

**INTRA-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG THE SABAOT OF
MT.ELGON, KENYA, 1945-2010**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university, or for any other school.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Kenneth Imbuye Atepe, my son Edson Oyatsi Imbuye and my daughter Doddie Ayako Imbuye

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xiv
GLOSSARY OF SABAOT TERMS	xvii
ABSTRACT	xviii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Objectives of the Study	8
1.4 Research Premises.....	8
1.5 Literature Review	9
1.6 Theoretical Framework	18
1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study	25
1.8 Scope and Limitations	26
1.9 Research Methodology.....	26
1.9.1 Research Design	26
1.9.2 Variables/ Categories of Analysis	27
1.9.3 Area of the Study	27
1.9.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size	30
1.9.5 Research Instruments	30
1.9.6 Data Collection Procedures	31
1.9.7 Data Analysis.....	32

1.9.8 Data Management and Ethical Considerations.....	33
CHAPTER TWO.....	34
THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ROOTS OF INTRA-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG THE SABAOT	34
2.0 Introduction.....	34
2.1 The People	35
2.2 Geographical Location, Administrative Frontiers and Climate	37
2.3 Physical and Natural Resources	40
2.4 Migration and Settlement of the Sabaot	42
2.5 Socio- Economic and Political Organization.....	46
2.5.1 Social Organisation.....	46
2.5.2 Economic Organization.....	50
2.5.3 Political Organization	51
2.6 The Impact of Sabaot Relations with her Neighbours on Intra-ethnic Relations	53
2.7 Establishment of Colonial Rule and its Impact on Intra- Ethnic Relations.....	55
2.8 Colonial Land Policies and their Impact on Intra-ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon Region	66
2.9 The Coming of Christianity and its Impact on Intra-Ethnic Relations.	70
CHAPTER THREE.....	77
THE IMPACT OF DECOLONISATION ON INTRA-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG THE SABAOT (1945-1963).....	77
3.0 Introduction.....	77
3.1 The Impact of the Second World War among the Sabaot Clans	78
3.2 Emergence of Dini Ya Musambwa (DYM) and its influence on Intra-Ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon Region	83
3.3 Decolonization and its Impact on intra-ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon.....	87
3.4 Conclusion	95

CHAPTER FOUR	97
INTRA-COMMUNITY RELATIONS WITHIN THE SABAOT CLANS IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA (1963-1992).....	97
4.0 Introduction.....	97
4.1 Influence of Politics on Intra-Ethnic Relations.....	98
4.2 Influence of Land Distribution / Management on Intra-Ethnic Relations.....	102
4.3 Conclusion	107
CHAPTER FIVE	109
INTRA-ETHNIC CRISIS WITHIN THE SABAOT CLANS OF MT. ELGON SUB-COUNTY (1993- 2010)	109
5.0 Introduction.....	109
5.1 The Crisis of Marginalization	110
5.2 The Crisis of Political Manipulation and the Land Question	120
5.3 The Boundary Question and the Formation of Militia Groups.....	125
5.3 Offensive Reaction to SLDF.....	133
5.3.1 Government Response to the Conflict	133
5.3.2 Formation of the Counter- Insurgency Militia Groups.....	136
5.3.3 The Deployment of the Army	137
5.4 Effects of the Mt. Elgon Conflicts	141
5.5 Conclusion	146
CHAPTER SIX.....	147
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	147
6.1 Summary of the Research.....	147
6.2 Recommendations from the Research Work	153
6.3 Areas of Further Research	154
REFERENCES	156
1 PRIMARY SOURCES.....	156

a) Archival Information	156
b) Governmental Reports.....	157
c) Newspapers	157
d) Oral Interviews	158
2 SECONDARY SOURCES.....	158
APPENDICES	172
A1: Sample Interview Guide	172
A 2.1 Map of Africa Showing Kenya	174
A2.2 Administrative Map of Kenya Showing Bungoma County.....	175
A3: Table of Informants	176
A4: Research Permit	177

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Clan: Kinship group based on actual or purported descent from a common ancestor as traced through the male line (patriclan). In this study, it has the same meaning as sub-ethnic group.

Community: A group of people living in the same geographical environment and bounded by same social, political and economic ties. Within this study it has the same meaning as an ethnic group. In Kenya such communities are registered as an ethnic group

Conflict: Relationship between two or more parties who have or think they have incompatible goals. It is a disagreement that is hotly contested

Conflict Resolution: Addresses the causes of conflict and seeks to build new lasting relationships between hostile groups.

Development: Process of acquisition and preservation of resources related to wealth as well as putting in place the basic infrastructural facilities and social amenities to enhance improvement of livelihoods. It is also the changes witnessed in social, political and economic aspects of a people

Eclectic approach: Use of more than one theory to analyze research data.

Ethnicity: A sense of belonging to a group, bounded by homogenous cultural ties.

Inter-ethnic relations: Relations with more than one ethnic group. In this study, it has the same meaning as inter-community relations.

Intra- ethnic relations: Relations within members of the same ethnic group. In this study, it has the same meaning as intra-community relations.

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.9: Administrative Map of Bungoma County showing Mt. Elgon Sub- County

Fig. 2.2: Geographical Map of Mt. Elgon Sub- County

Fig. 5.2: Map of Mt. Elgon Sub-County showing Contested Areas

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADC: African District Council

BU: Bukusu Union

CAPU: Coast African Peoples Union

CIPEV: Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence

DC: District Commissioner

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

DYM: Dini Ya Musambwa

ENDC: Elgon Nyanza District Congress

FAM: Friends Africa Mission

FAIM: Friends Africa Industrial Mission

FGDs: Focus Group Discussions

FORD: Forum for Restoration of Democracy

GEACo: German East African Company

GEMA: Gikuyu Embu and Meru Association

HRW: Human Rights Watch

IBA: Important Bird Areas

IBEACo: Imperial British East African Company

ICC: International Criminal Court

IMF: International Monetary Fund

KADU: Kenya African Democratic Union

KAMATUSA: Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu Alliance

KANU: Kenya African National Union

KAPP: Kenya African Peoples' Party

KAU: Kenya African Union

KES: Kitosh Educational Society

KHRW: Kenya Human Rights Watch

KIM: Kenya Independent Movement

KLA: Kenya Land Alliance

KNA: Kenya National Archives

KNCHR: Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

KNP: Kenya National Party

KPA: Kalenjin Political Alliance

LAC: Local Advisory Council

Leg Co: Legislative Council

MDF: Moorland Defense Force

MoE: Ministry of Education

MP: Member of Parliament

MUF: Maasai United Front

NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

NKFA: North Kitosh Farmers Association

ODM: Orange Democratic Movement

O.I: Oral Interview

PC: Provincial Commissioner

PNU: Party of National Unity

PRM: Political Revenge Movement

SALWs: Small Arms and Light Weapons

SLDF: Sabaot Land Defense Force

SNA: Somali National Association

UNO: United Nations Organization

USA: United States of America

US: United States

WB: World Bank

WHRW: Western Human Rights Watch

WKC: West Kalenjin Congress

GLOSSARY OF SABAOT TERMS

Bikap Koret: Owners of the territory

Chelelmok Morie: Pythons

El Kony: The Kony people

Kabindiraroi: Place heavily infested by pythons

Kapteeka: Bamboo land

Kirwagiik: Plural of Kirwagindet

Kirwagindet: An overall leader of several Laitariani

Kokwet: Council of elders

Koong'ta: Tortoises found in the salty springs

Kotap Mureen: Houses of warriors

Laitirian: Village heads who settled all sorts of disputes

Legaret: A belt worn by women to symbolize peace and reconciliation

Murenik: Warriors

Porosiek: A group of clans separated from each other by natural features like bushes, hills, rivers or escarpments.

Worgoik/ Laibon: Plural of Worgoondet/ Oloibon

Worgoondet/ oloibon: The highest ritual leader

Yeyia: Supreme Being

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the intra- ethnic relations among the Sabaot community of Mt. Elgon Sub-County, from the period 1945 to 2010. The study only focuses on the Sabaot found in this Sub-County. It also picks out the Sabaot ethnic group in a multilingual area of study. The study took a historical analysis of intra- ethnic relations as an ingredient of conflict on one hand and peace building on the other. It is argued that inter and intra-ethnic relations in the area of study are not only complex but subtle to the extent that cooperation, unity and conflict occurred either within specific ethnic or sub-ethnic composition or as across ethnic confines. However, most analysts have focused on inter-ethnic rather than intra-ethnic conflict and resolution in the area under study. Whereas inter-ethnic relations deserve attention in their own right, their nature in fact depends on the character of relations within a community. The ethnic group also has its own intra-ethnic relations that deserve attention. The focus of this study was to add to the available but limited knowledge on the study of intra-ethnic relations in general and the Sabaot in particular, from a historical perspective. The historical periods illuminated the changes that took place in the community and how they influenced conflicts within the various clans. It also showed how these conflicts have been handled by the stakeholders. Evaluation of the study utilized Constructivism and Instrumentalism theories. Constructivism was helpful in interrogating the origin of Sabaot clans; thus tracing its identity construction or invention to the colonial authorities and emergent nationalism as well as emphasizing its historicity and fluidity. It demonstrated an evolution of an ethnic group that kept transforming its social, political and economic set-up that sooner became a precursor to conflicts at the same time offering insights of peaceful co-existence. Instrumentalism helped to analyse the role of politics and political class in intra-ethnic manifestations. This is an aspect that brews conflicts and can be looked at as one of the major tools to be used in promoting peaceful co-existence. The two theories complemented each other to fully analyse the topic under study. The study utilized primary and secondary techniques of collecting data. The primary data collection methods included oral interviews, which have mainly been used in reconstruction of African history and in qualitative research design that this study utilised. The oral interview questions were open ended to help gather a wider scope of information. Other sources of primary data included information from the Kenya National Archives (KNA) and governmental documents like the parliamentary Committee Reports. The study also drew information from secondary sources, which included; text books, journals, theses, and dissertations from across libraries; seminar and conference papers, Non- Governmental Organizations (NGO) reports and print and electronic media. The collected information coupled with the researcher's analytical contribution helped make useful conclusions to the intra-ethnic problem in the area of study.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the logistics used in coming up with this piece of work. It focuses on the statement of the problem, specific objectives that guide the study, identified gaps in the available literature, the theoretical approach that is used in the work and how data is collected and analysed. The following are the sub-sections;

1.1 Background to the Study

Africa seems to be faced with the growing crisis of identity. The nature of this crisis may be conceptualized and understood within the modern conditions, and the context of colonial restructuring of pre-colonial societies (Kakai, 2000:1). This crisis finds expression in ethnicity and ethnic relations. These ethnic identities express themselves harmoniously or violently. Since Africa is ethnically diverse (Raj, 2003), inter-ethnic relations have attracted a lot of interest in research in the context of conflict. Barely have intra-ethnic relations done the same.

The knowledge on the inter-ethnic relations traces its problem of conflict to the establishment of colonial rule. Mkangi, in Bahemuka (2004:216) contends that Africa is caught in this culture of confusion of identity because of colonialism. But we cannot problematize colonialism before looking at the state of fact in the pre-colonial period. Berman (1998:5) argues that pre-colonial African societies, especially in turbulent decades before the establishment of formal colonial control in the late 19th century, were anything but unchanging. Moreover, pre-colonial political and social-cultural boundaries were marked by fuzziness and flexibility; and Africans existed within a reality of multiple, overlapping and alternative collective identities. Berman

adds that African communities were pervaded by relations of domination and dependence, based on patriarchal power exercised across differences of genders and generations, lineages and clans, languages and cultures. Mutiso (1975) compliments Berman's argument by stating that Africa had ethnic interactions during the pre-colonial period. He adds that these interactions included

“exchange of goods, institutions, but the basic socio-cultural unit remained defined in a tribally unique sociological concreteness” (ibid: 26)

Though from the above statements one can deduce a pre-colonial Africa free of conflicts, this is far from the truth. Gluckman (1973) asserts that conflicts are part of a social life, and custom appears to exacerbate these conflicts. This is why Ochieng' (1975) observes that even though there was prominent ethnic association, there were conflicts, but they were resolved. This did not only occur across ethnic groups, but also within the smaller units of communities; the clans. Freund (1993) observes that within lineage groups, inequality could and did develop. Elders who were close to ancestors secured control of aspects of production and the distribution of foodstuffs for consumption. The head of the household was able to use the labour of junior members. He adds that internal tensions developed leading to the hiving off of new households. In pre-colonial Buganda Kingdom, for instance, the settlement of the Ganda clansmen in conquered lands broke up the clan's territorial solidarity and created an increasingly individualized society (Illife, 1995). Thus, as Berman, (1998) asserts, pre-colonial societies were full of conflict and competition, instability and change. He adds that the scourges of war, famine and disease destroyed old communities and identities, forced people to move, and also created new communities out of the survivors and refugees, often linked in unequal measure and dependent relations.

Though this study is not about pre-colonial intra-ethnic relations, with the above background of ethnicity in the pre-colonial Africa, it is clear that intra-ethnic relations sometimes experienced turbulent moments. But what was the situation like in colonial Africa?

Berman, (1998) argues that modern ethnicities of Africa originate in the colonial period. He however notes that they are both clearly derived from the character of pre-colonial societies and profoundly influenced in form, scope and content by the social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism. This brings us to the theory of analysis of this study; Constructivism. In-fact this study concurs with Berman's assertion that

ethnicity is constructed in societies containing multiple and conflicting versions of culture and custom, as well as divergent interests and conflicts of gender, generation, clan, faction and under the impact of colonialism, developing classes (ibid:47).

Even though the colonial period derives its strength of operation from pre-colonial societal behaviour, it is worth noting that colonialism reinforced and separated ethnic groups. Some communities were discriminated against while others were inadvertently favoured by colonial policies (Leys, 1975:199). Kakai, (2000:82) observes that colonial rule created new terrains of conflict. These conflicts, more often than not were defined in ethnic terms.

The impact of colonialism cannot be underscored in the history of ethnic relations. Kisiang'ani (2003:1) states that colonialism was accompanied by the introduction of new ways of life to the hitherto unique but immensely rich traditional African lifestyle. He explains that this new culture which, by and large, created a permanent

crisis of identity among the African people, had serious social, political and economic implications. In essence this resulted in ethnic conflicts.

Are ethnic manifestations only evident in Africa? There is a lot of literature from other parts of the world demonstrating that this is a global phenomenon. A few examples from different parts of the world will suffice. Inter-ethnic conflict was widespread across all continents. In Palestine, the Jews have had territorial related conflicts with the Palestinians. In Southern Turkey, the Kurdish minority have wanted to repossess their Kurdistan land, which the Turks claim to be theirs (Muller, 2008). The Serbs and Croats in Bosnia were at war with one another over fear of domination. However, most European states have remained peaceful because of tolerating ethnic homogeneity (ibid).

African societies during the colonial period experienced inter and intra-ethnic conflicts as well as harmonious community co-existence. This in turn led to a post-colonial society full of inter and intra-ethnic conflicts. In Kenya, just like elsewhere in Africa, ethnic associations have been in existence for long. However, it is distinctive that before the advent of colonialism, ethnic interactions were witnessed through trade and sharing of institutions like circumcision, while the basic socio-cultural unit remained defined (Mutiso, 1975). While interacting, they had conflicts, but of low magnitude (Onyango, 2008), and they were resolved (Ochieng, 1975). This state changed with the advent of colonialism and the imposition of its bureaucratic authoritarian pervasive patron-client relations and a complex ethnic dialectic assimilation, fragmentation and competition (Berman, 1998). Socio-political and economic transformations did take place, informing the development that was to be witnessed,

thus transforming inter and intra-ethnic relations. Kenyan academicians have been prompted to carry out research on the changing ethnicities.

Since the main concern of this study was intra-ethnic relations in the Mt. Elgon region, the Western Province came into perspective because the Sabaot are settled in the same region. The composition of the population of the region was also to be brought into perspective. Thus, the region is seen to be dominated by the Luhya sub-ethnic groups. These groups have had ethnic associations with the Sabaot community and have been mentioned many times in the study. Among them, the groups that have closely associated with the Sabaot are the Bukusu and Tachoni (Kakai, 2000). Their pre-colonial period exhibit times of cordial and conflictual relations (Makila, 1978; Wekesa, 2000). This was also the case during the colonial and post-colonial period.

Since the study centres on intra-community relations among the Sabaot, it is important to know who the Sabaot are. This is a registered Kenyan ethnic group that is composed of six sub-ethnic groups (Forsberg, 2012). They include; the Kony, Bok, Bongomek, Sabiny/Sebei, Somek and the Chepkitale/Mosop (Amugune, 2008). Broadly, they are categorized into two depending on the location of their stay. Thus; the Soy live/settled on the slopes of the mountain and the Mosop live in the highland region of the mountain (Medard, 2008). These sub-ethnic groups have lived in this region from as early as 1000 AD as they were left behind by the other ethnic groups, particularly of Kalenjin descent while they looked for other suitable settlements to occupy (Were, 1967a). They are said to have owned the region as their ancestral land. This probably explains why they have resisted other groups who have claimed possession of part of this territory.

The accounts of the Sabaot relations in the post-colonial era have attracted a lot of attention worldwide. This is in relation to the seasonal sporadic conflicts that have been experienced in the region of study. These conflicts have mostly been inter-ethnic, but recently, they were exposed as intra-ethnic, where the main combatants were members of the same ethnic community, the Sabaot. These intra-ethnic conflicts have been analyzed by some scholars to have occurred in relation to distribution of resources and political influences that are fuelled by election stigma (Kakai, 2000; Simiyu, 2007). However, as has been discussed by Berman (1998), the link between pre-colonial and colonial periods should be established to help explain the post-colonial experience. This study aimed at establishing this link as outlined in the objectives.

Where conflicts have occurred, solutions have been sought for. The Mt. Elgon Sub-County has not been left behind. Studies of different nature and objectives have been done with the main aim of finding solutions to ending the undesired results of the conflicts. This study has taken cognizance of the efforts made by the different scholars. At the same time, it sought to contribute to the existing recommendations and other solutions that can be applied to avert explosive conflicts in the area of study. A historical perspective with the use of Constructivism and Instrumentalism theories were used to add new insights to the already existing body of knowledge. The intent is to avert any future conflicts among the Sabaot as well as among other communities in Kenya and across the globe.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ethnicity and ethnic relations have attracted extensive literature across the globe. In Africa, ethnic relations express themselves in varied ways. At times, they invite harmonious co-existence while at other times they become the basis for persistent identity-related conflicts. This has spanned a lot of research into ethnic related studies. However, most analysts have concentrated on inter-ethnic relations and rarely on intra-ethnic relations. While inter-ethnic relations deserve attention, their nature in fact depends on the character of relations within an ethnic grouping. Within an ethnic grouping, identity related conflicts have also been witnessed. This phenomenon has not received adequate scholarly attention. This study illuminates relations within one such Kenyan ethnic community, the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon Sub-County, from 1945 to 2010. It aims at looking at the nature of their history and the impact of the politics of settlement and land ownership on intra-community relations. It exposes how the intra-ethnic relations influenced wars as well as promoted peace in the area of study. These issues help contextualize and understand the intra-ethnic conflicts that have rocked the community in the recent past, leading to massive loss of life and formation of militia groups like the Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF). The study helps to unearth the origins and solutions to such conflicts.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. How did patterns of settlement, interaction and colonial rule impact on the intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot from the pre-colonial period to 1945?
- ii. What were the effects of decolonisation on intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot from 1945 to 1963?

- iii. What characterized intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot between 1963 and 1992?
- iv. How best can the intra-ethnic crisis between the warring clans among the Sabaot be handled?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following study objectives which it sought to achieve:

- i. To trace the geographical and historical roots of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot to 1945.
- ii. To assess the effects of decolonization on intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot between 1945 and 1963.
- iii. To evaluate the intra-community relations within the Sabaot clans in the post-independent era between 1964 and 1992.
- iv. To analyze the intra-ethnic crisis within the Sabaot clans of Mt. Elgon Constituency and its contingent solutions between 1993 and 2010.

1.4 Research Premises

The study aimed at proving the following premises:

- i. The patterns of settlement among the Sabaot were influenced by the immigration of their sub-ethnic groups as well as that of other communities into the region. Additionally, the colonial government dismantled the traditional settlement patterns and land ownership policies in the Mt. Elgon region causing inter and intra- community tensions.
- ii. Decolonisation increased tensions and suspicion among the Sabaot clans.

- iii. Intra- community relations were characterized by tension, suspicion and hate within the various clans of the Sabaot ethnic group from 1964 to 1992.
- iv. The recent crisis between the Sabaot warring clans can best be handled by integrating traditional and modern methods of conflict resolution.

1.5 Literature Review

This sub-section deals with understanding the origin of the term ethnicity. It also casts the research work into historical epochs as per the objectives, while trying to understand whether this is a worldwide problem. The study then narrows down to the area of study and looks at what has been studied by other scholars in respect to the objectives, while identifying the gaps that have been left, which the study seeks to fill. This is outlined as below;

A lot of literature is available on ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations across the globe although this subject is new in social sciences (Green, 2005). The word ethnicity first appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1972 and the word ethnic, has been in use in the language of English since the 14th century (ibid). Originally the term was used to refer to heathens, pagans, gentiles, non-Jews and non-Christians. But with time, its pejorative meaning transformed and acquired racial characteristics in the 19th century. In the 20th century, it was used by the United States (US) to refer to the immigrants' union of northern or western European descent (Eriksen, 1993). Its importance grew in the social sciences as anthropologists tried to make sense of the emergent social and cultural transformations within Africa and other parts of the third world in the 1960s (Eade, 1996:58). Since this study did not intend to deal with the finding of the correct definition of ethnicity, we contend with the definition below;

“products of a continuing historical process, always simultaneously old and new grounded in the past and perpetually in creation” (Berman, 1998:1).

The theme of ethnicity has attracted a number of scholars from the wider field of social sciences. Some studies have been devoted to the field of inter-ethnic relations. Very limited literature exists on the subject of intra-ethnic relations in general and on the Sabaot Community in particular. The subject of this study sprang from ethnicity, and it was embedded in ethnic conflict. This type of conflict was seen as being motivated by ethnic sentiments that are in form of deep seated hatred. Ethnic conflict is just one part of ethnicity. The second part is ethnic harmony. This is the identification within a grouping. It is what Nnoli (1995) describes as one that gives internal cohesion and encourages provision of natural security for each other. The two distinctions are what Eriksen (1993) sums up as the distinction of insiders and outsiders. This then points to an area of research based on intra-ethnic relations.

The basis of this research being historical is found in the description of Brown (1993) and Okoye (1973). They assert the importance of the history of a people. They see it as having its genesis in specific historical forces. The forces can be simultaneously structural and cultural as Comaroff (1992) observes. He went further and exemplified this assertion by giving an example of a research carried out by Peel among the Yoruba. The research revealed that the Yoruba ethnicity could not be accounted for satisfactorily without a consideration of the cultural and historical factors. He showed that although ethnic identities may appear as inventions, they are certainly not as arbitrary as such; rather, the historical causation severely limits the range of options for the intentional construction of identities and their form too. This justified the topic of study as cast into the theoretical construct of constructivism.

The subject of ethnicity has been looked at as the mother of ethno-political groups. These are groups of people whose members share a common nationality, language, cultural traditions and kinship ties. They view themselves as members of their nationality first and their state only secondarily (Kegley, 2001). This gives rise to ethno nationalism. This is what characterized reactions and the shaping of European states that have had a high degree of homogeneity (Muller, 2008). This aspect of ethno nationalism is very much entrenched into our African communities. This aspect was very helpful as we explored the Sabaoth nationality especially during the pre-colonial period and how it boosted their cordial relations.

Ethnic relations also manifest themselves in the maintenance of boundaries (Romanucci, 1995). This has made some groups to feel alienated as minority. This is exemplified by the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, the Jews in Palestine, the Blacks in the United States of America (USA), the Kurds in Turkey, and Tamil in India and the Serbs in Bosnia (Muller, 2008). This has created conflicts of one kind or the other in respective areas. Since the community under study has been affected by the maintenance of boundaries through the historical periods, this premise was helpful in analysing the role boundaries have played in instigating conflicts.

The study of ethnicity in Africa has been controversial. This is because some academicians have argued that ethnicity is divisive and conflictual (Fisher, 1991; Aluko, 2003). But Nnoli (1995) posits that ethnicity gives internal cohesion and encourages the community to provide natural security for each other. These two viewpoints have fanned research into ethnicity especially in Africa, a continent perceived to be ethnically diverse (Raj, 2003; Simbowale, 2006). These two views were the encouragement behind a research of an ethnic nature on the Sabaoth

which has experienced uniting moments and also division among them. The divisions have with time manifested into conflicts.

With the development of African research, it has become increasingly clear that pre-colonial African societies were changing (Berman, 1998). Africans existed within a reality of multiple, overlapping and alternative collective identities. They dominated and depended on each other. They exercised patriarchal power across differences of genders and generations, lineages and clans, languages and culture. The Yoruba fervently illustrated this phenomenon as shown by Comaroff (1992). The ideas got from the Yoruba were helpful in the analysis of the pre-colonial period of the various Sabaot clans and how they impacted on the Sabaot intra-ethnic relations from 1945.

African societies were politically, socially and economically organized for their smooth running in the pre-colonial period. These organizations affected their relations and subsequent development (Rodney, 1989). Through the major epochs of change, that is, from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial, societal constructions were being witnessed and new ethnic identities being formed (Simbowale, 2006). The pre-colonial period rather experienced unique relations. They had inter-ethnic association which encompassed intermarriages, trade, migration and clientele at the time of famine (Were, 1967a; Makila, 1978; Kakai, 2000). There were no natural boundaries (Mbiti, 1994). People lived a collective life. These authors depicted African societies that did not have conflicts. But this cannot be the case. This is what the study sought to find out particularly for the various clans that formed the Sabaot.

How could the colonial period in Africa be defined? Africa was never the same after the arrival of the colonial masters; the Europeans. This is where colonial capitalism,

acting in the colonial state affected ethnic relations in general and intra-ethnic relations in particular (Kakai, 2000). Colonial rule created new types of conflict that were both intra and inter-ethnic (ibid). Actually colonial masters tore into all aspects of political, social and economic spheres of organization. They looked at transformative circumstances that would benefit the European, not caring about the African. Some of the transformations included infusing new languages, new religion and new dress as a means of African civilization. This transformed African social relations that would later amount into ethnic conflict. The economy the Europeans introduced in Africa was that based on transforming the traditional modes of production to cash crops and wage labour (Berman, 1998; Kakai, 2000). This is described by Berman (1998) as having transformed the organization of African societies leading to structural differences. Lastly on the political scene, the colonists engaged Africans in administering their areas of influence as chiefs and village elders as well as police service. This antagonized community relations. This is the general view of colonialism in Africa, which does not specifically talk about the Sabaot. The divisive impact of colonialism has been tackled among the neighbouring Sabaot communities like the Bukusu and the Tachoni (Kakai, 2000; Wekesa, 2000), but not among the Sabaot clans. This missing information was what the study sought to fill.

We cannot however avoid looking at post-colonial Africa in relation to ethnic conflicts, particularly of intra-ethnic nature. The modern ethnicities of Africa originate in the colonial period, however, and they are both clearly derived from the character of pre-colonial societies (Berman, 1998). In-fact, Kabir (2001), sums it all up by asserting that the major problems of the post-colonial state in Africa have been the inability to manage ethnic conflicts successfully. These conflicts originate in the

colonial period. This is why countries like Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda and others have been subjects of investigation on inter-ethnic conflict (Alusala, 2007). This has not demonstrated that intra-ethnic conflict has existed in African communities with equal consequences like for inter-ethnic conflicts. This justified research into an ethnic community, the Sabaot, to establish whether they experienced intra-ethnic conflicts.

We cannot, therefore, conclude that no work has been carried out on intra-ethnic relations in Africa. Some scholars have delved into this field. They are many, but since this is not the main study objective, two communities come in handy. One is the Somali ethnicity in Somalia. For over twenty years, its various clans have been at war. Dualeh (1994), identifies the various warring clans as; Darod, Digil, Dir, Hawiye, Isaq and Rahanweyn. He asserts that within Somalia, each clan has another clan it considers its traditional enemy. Thus inter-clan and intra-clan conflicts have been threats to peaceful co-existence. The Ebira of Nigeria is another ethnic group that has experienced intra-ethnic conflicts. Theirs have been in regard to land resource as an agricultural community (Tenuche, 2008). Since the two do not address any research in Kenya, and neither is on the Sabaot ethnic group, their findings provided powerful insights into the Sabaot research.

But did we have ethnic related studies in Kenya? The answer is yes because there are a number of studies available on ethnic communities in Kenya. Some cover the pre-colonial period, others colonial resistances while others cover the post-colonial period. They include; the Agiriyama of Kenya (Champion, 1967), Notes on the Oral History of the Abatachoni (Wandibba, 1983), a History of the Ababukusu (Makila, 1978) among others. Aspects of identification with ethnic pride were noted. Intra-

ethnic relations and conflict had also been studied among some communities. Notable are studies on the pastoralists in Northern Kenya. Among the Turkana, Pragma (2013) asserts that, clan based conflicts on cattle raids were culturally approved. Recently, they began to perceive intra-communal conflicts as a method to compensate for their lack of resources. He further noted that in pre-colonial times, elders from different clans would opt to keep peace. This view was shared by Pkalya and others (2007) while studying traditional conflict resolution mechanisms among the Pokot, Turkana, Samburu, and Marakwet. These were ideas which assisted in studying intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot since these studies did not cover them. Other studies on intra-ethnic conflicts have been done in the Southern Rift, where clan conflicts have traditionally existed among the Maasai over raids and grazing fields (Peace net Kenya, 2013). In the Nyanza region, Kuria clans have been in decades of conflict over grazing fields and livestock raids, especially between the Nyabasi and Buirege clans (Gissa, 2012). Lasting peace is still being sought for. The above studies, though they talk about intra-ethnic conflict in Kenya, they do not talk about Sabaot. However, their insights were helpful when looking at the Sabaot ethnicity.

