

**THE COTTAGE INDUSTRY AMONG THE THARAKA PEOPLE OF
THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, THARAKA-NITHI COUNTY, KENYA
(1907-1963)**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in History of
Tharaka University College**

**THARAKA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
DECEMBER 2021**

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION


Declaration

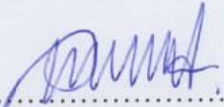
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Recommendation

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research thesis to the Almighty God and my dear parents, the late Samuel Mugao and Mary Karuru for their tireless effort in laying a strong foundation in my early levels of education that culminated to the current work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely thank the Tharaka University College for giving me this golden opportunity to pursue my Master Degree. My gratitude goes to my supervisors Dr. Caroline Kithinji and Dr. Isaiah Oduor for their guidance and advice during this study. May the Living Lord bless you abundantly my supervisors. I also immensely appreciate the Department of Humanities, Tharaka University College, for their support during the entire period of study especially Dr. Mary Karuri, Madam Eva Njeri and Mr. Ambrose Vengi.

Am also grateful to the staff of the Kenya National Archive, Chuka University Library, Tharaka University College Library, Kenya Methodist University Library, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library of University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University Library and the Kenya National Library Services in Meru. I also sincerely thank and appreciate my informants for sacrificing their valuable time to provide me with crucial data required for this study without which this work could not have been realized. Special thanks to my key respondents Stephen Nkuno and Samuel Mbiti for their enormous support in linking the researcher with other informed informants.

I am also indebted to my classmates Priscillor Kiremu and Peter Murauko for their advice and moral support during the entire period of the study. I greatly acknowledge my friends Kenneth Mwiti and Joyce Karimi for their valuable advice and encouragement during the entire period of the study.

ABSTRACT

During the pre-colonial period, Tharaka people were making variety of indigenous items such as pots, mats, bee hives, boats, baskets, swords and hoes to sustain their livelihood. The coming of the European colonialists negatively affected these traditional cottage industries. The study examined the cottage industry among the Tharaka of Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. The study discussed the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County. The study also examined the colonial policies on cottage industry among Tharaka people. The contribution of colonial rule on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County has also been analyzed. The assumptions of the study are that there existed a thriving cottage industry among the Tharaka people in the pre-colonial period, that the British colonial government introduced a number of policies that were not in favor of the development and growth of cottage industries in the Sub-County and the British colonialism contributed to underdevelopment of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963. To achieve the intended objectives, the study employed the primary, archival and secondary data. Research instruments used comprised interview schedules and focus group discussions. The study applied purposive and snowballing sampling techniques to select respondents for oral interviews. The target population was 75,250 people. The study purposively sampled and interviewed 50 respondents. The study was anchored on the articulation of modes of production theory. The data generated from the study was analyzed and interpreted qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data was transcribed into written text by merging the notes into coherent description of the conversation which was presented in a narrative form. Quantitative data was presented in tables. The study was carried out in Marimanti, Karocho, Chiakariga and Gituma locations in Tharaka South Sub-County. The study found that iron working, weaving, pottery, traditional beer production, flour and gruel production, wood-works, cloth making, snuff production, herbal medicine production and salt production were major cottage industries that existed in Tharaka South Sub-County during the pre-colonial period. Further, the colonial rule introduced a number of policies on cottage industries, such colonial policies were: high taxation, forced labor, transformation of Tharaka people into raw material producers, importation of western manufactured goods and abolition of Tharaka culture; female circumcision leading to non-production of tools like blades (*irunya*). The study also noted that colonialism led to decline of the cottage industries, consequently, causing mass unemployment among the traditional crafts. Colonialism, in addition, led to widespread poverty to traditional artisans. Majority of the crafts moved out of their residential places as result of joblessness and went to seek employment to other places. The study employed the descriptive research design. The findings of this study has contributed to Tharaka socio-economic historiography.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SSI	Small Scale Industries
OI	Oral Interview
TW	Third World
KNA	Kenya National Archive
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
DC	District Commissioner
DO	District Officer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IBEAC	Imperial British East African Company

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Sadia (2014), cottage industry refers to, “traditional artisanship of the rural people, who produce various household items with locally available raw materials and artistic skills inherited from the past generations”. During the pre-colonial period, money-lenders provided finances for the industry however, when the colonial rule arrived in Bangladesh, the colonial merchants started funding artisans in order to produce goods for export. But, this did not last for long as the colonial agents started exploiting the industrialists. They forfeited their goods, prosecuted and physically tortured them.

The decline of the Indian cottage industries during colonial period was examined by Meena (2017). The study revealed that India had a vibrant cottage industry before the colonial period. Cottage industries played a significant role in pre-colonial period. They provided the community members with products used for domestic use and for markets. However, with the western influence, many traditional industries declined. This is because colonialism altered the labor relations in India. Indians were only allowed to grow rural produce to provide the British industries with raw materials.

The cottage industries contribute greatly to the economic development of all countries in the world. Cottage and Small Scale Industries (SSI) are pertinent in Third World (TW) due to their potential in creation of job opportunities and development of the rural areas. The cottage industry was instrumental in growth and development of countries like India because it promoted income generation, employment and it was a source of foreign exchange (Pandey, 2013).

All communities in Africa had acquired knowledge and skills in traditional science and technology dated from when the human kind started sharpening tools (Ndalilah, 2012). African industries played a crucial role in the transformation of African economy. For instance, Babukusu were bee keepers, weavers, potters and blacksmiths. These tools were used in various socio-economic activities such as hunting and farming. This situation was interfered with by the colonial capitalist

system. The African socio-economic and political organization was forcibly integrated into the colonial capitalist structures.

According to Maxon (1992), during the pre-colonial period, Kenya had myriad indigenous industries. It is during the colonial period that the non-capitalist mode of production was integrated into the colonial capitalist system. During this period, Kenya was expected to produce raw materials for British industries. Kenyans provided ready markets for the manufactured goods from Europe. By doing this, Europeans discouraged any attempt by Africans to develop industries. They wanted to make Kenya her main supplier of raw materials for their industries while making Africa her main destination of their manufactured goods. The colonial mission to completely destroy the pre-capitalist mode of production failed. This is because the pre-capitalist mode of production survived the destruction and continued to operate although subordinate to the western capitalist mode of production.

The production of the industrial goods among the people of Kenya pre-dates the colonial era although on small scale that satisfied their societal needs. During this period, they learnt how to make a variety of tools such as hoes, spears, knives, pots, baskets and fish traps using the locally available resources (Ochieng 1990). It is the colonial rule that changed this order. The colonial officials discouraged any effort to develop cottage industries in the country. This is because colonialists wanted Kenya to be source of raw materials for their industries.

For a very long period of time before the establishment of colonial rule, Tharaka people produced goods and services using simple tools and techniques to satisfy their basic needs. The Tharaka people were experts in making a wide range of traditional items. Men made arrowheads, baskets, boats, granaries, swords, shields, bee-hives while women were experts in making both small and big pots, winnowing trays, calabash, gourds and mats. Some of these items were exchanged with other items like grains and livestock. The cottage industry among the Tharaka started slowing down as a result of the introduction of retrogressive policies during the colonial period. Exploitative policies such as high taxation, forced labor and land alienation impeded the growth of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. For example, there was massive land alienation in Ruau where the current Marimanti Prison stands.

