

Nandi Colonial Chieftaincy as Social Agency, 1902-1963

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Abstract: Upon annexing Kenya as a colony, the British colonial administration established different structures to support its political and economic agenda. One of those structures was the office of colonial chiefs. Among the Nandi of Kenya, indigenous leaders, especially the office of the Orkoiyot, were maintained where most of them were appointed as chiefs at the onset of colonial rule. However, the new appointees were no longer leaders derived from the traditional processes of the Nandi. Yet, the transformative role of these chiefs in Kenya during the colonial period cannot be overlooked as they were referred to as the agents of social change. Therefore, the study investigated the transformative role of colonial chiefs in Nandi, Kenya from 1902-1963. The study employed the Elite theory and Principal-Agent theories. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised former colonial chiefs, Nandi community elders, current chiefs who knew the history of their office of chieftaincy in the community. The inclusion criteria comprised variables such as geographical distribution, age and command of historical knowledge of the Nandi colonial chiefs. Data was collected using a questioning guideline, interviews and secondary sources. Therefore, apart from the respondents, the primary sources included archival material on colonial and post-colonial chiefs as well as their roles, collected at the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi and Kakamega, and the information from the County Government offices. Oral interviews were tape-recorded. Secondary sources were obtained from research libraries in Kenya and subjected to content analysis. Data from the interviews and document analysis was analysed thematically. The themes were derived from the objectives of the study and from the reviewed literature. Data from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. The results showed that the Nandi colonial chiefs played significant roles in the social transformation of their people. These included introduction of education, health care and Christianity. From these results, more studies are needed to develop a comprehensive documentation of the contribution of colonial chiefs to different aspects of socio-economic and political transformation, such as security, tourism, agriculture, education, health care, transport infrastructure, politics, substance abuse-related issues and environmental conservation. Such a documentation will provide a reference point for evaluating contemporary leadership challenges in Kenya's ongoing history.

Keywords: colonial chiefs, social transformation, Nandi, Kenya

I. INTRODUCTION

Social transformation means the restructuring of all aspects of social life, from health, education, dressing codes, ethics and morality, key social events that give order and structure to society, tribal relations, enforcement of social norms, religion

and marriage, among others. Through time, societies have been transformed from small associations of individuals tied together by instincts, need and fear, to small communities tied together by circumstances, kinship, traditions and religious beliefs, then to nations tied together by history, politics, ideology, culture and laws. However, for most of human history, the pace of change was very slow; no transformations in life conditions could be felt for several generations (Huntingford, 1953).

Prior to colonialism, the Nandi people were connected through ethnic social institutions and practices. In addition to family and neighbourhood ties, these connections were created by membership to a clan, initiation into an age-set, and kinship. In Nandi, there were seventeen clans as mentioned earlier. The clans were exogamous, totemic and patrilineal. However, according to Huntingford (1953), the Nandi clansmen did not claim descent from any particular human founder, but they claimed to be brothers of their clan animal or totem. Through the totem, there existed a mystical brotherhood between all members of the clan. Marriage between a man and a woman of the same clan was considered incestuous and therefore prohibited. However, when a clan had more than one totem, a man could marry a clanswoman provided she had a different totem. Nandi clans were dispersed all over Nandi *Bororiosiek*. Members of different clans lived in one *Bororiet*. This explains why the clan system in Nandi country did not exercise any political functions and had no powerful leadership structure.

At the onset of colonialism, the British appointed colonial chiefs to implement their indirect rule in Nandi. This happened especially after the death of Orkoiyot Samoei in 1905. Prior to colonialism, the Nandi had a solid social standing among their neighbours, mainly the Keiyo and the Abaluhya. They were known for their warrior mentality and ferocity. However, the advent of the era of colonial chiefs saw many changes to the social structures and practices of the Nandi. Some of these changes were good while others were not.

Statement of the Problem

The British introduced the office of colonial chiefs to implement the policy of indirect rule. These colonial chiefs were African leaders appointed by the British government. They were tasked with ensuring that the entire agenda of the colonial government was implemented effectively and accepted by the natives. As such, the colonial chiefs worked at

the behest of the British. However, their roles also implied that they had power to address the British concerning issues that affected the African people. For this reason, there is much to learn about how these chiefs exercised their dual roles of serving the interests of colonialists while simultaneously trying to enhance the political, economic and social welfare of their communities.

Most studies of African colonial chiefs have tended to paint these leaders as being either completely loyal to the British or secret servants of the interests of their native communities. Among the Nandi, no study has sought to document in detail the roles of colonial chiefs. Ideally, a proper documentation of the contribution of such leaders would help to inform the current leadership practices. It would provide lessons from the past successes and failures of such leaders. Such documentation also helps to define the most ideal and desirable political, economic and social structures for contemporary Africa societies. To this end, the study sought to document and critically assess the contribution of colonial chiefs to social transformation of the Nandi, 1902-1963.

African Colonial Chiefs and Social Transformation: Literature Review

In a study of South Africa, Crais (2002) contends that the African chiefs' powers was centrally tied to their access to and control of magic. One of the ways chiefs consolidated and extended their powers was through control of witchcraft and the 'eating up' of subject who were found to have used magic against the chief or his close relatives. Crais' view helped the present study to consider ways in which the African chiefs in Nandi took advantage of the traditional or social aspects to legitimize their powers. These traditional powers connected the chiefs more to locals and made them look suspicious or mysterious among colonialists. Therefore, colonial states in south east Africa were determined to stamp out the practice of witchcraft as one of those aspects of indigenous custom deemed repugnant. Crais' study shows that chiefs still had the connection with the locals even though they served colonial masters. It is also evident that these chiefs reverted to traditional powers when it best suited their personal interests in office. Nevertheless, it is not clear if these chiefs used their connection to the locals to advance the social wellbeing of the natives, a gap that the present study endeavoured to uncover among the Nandi.

According to Jaffe (1994), the distortion of the communal system by power brokers was crucial in undermining the position of the colonial chiefs in South Africa. Clearly, the British struggled to exert control over colonial chiefs, which is indicative of the fact that, as agents, sometimes these chiefs acted against the interests of the colonial principals. It also facilitated the emergence of a class of people who were independent of chiefs and desirous of a "civilized status", even if title under the new provisions and not quality landholders to the Franchise Rhodes was unambiguous on this, which is an indication of his early segregationist thinking. Jaffe's study underscores the fact that the position of colonial chiefs

contributed to social stratification. Did the position of colonial chiefs have the same effect among the Nandi in Kenya?

In the newly created Sierra Leone protectorate, by 1896, the British colonial authorities empowered a set of paramount chiefs as the sole authority of local government (Acemoglu, Reed & Robinson, 2014). These paramount chiefs were elected for life by a "Tribunal Authority" made up of local notables. Only individuals from the designated 'ruling families' of a chieftaincy the elite created and given exclusive right to rule by the British at the initiation of the system in 1896 were eligible to become paramount chiefs. This suggests that the British sought to retain aspects of elite traditional social structures where it suited their interest of indirect rule. The views of Acemoglu *et al.* indicate that in places like Sierra Leone, locals were given some degree of autonomy to elect chiefs. Given this fact, an important question to ask is did these chiefs serve the social interests of locals or their colonial overloads? What criteria did the locals use in electing chiefs? The study attempted to answer these questions in respect to the colonial chiefs of the Nandi in Kenya.

In colonial Uganda, the functions of Baganda agents in Busoga have been clearly explained by Burton (1935) who notes that: "The difficulty of finding suitable chiefs during the early days of the British Administration was considerable; in fact, so devoid were the Basoga of the ability, that a number of Baganda chiefs were appointed." This view helped the present study to explore how the Nandi reacted to the introduction of colonial chiefs. Moreover, it helped the study to examine the types of chiefs appointed where the Nandi resisted chieftaincy. Burton makes general comments on the appointment of colonial chiefs. Burton's study helped the present work to explore the difficulties of finding suitable candidates to be appointed as colonial chiefs in Nandi. In his study, Burton does not describe the role that these colonial chiefs actually played in the social transformation of the Busoga community. The present study goes a step further to examine the contribution of the Nandi colonial chiefs to the social transformation of the community in the colonial period.