In western Kenya, studies have been done among the Bukusu, Teso and Tachoni who are the closest neighbours to the Sabaot (Were, 1967a, b; Makila, 1978, Wekesa, 2000). But there are no notable inter- clan conflicts. Probably they have been of a very low magnitude. Among the Kalenjin, to which the Sabaot are presumed to belong to by some scholars, studies have been done among the Nandi (Snell, 2005), Kipsigis (Mwanzi, 1982; Omwoyo, 2003) and the Marakwet (Kipkorir, 1973). The idea of intra community conflicts has not been given much attention in their studies,

even though they could not have lacked. It is also notable that they did not cover the Sabaot, which this study focused on.

The Sabaot community has been studied by some scholars. Were (1967a), discussed the socio-political and economic aspects of the various sub-ethnic groups of the Sabaot. But he does not discuss any of the ethnic relations that could have been witnessed between the clans. In his expressions about migration, he points out the possible origin and formation of the Sabaot as a sub-group of the Kalenjin, but did not show whether this had any bearing on their socio-political and economic structures. Kisémbé (1978) described much of the migration, social and political history of the Sabaot, but did not elaborate on their intra-ethnic network and relations through the epochs of pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial era.

Some researchers have tried to study the Sabaot intra-ethnic relations from the colonial and post-colonial period. Simiyu (2007) argued elaborately that the Sabaot's conflicts were a culmination of a long history of the Sabaot community's struggle against historical land injustices in form of colonial disinheritance of their ancestral land without compensation by either the colonial government or successive neo-colonial governments. However, he did not cover times of intra-ethnic cordial relations. He did not identify any remedies that could apply from the colonial period to the post-colonial period. He majored on the 2006-07 conflict and highlighted other causes of conflict to this region. He gave solutions particularly to the state on how to stop these conflicts. He, however, did not explore the community's participation in the peace process. He adopted the scarcity perspective of resource accessibility theory of analysis which is different from the constructivism/ instrumentalism theories that this study has applied. All the mentioned gaps are what this study sought to

fill. Amugune (2007) posited that the arrival of British settlers and policies of colonial government as pertained to land drove some clans out of Mt. Elgon area to DRC, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda. He did not elaborate on the consequences of the British settlers in relation to conflict. Neither did he give solutions to this.

Kakai (2000) outlined both inter and intra-ethnic relations during the pre-colonial period. He went ahead to give important information on socio-political and economic organization. He added that as illustrations intimated, actions of the colonial agents not only created physical but structural conflicts. The colonial refugees were in their own way endeavouring to resolve their internal psychological and physical violence which was caused by the colonial situation. In his study he did not touch on the happenings among the Sabaot during the colonial periods. He climaxed on the results of presumable Sabaot oppression during the colonial period that culminated into inter-ethnic conflict. Though he mentioned traditional methods of peace building, he concentrated on inter-ethnic relations. This work was useful as it laid a background to the genesis of conflictual episodes in the Sabaot's areas of jurisdiction. However, he majored only on one cause: land and the torment the Sabaot received from the same. The purpose of the research was to include other areas of association not covered. In essence aspects of their socio-political and economic changes were not covered.

Medard (2006, 2008) concentrated on historical land injustices against the Sabaot and their various clans. Land divided them into those living in the highland, the Mosop and the ones in the lowlands, the Soy. She postulated that the solution to the land problem was with the state. This study looked at other solutions to the conflict other than the mentioned. The study attempted to fill in some of the highlighted weaknesses and contributed new ideas to the study of ethnicity of the Sabaot, especially, as it

relates to intra-ethnic conflicts and peace building. Moreover, she does not explore other areas of conflict among the Sabaot, like political actors and cultural factors. All the identified gaps were what the study sought to fill.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The study of ethnicity and ethnic relations, being a focus in all disciplines in the social sciences attracts various thoughts, concepts and paradigms within which they are analyzed. The study has become a source of debate in relation to conflicts that result from ethnic relations. Thus many scholars have come up with various theories to explain ethnic related conflicts in different parts of the world. This study did not focus on the above in detail but attempted to locate the study in two of the theoretical constructs. The portion only attempted to justify the use of the chosen theories for analysis of intra-ethnic conflict among the Sabaot. The two theories applied are Constructivism and Instrumentalism.

Fearon and Laitin (2000) viewed ethnic identities as socially constructed for explaining ethnic violence. Constructivism was pioneered by Barth, who claimed that ethnicity is the product of a social process rather than a cultural given made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth (Wimmer, 2008:972). Constructivists interrogate the origin of ethnic groups, tracing identity construction or invention to the activities of colonial authorities, missionaries and emergent nationalists and emphasizing the historicity and the fluidity of ethnic identities (Ukiwo, 2005). In this approach, some, or all discourses of ethnicity, create a disposition of violence. For the constructivist approach therefore; ethnicity is not a fixed condition or essence, but a historical

process that can only be studied in specific contexts. The historicity nature of analysis is what enabled us to use this construct.

More appealing was the assertion of Amone (2014) who commented that constructivism assumes that ethnic identity is malleable and dynamic rather than innate and unchanging. This of course is true because no society or human being is static. The explanation brought out the dynamism that is characteristic of societies. He further explained that ethnic identity is constructed by social, political and historical forces. In-fact Posner (2004) affirmed this by stating that ethnic groups are products of political and historical processes. This is why since the 1980s, as observed by Cati (2000); constructivists define ethnicity as invented or imagined.

However the above assertions may be right in their own version, but ethnicity can by no means be imagined. This is a fact we live with. At this point we commended the primordialist's approach that asserted that ethnic identity is part of our innate characteristic of belonging. We are social beings, and just like any other animal, the urge to belong and be appreciated is paramount. This notwithstanding, it is improper to believe that these social characteristics are immutable or fixed as explained by Oganesyanyan (2009). In-fact he asserted that this cannot explain why conflicts break out in some places and time and not others. Be it as it may, the constructivist view walks above the primordialist's view as it helps enlighten us on the root causes of certain ethnic conflicts and helps to understand their very nature.

The above ideas were rather general in looking at the theory of constructivism. How can these ideas apply to conflict and its resolution? If it cannot address this then its usefulness is vague. Fearon and Laitin (2000) shed some light on this. They

emphasized the applicability of the theory. They acknowledged that the theory was applicable in several instances. Among them were; the emphasis on elite manipulations of the mass public and the resultant violence that stemmed from ethnic interactions. They added that cultural systems may be seen as the agents that construct ethnic identities, ethnic violence and this is stressed on the internal logic of culturally defined specific ways of thinking, talking and acting. The above was further described as we looked at the African perspective of application of this theory in relation to conflicts.

The question asked is whether the above theory can be applicable to the African situation. The answer is yes. Berman (1998) elaborately illustrated this. He started by alluding to what recent research in Africa has revealed. He observed that recent research demonstrated that modern African ethnicity was a social construction of the colonial period through the reactions of pre-colonial societies to the social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism. He goes further to analyze constructivism in pre-colonial societies, the impact of and African response to colonial rule, and the contemporary continuity of institutions and trajectories of change laid down in the colonial period. This was all the study wanted to establish as it related to one of Kenyan communities, the Sabaot.

The development of African research alluded to the fact that pre-colonial societies lived within a reality of multiple, overlapping and alternative collective identities, and not a homogeneous culture (Lynch, 2006). This historical research richly documented the complex differentiations of wealth and power within all African societies. Berman (1998) observed that African communities were pervaded by relations of domination and dependence, based on patriarchal power exercised across differences of genders

and generations, lineages and clans, languages and cultures. He reaffirmed that where land was plentiful and populations small, wealth and power were measured in control of people, in having a large following of family and non-kin dependants. Thus he asserted that the power relations were typically of patrons and clients.

With the above conclusions, it would have been impossible to have a pre-colonial society without conflicts, yet inequalities were already set. These inequalities generated suspicion and resentment between members of the neighbouring communities or within the community itself. This was used to explore the later chapters of the study. But of importance to note is the fact that the invention of tradition and ethnic identities, along with polities, religions, trading networks and regional economies were not introduced at the arrival of Europeans (ibid). They were there long before the arrival of the Europeans. This removed the African communities from homogeneity, an assumption of the primordialists. Therefore modern ethnicities in Africa not only derive from the colonial period, but they derive to a greater extent from pre-colonial set-ups of the social, economic, cultural and political forces. Thus Berman (1998) summarized it by saying that ethnicity is constructed in societies containing multiple and conflicting versions of culture and custom, as well as divergent interests and conflicts of gender, generation, clan, faction and, under the impact of colonialism, developing classes. He also noted that modern ethnicities of Africa were much larger and more sharply defined and differentiated than those of the past, and they continue to be internally differentiated into regional or cultural sub-groups and identities engaged in vigorous internal rivalries. With this then the theory was relevant in studying intra-ethnic rivalries of one of the African ethnicities, the

Sabaot. It transcended the pre-colonial and colonial periods, making them link with the happenings in the post-colonial periods.

Lynch (2006) observed that evolution, devolution, change and conformity characterized ethnic identities in Kenya. The internal dimension, moral ethnicity, was the discursive and political arena within which ethnic identities emerged out of the renegotiation of the bounds of political community and authority, the social rights and obligations of moral economy and rights of access to land and property. These sentiments seem quite applicable to this study. The dialectically related external dimension, political tribalism, emerged out of the diverse consequences of colonialism for different African communities, especially with regard to access to the resources of modernity and economic accumulation (Lonsdale, 2004). Political tribalism did not involve a search for a moral community of rights and obligations, but rather collective political organization and action across the boundaries of communities defined by moral ethnicity, first against the alien power of the colonial state and then, increasingly, against the competing interests of other emerging rival ethnicities for access to the state and control of its patronage resources (ibid). The applicability of this to the Sabaot was very evident as the chapters unfolded. Ethnicity provided individuals and groups with their most important political resource in the competition for the scarce goods of modernity, as well as for access to local resources of land and labour. Internally, this took the language of moral ethnicity into conflicts over the definition of custom and moral responsibilities that shaped claims to communal membership and rights to property (Berman, 1998). Externally it took the blunter forms of communal solidarity and conflict of political tribalism. This

was important in analyzing the post-colonial era and the changing ethnic relations in the area of study.

The poor and those whose social positions were undermined by colonialism used ethnicity to sustain their claims to access to land and resources and to insist on the responsibilities and reciprocities of the wealthy and the powerful. The political mobilization of ethnicity is thus not simply an instrument of elite manipulation, of self aggrandizement by the rich and powerful, but also of demands from below for internal redistribution of resources and external protection and promotion of communal interests. This is where instrumentalism complimented constructivism, as constructivist findings about the flexibility of identity are rarely incorporated into theories about how ethnicity affects political behaviour (Chandra, K., 2001). Thus instrumental theory argues that the ethnic conflict was artificial modern phenomena, invented by the elite.

Instrumentalists view ethnicity as a means to some specific political end, and as such, it is focused on the goals rather than the origins. They believe that ethnicity is changeable. It is not a character acquired at birth and over time. Joireman (2007) continued to argue that instrumentalism is a belief that ethnic identities may be important sometimes and in some circumstances and completely absent at other times. This probably is because it is dependent on political actors. Thus to instrumentalists, identity is by examining actions and choices.

Instrumentalists associate ethnic identities to social classes. Thus, ethnic groups can join together in political pursuit of their group interests. They posit that ethnic identities are similar and important either because of circumstances or the role of

elites in manipulating identity. They believe that ethnicity is pervasive and deeply rooted because it is politically useful. Ethnicity therefore is argued not as neutral, but used in the struggle for power as groups or individuals pursue their own interests to achieve their own goals. Thus, leaders use ethnic identities and sentiments to control a whole group in an attempt to meet their own personal goals: there is something to gain from it. Thus, Oganessian (2009) argued that instrumentalism can reveal the overall political and economic structure of a society and help analyze the creation of new identities within these structures. In-fact Caselli and Coleman (2011) concluded that the instrumentalist view is that participants in the conflict have a motivation that after the conflict they would derive some material benefit like jobs, land and wealth.

However, this theory on its own was not productive for historical research. This is because, as Missoula (2009) stated, it ignored the cultural and psychological factors that could lead to violent ethnic conflict. This is the reason why it was complimented by the constructivist theory. It is important to note that the line between constructivism and instrumentalism is always not clear. But a small difference can be realized. Thus, while instrumentalists typically analyze the ways in which ethnicity is manipulated and used by elites to achieve political goals, constructivists are concerned with emergence and disappearance of ethnic groups and movements. Therefore one majorly deals with the now while the other incorporates the past.

In essence therefore, a mix of the two gave a better analysis into the issue of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabao. They complemented each other to bring out the holistic analysis of the intra-ethnic identity. This is the reason informing the decision to use the two theories as compliments of each other.

1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study

This study dealt with intra-ethnic relations. Ethnicity has attracted attention of historians, anthropologists, and international relations scholars and in general, social scientists from all walks of life. This study borrowed from all the fields to contribute to a comprehensive historical study. Studies addressing ethnic issues have generally focused on conflicts either at a national level or between different ethnic groups. Those that have addressed issues on conflict within an ethnic grouping are very few in Africa in general and Kenya in particular. Moreover the ones which have talked about Sabaot ethnic community are even fewer and they do not give a comprehensive historical account. Furthermore, none of the studies so far done among the Sabaot have applied the changing theoretical paradigm of constructivism and instrumentalism. This then showed that this study is new in its own respect and was bound to enrich the information on ethnicity otherwise found on the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon Sub-County.

The study focused on the Sabaot ethnic group with its sub-ethnic groups that seem to have been and are still being transformed by forces of modernity. The study hoped to look at the transformation from pre-colonial to colonial and post colonial periods. This put into account their socio-political and economic developments through history that have been in themselves sources of conflict, provided solutions and could still provide solutions for recent conflicts. The study also hoped that by looking at the mentioned issues, the community could embrace harmonious co-existence within the various sub-ethnic groups. The study hoped to provide some solutions to the conflict problem that has rocked the community under study in recent years. This could be useful to communities experiencing similar crises. The study focused on the period between 1945 and 2010. 1945 was chosen because it marks the beginning of serious

relational struggles within the Sabaot sub- ethnic groups as the area shaped up for decolonization struggles that were led by the Bukusu in this region. 2010 was chosen as the period of termination of the study because it fully captured the recent intra-ethnic conflict in the area of study that saw the formation of militia groups in the area of study and captured the attention of the whole world. However, this was not rigid. When need arose, the researcher dug into the earlier period to bring out more information that bolstered the central argument of the study. The period that the study covers is long enough to justify a historical study.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

The Sabaot community is found in two counties in Kenya; Trans-Nzoia and Bugoma. They are also found in Uganda, the area bordering Mt. Elgon. Due to time limit and financial constraints, the study focused on the Sabaot found in the Mt. Elgon Sub-County of Bungoma County. Mt. Elgon Sub-County comprises of inhabitants from other ethnic groups like the Luhya, Teso and Kikuyu. The study mainly focused on the Sabaot because they form 60% of the population (Kihuthu, 2005) and have been involved in intra-ethnic conflict that has caught the attention of the whole world in the recent past.

1.9 Research Methodology

1.9.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design, since no discrete numerical data was produced. Thus, the data was in form of words rather than numbers. This is so because human behaviour is best explained through words. In fact in Africa, since people have a tendency to pass information orally, qualitative approach is suitable as

it emphasizes oral communication and gives the respondents a chance to state their problems the way they perceive them.

1.9.2 Variables/ Categories of Analysis

The study looked at the Sabaot clans/sub-ethnic groups as the main tool of analysis. The community was categorized depending on where they have lived. They included; the Mosop who have lived in the high altitude on Mt. Elgon and the Soy who live on the lowlands of the slopes of Mt. Elgon. Despite where they live, the Sabaot are grouped into different clans, perceived to have arrived in the present region at different times. The clans included; the Kony, perceived to be the original Sabaot; the Bok, who are the most populous; the Bongomek, perceived to be more inclined to the Bukusu; the Sebei/Sabiny, perceived to be related to the Sebei of Uganda; Someek, believed to be close to Sebei and the Chepkitale who sometimes claim to be among the original Kenyan inhabitants of the region. These differences helped dig out sources of conflicts among the different clans of the Sabaot community.

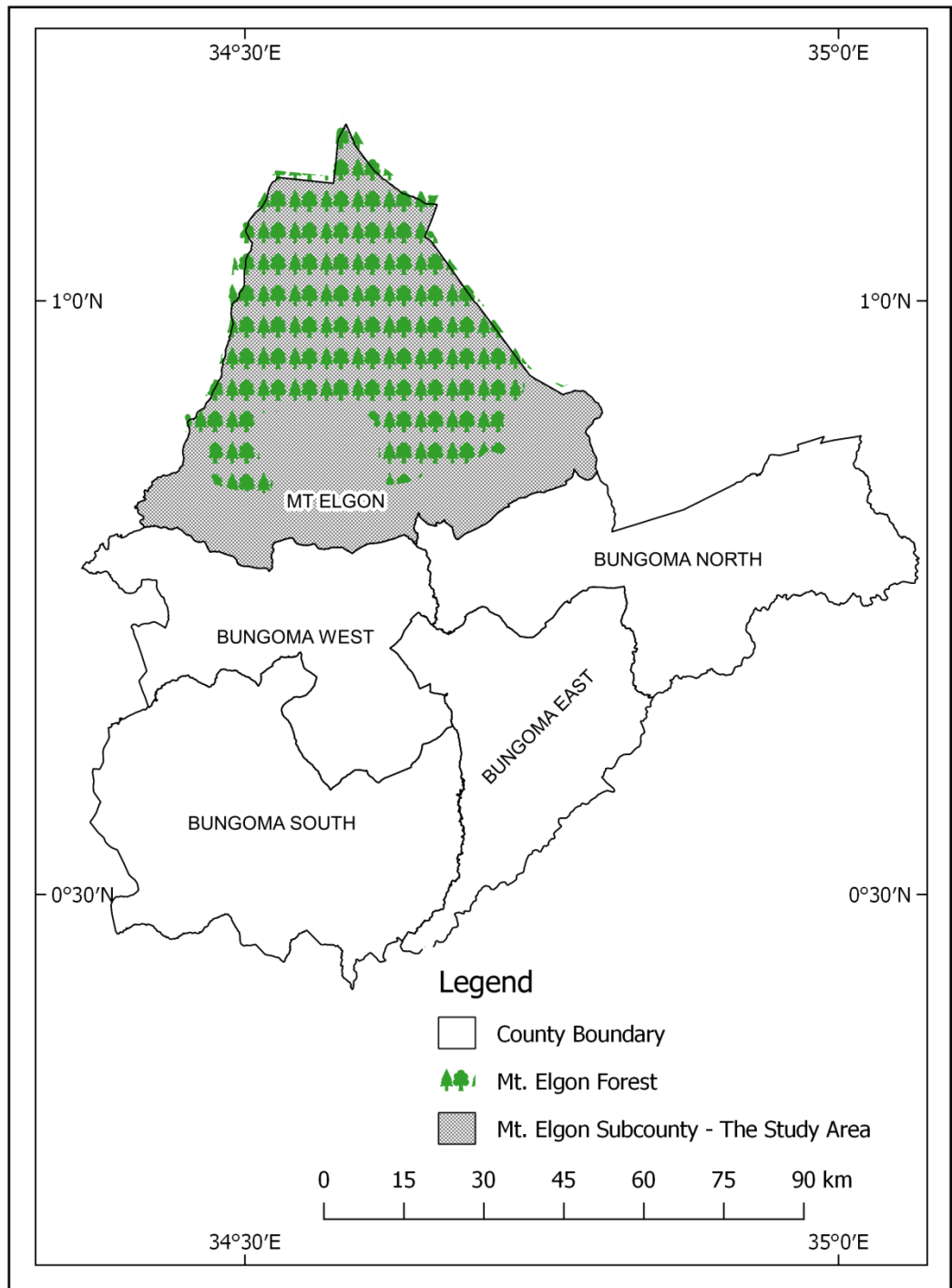
1.9.3 Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Mt. Elgon Sub-County of Bungoma County (see map on next page). This County is found in Kenya (see appendix 2.1). Kenya is a nation found on the East African part of the Continent of Africa (see appendix 2.2). As a district, (now re-named sub-county) it was established in 1993 by President Daniel arap Moi's presidential decree. It is located on the south-eastern slopes of Mt. Elgon and rises to about 800 meters above sea level in the south and 1430 meters above sea level in the north. It is bordered by Mt. Elgon to the north, Uganda to the west, Trans- Nzoia County to the east and Bungoma West and Bungoma North Sub-Counties to the

south. Thus, it has both internal and external boundaries which have been constructed over the years either by the Europeans or by successive Kenyan governments on grounds of ethnicity and administrative convenience.

It covers an area of 944 square kilometres, of which 600 square kilometres is forested. The Sub-County has rich, loamy soil and a favourable climate with two rainy seasons suitable for agriculture. The area of study is generally underdeveloped with poor transport and communication network and few social amenities (educational and health facilities). The study site has people from different ethnic backgrounds. The Saboot are the majority constituting about 60% of the total population. Among the minor ethnic groups are the Luhya and the Teso among others. It has eleven wards which elect eleven Members of the County Assembly. Since 1963 the area has had five members of parliament representing them. They include; Daniel Naibei Moss (1963- 1979), Wilberforce arap Kisiero (1979-1997), Kimkung Joseph, N (1997-2002), John Bomet Serut (2002-2007), Fred Kapondi (2008-2012) and the former member of parliament, John Bomet Serut who is the current member of the National Assembly.

Fig. 1.9 Administrative Map of Bungoma County Showing Mt. Elgon Sub-County



Source: Geography Department of Kenyatta University, 2016

1.9.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Non-probability sampling technique was employed. This technique ensured that those interviewed were representative of the total population as much as possible. The researcher, with the help of the research assistants identified knowledgeable people using purposive sampling. This was in respect to the objectives of the study. Identification took into account the representation of the six sub-clans of the Sabaot, the ages and the gender. Thus, at least three people were selected from every sub-clan. The larger clans were accorded a chance to choose more respondents on the basis of snowball sampling. Among the chosen sample were seven youths, seven middle aged people and nine old people. The number of the old people was more because the research is historical. There was proper gender representation of at least six females out of twenty three. Though the 'a third gender rule' was not fully adhered to, the female representation was adequate on advice of my research assistants and on grounds that the Sabaot are a patriarchal community. Thus at least twenty three respondents were chosen as representative of the target population.

1.9.5 Research Instruments

An interview guide (see appendix 1) with open ended questions was used. This guide helped the researcher and her trained assistants to explore many issues of concern to the study. The researcher and her assistants used pens, pencils, notebooks and a tape recorder to record the information from respondents. Mobile phone interviews were employed especially where resourceful persons like politicians were not available for the face to face interview.

1.9.6 Data Collection Procedures

Since this study is historical, it was of qualitative nature. Thus, the main data collecting methods were from primary as well as secondary sources. For the purposes of this study several libraries were consulted. Among them was the Post-modern library of Kenyatta University, The University of Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta Memorial library, the Macmillan library among others. From these libraries reference was made to relevant books, theses and dissertations, journals, newspapers and magazines. Other books and articles were sourced from the bookshops and friends. Internet sources were also consulted for seminar and conference papers as well as other written works unavailable in the written sources.

Due to weaknesses of omissions of some works in the written and internet sources, and probably a check on the accuracy of information, primary sources were consulted. This included materials from the Kenya National Archives (KNA). The archival information was derived from records on North Kavirondo District and those on Bungoma and Elgon Nyanza. Other archival materials from other areas that were relevant were consulted. Since it is difficult to get archival information from 1970 from the KNA, post-colonial governmental documents were consulted. They included parliamentary committee reports and presidential commissions of inquiry.

Archival information was weighed against information from oral interviews conducted in the area of study. This was the main method of data collection in the field. The interviews were guided by written questions that were mainly open ended. Where necessary, the oral interviews were supplemented by telephone interviews with resourceful persons like politicians who were not available for the face to face

interview. While in the field, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) became handy especially where some groups were conducting counselling meetings. The study heavily relied on the research assistants who helped identify twenty resourceful persons among the council of elders and others. Thus purposive sampling technique was employed, and where applicable, snowballing, where an interviewee referred the researcher to a more knowledgeable person who had not been identified. Therefore the selected number was not rigid, but was controlled. Care was taken to put on board interviewees from all the Sabaot sub- ethnic groups and to cater for age and sex disparities. During the interviews, members were asked to talk freely, and using a tape recorder, the information was taped. Pens and pencils were also used to write down some important information from the interviews. Other information was collected from observations made by the researcher in the area of study.

1.9.7 Data Analysis

Data got from both primary and secondary sources processed qualitatively as follows:

- i. Taped oral interviews in Sabaot were translated from the local language to English.
- ii. Comparison between all data collected was done and grouped according to the objectives.
- iii. Similarities and differences of the data from the above sources were tallied.
- iv. Data that was not in tandem with the objectives were harmonized.
- v. Ambiguous answers were interpreted and categorized
- vi. Contradicting answers were verified.

After sorting out the material, all the jotted material from the tapes, books, journals, theses and dissertations as well as printed material from newspapers, magazines and internet sources were kept safely in a lockable box and within reach by the researcher.

The grouped data was analyzed according to historical periods outlined in the objectives. The researcher's contribution was incorporated and necessary conclusions about the study were made.

1.9.8 Data Management and Ethical Considerations

Careful and detailed preparations were done before the research process begun. This included:

- i. Obtaining research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).
- ii. Preparing a working schedule for the research.
- iii. Choosing and training research assistants who were conversant with the local language and culture.

The respondents were informed about the intention of using them to participate in gathering information about their community's history. They were informed about the use of their names as contributors to information that was to be gathered. Those who resisted their names being mentioned were granted consent. After completion of the study, the information would be made available for use by any relevant institution for the betterment of the society.

CHAPTER TWO

THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ROOTS OF INTRA-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG THE SABAOT

2.0 Introduction

There exists a very close link between history and geography. So close is the link that to grasp one without the other is difficult. The relationship is dependent on the fact that the two disciplines represent two important dimensions of the same phenomena. Thus, history views human experiences from the aspect of time, while geography views them from the perspective of space. Thus history is dependent on geography in terms of the space the event took place, while geography depends on how history has modified the space. This may be summed up by what Mwanzi (1982) states, that even though geography may not fully explain why a people choose to settle in a certain area, the geography of that region affects their way of life.

On the other hand, the historical roots of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot examines the period before the actual declaration of a protectorate by the British over the region that the Sabaot are settled and after the coming of the Europeans to this region. Therefore it marks an important period that covers the pre-colonial life up to a restructured colonial lifestyle. In this description, a construction of the society's lifestyle is witnessed. In this construction, the social, economic and political structures are revolutionized to the expectation of the colonizers. These constructions come with areas of suspicion within the community.

This chapter examines the geographical setting and historical roots of the Mt. Elgon Sub-County. The main aim of this chapter is to explore the geographical setting and historical roots of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot and delineate its

significance on intra-ethnic relations as an in cursor of conflict and conflict resolution. This forms a pre-view of the intra-ethnic interactions before the actual period of study that commences in 1945.

2.1 The People

This study undertakes an analysis into intra-ethnic relations of one of Kenya's ethnic groups; the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon Sub-County. We start by looking at the observation by Lynch (2006:49-50), that an ethnic community is impossible to define clearly, since no clear formula exists of what constitutes such a group. There is no clear delimitation to membership and non-membership. Lynch (2006) goes on to give some common elements used to define ethnicity. Such commonalities include; linguistic and cultural similarity and geographical concentration. She adds that there must be an idea of shared interests 'from which a discourse of important similarities and unimportant differences can flow' (ibid, 2006:50). Thus, even the definition of the word has evolved over the years from the mid 14th century to the present, as demonstrated by Green (2005).

The above illustrations form the basis of our analysis of the Sabaot and ties into the theory of analysis of this study, which is constructivism. Here it denotes that the word in itself has continually been constructed, thereby affecting various ethnicities. Berman (1998) demonstrates this constructivism in African ethnicity from pre-colonial to colonial and to post-colonial periods. Mwanzi (1982:4) uses this for the Sabaot and asserts that '...are seen as a result of the evolutionary processes'. Therefore the synonym associated with the Sabaot ethnic group is still negotiable as

shall be demonstrated in the next chapter. For now we can look at it from a geographical perspective.

The term Sabaot as Nyukuri (2008) asserts is synonymous to ‘Somek’ and is used to refer to those in the region of Mt. Elgon who have a hunter-gatherer background. They are said to be one of the nine sub-ethnic groups of the Kalenjin ethnicity, a point the oral interviews dispute, majority claimed to be of Maasai descent while a few claimed indigeneity of the Mt. Elgon origin. Thus, they claim to be the original inhabitants. They did not migrate from anywhere to the region. Be it as it may, the other eight kalenjin groups include; Sengwer, Turgen, Terik, Keiyo, Kipsigis, Pokot, Marakwet and Nandi who live in the former Rift Valley Province. From this, other Kalenjin sub-ethnic groups refer to it as a sub-ethnic group commonly referred to by the other Kalenjins as “Kapkugo”. We shall come back to this in the later chapters.

The Sabaot are six dialects namely: the Pok/Bok, Somek, Mosop/Chepkitale, Kony, Bongomek and Sabiny. However it is registered as an independent ethnic group by the Kenya Government. Geographically, the Sabaot are divided into two categories; the Mosop (highland) and the Soy (lowland). These terms are purely geographical with clan groups cutting across the highland and lowland categories. The geographical space of dividing the Sabaot is what resulted into conflicts between the Mosop and the Soy from the 1970s. Nyukuri (2008) contends that when immigrants arrive they change the place-names, giving settlements a different ethno-geographical reference. This sometimes, and could be the case, taken as insult by the local communities since place names have a great historical and emotional value. This is elaborately discussed in the next chapter.

