration to Kiima Kya Kyeu (White Mountain), they made their home near Mount Kilimanjaro in Makueni County. Those who remained at *Kiima Kya Kyeu* later moved to Chullu Hills in search of fertile land for cultivation. Chullu Hills was a grazing site for the Masai community and therefore, the Masai constantly attacked the Kamba. As a result of constant attacks from the Masai, the Kamba moved to Kibwezi, a place that experienced seasonal drought. Moreover, Kibwezi had poor soils that were not good for cultivation. In the nineteenth century, Kamba moved to Mbooni (Andrew, 1994, Mutua, O.I. 2023). Andrews's account of Kamba migration was the most reliable for this work.

As a result of permanent settlement in Mbooni, the Kamba population increased. The population pressure emerged at Mbooni and this forced both pastoral and agricultural Kamba people to move to other places including Machakos. From Machakos, the Kamba crossed the Athi River to Kitui in search of grazing and cultivation fields. Kamba people sub-divide themselves into three categories according to their differences in linguistics. Traditionally, the Kamba of Kitui were known as *Athaisu*. They were distinguished from the Kamba of Machakos by *kyathi* (sharpening of upper two teeth into spatulate form). They also spoke a local

variation of kikamba. For example, in Kitui they say *nzi* referring to the earth, and in Machakos, they say *nthi* (Ndeti, 1972). Kamba of Kitui shows different dialects from those of Machakos. Kitui East and Kitui West Kamba also show variations in dialects. Those of Kitui West have a distinct tendency towards the Kikuyu language, the letter 'r' is very much pronounced, a sound that the Kitui East natives find difficult to pronounce. Names such as *nzelu* become *nzeru* in the Kitui West. The Kamba of Kitui shows great differences from the Kamba of Machakos. Charles Dundas says that the Kamba of Machakos appear to look down upon those of Kitui regarding them as destitute of good customs. The Kamba had taken over numerous territories at the end of the 19th and the start of the 20th centuries, including Ulu, Makueni, Machakos, Kibwezi, and Kitui districts (Kioko, 2011: 1).

Those who settled in Kitui East crossed the Yatta plateau and Athi River and finally settled there after they found extensive land for settlement, grazing, and cultivation. The environment was suitable for hunting and gathering. The Kitui-East Kamba hunted *nzia* (Impala) and large game-like elephants and gathered fruits like *ndula* (Berries) and *matoo* (Mascadine) which supplemented their diet.

Social-Economic and Political Organization of the Pre-Colonial Kitui-East Kamba

People lived in villages (*motui*). Numerous *Motui* (villages) made up a *Kivalo* (place), which was typically established by the existence of physical features like a small hill, river, or stream. The greatest territorial group above the clan was known as *Kivalo* (place), and *atumia ma Kivalo* (complete elders) was in charge of it. Full elders had a mandate of delivering judgments. Each territorial group was supposed to produce *anake* (junior elders) who acted as warriors by defending the community against external attacks. Junior elders were also useful during famines and disasters as they were the ones who raided other communities for food and livestock (Munro,1975: 15).

The people of Kamba held the belief that there was a supernatural entity, or deity. They referred to their God by many names. Ngai Mumbi, the creator, was a great being whose strength was manifested in creation. He was also known as *Ngai Mwatuangi*, which means God who splits created beings' fingers, toes, eyes, and mouths (Francis, 2000:184). These terms were used to refer to him as *Ngai* or *Mulungu*, one ultimate being. Through the *aimu*, or ancestor spirits, who were placated by sacrifices and offerings, the Kamba prayed to God. The ceremonies were held at a location known as *ithembo*, which means "holy place." The rituals were presided over by ritual experts known as the *atumia ma mathembo* (senior elders) including *andu awe* (sorcerers) (Hobley, 1967: 58).

There existed also social grades among the pre-colonial Kamba. These included: child (*kana*), and little boy (*kavisi*). The uncircumcised youngster (*Kavisi*), the young girl (*Kelitu*), the married woman (*Kiveti*), the single warrior young man (*Mwanake*), the middle-aged married man (*Nzele*), and the old man (*Mutumia*) were all unmarried. *Mutumia* might participate in conversations on issues pertaining to communal operations and peace (Munro, 1975:15). Among the Kamba, graduation from *mwanake* to *nzele* was one of the most awaited grades. Any male deemed suitable for marriage by the *atumia ma nzama* was referred to as a *mwanake* (KNA/KTI/LNC/33/7/7/3/3). It was legal and customary for *mwanake* to be married and start a family under Kamba law. In the Kamba community, marriage was polygamous since a man would wed as many wives as he pleased, as long as he married outside of his clan and could support them and their offspring (Middleton, 1972). For the Kamba, marriage was a significant cultural custom. Payment of a dowry was necessary for a marriage to be complete. The majority of bridegrooms' social position was elevated by these gratuities.

The pre-capitalist Kamba's mode of production was heavily dependent on the labor and land supply. A maximum amount of honey production, hunting, grazing, and gardening were done on land. The Kamba

people farmed local crops. These consisted of pigeon peas, guavas, finger millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes, arrow roots, and pumpkins (Lindblom, 1920: 505). farming was characterized by the use of simple implements such as iron hoes that looked like a pointed stick called *mwoo*. *Mwoo* was used to make holes in the ground, seeds would be put in the holes and then covered the holes with the help of a foot (Mutunga, O.I. 2023). Pre-capitalists Kamba community had basic industries that characterized their economy. Such industries and art relied on locally available resources. Many Kamba people were skilled in woodcarving, basketry, and ceramics. During the long-distance trade, the sisal baskets which were adorned with leather strips were frequently utilized to transport goods. Kamba women and a few men made pots from black and red clay. (Hobley, 1971: 29). Most of the Kamba men specialized in wood carving. They would make different shapes for each age grade. For example, there were three-legged stools which were known as *tutumbi* or *katumb*i. Sometimes these stools had a string that enabled men to carry them on their shoulders wherever they went hunting or herding. This made it possible for men to sit when they got tired while on the fields. Women would use the stool to sit on when cooking (Mwikali, O.I. 2023).

Ironworking was another key practice among the Kamba community. Ironworking produced items such as arrows, bows, and swords which facilitated the hunting of large game like elephants. The Kamba people poisoned their arrows with *ivai* (poison) which was strong enough to kill an elephant (Muthiani, 1973: 69).

The Somali People

Kenyan Somalis are a subgroup of a much larger Cushitic people that live throughout practically all of Africa's Horn. Most people reside in what is now Somalia. In addition, the majority population in Djibouti, the northern regions of Kenya, and the Ogaden region of southeast Ethiopia is Somali. Their history begins around the year 1000 AD. The Somali people's oral traditions link their ancestry to the prophet Mohamed's family and contend that the Arabian Peninsula was their original home. However, historical, linguistic, and cultural evidence suggests that they originated in the southern highlands of modern-day Ethiopia (Schlee, Gunter, 1989).