In Kenya, a study by Lagat (1995) shows that, in some areas, such as among the Kamba in Machakos, the intensity of the conflict and competition for chief's office led to repeated deposition of chiefs for their excesses by British Officers and disrupted the effectiveness of sate administration unity well into the 1920s. This observation attests to the fact that colonial chiefs regarded themselves as politicians in competition for office. It was also interesting to explore how such political campaigning impacted the contribution of colonial chiefs to social transformation in Nandi? Among the Nandi, the coming in of colonialists had great impact in the social organization of the community. This later becomes a key feature of the role of colonial chiefs in governance since institutional interference had taken root. This view underscores the importance of studying colonial chiefs as a basis for understanding contemporary forms of leadership in Kenya, which constituted one of the contributions the present study hoped to make.

In his work, Lagat (1995) asserts the Nandi people were socially organised along tribal social institutions and practices. In addition to family and neighbourhood ties, these connections were created by membership of a clan, initiation into an age-set, and kinship. In pre-colonial Nandi, there were seventeen clans. The clans were exogamous, totemic and patrilineal. Clansmen did not, however, claim descent from any particular human founder, but they claimed to be brothers of their clan animal or totem. Moreover, through the totem, there existed a mystical brotherhood between all members of the clan. When the Nandi were defeated by the British and British rule established, the *Bororiet* council was changed into locations and Nandi was divided into twenty-six locations cutting across the old *Bororiosiek* each under a headman (chief) who assumed the title of *kiruogindet*. The twenty-six locations were created in 1926 when Talai clan were placed in the same administrative location called kapsisiywa. Locations were reduced to nine in 1933. Although Lagat asserts that the introduction of the office of colonial chiefs disrupted the traditional administrative set-up in the Nandi community, he does not show exactly the changes or transformations that the office of colonial chiefs effected on this traditional governance system. To fill this gap, the present study examined the contribution of colonial chiefs to the social transformation of the Nandi society.

Maiyo (2019) examined the role of the local native councils in the development of western education among the Nandi of Kenya from 1923-1963. He found that the missionaries spearheaded education agenda prior to colonialism. Moreover, the colonial regime collaborated with the missionaries in the education of the Nandi. The nature of this collaboration is not clear in Maiyo's work, a gap that the present study sought to determine by examining the role of colonial chiefs in social transformation in Nandi. The local native councils and other elements of the colonial administration, such as the chiefs and assistant chiefs, also helped to further spread the education agenda in the Nandi. Again, Maiyo does not state the specific actions of these leaders that helped to spearhead education. However, the colonial government had different reasons for promoting education compared to that of the missionaries. Maiyo's study examined education, which is one aspect of social transformation as understood in this paper. The present study examined the role of colonial chiefs in the social transformation of the Nandi.

It is evident that colonial chiefs had some social influence on their communities in the colonial period. Among the social roles noted in the literature are education, disseminating information and advancing the propaganda of the colonial administration, and implementing social policies. The main gap that emerges from these studies is that there is no mention of how the social roles that these chiefs played transformed their societies. There is hardly any mention of the transformative social actions of specific colonial chiefs, an approach that the present study adopted. Therefore, the present study sought to explore the contribution of colonial chiefs to the social transformation of the Nandi.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Nandi County, Kenya. It adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised all the former colonial chiefs, Nandi community elders who had lived through the colonial period and had relevant knowledge about the contributions of the various Nandi colonial chiefs, historians who had studied the Nandi colonial chiefs and the current chiefs who had studied the colonial history of the office of chieftaincy. The sample size of the study was determined by the saturation point during data collection. The inclusion criteria comprised variables such as being of Nandi origin, or knowledgeable in Nandi colonial history, especially the subject of colonial chieftaincy, geographical distribution, age and command of historical knowledge, especially about colonial chiefs of the Nandi. Former colonial chiefs of the Nandi were the main target population. However, since most of them had died, complementary information about their roles was sought from relevant archived documents, relatives and friends of the colonial chiefs who are knowledgeable about the roles played by colonial chiefs, and scholars who had studied and written about the Nandi in general and colonial chiefs in particular.

Primary sources was collected by interviewing elderly respondents in Nandi County. Data was collected using question guidelines and interview schedule. The researcher conducted interviews with mainly the elderly respondents. Oral interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of each respondent. The data from the interviews was complemented by those from the question guidelines. The questions were administered to current chiefs to gauge their level of knowledge of the history of their office of chieftaincy. For document analysis, primary sources included archival material on colonial and post-colonial chiefs as well as their roles collected at the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi and Kakamega, and the information from the County Government offices. In the study, data analysis began first with transcription of audio-recorded data. Once every interview was completed, the researcher transcribed the notes by copying what was said into a Microsoft Word processor document. Data analysis began with the researcher picking out relevant information that could answer the research questions in detail. This was done using the units of analysis derived from the research objectives and the reviewed literature. The analysed data was presented by narration of what was said by the respondents with interpretations and discussions based on the objectives and the reviewed literature.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Colonial Chiefs' Contribution to Health Care Provision

Before colonialism, the Nandi did not have any conception of the germ theory of diseases. However, they were aware from experience that certain plants and animals were harmful. For instance, as indicated by Kuptum arap Temuge,

... the Nandi forbid their people from eating animals that had died on their own. Diseases were thought of as

products of breaking of taboos, disobeying god or witchcraft. Solutions for illnesses included divination, undoing of witchcraft spell and the use of traditional herbs and incantations. Therefore, the Nandi idea of doctors was the traditional medicine men and women and witch doctors (Oral interview with Kiptum arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

However, the British dismissed and outlawed most of these traditional practices soon after annexation of African territories. According to Chebii, Muthee and Kiemo (2020), the practice of traditional medicine was not amenable with the type of governance system introduced by the British in Kenya. This explains why attempts to modernize traditional medicine in Kenya have never taken root. During the colonial period, respondent Temuge indicated that hospitals were introduced to the Nandi with the help of colonial chiefs. The chiefs, with the help of the missionaries, also did much to educate their people on the causes and treatment of illnesses. They also encouraged the Nandi to seek medical treatment in the dispensaries and hospitals provided by the government and missionaries (Chebii *et al.*, 2020). From these findings, it is evident that the Nandi colonial chiefs did much to transform the health practices of the Nandi people.

Another respondent gave an account of the first hospitals constructed with the aid of colonial chiefs in Nandi:

The persons in charge of health care in colonial Nandi were Mr. B.H. Brown (DC) and a health officer known as Mr. Douglas. The first hospital that served Africans was built at Kapsabet in 1946, the second dispensary at Keubi and the third at Kilibwoni, Chebisas (Aldai). Before these hospitals were constructed, the Nandi relied on traditional medicine, although in very few occasions the white settlers could invite doctors to treat the squatters in their lands when sick. But many health centres in missionary areas were mainly for the white people. Most of the hospitals were ran by the Christian missionaries. In fact, wherever there was a mission centre, a hospital was also present (Oral interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old).

In contrast to the above views, another respondent indicated that by 1939, thanks to the advocacy of some local chiefs, the government had established clinics and dispensaries in Kapsabet, Kaiboi and Kilibwoni (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). Evidently, most of the clinics that catered to Africans in Nandi were constructed between the periods of 1939 and 1947. Indeed, it was also reported that, in 1947, the present-day Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) was established in Eldoret (Oral Interview with Peter arap Koei on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). As reported, the Hospital was operated by whites only and it catered mainly to the white people. However, over the years, the chiefs also proposed for the construction of local clinics and hospitals in different regions of the Nandi to cater to the natives. Evidently, the Nandi colonial chiefs seemed to have embraced fully the practices of western medicine and sensitised their

people on them. The above view on the role of colonial chiefs in health was confirmed by the following remarks from one of the respondents:

Prior to 1949, when some clinics had been erected, especially by the missionaries for the locals, many children under the age of five died in the Nandi. Therefore, thanks to the efforts of colonial chiefs, together with the missionaries, the introduction of clinics and dispensaries helped to reduce infant mortality among the Nandi during the colonial period (Oral Interview with Daudi Kipkoeh arap Maritim on 21/3/2019, 85 years old).