2.2 Geographical Location, Administrative Frontiers and Climate

The Mt. Elgon Sub-County has numerous boundaries that define it and at the same time bar settlements and population movements. There is an international boundary between Kenya and Uganda, which divides people of the same ethnicity, the Sabaot, or more specifically, the Sebei sub-ethnic group of the Sabaot. There are also internal boundaries that are for administrative convenience. They also play a major role at the local level. Again these boundaries have been constructed over the years either by the Europeans or by successive Kenyan governments on grounds of ethnicity. However, some have been established on the basis of topographical considerations. The forest reserves and national parks, for instance, were established in different locations over the years. This has been both on the Kenyan side and Ugandan side. People were, as a rule, not allowed to inhabit the high altitude areas, except the Chepkitale moorlands occupied by the Chepkitale on the Kenyan side of Mt. Elgon hence their name the Mosop. This was because of the creation of forest reserves and national parks.

The history of boundaries in this region is interesting. Boundaries have been and are still negotiated mainly for political gains. The history dates back to the colonial period. For instance, Medard (2008) observes that Trans Nzoia district, east of Mt. Elgon in Kenya was reserved for European settlement, while Bungoma and Mt. Elgon district to the south of Mt. Elgon were part of an African reserve. In this reserve is the location of the Sabaot ethnic group. As she further observes, boundaries have been instrumental in creating population reserves on the basis of ethnicity. This has been one reason to the ethnically motivated violence witnessed in Kenya. We shall explore this issue in our later chapters.

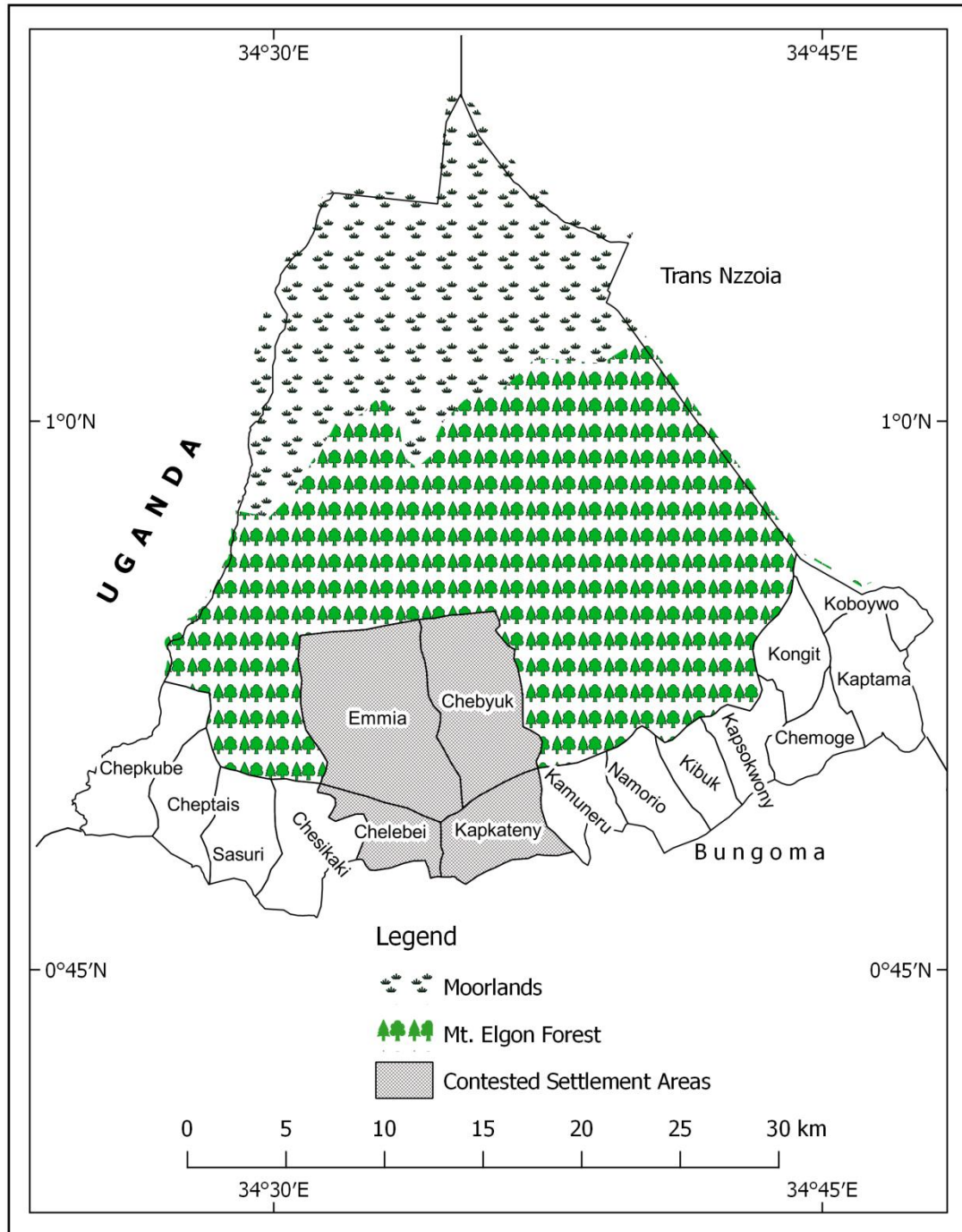
When we explore other geographical parameters of this area, we find that it is situated on latitude 0 degrees 48` and 1 degree 30` north. Longitudinal location is 34 degrees 22` and 35 degrees 10` east. The region covers a total area of 936.75 square km of which the forest covers 609.6 square km. We ask ourselves why the Sabaoth have for decades loved this place.

We have already noted the longitudinal/latitudinal geographical location as well as the altitude. This gives us a clue to the type of climate experienced in the region. Climate is therefore moderated by the altitude. Since the region is located on the environs of Mt. Elgon, the altitudinal moderation gives it cool temperatures of between 14 degrees to 28 degrees Celsius. The rainfall is between moderate and high. It ranges from between 400mm to 1800mm annually with a long dry season from November to February. This of course has a bearing on the occupation of the people.

Since Mt. Elgon is mentioned, and around it the community's history is built around, it is vital to look at the role it plays. In Rotberg (1971) the explorer Joseph Thompson, after touring Mt. Elgon, and being amazed by the caves on the mountain slopes, discovered that the caves were homes for the natives, described as the Kony. Actually the mountain was named Elgon by Thompson after an encounter with the El Kony/the Kony people (Kakai, 2000). The mountain is the attractive scenery found in the study area. This in itself justifies the theory of analysis that there was construction and deconstruction of names as Europeans arrived in Kenya, which in themselves were seeds of conflict sowed between the various sub-ethnic groups. In-fact one would wonder if Thomson did not interact with the other sub-ethnic groups around the mountain. This means that he constructed the Kony name and elevated it to a more

superior meaning, while demeaning the other names of the other groups. This in it would not be far from instilling seeds of hate to the other sub-ethnic groups.

Fig. 2.2 Geographical Map of Mt. Elgon Sub-County



Source: Geography Department of Kenyatta University, 2016

The mountain serves as an ecosystem, a water tower, game reserve and a compass point for North- Western part of Kenya. It is an extinct volcano, formed about 15 million years ago. Thus its uses have also been constructed. It has a diameter of about 50 miles and rises from about 1400m to about 4310m altitude. It is located north of Lake Victoria on the border between Kenya and Uganda (Kihuthu, 2005). The mountain contains the world's largest caldera. Probably this description of the mountain's significance is what has made the Sabaot ethnic group have the zeal to protect her territory. They have been zealous to defend their existence around the mountain.

2.3 Physical and Natural Resources

The physical and natural resources cannot be separated from Mt. Elgon. The area's vegetation is zoned by altitude. Three major vegetation types are observed. They include: the montane forests, found between (2000 and 3500) feet; bamboo zone, between (4000 and 4500) feet which have scattered vegetation; and moorland zone (4000 and 4500) feet and has very little grassland vegetation. These vegetation zones have attracted different types of wildlife to inhabit them (Kihuthu, 2005).

The mountain ecosystem in the area of study forms one of the richest biodiversities of the world. They harbour a wide range of bird species of about 240 species, and it's considered one of the Important Bird Areas (IBA) in Kenya. Species like the Splendid Starling is only found in this habitat. The mountain is also a suitable habitat for snakes, chameleons, frogs, tortoises and snails. Tortoises are found in salty springs which the Sabaot call *Koong'ta*. Oral accounts have showed inhabitation of about 30 species of mammals but only twenty can be check listed. The remaining ten seem to

have disappeared probably because of the infringement on the habitat by man. Different types of mammals inhabit different vegetation zones. Indigenous tree species are Elgon teak, cedar and rosewood which are almost becoming extinct and being replaced by exotic ones. Several shrubs and tree species are exploited for their medicinal purposes. This practice is now becoming commercialized. Since the uses are again being constructed for commercial purposes, and as oral interviews intimate, to be really a recognized individual in the Sabaot culture, one must exhibit material wealth. This in itself can be a source of conflict.

Along with this, is the notion of conserving nature by the community under study, which is enshrined in their culture. Their cultural beliefs forbade killing a pregnant wild animal. They also had a belief of staying for one week before drinking any milk if you had eaten any wild meat. Young boys were also forbidden from hunting since they were likely not to observe the norms. Thus they conserved the environment in which they lived. This conservation must have gone a long way in the quest to safeguard their territory. Thus, anything that tampered with what they had safeguarded for so long would face an equal amount of resistance.

Mt. Elgon is also considered among the five water towers in Kenya. It is a source to a number of rivers. Of mention are the very few out of many found in the area of study and not the whole area around the mountain. They include; Rakook, Terem, Sosio, Kisawoi and Suam. The rivers have a lot of spiritual, emotional and cultural beliefs attached to them by their clans. For instance, for the Kamukeen clan, a newly married woman from western Elgon could not cross Kisawoi River into Trans Nzoia without denouncing her witchcraft and throwing it to the river. Rivers have also had other religious significance. They are considered as very holy and sacred places where

certain vital societal rituals are carried out. For instance; each clan has its own specific river belonging to it historically and religiously. Thus lessons for initiates are undertaken on these rivers. This again almost personalized the area to be synonymous to the Sabaot. The rivers acted as uniting factors through their religious significance.

The Sabaot community practices pastoralism and crop farming. This is because the region has fertile soils. They initially were pastoralists, but due to constructivism in economic activities, necessitated by the arrival of the Bantu stock in the pre-colonial period, and that of the Europeans into this part of Kenya, they adopted crop husbandry. The change of the land tenure systems later became points of conflict over possession of land among the Sabaot clans.

We have seen the major role that Mt. Elgon plays in the area of study. It is like the whole livelihood and culture revolves around the mountain. However, it is important to note that the area is recognized as trans-border mountain ecosystem. The political boundaries that were drawn by the colonial government did not recognize the community or the features since they had not set eyes on the region. The boundaries have actually severed the community and the functioning of the ecosystem. However, the area can benefit from larger scale regional approach to conservation and development. This is still within the operation of the constructivist theory which this study is applying.

2.4 Migration and Settlement of the Sabaot

We have already discussed about the area the Sabaot ethnic group is found. This influenced their perception to their habitat and created zeal to protect their habitat. But how did they arrive to this unique ecological environment? Where had they

come from? And why have they not moved? These are the questions to be addressed by this section.

Though debatable, the Sabaot are said to belong to the Kalenjin. However, the very origin of the Kalenjin to which the Sabaot are said to belong is very obscure. First, the origin of the name is politically motivated as shall be seen later. They are said to fall into the category of Nilotic groups, who many authors agree to the fact that there is insufficient information regarding their history. These authors include; Ehret in Ogot, et al (1971), Were (1972), Kipkorir (1973), Atieno (1977), Towett (1979) and Mwanzi (1982). However, their original homeland is cited to be somewhere in the north or North West of Lake Turkana neighbouring Ethiopia (Were, 1972). Ehret in Ogot, et al (1971) contends that they are black skinned as the Bantu but with distinct histories. He suggests that they probably inhabited an area along the southern fringes of Ethiopian highlands near Lake Turkana region.

Since the Kalenjin fall into the Highland Nilotic speakers, Ehret (1971) continues to assert that they had a strong Cushitic influence which included not eating fish, practice of circumcision as a chief initiatory observance, adoption of the cyclic age-set system and borrowed their vocabulary. He observes that they kept livestock, practiced grain agriculture and iron working though emphasized cattle keeping. As Sutton in Ogot, et al (1971) observes, Nilotic migration and settlement is reconstructed mainly from linguistic and anthropological evidence. Ehret (1971) also observes that generally for every movement that took place in Africa, change was triggered and that there must have been several occasions when migrants were quietly absorbed into the pre-existing communities. In essence, communities were in a state of flux and changing their ethnic composition from time to time. This led to

construction of new identities as explained by the theory of constructivism. Therefore, he observes that migration and expansion of a people in East African history is best understood as the accumulation of many small movements of people over a period of generations.

For the Kalenjin speakers, their history of settlement according to Dr. Shruballs' examination quoted by Mwanzi (1982), led him to conclude that Kalenjins represent a fusion of four groups; the River-Lake nilotes, the Bantu, the Maasai and the Pygmy element (Okiek). Mwanzi (1982) sees it as a recent historical phenomenon, a process of ethnic interaction which forms a continuing theme in Kalenjin history. He associates it with the coming together of peoples of various ethnic and linguistic origins from which emerged a new ethnic group with its own language and culture; a society that is constantly changing. Kipkorir (1973:73) asserts that the word Kalenjin refers to the Nandi or Chemng'ala. It emerged as a product of World War II broadcasts. At the same time, servicemen from this group who wanted to identify themselves used the term subsequently making it official in the 1940s. However, all authors on the Kalenjin history agree to the fact that their origin is not clear just like the other Nilotic speakers to whom they belong. By default then, the history of the Sabaot is equally not clear.

Were (1967a), contends with the issue of their origin not being clear. He cites an area to the north or northwest of Lake Turkana, while Orchardson suggests a place called To, a neighbourhood of Lake Baringo (ibid). Since the study is not about the Kalenjin as a whole, we will not want to be caught in the mix of uncertainty. Let us for now contend with the conclusion of Were (1967a), that according to Huntingford, Orchardson, Mc Geagh, Hobley and the oral traditions of the Abaluhya, the present

Kalenjin sub-groups were one united community living on Mt. Kamalinga to the Northwest of Mt. Elgon. Later they migrated and settled on Mt. Elgon, where after some time, a second dispersal took place, disintegrating the Kalenjin and leaving Mt. Elgon with the Kony, Bongomek, Bok and the Sebeyi. But this conclusion is unsatisfactory since the other two clans of the Sabaot are not mentioned; the Sabiny and the Chepkitale.

This is explained by Kimkung (O.I, 2010), who asserts that the Sabiny are taken to be part of the Sebeyi, who they claim should belong to Uganda, pointing to an area of conflict. The Chepkitale are explained by Lynch (2006) as those who call themselves as a distinct ethnic group, probably with a similar history as that of the Sengwer. Kapchanga (O.I, 2011) and Sikirio (O.I, 2014) contend that the Sabaot acknowledge having been at Sengwer- present Cherangany area. Their father Kingo, they say, moved from Sengwer to Mt. Elgon region, with his four sons, Chebok, Chepkony, Chesabiny and Chebong'om, who later formed the four clans of the Sabaot; Bok, Kony, Sabiny and Bongomek respectively. This almost agrees with what Kisenbe (1978:30) observes. He says that King'oo and his wife Tamunae are the Kony ancestors who gave birth to Kipsomek, Kongin, Kimosop, Kipsengwer and Kibongom forming the Sabaot clans Kony, Someek, Bok, Mosopisyek and Bongomek, although the two do not generate same names. Again the Chepkitale and Sebeyi are left out; an area of suspicion also develops from this causing conflict. Probably what Lynch (2006) explains of them being indigenous to the area is true. But even though, Lynch's argument is questionable, she argues that it is unsustainable due to complex and extended histories of migration, intermarriage, interaction and assimilation, not to mention the specific contexts from which the term stems from. However, each of the

sub-groups tries to explain their migration and settlement differently. Were (1967a:20, 47) states that the word Kony is synonymous with Sabaot, as he is seen as the oldest of the Sabaot clans. He posits that Kingo and his wife Tamunae gave birth to six sons, namely; Kipsomek, Kongin, Kibok, Kimosop, Kipsenwer and Kibongom. This he translates to represent the clans. Be it as it may, the Sabaot clans emerge to be a construction of several historical forces embroidered in our theory of analysis, which in itself raises areas of suspicion among the various clans.

If we move from the composition of the Sabaot, the classification of their belonging to Kalenjin is unclear. Ehret (1971) displays a table on linguistic classification of Highland Nilotes in Kenya and the Sebei, Kony, Pok, Bongomek and Okiek are listed along with Pokot, Markwet, Elgeyo, Turken, Nandi, Nyang'ori and Kipsigis. This means that they were different sub-groups of the Kalenjin. Be it as it may, the issue is that the Sabaot were divided into different clans which have had conflicts over the years in their area of settlement, in this case, Mt. Elgon region.

2.5 Socio- Economic and Political Organization

Since this topic can make a study of its own, we are not going to elaborately discuss it as it is out of the scope of this study. We will only briefly highlight the social, economic and political issues that from pre-colonial period could be a source of conflict or resolution to conflict within the Sabaot community.

2.5.1 Social Organisation.

The Sabaot believed in a Supreme Being called *Yeyia* (Kirui, O.I, 2014; Mary C, O.I, 2014). He was believed to be the creator of heaven and earth. He was believed to be living in the sun (ibid). In the morning the head of the family would pray facing the

rising sun for blessings to help him face the day. In the evening, he would pray again facing the setting sun, specifically asking *Yeyia* that all those people who do not wish him well and family to go down with the sun (Towman, O.I, 2010; Kiboy, O.I, 2010). This exemplified a kind of conflict in which God was left to solve.

The Sabaot also believed in witchcraft. This was believed to be done by an evil man who never wished others well. He would even bewitch livestock which was highly regarded to the extent that the cow could not even produce a glass of milk (Cherono, O.I, 2011; Sile, O.I, 2012). The bewitched used herbs for healing. If it persisted, they contacted prophets who told them the witch. The bewitched would opt to migrate (ibid). This again is exemplified as a cause of conflict within the Sabaot community. The witches and the bewitched caused ethnic conflict in and within the clans.

During the initiation of the Sabaot, both boys and girls were circumcised. Girls and women were circumcised to eradicate prostitution and adultery since men would go out for war for many days. They also learnt how to treat their husbands, hence divorce was minimal. For the boys, circumcision enhanced cleanliness and inculcated bravery. They were trained for war. Thus, in a way, harmonious co-existence within the society was promoted. Since both boys and girls were circumcised, they were declared ready to marry. Polygamy was not an evil as people were considered rich by the number of children they had, alongside livestock (Cherono, O.I, 2011). Although the mix of many wives brought conflict that would even culminate into witchcraft.

From the perception on circumcision for both boys and girls, it clearly shows that the society was patrilineal, the type described by Berman (1998) as “patriarchal power exercised across differences of genders and generations, lineages and clans, languages

and cultures.”In-fact Khamala (2009:57) observes that patrilineality and patrilocality are the consequence of interaction between ethnicity characteristic of the sabaot. This is embedded in agnastic kinship described as a system in which one belongs to one’s father’s lineage (ibid). This generally involves the inheritance of property, names or titles through the male line. From the Focus Group Discussions FGDs, it was concluded that it was not possible to treat a boy equal to a girl. Even their very orientation from childhood, the son is trained to be the protector and could even join the warrior grade at the age of fifteen, while the girl at twenty five would still be at their home. The son was seen as an heir in the event of the father’s death. He was viewed as a security officer while the girl was looked at as a source of income that would be netted from bride price. This explains why the boys were radicalized throughout history.

On the other hand, the Sabaot conferred to women the status of a peacemaker. They wore a belt, *legaret*, which symbolized peace and reconciliation (Khamala, 2009:76). In the case of an extreme violent conflict, the woman would remove the belt and place it down. The warring groups/individuals were expected to cease fighting and make peace. Women were also valuable in important functions and rituals. For instance, certain rituals like calamities required the sacrifice of and participation of a virgin girl. The virgins could also be given as rewards to distinguished warriors. In our view there were gender bred conflicts within the community arising from the above gender discrimination. However other rituals like childbirth, marriage, naming, initiation, courtship, parenthood, kinship identity and funeral rites were celebrated and united the community as one whole. It brought cordial intra- ethnic relations.

It was also found out from the FGDs that the community accepted the children born by their girls out of wedlock as members of the clan, but would always carry a certain name that would be an indication of their status. Men who remarried widows also accepted them to their homes with their children, who became members of that family. Also, an old man would allow his young wife to sire children from outside if he was incapable of performing his marital duties. Such amalgamations of different family members brought with them some form of conflict within families and clans that would even result into death by way of murder or through witchcraft. This in-fact cuts across from pre-colonial period to the post-colonial era.

The Sabaot community is best described by Khamala (2009:66) as heterogeneous. This is because according to him, they incorporated in their fold aliens who drifted away into the tribal orbit either during peaceful times or following times or periods of social upheavals, like war, famine and epidemic. War captives contributed to the formation of sub-clans, but their descendants first assumed the host clan's name and appended their own maternal or paternal origins to make clear their background and distinctions. The male captives of war were given brides by foster parents to help evolve into complete clans within the ethnic community. The community also had refugee clans which unlike the individual aliens, they tended to inherit original clan names and only changed their ethnic affiliation by adopting the language, basic traditions like circumcision and adhered to the basic tenets of the culture. This was a means of increasing clan size for defense in times of external attack. These perceptions and behaviour would later be areas of conflict between and within clans as identity issues were raised (Sile, O.I, 2012).

The Sabaot clans are noted to be totemic. Thus, they showed particular plants, insects and animals that are deemed by their clan to identify and symbolize the particular clan from other clans (Khamala, 2009:76). This can partially explain why the clans would conflict (Chemaek, O.I, 2014).

2.5.2 Economic Organization

Achola (1990:14) asserts that the basis of any conflict in any society is inherent in the economic sub-structure. This is why it is important to look at the economic organization of the Sabaot and identify issues that have been conflictual especially in the pre-colonial society. This is because; the issues keep transcending historical epoch with very little metamorphosis.

The Kalenjin group as described by Towett (1979), and to which the Sabaot belong, were semi-nomadic pastoralists who moved when circumstances and geographical conditions favoured them. They could stay at a place for a good number of years if not disturbed. This is supported by Were (1972), who contends that they were pastoralists in an uninhabited country who freely grazed, roamed and hunted in the neighbourhood. For the Sabaot, they had rights to caves and hunting grounds which operated on *pororiet* basis as shall be seen later. The Mosopisiek/Chepkitale/Ogiek lived above the forested areas, 6000 to 10000 feet above sea level, a place called *kapteeka* (bamboo land). According to Kisembe (1978:34), the late 19th century rinderpest outbreak and raids from neighbouring communities compelled most of the Sabaot, particularly the Kony, Bok and Bongomek to adopt cultivation on the fertile foothills of the mountain. Their diet was therefore mainly meat from both domestic and wild game, milk, blood and porridge. Therefore, from the foregoing adaptations,

as Kakai (2000:69) puts it, especially in the 20th century, specific areas were associated with particular sub-ethnic groups leading to emergence of ancestral land. From the oral interviews, the term *Bikap Koret* was used long time ago to refer to ‘owners of the territory’ when the Sabaot were truly owners of a vast territory. However this did not bar other people from neighbouring clans or sub-ethnic collectivities to settle in areas which were not associated with their clans or sub-ethnic groups (ibid). Even people from other ethnic groups found their way to the Sabaot area of jurisdiction. No wonder it was noted that part of their land was taken up by the Bukusu (FGD) as shall be demonstrated later. This in essence, further led to reconstruction of the clans.

2.5.3 Political Organization

Family life was considered very sacred among the Sabaot. Apart from performing religious duties by the head of the family, who was the father, he also performed the political role. He solved disputes and protected the family. Families were exogamous and formed smaller sub-divisions on clan basis and occupied a certain ridge (Kakai, 2000:65). It is argued by Kisémbé (1973:36) that particular families shared camps. Kakai (2000:65) further states that within an enclosure or cave, boys and girls who had matured were moved from their parents’ rooms to their grand parents’ houses. He further posits that the *Murenik* (warriors) lived in separate camps called *Kotap Mureen* (Houses of warriors). A group of Sabaot families constituted villages in which could be found members of clans. A group of clans separated from each other by natural features like bushes, hills, rivers or escarpments formed a *Porosiek*. This was a territorial unit with a warrior group assigned to defend them from external attacks.

The village heads who were referred to as *Laitirian* settled all sorts of disputes, meaning that there were conflicts which they handled. They presided over cases and divided the land in the village. They actually controlled emergence of conflicts between members. The Sabaot also had a council of elders to assist in judicial matters. Thus, what the village head could not handle went to the council of elders (*Kokwet*). It was composed of the oldest age-set members. This was a well controlled system of controlling and managing conflicts within the Sabaot community.

Kisembe (1978:39) asserts that several *laitariani* were under an overall leader called *Kirwagindet*- in plural *Kirwagiik*. He wore a cloak of monkey skin which no one else did, a necklace of iron with pendants which signified authority. He was selected carefully after looking at certain qualities. The qualities included; being tolerant, not greedy, not having tyrannical tendencies, being wise and judicious. This was crucial because he settled disputes between villages. He was to be consulted when a new village was to be set up. His office was not hereditary. If in the family of a previous *Kirwagindet* nobody existed with the accepted qualities, elders easily looked for candidates from other families.

The highest ritual leader among the Sabaot was called *Worgoondet*. Some clans called him *Oloibon*. The singular form was *Worgoondet/oloibon* while the plural form was *Worgoik/ Laibon* (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). His duties were performed through dreaming. They inspired the warriors during war time and during raids, though physically, they never took part in the wars or raids. They were rewarded with cattle obtained from the raids. His office was hereditary. In essence, this signified a society that was prepared for both internal and external conflicts.

2.6 The Impact of Sabaot Relations with her Neighbours on Intra-ethnic Relations

Though Sabaot relations with her neighbours is out of scope of this study, Mwanzi (1982:167) observes that the coming together of peoples of various ethnic and linguistic origins in the 18th and 19th centuries led to the emergence of new ethnic groups with their own language and culture. In-fact constructivists allude to the fact that no ethnic group is homogenous. Since human beings are interactive, his behaviour is moulded by what he gains from other social groups. This interaction during the migration and settlement of the peoples of western Kenya led to adoption of new culture, language and custom which led to the emergence of a unique culture. A culture that would on one hand unites and on the other divide. However, the ethnic groups that emerged were not political entities with a common system of government. Despite the common traditions and language, each sub-ethnic group or group of clans was a separate entity. It is therefore important to look at the contribution of interaction of the Sabaot with other ethnic groups and the resultant impact on the Sabaot relations.

It has already been stated by Mwanzi (1982) that the Kalenjin were a mix of four groups; the Highland Nilotes, Maasai, Bantu and some Pygmy element allied to the Khoisan of South Africa. It means that even before the Sabaot reached their settlement of Mt. Elgon, they had borrowed character from various groups, which differentiated the various clans. Were (1967a) observes that the Bongomek and Bok claim some of their people originally belonged to the Sirikwa and that they formerly lived in Sirikwa area of modern Uasin Gishu Plateau. Kitembe (1973) holds that the Bongomek entered Mt. Elgon region via Bugisuland and that some are still in

Bugisu.Wandibba (1983) concludes that prolonged periods of Bongomek and Luhya gave birth to Tachoni. The Bongomek abandoned their language and adopted the Bantu language. This view is supported by Were (1967a) and Makila (1978). This background illuminates the different clans as different ethnic groups with different interests. And so areas of conflict from their differences could arise.

When we look at the economic practice of the Sabaot after the attack by rinderpest, they adopted crop farming they had learnt from the Luhya. Even the eating habits, like taking porridge were learnt from the Luhya. All along their interactions with the Bantu, intermarriages were witnessed which transformed the very social fabric of the Sabaot. They culturally practiced circumcision, which they were unable to perform. This was because the Sabaot circumcisers were ridiculed until they gave up (Kakai, 2000). It was considered not an honourable profession. So they utilized the availability of the Bukusu circumcisers whom they hired. During times of conflicts between the two ethnic groups, the Sabaot suspended circumcision, even up to five years. In brief, the interaction between the Sabaot and other ethnic groups was both harmonious and conflictual, and to some extent transformed their socio-economic set-up that later became a point of conflict within the various clans.

This transformation in itself impacted different clans differently. The people who migrated to western Kenya settled as members of clans and not as a united ethnic group. This was elaborately shown by the choices of where they settled. However, they knew about each other and had regular contacts. They had long periods of peaceful co-existence which were sometimes interrupted by inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts. On many occasions, reconciliation meetings were held and the warring groups resolved their conflicts through an oath (*muma*) taken by both

parties(Khamala, 2009). Thus, even with inter-ethnic interaction, the Sabaot clans underwent transformations that were perceived to be sources of conflicts amongst them. However they had solutions to these conflicts as has been mentioned earlier.

2.7 Establishment of Colonial Rule and its Impact on Intra- Ethnic Relations

In the previous sub-section, we showed how the Sabaot interacted amongst themselves socially, politically and economically. Potential areas of conflict and harmony were highlighted while pin-pointing to possible ways in which they handled the conflict. This sub-section picks up from that point to discuss the interaction of the community with strangers, strangers that were surrounded by a lot of myths from the community's foretellers. This does not mean that it was the first time for the community to interact with strangers. The strangers earlier highlighted were fellow Africans who, through both conflictual and harmonious interaction, contributed to their holistic development in one way or the other. They helped mould the fabric of the intra-community relations. Let us see the impact of the next group of strangers to intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot.