Resultant factor was a decline in farming tools production due to a decrease in farming land among the natives (O.I, Kairiba, Karocho, February 10th 2021).

Tharaka is one of the nine Meru sub-ethnic groups. They speak Kitharaka language and they reside in Tharaka-Nithi County in the lower parts of Mount Kenya (O.I, Ciota, Marimanti, January 13th 2021). They settled at the present day homeland after their migration from Mbwa together with other Meru sub-groups. Apart from being hunters and gathers, and farmers during the pre-colonial period, local manufacturing was a crucial technological advancement that ever happened to their life. The cottage industry, agriculture and hunting complemented each other. Cottage industry provided farm implements such as hoes, axes, digging sticks and baskets. On the other hand, hunted wild animals were source of hides and skins used by the traditional crafts to make clothing while cereals used for production of local brew were associated with farmers. However, the cottage industry among the Tharaka was in decline by 1963. The researcher therefore found it necessary to examine the contribution of colonial rule on the cottage industry from 1907 to 1963.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Among the traditional communities, cottage industries enabled for the production of goods and services for both personal use and trading. This means that, they were fundamental in the socio-economic development of such societies in the pre-European period. Colonialism came with policies which adversely affected the socio-economic and cultural aspects of life of the local people. Pre-colonial cottage industry in Tharaka was not an exception as there was influx of the western manufactured goods in the local markets that made many craftsmen in Kenya and specifically in Tharaka South Sub-County to abandon the African traditional technology. Nevertheless, the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County has not been adequately researched regardless of its potential in poverty alleviation especially in the rural areas. This scenario leaves a knowledge gap among the local people particularly the Tharaka which this study intends to fill. This work took a chronological account in the contribution of the colonialism in the development of cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County, in the wider Tharaka-Nithi County from 1907-1963.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the contribution of colonialism on the cottage industries among the Tharaka of South Sub-County (1907-1963).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1) To examine pre-colonial cottage industries among the Tharaka people prior to 1907.
- 2) To assess colonial policies on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963.
- 3) To analyze the contributions of colonialism on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963.

1.5 Research Questions

The research sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) How was pre-colonial cottage industry among the Tharaka people prior to 1907?
- 2) Which policies did the British colonial government institute on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963?
- 3) What were the contributions of colonialism on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963?

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- 1) There existed a thriving cottage industry among the Tharaka people in the pre-colonial period.
- 2) The British colonial government introduced a number of policies that affected the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County.
- 3) British colonialism underdeveloped the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Cottage industries are considered imperative to traditional societies because they have been the source of livelihood for many households before the arrival of the colonial

rule. They played a substantial role in poverty reduction among the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period. The study contributes to socio-economic historiography of Tharaka people in Tharaka South Sub-County. Further, socio-economic histories being aspects of the culture, the study helps in preserving the cultural heritage of the Tharaka people through documentation which is of great importance not only to the existing generation but also generations to come. The findings of this study are a milestone to policy makers especially those in the Department of Industry, Cooperatives and Trade in their effort to promote the growth and development of modern industries in the area because cottage industry acts as a foundation for industrialization. The study is also useful to the scholars and researchers of socio-economic history and related disciplines in higher institutions of learning.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This is a historical study on the contribution of colonial rule on the cottage industry among the Tharaka of Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. The choice of 1907 as the starting point of the study is based on the fact that the European colonialists arrived in Tharaka in 1907. The colonial rule was characterized by numerous oppressive policies that either directly or indirectly affected the performance of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. Consequently, the cottage industry declined affecting the lives of many traditional crafts. The study ends in 1963 when Kenya attained her self-rule marking the end of the exploitative colonial rule.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The study was faced by a number of limitations. First and foremost, the researcher found it difficult to get respondents who had adequate knowledge on the cottage industry before the arrival of the Europeans. However, the researcher consulted the oral sources and archival documents to confirm the oral information. The archival data on the topic of the study was scanty. Nevertheless, the data collected was complemented by oral and secondary data. Some secondary sources were subjective especially those that were written by the western writers about African manufacturers during pre-colonial period. To delimit the Eurocentrism in data, the researcher corroborated it with both oral and archival sources to document the correct data.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

The following is the operational definition of the terms used in the proposed study:

Profession	: A traditional field of knowledge that dealt with the production of traditional items using the locally available resources
Tharaka	: One of the nine Meru sub-ethnic groups
Industry	An enterprise that produces goods and services
Cottage Industry	: An art in which items are produced using traditional skills rather than being produced by use of machines in factories.
Capitalism	: A system of production that was characterized by European domination over the African resources such as human labor, land and raw materials
Pre-Capitalism	: A system of production that existed in Africa during pre-colonial period in which labor, land and raw materials were readily available and their uses were not restricted whosoever
Artisan	: A person who possess a particular skill in manufacturing such as cottage industry.
Informal Sector	An enterprise that operates outside the norms of the formal sector.
Developing Countries	: These are less developed countries specifically in Africa and Asia that mainly embraced cottage industry as one of their sources of livelihood rather than modern industries
International Labor Relations	: Refers to roles played by different countries in the world that was altered during colonial period.
Means of Production	: Refers to various articles that facilitate production such as labor, land and raw materials.
Underdevelopment	: The state of lagging behind in terms socio-economic development.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a review of related literature on the cottage industries under the following headings: the pre-colonial cottage industries, the colonial policies on cottage industries and the contribution of colonialism on the cottage industry. The theory that guided the research is also presented.

2.2 Pre-Colonial Cottage Industries

The emerging opportunities and challenges for cottage industries in India was considered by the Thanga and Kani (2013). There existed five main types of indigenous industries in India. These industries are: cotton weaving, silk weaving, carpet making, leather industry, metal handicrafts and small food processing industries. The government of India supported these industries because they played an eminent role in promoting the growth of the Indian economy. The study is related to the current study because it examined forms of the cottage industries but it contrasts with the current study because it has touched on the role of the cottage industry in Indian economy. The present study focuses on the pre-colonial cottage industry among the Tharaka people of South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963 which found iron working, pottery, wood-works, salt extraction, leather production, bee hive production as the pre-colonial industries among others as discussed in chapter four of this document.

According to Kenton (2018), the first traditional industries in England and United States were garment making, textiles and shoe making. The researcher further reveals that these traditional industries were made up of family members who produced items using raw materials supplied by the business manager. He argues that most of the modern industries started as cottage industries before industrial revolution. The present study relates with this study because it has evaluated a few forms of cottage industries. This work is however different from the current study since its focus was on the historical background and the forms of the cottage industry while the present study is on the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County by 1907. The present study has analyzed ten pre-colonial industries as demonstrated in chapter four of this thesis.

In Europe, textile manufacturing developed and grew significantly even without the invention of new machines and factories. This situation was contributed by spread of domestic system. In this system, the business manager supplied family members working at home with raw materials. The arrangement was that the mother and the children washed the fibers, mother and the older girls spun fibers into thread and the father wove the cloth being assisted by the children. These family members were not only involved in textile manufacturing but also made other items such as baskets, nails, and guns (Lynn, 2003). This study was based on the peoples' cultures in Europe and is significant to the current study for it has examined items produced by cottage industries which are found in various forms of cottage industries. The study therefore gives an insight when assessing pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County up to 1907. However, the geographical location of Europe contrasts the present location of the study.