The study found that the colonial chiefs encouraged the Nandi to seek medication in the established health facilities. However, as indicated by one respondent, most of the Nandi people were reluctant and often preferred to use herbal medicine men (*chepkerichinik*) (Oral Interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old). The *laibons* also reinforced this resistance since their social power came from the practice of traditional medicine and divine incantations. To promote hygiene, the colonial government also used the chiefs to compel the Nandi to dig pit latrines. The chiefs were also mandated with ensuring that the natives kept their environment clean. This, according to Biwott, “included maintenance of personal hygiene by regular washing of self and clothing, proper dress code and house and compound cleaning. Of course this was part of the civilising mission of the missionaries and the colonisers” (Oral Interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old). Therefore, it is clear that the colonial chiefs played a significant role in the transformation of health practices of the Nandi.

The study also found that colonial chiefs played a significant role in the use and maintenance of hospitals and health centres. As indicated by one respondent, “The chiefs oversaw the security and usage of the hospitals. They also played the role of forcing people to go to hospital. Moreover, they supervised vaccinations against such diseases as measles, cholera and malaria” (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old).

It was also found that the Nandi colonial chiefs played a role in animal health. As explained by Marus, concerning animal health,

...the chiefs also oversaw the vaccination against anthrax and other illnesses. Where animal and human quarantine was imposed, the chiefs enforced it. Outbreaks of new diseases were announced at chiefs’ *barazas*. Those who defied quarantine orders were fined by confiscating their animals and were also taken to the local tribunal (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old).

The study findings on the contribution of colonial chiefs to health care in Nandi affirmed those of Irungu (2019). In his study on the role of colonial chiefs in Kenya, Irungu posits that colonial chiefs mobilised the colonial regimes to construct health centres. The chiefs secured land for construction of such

facilities. They also encouraged the locals to seek treatment and embrace immunization services. These facilities provided health services (such as treatments and immunization) as well as education on health care. According to Irungu, the increased use of health facilities enhanced the life span and living standards of Kenyans. This further saw the rapid rise in the country's population.

It was also observed from the findings that most of the hospitals in colonial Nandi were constructed during the period of World War II (1939-1945). This could be explained by the fact during this time there was an influx of settler farmers in the Kenyan colony owing to the need to increase resources needed by the British empire to support the War. As such, to cater to the increasing number of settlers and subsequently African labourers in settler farms, the colonial government must have seen the need to provide functional hospitals to both the whites and Africans in Nandi land.

Chiefs and Formal Education in Nandi

The study found that the history of education in Nandi follows the movement of Christian missionaries from their entry point in Mombasa, Kenya to the point when they landed in present-day Nandi land. According to Maiyo (2019), the first phase of this inward spread took off from the Coast, to Nairobi, Meru, Kikuyu and then Mijikenda. Another phase spread from Kamba land to Maasai, Kispigis, Kisii/Kuria, Luo (Ramogi), Luhyia, Mt. Elgon, Tambach, Iten, Eldoret and Kapsabet. Maiyo notes that formal education in Kenya dates back to 1888 when the Imperial British East African Company was permitted to explore the British spheres of influence. In 1895, Kenya was declared the British protectorate. From the onset, formal education was seen as a means to realize the aims of colonization in Kenya. Prior to colonization, the missionaries spearheaded the introduction and spread of formal education across Africa. Moreover, to the missionaries, the aims of education was to help entrench Christianity among the native Africans. However, with the establishment of colonialism, education was championed through colonial administrative structures, which included the chiefs and assistant chiefs at the grassroots (Maiyo, 2019).

From the study findings, it was reported that the first schools in Nandi were constructed in Kapsabet around 1926 (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). Education among the Nandi during the colonial period was spearheaded by missions, specifically African Inland Missions (AIM) and the Catholic Church Missionary Society (CMS). This finding reiterates what Maiyo has posited, that the missionaries "were the most essential actors in the establishment of mission education in Nandi country" (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). This observation has also been made by Ronoh concerning the history of education among the Kispigis. According to Ronoh (2000), during the colonial period, the missionaries played key roles in the establishment, administration, staffing and curriculum development. Ronoh also traces the development of girls' education to the work of missionaries. These missionaries

received protection from the colonial government. For example, AIM introduced education around Namgoi (present-day Chebisas) while in present-day Chepterit, Father Godwin, a German, worked hard to establish formal education from 1939-50. These schools were based mainly on religious teaching. As such, as indicated by one respondent, "every missions had their own trained teachers" (Oral Interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old). Another respondent also indicated that a Catholic priest by the name of Father Joseph Khun from Germany, together with Antony Voughan from Poland, started Chepterit Primary School in 1939 (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). According to Marus, the Catholics also established Chepteni School in 1936. Other schools started by the AIM in Nandi during the colonial period were Namgoi, Kosirai and Mutwot.

The study further established that the Nandi initially completely resisted entry into formal schools for their children. As reported by one respondent:

Most children who went to school were not the aborigines of Nandi. Those Nandi who were exposed or enlightened joined school. However, the children from the Nandi mostly declined to go to school. Worse still, girls were not allowed to go to school. Nevertheless, despite all these restrictions, a few girls managed to attend schools (Oral Interview with Pius Kiparus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

It was also found that the resistance to formal education was most severe among the Talai clan. This resistance led to the closing down of Kapsisiywa, Kabiyet and Kaiboi Schools due to non-enrolment. These findings were reported in the minutes of a Baraza held on February 9th, 1938:

At Kapsisiywa, the attendance at the out school had fallen off and the PC warned the people that the Talai clan would never progress or keep up with their neighbours without education. At Kabiyet, the Kaiboi School was still closed and the people could not expect their children to progress or ever to obtain responsible work without education. The Kaiboi School will be re-opened if the people prove they really want it and will support it (KNA PC/RVP/9/1, 1938).

Around 1940s, Kapkiyai recounted that other schools initiated in Nandi were Kimaren, sponsored by Catholics situated in Kobujoi and belonged to Kapchepkendi. Maraba School under District Education Board (DEB) was opened up to all religions. The school was situated in Kaptumek in location 19, under Kapsile clan (Pororiet). Kaptumek School was situated in a region resided by the Kapsile clan. It had been initiated within the boundary of Kepchepkendi and Kaboch clans. It was sponsored by the Catholics. Another school was Chepkebuke in location 16, which belonged to Kaptumois and had been sponsored by African Inland Mission (AIM). According to Kapkiyai, the chiefs were quite active in the founding of these schools (KNA PC/RVP/9/1, 1938). This could explain why

most of the schools were established based on the locations headed by the colonial chiefs.

The study also found that religious affiliation and race played key roles in the establishment and enrolment of learners in schools in Nandi. For instance, as Biwott observed, DEB and government schools never affiliated themselves with any specific religion, e.g. Kabiyet, Kaiboi and Kilibwoni. However, Government African Schools (GAS) were later established, which segregated learners based on race (Oral Interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old). Clearly, the extent and the quality of education in Nandi was dependent to a considerable degree on the willingness or unwillingness of the colonial chiefs, elders and local people of influence to cooperate with educators be they government officials or missionaries. Many chiefs clung to their own patterns of education for their children, which they held to be distinct from and opposed to the new forms of western education offered to them. Others eagerly embraced the new type and after their own conversion to Christianity vigorously promoted the growth of exclusive schools for the sons of chiefs along with the missionaries.