The mentioned region is found in a country called Kenya (see appendix 2.1), which before 1895 did not exist (Kisiang'ani, 2003:55). The same author alludes to the fact that inland areas of the present Kenya, of which the constituency under study belongs, were in a web of domestic economies comprising of nomadic and sedentary pastoral forms of production and limited shifting cultivation of annual cereals under the production of female labour on very small pieces of the vast grazing fields. Thus conflicts were witnessed within rather than between economic zones. Thus, land tenure rules were obsolete since land was vast. They however had historical contacts

with the Arabs and Swahili traders interested in ivory and slaves from the interior. The coming of the British complicated the matrix into the process of colonization. Thus, Kenya was formed out of a deliberate cultural, political and economic construction of the West.

Just like elsewhere in Africa, European interests in Africa predated its scramble and partition. For East Africa, Omwoyo (2003:100) postulates that the Uganda region was of crucial importance to the British. First, it was the source of the River Nile, which was the lifeline for their other important region, Egypt. Second, it was safeguarded for its strategic economic reasons. This interplay of factors brought Kenya into the limelight as it was a passage from the Indian Ocean Port of Mombasa to Uganda. Since this study is not about Kenya and how it was colonized; let us try to examine how the Europeans arrived into the western part of Kenya, where the region under study is found.

The interaction of Africans and Europeans in this part of Kenya was when the Europeans arrived as traders, travellers and missionaries, and transversed the region for different reasons (Wekesa, 2000:94). This was because, generally the Europeans in the 18th century, through their explorers, Christian missionaries, traders and administrators, as explained by Muraya (2009:82), spearheaded their activities. During this time, Consul-General John Kirk made significant changes in the British economic policies, which encouraged European private companies to come and operate in East Africa (Leys, 1973:42). To safeguard her economic interests in East Africa in the wake of rivalry and impending competition from the Germans in Tanganyika, the British sought to secure their interests in Uganda permanently (Omwoyo, 2000:100). This was done through a series of agreements, which included

the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. The conference was very important because it set up guidelines that were to be observed by European powers in the partition of Africa. From this conference, Kenya was preserved for the British as was their aim to help control Uganda. Since then, as Leys (1973:92) observes, there was an influx of European settlers and missionaries into the protectorate through the invitation of Sir Charles Elliot. This was the general perspective of colonialism in Kenya. What could have transpired in the area of study with regard to colonialism?

Were (1967a:156) suggests that the British contacts with the area under study dates back into 1883 when the Scottish explorer and adventurer Joseph Thomson and his companion J. Martin came to Mumias. They were on their way to Uganda and in the company of some Arab- Swahili caravan traders. Thus, they passed around the Elgon region. At this time, it is important to mention that Mumias was very important since it was the home of the Wanga described as the most important tribe in Kavirondo and more powerful and civilized than any other (KNA DC/EN/3/1/1-1930). We will not delve into the intricacies that surrounded the coming of the visitors and how Mumias became important because it is out of the scope of this study. But let us focus on a group of people who shaped up the politics of colonialism in the Mt. Elgon region.

In 1889 imperialists Frederick Jackson and Ernest Gedge from one of the important companies given authority to administer the protectorate, arrived at Mumias. This company was the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEACo). His intention was to map out a serviceable route to Uganda. In 1889, he signed a treaty with Nabongo Mumia to make Western Kenya region a British sphere of influence (Were, 1967a:157). When he settled that, since Mt. Elgon had fascinated them, and from around it came ivory, he went for a walk. While there, he saw the vast resources

associated with the mountain and decided to secure the area. This he did through signing a treaty with *Kirwagindet* Kimingichi of the Bok in Mt. Elgon in February 1890 (Kakai 2000:85). While he was still signing the treaty with the Sabaot and looking for ivory, back at Mumias, a German adventurer and founder of the German East Africa Company (GEACo), Carl Peters tricked Mumia into signing another treaty with him and putting the area into a German sphere of influence (Wekesa, 2000:98). This forced a negotiation between Germany and Britain which culminated into the signing of the Heligoland treaty in 1890 (Kakai, 2000:95). The treaty sorted the difference putting Kenya and Uganda under British sphere of influence and Tanganyika under German sphere of influence (Omwoyo, 2000:100).

In the culture of the African people, it is very important to highlight that they considered treaties as very important. This is why as earlier mentioned; the treaty signed between *Kirwagindet* Kimingichi of the Bok and Sir Frederick Jackson was an entry into blood brotherhood relation (Kisembe, 1978:80; KNA/PC/NZA/3/14/29B:1949-56). Blood brotherhood as explained by Kakai (2000) was probably the highest expression of trust among African communities. This is why Kimkung (O.I, 2013) gave a narrative of an invasion of the community by the Nandi, Maasai and Samburu. The Whiteman they had seen had disappeared. So they escaped to (present day Amagoro). They reached a place that was heavily infested by *Chelelmok Morie*(pythons) and named it *Kabindiraroi*. While there they helped the Teso to defeat the Basoga their traditional enemies. But when the white man they call Rego met them, he urged them to go back home and no one would attack them since he would protect them with the gun. They believed him on the strength of the treaty and went back. We will come back to this later. Whereas the Africans valued the

treaties one wonders whether the Europeans shared the same sentiments. But Kakai (2000) reiterates that they were not sincere. Theirs was a trick to persuade the African leaders to allow Europeans to operate in those territories. In essence the treaty that was signed actually operationalized the presence of the British in the Mt. Elgon region.

Going back to the Helligoland treaty of 1890, the British Government did not assume immediate control of their 'sphere of influence' from the IBEA Company, yet the company was experiencing dire financial, transport and military problems (Wekesa, 2000:99). Thus the company lacked the ability to administer the territory (KNA PC/NZA 1/4-1908-1909). It went bankrupt, withdrew and the British Government took over to control the region (Nangulu, 1986:43). This period is what Kakai (2000:84) calls 'the structures of colonial rule were under construction'. Therefore, on 10th June, 1894 Uganda was declared a British protectorate. The protectorate was divided into provinces. Mt. Elgon region fell under the Eastern Province of Uganda. The first appointed commissioner of the Uganda Protectorate was Sir H. Colvile. On his way to Kampala, which was the Capital of the Protectorate, where he was to take up his appointment, he camped at Mumias. On departure, he left behind Frederick Spire to found an administrative station there (Were, 1967a:157). This area actually transformed into a hub of the Eastern Province of Uganda and the nucleus around which British colonialism evolved (Wekesa, 2000:100). Since this area was under the influence of Mumia, his influence extended across the border to the people on the slopes of the mountain (Osogo, 1975:25). However, with the evolving structures of colonial rule in the protectorate, the Eastern province was transferred to the British East African Protectorate which roughly represents today's Republic of Kenya. Thus,

the Mt. Elgon region now fell under the Lakes Province before transforming to Kavirondo and finally to Nyanza Province after 1909 (Aseka, 1989:152).

When the colonial powers were shifting the Eastern Province from British Protectorate (Uganda) to British East Africa Protectorate (Kenya) on April 1, 1902, Mumia was similarly receiving official recognition under the Headman Ordinance of 1902 as the Chief of Buluhya (Aseka, 1989:152). In 1912, Mumia was again recognized as the official Headman under the Native Authority Ordinance (ibid). This is summed up by Mamdani (1996:16) as creation of a bifurcated system in which no indigenous institution would be recognized even as Africans were to conform to European laws. This system as described by Kakai (2000:96) could only epitomize African leaders employed to oversee and oppress other Africans of different 'tribes' in the neighbourhood. Favouritism was experienced, pitting Africans against each other.

Inevitably, the policy of divide and rule by the British was at work. This is summed up by the assertion that colonial period witnessed inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts that were nurtured by the policies and conditions created by the British colonial rule. The policies and conditions as; first, dividing the regions into districts that did not take into account the interests of the affected communities. Secondly, the imposition of foreign chiefs created mistrust and hatred among communities. And thirdly, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflict was nurtured by the economic policies of the British colonialists (ibid). This led to disparities in resources and amenities between ethnic groups, sub-ethnic divisions and districts, fostering ethnic disunity (ibid). Ochieng (1975:54) sums it up by asserting that the pre-colonial lineage or clan tensions were now exported, extended and heightened within the colonial

“Headman’s territory”. All this constructed new societal behaviours which then increased tensions within inter and intra-ethnic relations within the Mt. Elgon region.

Mumia, with authority and recognition bestowed upon him by the British, went about appointing his Wangu relatives to serve under him between 1902 and 1912. Thus, in 1908, he together with his brother Murunga accompanied the then Acting District Commissioner (DC) of North Kavirondo to divide Buluhya into eight administrative locations (Kakai, 2000:96). They included Butso, Kabasi, Marama, North Kitosh, Nabakholo, Samia, South Bukusu and Wangu. Some of the boundaries displeased the local communities, later evolving into seeds of resentment against the Wangu (Were, 1967a:167). However to rule over Abatachoni, Babukusu Teso and Sabaot communities, two chiefs were appointed. According to Kakai (2000:96), Mumia recommended Sudi Namachanja, the son of his friend from the Babukusu to administer South Bukusu while his brother Murunga was given North Kitosh to which the Sabaot belonged.

The leaders were to collect poll and hut taxes and recruit people to offer labour for public works in road constructions and building of bridges. Again this work was carried out in a brutal way. This is exemplified by a petition filed by Chief Tendetti against the Bukusu encroachment on his community’s perceived ancestral land (KNA/PC/NZA/3/14/23:1944-49). In his explanation, he stated that the authoritarian Chief Murunga used to flog the Bok, Bongomek and Kony in order to make them work as instructed by the colonial authorities between 1908 and 1909. This is complimented by Towmann (O.I, 2010) and Kipseret (O.I, 2012), who assert that at the dawn of colonialism, Sabaot men had decided to sport dreadlocks. We believe that to some of them, especially the ones we interviewed (FGD), Murunga was a Bukusu,

probably because of the rivalry that has existed between them over the years. To them, the Bukusu chiefs decided to subjugate the Sabaot men by literally pulling out their dreadlocks. This was a painful experience and majority of them ran away.

The running away could be explained in two ways. First, they already had been prophesied to by their Oloibon that strange visitors would come carrying fire in their mouths. They would also come with very powerful spears that they would hit on target (Kirui, O.I, 2014; Chacha, O.I, 2014 and Patrola J, O.I, 2014). Probably this coupled with the fact that their traditional enemies, the Bukusu were the ones executing this exercise, the worst option would be to resist. This could be why they ran away. Secondly, while at *Chelelmok Morie*, they were requested by Mr. Rego the Whiteman earlier talked about to go back to their homeland since they would be protected by the gun (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). They divided themselves into three groups. Probably this was on clan basis. We would also want to speculate that it is possible some people remained at the Mt. Elgon region.

It is interesting that the group led by mzee Tendetti was relocated back home. When they were attacked by the Bukusu, they lost all of their livestock. Tendetti quickly reported to Mumias about the incident and he was given by the DC four guards with guns to protect him. He must have posed as the important one as it is the nature of man to feel above others. He had just talked to the Whiteman. No wonder, he remained a headman at the arrival in their homeland. These divisions in themselves could have first led to further reconstruction of the various clans and secondly posed possible areas of conflict among the clans. The Bok clan which was led by chief Tendetti was considered as a traitor among the other clans of the Sabaot (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). This strained intra-ethnic relations. However, the Sabaot continued

promoting the spirit of blood brotherhood through ceremonies like circumcision, child naming and marriages. These ceremonies never ceased to take place even though the ethnic group was grappling with issues of division. This was a method of fostering peaceful intra-ethnic relations.

What then happened to the areas where the Sabaot had vacated due to the brutal treatment of those executing colonial labour policies? As the complaint of Chief Tendetti alleged, the Bukusu who were equally escaping from Murunga's mishandling, moved and occupied the land that had been vacated by the Sabaot (KNA/PC/NZA/3/1/1:1909; Wagner, 1949:33). This is what Kakai (2000:99) describes as creation of physical and structural conflicts. These types of conflicts are further described by Assefa (in Kakai, 2000:99) as those that arise from the unjust, repressive and oppressive political structure. This, he contends causes a psychological friction and disturbance that victims desperately look for emancipator means.

The inter-war period in Mumia's area of jurisdiction saw further oppression to his subjects, particularly those of other ethnic/sub-ethnic groups. This is when the able bodied men as described by Kakai (2000:97) were conscripted to serve in the wars as carrier corps or pioneer corps, soldiers, constructors and manning of road blocks, wars that had nothing to do with Africans. The conscripts were taken into military Lorries from schools with false promises of being taken to non-military camps. They only landed at military training centre (Wekesa, 2000). Those who did not join the military camps were forced by the agents to provide food and cattle for the army. The amount of taxation was also increased to cater for the war fund. Life became unbearable. No wonder some Sabaot basically looked for alternative shelters in caves on the mountain to evade flogging as well as paying poll and hut taxes (Kisembe 1978:23). By 1939 as

Wekesa (2000:194) asserts, pioneer corps were being recruited in Nyanza Province and the colonial chiefs did it very brutally. This forced some members in the Kitosh region, the Sabaot inclusive to evade conscription by relocating to the established white settler farms in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu to work for wages in the farms. The Sabaot who relocated were mainly the Kony. This is why the majority of the Sabaot living in Trans Nzoia County are Kony (Kiboy, O.I, 2010). Some Bukusus hid in the bushes while some Sabaot relocated to hide in the caves on the mountain (ibid). However, not all the Sabaot hid on the mountain. Some volunteered to be conscripted for fear of the superiority of the Europeans (Kapchanga, O. I, 2011). But as Aseka (1989:330) asserted, high numbers of male workers moved out of the district in the late 1930s. Thus, the nature of the European engagement with the Sabaot community was more of divisive than uniting. It is only the traditional celebrations that kept uniting the Sabaot clans during this period.

For the men who were conscripted in the military, some became soldiers while others constructed and manned roadblocks on the boundaries of neighbouring countries to avoid military attacks. Since the Sabaot are skilled warriors and during initiation they trained to shoot on target, (Kirui, O.I, 2014; Chacha, O.I, 2014) they were mostly chosen as soldiers. Their counterparts the Bukusu, because of their heavy muscles and physical strength, were assigned construction. If this prevailed, then one would want to imagine that more Sabaot must have been killed in battle than the Bukusu. It also implies that when the soldiers came back, the number of the Sabaot soldiers had reduced. They therefore had nothing good to boast about the war. They had survived death. This is why Sikirio (O.I, 2014) and Kimkung (O.I, 2013) intimated that the ex-soldiers were just there. They came with money, bought land, married, settled and

kept to their own selves away from the rest. This divided the community since others perceived them as proud (Kibocha, O.I, 2014). Yet among the soldiers they were nursing their frustration of the war.

With the hiding and relocation of some males from the Kitosh region, the colonial government had to look for sufficient measures to recruit the army. This was coupled with the high demand of labour for the army. Thus, many local administrators became more dictatorial in their recruitment and this annoyed the local people. Stringent measures were put on the squatter system thus affecting the clans that were running away to Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu. Thus in March 1944 squatters were allowed to work for 240 days up from 180 days per year (Wekesa, 2000). These measures helped increase the number of able men conscripted into the army. The communities therefore witnessed loss of the useful male population in their areas. The communities had also to provide food and cattle to the army. Cattle were very close to the heart of the Sabaot as far as their economy was concerned. Many had to seek refuge on the mountain to hide their cattle. Those who lost their stock had to look for means to steal others even from among their kinsmen (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). This bred intra-community warfare on a small scale.

How did the chiefs execute the order to raise enough cattle for the colonial government? It was through the raising of allotment of animals and people. People were encouraged to take their animals for 'auction' to achieve this. This enabled the colonial government to acquire the animals at a very cheap price. In the same vein, tax was increased to cater for the emergency war fund. All these contributions went to the Central War Fund, Ambulance Fund, KAR, the Pioneer Corps and other units of the forces (KNA, DC/NN/1/22:1940). As can clearly be seen, what was put in place

was purely for the European welfare. The African needs and rights were out of question. Reactions of resentment from the affected 'tribes' were inevitable. The Saboot were part of the groups in the reactions against such mistreatment. The other very sensitive issue that affected the Saboot was loss of their land. Let us find out about this in the next sub topic what happened.

2.8 Colonial Land Policies and their Impact on Intra-ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon Region

Kisiang'ani (2003:59) argues that no discussion of the history of colonial Kenya would be complete without critical understanding of the role of land in shaping the colonial state. Thus, he says, Europeans assumed that Africans could only be induced into civilization by continuously interacting with the Europeans. They thought, to achieve this, they had to have permanent residence among the Africans. Thus, acquisition of African land was symbolic assurance of political control which in turn guaranteed economic safety (ibid, pg 63). But the owners of this land were Africans. Land in Kenya, from the pre-colonial period was central to her economy, culture and politics. It is also around land that socio-cultural and spiritual relations among community members were and are defined and organized (Republic of Kenya, 2002). How then did the British interfere with the African perspective of land in Kenya? Colonialism not only imposed alien land tenure relations in Kenya, but also introduced conceptual, legal and sociological reorganization in the traditional tenure systems prevailing in the pre-colonial societies.

How then did the British bring about the conceptual, legal and sociological reorganization in the existing traditional tenure systems? We have already seen

that new administration in their respective areas of jurisdiction was introduced. Additionally, the British introduced new terms of land ownership. This was through laws termed as ordinances right from their arrival in 1890 to the time Kenya was declared a Republic. As elaborately explained by Mweseli, (2000:3-22), they ranged from Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890 to Native Lands Registration Ordinance of 1959. The details of land laws would best be explained by Law academicians, but for purposes of this study, few of those laws will be mentioned. Kenya Land Alliance (2004) states that ever since the court declared Africans as Tenants at Will of the Crown following the promulgation of the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915, the problem of landlessness was born, and it has persisted in Kenya.

But at the point of introduction of new administrative units to new terms of land ownership by the British government, Africans did not make sense of it. There was an indigenous land tenure system in which the final say lay in the hands of the family, clan or ethnic community (Kakai, 2000:101). This did not matter to the British. Following the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890, that in summary allowed all land to be owned by the crown, the IBEA Company promulgated regulations which permitted it to lease land for grazing, residing in and for other agricultural purposes. In 1897, the protectorate authorities promulgated the East African Land Regulations in order to provide land for settlers away from Sultan's dominion and offer certificates of occupancy for a period of 21 years (Mweseli, 2000:5). A year later, lease period was increased to 99 years. Mweseli continues to explain that in 1901, the East Africa (Lands) Order in Council defined Crown Land as all public lands within East Africa Protectorate which was under the control of the Crown by virtue of any treaty,

Convention or Agreement and all lands which have been or may hereafter be acquired by His Majesty under the Lands Acquisition Act of 1894 (ibid).

As we said earlier, the laws were many. But this particular enactment meant that Africans had lost their land. This was cemented the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902, revised in 1915. The revision was due to an opposition in 1908 as stated by Okoth Ogendo (1991). This led to the total disinheritance of land of the indigenous population. This meant that African interests were to be considered first. This as Kakai (2000:103) reiterates, were insincere since they continued to acquire and administer land selfishly. This led to occupation of a huge chunk of land that was very fertile in colonial Kenya. The region commonly referred to as the 'White Highlands' was inclusive of Trans Nzoia District which by November 29th, 1912 occupied a lot of the present areas of Bungoma County to which the area of study is found. The line of demarcation was from the source of River Kamukuywa in Mt. Elgon forest, passing through the confluences of rivers Kibisi and Nzoia to River Kipkaren opposite Marabusi Hill (KNA/PC/NZA/3/7/2/2:1912-1923). This demarcation pushed the Sabaot alongside other ethnic groups by an order to move to the west of the boundary by end of December 1912. Kakai (2000:104) asserts that the communities did not just move and obey the order, but that they resisted until they saw their houses being burnt. Probably the art of burning houses in an event of a conflict must have been learnt from them. Thus the evictions changed the status of the indigenous communities to squatters, and with the application of the other regulatory provisions as earlier mentioned, relegated them to offer wage labour to the white settlers as has been earlier discussed.

Mweseli (2000) continues to assert that the effect of Crown Lands Ordinance 1915, the Kenya Annexation Order-in-Council 1921 and the Kenya Colony Order-in-Council 1921 was to take away all native rights in land reserved for their occupation, by way of vesting all land in the Crown and leave natives as tenants at the will of the Crown in the actual occupied land.

To go a little deeper into the effects of the laws to the African communities, after successfully reinforcing settlement of the Whites, the lands required labour to be productive. This was for the exclusive benefits of the whites to be able to economically extract something from the annexed lands. This was against a background of a native population that was self-sufficient within its pre-capitalist economy. The settlers were to engage them to provide labour. The natives did not know about money. Their lands had been taken away. They had to be introduced to wagemlabour against a background of a settler economy that could not sustain high wages. Thus the settlers devised instruments of public law and the reserve's policy (Okoth, 1991). This was done through compulsory taxation, official conscription, kipande system and direct recruitment by the colonial administration which resulted in coercion of natives into wage labourers in settler farms (Mweseli, 2000:9). The relevant legislative instruments were Hut Tax Regulations, the Native Hut and Poll Tax Ordinance and the Native Registration ordinance (ibid). Other laws notwithstanding, African labour was annexed by force. This came with complaints and demonstrations from both the Africans and Indians. This necessitated the Devonshire White Paper Agreement of 1923.

As earlier stated, the Sabaot alongside the Babukusu and Tachoni ran away to Trans Nzoia to escape Murunga's highhandedness in implementing the colonial labour laws.

Apart from this definitely disagreements would not miss. Kitembe (1978:25) explains that Kosus, one of the Kony leaders disagreed with his kinsman Kiptek in the 1920s. This made the former to flee from the area, and because of him being influential, he moved away with other members of the clan. Additionally, since they required more land for pasture, more Sabaot moved away from the Mt. Elgon moorland into Kisawai in Trans Nzoia (KNA/PC/NZA/2/10/7:1931-51). Additionally, with the colonial gazetement of the Mt. Elgon forest area, more pressure on pastureland forced the Sabaot under Kosus to cross River Suam and settled among their kinsfolk the Sebeyi of Uganda. As the groups of Sabaot clans moved, some remained behind. This divided these groups so that as they came back, they could no longer hold as one. Those who came back were mistreated by the ones who remained (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). For instance, Kosus returned to Trans Nzoia and died there (Kitembe, 1978:108). This bred intra-ethnic rivalries that later pitted one clan against the other. This was the main explanation of disagreement between the Chepkitale and the Kony (Kiboy, O.I, 2010).

From the foregoing, it emerges that there were cross-border relations between the Sabaot of Kenya and their kinsfolk, the Sebeyi of Uganda. Since our boundaries are porous, one could tap into this phenomena and aggravate conflicts in an area. This is going to emerge in the later chapters of this study.

2.9 The Coming of Christianity and its Impact on Intra-Ethnic Relations.

We begin from the assertion by Samita (1992:85) that most of the changes affecting Kenya today, whether political, economic or socio-religious can be easily traced to the period of the arrival of the colonial settlers and the missionaries. The latter preceded

the former. However, the contribution of missionary activities to the whole question of ethnic relations in general and intra-ethnic relations in particular cannot be understated. Common knowledge has it that Christianity impacted on social relations within and between communities. Depending on the adaptation of these social relations, conflicts were inevitable, whether intra or inter-community conflicts. This unfolds in the paragraphs below.

Mt. Elgon region is associated with the Friends African Industrial Mission (FAIM) also referred to as the Quakers. They were the first missionaries to arrive in Western Kenya in 1902 (Samita, 1992:90). It transformed into Friends African Mission (FAM) due to its focus on the missionary activities with less emphasis on the industrial aspect and set up the first mission station at Kaimosi. Gimode (1993:143) observes that when the missionaries arrived, they were a representative of a whole culture, and not just a religion. To them, the culture was Christian and that industry and western education were Christian virtues. This they justified by setting up an Industrial Department at Kaimosi, which they thought was necessary in founding a Christian civilization in the midst of a barbarous people (KNA, EAYMF 64/80,1910). But the people they called 'barbarous' had their own culture and religion. Thus, as they interacted, the two cultural forces glared at each other: one Christian and the other indigenous, with the first having a premonition to changing the later. This, as Gimode (1993:144) describes, was going to be of great historical significance as the decades unfolded.

Since this study is not just about the FAM but how it penetrated to the area under study, Kakai (2000:108) asserts that they gradually spread to other areas including Lugulu or Kitosh station in August 1913. Between 1913 and 1920, under the pioneer missionaries; Dr. A.B. Astock and Mr. J W. Ford, the Quakers set up a church, a

mission primary school and a hospital (Kakai, 1992:174). Between 1920 and 1930 Quakers expanded rapidly in what was administratively known as North Kitosh that comprised of the Mt. Elgon region and other parts of the present Bungoma County. The impact of the Quakers in this region saw the rise of schools and the consequent increase in the number of Africans that enrolled to attend school. Definitely, a cultural transformation with consequent measures of resistance was inevitable.

FAM was not the only Christian mission in the region. The Catholic Church, whose influence in the region began in the 1920s, built its first church at Kibabii in 1931. Kakai (2000:108) explains that between 1925 and 1935, catholic influence spread very fast in South Bungoma. However their spread was not fast in North Kitosh. Wekesa (2000:147) alludes to the fact that the rivalry between the Catholics and Protestants made them divide the region into; a protestant dominated region in North Kitosh and a Catholic dominated region in South Bukusu. There were other minor denominations which included the Salvation Army and Anglicans. Their influence was however minimal compared to that of Catholics and Quakers. This rivalry is the cause of conflict between communities along religious lines.

Going by Shilaro's observation on Christian missions (Shilaro, 1991:130), that they undermined clan and ethnic affiliations among the Kabras, this could also be the case among the Sabaot. Though no clear cases of division is mentioned both in oral interviews and written records, it can be postulated that the demand for the removal of Chief Murunga by the Bukusu from chieftaincy was heavily supported by the Sabaot. This could have been because they belonged to the same denomination. Since the Quakers had spread their tentacles in the North Kitosh Location, the Africans spoke as one voice. Changes were instituted. In-fact with the new colonial restructuring, Chief

Tendetti became the new chief of Elgon Location (KNA/DC/EN/3/1/2:1920-1950). But in the drawing of boundaries of locations, the Bukusu and the Bok of Malakisi location as argued by Kakai (2000:114), enjoyed warm relations, probably as united by the denomination they subscribed to. When the Bok were asked if they would be transferred to the new Elgon Location, they declined and preferred to remain in Malakisi. But after a disagreement with the Bukusu after some time, they requested the District Commissioner (DC) of North Kavirondo District, Captain F. D Hislop to transfer them to the Elgon Location where the Sabaot were the majority. Chief Tendetti turned down this request (KNA/PC/NZA/3/14 23:1944-1949). This must have definitely fuelled up intra- ethnic sentiments between those who were in the diaspora in Malakisi Location and those in the Elgon location. Even though they would not manifest themselves as at then, they would express themselves at the opportune time.

There was another development witnessed with the establishment of Christian missions. This was in the agricultural sector; the use of the ox-plough. It was rapidly spreading through formation of ploughing companies. The first company was formed by the Quaker members at Lugulu. This was to help improve agriculture and raise the living standards of the converts. This spread up to the Mt. Elgon region. From FGDs the members agreed that indeed the art of farming and use of the ox- plough was learnt from the Bukusu. Later this technology spread to catholic dominated areas. Of importance to this study is how the Sabaot embraced this new technology against a background of being pastoralist. It is important to remember that land alienation had reduced the then pastoral land and it called for substantive measures to handle food security. Some embraced the technology while the cultural die-hards

refused. This again presented an agent of conflict between the various clans along class lines. There were those who owned the plough and the poor peasants who conflicted against each other.

As earlier stated the main aim of the coming of the missionaries was to civilize the barbaric Africans. This they did through establishment of schools. For the Quakers who dominated the region, as Gimode (1993:167) puts it, schools existed in so far as they were going to be an instrument of winning converts. Chiefs and headmen were also asked by the Colonial Government to send children to school. The children were captured by Chief Tendetti and his headmen and taken to school at Lugulu (Kimkung, O.I, 2013; Towman, O.I, 2010). This is supported by Wekesa (2000:147) in relation to the Bukusu. However, one of the FGDs contended that it was against their pastoralist way of life that required young boys to tend their fathers' animals and carry out raids. This forced them to adopt a settled life. Some members could not accept this. Kirui (O.I, 2014 and Chemaek (O.I, 2014) argue that there was war between the chiefs and headmen.

Education was also viewed as an agent to spread cultural imperialism by Africans. Thus, as earlier said, the Sabaoit conservative nature could not allow their culture to be tampered with. In-fact, it is alleged that many did not embrace Christianity because of this (Cherono, O.I, 2011; Chacha, O.I, 2014). They stated that the castigation of their treasured culture, like female circumcision, polygamy and ancestral worship in shrines and caves were among issues that forbade their embrace to Christian doctrine. It therefore meant that those who accepted Christianity faced segregation from the rest of the community. In-fact, if he/she stopped to practice the cultural activities they faced stiff penalties including expulsion from the community. However, some Sabaoit

embraced education, went to church, but continued practicing their culture in order to be accepted in the society. Again, this group was treated with suspicion. In this case the Christian objective of bringing an early demise to the traditional African societies' culture and the immediate triumph of a new Christian culture, as postulated by Gimode (1993:145) was far from achievement. Instead what followed was a process of cultural mutation. This is best described against the premise of societal construction of cultural, political and economic set-up.