The cottage industry in pre-colonial Africa consisted of mining industries, iron working technology industry, and art and craft industries. Mining industries involved mining of various minerals like salt, iron, gold, copper and silver. Salt and gold were used as items of trade during the Trans-Saharan trade (Ogutu and Kinyanchui, 1991). They further believe that the growth and expansion of some parts of Central Africa can be attributed to salt and gold. All African societies developed the art of weaving and spinning of cotton and other fibers to manufacture cloths. In Uganda, clothes were manufactured using bark of the trees and were very expensive. The study is related to the current study because it examined forms of the indigenous industries in Africa. However, the work focused on only three forms of indigenous industries unlike the current study which is examining the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County prior to 1907. The present study has explored ten forms of cottage industries; iron working, weaving, wood-works, textile production, local brew production, gruel and flour production, traditional medicine production, salt extraction, pottery and snuff production.

A research in Africa on how Europe underdeveloped Africa was carried out by Rodney (1973). The study found that the traditional industries in Africa started after the birth of the Christ. The study revealed that during the pre-colonial period, African cottage industries produced myriad articles which were used to satisfy basic needs.

Rodney further believes that European writers disregarded the African industry based on the idea that industry exists only in the presence of the factories and machines which is not the case. This is because manufactures literally mean items made, formed or produced and Africans had been making many articles and weapons. This work relates to the current study because it examined when the traditional industries developed which is key to the current study. However, the current study seeks to examine various pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County by 1907 as discussed in chapter four which this study has not addressed.

A study that focused on the Class and Economic Change in Kenya was done by Kitching (1980). The study showed that high population growth rate in the Reserves led to overpopulation. As the people competed for limited resource; land, majority of people lost their land leading to widespread poverty. The author further revealed that with the increasing rate of unemployment in the formal sector, other sources of employment such as self-employment, wage employment and the informal employment were expanded to absorb the rapid growing male unemployed population. The study is relevant to the present study because it investigated the informal sector in urban centers in Kenya the category that the cottage industry falls. Nevertheless, the study is centered on historical background of the informal sector while the present study focuses on the pre-colonial cottage industries such as weaving, gruel and flour manufacturing, local beer production among others in Tharaka South Sub-County by 1907.

A research carried out in Kenya whose focus was on the realities of the informal sector in Kenya and its economic implications by Onchwari (1992). The study demonstrated that the development and growth of Sub-Saharan Africa has been declining in the last two decades. The government's efforts to promote the development and growth of the region bore no fruits. The author further found that residents of this region have been languishing in absolute poverty due to low level of technology, inappropriate education system and the overdependence on foreign countries. This situation led to the adoption of the informal sector by most of governments including Kenya. The work enriches the present study in that it gives a lot of insight on what made many artisans to join the informal sector. However, the

study focused on the post-colonial period unlike the current study that is limited to the period between 1907 to 1963.

Ochieng (1985) writing about a history of Kenya pointed out that most of Kenyan communities such as Bantu were specialists in iron working technology. Blacksmithing was a prestigious occupation that was restricted to a few in the community. Smiths manufactured a wide range of items such as arrowheads, ornaments, spears and knives. Moreover, the study found that Kenyan societies participated in drum-making, pottery and canoe-making. In traditional Kenya, crafts were reserved for particular clans. Although the study relates with the current study, the work mentioned a few articles produced by the artisans without mentioning their respective forms. The current study explored the forms of pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County prior to 1907. The study has investigated both the forms of the cottage industry together with the items produced by each industry, for instance, the study has found that blacksmiths produced arrow-heads, hoes, swords and spears. More other items produced from various industries are discussed in chapter four of this thesis.

The cottage industries in urban centers in Kenya have been documented by Mochache (1983). The author points out that the TW countries favored the indigenous industries in their development agenda. This has been largely influenced by the poor technology and inadequate raw materials for the development of the modern industries. The study attests that after colonial period, developing countries gave more attention in the development of the SSI as foundation for development of sophisticated industries. The study by Mochache is important to the current study in that it gives the reasons why most of the developing countries promoted the development and the growth of the indigenous industries. This study contrasts the present study given the fact that it was carried out in urban centers while current study examined the pre-colonial cottage industry in rural areas, Tharaka South Sub-County.

Makokha (2015) carried a research on the role of the cottage industries in the Socio-economic transformation of the rural areas in Kakamega County. The author found that traditional crafts practiced a number of cottage industries. These are the earth-ware production, unrefined sugar production, brick production liquor generation,

wood-works, herbal medicine extraction, weaving among others. These industries played a key role in wealth creation among rural people. The research is relevant to the current study because it investigated forms of cottage industries in Kakamega County. However, the study differs with the current work in that it was guided by the rational choice theory and theory of structural functionalism unlike the current work which adopted the articulation of modes of production theory.

The traditional handicraft industries existed in Kenya even before colonial period. The Mbeere people had specialists in iron working, dress making, pottery among others. Short skirts for girls were also made by Mbeere and Embu. Men were shed builders, hunters, bee keepers and blacksmiths. On the other hand, women were specialists in pot making and porridge preparation (Mwaniki, 1986). This work relates to the present study because it assessed the items produced and the aspect of labor in Mbeere and Embu. However, the work focused lightly on the pre-colonial cottage industries unlike the present study which investigated in depth the pre-colonial cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County up to 1907 as discussed in chapter four of this document.

2.3 Colonial Policies on Cottage Industries

A study on how Indian cottage industries declined during colonial period was examined by Meena (2017). The study noted that in the 18th century, India was a great industrial and agricultural country, she exported industrial products to international markets in Asia and Europe. Indian traditional industry was changed by the British colonial rule. The study further revealed that British colonial government put in place policies that aimed at promoting British manufactured goods while penalizing the Indian made traditional goods in the local and international markets. Indian manufactured goods exported to British markets attracted a high import duty. This was to make them unsalable in the British markets due to high price, forcing them to leave the British market. This study is important to the present to work because it examined the British colonial policies that brought down the cottage industry in India. Nevertheless, the work is different from the current study in terms of methodology, the former consulted the secondary and archival sources whereas the latter collected data from secondary, archival and oral sources.

During the pre-colonial period, Africans were experts in building huts, clothing and many types of tools (Benedict, 2011). However, Africans' traditional industry was greatly changed by the colonial rule by undermining the confidence of the local crafts. Moreover, the study revealed that colonialism affected all crafts namely; traditional medicine men, potters, weavers, carpenters and architects. The study further found that the African manufacturers met with the worst destruction after the arrival of the colonial rule. However, the colonial agents were not able to completely kill the traditional industry irrespective of the unfavorable measures presented by the colonial government. This work relates to the current study because of involvement of colonialism in the decline of the traditional industries in Africa. However, the study is different from this current work in terms of theoretical framework.