The above findings concurred with those of Irungu (2019) who examined the role of colonial chiefs in Kenya. In his study, Irungu found that colonial chiefs facilitated the construction of schools for Africans and sensitized locals to enrol in those schools. Some of the chiefs, according to Irungu, even donated lands for construction of schools. These schools helped many Kenyans to acquire skills that helped them to find work and hence transform their societies with their earnings. It was these schools that helped to cultivate the brilliant Kenyan minds who would take over the reins of government after independence.

Ngeno, Barasa and Chang'ach (2020) argue that colonial education policies were characterised by conflicting interests. However, overall, the British sought to inculcate western morals and technical competences in Africans. This complicated the lives and work of colonial chiefs who were the frontline champions of western education at the grassroots. On the one hand, these chiefs had to encourage Africans to enrol in schools while, on the other hand, some of them had to dissuade Africans from abandoning their cultures and embracing the Whiteman's ways. Furley (1963) has also found that, in Kenya, colonial headmen and chiefs were not so keen to foster missionary education but preferred to press colonial Government to expand purely secular forms of education. The response varied but quite frequently the expansion of schools and the establishment of more senior schools was the result of much prodding and petitioning by council of elders. Conversely, areas where chiefs were hostile to education remained without schools for an astonishingly long time. Nevertheless, as observed in the study, many of the Nandi colonial chiefs were not resistant to education, which explains the pervasive presence of schools established in the colonial period in the Nandi land.

The promotion of education is also cited in the reviewed literature as one positive contribution of colonial chiefs to the

social transformation of African natives. For instance, Furley (1963) has shown the positive role of chiefs and other elders in mainland Tanzania who, in the inter-war period, led the Local Native Authorities there to build their own elementary schools from their own treasuries. For Uganda, it was the kings and chiefs who opposed the introduction of technical education, and demanded, accelerated and perpetuated the growth of academic education in the protectorate. In particular, Furley demonstrates that the history of such prominent missionary and secular schools as Kisubi, Namilyango, Mengo, Budo, Hoima and Busoga between 1900 and 1940 is inextricably linked with the efforts of the Kabaka of Buganda, the Mukamas of Toro and Bunyoro and the Kyabazingas of Busoga. Similarly, Bogonko (1985) affirms that colonial chiefs helped to build schools, dams and wells and construct roads.

In the Western Kenya, Luo Chiefs were equally some of the key sponsors of the Young Kavirondo Association (YKA) on December 23, 1921, which campaigned for a degree of higher education and for a government school or schools. YKA was under the patronage and chairmanship of such chiefs as Daniel Odindo and Ogada Odera between 1921 and 1923 were held (Bogonko, 1985). At those gatherings, the chiefs did not leave the government in any doubt as regarded the need for the redress of African grievances against colonialism. Above all, they stressed the need for a government school for Central Nyanza.

Changing Dress Code and British Imperialism

The Nandi dressing styles were a function of their culture and social events. However, the study found that new forces came into play to alter the dressing code of the Nandi during the colonial period. These alterations had implications on the Nandi culture. As indicated by one respondent,

When the colonialists came, they began to enforce what they would call 'decent' and 'civilised' forms of dress codes. The traditional Nandi dresses began to be secondary as new types of clothes were enforced. Those who worked in white settler farms or industries were expected to wear clothes that matched their work. Similarly, the police officers were expected to wear khakis while the chiefs were required to don formal attire befitting of their leadership roles. The girls, ladies or women began to wear skirt (*marindet*). On their heads, they put on *kitambaa* and weaved their hair. Old men began to put on shorts and long trousers. Boys likewise put on shorts/shirts, vests and trousers. Footwear was also improved as most people began to put on socks and shoes. However, the older dressing styles were not discarded. Chiefs and other top leaders would still wear the traditional skins, especially when they were with their people. They put on these traditional skins on top of their colonial attire (Oral Interview with Malakwen Arap Rutto on 15/04/2019, 87 years old).

The new types of dressing was determined by the western notions of decency and the functions that Africans were required to undertake. For instance, the tribal soldiers were

required to wear uniforms while farm workers were to wear protective clothing. Uniforms thus became a means of identification with one's profession, such as nursing, farming, teaching and religious life. The above findings underscore the changing trends of dressing precipitated by colonialism. Moreover, the findings show that traditional wear, especially for colonial chiefs, became a means for identifying with and validating themselves before the natives. Therefore, they dressed in European style to please the colonisers and dressed in traditional regalia to impress their Nandi natives.

The study found that colonialists were not impressed with the traditional dressing styles of the Nandi, which they considered uncivilized or primitive. According to Kapkiyai, during this time, the Leso and a blanket were worn during the *baraza*. The chief announced the incoming of western costumers. Dressing styles also began to reflect the varying economic capabilities of groups or clans and individuals. This was a form of social stratification reflected in the ability to afford certain attires. Those who embraced the Leso and a short were considered to be reasonably well-off. However, the well-to-do wore raincoats (Oral Interview with Pius Kiparus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old). According to Pius Kipsanga Arap Sabul, "the Nyongi age-set put on a sheet wrapped around the body worth one shilling. The elderly wore blankets worth two shillings. The chief summoned a *baraza* to persuade the Nandi to buy sheets. Arap Sisiwa was the pioneer seller of such sheets" (Oral Interview with Pius Kiparus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

The above findings concur with those of Hensen (2017) who avers that the cultural norms that shaped the British colonial encounters were grounded in Christian ideals of morality and decency. For this reason, the missionaries who saw African dresses despised them immediately. They embarked on the mission of properly clothing or dressing the natives. The colonialists came and enforced these notions of morality and decency. The colonial chiefs became the avenues for enforcing and modelling these new so-called decent dress codes. The colonisers insisted that Africans should dress decently and in line with their status and work. Similarly, Aris (2007) argues that dress code in Africa often carries certain political and historical connotations that are rooted in the missionary and colonial times. According to Aris, dress code, in the colonial and post-colonial times, represents one's social status, power dynamics and is a means for articulating certain political or ideological orientations. By enforcing a specific dress code on Africans, the colonialists sought to impose their power and identity on the natives. They also served to erode the value placed in traditional attire to that of mere identification with the natives. This was perhaps the birth of the culture of convenience.

In agreement with the above views, Mwesigire (2015) avers that part of the British imperial ideology was to label the whole ways of life of the Africans as uncivilised. In this way, clothing or dressing became a platform for waging ideological warfare between Africans and the colonisers. Slowly but surely, Africans were made to feel that their clothes were inferior, so

were they before their colonial masters. Some who accepted the colonizers' clothes were rewarded by being appointed chiefs or headmen. The white people's clothes became the defining feature of sophistication, power and elitism. This explains why the younger generation of the Nandi, and many other groups in Africa, are clueless about the fashion choices and dress functions of their progenitors who transitioned through the colonial period.

Nandi Chiefs, Social Events and Ceremonies

During the colonial period, the Nandi still practised their traditional ceremonies, such as circumcision. The white settlers and the Christian missionaries despised most of these ceremonies. However, as indicated by Marus, the chiefs mostly understood the value of such ceremonies (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). They were meant to make society upright and to create warriors to defend the community. Therefore, the government attempts to eradicate or modify such ceremonies became a point of contention between the Nandi colonial chiefs and the colonial system. According to one respondent, prior to colonialism, the circumcision period among the Nandi lasted for almost three months:

The long ceremony involved many activities, much of which covered training on basic skills such as blacksmithing, raiding and pottery. However, the colonialists began to limit the duration of such ceremonies to reduce the length of time the Nandi could gather at any given time. Besides, the British regarded such ceremonies as distractive to the work that the Nandi were expected to undertake in white settler farms and other economic sectors that were of importance to the colonial state (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old).