The Digil clans, who speak a language different from that of the other Somali groups, represent the sole major divide within the single ethnic group known as the Somalis in the Horn of Africa. The Somali people believe that their shared profession of Islam, their mainly pastoral nomadic culture, and their common language are what bind them together. The Islamic faith was first embraced by the Somali people in the ninth century when it moved inland from the Arabian Peninsula along the Somali coast. The term "Somali" was originally recorded in an Ethiopian song from the fifteenth century, commemorating the triumphs of Negus Yeshaaq, the king of Abyss, during the holy battles against Islamic principalities. (Haakonsen, J. 1984).

The Kenyan Somali are predominantly found in the Northern parts of Kenya and Isiolo County. Somalis are, however, randomly distributed in almost all cities, towns, and trading centers in Kenya mainly in Eastleigh Nairobi. Here they are mainly engaged in small businesses, particularly hotels, butcheries, and retail shops. Perhaps due to their nomadic way of life, the Somalis tend to travel and move a lot (Maalim, O.I.2023).

Somali Expansion into the Northern Frontier District

Several postulations explain how the Somali community settled in present-day Northern Kenya. Lewis (1964) says that the Northern Kenya Somalis were inhabitants of present Somalia. In the 14th Century, the Sultan of Ifat, Haq ad-Din began a war of aggression against the Abyssinian "Unbelievers." The Muslims won the conflict in the beginning. At the point of the sword, Christians were forced to renounce their faith when Christian lands were conquered and churches destroyed. Lewis, however, claims that the Muslims were vanquished in 1415, and Haq ad-Din, their monarch, was hunted down and slain. Negus Yeshaq, the

Abyssinian king, oversaw this humiliating defeat. The Abyssinian victory dealt a severe blow to Somali Muslims who supported the Sultan of Ifat. According to Lewis, the Christians' victory against the Muslims blocked their path for further westward migration, pushing the Somali people ever southward in search of pasture and water for their cattle as well as a way out of the hands of the Ethiopian Christians. Somalis' southward movements after their defeat in the Abyssinian-Adal war led them to settle in present-day Northern Kenya.

Turton (1970) contends that Somali clans settled in Northern parts of present Somalia before they were forced to migrate southwards to escape from Ethiopian raiders. Their movements southwards were not easy for they faced fierce resistance from Oromo who had preceded them. When the Somali invaders came across a strong neighbor, it was preferable to curry favor rather than stir up conflict. As a result, the Somali clans consented to serve the Oromo people as clients. As a result, the Somali clans crossed the Tana River as Oromo allies after gaining their protection. The Oromo embraced the fresh backing from the Somali clans and utilized it to their benefit in their interactions with the Kamba and Masai people. The strength of Somali clans under the protection of the Oromo gradually increased. The Somali-Oromo alliance soon became apprehensive. During his visit to the southern Somali coast in 1865, French explorer Charles Gullain characterized the partnership between the Somali and the Galla as poisonous. With the passage of time, the Somali clans attacked their Galla hosts from all directions and put up a fierce battle with them. The Somali clans defeated the Galla community and took control of the northern regions of Kenya. According to Turton, the Somali tribes advanced as far south as the Tana River by 1909, bringing with them an estimated 50,000 animals. This work is nicely explained by Turton's account of Somali expansion into the northern parts of Kenya. (Turton, 1970, Mohamed, O.I.:2023).

The Social-economic and Political Organization of the Northern Kenya Somali

The Somalis have a decentralized society, with the political authority vested in lineage groups (Turton, 1970: 24). All Somali pastoralists are organized in units, commonly termed as lineage unit, clan unit, and family unit. These units are united by a bond of corporate to one's group unit (Lewis, 1964). Segmented patrilineages provide the foundation of the Somali people's social and political system. The major lineage, the clan, the sub-clan, the clan family, and the diya-paying group or *rer* are the five main levels of segmentation. The Somali people are divided into six primary clan families: Darod, Digil, Isaaq, Dir, Hawiye, and Rahanwein. There are three primary clans among the Darod. The Marehan, the Ogaden, and the Herti are these. Mohammed (1993: 45)

Since the clan family, which makes up the largest group in Somali culture, is too far dispersed to have any political relevance, the "*rer*" serves as the fundamental unit of political structure. All of these components of the society are founded on lineages. This unit is also known as the *diya* paying group. *Diya* is an Arabic word that is given about the blood money this group jointly pledges to pay or receive in case of homicide. Somali payment of the *diya* (blood wealth) occurred when a member of one Somali section physically harmed a member of another section. The practice alleviated tensions and therefore prevented extensive bloodshed. The amount payable was decided in a meeting of elders depending on the following variables: status of the person involved, whether or not the incident took place within the *diya* paying group, the size of sections included in the incident, the sex of the person, and whether or not the incident was accidental (Lewis 1961: 72-78). The joint or extended family with a three- or four-generation ancestry made up the *diya*-paying group. Through a contractual alliance, in which members agreed to help one another in accepting collective political and legal responsibility, the unity of this organization was preserved and protected. In this regard, paying blood money

and any other legal liabilities that might befall a specific group member was one of their most significant pledges. Because the *diya*-paying group served as the fundamental building block of Somali social life, its significance could not be overstated (M. Colunotta 1921: 15-17). It essentially kept the money of each member as a pawn or surety for their own and their colleagues' good behavior.

Every adult male member of the council, known as the "*shir*," was responsible for overseeing the *rer's* affairs. Among the elders, a headman was chosen, whose duties included overseeing the *rer's* internal operations and interactions with other like-minded groups. There was usually a main bloodline within the clan or sub-clan from which the headman (*Garad*), sometimes known as Sultan, was selected. As a result, the *rer* Ali was the primary section among the Aulihan, the *rer* Farah Ugus among the Marehan, the Yusuf Mahmud section of the *rer* Osman Mahmud among the Herti, and the *rer* Ugus section of the *rer* Hersi among the Muhammad Zubeir and the Ogaden. The Ogaden frequently used primogeniture in selecting the sub-clan headman, and most other clans occasionally did the same. However, in each case, a sub-clan or clan head would be selected from a particular family or lineage (Soli, 1927: 184, Lewis, 1955: 99).

In terms of politics, the sub-clan headman was in charge of preserving harmony between the groups that fell under his authority. In all the disputes over which he presided, he served as the official arbiter, and the elders-imposed fines and penalties on him. However, he was merely a *primus inter pares*, or senior, and was therefore powerless to take independent action. He was not a leader in politics; rather, he was a chairman. The sub-clan and the clan were both potential centers of political activity, but a corporate political organization might be said to function most broadly at the level of segmentation found in the clan. According to Lewis (1966), these broad political alliances did not have the same binding power as the *rer*.