According to Rodney (1973), African manufactured clothes demand increased tremendously from 15th to 17th centuries such that all clothes produced by the African traditional industries could not fully meet the market demand. This unmet market demand led to importation of clothes made from Europe and Asia. European traders in addition, imported goods from other countries with an aim of obliterating African made goods from the market, an objective that was achieved. The author reveals that for a society to transit from small craft technology to a sophisticated modern technology largely depends on the demand for the goods produced by traditional crafts industries. If the demand for locally made goods is high and not met, then there will be a need for an advanced technology that would facilitate the production of such goods in large scale. African markets having been filled up with foreign goods, African producers were indirectly forced to abandon the cottage industry. The study is relevant to the present study because it attributed the decline of the traditional industry to the importation of western made goods by Europeans traders. However, the current study sought to assess the British economic policies on the cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. Apart from imported goods from Europe as discussed above, in chapter five the study assessed other colonial policies such as high taxation, forced labor and erosion of Tharaka culture.

The imposition of taxation to Africans by the colonial masters negatively impacted the African labor organization in Tanganyika, consequently affecting the domestic production (Katherine, 2018). The colonial government introduced head tax which

was collected from all men at prime age. At the beginning, the collection of the taxes was a bit slow and it was paid mainly in labor form. At this time the subjects could pay taxes comfortably using resources within their reach while engaging in local production. In 1907, the colonial authorities demanded the payment of the taxes to be done in rupees. Consequently, Africans moved to mission stations where their labor was required in exchange for money. By 1908, a large number of men had been reported to have sought work on coastal plantation with an aim of earning money necessary for the payment of taxes. The absence of men labor in the villages spelt a doom to once a vibrant industry in the society. This study relates with the present study because it unearthed taxation and forced labor as major colonial policies introduced by the colonialists in Tanganyika that ruined the traditional industry. Katherine's work contradicts this study in terms of its period of study; 1830 to 1940 of which the current study is from 1907 to 1963.

African traditional industries declined due to the coming of the colonialists. This is because Europeans colonialists introduced new and efficient methods in manufacturing industries that could not be compared to arduous African traditional technologies. The white people brought western manufactured goods that were of high quality and relatively cheap. As a result, these goods were preferred more than those made by traditional crafts. This situation made many traditional craftsmen to exit the traditional industry leaving a few to produce a few items to supplement western made products in the market (Ogonda, 1992). Although this study relates to the current study, there is scanty information on the colonial policies on the cottage industries. The current study is on the colonial policies on cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. The study examined colonial policies such as disregard of Tharaka traditions, land alienation, forced labor and imposition of high taxation among the Tharaka people.

2.4 Contribution of Colonialism on the Cottage Industries

A research was carried out in India on the British industrial policy and the decline of handicrafts in the 19th and 20th centuries by Meena (2016). The author reveals that India was the main supplier of locally manufactured goods. Indian traditional industries made high quality products and she exported about two hundred types of cotton clothes. In the 19th century, colonial government applied oppressive policies

that made India to be the source of raw materials for British manufacturing industries. This led to the ruination of the cottage industry which was key in wealth creation and promotion of the international trade. Widespread unemployment and demand for goods in the domestic market of India were the main consequences of the decline of the home based industries in India. The research is relevant to this study although the current study focused on Tharaka South Sub-County in Tharaka-Nithi, Kenya while the former was on India, Asia.

Morkyr (2003) asserts that British Industrial Revolution is to blame for the deindustrialization of India. The discovery and the use of sophisticated machines in spinning and weaving had devastating effects on the crafts industries in India specifically in textile industry. The study revealed that by 1830, the Indian handloom textiles had been eliminated from the international markets. The situation was worsened by the fact that British went ahead and introduced Lancashire-made cotton textiles in the Indian local markets. This move by British damagingly affected the indigenous industry in India. The study found that the decline of the handicrafts industries led to loss of many jobs among the traditional industrialists. Although this work relates with the current study, it is different in terms method of data collection; it heavily relied on the secondary data and the archival source.

According to Austin (2016), the colonial period in Africa was characterized by mass importation of western manufactured goods and free trade policies. These colonial policies led to the disruption of the indigenous African economies and fiercely destroyed the traditional crafts. Dwayne (1996) strongly supports the above argument by stating that the coming of colonialists in Africa changed its history forever. The influence of colonial rule in Africa impeded the growth of African economies. The writer further posits that the exploitative policies furthered by the colonialism led to the decay of the African handicraft industries and created a state of dependency on European goods among the Africans. These studies are significant to this study because of their focus on the colonial policies and its impacts on traditional industry. Nevertheless, their work is different from the present study in terms of theoretical framework.

A research carried out in Nigeria by Olusegun and David (2014) on the implications of the British colonial economic policies on the Nigeria's development found that, British colonial rule in Africa created a close tie between the African economy and that of the colonizing nation. The colonial powers swiftly controlled the development of the indigenous African economy in their attempt to advance their interest. To achieve this, the colonial governments formulated myriad economic policies. Nigeria was required to export primary materials while the colonizing power was to import their manufactured goods to Nigeria. By this arrangement, the indigenous industries were terribly damaged. This is because the imported goods from Europe were sold at a relative low price. Most of the Africans preferred Europe goods over their cottage ones. The study is significant to the current study for it has examined the decline of the traditional industries as a result of colonialism which is the area of focus of this study. However, the study contrasts the present work in terms of location of which the former was Nigeria whereas the latter is Tharaka South Sub-County in Tharaka-Nithi County, Kenya.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the articulation of modes of production theory. The theoretical treatment of the articulation of mode of production has been developed within the Marxist social science tradition. According to Karl Marx, in any specific society, different modes of production might emerge and exist alongside each other, linked together economically through trade and mutual obligation. The proponents of this theory name pre-capitalism, capitalism, feudalism and socialism as the major systems of production. Of the four modes of production, pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production were relevant to the interpretation of how the colonialism undermined the performance of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. In pre-capitalist mode of production, indigenous population practiced independent peasantry where the peasant family produces its own subsistence, but would do an extra work to produce a surplus to sell in local markets.

On the other hand, capitalist mode of production is associated with the emergence of modern industrial society and the global market economy. Central to the new capitalist system was the introduction of currency method of trade. The expansion of the capitalist modes of production tended to dissolve and displace the pre-capitalist

modes of production over time. The emergence of new system of production causes conflict in the current mode of production.

According to Essese (1990), when conflict arises, the new mode of production can evolve within the current structure or cause a complete breakdown. The penetration and the growth of the colonial capitalist social relations affected the articulation of indigenous modes of production that aided the natives' external dependency.

The articulation of modes of production theory is appropriate in interpreting the contribution of the colonialism on the cottage industry in Tharaka South in Tharaka-Nithi County between 1907 and 1963. For ancient times, the Tharaka people adopted a pre-colonial mode of production where the local manufacturers produced diverse products such as knives, swords, pots, clothes, clubs among others for domestic use and sale.