The above views show the growing influence of colonialism on the Nandi social events. According to Marus, during colonialism,

...circumcision ceremonies were only conducted after seeking a permit from the authorities. The chiefs facilitated such applications. The permit (*barwetab chemuriet*) and law was dispensed by the chief. Local brews (*busaa*) were used during the circumcision ceremony and only meant for old men and women. Chiefs could however intervene when liquor was served to children. Through the chiefs, the government also controlled the amounts of *busaa* people could consume during circumcision ceremonies (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old).

The above remarks underscore the role played by colonial chiefs in restructuring the features of the circumcision ceremonies of the Nandi. The colonial entry into Nandi land had some significant impact on the circumcision ceremonies. The colonial administration, having experienced the Nandi warrior mentality during the long resistance, was cautious to allow lengthy gatherings. These gatherings were seen as

meetings where Nandi warriors incited other Nandi people to rebel against the colonialists. Therefore, during the colonial period, the Nandi circumcision ceremonies lasted a shorter time than before. These changes to the circumcision ceremonies invited a backlash among sections of the Nandi community during the colonial period. This is attested to by a respondent in respect to the events that occurred in one circumcision ceremony:

Arap Marigei from Nandi, who was the head of circumcision, once confronted Arap Muron from Keiyo, who was the overseer, concerning the changing state of circumcision. Marigei protested the short duration allowed for the ceremonies. He also noted that some features of the ceremony had been stripped away by the orders of colonial chiefs who considered certain procedures as unchristian or uncivilised. Nevertheless, having noted the changes in the ceremonies, backed by the colonial chief, the overseer ushered in the candidates and he approved the circumcision to proceed (Oral Interview with Some arap Kogo on 16/3/2019, 81 years old).

This was an indicator of some degree of acquiescence with the changing trends in the structure of important ceremonies brought about by the colonial incursion into the Nandi society. This acquiescence was spearheaded by the colonial chiefs. Evidently, when colonial powers landed in the Nandi, much of the procedures involved in circumcision ceremonies were disrupted. There are two possible explanations for these changes. First, the new initiates had to be recruited fast to become warriors to fight in the resistance of the British. Therefore, the elders did not also have time to study the atmosphere or the stars to determine the appropriate time for circumcision. Second, after annexation of Nandi, the white settlers considered the time spent by natives on ceremonies as a waste. They instead wanted the Nandi to spend more time in labour at the farms.

The above views were confirmed by the remarks made by Ruto in an interview. According to this respondent, at the advent of colonialism, most of the circumcised youths joined labour in local settler farms and colonial industries. Some were co-opted into the colonial police regimen. These new kinds of transitions also meant that most of them did not marry soon after circumcision. These changes were also reinforced by the Christian missionaries who abhorred not only traditional circumcision ceremonies (specifically female circumcision) but also the early marriage of girls (Oral Interview with Malakwen arap Ruto on 15/04/2019, 87 years old). Another key event affected by colonial chiefs was that of wrestling. In Nandi, wrestling was also organized and undertaken by middle-aged people. For the younger men, wrestling was a means to show off before the girls who were their potential spouses. However, as one respondent indicated, colonial chiefs hardly permitted wrestling events:

During the circumcision of girls, the clan warriors fought to show their skills and where such fighting went beyond approach the chiefs intervened. The men also stepped on

fire (kelong) to impress their girls. The white settlers did not intervene in all the exercises carried out. However, the chief also warned of any subsequent conflicts following such wrestling or competition events (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

The study further established that, in Nandi, there were special ceremonies for burial of those who committed suicide. As indicated by Chirchir, if a person decided to take away his/her life (Kamarikit met), families affected came together and performed some rituals to eliminate attendant curses. In the colonial period, the chief was informed before undertaking such rituals. Similarly, in other funerals the chief also had to be informed to justify why people were gathering. The Nandi were not expected to seek permits for funerals. However, the colonial regime expected the chiefs to make accurate documentations to explain such gatherings (Oral Interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old). This shows that the colonial system trusted that the chiefs would provide accurate information on such gatherings. According to Temuge, the ceremony undertaken where someone had committed suicide was very elaborate:

The chief summoned the people to address the problem; the family was interrogated to provide some circumstances leading to the death of the victim. If the victim who hanged himself was established to have died due to certain reason, a close relative was called upon to climb the tree where the victim's body was. He was commanded to pick a small stick and told to beat the dead. He proclaimed to the body that nobody was responsible for the death. The body was then released to the ground. A goat was then slaughtered; the community dug out the tree on which the victim had hanged himself. Cow dung was thrown onto the ground where the tree had fallen. In the meantime, the elders roasted meat. The body was disposed of in the bush. A specialist prepared some special herbs to wash the hands of the family and community members. This symbolised the cleansing away of blame for the death of the one who had committed suicide. Throughout this process, the chief co-operated with people. He also helped the colonial authorities to understand why the Nandi needed to take time to undertake such elaborate ceremonies (Oral Interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

Therefore, as far as social ceremonies were concerned, colonial chiefs acted as interpreters of the Nandi cultural practices to the British.

Promotion of Role of Women

The study found that during the colonial period, the Nandi women worked in the settler farms with their husbands (Oral Interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old). This was in contrast to their role in pre-colonial Nandi, which was restricted mainly to the home. However, they also had to ensure their families were fed. They could do some odd jobs like preparing the land, but they never influenced most of the issues. They were, for instance, not allowed to hold or

translate gossips (rotek) that men spoke about the white settlers. If they declined to listen they were thoroughly beaten. Women were also required to adorn themselves by putting on some special necklace (Taet), and if they declined they were harshly beaten. Women were also not allowed to attend meetings; however, they were only allowed in case they had witnessed an issue, in which case she could only speak while seated.

Asked to explain the roles of colonial chiefs in defining the new place of women in Nandi society during the colonial period, Temuge had this to say:

Chiefs were the new leaders that helped resolve conflicts including those at home. So, some women could report their husband's beating to the chief and the chief called them to a meeting. Also, women who misbehaved, like disrespecting traditions, or the husband or even using witchcraft, were punished by the chief after investigation. Some of the chiefs also urged men to give resources like cows or land to women, especially widows and single mothers with families to support (Oral interview with Kiptum arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

The study also found that colonial chiefs intervened in extreme cases of domestic violence. This was attested to in a DC report from KNA as follows:

Only two cases of homicide occurred during the year as compared with six in 1949 both these cases were reduced to manslaughter by the Supreme Court. One was acquitted and the other convicted. In addition one murder case which occurred in 1949 was cleared up and the accused a Nandi woman had killed her husband while he was asleep, by chopping his head off gave herself up after spending a time of exile in Uganda. She was sentenced to life imprisonment (KNA DC/NDI/1711, 1952).

The above findings roles of women were in support of the view by von Bulow that the Nandi women played roles that were important for the continuity of family and community. Moreover, the findings were in support of those of Tanui (2015), that Nandi women had less power than their men. As indicated by Temuge above, Nandi women relied on men and the chiefs for resources and social support. As such, they could not control much of the agricultural resources. This shows that Nandi women did not benefit much in form of rights to property during the colonial period.

Chiefs and Ethnic Relations

In the pre-colonial period, cordial relations existed between the Nandi, Luo and Luhya. The members of these communities used to take local brews together. However, intermarriage did not exist with Luo because the latter were not circumcised. Nevertheless, there were occasional tensions and flares of ethnic conflicts between the Nandi and its neighbours. According to one respondent, however, the advent of colonialism heightened tensions between the Nandi and its neighbouring ethnic groups:

First, the Nandi resisted the British for long. So, they began to distrust all those communities that had been subdued or had collaborated with the colonisers. The resistance also gave the Nandi some level of superiority complex, which made them think they are better than other tribes. To some extent, the British also isolated the Nandi from other tribes in order to deny them [Nandi] support from the other ethnic groups. This was part of the project of indirect rule (Oral interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

The study found that the effect of isolation of the Nandi from the other tribes was slow socio-economic and political development. This was affirmed by the concerns raised by the Provincial Commissioner in a Baraza held at Kapsabet in June 25th, 1938:

Neighbours tribes were getting far ahead of the Nandi in their general development and if Government was constantly occupied in question of keeping law and order it could be unable to give sufficient assistance towards the further progress and prosperity in the Nandi (KNA PC/RVP/9/1, 1938).