During the colonial era, the mission educated elite pioneered the setting up of associations aimed at promoting the welfare of their people. In 1936, the Bukusu pioneered the formation of the Kitosh Educational Society (KES) that operated up to the Mt. Elgon region. Their primary concern focused on health, education, agriculture and administration. In 1930s, another organization called the North Kitosh Farmers Association (NKFA) was formed under the umbrella of the Quakers. This movement advocated for better marketing of the farmers' maize of African origin (KNA/PC/NZA/3/1/355:1939-1944). This gave rise to African nationalism in this part of the world. Even though the Sabaot were not very active, probably because of their numbers and conservative nature, the fact that the movement was in their area of jurisdiction made some members to take part in the movement. In essence there were forces that promoted ethnic harmony while at the same time disintegrated the Sabaot community.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, a detailed account of the geographical and historical roots to intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot is given. Among them is the geography of the area

and the migration and settlement that led to construction of new groups forming the Sabaot. The socio-political and economic organisation of the Sabaot also evolved through time and brought with it conflicts as well as conflict resolution mechanisms. The coming of the missionaries and colonial masters was another springboard to the intra-ethnic conflicts in the region. However, the genesis of all these conflicts got a better channel of growth and expression during the decolonisation period. This unfolds in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF DECOLONISATION ON INTRA-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG THE SABAOT (1945-1963)

3.0 Introduction.

It is important to realize that from about 1945, the national scene changed. It was the cry for freedom. Kenyans looked for emancipation. This was a factor that was deeply strengthened by internal and external factors. The ex-soldiers who had served in the Second World War outside Africa saw no difference between Africans and Europeans. In fact this demystified the connotation that the Europeans were a superior race. Coupled with this was the issue of segregation. African ex-soldiers wondered why the colonial government could not settle them in the White Highlands just like the White ex- soldiers. All this fuelled the desire for emancipation.

As earlier mentioned, there were conflictual relations between the colonizers and the colonized. This was because the colonizers had disrupted the indigenous peoples operations and deprived them of their genuine rights of land ownership. The Sabaot were immensely affected by this. There were also issues related to political domination and general social deprivation of Africans by Europeans who destroyed the pre-colonial African organization breeding with it inter-racial, inter or intra-ethnic suspicions, tensions and conflicts (Kakai, 2000:124). The communities experienced conflictual episodes which operated both psychologically and physically within and between communities affected (ibid). Thus, the period from 1945 to 1963 witnessed increased African opposition to colonial policy. The main aim of the Africans was not just to rectify the socio- economic and political injustices, which they were experiencing, but an overthrow of the colonial system (Sifuna, 1990:193). This

general perception permeated to the smallest units of the communities; the clans. Of importance to this study is how the Sabaot clans were impacted by the desire for emancipation. The chapter exposes how the clans participated in the process of decolonisation and how this evolutionised their organisation, bringing with it areas of suspicion as well as unity among the various clans. Let us see how this unfolded in the sub-sections below.

3.1 The Impact of the Second World War among the Sabaot Clans

The Second World War was a contributing factor to intra-ethnic relations in the Mt. Elgon region. It is therefore important to look at the events preceding the war among the Africans in general and Sabaot in particular, before looking at the influence of the war. By 1939 as Wekesa (2000:194) asserts, pioneer corps were being recruited in Nyanza Province and the colonial chiefs did it very brutally. This forced some members in the Kitosh region, the Sabaot inclusive, to evade conscription by relocating to the established white settler farms in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu to work for wages in the farms. Some Bukusus hid in the bushes while some Sabaot relocated to hide in the caves on the mountain (Kiboy, O.I, 2010). However, not all the Sabaot hid on the mountain. Some volunteered to be conscripted for fear of the superiority of the Europeans (Kapchanga, O.I, 2011). But as Aseka (1989:330) asserted, high numbers of male workers moved out of the district in the late 1930s.

For the men who were conscripted in the military, some became soldiers while others constructed and manned roadblocks on the boundaries of neighbouring countries to avoid military attacks. Since the Sabaot are skilled warriors and during initiation they trained to shoot on target, (Kirui, O.I, 2014; Chacha, O.I, 2014) they were

mostly chosen as soldiers. Their counterparts the Bukusu, because of their heavy muscles and physical strength, were assigned construction (ibid). If this prevailed, then more Sabaot soldiers must have been killed in battle than the Bukusu soldiers. Thus, when the soldiers came back, the number of the Sabaot soldiers had reduced. They therefore had nothing good to boast about the war. They had survived death. This is why the Sabaot ex-soldiers were less active in liberation struggles, unlike their counter-parts; the Bukusu (Sikirio, O.I, 2014, Kimkung, O.I, 2013). They came with money, bought land, married, settled and kept to their own selves away from the rest (ibid).

At the end of the Second World War, the situation was different across the world. USA had bombed and devastated the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marking the defeat of Japanese Imperialism and German Nazism (Maloba in Ochieng (ed), 1989:176). The end of this war witnessed the emergence of new superpowers, the USA and USSR. A new world order had to be set up with the inauguration of the United Nations Organization (UNO). Thus, they pressurized the colonial regimes to give up their colonies and institute self governance. At the same time, as if luck was on the African side, the defeat of Britain and France who were the major colonial powers generally reduced the mystique of the imperial powers. The imperial powers were out of strength to carry out their colonial duties. They wanted to concentrate on consolidating their nations back at home. The costs of maintaining colonialism in terms of social, economic, military and psychological sustenance was unbearably high (Ochieng, 1989:201). Their strength and appetite for colonies was waning away.

Back in Africa, the ground was hot. African political consciousness was high. The appetite for liberation was high. The war had revolutionized the ex-soldiers and

destroyed the myth of the invincible colonial powers. The exposure of the ex-servicemen activated them to get new ideas from across the world as they interacted with people from various parts of the world. As they came back to Africa, they assessed their political position. Despite their high economic and political awareness, problems waited for them on their arrival at home. They had no employment and no adequate finance. What they were given as token was a drop in the ocean. They joined their kin in the reserves that were crowded and unhygienic. They glared at oppression in their own lands; slaves in their own motherlands. This they could not stomach.

When the ex-soldiers came back from war, they expected the promises they had been given, that of better life to be granted. Instead, what they witnessed was segregation. As earlier explained, the white ex-soldiers were given land in the white highlands for free and the Africans were not. The picture they depicted to Africans was that of adamancy. Yet, back at the war, the Africans did, if not were able to do what the Europeans did. Why did the Europeans think they were superior? This fuelled the desire for emancipation. Even though from the onset of the period after war the Europeans wanted a gradual repatriation back to their country, theirs was going to be gradual since there was a large presence of settlers and they had vast investments in the country (Ochieng, 1989:204). This necessitated nationalist agitation and rebellions to hasten the pace of the independence of the colonies (Wekesa, 2000:222).

It is worth mentioning that African liberation was not just about the ex-soldiers. Other stakeholders played a major role too. There was an increasing crop of mission school elite as well as those Africans working in other fields that set up political parties and societies through which they demanded self governance (Kakai, 2000:123). This we shall come back to later, but now let us focus on what was taking place in the area of

study. Were they in the picture of the liberation struggles that were taking place across the country? We pick up from the African political participation in the whole country.

Wekesa (2000:223) explains that officially recognized fora for African political participation in Kenya were curtailed at the onset of the Second World War. Thus, there was a total ban on political organizations that emerged across the country when their leaders were detained at Kapenguria (Shiroya, 1972:3). Although this aimed at controlling the African political parties and activities during the war period, Wekesa (2000) argues that it effectively succeeded in destroying the roots of organized territorial nationalism in Kenya. Thus, the area of study was not left out.

Mt. Elgon region has for a long time been administered from Bungoma, either as a district or more recently as a sub-county. The dominant population has been of the Bukusu sub-ethnic group, which presumably has dominated them. Even though they have in one way or another been 'dominated' by the Bukusu, the political surrounding and behaviour of the Sabaot was largely influenced by the Bukusu. Thus, at the time of the Second World War, the Sabaot were in the same administrative district and division. When labour was being recruited, the Sabaot were also recruited. At that time they were in North Kitosh location under Murunga.

Labour recruitment was very important to the Europeans because it helped avoid expensive foreign labour (Momanyi, 1996:26). As Sikirio (O.I, 2014) asserts, the clan quota for the recruitment of labour showed that some clans like the Bok recruited more members than others. In effect they were favoured by the White man than other

clans. These bred structural conflicts among the Sabaot clans as the Bok were considered as allies of the Bukusu.

The above reactions and actions by the colonial government deterred community progress during this war period. The able-bodied men were absent. The Sabaot community as earlier said, practised female circumcision with the objective that in the absence of their men, the women would not be promiscuous. This then implied that with the many events that were denying the community the presence of able men, the women were incapable of reproducing. This was dangerous for the society's continuity. It must be one of the major factors that has contributed to the low population among the Sabaot.

Yet, this notwithstanding, Wekesa (2000:199) observes that the period between 1942 and 1944 witnessed the emergence serious famine in the whole of south Bukusu and North Kitosh. The Sabaot were definitely affected. This mainly stemmed from the absence of the able-bodied men. These men were the ones who provided security with which production could be realized. They hunted in the vast Mt. Elgon forest to supplement food production. They carried out raids to replenish their cattle (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). Now the community was left at the mercy of women and old men who could hardly produce enough to sustain the community. Additionally, there was failure of rains and the price of the maize was high. Some Sabaot clans decided to treasure and practice agriculture more seriously than livestock. These were the Bok who have been at the centre of controversial land allocations that have caused intra-ethnic rivalries.

With all these problems experienced during the war period alongside the others earlier mentioned, agitation for the people's rights was inevitable. The people of the mountain, though fewer in number staged their reactions during this period. But how were all these impacting on the Sabaot clan relations? From the above discussion, this is the summary. First we see a community whose direction has been confused by events. We see those running away from colonial influence across the border to Uganda. We observe a community whose procreation is controlled by circumstances. We see a community whose number has been reduced by the soldiers who do not return from war. Evolution and revolution of new identities shape up. The educated, the cowards, the soldiers, the conservatives and the christians formed identities along which conflicts began to breed. These divisions, though not visible, bred sources of discontentment within the Sabaot fraternity. Those soldiers who returned kept to themselves. The very clan fabric was no longer what it was. Construction took toll. Even as a spirited effort was taken up by some community members in an effort to combat colonialism, others became less bothered. Further community disintegration shaped up. This unfolds in the next sub-section as we look at the emergence and influence of Dini ya Musambwa (DYM) among the Sabaot.

3.2 Emergence of Dini Ya Musambwa (DYM) and its influence on Intra-Ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon Region

DYM was a religious movement through which some Kenyan communities who subscribed to it expressed their grievances and challenged the colonial governance. It was led by Elijah Masinde son of Mwasame. He hailed from the Babichachi Clan and was uncled among the Bameme clan, both of the Babukusu. He was brought up, educated and socialized in the FAM between 1928 and 1935. In 1932, he worked as

an instructor with the mission (Shimanyula, 1978:3). In 1935, he married a second wife and was expelled from the church for contravening their laws (Shilaro, 1991:164). Up to 1942, he was employed by the Local Native Tribunal Court with the sole duty of arresting suspects and attaching their property after Court Orders. This did not amuse him and in due course, he quarreled with the President of the Tribunal and resigned (KNA, DC/NN/10/1/5:1946-1949).

Just about the time of his expulsion from FAM, Masinde was urging his followers to reject humiliation on European settler farms (Makila, 1978:2). In 1943, he picked up Walumoli's dream of 1933 of which the ancestors instructed him to preach the revival of the Bukusu way of worship. This sect was engrossed in the merger between African traditional worship and the Christian doctrine. Were (1971:87), sums it up by asserting that DYM was an attempt to adapt Christianity to suit local demands and practices and to reduce the amount of European culture in Christianity. It spread rapidly from Bukusu and to the Iteso, Pokot, Nandi, Sabaot, Nandi, Marakwet, Gusii, Turkana, and the Karamajong, Gishu, Sebei and the Abasoga of Uganda (Wekesa, 2000:202). From this assertion, it is clear that the Sabaot embraced the religion. However, not all the Sabaot clans embraced the cult. Some considered it as retrogressive to their quest for education (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). The Sabaot who had embraced Christianity condemned DYM. Thus, the supporters of DYM differed with the Christians. This brought intra-ethnic rivalry.

How did this cult spread? This would be attributed to a number of factors. First was the genuine feeling that people needed a religion that was firmly rooted in their traditions and way of life- a religion which would be comprehensible and embrace their social life (Ndeda: 1985). Christianity as taught by missionaries was foreign,

distant, and incomprehensible and even harsh (Were in Ogot, 1971:87). It was intolerant and unsympathetic to the African way of life (Wekesa, 2000:202). DYM thus came in to grant the desire to break away from these teachings and prohibitions (KNA, DC/NN. 10/1/5:1946-1949). The genuine feeling of the people was that the Old Testament was very handy as it promoted practices like polygamy. DYM opposed Christian teachings in the New Testament that supported the purported ills orchestrated by the colonial government in Western Kenya. They included; forced labour, kipande system, land alienation, payment of tax and wage labour. The movement believed that Europeans would be driven out of Kenya and that by 1952, Kenya would be independent (Were, 1971). The above description of the DYM appealed to many Sabaot who had cherished their traditions. They had also suffered the harsh colonial rule. Those who embraced it more were the Sabiny and Kony (Kirui, O.I, 2014). They were the ones that participated in agitation against the white man. Thus, there was intra-ethnic rivalry, though not so outspoken.

The DYM's leadership and followers demonstrated their search for freedom violently. For instance in 1943, they burnt down the Native Tribunal building and three maize and produce shops at Kamutiong' on the slopes of the Mountain. This happened in Sabaot land where the Sabaot DYM supporters actively participated. Since some members of the Sabaot opposed DYM, there was intra-ethnic division among them based on their religious inclinations as Kirui (O.I, 2014) explained.

In 1944, the DYM assaulted tribal policemen and headmen who had been assigned to deliver conscript labour summonses to him and other local members. The same year, they burnt down the house of Bickford, an agricultural officer in opposition to his measures of soil conservation (Kakai, 2000:126). This mainly involved the Bukusu

and the Sabaot. These violent acts made the PC for Nyanza Province to describe the area as one area with considerable political activity (KNA, DC/NN 1/28:1946).

In 1945, Masinde was convicted of assault and sentenced to imprisonment. Later he was confined to Mathare Hospital after being declared insane for two years. No wonder the colonial Government described him as ‘subversive’, ‘persecutory’, ‘a criminal lunatic’, a religious maniac’ and ‘a very dangerous political character’ (Were in Ogot, 1971:88). This did not deter the spread of the movement. It became even more vibrant upon his release. In very emotional rallies, he compelled his followers to manufacture weapons to chase the Whiteman. Just about the same time, he held a commemoration service at Chetambe Fort to remember the heroes who had been murdered by the colonialists in 1895. The Lumboka-Chetambe war was the guiding spiritual force of the DYM. After the ceremony, the colonial forces panicked and arrested the leaders. Riots increased among the Bukusu, but quieted at his arrest. They resurfaced slowly through the unravelling political parties that disguised themselves as unions. This we will look at in the next topic.

But it will be incomplete not to mention the intra-ethnic factors that arose from the emergence and spread of the DYM with particular reference to the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon Constituency. Chacha(O.I,2014) and Kibocha(O.I, 2014), indicated that this sect began in the caves of Mt. Elgon, where Masinde had gone to worship and the ancestors spoke to him. These caves were near Kaptama. They also stated that the talk with the ancestors was affirmed when Elijah was asked to hit the ball to the sky outside the cave. He did so and the ball never came back. When this was happening, some Sabaot elders were with him (ibid). Though this fact may differ with some other scholars, the fact is that some Sabaot had refused to embrace Christianity as had been

noted earlier, and had joyfully embraced DYM. To concretize this, the caves on Mt. Elgon acted as instrumental places of worship. Thus, DYM was never denied access to the caves to worship since the sect was widely accepted and revered by the Sabaot. Especially elders from sections of clans like the Chepkitale and the Kony (Towman, O.I, 2010; Kapchanga, O.I, 2011). In essence, these occurrences led to intra-ethnic rivalries between and within the Sabaot clans; between the believers of the DYM and the non-believers, especially the Christians.

From the above findings, it becomes clear that DYM united those who subscribed to it and pitted them against those who opposed it. Kakai (2000:129) gives an illustration that Christians from within Abatachoni, Babukusu and Sabaot were opposed to the DYM. For instance when they burnt Bickford's house, they also set ablaze the FAM church in the neighbourhood. The Sabaot who were members of FAM were disappointed at the action and criticized their kinsmen. This sowed seeds of intra-ethnic hatred (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). This probably explains why the Sabaot who received education from the mission schools and probably went abroad have never come back to settle in their ancestral land (Towman, O.I, 2010).

3.3 Decolonization and its Impact on intra-ethnic Relations in Mt. Elgon

Before we look at what took place in Mt. Elgon, let us have a preview of the nationwide state during this time. During the Second World War, officially recognized African political associations were banned. Thus, in the 1930s, leaders of political organizations from different parts of the country were detained at Kapenguria (Shiroya, 1972:3). This move as argued by Wekesa (2000:223) effectively succeeded in destroying the roots of organized territorial nationalism in Kenya. But was there

any political party in Mt. Elgon region? Definitely as earlier noted, the Sabaot having been together with the Bukusu in administrative units, whatever the Bukusu took part in the Sabaot also did. Therefore as political parties were being banned in Kenya in 1939, the Sabaot alongside the Bukusu had already made their grievances known to the colonial masters. This was through the KES, which was also banned in 1939. When the DC thought it wise to allow semi-political associations to operate openly so that they could be monitored, the KES quickly recongregated under the Bukusu Union (BU) that disguised itself to concentrate on social welfare (KNA, DC/NN 10/1/:1926-1940).

The changing of KES to BU did not go well with the members of KES who were not Bukusu. Some members of the Tachoni and Sabaot communities withdrew to form their own ethnic unions. Some of the other members steadfastly remained in BU, which greatly embraced the radicalism of the DYM. At this juncture, the Sabaot community was again split along political and social lines influenced by both BU and DYM. This further constructed the community along different lines which definitely resulted into structural conflicts. Thus, towards the later part of 1950s Sabaot Union was formed (KNA /DC/KIT/1/1/1:1960). This union concentrated on cultural issues like clitoridectomy and asking for the Sabaot peoples' own location (KNA/PC/NZA/2/1/54:1931-51). It was led by the Kony under the leadership of Samuel Kimkung, who mobilised elders to lead the Union (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). But some members among the Sabaot did not join the union. This split the Sabaot into two political groups.

Since some members of the Sabaot community had opted to remain in BU, it will be important to look at the impact of BU on the decolonization process. This union as

Kakai (2000:131) notes, had welfare and political concerns. The Union together with the Catholic Union and Kimilili Local Advisory Council (LAC) mobilized collection of funds to send students abroad for training at colleges and universities (Wolf, 1977:152). The prominent beneficiaries of the contributions, among them Masinde Muliro did not include any Sabaot, yet the Sabaot members of the union had contributed to the funds drive. This segregation left the Sabaot less exposed even to participate actively in decolonisation.

Yet this notwithstanding, the BU from North Kitosh had a lot of complains to members who came from Southern Buluhya and which was dominated by the Bukusu. They complained that they were disadvantaged in the way educational resources were being distributed. They noted that three quarters of their resources were being used to develop South Bukusu and that the continued use of Lubukusu in examinations had adversely affected the pupils from the Sabaot community (Kiboy, O.I, 2010; Chemaek, O.I, 2014 and Sikirio, O.I, 2014). This heightened the animosity that existed between the Sabaot and the Bukusu, an issue out of the scope of this study. However from the foregoing, we realize that there was resentment that affected the Sabaot relations. This effect was in terms of a reunion on one side (castigating BU and Bukusu) and division on the other (laughing at their kin for not reading signs of mischief in the Bukusu actions). This made some Sabaot to abandon the union at this juncture. Some feared being laughed at by their kins while others held on to their membership with the BU.

In the 1940s the BU started advocating for the creation of a new district as stated by Kakai (2000:132). This he asserts was to help benefit its members on matters concerning education and other issues related to social welfare. This demand was

realized in 1956 when the North Nyanza District was split due to additional pressure received from the African District Council (ADC) which had significant Bukusu representation. But the colonial administration largely considered the creation of the district because it was going to help combat DYM's activities. Indeed this is echoed in the report of the PC for Nyanza in 1954 when Bungoma was a new administrative sub-station. He reported that the DYM disturbances which had led to the setting up of the sub-station had gone (KNA/PC/NZA/3/1/252:1953-1958). The new district that was created was called Elgon Nyanza. The district had a lot of political connotations, one being that of reducing Masinde Muliro's influence in the region. For now that is not the point of focus, but we note that the name Elgon later became a focal point of negotiating political boundaries that brought with them inter and intra-ethnic rivalries.

In the 1940s the BU again advocated to be transferred from the Kenya Colony to Uganda Protectorate. This would bring their kin; the Bagishu and Sebeyi into interaction with them. However their wishes were not granted, as both the Bagisu and Sebeyi remained in Uganda. This boundary conflict of reconstructing different identities from the same ethnic group will be one of our points of focus in the next chapter, specifically as a precursor to intra-ethnic conflict.

Since nationalist movement had engulfed the whole colony of Kenya, the BU could no longer operate in isolation. As Bode (in Wekesa, 2000:226) argues, district leaders felt that better results for their grievances would be realized if they joined hands with other Kenyans. Thus, the BU formed an alliance with Kenya African Union (KAU) and other emerging Kenyan nationalist movements. Thus, at the formation of KAU, the immediate aim was to support the first African unofficial member of the Legislative Council (LegCo).

KAU's main task was to help express the voice of African nationalism in Kenya, unite Kenyans and advocate for their social and economic progress. Its leadership was composed of the elites from various parts of Kenya (Sifuna, 1990). Members of the BU by extension became members of KAU. This included the Sabaot, among them, Samuel Kimkung and Daniel Moss (Sikirio, O.I, 2014). In fact in 1948, when Mzee Jomo Kenyatta held a rally at Chwele Market in Bungoma, members of the BU from among the Sabaot, led by Samuel Kimkung attended. These were only representatives of two clans; the Kony and the Bok. Where were the rest? This was a point of neglect the other clans received which divided them along these lines.

However, with the declaration of the 'state of emergency' in Kenya in 1952, KAU was banned in 1953 and all other political organizations went underground. Thus, for our area of study, anti-colonial politics after 1953 as Kakai (2000:137) intimates were conducted through the religion-political organization, the DYM. It was until 1955 that the colonial government licensed the formation of African political parties at the provincial level and not national level (Aseka 1989:387). With this licensing, the Elgon Nyanza District Congress (ENDC) was formed under the leadership of Masinde Muliro. This was dominant in Elgon Nyanza District. This further spurred Masinde Muliro's political career to greater heights. But since this is out of scope of our study we rest it at that.

Though the discussion is not against the person of Masinde Muliro, his formation of another political party in the area of study is significant. In 1959, he formed the Kenya National Party (KNP) which advocated for the availability of crown land and unused land in the highlands to Africans. This later transformed to Kenya African Peoples' Party (KAPP) to have a wider coverage (Aseka, 1989:398). He definitely

drew members from the Luhya and Sabaot ethnic groups. Masinde Muliro played a major role in intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot during this period. He divided the Sabaot into those who supported him and those who were against him.

In 1960, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi formed the Kalenjin Political Alliance (KPA), which showed interest in Trans Nzoia as one of the areas claimed to be their ancestral homelands (Kakai, 2000:139). The same year witnessed the merging of ethnically based political parties to form two main political parties. Thus, in 1960, from the 1959 Kenya Independent Movement (KIM) which comprised of mainly the Kikuyu and Luo, Kenya African National Union (KANU) was formed. For fear of being dominated by the Kikuyu and Luo, the other ethnic groups brought together their political outfits. They included; the Maasai United Front (MUF) of John Keen, the KPA of Moi, the KAPP of Muliro, the Coast African Peoples Union (CAPU) of Ronald Ngala and the Somali National Association (SNA). They formed a coalition called Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU).

The two coalitions had two separate ideologies. The former supported a centralized system of government while the later supported regionalism. I will not endeavour to look into detail concerning the ideologies, but will concentrate on how these coalitions influenced intra-ethnic relations in the area of study. Since the Bukusu under Muliro supported KADU, with the kind of ethnic animosity that existed between the Sabaot and Bukusu, some Sabaot opted not to support KADU under the leadership of Moss. Moss had supported Muliro's endeavours for long, but he noticed that Muliro could short-change him and cause suffering to the Sabaot. On the other hand, since Moi who advocated for ancestral land from foreign ethnic identities supported KADU, some Sabaot supported it too, led by Samuel Kimkung. Thus,

structural conflicts shaped up among the Sabaot in terms of the support political outfits were soliciting.

Back to land issues which formed an important component of the negotiations that were going on at the Lancaster House Conference in readiness for Kenya's self rule, the Sabaot were not left out. At the local level and national level, briefs were received from the representative political elite. In the regions occupied by the Sabaot, the politicians that were listened to were Masinde Muliro and Daniel Moss. In 1962, Muliro told the Boundaries Commission that Kitale should form the headquarters of the Luhya dominated western region. The same year, he laid a foundation stone in the middle of the sports stadium, trying to annex it to symbolize what he had declared. The Luhya elders supported this declaration arguing that before the Kalenjin settled in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu, these areas were occupied by the Luhya (Kiliku, 1992:22).

The above declarations did not go well with the Sabaot who were in the Elgon Nyanza Constituency. Thus, through Daniel Moss, they expressed their wish to be administered from Trans Nzoia and to be included in the Rift Valley Region where the other Kalenjins were administered from (Kakai, 2000:146). Thus, they formed the West Kalenjin Congress (WKC) under Moss to help argue their grievances more vividly. They claimed Trans Nzoia as Kalenjin land. The same year the Sabaot leadership complained to the Trans Nzoia DC that the Sabaot living in Elgon Nyanza District were being mistreated by the Bukusu and asked if they could register as voters from Trans Nzoia. The community had further been frustrated by the Bukusu dominance in ADC, where matters were deliberated from an ethnic angle

(KNA/PC/NZA/4/4/114:1961). They thought that they were not heard since they were the minority.

In the views of the WKC, it was better to have the Kalenjin represent them in the Upper as well as Lower Houses (KNA/DC/KIT/1/5/8:1962-63). These again were not considered, brooding tension between the two communities. The tension was further increased when the Boundaries Commission refused to respond to WKC's recommendations. Additionally, they took some land from Trans Nzoia and added to the Western Region that formed the Kamukuywa, Naitiri, Tongaren, Kibisi and Ndalu Schemes (Kakai, 2000:147). With all the disappointments, the WKC transferred their loyalty from KADU to KANU. They thought that if KANU won, their grievances would perhaps be looked into. This fuelled the inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts that have been experienced in the region for a long time. However discussions on these types of conflicts have elaborately been discussed by Kakai (2000). Mine is to look at how the ensuing political scene necessitated intra-ethnic conflicts among the Sabaot.

Looking at the unfolding scenes surrounding the feelings of ethnic elite of domination by some other ethnic groups, this is best seen through the lens of the theory of instrumentalism. This theory puts political actors into play. Thus, at the scene of the Kalenjin was Moi advocating for ancestral land, hence rallying the Kalenjin community behind KADU. At the scene of the Sabaot was Moss, arguing against their oppression and dispossession of their land by the Bukusu. Due to this, he carried his troops in WKC to the party of KANU, probably with the same objective like that of Moi. What were the results? A community confused on whom and which party to support. Finally, the end result was both structural and violent conflicts based on differing political inclinations.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, special interest has been given to the impact of World War II and DYM on the Sabaot intra-ethnic relations and the formation of political unions in the decolonisation period. All this helped in construction of new ethnic identities, identities of a society containing multiple and conflicting versions of culture and custom, as well as divergent interests and conflicts of generation, clan, faction and development of political classes (Berman, 1998:6). These constructions emerge more strongly in the decolonization period, where Africans seek emancipation from what they consider oppressive forces. Their built up experience from the foregoing becomes very instrumental in this process and generates new forms of inter and intra clanrelations that build up structural conflicts.

In the history of decolonization, the Sabaot were a divided lot between those supporting the Bukusu and those against. Though at a lower level, violent conflicts would be experienced, most of the time structural conflicts built up. These included economic security. Along with the societal construction along social issues, when time was ripe, the structural conflicts erupted into violent manifestations between the clans in what was witnessed in 2006/2007. In essence the decolonization period was the period of continuous build-up of the structural conflicts. Thus, as Aseka (1989) reiterates, the colonial state was the mid-wife of the power struggles between various groups, especially between the African peasantry and the settlers. Later it played into intra and inter-clan rivalries and factional politics which produced ethnic interpellations that drew from the common historical origins, common dialect and kinship ties (ibid). The build-up was further aggravated at the attainment of self rule by Kenya in 1963. The next chapter unravels what took place from the time Kenya

attained independence and how intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot were influenced.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRA-COMMUNITY RELATIONS WITHIN THE SABAOT CLANS IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA (1963-1992)

4.0 Introduction

This chapter aims at discussing intra-ethnic relations in independent Kenya among the Sabaot. The year 1963 was a very significant one for Kenya's political, social and economic history. This is because it marked the end of 68 years of British colonialism putting Kenya at the 34th country in Africa to become independent (Odinga, 1967:253). It had attained what African nationalism aim of the 1960s was about: to attain political independence (Maloba, 1995:7). However this self rule did not lack its own set of challenges.

One of the challenges was retribalisation of political, social and economic indices. This mainly touched on culture. Cultural identity is seen as one of the most controversial aspects of decolonization since political independence did not lead to cultural decolonization/re-Africanisation (ibid). Thus, the Sabaot also wanted a part of the national cake. This is why they joined KANU in large numbers contrary to their 'Kalenjin cousins' move of being in KADU, until Kenya became a single party state. This has elaborately been dealt with in the previous chapter.

On the other hand, Kenya has experienced conflictual moments in the process of coming to terms with the requirements of the post-independent era (Kakai 2000:158). The Sabaot also had a share of their clan squabbles as they struggled to come to terms with post-colonial challenges. This is mainly brought about by the influence of the

political class. The theory of instrumentalism becomes very handy in this analysis as we see the politicians clamour for wealth and influence through the use of their subjects. This is the central argument of this chapter.