During the colonial period, colonial government penetrated the capitalist mode of production into the Tharaka pre-capitalist system of production. The new mode of production came with destructive policies such as high taxation, forced labor and biased labor relations that affected the cottage industry. These colonial capitalist economic policies not only led to the decline of the native traditional industries in Tharaka South Sub-County but also created a gigantic unemployment and a new demand of the foreign goods in the local markets.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses the research design, location of study, target population, sampling procedure and sample size. The chapter further presents the instruments for data collection, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Tharaka South Sub-County in Tharaka-Nithi County. The Sub-County is subdivided into fourteen locations namely; Marimanti, Turima, Karocho, Gituma, Kamarandi, Gakurungu, Chiakariga, Ntugi, Nkarini, Kamanyaki, Nkondi, Mwanyani, Matakiri and Tunyai. This study was carried out in Tharaka South Sub-County because it was richly endowed with raw materials that contributed the proliferation of cottage industries in the area. However, they remarkably diminished from 1907 when the colonialism arrived in Tharaka land. The industry is deemed as an indispensable means of livelihood among the residents. Nevertheless, the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County has attracted negligible scholarly attention. This, therefore, makes the Tharaka South Sub-County a suitable location for the present study.

The proposed area of study is located in semi-arid part of Tharaka-Nithi county and receives an average rainfall ranging from 550mm to 1750mm per annum. Residents of the study area are mainly agro-pastoralists. They grow crops such as millet, green grams, cowpeas, sorghum and maize. They also keep livestock namely; cattle, goats, sheep and donkeys. The area has two rainfall seasons namely the short and long rains. Long rains come in between March and May while the short rains fall between October and December. June, July and August are the coldest months while the hottest are January, February and September. Major hills in sub-county are Kijege and Ntugi. The area of study has been trans-versed by several rivers which originate from Mt. Kenya. These rivers are Mutonga, Thingithu, Kathita, Kithiino and Thanantu. These rivers provide water for irrigation and for domestic use. The sub-county borders Meru county to the West, Tharaka North to the South, Kitui County to the East and Embu County to the North.

3.3 Research Design

The study used descriptive research design. The descriptive research was directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. This research design enabled the researcher to gather comprehensive data from the secondary, archival and oral sources on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963. This method allowed the researcher to further summarize, present and interpret the collected data on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County for clarification without distorting it. In this light, Kombo & Tromp (2006) opine that the main purpose of the descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists.

3.4 Research Instruments

The data was collected using interview schedule and focus group discussions.

3.5 Target Population

Target population refers to all members of the real set of people, events or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the findings (Borg and Gall, 1989). In this study, the target population was the Tharaka people of Tharaka South Sub-County. According to 2019 census, the population of the sub-county was 75,250.

3.6 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The sample was drawn from four locations of Tharaka South Sub-County. These are: Marimanti, Karocho, Chiakariga and Gituma. The term sample according to Kothari (1985) means a number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. Kathuri and Pals (1993) defines sampling as a process of selecting few cases in order to provide information that can be used to make judgement about a much larger number of cases. If a population has to provide adequate information to make judgement, it should be a good representative of the population characteristics on which the judgement is to be based. The authors further suggest that in determining a sample size for a major subgroup the minimum sample size is 100 cases while for a minor subgroup the minimum sample size should be between 20-50 people. In this reference, Tharaka South Sub-County being a minor subgroup, researcher interviewed 50 cases.

The researcher employed non-probability sampling technique that is, the purposive and snowballing. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), initial subjects with the desired characteristics are identified using purposive technique. The goal of purposive sampling is to select cases that are likely to be information rich with respect to the purpose of the study. The power of the purposive sampling lies in selecting cases rich in information required. The initial respondents for this study were purposively selected. The purposive technique allowed the researcher to choose the informants who gave the required data based on the objectives of the study. This sampling method allowed the study to purposively select the professional crafts and the elderly respondents of 65 years and above because they were knowledgeable about the cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County based on their experience in the occupation and their age. Among respondents interviewed, twenty-six were men while women were twenty-four. The youngest informant was 65 years old and the oldest 104 years. The authors further point out that a researcher who proposes to employ purposive sampling must specify the criteria for selecting certain specific cases. The criteria for this study was gender, age, profession and the duration of stay in the profession.

Snow balling is a process that starts with a small number of subjects who have the desired requisites, through whom further individuals with the same characteristics are identified (Piergiorgio, 2003). The researcher used the snowballing method to identify the respondents who were well versed with historical dynamics during the pre-colonial and colonial period in Tharaka South Sub-County. The initial subjects with the desired characteristics were identified using purposive sampling, they were then required to name others that they knew to have the required characteristics until the researcher realized the required number of cases.

3.6.1 Interview Schedule

The researcher used interview guide with open ended questions that gave the respondents flexibility in responding. Informants were subjected to the same questions. This enhanced the reliability of the data collected. The use of interviews based on a question guide is suitable because it saved time since the respondents simply answered what was asked. The researcher used pens and notebooks to note down the information. The researcher organized the data according to the theme on

daily basis. The question guide was based on pre-colonial cottage industries, the colonial policies on the cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County and the contribution of the colonialism on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Focus group discussions were carefully planned and designed by the researcher to obtain information on the participants' belief and perception on the cottage industry among the Tharaka people. It also helped the researcher to clarify information collected through interview schedule. There was also a predetermined list of open ended questions that were discussed. There were two focus groups composed of six respondents each, one for the elderly respondents and another for the professional crafts.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a recommendation letter from Tharaka University College and a research permit from the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) before going out for data collection. The researcher then booked appointments with the interviewees. Before the start of the interview, the researcher assured interviewees that the information they provide would be treated with highest level of confidentiality and would only be used for research purposes. Then the researcher conducted interviews guided by the objectives of the study. Data collection was carried out during the months of January and February 2021. The data collected included the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County up to 1907, the colonial policies on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County and the contribution of colonialism on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. The data was collected from three broad categories namely; oral, archival and secondary sources.

3.7.1 Oral Sources

Oral data was obtained from the professional crafts and elderly respondents of 75 years and above. The researcher first notified the area chief of the visit. Then, he booked appointment with the respondents prior to the interview.

3.7.2 Archival Sources

The researcher visited the Kenya National Archives (KNA) in Nairobi to collect data on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County particularly during the colonial period. The researcher read various documents on the cottage industry in Tharaka and other relevant and available materials.

3.7.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data was obtained from various libraries like Chuka University Library, Tharaka University College Library, Kenya Methodist University Library, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library of University of Nairobi and National Library Services in Meru. The secondary data constituted data from books, seminar papers, unpublished thesis and journals. This data was relevant to the present study because it enriched the research at the same time its information was collaborated with other sources to enhance data credibility and liability. Additionally, the internet was consulted to get the up-dated information on the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic data analysis is the most suitable for the data analysis in qualitative research. Since this is a qualitative research, the researcher used this data analysis procedure. The data analysis involved pinpointing, examining and recording themes of the data collected. The themes became the categories for analysis. The researcher identified the themes with similar meaning and classified them in accordance to the objectives of the study. On the other hand, the numerical data was analyzed quantitatively. To establish various categories, data was tallied and presented in tables.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher exercised utmost discipline in administering data collection instruments to the participants in ensuring their rights to privacy were respected. Explanation on the aim and the purpose of the study was well done to the respondents in the language of their preference. The recordings of interviews and the information collected for data analysis was treated with utmost confidentiality where applicable and was only used for purpose of the research. The privacy of the informants was guaranteed by keeping the data safe during the research process to avoid being

revealed to other uninterested parties. Further, the study focused on non-personal questions that could not jeopardize the privacy of the respondents.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE PRE-COLONIAL COTTAGE INDUSTRIES AMONG THE THARAKA
OF SOUTH SUB-COUNTY

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents findings of the first objective of this study. Prior to the colonial conquest in Tharaka, the native inhabitants employed the traditional technology in harnessing the environment for their survival. They practiced iron technology, wood work, weaving, local brew production, pottery, textile production, herbal medicine extraction, snuff production, salt extraction among others. The respondents' profile is also captured in this chapter for proper comprehension of the informants mentioned in this thesis. To understand and appreciate the pre-colonial cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County, the history of Tharaka people has been discussed in this chapter. This discussion is guided by articulation of modes of production theory. The theory is used to examine the pre-colonial economy of the Tharaka people specifically the pre-colonial cottage industry before and after 1907.