These concerns show that the British were more interested in securing law and order in Nandi than in promoting other social, economic and political agenda in favour of the local communities. After annexation of the Nandi, however, the main role of the colonial chief was to advocate for peaceful coexistence between the Nandi and its neighbours. Therefore, the chiefs appointed some locals to take care of the environment and Nandi boundaries. Those appointed to guard the boundary reported any incidents to the chief. As indicated by Kapkiyai:

In case of murder of a neighbour either from Luo or Luhya, the chief summoned a meeting (baraza). The Nandi also bribed members of these neighbouring communities to betray their own people, especially during cattle rustling. The betrayer from Luo or Luhya was rewarded with one of the stolen cows. Some of the chiefs who supported the community helped in the process of bribery because they were allowed to move around better than others. The free movement of the chiefs also helped them to act as emissaries who could be send by the community to negotiate for peace with neighbouring ethnic groups (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

The study found that the decisions of the colonial chief concerning all disputes were final. In fact, the Nandi expected the chiefs to be assertive, just like their traditional leaders. According to Kapkiyai, the Nandi despise timidity in leaders. Therefore, colonial chiefs from the Nandi understood that they were to show authoritarianism. They were expected by both the Nandi and the colonial regime to make decisions fast, maintain social order and command respect. For this reason, the Nandi chiefs are not praised more for being kind or respectful to their people than for being decisive, brave and able to pull crowds in any given direction (KNA/DC/ND/13, 1921).

The general disdain for colonial chiefs may be explained by the tendency among the Nandi to despise the elderly and less authoritarian leaders and prefer younger and more aggressive leaders. This was compounded by the fact that many of the colonial chiefs were elderly members of the Nandi community. This observation was made in an archived DC report thus:

The influential element amongst these people is not the elder generation as with other tribes, but the younger warriors, the guardians of the safety of the tribe in the good old days when raiding was the sole aim and object of a man's existence. Old men, instead of being looked for wisdom and advice, are practically speaking, ignored, if not actually despised as being relics of an age which may have served its time but which is now most certainly out of date. Their influence, in consequence with the younger generation, is small and their value as agents for the dissemination of government wishes or instructions negligent (KNA/DC/ND/13, 1921).

The respondents reported that land appropriation and displacement was the key genesis of tribal conflicts in the colonial Kenya. This finding affirmed those of Masakhalia (2011) who notes that prior to colonialism there was little contact between major ethnic blocs in Kenya. By blocs, Masakhalia refers to tribes from the west (Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin and Kisii) and the so-called GEMA tribes (Kikuyu, Embu and Meru). These are the groups that have experienced much of Kenya's tribal tensions and conflicts since the colonial period to date. Therefore, to Masakhalia, the British brought tensions between these blocs in two ways. First, taking fertile land from these groups led to displacement. As a result, groups from GEMA were forced to move in search of land. The forceful displacement also entailed the transfer of one ethnic group into the region initially occupied by another, which resulted in ethnic tensions. Second was labour recruitment. The movement of people from different regions into white settler farms implied contacts among different tribal groups. This view was affirmed in the present study, which found that there were a number of Abaluhya who lived and work on Nandi farms in the district (KNA DC/NDI 2/2, 1965). The colonial chiefs played a role in enforcing these measures that contributed to tribal tensions. They were responsible for drawing boundaries and recruitment of labour. However, these chiefs also arbitrated in conflicts involving the different ethnic groups.

Another source of tribal conflict reported in the study during the colonial period was also livestock theft. This was evidenced in the following entry in the report from the DC:

The tribal relations with North and Central, Nyanza were excellent throughout the year. In May 41 cases of stock theft involving movement of stolen stock into Nandi from Teriki and Kabras were reported and, as a result, a joint meeting of Nandi North Nyanza chief was arranged in July. Final agreements concerning the action to be taken to reduce stock theft was reached and a large number of arrest had been made during the latter half of the year by chief Arap Titi and Joseph (KNA DC/NDI/7/1, 1950).

The above remarks also illustrate that colonial chiefs could be relied upon by the government to arbitrate cases of livestock theft across ethnic boundaries. In agreement, Muiga (2019) argues that tribalism in Kenya is a direct result of the British indirect rule. In his view, prior to colonialism, tribal groups did not exist as definable entities but the mere difference was language. Boundaries between groups were not marked. Some groups were so close that individuals could switch back and forth from one tribe to the next. Even acts of aggression such as cattle rustling were thought of as rotational sports. Therefore, tribe did not connote a political entity. In fact, this view is emphasized by Mamdani (1996) thus:

Did tribe exist [in Africa] before colonialism? If we understand by tribe an ethnic group with a common language, it did. But tribe as an administrative entity that distinguishes between natives and non-natives and systematically discriminates in favour of the former against the latter – defining access to land and participation in local governance and rules for settling disputes according to tribal identity – certainly did *not* exist before colonialism.

The notion by Muiga (2019) that cattle rustling was considered a form of rotational sport was affirmed by the study findings. It was observed that the Nandi had a tradition of raiding cattle from Kano Plains in Nyanza, as indicated in the following KNA report entry:

It has been the tradition of the tribe to raid cattle from their Kavirondo neighbors of the Kano Plains. But when an explanation is demanded as to why this lawlessness is not checked the invariable reply is made that the fact of the raid is not known. Of course the truth is being suppressed; the thefts are known well enough, and not only are they not being discouraged but they are actually being winked at and sympathized with (KNA/DC/ND/13, 1921).

The above remarks underscore the suspicion that the DC had towards the Nandi and the colonial chiefs. He seemed to believe that the chiefs and the people were aware of the perpetrators of cattle rustling but were unwilling to report them to the government. It is possible that the colonial chiefs did not consider such raiding a criminal offense. However, as the findings of this and other studies have shown, colonial systems entrenched and reinforced tribalism as part of the divide-and-concur strategy. They did this by defining administrative boundaries using tribes. Moreover, they reinforced tribalism by appointing native leaders, that is, colonial chiefs as their representatives in those administrative units. They also created laws to define the relations between these ethnic groups (Muiga, 2019). Berman (1998) observes that colonial chiefs turned into ethnic Big Men who regarded themselves as the spokespersons of their tribes on political matters. These Big Men perpetuated discourses of tribal superiority to other supposedly inferior tribes. The colonial regimes took advantage of such dialectics to further divide and concur Africans.

Chiefs' Role in Oathing and Divination

The practice of oathing continued in Nandi during the colonial period. In the colonial era, the Nandi undertook oaths when a case was heard by elders and, in some cases, in the execution of the chiefs' rulings. Asked to explain the function of oathing, one respondent had this to say: "Oathing helped to reinforce the decisions made and make the laws binding to all persons" (Oral Interview with Malakwen Arap Ruto on 15/04/2019, 87 years old). If a case become more challenging to the elders, it deferred to the colonial chief. If, for example, some livestock had been stolen, a big fire was prepared and the suspects were asked by the elders and the chief to swear upon it. Some women intervened by informing on their people, for instance that the animal stolen was available. The chief was always present during such oaths. If one was identified as a culprit, a fire was imposed and the chiefs decided on the actions to be taken on a given oath. Those convicted of crimes were handed over to the chief for further punishment. The chief was mandated to punish the culprits. In extreme cases, where the victim was not able to concede the crime, curses were administered. Evidently, the colonial chiefs respected and still justified before the British the importance of the Nandi traditional methods of administering justice through oathing (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

Connected to oathing was also the use of magic or diviners, of which the chiefs were aware and ignored or feared to dismiss. The study found that the Nandi in the colonial era visited the magicians or diviners to get dues to a sick person. They also relied on diviners to locate lost items. The diviners used magic to locate the lost items. If a person suspected that he or she had been bewitched he/she would go to a magician or diviner. Chiefs did not openly promote such acts as they were not allowed by Christian missionaries. However, they were not quick to punish those who consulted diviners or magicians or to dismiss the diviners (Oral Interview with Malakwen Arap Ruto on 15/04/2019, 87 years old). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that colonial chiefs did not do much to affect the practices of oathing and consultation with magicians and diviners in colonial Nandi.