The age-set system is practiced by the Somali clans. Age groups were made up of Somali youths arranged according to clan. There were two age groups with equal authority among the Darod. Two were selected, one from the Herti and the other from the Ogaden. The age group would transition to a new grade every eight years, and a new group made up of the youngest male adults would then be formed. An act of bravery on the part of the set that was about to be created could not change the disparaging titles given to new sets. There would be a leader for each set, who would answer to one of the two clan family heads (KNA/PC/NFD/4/6/1).

The age-set system's primary goal was to form a military unit that could more successfully unite the clan's fighting men than Somalia's segmentation system could. Oral accounts confirm that the leaders of the two age groups periodically questioned the sub-clan chiefs' authority in matters of politics, though it is unclear how much of an impact this practice had on politics. Furthermore, in order for the entire system to function, the head of the *rer* had to be selected from the senior group of the bone-breakers (*laf gebis*), the age group that had been initiated therewith (Mohamed, O.I. 2023). The Somali pastoralists have been defined along with the following peoples as pastoralists who pursue a pure form of pastoralism in northern Kenya. These are the Barabaig, the Boran, the Samburu, the Rendile, the Maasai, the pastoral Suk (pokot), and the Turkana (Gulliver, 1971: 377). As pure pastoralists, these groups are believed to have the ability to survive quite entirely on the products of their livestock. It is, however, worth noting here that there are groups of Somali clans who occupy different environmental conditions and therefore have different forms of occupation. For example, the Somali clans who live along Rivers, Juba, and Tana practice farming. The Northern Kenya Somalis purely depend on pastoralism (Lewis: 1962).

The pastoral Somali people of Northeastern Kenya used a herding strategy in their pastoral occupation. However, several resource factors determined the mobility of the Somali pastoralists in their daily quest for livestock herding. Among these were the availability of pastures and how these were related to water points.

The other was the type of livestock and their grazing habits. The grazing needs of the herds were also associated with the availability of salt licks. The need to escape from disease-infected areas was also another important factor that determined the mobility of the pastoralists. The type of livestock and their grazing habits gave in the case of the Somali pastoralists a rise of two distinct herding units. The first was composed of closely related family units. Under the care of these were the stocks that were meant to provide them with their subsistence needs. These were a few camels or cattle as well as sheep and goats. The unit under which the care of these stocks was entrusted was composed of one *rer* which represented members of an extended family. This unit did not cover long distances as the need to water sheep and goats, as well as cattle demanded that they travel in closer proximity to where water was available (Farah, 1993:62-63).

Although certain groups participated in trade more than others, it was another minor economic activity that the Somali nomads engaged in. For instance, although the Gurreh engaged in extensive trading, they saw themselves as nomads rather than traders. Somalis participated in both local and long-distance trading prior to colonization. The nomads too engaged in local trade, exchanging goods such as lox (a wooden writing instrument used for the Quran) and *hema* (a wooden container used for milk and water). The Somali pastoral group in Northern Kenya traded these goods for other goods including corn, salt, and dhurra (millet) from neighboring villages.

The trader was only separated from his family for a few weeks during local trading, which involved no outsiders and covered a maximum distance of four hundred kilometers. However, the majority of the luxury commodities involved in long-distance trading had to be obtained from the coast of East Africa, meaning that the nomads could have to spend up to four months away from his family. Gold, Chinese pottery, and other oriental commodities that were accessible along the shore were among the goods traded. The Somali delivered goods to the coastal traders, including ivory, cattle, hides, ghee, and slaves from Galla and Bantu (Lewis, 1992).

Kamba-Somali Relations Before 1895

Relations between Kamba of Kitui and the Somali of Northeastern Kenya have evolved over a long period of time, subjecting the two peoples to adopt cultural values and economic institutions of each other. These relations were active even before the advent of colonial rule in Kenya. These relations have been defined, refined, and transformed in response to the dictates of time and need.

The relationship between the Somali of Northeastern Kenya and the Kamba of Kitui was greatly influenced by geography. Throughout their history of migration and eventual settlement, the Kamba went for environmental conditions that were suitable for mixed economy. They carried out crop and animal husbandry. On the other hand, the Somali moved in constant search for water and pasture for their livestock. It is this movement that brought them into close contact with the Kamba for a long time. The relations came to be dictated by the demand for consumption goods outside each community's area. Food items that were not found in a particular area were obtained from the neighboring community. Oral sources attest to the fact that most Kamba people produced plenty of cassava, millet, sorghum, and animal products like milk and meat. At the same time, the Kamba never kept camels. The Kamba therefore depended on the Somali people for camel products like camel milk and meat which were said to be of higher nutritional value than the cattle and goats. To supplement their diet, the Somali would get grain food from the Kamba farmers since Somali of Northeastern Kenya pastoralists never practiced farming (Nzole, O.I. 2023).

During the pre-colonial period, there existed no clear territorial distinctions between the two communities. They interacted without fear of encroaching on the other communities' boundaries the way it came to be in the

colonial period. Boundaries were hardly ever marked by signs indicating the route of an imaginary line. Boundaries were determined either in terms of zones within which certain language was spoken, in terms of neighboring groups, and the relationships that existed between them. The Africans spoke of where his people met with their neighboring people on land, where they shared the earth, and not where they separated (Marshall, 1968: 6). This kind of life enabled people to spill or overlap legitimately into their neighbor's territory unlike in the colonial period. Neighboring communities would trade together, borrow cultural practices, and form social groups. The Kamba of Kitui would cross to Northern Kenya Somali territories and vice versa without causing disputes. These two communities shared hunting and herding zones like Engamba and Endau forests. Many uninhabited areas in Kitui East and Northern Kenya were shared by the two communities. The uninhabited areas were used for hunting, herding, honey harvesting, and fruit gathering by both communities. Their relationship was cordial and conflicts rarely occurred (Omar, O.I. 2023).

Initiation symbolized a passage from a junior to a senior status in society. The passage marked a change from childhood, weakness, and cowardice to a higher plane of manliness, maturity, and courage. This was the clear meaning of circumcision in the two communities. (Saadia, O.I. 2023; Nzole,O.I. 2023) confirms that the biannual timings of initiation involved several members from both communities. During initiation ceremonies, the Kamba of Kitui would invite the Somali of Northeastern Kenya as a sign of friendship and good neighborliness. Clan elders from both communities met during initiation ceremonies to negotiate the best ways of ensuring that the two neighbors lived in harmony. A middle-aged man conducted the circumcision, keeping women out of sight and away from the homestead. Women were prohibited from entering the area while the procedure was underway. (Cerulli, 1923: 105-108).