4.2 Background Characteristics of the Respondents

The background characteristics of the respondents was based on gender, age, occupation and length of stay in the profession.

4.2.1 Respondents' Gender

The researcher interviewed fifty informants. Twenty-six were men while females were twenty-four. From this data, men were more than women. The reason for this disparity could be due to gender social roles in Tharaka. Women, more often engaged in domestic duties compared to their men counterparts who spent most of their time manufacturing indigenous products. This is demonstrated in the table below:

Table 1:
Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	26	52
Females	24	48
Total Number of Respondents	50	100

4.2.2 Respondents' Age

Majority of the informants of this study were between the ages of seventy-five to eighty-four. Followed by those between ages sixty-five to seventy-four. Respondents in both categories were very resourceful and knowledgeable about cottage industries among the Tharaka people during pre-colonial and colonial period.

Table 2:
Age of the Respondents

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
65 – 74	13	26
75 – 84	25	50
85 – 94	11	22
95 – 104	1	2
Total	50	100

4.2.3 Respondents' Occupation

The researcher interviewed both the professional crafts and subsistence farmers. Out of 50 respondents interviewed, only 13 were professional crafts while others were subsistence mixed farmers. This is because most of the traditional occupations were part time for the majority of the residents and owing to the fact that elderly people do not engage in some high energy demanding activities such as iron working and wood work. This data is illustrated in the table below.

Table 3:
The Occupation of the Respondents

Profession	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Professional crafts	13	26
Subsistence farmers	37	74
Total	50	100

4.2.4 Respondents' Length of Stay in the Profession

The researcher interviewed professional crafts. The researcher wanted to know the experience accumulated by the respondents. Two had an experience of between 41-45 years. Four had worked in the industry for 46-50 years. Three more had served in the cottage industry for 51-55 years, two had an experience of between 56-60 years and two more had been in cottage industry for 61 years and above. From this data, those who have served in the industry for many years are few compared to those with less

years in the occupation. This can be attributed to the fact that most of traditional crafts are already dead while others by virtue of their age decided to abandon the industry.

Table 4:
Length of Stay in the Profession

Number of years in the profession	Frequency	Percentage (%)
41-45	2	15.384
46-50	4	30.769
51-55	3	23.076
56- 60	2	15.384
61 and above	2	15.384
Total	13	100

4.3 The History of Tharaka People

This section of the chapter presents the history of the Tharaka people based on the following sub-section: the origin, migration and settlement of the Tharaka people, the social, economic and the political organization of the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period.

4.3.1 The Origin, Migration and Settlement of the Tharaka People in Tharaka Land

According to Icheria (2015), the origin of Tharaka people is inseparable from that of other Meru sub-tribes. This is because Tharaka is a sub-tribe of Meru tribe. She points out that Meru is a Bantu tribe who originated from Mbwa. All the Meru sub-tribes settled at a place known as Igaironi in Tharaka after they moved from Mbwa. At Tharaka area, the Ameru met Gumba community which was the original inhabitant of the region. Gumba was later assimilated by the Ameru. Owing to the population pressure at Tharaka, the other Meru sub-tribes dispersed to different parts of the Meru from Igaironi (a place of division). Each sub-tribe migrated and settled to present day settlement. Other Meru sub-tribes are Chuka, Muthambi, Imenti, Tigania and Igembe. The Tharaka people were left at Tharaka land where they live up to date.

The Meru community and the neighboring communities like the Agikuyu, the Embu, the Mbeere and the Kamba had migrated from their cradleland; mbwa before settling at their present land (Fadiman, 2012). During the pre-colonial period, the Meru tribe comprised five sub-groups. These include the Imenti, the Igoji, the Tigania, the Igembe and the Miutini. The writer notes that the other four sub-tribes were later

included by the colonial administration. These includes the Tharaka, the Mwimbi, the Chuka and the Muthambi. The migration of Meru from Mbwa was mainly aided by two main reasons: One, they were fearful of the Nguo Ntune people who had enslaved them for many years; they had seized their livestock and forced them to work in the production of foodstuff. They therefore wanted to salvage themselves from Nguo Ntune slavery. Second, the presence of prophets motivated their migration. Every Meru movement was highly influenced by their prophets. The writer reveals that when the Ameru crossed the 'Red Sea' they got into the inland where they moved to the South of the 'Sea' for several seasons. From there they deviated to the North of River before getting to what the oral traditions refer as the 'desert'. The tradition clearly indicates that this new land was stony and had few vegetation but with adequate grass for livestock consumption.

KNA/MSS/7/1/1937 seems to support the idea that the Ameru moved from elsewhere before settling to the present homeland as noted below:

“There are various legends which indicate that the Meru originally lived on the other side of the Tana River, somewhere towards the East. The reason given for the movement from this region is that they were forced to work for brown-skinned overlords who ill-treated them. They asked to be allowed to leave and various tests were arranged, increasing with difficulty.”

The Tharaka are currently settled over the rocky hills ranging from the plains around Nyambene Range down to Tana, Mutonga and Githimu Rivers. Thagichu, a section of Tharaka lives beyond river Tana in Kitui District, in Kitui County (Bernardi, 1959). There has been a continuous exchange of goods and services at local markets between the main section of Tharaka and the Thagichu that has maintained the social intercourse among themselves. Some writers such as Middleton and Kershaw (1972) while referring to Lambert (1959) allude that Tharaka people are closely related with the Akamba and Meru and they are therefore the aggregate offshoots of several clans and tribes such as Kamba, Chuka and Mbeere. Such claims are strongly opposed by Bernardi (1959) who states that Tharaka people and all other Meru tribes share common traditions. For example, like all other Meru sub-tribes, the Tharaka possesses social ceremonies, clan system, age-units among other socio-cultural practices. On the relationship between the Tharaka and the rest of other Meru sub-tribes, the Bernardi states:

“I have found no specific evidence to support the theory that the Tharaka are the product of off-shoots of various tribes and clans; on contrary, I have been surprised by the consciousness of the tribal unity possessed by the Tharaka even in relation to other Meru. They say: Meru ni *bamwe*, ‘all Meru are one; and also: Tharaka ni *bamwe*, ‘all Tharaka are one.”

On Migration and settlement of Tharaka people, the following was recorded from Nkuno:

“The Tharaka people together with other Meru sub-groups originated from Mbwa, a place along the East African Coast. They first settled at a place called Igaironi in Tharaka South Sub-County. Related people were given the same clan name-. As the population increased beyond what the area could comfortably accommodate, they dispersed to various places within the Sub-County. It is at this period other Meru Sub-tribes moved to their respective present settlement” (O.I, Nkuno, Marimanti, January 13th 2021).