4.1 Influence of Politics on Intra-Ethnic Relations

Politics dominate our day to day life. This becomes our point of entry to this discussion as we look at the intra-ethnic conflicts that were witnessed in Mt. Elgon region. As scholars of history have observed, for instance, Oyugi (1997), ethnicity has been progressively accentuated as a factor in national politics. In fact ethnic tensions developed around structures of access to economic opportunities (ibid). Other scholars have also had their general observations that may be important to our study. For instance, Mamdani (1996) studied conflicts in the context of the crisis of the post-colonial state and concluded that violence in the modern era is as a result of the privatization of public authority and failure to cultivate patriotism between the state and the population under its rule. On the other hand Bayart (1993:55) observed that ethnicity in contemporary African states exists as a main mechanism of amassing wealth and political power. The moment an ethnic group becomes hungry for state power and resources; they invariably heighten ethnic consciousness and possibilities of ethnic conflicts. Gecaga (2001) posits that ethnic conflicts are due to disaffection over uneven distribution of resources appropriated during the colonial period. She asserts that tensions were aggravated during the post- independent era due to politicized ethnicity. These statements will come into perspective as the chapter unfolds.

How did politics play into ethnic relations in this part of the world? Ethnicity became more alert as the colonial government used this weapon to divide and rule. This approach gave rise to ethnic conglomerations leading to formations of such groups as Luhya, Kalenjin, and Sabaot among others (Lynch, 2006). These ambiguities, which are of the imagined and forcefully produced ethnic categories of colonial administration, provide an important background to current debates about political identity in Kenya (ibid). For instance, the term Luhya was coined as an ethnic referent in the late 1920s. The term Sabaot is presumably seen to have come to the scene in the late 1940s, coined by leaders in an attempt to unite or reunite a number of linguistically similar communities. It was linked to territorial claims for land and a search for an administrative status (Medard, 2008:74). This was political construction of identities for a particular course. In this case it was against the Bukusu dominance in the Sabaot's area of jurisdiction. This alliance was to be very instrumental in expelling the other ethnic groups from the Mt. Elgon area presumed to be the ancestral home of the Sabaot, especially at the onset of independence.

It is important to note that while the 1963 independence celebrations were taking place in the entire Republic, the Sabaot were engrossed in disappointments, ones that had made them fight for political freedom from the Bukusu dominance that helped them capture their own constituency. Even though they had achieved the constituency under the leadership of Daniel Moss as the MP, they were still disappointed with the 1962 Boundaries Commission which left most of them in the Elgon Nyanza District contrary to their popular wish of being united to their fellow Kalenjins in Trans Nzoia District (Kakai, 2000:169). By being administered from Trans Nzoia the Sabaot would be in the Rift Valley Province with the rest of the Kalenjin community

(Odinga, 1969:244). Thus, as Kakai (2000:169) postulates, they would be considered in the award of development projects. Now these hopes were thwarted. Much of the area they thought would be transferred to Trans Nzoia was not. Such areas were put in western Province. Such areas included Kamukuywa, Kibisi, Lugari, Matunda, Naitiri, Ndalu and Tongaren (Kiliku, 1992:22). Even in Trans Nzoia, they did not get free land as they expected. They bought like any other citizen. This frustration burst out and the Sabaot burnt down houses, destroyed crops and raided livestock which belonged to other communities. This was the 1963 clashes. This is elaborately discussed by Kakai (2000) and is not in the scope of this study.

Of importance to this study from the above reactions is that the Sabaot got their Elgon Constituency with their own MP, even though they still belonged to the Bukusu dominated district. This constituency as argued by Medard (2006:240) brought together the Bok community of Cheptais Division to the west, the Kony community of Kapsokwony Division to the east and the Chepkitale Division from the top of Mt. Elgon claimed by the 'Ndorobo' or Chepkitale community. Other groups included among the Sabaot were the Bongomek from the Bungoma region and the Sabiny/Sebei from the northern slopes of Mt. Elgon in Uganda. At this juncture, the Sabiny do not feature elaborately in the intra-ethnic confrontations. As Kirui (O.I, 2014) explains, the Sabiny were considered not of the Mt. Elgon region. They were considered as nomads by the other clans. Sometimes they are referred to as the Elgon Maasai. They are few and would rather disguise themselves as Kony or Bok depending on the prevailing situation. Thus, when there is war, they take off to join the Sebeyi of Uganda. Some have residence here in Kenya and Uganda. They play a major role in determining the safety of the Sabaot warriors in an event of war. They

are well versed with the hideouts on Mt. Elgon. Thus, generally they relate positively with the other clans. The Someek were either considered absorbed by the Chepkitale or Bok (Kibocha, O.I, 2014, Kapchanga, O.I, 2011). These identities of the clans were crucial in determining their cordial or conflictual relations.

Political conflicts in this region did not then cease after the Sabaot were given a constituency in 1963. In 1968, another conflict ensued between the Bukusu and the Sabaot. Kakai (2000:172) asserts that this was an incitement from the area MP, Daniel Moss to the Sabaot to expel the strangers in their land, the Bukusu who had ridiculed and disrespected them calling them cattle rustlers. This purported insult stemmed from the allegation that the Sabaot would steal cattle from the Bukusu and sell them to their cousins the Sebei in Uganda. But the main feeling among the Sabaot was that they wanted recognition; as capable of being able to administer themselves and not being governed by the Bukusu. This notwithstanding, not all the Sabaot were against the Bukusu, because already the Bok were dominating the other clans. Some of the members of the other clans would act as Bukusu informers. They wanted the Bukusu and other Luhya sub-ethnic groups to help them subdue the Bok who had dominated them. Thus, there was intra-clan animosity.

Another fundamental occurrence happened at Malakisi. According to Wolf (1977), the Sabaot who were in North Malakisi demanded to have two representatives in Bungoma County Council to strengthen their say in a Bukusu dominated Council. Moss threatened to demand for a Sabaot District if the demands for the Sabaot in Malakisi were not met. A conflict arose but it was short-lived. In 1975 another conflict arose where the Bukusu accused Moss of incitement. The consequent incitement earned Moss an exit from politics in 1978. This was because the other

clans supported his successor, Wilberforce Kisiero since they were tired of Moss's way of governance (Kapchanga, O.I, 2011). Kisiero also earned a considerable support from the Bukusu that resided in the constituency (Kakai, 2000:175).

From the period 1978 to 1991 there was calm, with no major attack on the Bukusu, although the Sabaot wanted a district of their own and carried out cattle raids. But amongst themselves, disagreements on land occupation cropped up. This further divided the Sabaot along clan lines. Let us see how this unfolds in the next subsection.

4.2 Influence of Land Distribution / Management on Intra-Ethnic Relations

Whereas there was inter-ethnic calm in the period between 1978 and 1991, a lot was taking place within the borders of the Sabaot clans. The government under the then President Daniel Arap Moi had hatched a plan to resettle the Chepkitale from the moorland to the lower slopes. But as elsewhere in the country, land allocation in settlement schemes was invariably characterized by corruption, favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, patronage and outright grabbing by government officials and politicians (Kanyinga 1998). In Mt. Elgon specifically, conflict was heightened by irregular allocation and grabbing of land in settlement schemes, illegal resettlement, unhealthy competitive politics, unresolved land claims and the 2006 evictions by the government (Oloo, 2010). Thus, the targeted beneficiaries who were poor, landless squatters, lost out to the powerful elites with the economic power and who were politically connected (KHRW, 1996). This left the later with a sense of bitterness that would explode at the slightest provocation. How did this unfold? Let us find out in the next paragraphs.

For the Sabaot, the hatched plan of the government to resettle the Chepkitale was implemented between 1971 and 1974; which was commonly referred to as Chepyuk I (Patrola, O.I, 2014). This was after community leaders went to lobby the then President Kenyatta. A total of 1,489 parcels of 5 acres of land were created (Oloo, 2010: 166). In 1974, more land than was gazetted was cleared in collusion with the local administration and the forest department. This was after the government issued notice to degazette portions of the forest reserve which consisted of 3600 acres (ibid). Although land was subdivided on individual basis it remained government land (Medard, 2006:344). The same year, the landless Bok were added to the scheme. But one would ask why the Bok were landless. Likely, they were well connected people to the then area MP, Daniel Moss. A few Chepkitale were also given portions of this land, those who supported Moss (Patrola, O.I, 2014). But each of the groups was given a separate sub-location to occupy. This already divided the two clans. With the final occupation of Chepyuk I, the Bok outnumbered the Chepkitale, yet the scheme was meant for the Chepkitale.

Silently, seeds of hatred and envy were sown between the Bok and the Chepkitale, which was later to culminate into a full blown war. This was for political advantage of the then MP Daniel Moss of the Bok clan in order to be re-elected (ibid). He had to favour his own community which had the highest population to be able to win parliamentary elections. Actually, Chepyuk I was a deal between President Kenyatta and the MP, Moss (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). This could be the period the Kenyatta Government was giving land to the GEMA in areas that were otherwise ancestral occupations of other communities. In this region, the Mucharage and Kitwamba farms were given to the Kikuyu (Kiboy, O.I 2010). But we stop at that because this is out of

scope of our discussion. We conclude this section by acknowledging that the events that happened in relation to land distribution were the main reason why Moss was ousted from being MP and the mantle passed on to Wilberforce Kisiero, who was still from the Bok clan. What happened during his reign?

With the exit of Moss and the coming of Wilberforce Kisiero in 1979, he sought to leave a mark over the Chepyuk settlement. Some of the targeted groups had missed out on the allocation of Chepyuk 1 because they were not allies of Moss. Through the MP Kisiero, they petitioned the then President Moi who had succeeded President Kenyatta to consider their plight (Chacha, O.I, 2014). In 1979, President Moi conceded and more land was set aside for resettlement at Cheptoror and Kaimugul of 2516 Parcels. This formed Chepyuk II (Oloo, 2010:166). These parcels of land were to benefit the Bok who did not benefit during Moss's time, especially for voting for Kisiero regardless of the other Sabaot clans in the region. It was their political reward for ousting Moss out of power even though he still hailed from their clan (Chacha, O.I, 2014). However the allocations were marred by mismanagement and malpractices. The Bok and Chepkitale who were not allied to the then MP, Kisiero were left out of the allocation. Some were being punished for having supported Daniel Moss in the past elections (Chemaek, O.I, 2014). The residents who missed out complained bitterly but no action was taken. This brought intra-ethnic animosity between Moss's supporters and Kisiero's supporters. At the end of the 1980s, land legalization and occupation was to be effected through land registration. New land for settlement had been availed and new applications were to be considered. These were basically to the new generation of the Ndorobos and those who had been evicted from forest land (Towman, O.I,2010, Kipseret, O.I, 2012).The MP saw an opportunity to reward his

loyalists, an opportunity for grabbing (Kibocha, O.I, 2014). This further disintegrated the Sabaot clans depending on whom they voted for during the general election.

This is well explained in the theory of instrumentalism, where the political class impose dominion over the subjects with an objective of getting a set benefit. Thus, as the opportunity presented itself, the beneficiaries were never to be the target groups of the minority nor the poor and landless, but Kisiero's political clients. Land was given out in a much decentralized manner (Medard, 2008). When the complaints reached the president in 1989, the process of land allocation was halted and land re-evaluation process instituted, since an intra-ethnic crisis was brewing. This was to be overseen by the Western Provincial Commissioner, Francis Lekoolool and the District Commissioner, William Chang'ole. They cancelled all the previous allocations and transactions (Simiyu, 2007). Encroachments on forest lands were also fought.

New applications were invited. In this action, local leaders were not consulted. The invitations overwhelmed the vetting committee; hence it introduced balloting and limiting the land size to two hectares per family (ibid). At the end of the exercise, a group of the Mosop was settled in the Cheptoror and Kaimulgul areas, while applications from the Soy and other communities who had already settled in the area, some after purchasing land from the Mosop, lost their pieces of land (Kibocha, O.I, 2014). The Soy were enraged alongside the other Mosop and Kony who had missed allocations. Hence, the then KANU chairman Fred Chesebe Kapondi in 1989 and 1993 met the President and petitioned for a resettlement of the Sabaot who had been evicted and remained landless (KLA, 2007). Of course at this juncture, Kisiero had lost his seat to Joseph Kimkung in the 1992 elections. All the Sabaot that were left out

of the allocations of land and the Bukusu ganged up against Kisiero. Thus, intra-ethnic animosity continued to breed.

It is important to highlight that while there were serious intra-ethnic issues to be sorted out by the Sabaot; at the national scene was the wind of multi-partism. Multi-party diehards hailed mainly from the Central, Eastern, Coast, Western and Nyanza Provinces. This gained momentum in the 1990s when the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) opposed authoritarianism, corruption and mismanagement. They advocated for multi-party democracy in the Third World Countries and especially Africa to control these vices. Sanctions were put to countries from these financial organizations to implement the Structural Adjustment Plan (SAP) or lose international support. Other strategies had to be employed to counter establishment of the multi-party democracy.

Thus, since President Moi could not quench the thirst for multipartism in Kenya, he had to form alliances to counter the move and bring to a halt in a 'democratic' way the 'ghost' of multipartism. One of such alliances was the Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu Alliance (KAMATUSA), although it never officially existed. But before then, the Kalenjin politicians in 1991 held rallies threatening the proponents of multi-party politics to risk facing expulsion from the Kalenjin dominated areas. This was an agitation against dispossession of land. The Bukusu leaders being members of the Forum for Restoration of Democracy (FORD), and being traditional enemies of one of the 'Kalenjin groups', the Sabaot, were alongside other Luhya groups supporting multi-partism and risked being expunged from Kalenjin ancestral land (Kakai, 2000). Thus, even though the Sabaot had their own internal wrangles, they had to unite to expunge the Bukusu from their ancestral land. This led to the 1991/92 clashes in the

Mt. Elgon region. Their reward from President Moi was the granting of a new district for the Sabaot, the Mt. Elgon District created in 1993. This diverted attention from internal wrangles among the Sabaot.

But 1991, after ballots were issued for plots in Phase I and II which were found east and south of Chepyuk, the area north of Kipsigon in Chepkurkur that forms Phase III of the Chepyuk settlement scheme was as at then left out. The people who farmed in this region were evacuated when the reforestation project sponsored by the Government of Finland commenced. This rendered some people to become squatters while others relocated to towns as landless. They comprised of the supporters of the then ousted MP, Wilberforce Kisiero. The squatters petitioned President Moi about the issue in 1991 and he sacked Chang'ole the then DC, as the petitioners went back to their reforested land (Medard, 2008). As a result there was a rush to maximize the opportunity which rendered some people who lived in the region before reforestation landless. Thus tensions emanating from the people who lived on the land before reforestation and the ones who had grabbed in the rush emerged so strongly.

In December 1992, even though there was concentration in expelling Bukusus and their allies from the region, some houses belonging to the Ndorobo were burnt in Chepkurkur. Ever since, clashes have occurred repeatedly (Kirui, O.I, 2014, Chemaek, O.I, 2014).

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been argued that politics manifests itself in ethnic relations in general and intra-ethnic relations in particular among the Sabaot. This ties into our

two theories of analysis where in both cases political tribalism and the political elite play roles in instigating conflicts. From the instrumentalism point of view, the political elite gear towards the reward they are going to get from the action. This is clearly seen as the political elite struggle for superiority and the promises they give to their subjects. In this context instrumentalism played its way in breeding animosity in inter and intra- clan relations in Mt. Elgon region. This had far reaching consequences that get unveiled in the next chapter

CHAPTER FIVE

INTRA-ETHNIC CRISIS WITHIN THE SABAOT CLANS OF MT. ELGON SUB-COUNTY (1993- 2010)

5.0 Introduction

This chapter builds up on the perceived intra-ethnic structural conflicts from the pre-colonial period, which built up further in the colonial period, matured in the post independence era and exploded violently between 2006 and 2007. This witnesses a construction of the community into various stages of intra-ethnic relations and a political dimension that sees the relations sour or sweeter. The same constructivism as theory on which this study is grounded does provide constructive ways to solve emerging sour relations.

Since constructivism vaguely covers the contribution of political actors in intra-ethnic relations, instrumentalism is used to explain the chronology of what has happened in this society and its leadership. The same actors we believe can be instruments of peace as the chapter unfolds. This chapter seeks to analyze the perceived marginalization of the community, political manipulation, the land question, social issues imbedded in the society, the issue of perception of boundaries, formation of militia groups and the effects all these brought to the Sabaot intra-ethnic relations. All these issues are analyzed in relation to the intra-ethnic conflicts that exploded in the region at the wake of the 2006/2007 general elections that brought with them inter-ethnic conflicts across the country. By analyzing the crises, the intention is to get useful tenets that can be applied to bring the community into a peaceful co-existence with members from different clans.

5.1 The Crisis of Marginalization

The Sabaot community in our opinion is justified in claiming that they are marginalized. From the early history of migration and settlement of the present peoples of East Africa, Mt. Elgon area is very significant. One would therefore expect to find a detailed account of the peoples who claim the region as their ancestral home. But this is far from the truth. The early scholars of history that covered this region seem to have marginalized the Sabaot. In-fact one would be convinced to imagine that this could be the ancestral homeland of the Luhya as claimed by Muliro (see chapter four). But let us imagine that G.S. Were's intensive research in this region must have influenced his cohort to talk more about the Abaluhya than any other ethnic group.

But even with this, it is surprising that the work done about the migration of the Kalenjin, again gives very little scholarly coverage to the Sabaot. Various obvious omissions are evidently seen. For instance, Wandibba's work (1983) almost extinguishes the Bongomek clan of the Sabaot, claiming that they were swallowed up by the Tachoni. Atieno (1991) in a migratory map only shows the Sebei settled on the Ugandan part. No other Sabaot clan is mentioned. That notwithstanding, according to this map, the Sabaot in Kenya are non-existent. He goes further and dedicates much of his explanation about the Highland Nilotes to the Nandi, yet Sabaot are not Nandi. This contradicts the oral interviews (Kimkung, O.I., 2013; Kipseret, O.I., 2012), who argued that the original dialect of the Kalenjin should be Sabaot. This, they said, is because the Sabaot can understand the other Kalenjin dialects while the others cannot understand the Sabaot language.

Ehret in Ogot, B.A (ed) (1971) illustrates on the chart drawn on page 80 on linguistic classification of the Highland Nilotes in Kenya that the clans of the Sabaot are listed as independent sub-groups of the highland nilotes. The clans listed include the Sebei, Kony, Pok, Bungomek and Okiek. They are listed alongside the Pokot, Marakwet, Turgen, Nandi, Nyang'ori and Kipsigis. Were, et al (1972), in talking about the migration of the Kalenjin explains that at the beginning of the 17th century, the Kalenjin emigrated and settled on Mt. Elgon. Major dispersal occurred dividing the various groups. He then mentions that a few were left behind in the Elgon area. They were the Bok, Bongomek and Kony. Other sub-groups equally are not mentioned. In fact on the map, the Sabaot are not shown.

Marginalization seems to be a long term problem among the Sabaot. It catches up with them during the colonial period. As has been earlier argued, since the inception of colonialism, despite the fact that it was the Kony *Kirwagindet* who signed a treaty for occupation of the Elgon region, much of the early colonial administration was done by the Wanga under Murunga and later, the Bukusu monopolized the administration, education, religion, politics and acquisition of land. In fact it has been argued that even during the later part of pre- colonial period, land issues in this region had been infringed on by the Bukusu. This has been effectively covered in the previous chapter. What we want to argue at this juncture is that these were forms of marginalization of the Sabaot community. Indeed it was like they were to say the least and to be subservient to the ones who dominated over them. Kiboy, (O.I, 2010) described Bukusu treatment to them during the colonial period as a humiliation. Of course the results of this were conflicts between the two communities which are out of scope of this study.

Actually the marginalization is not only witnessed in the colonial period. The Sabaot began their independence period with a gross feeling of neglect. Thus, the war for liberation in Kenya was war for liberation against Bukusu domination. While people were thinking of freedom from European domination the Sabaot wanted their freedom from the Bukusu. This led to the inter-ethnic war of 1963 discussed in the previous chapter. But how have they felt marginalized in this new era of post-independent Kenya? Few highlights are hereby observed. First, Simiyu (2007:11) observes that the region is generally underdeveloped, with poor road network, housing and social amenities such as schools and hospitals. There is only one all-weather road and coupled together with the sloping terrain, mobility even for the most determined becomes a challenge. This is described as geographical marginalization (ibid). Again the government over the years has not been able to establish an effective administrative presence in some of the remote areas. These factors have combined to engender feelings of neglect and marginalization by the state among the local population within its borders.

The Sabaot have also been marginalized in terms of national politics. The group has neither produced a politician of national standing nor has it attracted the consistent attraction of one (ibid: 12). If one considers patterns of resource distribution in relation to polity, then the region has been marginalized. While still relating to the recent conflict in the area issues, of the Sabaot marginalization also emerged. For instance, an investigation by the Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence (CIPEV) the violence that had engulfed the country after the 2007/2008 disputed elections, a period in which there were tragic conflicts, not only in Kenya, but more specifically in the area of study, the Commission never attempted to understand what

took place in the then Mt. Elgon District. They simply stated as quoted by Forsberg (2012:8) that the events:

“.....were for such magnitude that the commission could not delve into them.....”

Waki Report of 2008 further settled for a brief description as

“Western Province is home to mountainous and agriculturally rich Mt. Elgon District, which is at the centre of a long standing dispute over land and cattle rustling between the Sabaot and other ethnic communities...”

Reactions to the above omissions have recently led to the East African Court of Justice to issue a ruling accusing the Kenya Government of failing to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for executions, acts of torture, cruelty and inhuman and degrading treatment of over 3,000 Kenyan residents in Mt. Elgon area (Forsberg, 2012:9). Human Rights Watch (HRW) recommends in a recent report that Mt. Elgon conflict be investigated by the International Criminal Court (ICC) as it deems to be within their jurisdiction. All these are evidence to show marginalization of both the people and the area of occupation in this post- independence era.

Coming back to marginalization within the community, it starts with the colonial period where the mountain was named Elgon from the local people called the Kony. In fact the *kirwagindet* who signed the treaty with Sir Frederick Jackson was from the Kony. At one point all the Mt. Elgon clans were referred to as the Kony. This exacerbated feelings of neglect among the other clans. On the other hand, the Bok has politically become very popular because they have been producing the political leaders to represent the region since 1963, except for 1992-1997 when Kimkung was the Member of Parliament from the Kony clan. The Someek seem to have been

swallowed up by the Bok, since nothing much is talked about them. The Bok have predominated the political scene because of being the most populous. The Bok have tended to dictate to the other clans, which has raised feelings of animosity against them (Kimkung, O.I, 2013).

A group that seems to have been most affected by marginalization is the Chepkitale/Ogiik/ Dorobo/Mosop. From the outline the group seems to have different names. From the Mt. Elgon Genocide Update (2007), they are considered the minority. They live in the entire moorland and forest of Mt. Elgon since time immemorial. They are about 5,000 families. They are a hunter and gatherer community, but have embraced agriculture with the government's ban on hunting (ibid). This has made them assert that they belong to a different ethnic group from that of their neighbours, the Sabaot. Others deny the assertion claiming that the only valued distinction is that the Chepkitale are 'Mosop': those who live high up and as a result of their relative isolation, remain true to the culture of the original Sabaot (Lynch, 2006:5).

Lynch further observes that while some debate that the people from Chepkitale are Ogiek/ Ogiik, others take halfway position this is because, as articulated by one Sabaot during the colonial period, Arap Kasisi argued in his evidence before the Land Commission on 8th October 1932 that he was a Kony and that while

“...part of the tribe.... have always lived up on the higher slopes of the mountain above the forest, and while they now have stock when they used not to, these people from above the forest are part of our tribe- we are all Dorobo” (Colonial Office, 1934: 2080).

Thus, Lynch argues that the term Dorobo is invoked more as a claim to indigeneity, than as a reference to socio-economic characteristics commonly associated with this identity (Lynch 2006:56). Since neighbouring communities are all regarded as having

migrated into the area, the statements of being Ogiek/ Dorobo can be deployed or reconstructed as a basis to claim original residency. But this idea is like the idea of any clear and bounded ethnic group, unsustainable due to complex and extended histories of migration, intermarriage, interaction and assimilation, not to mention the specific contexts from which the term stems from (ibid).

While this contestation drags on, the Chepkitale in the Mt. Elgon Genocide Update (2007) argue that they were treated as a different ethnic community, nicknamed Elgony/Elgon Maasai/ Ndorobo. But Kimkung, (O.I, 2013) argues that the term Elgon Maasai referred to the Sabaot who the Europeans found to resemble the Maasai they had come across in the Uasin Gishu Plateau. They therefore termed them as Elgon Maasai implying the Maasai that are found in the Elgon area. Be it as it may, the argument is that in 1911, the Colonial Government gave the Chepkitale their own Native Chief Sangula, while the other communities had Kasisi, Tendeti and Kimingich. But due to marginalization, they argue that in 1921 chief Sangula was demoted to an Assistant Chief while the other three maintained their status. They also argue that in 1932, the Chepkitale were recognized as a distinct community and given their reserve, the Chepkitale Native Reserve, which was recognized after independence and renamed Chepkitale Trust Land.

Due to continued political and economic oppression and marginalization of Chepkitale Ogiek, Mt. Elgon County Council with the help of former MP, Joseph Kimkung, convinced the government of Kenya that the Chepkitale Trust Land be converted to Chepkitale Game Reserve. This was accepted on 6th June 2000. Without saying anything, the meeting reiterated, this was a serious violation of Human Rights and the Land Rights of the people referred to as the Chepkitale Ogiek.

When President Kibaki's government took power in 2002, the current MP, John Serut followed the footsteps of his predecessors by oppressing the community the more. Having worked in the Ministry of Lands and Settlement and being well experienced in the unsolved malpractices in the ministry and in the entire country, they said, Serut orchestrated the woos of Chepkitale Ogiek, by supporting the initial formation of the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF), which they alleged was being used to exterminate the Chepkitale Ogiek from the face of the earth, hence the inevitable Genocide on Chepkitale Ogiek, a minority community. The Bok people who are the majority are in the habit of expansionism and domineering, thus, they wanted to expand their territory and take over Ogiek land in Mt. Elgon through the killings that were manifested during the 2006/2008 genocide. The meeting further observed that the turnover rate of Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs in Chepkitale Ogiek land was alarming and the statistics depicted that no Chepkitale Ogiek chief has ever remained in office for more than 5 years. This they said was a true indicator of the worsening situation of marginalization in the area (ibid).

Chepkitale Ogiek, as they observed, existed as a distinct ethnic community and the misleading information that the clans of Soy and Mosop are the one fighting is null and void. The information was meant to pave way for the extermination of the Ogiek and a subsequent peaceful settlement of the Ogiek land by the Bok people (ibid). The fact of the matter was that the Bok was using the outlawed SLDF to kill the Chepkitale Ogiek (Towman, O.I, 2010). The Chepkitale leaders further stated that;

“It should be very clear that the Ogiek are dying in big numbers through the bullet and more children and women are dying of hunger and diseases since they cannot access their crops and livestock which were stolen. The situation is so pathetic, that the international

community should move in with speed to save humanity from being exterminated” (Mt. Elgon Genocide Update, 2007)”

These were heartfelt feelings from the Chepkitale, which shed light on the gross feelings of marginalization between the clans.

To shed more light on the purported marginalization, Simiyu (2007:14) observes that the plan to resettle the Chepkitale in good faith, who had been displaced in the colonial times, to a more hospitable environment with their Soy counterparts dates back to 1965. This was also to protect the Mosop against violent incursions from communities across the border from Uganda. This was coming from the incident that happened between 1979-1983 when the former soldiers of the toppled Ugandan President Idi Amin fled to the mountain and persistently raided the Mosop and stole their cattle (Kimkung, O.I, 2013). Further description of the area that necessitated this move was that the area was remote and inaccessible hence the government would not provide basic services to the Mosop. Communication between Chepkitale and other inhabited parts of the region was poor. Only footpaths existed and therefore transport was by foot or donkey. There were no health facilities and the only school that existed was Kashok primary which had no trained teachers. Though these anomalies had been noted, other reasons for the relocation of the Chepkitale emerged.

Simiyu (2007) argues that the main reason was that the entire Chepkitale region was a water catchment area that needed to be conserved by the government, the government proposed to affect this by establishing a game reserve that would also attract tourists and earn the country some income. This was effected in 1968. There was therefore urgency to the resettlement plans since the game reserve took a substantial portion of the moorlands which were grazing fields of the Mosop. This in fact sparked off

protests from the Mosop who thought their rights were being infringed on. In addition, this aggravated environmental degradation resulting from overgrazing in the remaining smaller portion of the Chepkitale moorland. In 1971, a settlement scheme was mooted down slope in Chepyuk to resettle the mosop from the Chepkitale Trust Land. This was to be through degazettement of a forest reserve. This led to a process of negotiation described by Kamoet (2008:) as follows:

“In 1965, the Dorobo leadership in Chepkitale, government representatives and local community leaders began negotiations on how the Dorobo (Mosop) people could be moved from the ‘Trust Land’ above the forest to the lower slopes close to their Soy counterparts. Despite some resistance from some members of the Mosop group, the majority agreed and they were moved in 1971 to Chepyuk settlement scheme through legal notice no. 35 of 1968.”

Thus, the Chepyuk Phase 1 scheme was established from 1971-1974. This was in the present Emia and Chepyuk Locations of Kopsiro Division. Many things took place at the allotment of the plots. But at this juncture, we mention that some 650 Mosop families and 300 Soy families receive land (Medard, 2008).