The Kamba of Kitui and the Somali of Northeastern Kenya had also developed friendly relations in pre-colonial times through hunting and trade. The establishment of settlements in the eastern sections of Kitui came at a time when long-distance trade and merchants had expanded their activities on the major route that ran through the area to the north. The northern regions had become the most important center for elephant hunting and ivory trade. Nzioki (1982) describes two main routes that were followed by traders from these two communities. One was to push up through Kikuyu land, then down the Rift Valley, and through Nandi land to the regions around Lake Victoria. The second route went first to Kitui then through Meru land to the country round Mount Kenya. Traders sometimes went towards Lake Turkana. Lindblom (1920) contents that since the eighteenth century, the Kamba from the Kitui district traveled widely before the advent of the British administration to hunt elephants. The Kamba played a major role in the pre-colonial ivory trade as well as the Somali people. Both communities were part of the network that sold game products to Asians along the coast. Most of these traders were employed by firms based in Scinde, Karachi, Bombay, and Kathiawar and they satisfied the demand in Asia for various trophy items (Beachy, 1967: 277).

Drought, famine, and diseases fueled conflicts between the Kitui East Kamba and the Northern Kenya Somali clans. In the time of drought, there was a shortage of water and grazing pasture. Both communities relied on the Tana River and Enziu River as the main sources of water. The Kitui East Kamba had dug wells along the Enziu River which they would use when the river dried up since it was a seasonal river. Time and again, the Kitui East Kamba would excuse their fellow Somali pastoralists to water their animals in those wells but at a certain fee. Mweu confirms that such practice would never end peacefully. This was because the Somali nomads would water more animals than agreed upon with the well owners. They would at other times water their animals from other wells that they had not been permitted to use. On the other hand, the Kitui East Kamba would at times lend the wells to the Somali people but after realizing that rains had delayed and that

drought would continue for a longer period, they would unite and chase the Somali pastoralists away therefore breaking their agreement. Such actions ended up in ethnic conflicts. Once these communities had disagreements, elders from both sides would meet and settle the disputes (Mwikya, O.I. 2023).

The most important institution within the political structure of the two communities was the Council of Elders. The role of these elders was, however, not really to rule but to mediate disputes and identify common concerns among various groups or individuals, different lineages, villages, competing leaders, age groups, and particular economic interests. Expulsion from the group was the final penalty for adhering to the Council of Elders' judgments. In the event that a man committed a transgression and fled rather than face the penalty, the elders would methodically oversee the theft of his belongings. Feasting at the offender's expense was a common way for the elders to extract in kind fines for violations of tradition and protocol. An agreement between the two groups of elders was accepted by their people without question or complaint (Maalim, O.I. 2023, Mutua, O.I. 2023).

COLONIALISM, COLONIAL POLICIES, AND THE KAMBA-SOMALI RELATIONS 1895-1938

Establishment of Colonial Rule in Ukambani

The arrival of Europeans in the Kamba region was anticipated due to a prophecy by a Kamba Prophetess named Syokimau. She foresaw the building of the Kenya-Uganda railway as well as the entrance of white immigrants. According to her vision, she described a long snake emitting fire and smoke as it traversed bodies of water. Within this vision were individuals with skin resembling raw meat, speaking unintelligibly like birds, and carrying fire in their pockets. This prophecy came true with the completion of the Kenya-Uganda railway in the 20th century, which linked Mombasa with Kisumu (then known as Port Florence). These individuals she foresaw were the English-speaking white settlers carrying matchboxes.

The first recorded white individual to visit Ukambani was a missionary named Dr. Ludwig Krapf in 1849. Subsequently, in 1892, George Leith was dispatched to Machakos as a British administrator, though he was later driven away by the Kamba and replaced by John Ainsworth in the same year. Following a peaceful reconciliation between the Europeans and the Kamba, the colonial government established a permanent base in Machakos to establish a firm political presence.

In 1908, Charles Dundas was dispatched to Kitui as a British administrator. Initially assigned to address elephant poaching in Mumoni, he later relocated to Kitui town to serve as an administrator. Later, another British administrator, Charles William Hobley, arrived in Kitui after the provincial commissioner ordered him there for a government inspection, and he decided to stay. John Ainsworth made his first long trip to Kitui in the early months of 1895 and made his home there with Chief Kivoi's help. Ainsworth was later appointed as the district commissioner of Kitui. It was during Dundas's tenure in Kitui that the colonial government augmented the number of Europeans from one to three, thus bolstering European control in the region. The establishment of colonial rule in Ukambani occurred amidst the Kamba's successful attacks on neighboring Oromo and Masai tribes, alongside their expanding trade with the coast. According to Dundas, (1955), the British administration sought to curb poaching and the Kamba's long-distance trade. These disruptions caused by the Europeans swiftly prompted resistance among the Kamba of Kitui.

Nzole, (2023) asserts that the Kamba of Kitui were unwilling to halt the ivory trade, comply with game laws, or accept colonial authority. Consequently, many Kamba migrated from central Kitui to the southern and eastern regions. Before long, Kitui district was plagued by epidemics and famines, beginning with locust swarms in 1897-1898 followed by famine in 1898-1899. This period witnessed widespread environmental degradation that adversely affected the Kamba's means of production. Famine led to the destruction of forests

and wildlife, while livestock succumbed to diseases, posing threats to Kamba's survival. These hardships forced the Kamba of Kitui to seek relief food and water from colonial government centers. Ainsworth (1955: 15) notes that Kitui district was severely affected by famine and had to rely on relief food from Nairobi and Machakos. Ultimately, the Kamba of Kitui had to submit to colonial rule for survival.

Establishment of Colonial Rule in the Northern Frontier District

The British gradually extended their influence into the territories of African peoples, including northeastern Kenya. By the time the East Africa Protectorate was established in 1895, diplomatic agreements had resolved the threat of competing European interests in the region, particularly in the Trans-Juba area. The Anglo-German agreement of 1890 and the Anglo-Italian protocol of 24 March 1891 were signed in order to accomplish this.

The East Africa Protectorate was ruled by Sir James H. Sadler from 1905 to 1909, but the colonial authorities were unable to set up a functioning administration in the frontier, with only sporadic efforts made by the Boma Trading Company. Opportunities for trade and commercial relations in the Northern Frontier were left largely untapped. Furthermore, the situation deteriorated as Somalis from east of the Juba River began moving westward, and Ethiopian subjects conducted cross-border raids (Lewis, 1965). From the British perspective, the situation with the northern Kenya Somalis became precarious in 1909 when around ten thousand Somalis, accompanied by herds in need of water, migrated along the Tana River and remained there until the following year's *guu* (long rains). (Lewis, 1965: 30).

In 1909, with the appointment of Sir Percy Girouard as colonial governor, there was disagreement among officials within the colonial administration of the East Africa Protectorate regarding the appropriate policy for the Northern Frontier. A military solution was suggested by Colonel George Thesiger, the inspector general of the King's African Rifles (KAR) at the time, while John Hope, a British administrator in the area, suggested a prudent plan with few troops. Despite being an impractical blend of expansion and passivity, Hope's proposal offered the crucial advantage of limiting military interventions and thus became the preferred policy under the new Governor. Consequently, in 1909, the arid and barren wilderness was formally integrated into the East Africa Protectorate and officially designated as the Northern Frontier District. Over the next five years, British colonial officials sought to maintain peace on the frontier by adhering to this policy (C.O.533/54/6401).