4.3.2 Social Organization of the Tharaka during the Pre-colonial Period

The family unit among the Ameru was an imperative social institution within a clan. It was composed of the father, mother and the children, however, in some cases there existed large families characterized by presence of many wives married by a single husband. Within the boundaries of the family, the father’s authority was final although this authority was limited by the clan elders’ power on issues outside the family. The father represented the family in the council of elders within the clan. He spoke on behalf of the rest of the family members (Bernardi,1959).

Ameru were highly religious and adored their religious leaders so much. They believed in the existence of ancestral spirits, the Supreme Being and the living. They believed that their God resided in Mt Kenya and other sacred places such as waterfalls, lakes and swamps (Gichere and Ishida, 2007). To Gichere and Ishida, the spirits could bring a blessing or curse depending on the prevailing situation. It was a social responsibility of the Ameru to appease them all the time to avoid punitive consequences that could arise in case the spirits were not happy.

The study sought the views of Gachoma regarding the religion among the Tharaka people. She attests that:

“Tharaka people believed in one God referred as *Murungu* whom they believed to reside in shrines such as mountains and river falls. Elders were only people who consulted their supernatural creator during times of calamities. At time they slaughtered one color goat to please Him for his blessings. They believed that God was responsible for their wellbeing. They could pray *Murungu* to bring rain,

to free people from diseases and seek forgiveness of any sin committed by the members of the society” (O.I, Gachoma, Karocho, February 22th 2021).

According to Icheria (2015), during the pre-colonial period, a boy underwent several rites of passages before being considered a mature and responsible member of the community. First and foremost was the ‘swallowing’ of the young boys by a mythical wild animal locally known as *Kirimo*. One could not qualify for circumcision without first being ‘swallowed’. The author notes that not much is known about *kumerua* because it is the domain of the *rugu* (swallowed) only and they were prohibited from revealing the secrets of *kirimo* to women and *nkara* (non-swallowed). The *rugu* could be easily be identified due to their coded language and standing morals.

The above sentiment is confirmed by Mungania (2010) who asserts that swallowing of boys was a child abuse practice that had devastating impact on them. In some cases, the rite of passage led to severe consequences like death and serious injuries. The act of swallowing was a basic rite of passage that qualified boys to the next rites of passage such as circumcision and marriage. Swallowed boys were isolated for four days where they were taught the societal norms, values and morals.

Were and Wandibba (1988) posit that initiation was a very imperative rite of passage among the young boys and girls of Meru at large. Both girls and boys underwent initiation at puberty and they were grouped according to the season they were circumcised. The initiates of the same season referred each other as “*Muntu wa nthuke yetu*” (a fellow initiate of the same season). Among the Tharaka, circumcision was one of the most important social events in the life of every member of the Tharaka sub-tribe. After initiation, the male initiates stayed in one small hut until they were fully healed. Upon the healing of the young boys, each initiate’s parent organized a social function. During the fete, one bull and eight goats were slaughtered, and several gourds of beer were also prepared for consumption by the invited guests. The initiates were taught the moral code of the society that regulated the conduct of every member of the society. For instance, a circumcised Tharaka man was not expected to entertain laughter from his juniors (uncircumcised ones). The young boys were further briefed on how to take care of the family once married.

An archival source corroborated the above views about circumcision by stating that:

“A boy cannot be circumcised until his father has celebrated the ‘ntute’ feast. When the time for circumcision is rife, the father meets with the other elders. Then he visits the magician and acting on his advice a day is appointed for the ceremony. The father says nothing about this until the following day when the boy and the rest of the family members are informed. The news is then sent to all clansmen, neighbors and friends. Millet is steeped for beer and sugar cane pounded. Porridge is also made and food prepared in large quantities. There is dancing in the evenings and throughout the night. After circumcision, the boy spends some months in the seclusion of his hut. During this time, he is given a good deal of instruction by his tutor in conjunction with his father and the warriors. The tutor is generally a man a bit older than the novitiate” (KNA/DC/MRU/7/1/1938).

Both boys and girls were initiated among the Tharaka people. In the words of an informant Kimatiria:

“Initiation for both boys and girls was carried out in Tharaka community. It was the work of the Njuri Ncheke to plan the circumcision seasons, however, initiation took place in the month of August of every year after the harvest. Unlike girls who were circumcised in all initiation seasons, elders could forego the initiation for boys in some years especially when men of the previous age set were yet to marry. This was to give them enough time for them to look for their life partners” (O.I, Kimatiria, Marimanti, January 14th 2021).

Among the Ameru, there existed *giciaro*; the blood-brotherhood. There were various ways of initiating the blood-brotherhood among the Meru sub-groups. The earliest and well known method of creating *giciaro* was where the participating parties suck the blood from one another. The participants involved in the blood-brotherhood were expected to demonstrate an outstanding hospitality to each other, to ensure peaceful co-existence all the time and defend one another in case of an external attack. The *giciaro* was exogamous in nature, marriage between such members of the society was not allowed. The Tharaka and Imenti, with the exception of the Gitie are related by blood-brotherhood (Bernardi, 1959).

Tharaka people were grouped into *iriika* or *nthuke* depending on the season of their circumcision, those circumcised the same season were deemed to belong to the same *iriika* or *nthuke*. Examples of *nthuke* among the Tharaka are: *Kianjuri*, *kaburia* and *Kiarutha*. During colonial period, the colonial administration used such seasons (*nthuke*) to trace the year of birth of the indigenous people during issuance of the identification cards. Those initiated the same season referred themselves as “*Muntu wa nthuke yeetu*,” a peer of the same season. The circumcised boys and girls were

given new names by their sponsors; boy's and girl's sponsors were known as *bamo* and *maami wa muthenya* (a daylight mother) respectively. Ladies of the same initiation season referred each other as *bacigira* (Icheria, 2015).

The Tharaka people believed in witchcraft. The traditional medicine men were highly regarded as they were well informed on traditional medicines and spiritual matters. The medicine people foretold the future, healed the sick and could cause misfortune. Items such as gourds and calabashes, roots and barks, horns and fly whisks, shells and totems of snails were used by the traditional medicine men (National Museums of Kenya).

Commenting on the witchcrafts among the Tharaka people, a respondent Kangaria (O.I, Gituma, and February 10th 2021) stated that:

“Witch doctors were believed to possess evil spirits that they used to harm the members of the community. Most of people in Tharaka believed that misfortunes such as deaths, disabilities and sickness among the human beings and livestock had a recourse to witchcraft. Experienced and famous wizards trained the interested members of the society at a fee. Witch doctors were looked upon with a lot of fear by the members of the society. However, there existed medicine men who treated patients ailing from various diseases. Unlike the witch doctors who were highly opposed by the people, medicine people were enormously celebrated and respected by all the people in the community.”

According to National Museum of Kenya, marriage was an important social institution among the Tharaka people. It took long period of time before it materialized and was marked with various ceremonies. The process started with the young man identifying an appropriate girl where he informed his parents on the matter who visited the girl's parents with gourd of traditional beer. In the event of acceptance of the beer by the girl's parents, the boy started visiting the girl. The engagement took four months, the period that the girl spent in the boy's mother hut, while her morals were closely monitored by the mother-in-law. It was an Atharaka tradition for the girl to be virgin before marriage. Marriage was only allowed to take place after the girl was proven to be of impeccable character. The groom's father was expected to pay dowry to the bride's parents after which a great ceremony was organized at the man's home. During the wedding fete, the bride wore a triangular leather cloth which was beautifully decorated with cowrie shells.