Since some people had missed being allocated land in Phase 1, Phase II was instituted. But there were arguments that the lifestyle of the Mosop would not allow them to till the land. They preferred herding and foraging in the forest. In fact some who had acquired land opted to lease or sell it and go back to Chepkitale. The Soy bought most of the land and ended up dominating the schemes, against the initial plan. After noticing the dominance of the Soy, the Mosop started complaining about illegal allocations of land to the Soy and felt they were losing out to them. They pressed to get their land back. They wanted the government to give them land that was equivalent in size to the one that had been possessed by the government in the

moorland. The Soy on the other hand wanted their money back. This we shall come back to when talking about land in the next sub-sections.

But to pick up a conclusion on marginalization in land allocations is that both groups felt unfavored by government actors and quietly developed structural conflicts. The Mosop particularly were grieved because they assumed they were being unfavored because of their general marginalization. They claim that even decisions relating to them on land allocations were made by the Soy leaders. This is clearly seen in the political representation where until 1997 the Mosop had no representation. The first Councilor was elected in 1997. By 2004, the Mosop had only one Councilor, one chief, four assistant chiefs and in a district with an MP, eleven councillors, sixteen chiefs and forty two assistant chiefs (Simiyu, 2007).

The Mosop have further claimed that they have been sidelined in delegations to State House to petition President Moi on land matters. They claim having been always under-represented on land allocation committees. The Soy, on the other hand, were dissatisfied with the inclusion of the Mosop in Chepyuk Phase III which was created for the Soy. These incidences are summarized by what Mwasera (2008:74) states; efforts by the clans to alienate each other and clear the area of the other clan. This sparked off violent reactions from the build-up of structural conflicts. The sympathizers of the minority ganged up with them to fight the dominant Bok clan. It became a war between the Bok and Chepkitale. The other clans were to align themselves to these two sub-groups. This is why when the war broke out, the SLDF used to ask whether the victim was a Bok or a Chepkitale.

From the above explanations, two points come out clearly on how the perceived marginalization could be used in conflict resolution. First is that the unity of sympathizers of the Chepkitale, which is alleged to have had some members of the Bok clan could have been used in resolving the conflict. Since the Chepkitale had no numbers it was futile to try to exterminate them. In any case they would still peacefully have given the Soy their land as the Soy could help push the government to return the Chepkitale to the forest as a means of conservation. The second point is that since this community knew it was a marginalized one, the best way they would call from survival is to remain united. They should take any force trying to divide them as an enemy. At the end of the day, they belong to one another. If this point is explained to them the community can avert any further outbreak of violence.

5.2 The Crisis of Political Manipulation and the Land Question

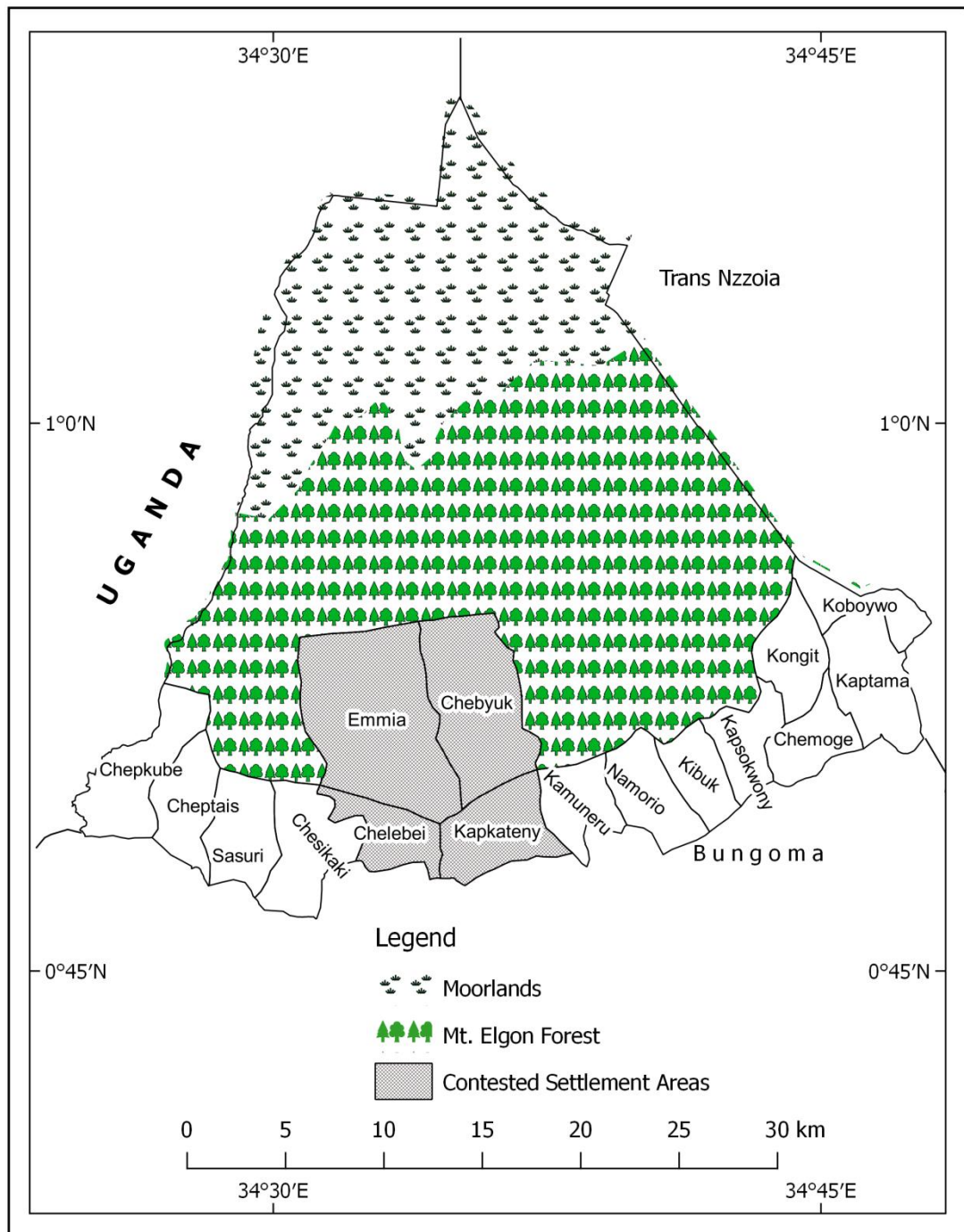
This sub-section continues from where we stopped in the preceding chapter. In December 1992, even though there was concentration in expelling Bukusus and their allies from the region, some houses belonging to the Ndorobo were burnt in Chepkurkur. Ever since, clashes have occurred repeatedly. In 2002, the Bok were attacked in areas that were found in Phase I and II. This arose from the said political protection of the area MP, John Serut. It is alleged that in 1998, after Serut won the elections, as it was the manner to give promises to the electorate, who were mainly the Bok, he is said to have delayed the process of land reallocation in Phase III to protect their interests. However, the Government cancelled Chepyuk I and II allocations and created Chepyuk III in 2002 (Oloo, 2010). Because the created scheme was politically meant for the Soy, when the Government finished allocations, they included the Mosop to punish the Soy voting in the 2005 referendum, where they

voted against the draft constitution (ibid). Serut finally consented to the reform of reallocation in 2006 after the defeat of the referendum which he supported in his area of jurisdiction. This was because his allies voted against the referendum and by extension against him. This was because he was against the territorial politics where all Kalenjins were voting against the constitution, of whom the Sabaot were perceived to belong to this block.

The violence gained momentum in 2002 when the Ndorobo in Kaimugul were attacked by the Bok. The general feeling of insecurity grew and in 2005, the Bok declined taking land close to the forest. In early 2004, 200 houses said to belong to both the moderate Bok and Ndorobo were torched with the outburst being marked in February 2005 (Simiyu, 2007). Thus, as Medard (2008:31) observes, the general feeling of insecurity partly grew from the Ndorobo's indigenous claims and are partly to blame. This was the summary of the brewing conflict;

“the moderate Bok and Ndorobo who are under attack by the radical factions are those inclined to protect the common heritage that they share. Their opponents are the aggrieved lot who count their losses from the 1970s and can only express their dissatisfaction by violent reactions. Individualization of the land tenure has escalated the clashes as many people become squatters. The government is greatly blamed for the anomalies in the allotment of plots. Thus the conflict has presented itself as Bok versus Ndorobo, yet behind the scenes is politics, where new leaders and new clients threaten an older political order” (ibid).”

Fig. 5.2 Map of Mt. Elgon Sub-County showing Contested Settlement Areas



Source: Geography Department of Kenyatta University, 2016

According to Simiyu (2007), when the process of allotment of ChepyukIII was revisited in 2005, the number of applicants for land allocation had increased from

1732 families to 7000 families. This meant that allocation was to be revised from 2 hectares to 1 hectare per family. Further to this through consultations with the local leaders who were consulted instead of chiefs, it was agreed through the chairmanship of the then Provincial Commissioner Abdul Mwaserah that the Mosop should share in the land allocation in equal proportions to the Soy. This was seen as a ploy speculated by by Serut to punish the Soy for their voting against the referendum of 2005 and reward the Mosop for their referendum support (KLA, 2007). It is further argued that after losing his political contest among his fellow Soy, he coveted the Mosop support in a bid to strengthen his support base in readiness to the 2007 election.

The process of new allocation kicked off and among the Mosop it was smooth. The Mosop elders submitted the list of the families that were to benefit without any innuendos. But among the Soy, the list was highly politicized and problematic. Simiyu (2007) explains that the rival Soy politicians; Serut and Fred Kapondi influenced the appointment of allies to the vetting committee, which was to ensure that there was transparency and inclusiveness in the process. This went against Serut's pre-election pledges in 2002 that he would resettle squatters. The government also introduced balloting in allocating the 1 hectare plot which could not guarantee the squatters the plots they were already settled on. His political rivals protested against the above decision and accused Serut of betraying the Soy. They withdrew from the vetting committee and boycotted the vetting process. Serut took advantage of the situation and fixed his cronies in the committee.

In March 2006, a list of successful applicants for land allocations was posted at the local administration offices. There were thousands of unsuccessful applicants who included those who had bribed the authorities. The members of the Soy clan who

opposed the resettlement of the Mosop since they were not part of the beneficiaries protested bitterly their resettlement in the Chepkurkur and Korng'otuny areas since they were not part of the initial target group. KLA (2007) also noted that there was bribery on large scale with claims that officers and provincial administration received bribes on behalf of the allocation committee which culminated into 16 double allocations, falsification of documents, fictitious beneficiaries and political interference. This as Simiyu (2007) stated, led to a possible eviction of about 1500 families, many of whom had made the scheme their home since 1971. The reason behind the eviction was failure to fulfil all the requirements of the allocation or, if they were successful, they occupied large tracts of land which they were not willing to surrender part of the land for reallocation to other families. The second category composed of community leaders among the Soy, like Patrick Komon and the 80 year old spiritual leader, Jason Psongoywo Manyiror whose 80 hectares of land had already been subdivided amongst his sons (*Daily Nation*, 17th May, 2008). This second group on realizing that they would lose their land mobilized funds to help seek legal redress. This however failed and the group channelled the funds collected to mobilize youth to defend their land. This is how the SLDF was founded. Its activities unfold in the next sub-section.

From the above, it is clear that politics is behind any happening to any community of this magnitude. To the political class, if you can mobilize people's ability, you well know for sure you possess what you wanted. You are like a doctor who can touch any part of the human body. You can still influence any part of the community's behaviour. Let the influence be to stop conflict rather than to instigate conflicts.

5.3 The Boundary Question and the Formation of Militia Groups

As earlier mentioned, the boundary question in the history of the Sabaot is a contested one. Their claim on Mt. Elgon is what defines their conservative nature. Though separated by the colonial boundaries of Kenya and Uganda, the blood brotherhood of the Sebei, believed to be a clan of the Sabaot comes into play when conflicts become deep-rooted. Their role becomes more visible with the formation of the SLDF. This is what this sub-section delves into.

Accounts of warfare among the Sabaot has historically been imbedded in their landscape and cultural structure and that the territorial military organization was integrated into its sociological features like age-sets and the clans (Weatherby, 1962). The Sabaot are well known to be a 'war-like community' from the pre-colonial period. In the 1991/92 clashes between the Sabaot and Bukusu, the Sabaot warriors helped by their cousins from across the border in Uganda carried out several attacks against the Bukusu (HRW, 1993). In addition, as Simiyu (2007:53) puts it, the history of militarization of the Sabaot has been facilitated by the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWS) along the Kenya-Uganda border. This is attributed to the many years of war and instability in Uganda, particularly in Northern Uganda between the Lord's Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony an assumed relative of the Sabaot, and the Government of Uganda. Thus, the weapons are generally in circulation and because of the porous Kenya-Uganda border, they find their way into the Mt. Elgon region.

Family ties between the groups on either side of the border meant that the assailants could seek refuge comfortably across the border while carrying out their heinous acts

on the Kenyan side. In fact as earlier mentioned, the Sebei of Uganda would be hired to assist in the attacks (ibid). This was also the case of the Sabaot who lived in Trans-Nzoia County. Thus the Kenya-Uganda boundary alongside internal boundaries had a lot in play in fuelling the conflict under discussion.

Going back to the formation of SLDF, the punishment that was instigated against the Soy for voting against the referendum was badly received by the Soy. This was because most of the allocation of land in Chepyuk III went to the Mosop. This made the Soy to mobilise young people to defend their land and resist any further evictions (Oloo, 2010:166). Patrick Komon's son, Wycliffe Kirui Matakwei was among the young men who volunteered to take up arms and mobilize others to resist any evictions (Simiyu, 2007). He later became the deputy leader of the militia group which comprised of young men from the Soy clan. The recruitment was voluntary but at some point young men were forced to join or be killed (George, O.I, 2010; Fred, O.I, 2011). One confessed of having been forced to join the group or face the consequences. He narrated that being a circumcised man, he would not want to be termed a coward and so he joined. Others as was narrated found it fun to be members of this group. After all they had no engagement. Their target was to eliminate the Mosop, perceived to be favoured by the government and the officials who presided over land allocations.

From the narration of Saulo (O.I, 2010) and Barno (O.I, 2011), apart from the above there were feelings of hate between children who had come with their mothers into a marriage and those of that marriage. The community believed that the foreigners would snatch the children of the home their blessings. These feelings of hate also existed between children born in a home of an old man by a younger wife and those

of the elder wife (Chemaek, O.I, 2014). Still the children born by other men after the man of the home was deceased were at loggerheads with the original children of the home (Cherotich, O.I, 2013; Sile, O.I, 2012). As already highlighted in chapter three, the permissiveness of the Sabaot society was in it a source of intra-ethnic conflicts. All these were intra-ethnic conflict escalators which burst out with the emergence of land issues. Those who had harboured feelings of hatred had an opportunity to express them through the eruption of this conflict. They all took cover in the militia outfit of SLDF.

The intra-ethnic conflicts escalated into the killing of an official from the Provincial Administration. In June 2006, the chief of Kapkateny Location, Cleophas Sonit was killed in his office. Sonit was a relative of Serut who had refused to comply with the SLDF demands (Simiyu, 2007). In August 2006, Assistant Chief, Shem Cherowo Chemuny, his daughter and two guards were killed. Chemuny was implicated in bribery to influence land allocations. In January 2007, Ben Kipnusu, a Councilor of Chepkube ward was killed for being Serut's supporter (*East African Standard*, 17 Jan. 2007).

The SLDF militia activities were concentrated in Kopsiro division where Chepyuk settlement scheme is located and in Kaptama division where most SLDF commanders hailed from and where majority of land claimants in Chepyuk III originally came from (Simiyu, 2007:23-24). Later other areas were included. The militia activities took the turn of ruthlessness and human rights violations, including physical assaults, abductions, rape, physical and psychological torture of victims, murder of any person opposing them, and on occasions wiping out an entire family. On 31st December, 2007, a family of twelve was exterminated in Kimama village, and their land

subdivided among SLDF militia men (Simiyu, 2007). These killings as explained by Chepkoech (O.I, 2012), were carried out by the young boys with standard four level of education.

Apart from the killings, the militia tried to establish its own government in the Mt. Elgon region. They levied taxes as a method of raising revenue for sustenance (Mary, O.I, 2014; Chemaek, O.I, 2014). Initially, every household was to pay 1000 shillings, but later, they resorted to individual monthly payments which were determined from the individual's monthly income (Cherono, O.I, 2011). People working in the district as government workers were to pay protection fee of between 2000 and 5000 per month (*The East African Standard*, 27 August, 2007). Each household was also to surrender a 90-kg bag of maize to the militia for every acre of land harvested. In essence, there was an emergent insurgency economy that sustained the lifestyles of the militia and this appealed to many youths from poor backgrounds. Theft was also carried out by the militia especially of livestock from neighbouring Bungoma West District. They had also established their own court system where people considered bad in the society like thieves, witches, adulterous, drunkards were frogmarched, disciplined by being cained, their ears being chopped off, their hands being cut off, their mouths being sewed and in some instances being killed (Kirui, O.I, 2011; Steve, O.I, 2013; Barno, O.I, 2015). The court was located on a sloppy land and if one was sentenced to death, then the same was taken to the forest and his body was never to be seen again (George, O.I, 2010; Kapchanga, O.I, 2011; Kibocha, O.I, 2014).

The politician who suffered the wrath of the SLDF was John Serut. This was because he had used his position to include the Mosop in Phase III of Chepyuk resettlement programme even when they were considered not part of the deal by the Soy. He was

also accused of ensuring that his cronies benefited from the scheme with land allocation (Simiyu, 2007:26). Thus, on 30th June 2007, his brother, Edward Kale was murdered (*East African Standard*, 1st July, 2007). On the night of 12th November, 2007, another brother Jeremiah Serut and a niece Milcah Serut were also murdered. The same attack saw the murder of Protus Cheroben Chesebe and his wife, Beatrice Chesebe (*Daily Nation*, 14th November, 2007). Serut speaking at the scene of his brother's murder complained that he had received threatening telephone calls about his life (*Daily Nation*, 2nd July, 2007).

How did the militia manage to hold an insurgency for a long time? As earlier mentioned the issue of boundaries played into the militia's hands. The fact that they could hide from the Kenyan disciplined forces helped them play into the insurgency for long. Thus, the terrain of the Mt. Elgon region would offer hideouts for the militia since it cut across two countries; Kenya and Uganda, and two regions; Trans- Nzoia and Bungoma counties. When the militia was hunted down by the government, they simply switched residence to either Uganda or Trans- Nzoia County (Towmann, O.I, 2010; Kapchanga, O.I, 2011).

The second strategy for the SLDF was wearing military fatigues and police uniforms and communicated in the national language, Kiswahili (Simiyu, 2007:27). Thus as Simiyu (2007:27) further puts it, the local residents were unable to distinguish them from the security personnel that officially wore the uniforms. The militia would thereby carry out their operations alongside the security personnel which they carried out during the night. It is alleged that the militia was well linked and trained by retired army officers and policemen. Some of the uniforms were bought while others were stolen from police outlets in the area (Fredy, O.I, 2011; Kibocha, O.I, 2014).

The SLDF also employed propaganda to sustain its war in the face of strong government operations in the region. For instance, there was a widely held belief that the SLDF fighters lived in the forest. This was not true as the SLDF lived amongst the local population and in fact operated from their homes. Simiyu (2007:28) observes that they only assembled whenever there was a job to be done after which they would merge with the civilian population again while the security forces mounted up futile operations in the forest to hunt them down. Their groups that would attack were organized of between 10 to 12 people (Oloo, 2010). This made their movement difficult to detect. Only the commanders and strategists had specific bases and hiding places in caves and forested mountain slopes (George, O.I, 2010). These hiding places were a place they were used to and were more adaptable to the terrain than the security forces (ibid).

During the SLDF operations, the militia used threats and intimidation to ensure that no resident volunteered information to the security forces. This issue in itself posed a great challenge as we gathered information from the field. Most respondents wanted to know who we were and why we wanted the information. That aside the issue was that since the militiamen lived among the locals, any traitor would easily be found and dealt with.

Simiyu (2007:28) also notes that during operations the SLDF fighters did not carry weapons for long. This was probably to avoid being sported by the security agencies. Their weapons were delivered to them at designated places within close range of the target, to which they returned them after the operation and from where they were transported back to the armoury, deep in the forest (ibid). This meant that it was difficult to get the militia who had weapons to destroy or take away the weapons.

Most of all the militia employed oath taking and spiritual guidance from the Laibon, their spiritual leader. Special charms were given which were believed just like for the MajiMaji Rebellion and the Mau Mau Rebellion, both of which agitated against their loss of independence, the former during the institution of colonial rule and the later during the decolonization process. The aim of the charms in both groups was to give the fighters protection from the bullets and give them supernatural strength to fight. For the SLDF, Oloo (2010:167) rightly observes that the oath and charms gave confidence and psychological boost and this he says explains why many young people joined the group. It also bound them to the cause of the SLDF. This is further confirmed by a quotation of Namwaya in *The East African Standard*, 27 August, 2007, of one member of the militia saying;

“What has given us supernatural powers is God. We have even got to know who the members of the special anti-insurgency security squad are through God’s powers”

This probably is gotten from the culture and military history of the Sabaot. As Weatherby (1962) puts it, the powers held by the prophets in this community were mystic and hereditary. This they transferred to the SLDF. The young men were encouraged to enrol since they would enjoy the mystic protection and be invincible. The Laibon was also to predict what to expect in operations and how to avert danger (Simiyu, 2007:29).

Since the religious arm did not operate in isolation, the militia had a military as well as political wing that helped run its affairs (Simiyu, 2007:28-29). The military wing, had organisers who were former police and army officers (Kibocha, O. I., 2014). This wing was headed by Matakwei, but he had his senior who about much is not known. Probably they are still alive and no one would want to betray them, in fear of facing

the consequences. This wing held hidden training sessions where the militia learnt and perfected the use of the gun. It was closely linked to the religious wing which carried out oathing ceremonies(Oloo, 2010:167).

The third wing was the political wing. This is believed to have been behind the rise of the insurgence. Probably, as stated in the instrumentalist theory above, the political class manipulates the low class in society to achieve their desired end for their own benefit. Probably that is why a majority of our interviewees admitted that politicians gave financial support for the insurgence. However, the support must have been insufficient, forcing the militia to engage in looting, extortion and illegal taxation of the local residents (ibid). However the political dimension of the conflict in Mt. Elgon cannot be underscored. For fact, many of the locals we met agreed to the fact that SLDF was allied to Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and was very intolerant of leaders and supporters of other parties (Saulo, O.I, 2010). The PNU supporters were intimidated and in some cases executed. Many prominent politicians decamped to ODM.No wonder Fred Kapondi won the ODM party nomination while he was in custody. There was uncertainty if he would win the general election as area MP. But when he was released a few days to election of 2007, winning was evident. Kapondi argued that there was a political motive behind his arrest and challenged the state that he wanted to know why he was arrested (*The East African Standard*, 29thNov. 2007)

The winning of Kapondi as area MP brought with it serious consequences. Locally it implied that those allied to him, particularly the Soy stood to benefit from this new dispensation. This ties in well to the instrumentalists who see a reward in whatever political action they take as earlier alluded to. On the other hand, as Simiyu (2007) observed, the Mosop and Serut's Soy supporters alongside other ethnic communities

in the region feared exclusion and attacks from the SLDF. On the national scene, as Simiyu (2008:34) rightly observes, after the declaration of the PNU's candidate, Mwai Kibaki as the winner of the presidential elections which the ODM supporters refuted, violence that broke up in ODM strongholds worsened the violence in Mt. Elgon. This prolonged the intra-ethnic conflict in the area.

In this subsection, we see the political leadership and religious leadership having the power to create. They created SLDF and sustained it. If these leaders could come together, they could create peace for the community. Thus, political and religious leaders can unite and through several meetings with their subjects, lasting peace could be reached at. What then happened to the prolonged conflict in the eyes of the government? This unfolds in the next sub-section.

5.3 Offensive Reaction to SLDF.

5.3.1 Government Response to the Conflict

The initial government response to the Mt. Elgon conflict was that of dismissal. They presumed that the conflict was as a result of incitement by irresponsible leaders and that the militia was a bunch of criminals who should be firmly dealt with (Simiyu, 2008:25). Since the issue looked more localized, the government charged the local chiefs with the responsibility of ensuring peace in their areas of jurisdiction (ibid). Curfews were instituted and implementers were to be the local chiefs and administration police. As usual, though these people knew that the stage of development of the insurgency was advanced, they decided not to report the truth but to conceal it believing that things would change. This approach yielded no fruits as the SLDF continued to unleash terror on the purported subjects.

Since the government viewed this as a security issue, more security personnel were deployed in the region that included Rapid Deployment Unit, Anti- Stock Theft Unit and the Paramilitary General Service Unit (ibid). Some results were achieved and according to Mwaserah (2008:75), a major operation to flush out those with illegal arms was launched. This led to several criminals being apprehended. Several other police patrol bases and posts were set up to beef up security. This did not outwit the militia. They employed several tactics and practices that outwitted the security agents. This included; the spiritual, military and political strategies that have already been talked about. Which way was the government to go? This is what we delve into next.

The instituted security personnel could not weed out the SLDF. This was because, as Simiyu (2007) articulates, the security personnel were unable to gather intelligence on SLDF operational strategies. The personnel also lacked specialized training in counter- insurgency. The truth was that the SLDF was too strong and tactful for the security forces. The security forces became frustrated since there were no results from their work (Oloo, 2010:168). They had been defeated to protect innocent civilians. This frustration was vented on the same civilians who needed protection for failing to give crucial information about the militia (Cherotich, O.I, 2013). All young men became militia suspects and parents had to account for their sons' whereabouts (ibid). In fact the police change of tact turned to violation of human rights. They killed and tortured innocent suspects, burned houses they suspected belonged to militiamen or their hideouts, looted property, extorted money from the residents and raped women (KNCHR, 2008).

Since little was being achieved in terms of the government response to the conflict, the government had to engage supplementary ways of ending the conflict. Thus, the

government mounted a manhunt for the local leaders purported to be supporting and sympathizing with SLDF. Among the three most wanted persons were Matakwei, Kapondi and Warsama. This saw Kapondi being apprehended for acts of robbery with violence and murder. He remained in custody for seven months. This he saw as the hand of Serut, the sitting MP who wanted to thwart his ambition of getting him off power.

The provincial administration also engaged the local community and its leaders in a bid to build trust between them, which would enhance gathering of intelligence reports on militia activities and promoting dialogue and peace in the campaign to resolve the conflict (Simiyu, 2007:31). Thus, on 24th March 2007, 430 leaders from the two warring clans held a meeting in a local school, while on 28th March and 10th April 2007 meetings were held with elected councillors and former MPs. On 3rd April 2007 another meeting involving the local MP, Minister for Lands and religious leaders held a meeting at the Provincial Commissioner's (PC) office at Kakamega and discussed the complex land issue in Mt. Elgon. This led to the meeting of 49 elders and other stakeholders from 16th to 18th May to scrutinize the lists of the identified beneficiaries of the Chepyuk Scheme.

In the peace meetings that were held, amnesty was granted by the government representatives for those who possessed illegal fire arms and ammunition and identified places where they would be surrendered. There was also a promise of a cash reward of Ksh. 10,000 for any weapon that was surrendered to the police. However, by the time of dateline, no weapon had been surrendered (Chemaek, O.I, 2014). This could have been because of two reasons; one, they feared to surrender to the security forces they had frustrated in a bid to cog the conflict, and two, they were

engrossed in their religious oaths and charms and they knew they could not be tracked.

The above conclusions probably explain why the government officers saw a solution in engaging the cultural/religious leaders of the Soy (Kibocha, O.I, 2014). They believed this would restore order and peace. This approach failed since the leaders had just re-negotiated their position in their society and had benefited from the large tracts of land that were being harvested by the SLDF (ibid). Thus they had acquired a new political and economic status that would not be wished away (Simiyu, 2007)). Thus, even though the government had changed strategy in its determination to solve the conflict, it failed. The conflict blazed on. The Mosop and the Soy supporters came up with a new strategy to defend themselves from the pawns of the SLDF militia. They formed a counter-insurgency militia called the Moorland Defense Force (MDF). Let us see how the insurgency operated in the next sub-section.

5.3.2 Formation of the Counter- Insurgency Militia Groups

The questions that are very crucial in this section are how and why was the counter-insurgency groups formed? The counter-insurgency as earlier mentioned stemmed from the need for self protection by the Mosop and the Soy allied to Serut from the pangs of the SLDF militia. This was particularly so since the presence of the heavy security and the establishment of three police bases at Chepyuk, Kipsikrok and Kaimugul had not stopped the SLDF from unleashing its terror on the other group. Moreso, the respected Mosop elder and retired chief, Tenderesi Temoi precipitated in the formation of the Moorland Defence Force (MDF). As the name suggests, the MDF operated in the Moorlands from where the Mosop had been relocated earlier on

and to which they fled back after the SLDF attacks. Just like the SLDF the MDF had retired army officers who trained the youth on various aspects of defense (Simiyu, 2007). However, MDF was not strongly publicized since they never aimed to harm innocent civilians and that the fighters surrendered their weapons when military operation took to the scene. They supported military operation against the SLDF.

There was yet another militia group that was formed to defend the Soy clan allied to Serut called Political Revenge Movement (PRM). It was based in the deep forest and its members are said to have been among key informers and associates of the army in identifying SLDF militiamen (KNCHR, 2008). This was with regard to the computer/satellite screening of individuals who had held or used guns (IMLU, 2008). The question was whether the government would watch while another 'state' was being formed. This was not going to happen. This is why the army was deployed into the region.