Between October and December 1911, Colonel Thesiger embarked on an official tour of the Northern Frontier District (NFD) during which he assessed the potential for significant military challenges. He cautioned that there was a risk of a complete breakdown if the colonial administration persisted in what he viewed as a misguided policy of passive observation. But that year, with significant troop cuts for the King's African Rifles (KAR), the British found it more difficult to use the military to impose imperial power. Despite Thesiger's warnings, the colonial administration took no action.

A third option for the district emerged, suggesting British withdrawal from the region, although this idea was never seriously considered due to concerns that it would tarnish colonial prestige. Additionally, withdrawal was deemed impractical due to the colonial focus on the white highlands, with fears that tribal conflicts could spill over into areas inhabited by Europeans. (Hickey, 1913: 21). Various Somali clans in northeastern Kenya engaged in active resistance against British colonial rule at different times. For instance, Mohamed Zubeir resisted from 1899 to 1903, the Marehan clan resisted from 1910 to 1913, and the Auliyahan clan resisted from 1915 to 1917 (KNA/PC/NFD/4/6/1: 1915). The British had to suppress the Somali clans by dispatching several expeditions to the frontier. Eventually, the Somali clans came to the realization that the British possessed overwhelming power, leading to their surrender to British rule in northern Kenya. (Touval, 1955).

Colonial Land Policies and their Impact on Kamba-Somali Relations

In 1894, the Indian Land Act was extended to the East African Protectorate by the British administration to facilitate the acquisition of land for public projects, and it was implemented in 1896. With this extension, public use of mainland lands beyond Mombasa was permitted, provided that it remained within a mile of either side of the railway line. The colonial office then suggested to the foreign office in 1896 that a land commission be established in order to distinguish between native and crown property. The East African Order in Council of 1901 was issued as a result of the report prepared by legal specialists from the foreign office.

Crown lands in the Kenyan protectorate were placed under the commissioner's and general council's jurisdiction by the East Africa Land Order in Council of 1901, which was held in trust for the Queen of England. Crown land was defined by the decree as all public lands under His Majesty's jurisdiction within the East African protectorate. The commissioner was authorized by this law to sell, grant, or lease crown land for any reasonable duration, subject to the Secretary of State's directions (Kanyinga, 1998; Sorrenson, 1968).

The Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902, which replaced the East African Order-in-Council of 1901 and brought more precise land regulations, was a major advancement in land expropriation in Kenya. By permitting the ownership of interest principle to be applied to the allocation of vast tracts of land to settlers, this law made it easier for Europeans to settle in Kenya. For a span of ninety-nine years, land previously held by Africans was transferred to Europeans. The Crown Land Ordinance of 1915 superseded the 1902 version, declaring that the governor had the power to alienate any area inside the protectorate because it was Crown land. It explicitly prohibited non-Europeans from purchasing or leasing land originally contracted or leased by European owners. Europeans were the only ones allowed to possess land, and lease terms were increased from ninety-nine to nine hundred and ninety-nine years (Boahan, 1985). A Crown Land Ordinance that was introduced in 1925 gave the Governor the power to set aside any Crown land that was thought to be required for the colony's use. According to Kanyinga (2000), this legislation designated all undeveloped and unclaimed territory inside the protectorate as Crown territory, which the governor could dispose of.

`The designation of the Yatta plateau and other traditional grazing areas like Engamba and Endau as crown lands in 1902 had devastating consequences for the Kamba of Kitui and the Somali pastoralists of north eastern Kenya. With grazing land becoming restricted, conflicts and raids escalated between these two pastoral communities (Abdul, O.I. 2023).

Quarantine as a Key Constraint to Kamba-Somali Relations

Colonial policies in pastoral regions were grounded in the belief that pastoralists were unproductive and hindered the development of the colonial economy, as outlined by Mutiso, 1977. Colonial administrators perceived pastoralists as practicing poor land utilization, leading them to conclude that the solution laid in inviting foreign settlers who would make more efficient use of the land. In July 1899, Ainsworth recommended to his superiors that Indian farmers be brought in to increase agricultural productivity in the province of Ukambani, which is pastoral. During this time, Sir Charles Elliot, who was the Commissioner of the East Africa Protectorate and a well-known supporter of European colonization in Kenya, voiced his misgivings over the possible benefits of having a poor rural population using traditional farming practices. He openly criticized African modes of production, particularly pastoralism (Wolf, 1974: 66).

Given the colonial administration's negative view of pastoralism, policies were devised with the aim of halting pastoral practices. The colonial state encouraged more white settlers to establish ranches, effectively fencing native pastoralists out of prime grazing lands. Europeans feared that native livestock could transmit diseases to their own livestock, leading to the imposition of quarantines in pastoralist areas. Consequently, pastoralist

movements were restricted, resulting in Ukambani and the northern parts of Kenya being subjected to livestock quarantines (Mutiso, 1977).

Between 1922 and 1938, two major changes reshaped the structure of the livestock trade. Firstly, in 1922, the introduction of cattle quarantine stations, such as the one opened in Isiolo in the NFD, prohibited the export of cattle from quarantine zones. Secondly, monopolistic government livestock agencies were established, such as the Livestock Control Agency and the Meat Marketing Board. These agencies monopolized livestock sales, dictating when, where, to whom, and at what price nomads could sell their livestock. These agencies operated with significant control and influence, compelling livestock owners in northern Kenya to sell their stock to them (KNA/PC/NFD/2/1/3).

The colonial government prioritized the interests of European farmers over eradicating livestock diseases in reserves. There was a lack of serious effort to develop the native livestock market. For example, in 1938, there were only three veterinary scouts and one stock inspector responsible for the entire northern Kenya region (KNA/PC/NFD/1/7/3: 1938). Without adequate resources and expertise, livestock trade from pastoral areas was likely to struggle. Moreover, the quarantine of livestock had further consequences. Prolonged overcrowding of livestock in reserves increased the risk of disease spread, overgrazing, and ultimately the death of livestock.

The introduction of the Stock Traders License (STL) under the 1918 ordinance posed another challenge to livestock trade. According to this regulation, all traders were mandated to obtain this license, priced at Rupees 500 per license, a significant sum for the already financially strained pastoralists (KNA/PC/NFD/2/1/2: 1921). The STL ordinance and subsequent amendments aimed to control access to the Northern Frontier District (NFD), barring livestock traders from Kitui District from entering the NFD. Over time, this law underwent two amendments, eventually requiring both traders and their agents to possess licenses by 1921. Consequently, this ordinance effectively reduced the number of traders willing to participate in livestock trade.