Colonial Chiefs and Nandi Religious Practices

The Christian religion had already arrived in Nandi by the time the colonialists came. However, as the study found, Christianity had not spread far and wide in Nandi land. Prior to the advent of Christianity, the Nandi used to subscribe to god known by many names such as Asis, Chebokipkoiyo and Chebonamuni. Most of the Nandi still believed in such a deity during the colonial period. From the research findings, the Nandi colonial chiefs never interfered with their people's traditional beliefs. Therefore, the Nandi continued to engage in many of their traditional religious practices even during the colonial period. For instance, during times of drought, women smeared themselves with ashes (omenjoget) and prayed to Asis to bring rain (Oral Interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). However, colonialism did much to interfere with the

general practice of traditional religions. As one respondent explained:

Most of the Nandi shrines (kapkoros) were abandoned after the death of Koitalel Samoei. This could also be explained by the fact that the Nandi were pushed off from their original settlements following their defeat by the British. Subsequently, some of the shrines were later turned into churches (Oral Interview Joseph Arap Keter on 1/4/2019, 77 years old).

The study further established that, with the aid of the chiefs, the colonial government helped to spread Christianity further into hinterland Nandi. According to Peter arap Koey,

...the British saw an opportunity in Christianity to pacify the Nandi. Therefore, it was during the colonial period that more missionary centres were erected. For instance, the AIM established its centre in Kapsabet while the Catholics set up camp in Chepterit. These centres were safeguarded by colonial forces (Oral Interview on Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old).

The respondents also indicated that the Nandi colonial chiefs were mandated to encourage and, in some cases, force the Nandi to become members of the religious denominations. For instance, as indicated by one respondent, "Chief Malel and Arap Katono advocated for the Nandi to join AIM. Chief Chepkiyeng also advocated for the Nandi to join the Roman Catholic Church at Kaplamai (Cheribisi)" (Oral Interview on Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). Therefore, these chiefs encouraged the Nandi to abandon their African traditional beliefs. In some places, the Nandi shrines were abandoned or destroyed by the orders of the chief. Some of the shrines were turned into *barazas*, the places where chiefs held public meetings. Similarly, religious rites, such as circumcision, were also discouraged (Oral Interview on Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). These findings show that colonial chiefs also acted as agents of religious transformation on behalf of the missionaries and the colonial government.

From the findings of the study, it was further indicated that AIM established a church in Kobujoi while the Catholics established a church in Chepterit. The DC convinced the missionaries from Kobujoi to shift to Kapsabet. The chiefs were the organizers and facilitators of such shifts. The British also used blackmail and bribery to prevent the Nandi from going to their shrines. Some of those who turned to Christianity were appointed chiefs or headmen. The Nandi still visited shrines to pray for things like drought, epidemics among others. Most of the chiefs who had converted to Christianity were not in support of such practices of visiting shrines, as a directed from the white settlers (Oral Interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old).

Some of the chiefs were the first members of the Nandi community to embrace the white man's religion. As the study findings showed, in fact, some became chiefs mainly because they had been seen, through such acts as embracing

Christianity, as being loyal to the colonial authorities (Oral Interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old). Therefore, based on their personal interest, some of the colonial chiefs embraced religion of their choice. For example, Kurgat noted that Chief Micah Bomet became a member of the African Inland Church (AIC). Another chief, Chief Katono, subscribed to the Catholic Church, most of whom were found in Kabiyet. Although these chiefs supported the programmes by the white settlers, majority of the Nandi were still resistant to Christianity.

The spread of Christianity courtesy of the agency of colonial chiefs had some significant impact on the Nandi (and the entire Kalenjini community's) traditions. For instance, "Chief Micah Bomet refused to be circumcised due to religious influence. However, the Nandi elders initiated Chief Micah together with the wife to lead the people. Chief Micah belonged to Kaptumios and Tibingot" (Oral Interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old).

The colonial chief facilitated Christian missionaries' efforts to do away with the Nandi shrines. Many of the chiefs embraced Christianity and became agents of religious transformation of the Nandi. There were several shrines in Tindiret. However, some of the chiefs were afraid to interfere with traditional rituals. Some of the chiefs also only interfered in the rituals by stripping away practices they considered too unchristian. In one incident, for example, "a chief used force to recall the initiates from traditional seclusion (*menjo*) during the circumcision rite" (Oral Interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old). Evidently, colonial chiefs as agents of religious change in Nandi facilitated the disruption of many Nandi traditional religious practices.

Colonial Chiefs and Nandi Marriage Ceremonies

Among the Nandi in the pre-colonial period, circumcision was a precursor to marriage for both boys and girls. Therefore, traditionally, girls were married immediately after circumcision. Dowry was paid after circumcision. Therefore, circumcision for women also signified readiness for marriage. Dowry was mentioned in form of cattle, sheep and goats. During pre-weddings (*koito*), animals to be given out were mentioned. Weddings were organized traditionally (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old). However, as the study established, many of the features of the Nandi marriage were affected by the advent of colonialism.

In the colonial period, the chief became a central figure in the marriage ceremonies of the Nandi. Kurgat enumerated the roles of colonial chiefs in marriage ceremonies as follows:

First, he had to be consulted to provide permits for all gatherings leading up to and after marriage ceremonies. For this reason, the colonial chiefs advised the elders to undertake the ceremonies well. However, some of the missionaries intensified their protest against such ceremonies as circumcision and early marriage of young women. Therefore, the chiefs had to find a balance between the views of missionaries and those of the Nandi

on circumcision and early marriages of boys and girls. Some missionaries even argued that dowry payment was wrong since it amounted to sale of girls. The colonial chiefs who had embraced Christianity communicated and enforced these protests among the Nandi (Oral Interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old).

According to respondent Kurgat, other challenges also made it difficult for the Nandi marriage ceremonies. "Some of the men who were supposed to marry after circumcision were either taken to fight in wars, recruited into the *kanga* or lost in labour." The chiefs facilitated all these changes since they identified the suitable men for these functions. Consequently, some of the men took too long to marry. Besides, it was increasingly becoming difficult to pay dowry because the British had limited the number of livestock that the Nandi could keep under the rules of the Squatter System. The fact that some girls had chosen to become Christians and were unwilling to be circumcised also made it difficult for the young men to find a suitable bride. Besides, the British, especially the white settlers, did not respect the marriage ceremonies of the Nandi. They saw all the procedures involved as being demeaning to the women. They also protested that the Nandi spent too much time in ceremonies instead of providing labour in the farms (Oral Interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old). All these restrictions and changes were effected courtesy of the colonial chiefs and the *kanga*, meaning that colonial chiefs contributed to the erosion of the marriage traditions and practices of the Nandi.

The study further established that the Nandi colonial chiefs also played some roles in regard to wife inheritance. In pre-colonial Nandi whenever a husband died among the Nandi (*toloita*), the eldest brother of the deceased inherited the wife and children. The colonial authorities, through the colonial chiefs, outlawed this practice under the influence of Christianity. Other changes that were introduced by the Christian missionaries and were reinforced during the colonial period included marriage from other tribes and Christian weddings. Due to increased inter-ethnic interaction, the Nandi ended up intermarrying with other ethnic communities (Oral Interview with Some arap Kogo on 16/3/2019, 81 years old).