5.3.3 The Deployment of the Army

The government had now realized that the conflict was greater than she had thought. It was bigger and more organized. Yet there was a worsening humanitarian crisis that was capturing the attention of the whole world. The government decided to call in the army to restore law and order in Mt. Elgon. The government's decision could have been informed by two issues; one, the scare of the commander of the SLDF who claimed to be commanding a large army of about 35,000 men (HRW, 2008). This in itself was a threat to the government that was already under siege over the post-election violence. Such figures would only confirm a country headed for anarchy. This is why the army was swung into action. The second reason was that the post-

election violence of 2007 saw an emergence of 23 militia groups on both sides of PNU and ODM (Simiyu, 2007). This was a dangerous trend which any government would have feared to be an opener to a civil war. These groups had to be suppressed

The army set up a base at Kapkota in Sasur Location of Cheptais Division and launched the Operation Okoa Maisha (Operation Save Life) initiative on March 10th 2008. The army's choice of place was informed by the fact that many of the SLDF leaders and commanders came from the area. The military engaged both ground operations and aerial bombardments using helicopter gunships to targeted suspected SLDF sites in the forests and in caves (Simiyu, 2007:38). They cordoned off the area and the media and humanitarian agencies had restricted access. Those who disobeyed like the two Nation Media crew members- Samuel Cheboi and cameraman Hillary Obinda were beaten up by the army officers and their camera confiscated after which the footage was deleted before the camera was handed back to them (*East African Standard*, 16th March, 2008).

Since the army had been informed of the challenge of gathering intelligence reports as earlier stated, they applied brutal force to extract information from the residents. Males were rounded up for interrogation. According to HRW (2008:4), the army violated human rights by using torture, mass detentions, forced confessions and extra-judicial killings. Further allegations were that the army raided homes at dawn and abducted men, some of whom were tortured and others killed and their bodies either thrown in the forest or taken to Webuye or Bungoma mortuaries (ibid). This we shall come back to later in the next sub-section.

Although the coming of the army was welcome by the residents who had suffered at the hands of the SLDF, their misery was aggravated at the very operation of the military (KNCHR, 2008). As a result more people became displaced. Regional security threat was increased as even some of the militiamen fled to Uganda, Eldoret, West Pokot and Trans- Nzoia (*Daily Nation*, 8th April, 2008).

The army recorded a number of successes. On 5th April, 2008, the police spokesman reported that two militia commanders had been killed, over 1,735 suspects arrested, 1,324 interrogated and released, 374 arraigned in court and charged with various crimes while 37 remained in the police custody. Further to this 41 AK47rifles and over 1,000 rounds of ammunition had been recovered (*Daily Nation*, 6 April, 2008). Again due to the flushing off of the militia from Mt. Elgon area, the police were able to apprehend the SLDF spiritual leader and oath administrator, Manyiror in Eldoret (*Daily Nation*, 8 April, 2008). At this juncture the man that was being hunted for, Matakwei was still at large. The greatest army victory was when Matakwei was gunned down on 16th May, 2008 together with twelve other fighters. It was seen as the beginning of the end of the conflict (*East African Standard*, 17 May, 2008). This gave strength to the government who thought of establishing a permanent military base in the area to ensure lasting peace. In addition, the provincial administration held a series of meetings with local residents and leaders to extract more information about the SLDF whom they wanted completely wiped out.

Simiyu (2007) gives credible five reasons as to how the army managed to silence the SLDF. One, the army was trained and equipped for combat. The SLDF's geographical advantage was countered by the army's use of bombs and rockets that forced the militiamen to abandon their hideouts and come out to the hands of the army or to die

right there. Secondly, the army cordoned off the area and cooperated with Uganda in the cordoning. This left the militia with limited supplies that could not be renewed. They could also not escape from their hideout. In case they managed to sneak to Uganda; the Ugandan forces arrested them and handed them over back to the Kenyan authorities. The cordoning off of the area meant that the militia's economic base was being depleted without renewal. This hastened their death

Thirdly, the approach of the SLDF to the local community caused them to lose favour with the community. Hence, with the brutality of the army, the locals were willing to disclose that which they knew about the militiamen. Thus the militiamen were betrayed. The fourth point lay in the technology of the army. The introduction of screening of suspects that would detect anyone who had handled a gun forced the militiamen to stick in the forest where they were easily dealt with. The fifth point is that the support received by the army from the counter insurgency groups helped the army in identifying members of SLDF from their midst. The groups; MDF and PRM controlled the movement of the SLDF into the forest. Those they apprehended were surrendered to the army.

Lastly, one cannot underscore the death of the army commander and the apprehension of the religious leader. It meant that the SLDF had no commander; and in essence it was dead. Secondly, the arrest of the religious leader meant that now the oaths and their supernatural mystical powers were no longer useful. Thus, the followers became demoralized and quit the group. Thus, the Mt. Elgon region was on the path to restoration of peace the residents had longed for. However one wonders if this could mean lasting solution to the deep seated conflicts that are unveiled in their history.

Definitely this was an immediate solution to the Mt. Elgon crisis. What clearly comes out of the reactions is that in a bid to look for peace, more than one method should be engaged. And even after the solution is reached, one should look for areas that have not been sufficiently handled to engage them. In this case I see a lasting solution coming from the collaborative effort of the government, the new county leaders and the community leaders. They are supposed to engage vigorously to seal off loopholes that can let a volcano to erupt. This should involve elders, youth, women, church leaders, and all other stakeholders. With the democracy that is being promoted in this country, no mountain can be too difficult to level.

5.4 Effects of the Mt. Elgon Conflicts

As earlier established, Mt. Elgon region in Kenya has suffered a series of protracted conflicts. Their effects are well articulated by many authors. However, for the purposes of this study, only what came from the 2006-2008 conflict that was intra-ethnic in nature will be highlighted

From the onset of this study, land is one of the central points of argument. As Ndegwa (Synchar Report No. 1) puts it, the perception of the majority of Kenyans is that land is still the most important source of livelihood. To some land is seen as the only source of livelihood. Kamungi sees land as one that is valued as a cultural but also a spiritual asset (ibid). The land ownership and state involvement in defining rights and access to land remain as disputed as ever in Kenya (Medard, 2008). The very purpose of the government introducing allocation of land in Chepyuk schemes was to provide the landless who were the Mosop with land. But as earlier cited, the land was somehow off the hands of the target group. The Mosop were left landless without

control over the moorlands and with no land in Chepyuk. There were many other people who due to irregularities of allocation and reallocation, they lost their land and are now homeless.

On the other hand, the conflict was rewarding to some people who managed to acquire land. For instance, as earlier mentioned, the people who had not been considered in land allocations were now considered. The religious leaders and SLDF militia were among the beneficiaries of the land that was vacated due to the conflict. In fact some members of the community were more concerned about their survival than their land. To date, some people who vacated have never had intentions of going back to occupy the land (FGDs).

Even though there was acquisition of land the economic situation of the region under conflict deteriorated. Many families lost their livestock to the SLDF militia. The militia either stole them or cut them to pieces or burnt them as they attacked target areas (Chemaek, O.I, 2014; Chacha, O.I, 2014)). In addition, the militiamen had closed the major roads making people unable to access market areas, especially from Chepkitale. This meant that some of the land produce could not be sold and some of the produce was forcefully taken by the militiamen. This was to maintain their food security during the war. They had stores set up in the caves in the forest (Chepkoech O.I, 2012; Kirui, O.I, 2014). Many shops remained closed. Actually food supply in some areas was cut off.

Since the attacks affected the psyche of the people, those who were working in government departments and were not Sabao, ran away. Even the locals left their work places in fear of attacks. Thus, many institutions like schools and hospitals

closed. Many children were out of school. For those who had taken refuge in Endebess, the children had put strain on learning facilities (IRIN, 2008). Accessing medical care was impossible and the children and expectant mothers were most affected (Mt. Elgon Genocide Update, 2007).

From the above occurrences, it is clear that many people lost their lives. People were killed by the militiamen, by the army, by hunger, lack of medical care and some by stress of what was happening. Remember the army tortured people until some died out of stress. Some people would only escape the torture of the army by hiding in water which was cold (Fred, O.I, 2011; Mary, O.I, 2014). Life was difficult and unbearable. Those who were sentenced to murder by the SLDF militiamen died even before they reached the execution spot. They were pulled and drugged using a rope and flogged (George, O.I, 2010; Cheron, O.I, 2011; Steve, O.I, 2013). Some at the hands of the militia were sliced piece by piece till they died. Some had their throats sliced (Towmann, O.I, 2010) what an excruciating pain and death! One wonders if in this case reason and the human feelings were out of site or dead.

Alongside murder was of course what we have mentioned; torture. Torture was both executed by the army and the militiamen. The militiamen chopped off their victim's organs like ears, fingers, toes, and hands, to some extent destroyed the eyes and harmed the private parts. In essence this was great torture we got from the facial communication of our interviewees. Some would burst out into screams. It came out clearly in FDGs. Sometimes I was caught with emotions and cried with them, but my assistants would keep me cautioned. I actually also became traumatized as a researcher. How about my clients? The Mt. Elgon people are a traumatized lot. The militiamen, the victims of their activities and the observers, all became traumatized.

On talking to a small boy about 13 years of age we found at the area where the militia courts were conducted, the boy told us this;

“They took them to that court. They beat him up. He cried loudly. I followed him at a distance and saw all that was happening. I saw his perpetrators. I know them. After they were through with the judgment, they disappeared with him through that route to the forest. a piece of cloth he had was thrown back which I went to pick. My father screamed loudly and vanished with the executors, never to be seen again”.

At this point the boy was sweating and breathing profusely. We were full of regrets of carrying out the interview. He finally said;

“I will revenge. I must revenge. School has no meaning. Every week I must come to this place.”

At this point we cut the interview short and gave the boy some lunch. What came out of this interview was that the location of the court was in a slanting valley which one was able to see all that transpired. This added to the trauma of the entire society that witnessed this. For this boy, vengeance is what is on his mind. In this case, have we handled and solved the conflict? These are some of the questions that one cannot avoid crossing the mind. The Sabaoth society is in dire need of psychological healing. No idea if our government has sufficient counselling services. Anyway, if I was to narrate all we encountered time and space would not allow. This was a case of torture by the SLDF militiamen.

The army also expedited torture that was beyond explanation. Some narrations can be found in other literature particularly by the groups that sought to assist the people from danger. When in the field, most of the interviewees shied off from narrating stories relating to the army. But they told us that if we were strong they would push us close to the field where the army dumped the remains of the people who died under

their operation. The place, they described was full of human skulls and no one was allowed to move close unless you wanted to be part of the display. We declined the offer and left it at that. Whereas the army was instrumental in quelling the conflict, I join others to state that they used excessive force which was not necessary.

In any conflict of the magnitude of the one that faced Mt. Elgon Sub-County, women always have their share of torture. In this case, many women are raped. Things were not different in this constituency. Women were abused greatly. This was at the hands of the militia as well as the security forces. Some were raped by more than five men. Some contracted diseases including HIV. Some have been unable to conceive and have been chased out of their matrimonial homes. Some have protruding stomachs, showing pregnancy yet they are not pregnant. Some had conceived and gave birth to children whose fathers are not known. All this came out in an FGD that comprised of women. These were gross violations against women.

Furthermore, as earlier stated, many people lost their lives. Lives were lost at the hands of the militiamen, security officers and through negligence in provision of essential services like Medicare and food. The loss of family members left families frustrated and in despair. An account of a 15 year old girl who had been married was among those who became widowed and with two children. She was so young and frustrated to the extent that she wanted to commit suicide before she was rescued by a humanitarian organization and taken to school. Many women were left widowed as most casualties of the conflict were men. The homes were left without security providers. To date most of the remaining men have taken to drinking probably as a way of forgetting the past. Most of them do not attend school. In fact it is said that

more girls are attending school than boys contrary to what has been the case in the past.

On the positive side, the conflicts opened up the region to more interaction with the outside world. Bearing in mind the nature of the Sabaot as conservatives, they were exposed to socialization with humanitarian agencies that have opened up avenues of further adventure by members of the community. Some have even been employed by the organizations while others have got scholarships to study away from home. This can help the region embrace diversity both economically and socially. Some of the members have also got assistance in terms of diversifying their economy. New methods of farming have been introduced. People are now keen to carry out a study about this community; which has not been the case. However, the humanitarian agencies have laid emphasis on the women and the girl child. Very little is being done about the men and boys who have taken to drinking. This in itself will in the near future create a gender imbalance towards the boy child who is already under threat.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the crisis that faced Mt. Elgon Constituency. It has summarized very painful experiences humanity in this part of the world faced. It has highlighted the causes, the effects as well as solutions to this crisis. There have also been gains to individuals in the area of conflict, which we cannot always anticipate in the case of a crisis of this magnitude. However after an indepth analysis of the area of study, some observations and recommendations have been made. This unfolds in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of the Research

This research has focused on the study of intra-ethnic relations among the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon Constituency. It has tried to situate the study in a background of understanding these relations from the pre-colonial period, through the early colonial period, into the decolonization period through to the independence and finally in the multi-party era. This is because it is good to understand the root cause of any event. A tree is easily killed from the roots. There were particular items that were sourced for in every epoch that related to the title of the research. This was closely linked to the objectives of the research

Before looking at the gist of intra-ethnic relations, the geographical location was very necessary. In this location, the Sabaot were found to have loved the place and while the rest of the people migrated from this region (it was a dispersal point), they chose to remain. This was attributed to their supposed conservative nature. Thus they are resistant to change. This did not discredit the fact that they were an evolutionary people; when broadly cast into the theoretical perspective of constructivism. In this respect, it was established that the Sabaot were as a result of the evolutionary process (Mwanzi, 1982:4). Though conservative in nature, they could not resist the forces of change that surrounded them. This included; association with other ethnic groups, colonialism, post colonial era and the political, socio-economic changes that came with the different epochs.

The confines of the study area were also found to be an evolutionary phenomenon. For instance, the initial location of the Sabaot covered one area around Mt. Elgon, in the pre-colonial period. This was to change when the colonial government drew boundaries that put the same ethnic group into different administrative locations; Kenya and Uganda. After independence, due to political instrumentalism, the Sabaot were located not only in two different countries, but that those in Kenya were separated into two different administrative provinces and later into two counties. This in itself became a precursor to ethnic conflict. Thus boundaries played a role in aggravating the conflicts under focus.

From the research, it was found out that the name Mt. Elgon was not the initial name of the mountain. It was coined by Thomson who met people from one of the Sabaot clans called the Kony. Thus, this name was constructed by the explorer and could have been seen as sowing a seed of discord, since one clan's name was the one used above names of other clans to name the mountain.

The pre-colonial set-up of the Sabaot as established by this research put them into different sub-groups, whose history could not be clearly captured. Thus the term Sabaot had again been constructed. These sub-groups were as a result of the interactions occasioned by their immigration and settlement as well as their semi-nomadic lifestyle. This meant that there was fusion of different groups that made up different clans. Since there was a mix of blood brotherhood, this in itself can be used in conflict resolution as there was some kind of blood unity. However, this was also a source of structural conflicts as the issues that put some of them away from each other could not be erased. Thus the first premise was proved so though the aspect of their

semi-nomadic lifestyle affecting their patterns of settlement complimented the premise.

There were other pre-colonial characteristics of the Sabaot that were deemed to cause conflict or bring peace. Such included their common beliefs. Such beliefs included the belief in *Yeyia* whom they all worshipped. This was a uniting belief. They also had common rituals that included celebrations. These were related to child bearing and naming, harvests, weddings among others. They also mourned their dead together. These were events that cemented relationships and glued the community together. Since celebrations are still treasured today, invitations of the purported enemies to the same ceremony could build trust and unite the Sabaot clans. Other ceremonies that were of great value to the community included circumcision of both boys and girls. The celebrations in themselves were a uniting factor. But what the act did to the boys was typically different. Since the boys were trained for protection as warriors, it radicalized the boys. War is what they looked forward to. In fact that is why the formation of the three militia groups earlier talked about was not an issue. There were also some beliefs that disintegrated the Sabaot. Such issues included polygamy, witchcraft and use of totems to refer to a particular clan. Children who were; born out of wedlock, born after wife inheritance, came with their mothers or those who were war captives also were dividing factors to the Sabaot community. But women were a sign of peace. This role could still be incorporated to this society through training as a means of conflict resolution. Lastly, the well established political system in the pre-colonial period can be a source of conflict resolution as elders are still very much valued in the present Kenyan society. The bit of interaction within the

community that was both a source of conflict and resolution was also not put into perspective in the first premise.

Moving to the colonial period, the Sabaot society saw more disintegration and the build-up of structural conflicts. The initial stages of the launch of colonization saw African communities sign treaties. The Sabaot were not left behind as a treaty was signed between Sir Frederick Jackson and *Kirwagindet* Kimingichi of the Bok to engage the Sabaot land under the IBEACo. The other communities were not engaged in the treaty. This divided them. What followed the treaty was the issue of boundaries that was synonymous with colonial occupation. The boundaries disintegrated the Sabaot into two countries; Kenya and Uganda. What followed this was the policy of 'divide and rule'. The use of the Wanga ethnic group to dominate western Kenya divided the Sabaot into those who submitted to this and those who ran away. This was still a build up to the structural conflicts. It was also clear that during the installation of colonial period, the main agenda was to take up and occupy land for the British. The Sabaot were part of the many Kenyans who lost their land under these circumstances. Part of their land was taken up by the settlers, the other by the creation of the African reserve to which the Bukusu were also pushed, while the other was taken as a forest reserve; thus displacing the Chepkitale. This again created a further build-up of structural conflicts.

As was discussed in the research, the British carried with them good news for Africans in form of Christianity. When they came with the good news, they found Africans already engrossed in their traditional forms of worship. The Sabaot were part of this group. Whereas not all Africans refused to embrace the new religion, some conformed to it as has been explained in chapter four. This divided the Sabaot into the

Christians and non-Christians. This was a build-up of the division that would later manifest itself in violent conflicts. This went hand in hand with education. The Sabaot who went to school had a different outlook to life than those who did not. This divided them academically.

During the inter-war period, there was recruitment of Africans to join the army and those who were conscripted to do various duties. Of course many Sabaot evaded this. The others who did not manage were subjected to hard labour but also got exposed to new techniques of fighting. Some of the members of the community who became chiefs were part of the group that harassed their fellow Sabaot. In essence this sowed seeds of discord. After the World Wars, the soldiers who managed to come back (majority of the Sabaot soldiers were killed), withdrew from the rest due to the frustration they had received both from their kinsmen and the British. Already there was division. This was later to culminate into full blast conflicts.

As the World Wars were coming to a close, the Africans had the desire for emancipation and self rule. This was manifested in formation of nationalistic movements. In the area of study, they took a religious angle under the DYM. This was not only an outfit for the Bukusu but also for the Africans who agitated against colonial rule in this part of the world. The Sabaot were part of them. But this again divided them. The conservatives had nothing to do with forming emancipator outfits. Those who resented colonial rule joined the Bukusu in agitation. The community was thus divided and structural conflicts were breeding. This was also the case when political parties were formed as has been elaborately dealt with in Chapter four. In essence the colonial period was one of the worst periods of build-up of the structural conflicts. In this chapter, the second premise is approved.

In Chapter five, when Kenya attained her independence, new issues emerged among the Sabaot. We see retribalisation of the inclusive ethnicity vis-a-vis others. The Sabaot entered independence in their political outfit. They did this to gang against the Bukusu. They raised issues related to the land they ought to have possessed and they lost out on it. But they managed to get a constituency. This became the tool for political bargain. The politicians used this tool since then to ascend to power or to negotiate for their need with the government of the day. This then ushered in episodes of violent conflicts based on exclusive ethnicity. Politics also became a tool of influence in issues to do with land settlement. The politics of exclusion came into play when the Sabaot wanted the Bukusu out of their land. A series of wars were fought. But this did not stop with the Bukusu. Since political class discovered that, one of the ways they were going to use to easily make it to parliament was through giving their electorate promises on acquisition of land, they initiated the Chepyuk settlement scheme deal. This is the scheme that epitomized the intra-ethnic conflicts that later manifested in 2006-2008. This then partly approves the third premise except that tension, suspicion and hate were not exclusive. Periods of unity and togetherness were also witnessed.

In Chapter six, the research looked at the crisis that resulted from the 2006-2008 intra-ethnic conflicts. Some of the results of the conflicts were unbelievable, but it happened. The main issue is how this occurrence can be stopped from happening again. The immediate as well as other causes of the conflict were brought to the fore. The results were discussed and have been discussed in other pieces of literature. The issue I now seek is to further propose how the occurrence of such a conflict can be further repulsed. This unfolds in the recommendations.

6.2 Recommendations from the Research Work

Based on the findings of this research work the following recommendations are hereby made;

Since this conflict took place in a sovereign state, the action of the militia was a dangerous event to the country. Thus, the central government should be vigilant in detecting danger more seriously than before through its intelligence reports. They should also be fast to respond to such crises so that people do not have times of regrouping and re-strategizing their attacks. This will be an immediate solution to ending conflicts. Secondly, the politicians from this region who have basically come from the same clan, the Bok, should use this political gimmick and prowess by showing unity among them, so as to unite the whole ethnic group. On the strength of overcoming trauma, major hospitals within Bungoma County should have increased number of counsellors and psychiatrists to assist victims. It should not only be left to the international bodies to facilitate this.

Additionally, the Central Government should strengthen the instituted Peace Committees to operate even when there is no war, for a war-prone area like Mt. Elgon. This can be strengthened by the County Government, who can strengthen cultural festivals that advocate for peace as we have seen in pre-colonial societies. This can best be done by involvement of the Sabaot elders and religious leaders. Through this, the younger generation can be equipped with conflict resolution tools carried down from the clan's forefathers. Probably as the government looks into employing more counsellors, they could still serve this purpose.

Since women are the most affected during conflicts, the Sabaot women should be educated on their traditional roles as conflict resolution agents. This can be done by the humanitarian agencies, the religious leaders and the elders. Additionally, in Mt. Elgon Sub-County, humanitarian agencies have done a good job in helping the victims of conflict. But as regards material support we recommend that they do it when the victims are unable to help themselves. Once they are in a position, they should be taught on how to fend for themselves. Otherwise they take anyone going there, even for research, as a source of some material goods. This notion should be done away with if the community has to embrace development and education.

Lastly, it is unfortunate that in this region, when conflicts have occurred, the women and girls have really been taken care of in terms of their material, emotional and social needs. Men and boys have been left out. This omission should be corrected to save the boy child in this community. They also require attention just like the females to overcome the trauma experienced when a conflict occurs.

6.3 Areas of Further Research

This study has identified the following areas for further research; first, is the relationships between gender and conflicts among the Sabaot. This is a gap that can help men to cope up with the aftermath of conflict episodes to which they are the main actors. Any other community can also be studied in this context. Secondly, we propose a study on the history of internal and external boundary relations of the Sabaot. This can help in security studies and international border relations. Since the history of the Sabaot is not well documented, a research on their social, economic and

political aspects is an area of great importance. It can help the community reduce feelings of marginalization.

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See Appendix 3

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APPENDICES

A1: SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

A: Background Information

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Clan:

Praise Name:

Education Background: Address/ Location/ Residence

B: Location on Intra- Ethnic Relations

1. How long have you lived in this area?
2. Did you settle as an individual, family, clan, sub ethnic group or the entire ethnic group?
3. Give a brief history of your community; point of origin, migratory routes and periods, and identify the specific events that occurred at specific periods.
4. Which other ethnic group live here and for how long?
5. How have you related with members of your community as well as other communities
6. What is the occupation of your community members?
7. Do you boost cordial relations between sub- ethnic groups?

8. How is initiation done in your community and how important is it?
9. Tell us about your cultural values and beliefs in the Laibon.

C: Specific Intra-Ethnic Relations

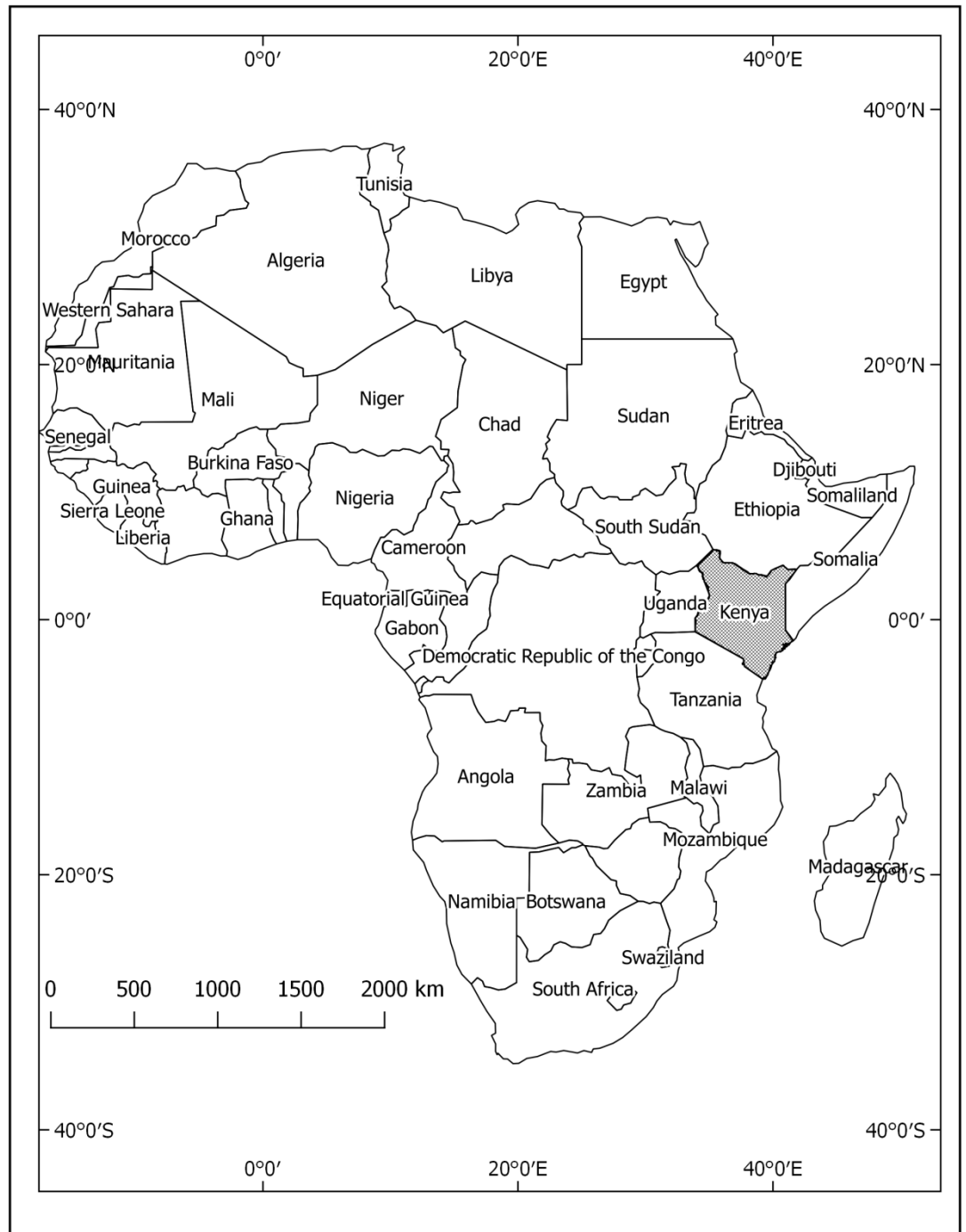
1. What factors have contributed to the emergence of intra- ethnic tensions? Did your ancestors have such experiences?
2. How have the following influenced intra- ethnic relations- Land, education, development in the region, job allocations, politics, religion, natural disasters?

D: Personalities

Identify some leading personalities in your ethnic group or sub ethnic group who tried to advocate for peaceful co-existence. When did they live? How did they advocate for peace/ were their efforts successful?

Note: This interview guide was flexible and was enriched in the field. It was also dictated by the mood of the informant.

A 2.1 Map of Africa Showing Kenya



Source: Geography Department, Kenyatta University, 2016

A2.2 Administrative Map of Kenya Showing Bungoma County



Source: Geography Department of Kenyatta University, 2016

A3: Table of Informants

Anne Sile	Female	61yrs	Cheptais	Somek	5/8/2012
Barno, G.	Male	14 yrs	Chepkitale	Ogiek	14/4/2011
Baro, B.	Male	17yrs	Kapsokwony	Kony	3/1/2015
Ben Chacha	Male	62 yrs	Cheptais	Bok	12/11/2014
Chemaek Jack	Male	52 yrs	Cheptais	Bok	8/12/2014
Chemtai, J.	Female	15 yrs	Kopsiro	Ogiek	4/9/2010
Chepkoech, S.	Female	56 yrs	Chepkitale	Ogiek	15/9/2012
Cherotich, B.	Female	39 yrs	Kaptama	Kony	3/3/2013
Fredy, C.	Male	19 yrs	Kapsokwony	Ogiek	14/4/2011
George, C.	Male	25 yrs	Cheptais	Bok	3/9/2010
Kapchanga Jack	Male	63 yrs	Kaptama	Somek	12/4/2011
Kibocha Peter	Male	79 yrs	Kopsiro	Bok	4/5/2014
Kiboy Martin	Male	71 yrs	Cheptais	Kony	3/9/2010
Kimkung	Male	82 yrs	Kapsokwony	Kony	3/3/2013
Kipseret Hezron	Male	45 yrs	Kopsiro	Bongomek	5/8/2012
Kirui Martin	Male	72 yrs	Kopsiro	Sabiny	13/12/2013
Lydia Cheronon	Female	42 yrs	Kapsokwony	Bongomek	15/11/2011
Mary, C.	Female	72yrs	Cheptais	Kony	12/8/2014
Patrola, J.	Male	56yrs	Chepkitale	Ogiek	10/11/2014
Saulo, P.	Male	21 yrs	Kopsiro	Bok	4/9/2010
Sikirio Andrew	Male	86 yrs	Kaptama	Kony	8/8/2014
Steve, R.	Male	12 yrs	Kopsiro	Bok	18/8/2013
Towmann, J.	Male	62 yrs	Kaptama	Ogiek	12/8/2010