The combination of quarantine measures, restricted mobility, and the high financial burden of obtaining licenses contributed to the stagnation of livestock trade in both Kitui and the Northern Frontier Districts, as evident from the data.

Table 1: Cattle Export from NFD 1926-1937

Year	No. of Cattle
1927	Nil
1928	Nil
1929	Nil
1930	Nil
1931	Nil
1932	Nil
1933	Nil
1934	Nil
1935	Nil
1936	679
1937	768

To counter the obstacles posed by quarantine measures, restricted mobility, and fixed prices, which had hindered trade between the Kamba and Somali communities, these groups attempted to establish clandestine markets. These markets were strategically located in areas inaccessible to administrative vehicles due to poor

road infrastructure. Examples of such markets included Malalani and Nuu markets in Kitui east, as documented in a letter addressed to the officer-in-charge in Isiolo (DC/Garissa/2/2/1/3, Kilinge O.I. 2023). Despite their efforts, the colonial authorities actively discouraged these markets from thriving by outlawing them and imposing penalties on those caught engaging in trade activities. This action was driven by the colonial administration's self-serving agenda, aimed at protecting the interests of European farmers, even though the trade could have potentially alleviated the strain on livestock quarantines through sales. Throughout this period, there were no reported conflicts or livestock raids between the Kamba of Kitui and the Somali communities in Northeastern Kenya.

Imposition of Taxation and its Impact on Kamba-Somali Relations

Before colonial influence, African society operated under a communal system where land was collectively owned. In most ethnic groups, a portion of the produce from various activities, including agriculture, trade, or gifts, was required to be contributed to the community leaders. This contribution, known as tithes, was expected from both local and foreign traders, especially those involved in activities like ivory and slave trading (Kwatemba, 2005: 3). The tithe was typically reasonable and, during times of famine, community leaders and successful farmers would distribute food to those affected by famine (Warris, 2017: 15).

Upon declaring Kenya a protectorate, and later a colony in 1920, the British government introduced tax policies with several objectives. Firstly, to finance its economy by establishing foreign markets and acquiring raw materials for its industries. Secondly, as part of a deliberate policy to colonize Africa by transitioning from co-existence to territorial control. Thirdly, to secure cheap African labor by gradually moving locals away from subsistence living (Warris, 2007: 6).

In line with these objectives, the British government initiated the application of tax laws in Kenya through the imposition of the hut and poll taxes. The hut tax, introduced in 1901, required African males to pay a fee based on the number of houses they owned. However, on realizing that many males were exempted from this tax, a poll tax was introduced in 1910, requiring all males above the age of sixteen to pay tax to the government. The colonial government aimed to create a need for money among males who previously did not require it to pay taxes (Nyakwaka, 2013: 49).

The gradual economic changes initiated by the colonial government compelled the Kamba of Kitui to seek colonial employment to meet their tax and other financial obligations. Rising material desires, increasing bride wealth costs, the introduction of hut and poll taxes, and diminishing land availability prompted a growing interest in money and wage labour among the Kamba. Consequently, they entered the labour market selectively, with complaints from the District Commissioner of Kitui about their reluctance to engage in government projects and settler farms throughout the decade (KNA/DC/KTI/1/1/4: 1933).

In contrast, the north eastern Kenya Somali people took longer to adapt to colonial taxation policies. The Somalis resisted paying taxes in cash until 1930 when stringent legislation was enacted for Somali-inhabited areas. Mr. Glenday said on September 1st, 1930, that every adult Somali would have to pay a set amount of ten shillings annually in cash beginning in January 1931. The Somalis were given a grace period of four months to determine whether or not to comply (KNA/PC/NFD/2/1/1: 1928). Non-compliance with the NFD poll tax policy could result in imprisonment or fines (KNA/PC/NFD/2/1/1: 1934).

Table 2: Tax Revenues in NFD (1931-1935)

Year	Amount of Tax Collected
1931	5782
1932	6264
1933	6573
1934	7530
1935	6784

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The table below shows the amount of taxes collected in Kitui District between 1901 and 1910

Table 3: Taxes Collected in Kitui District between 1901 and 1910

Year	Amount of Tax Collected
1901-1902	1501
1902-1903	16073
1903-1904	23,618
1904-1905	50,352
1905-1906	46,436
1906-1907	71,437
1907-1908	71,811
1908-1909	71,826
1909-1910	88,002

Source KNA/DC/KTI/1/1/1: 1918

Taxation in Kitui district steadily increased over time, compelling residents to abandon their traditional modes of production and provide what was essentially cheap labor to meet tax obligations, which primarily benefited European colonialists at the expense of the indigenous population.

In the NFD, tax collection by chiefs faced resistance, particularly from nomadic pastoralists who were hesitant to pay. Defaulters, predominantly Somalis, frequently moved in search of grazing and water for their livestock, leading to inconsistency in tax payments compared to the Kamba of Kitui (KNA/PC/NFD/8/1/2: 1946).

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND DECOLONIZATION ON KAMBA – SOMALI RELATIONS, 1939 – 1963

Recruitment and Service of Kamba of Kitui East and North eastern Kenya Somalis to the Kings African Rifle

Interethnic ties between the Somalis of North Eastern Kenya and the Kitui East Kamba were significantly impacted by the Second World War. Pioneer corps were being recruited in the Northern Frontier District and Ukambani by 1939. The ruthless colonial chiefs were in charge of recruiting. The Kamba and Somali people first refused to enlist in the military. Many held vivid recollections of the First World War, despite a gap of around two decades. They refused to endure the same situation (Mutua, O.I. 2023). The outbreak of war in 1939 required a significant increase in military officers. This demand generated tension among Kenyan communities and white settlers in Kenya. On the one hand, the white settlers were not willing to leave their farms to go and fight a war in Europe and they feared that they would be forced to join the army. They also worried that a labor scarcity would result from all of their finest employees joining the military. On the other hand, African communities were not willing to join the army. They were aware of the tricks that the Europeans

had used during the First World War to recruit them to the army and so there was a lot of suspicion, tension and fear among Kenya communities like the Kamba and the Somali during this period (Parsons, 1999).

British colonial officials in Kenya considered the Kamba to be the premier martial race in Africa. They were known to be accomplished fighters and hunters who were praised for their skill of using bows and poisoned arrows. Despite this, the first British recruiters for Kings African Rifle were not particularly impressed with them instead preferring to rely on Sudanese soldiers (Mazrui, 1977). On the other hand, the Kamba had scant interest in military service and little need for money or wage labor. Variables such as economic transformations and growing demand for soldiers to fight in the war made the Kamba people to change their attitude towards military service.