Other Social Roles of Chiefs

The study found that among the social roles of the colonial chiefs was to discourage immoral behaviours. Such behaviours included excessive alcoholism, stealing and idleness. The British government used the chiefs to fight against the brewing of local drinks (*busaa*). Peter arap Koey recounted thus:

Those who broke this law were taken to court. However, there were also double standards in regard to the ban on alcoholism. In some cases, the chiefs convinced the British to allow the Nandi to brew their *busaa*. On their part, the British allowed this practice because they realised that as long as the Nandi were drunk they would be less resistant to their colonial agenda. Besides, there were chiefs who also loved to drink. However, those chiefs who drank too much often lost their jobs in the white settler farms. In fact,

some of the chiefs were sacked for drinking too much. Some of the chiefs also used to accept bribes in the form of alcohol (Oral Interview with Peter arap Koei on 21/3/2019, 86 years old).

From the above remarks, it is evident that the Nandi colonial chiefs were also wary of too much drinking and often cautioned their people against such habits.

The study further established that colonial chiefs encouraged individuals and families to work hard to satisfy their needs. This finding was derived from the views by respondent Sabul thus:

They [colonial chiefs] punished the lazy in society. They considered idleness, especially among young and energetic men, as a crime and often brought the full force of their office to bear on those they found loitering aimlessly. Those who never worked were taken before the meeting (baraza) where the chief passed crucial information on development. Most of the chiefs connected criminal acts such as stock theft with such laziness and loitering. They therefore condemned laziness and asked people to work hard so that they would not have to steal from their communities or from the white settlers (Oral Interview with Pius Kipsang Arap Sabul on 4/4/2019, 77 years old).

This was an aspect of traditional Nandi society transmitted from the pre-colonial period with the help of colonial chiefs. Traditionally, Nandi men were expected to work hard to make enough wealth to satisfy their needs and those of their families.

The research results also indicated that the Nandi colonial chiefs supervised the transfer of family property across generations. This could be through inheritance or parents empowering young men with land or livestock to kick-start their lives. As indicated earlier, every young man was encouraged to work hard for their own resources (land and animals). In fact, the Nandi believed that a man who never worked hard to build own wealth was not entitled to ask for inheritance. Yet, in most cases, parents were still lenient and saw it fit to pass down their wealth to their sons. However, if one of the sons insisted to be given a share the father's land or cows – a practise that the Nandi detested very much – conflicts tended to arise needing arbitration. In case one of the sons became violent, the father reported the incident to the colonial chief. The chief was present during the sharing of the resources (Oral Interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

It was also reported that the colonial chiefs helped the Nandi to prepare for famine. Prior to colonialism, this role belonged to the village elders. During such times, the village elder summoned the village and visited the community to request for produce. The gathered proceeds were then shared (sociolivity [kesumet]). During the colonial period, the chief thus oversaw the gathering and distribution of such relief food (Oral Interview with Daudi Kipkoech arap Maritim on 21/3/2019, 85 years old). It is interesting that the Nandi continued this practice

despite colonialism having taken away much of their productive land and subjected them to the squatter system.

Specific Chiefs and their Contributions

From the findings of the study, some specific Nandi colonial chiefs are worth mentioning because they played notable social roles during the colonial period. For instance, Chief arap Cheno (1905) is remembered most for demarcating the present-day Nandi boundaries. He was a literate man and he almost became the overall paramount chief of the Nandi. Similarly, Chief Elijah Cheruiyot Chepkwony (1948) taught the Nandi about environmental issues. He also oversaw the construction of schools, latrines and ploughing. He had learned up to Standard Two. He was appointed Chief in the early 1940s, soon became a clerk at the DC's office in Kapsabet and in 1946 was promoted to Chairman of the DC. He propelled the Nandi up to Kenya's independence. He participated in various developments, such as vaccination of animals and planting of tea in the 1950s. He was appointed chairperson of the county (LNC). He also motivated the Nandi to go to school and participated actively in Kenya's independence politics. He worked with renowned Chief Arap Titi-Serem (Oral Interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

It was also reported that Chief Malel was appointed in 1958 to oversee Kabandan Mosoriot. Daudi Kipkoech arap Maritim described him as an angry man. In his time, he demanded for the construction of a plot centre, auction dispensary and teachers' college. He also oversaw the construction of Kosirai Primary School, which was completed in the time of Chief Willy Boit (Oral Interview with Daudi Kipkoech arap Maritim on 21/3/2019, 85 years old).

Further, Chief Willy Boit was appointed in the 1950s to head Kapnyeberai. He was a well-travelled man by the time of his appointment. His mother had taken him to Mombasa at a young age when she had separated with her husband and had to seek refuge. In the 1920s, when Willy's time came to be circumcised, he returned to his paternal home (Kapnyeberai). His father who had established himself in Nairobi married a second wife in the 1930s, the mother to the former PC, Paul Boit. By 1955, Chief Willy was very active in Kenya's independence politics. Chief Willy educated his family members well. Although the Nandi still declined formal education during his time, he helped to construct health centres, schools and churches in different areas of the Nandi. He also fought against alcohol consumption and advocated for vaccination of animals. Still, many of the Nandis were forced to vaccinate their animals during his time as chief. They were afraid to lose their animals to confiscation; so they selected weak animals to be vaccinated and left healthy ones due to outbreak of anthrax. Chief Willy also facilitated the introduction of ploughing by oxen. He initiated co-operative societies to enhance the Nandi economy (Oral Interview with Daudi Kipkoech arap Maritim on 21/3/2019, 85 years old).

The study also found that Chief Surtan arap Tulel-Terik was known more as an aggressive and harsh chief (Oral Interview with Sawe arap Mengich on 23/3/2019, 73 years old). He was

very loyal to the British. He had become so famous that people used to pronounce the coming of Chief Tulel to their relatives. When he came to the Nandi, he was accompanied by a friend, Arap Kasiran. They were received and served with brews during their visit. He used to take reports to Eldoret (Sisibo). He intervened in crimes like animal raiding in the *baraza*. Elders (Kipatainik) interrogated the victims in the *baraza*. They isolated the clans. Those who did not attend the *baraza* were subjected to work on the roads. Chief Surtan arap Tulel-Terik forced the Nandi children to go to school. Most of the Nandi declined to send their children to school. He was a stammerer. He also compelled people to go to hospital for vaccination against measles, chicken pox and scabies. He established a dispensary in Kibwargen'g. The hospital was later named after him, Tulel Dispensary (Oral Interview with Sawe arap Mengich on 23/3/2019, 73 years old).

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Nandi colonial chiefs played significant roles in the social transformation of their people. Although their social roles were always dualistic, most of them tried to steer the middle course to ensure there was harmonious relationship between the British and the Nandi. Nevertheless, it is evident that the actions of these chiefs did much to transform the Nandi socially than they did to harm their cultural traditions and practices. The chiefs lobbied for the construction of schools and hospitals. They encouraged their people to go to school and seek formal education. Some of them exemplified this by educating their own families. The chiefs also encouraged people to practice healthy and hygienic lifestyles by seeking treatment in hospitals and digging of pit latrines. They also arbitrated in family disputes such as those relating to marriage and sharing of family wealth. They also supervised oathing ceremonies and other social ceremonies such as circumcision and wrestling. Some of the chiefs also facilitated in the construction of churches and encouraged their people to convert to Christianity. Nevertheless, the colonial chiefs enforced some of the colonial laws that demeaned the social ceremonies, such as marriage, of the Nandi.

It is recommended that the Kenya government should develop a comprehensive documentation of the contribution of colonial chiefs to different aspects of socio-economic and political transformation, such as security, tourism, agriculture, education, health care, transport infrastructure, politics, substance abuse-related issues and environmental conservation. Such a documentation will provide a reference point for evaluating contemporary leadership challenges in Kenya's ongoing history.

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