In early 1940, the Somali and the Kamba peoples began to join the military in large numbers. Many factors combined to make military job attractive to Kamba and Somali communities. Excessive pay and the assurance of pensions communicated hopes for both immediate and long-term financial stability. The societal implications of KAR service were also effective in drawing in new members. Becoming a member of the KAR was considered a way to progress and it gave soldiers a certain social status. In 1940, troops received exemptions from paying the head tax and from other civil legal procedures, such as being arrested for small-time offenses and debts. (Christopher, 1945: 12). In a similar vein, colonial authorities respected police officers more than they did the citizens. The Kamba and Somali people were interested in money and wage labor due to the imposition of hut and poll taxes and the increasing scarcity of land. The KAR swiftly gained the favor of the Kamba and Somali people by offering these necessities together with a stable salary.

In June 1940 monthly rates of pay in the KAR were,

Table 4: Monthly Pay Rates in June 1940 in KAR

Rank	Shillings
Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM)	120
Command Sergeant Major (CSM)	90
Sergeant	64
Corporal	40
Private Askari	28
Recruit Askari	20

Source: Warner, (1985)

Domestic helpers and agricultural laborers were not entitled to the same rations and benefits as police officers. Agricultural pay, on the other hand, were from 10 to 15 Shillings per month.

It was largely young, physically fit males who were in demand for military duty. The chiefs located the houses of these young people, apprehended them, and transported them to labor recruiting offices. Certain individuals were transported from their educational institution onto military vehicles under the pretext of being transported to their workplace, only to arrive at military boot camps (Zeleka, 1989: 146). Upon entering the training base, the prospective soldiers underwent medical examinations and basic physical fitness tests. These tests included the capacity to run or jump over a fence, have sharp vision, close one eye independently of the other, and have a disability check. Those with visual impairments found it difficult to utilize rifles effectively. The right fore fingers were also examined, but in this instance, at least one enthusiastic recruit managed to get through and discovered that he could shoot his gun using his middle finger instead of his missing finger.

The Second World War strengthened African resistance to colonial control and provided a strong boost to

political nationalism throughout the continent generally. Strong African nationalism was cultivated as a result of the struggle, and all Africans shared the desire to fight for their liberation. During World War II, African Americans gained valuable experience in collaboration and communication skills. Africans realized that their continent's lack of unity was one of the main reasons European nations colonized them. African nations were frequently engaged in internal conflict while also thwarting European imperialism during the early years of European colonization.

The Ukamba Members Association was established by the Kamba to express their complaints by the time political parties were outlawed. A number of resolutions has been approved by UMA members. They claimed that overstocking was to blame for soil degradation in the Kitui and Machakos regions, and they were against the colonial policy of de-stocking. They also battled for Kamba's liberties and rights while opposing high taxes. Prior to 1939, the Somalis in North Eastern Kenya did not organize into any political organizations.

KAU was established shortly before the Second World War came to a conclusion. On October 1, 1944, KAU was established, with seasoned political figure Harry Thuku serving as its president. Simeon Mulandi, who represented the Ukambani region, was one of the seven members of the representative committee at KAU. KAU's objectives included promoting the social and economic advancement of Kenyan Africans and fostering their togetherness (Sifuna 1990). KAU stood for the unified nationalistic front of Kenyan tribes that want their territories back and political representation in the government.

KAU conducted numerous events in Ukambani and other regions of Kenya, however the party did not receive many points. Any political movement in Kenya would have been nearly impossible to flourish under the oppressive policies imposed by the colonial government. Its primary goal was to exclude any united constituency inside the community that may pose a threat to its hegemony. In the end, KAU was outlawed on June 8, 1953. The governor declared that KAU would never be allowed to operate in Kenya again and that going forward, the government would only let local associations that genuinely and reasonably served the interests of their people (Shiroya 1972: 4). As each group reoriented its districts in accordance with colonial needs, the development of broad-based ties between Kamba and Somali people was hindered by the relegation of African politics to the district levels.

The Horn of Africa's Somali Youth League sought to bring all Somalis together. Branch offices of SYL were established in Wajir, Mandera, and Isiolo at the start of 1947. Later on, other branches were established at Marsabit, Moyale, and Garissa (KNA. NPC/NFD/1/1/9). The NFD Somali fought to become a part of Somalia. The SYL members wore horns with the moon and five stars carved inside as a distinctive method to identify themselves. This was dubbed "Hilaal," and the five stars stood for the five Somali regions that were partitioned, including NFD (Tauval, 1963).

The relations between Kamba and Somali people in Kenya from 1944 to 1952 were characterized by the division between the two communities. The colonial administration rigidified ethnicity by first drawing administrative units and secondly, ensuring that political parties were ethnically based. The Kamba therefore perceived the Somali as foreigners whenever they were found in their locations. The division between the two communities was again experienced when the Kamba joined the KAU and the northern Kenya Somalis joined the SYL. SYL was banned in 1948 and KAU was banned in 1953.

Following the start of the Mau Mau activities among the Kikuyu and their expansion to other regions of the colony, including Ukambani, the KAU was banned. Kenyans' nationalistic views made it easier for various communities to come together and work together. As a result, there existed a determined, combative group of

liberation fighters whose only goal was to remove the white minority from power. This group of nationalists knew that the colonial state could not understand any other language except the military one. The British policymakers believed that Kenyans were inferior and incapable of becoming a serious military threat. According to Kulu (O.I.2023), the Kenyans' capacity to uphold tribal allegiance was the reason the British misjudged the Mau Mau. He goes on to say that nationalists were inspired to unite and defend their nation by British arrogance and the notion that the Mau Mau was a motley crew of jungle fighters. An increasing number of Kenyans joined the Mau Mau struggle as their confidence increased. Africans, particularly those from the Kikuyu territory, who had lost hope in using constitutional means to fight for independence, were the main forces behind the creation and expansion of the Mau Mau (Ogot, 1972: 89).

On October 20, 1952, Sir Everlyn Baring proclaimed a state of emergency in an effort to stop Mau Mau operations. As a result, several African leaders were detained and accused of leading and controlling the Mau Mau, including Jomo Kenyatta, Paul Ngei, Ramogi, Achieng Oneko, Bildad Kagia, and Fred Kubai. To stop the movement from spreading, more harsh measures were implemented. The colony's governor was forced to request the presence of further British army units. The government's fear of a connection between KAU and Mau Mau led to the warning and rounding of former KAU politicians nationwide. (Hal Brands, 2005).

Despite government's restrictions, Mau Mau had some success in recruiting Kamba of Kitui East into the movement. In 1953, there was a reported influx of the Kamba joining the Mau Mau in the reserves. The colonial government was compelled by this to establish the East Ukamba police force. The authorities effectively cut off the Kitui district from Mau Mau in this way. Later, in 1954, the government established an east Ukamba Home Guard force, which included farm guards in addition to those armed with bows and arrows (KNA/MAA/7/250: 1954).

The government employed the tried-and-true strategy of "divide and rule" in an effort to drive the Kamba and Kikuyu apart. The British administration made sure that the Kamba reserves did not physically border Kikuyu territory. The state shifted Kitui to the newly established Southern Province in September 1953, removing it from the central province that it shared with the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru (KNA/PC/SP/1:1953). In addition, the state, through the employment of the army, forbade Kamba police from getting married to Kikuyu women and prevented those who had married them from taking their spouses home, as these women needed to be quarantined similarly to animals that had hoof-and-mouth disease. (KNA/DC/MKS/2/16/5/364: 1956).

The colonial administration in Kenya undertook numerous programs aimed at reinforcing Kamba's loyalty to the government (Osborne, 2014: 204). In 1954, it was the catalyst for the founding of the Kamba Association (AA). The objective was to bring the Kamba tribe together and to offer social services to those who worked outside of Kitui and Machakos (KNA/DC/KT1/1/11; 1954). Men from Ukambani whose loyalty to the government was beyond question were brought in to assist in the running of AA. Despite all the efforts employed by the AA, its impact was very minimal as their first meeting did not take place until 15 Jan 1955, when Mau Mau was in recession (KNA/DC/KTI/1/11:1954).

Following the ban of Mau Mau and the SYL, there was a Kind of political vacuum in the period from 1953 and 1960. Leaders of Mau Mau and SYL had been detained and others exiled. Following the Emergency in Kenya on January 12, 1960, Kenya's struggle for independence continued. NFD question took center stage too. During the first and second Lancaster House conferences in the 1960s, these kinds of conversations took place. The construction of an African elected administration was one of the many demands made by the African elected members, along with the liberation of Kenyatta and other political prisoners. The inaugural Lancaster House meeting took place in 1960, and it was then that 37 out of 65 Legco seats were awarded to

Africans. This was followed by the lifting of the seven-year state of emergency and the allowing of Africans to form nationwide political parties. Like other political processes before this period, the formation of political developments took place against the will of the authoritarian colonial state. The Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and the Kenya African National Union (KANU) were born out of these realities (Ogot, 1972).

The two national parties had almost a similar agenda regarding independence. The issues of safeguarding ethnic and regional interests within the umbrella of the future Kenyan state raised a major point of conflict. The contentious issue between the parties on the applicability of either a unitary or federal constitution for independent Kenya reached its high point at the second Lancaster conference held in February 1962 (Maloba, 1989: 52). The Kamba and Somali communities in Kenya identified themselves with KADU whose main concern was for the interest of the so-called 'small communities. Leading the charge were Ronald Ngala, Masinde Muliro, and Daniel Arap Moi, who advocated for the creation of regional governments (*Majimbo*) in place of the Westminster model unitary state that KANU supported, claiming that the latter would consolidate power in the hands of the majority party.

If KADU gained power, it would guarantee internal autonomy to the Somalis residing in northern Kenya. The Somali and Kamba groups in Kenya were polarized, distrusting, and hostile toward one another under KADU rule. After reaching a settlement during the second Lancaster House conference, KANU and KADU decided to establish a coalition in order to prepare for the general election that KANU won in May 1963. The Kamba through their representative Paul Ngei welcomed KANUs win and were set to form government under the leadership of Kenyatta. On the other hand, Somalis of Northern Kenya refused to participate in the May elections in their push to be allowed to join Somalia. On June 1, 1963, Kenyatta took office as prime minister, and on December 12, 1963, the country gained independence. The Somalis of northern Kenya were gearing up for a conflict that would force them to join Somalia, while the Kamba and other groups celebrated their independence.

The Second World War caused significant economic disruptions and shifts. For the Kamba, their involvement in the war effort brought some economic benefits to them. Many Kamba soldiers returned with new skills, monetary savings, and broad worldwide view, which they invested in their community. The British rewarded loyal service with development and educational opportunities in the Kamba region furthering economic development. On the other hand, the Somali community faced economic hardship due to the war.

The colonial administration did not support any form of economic development in the Somali region. The colonial administration-imposed restrictions on livestock movement and trade, which were critical to the Somali pastoral economy. Additionally, the British military presence and operations in Northern Kenya disrupted traditional grazing routes and markets, leading to economic strain for the Somali community. These economic disparities fostered resentment and tension between the Kamba and Somali communities.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION THE STUDY

This study highlights the complex historical relationship between the Kamba and Somali communities, particularly focusing on their cooperation and conflicts from the pre-colonial to colonial periods. Both communities exhibited high levels of interdependence, notably in the joint efforts to displace the Galla from the Engamba ranch, showcasing their capacity for cooperation. However, conflicts often arose due to competition for resources like water and pasture, with both communities relying on their traditional political systems, led by clan elders, to mediate disputes. The arrival of colonial rule, with its imposition of artificial boundaries and economic policies, disrupted these traditional systems. The colonial government introduced

new institutions, restricted movement, and forced the communities into wage labor, exacerbating tensions as they competed for diminishing resources. Additionally, the introduction of quarantines and land alienation further strained relations, leading to increased conflict over grazing land and water sources.

During the Second World War, both communities experienced a shift in dynamics, as many men were conscripted into the army, leaving behind labor shortages and reducing the frequency of conflicts. The war also fueled a rise in political consciousness, with the Kamba community aligning with nationalist movements like the Kenya African Union (KAU), while the Somali community largely remained uninvolved, which deepened the divide between them. The post-war period saw growing nationalist sentiments, with the Kamba joining the anti-colonial Mau Mau movement, while the Somali community in the Northern Frontier District (NFD) pushed for separation from Kenya to join Somalia. This period of political vacuum and subsequent rise of nationalist movements ultimately set the stage for the contradictions between the Kamba and Somali communities as they navigated the path towards independence, with differing interests regarding Kenya's future.

STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are three recommendations based on the study:

Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict: The study suggests that resolving conflict requires a deep analysis of its historical context, uncovering long-standing issues that have shaped the community. Rather than simply focusing on the immediate manifestations of conflict, understanding the underlying causes can lead to more effective and lasting resolutions. By examining the past, communities can better address the deeper tensions that persist.

Incorporating Traditional Leadership in Modern Governance: The recommendation of a "paradigm from below" emphasizes the importance of involving community elders in contemporary governance structures. These elders hold valuable cultural knowledge and influence in their communities, and their inclusion in decision-making processes can bridge the gap between modern legal systems and traditional practices. This can help foster a sense of respect and unity among different ethnic groups.

Promoting Socio-Cultural Integration through Education and Activities: The study highlights the role of socio-cultural factors in fueling conflicts between the two communities. To build harmony, it is recommended that inter-ethnic sporting events, cultural exchanges, and ethnic education programs be prioritized. These activities can help break down stereotypes, promote mutual understanding, and cultivate a more cohesive society where ethnic differences are celebrated rather than divisive.

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