An informant Gatue (O.I, Karocho, February 26th 2021) confirmed the above information by stating that:

“The circumcised boys and girls were considered mature enough and ready to marry. Marriage between members of the same clan was prohibited. The groom’s father was expected to pay dowry to the bride’s parents. The dowry was a symbol of acceptance and love of the married girl as well as strengthening the bond between the two families. Tharaka people valued large families as it was believed that many children were sign of wealth and mighty. To have many children, one man could marry as many wives as possible”

According to Middleton and Kershaw (1972), labor was divided depending on gender among the Agikuyu and all other Northern tribes. Men played different roles within the family, they took care of the livestock especially the cattle. They tended livestock exclusively including selling and buying. In addition, men skinned animals, tanned the animal skins and produced skin clothes. They also cleared the virgin lands, built bridges and broke up the land for women to cultivate. Building of houses, erecting wooden sticks, constructing granaries and building fences was also the work of the men. Women on the other hand, took care of the general welfare of the children. They also did other chores such as planting millet, maize, beans and harvesting farm produce. In hut building, women plastered and thatched houses. They further took part in potting, basketry and trade. Moreover, women performed general domestic duties like fetching water and collecting fire woods, cooking food and grinding grains.

The researcher sought the views of Karigu, a respondent on the division of labor among Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period and she confirmed the above idea by stating that:

“Labor among the Tharaka people was highly gendered. Men and women had their roles well spelt out by the community lore. However, that did not prohibit either men or women from assisting one another in their duties. Generally, women performed home-based duties such as tendering the young children while men did activities considered difficult by the members of the society, such duties are hut construction, blacksmithing and defending the community against the external aggression. There existed various forms of labor. There was hired labor, cooperative labor and communal labor. Remunerated labor was payable with cereals. Those who had large tracts of farms hired labor among the members of the society to assist in tilling the land, weeding and harvesting. Community members also organized themselves in such a way that they could work as a team. They worked for each member of the team on rotational basis. Lastly, one could call upon the members of the society to assist in any socio-economic activity for free” (O.I, Karigu, Chiakariga, January 15th 2021).

As aforementioned, the Aatharaka were social beings who interacted at various levels and at different social functions. It is noted that family was the lowest level of socialization among the Tharaka people. Both girls and boys underwent initiation before considered adults who could marry. Marriage was an important social institution and it was polygamous and exogamous in nature. They also believed in the existence of supernatural powers which controlled their daily life.

4.3.3 Political Organization of the Tharaka during the Pre-Colonial Period

During the pre-colonial period, the Ameru had a federal system of government composed of nine sub-groups equivalent to states. These states were Imenti, Tigania, Igembe, Tharaka, Chuka, Mwimbi, Muthambi, Miutine and Igoji. There were five *agwe* among the Ameru. Imenti, Miutine and Igoji shared one *mugwe*, another one ruled the Chuka, Muthambi and Mwimbi. Tharaka, Igembe and Tigania each had one *mugwe* (Gichere and Ishida, 2007).

Fadiman (2012), points out that families which shared a common origin formed a clan which was the basic political unit. Conflicts within the clan were settled by the council of elders which was the governing body of the society. Each age set had its own council which worked in consultation with the council system. Men and women reported their issues to their respective authority which was made up of their age sets. Therefore, boys, warriors, family heads, ruling heads and the youths each had councils that solved conflicts among its members. Men whose sons had reached the age of being warriors qualified to be members of the council of ruling elders. Communal decisions were enforced by the warriors who were instructed by their fathers who formed the ruling group. On matters regarding the whole society, the ruling group consulted the old men who were of their fathers' age set and were still alive.

Traditionally, the clan was an important socio-political structure among the Tharaka people. Young boys who were circumcised during the same season joined an age set system. Respect was accorded to both groups based on seniority. Before the colonial period, the council of elders was the highest judicial authority among the Tharaka people. The council of elders; *kiama* was in charge of law and order, the religious matters, administration and the decision making (Kenya National Museum).

Elders acted as the genuine representatives of the clan. The clan elders presided over ceremonial and political activities within the clan (Bernardi, 1959). Initiation ceremonies could only be allowed to take place upon the approval by the clan elders. It was also a responsibility of the clan elders to decide when and where to offer the sacrifice for rain and other blessings. In addition, conflicts within the clan were fairly heard and ruling done mostly accompanied by corporal punishment. However, the death sentence was only arrived at after thorough consultation among the elders of the council; *the Njuri*.

The initiated boys formed the age set system. The initiated boys were housed in *Iganda*, a small hut. They stayed there until when they were fully healed. The main purpose of the initiation among men was to shape the initiates' character so that they could fit in the society and this was done by passing the society norms and traditions to them. After fully healing, the initiates moved out of the *Iganda* and settled in *gaaru*, a special hut which was located away from the rest of the family members. Here, the circumcised boys were thoroughly trained on the values and traditions of the community. *Gaaru* was an imperative social institution that promoted socialization and training among the initiates (Bernardi, 1959). While referring to what was recorded by A.M. Champion in 1912 about *gaaru* among the Tharaka, Bernardi wrote:

“The unmarried men, and those whose children are yet to be circumcised, cannot sleep in the villages unless they are sick. In each settlement, therefore, the young men built for themselves one hut generally hidden in the thicket close to the settlement. These huts are perfect works of the art. They are about 20-25 feet in diameter, and from 10-14 feet high, and built of very stout, well fashioned poles. The doorway is about 3.5 feet to 4 feet in height, and extends up to the level of the cave. The walls are composed of stout posts placed into the ground close together. One enters by a sort of wattle passage, which is, in reality, the close-up end of a continuous sort of wattle bedstead running completely round the whole hut; standing in the middle it gives one of the impression of a circular saloon with berths all round. These huts are never occupied during the day, and I never found any sign of habitation, except fire. The care with which these huts are built and the excellence of workmanship struck me very favorably.”

The Meru society was highly stratified. The upper level was occupied by the *mugwe*, *mukiama* and *agaambi*. This stratum was made up of the governing patricians. The second in the hierarchy was the *Kiama* and the *nthaka*. *Nthaka* were either in *Kiruka* or *Ntiba* political parties that governed the community. At the bottom were the youth

and women of the Ameru community. The populace at this level followed the instructions given to them by the *Kiama* and *Nthaka*. Apart from presiding over religious rites and rituals, the *mugwe*, *kiama* and council of elders formulated the moral code that guided the conduct of every member of the society (Gichere and Ishida, 2007).

About the political structure in Tharaka, an informant Mbiti a former colonial counselor notes that:

“During the pre-European period, the Tharaka people had three main levels of governments. Each political unit with well-defined powers that was used to govern the people under their jurisdiction. Family was the basic political unit. Family was made up of parents and children and in some case the grandparents. Family was headed by the father. Any disputes that arose among the family members was amicably resolved by the father. The second political unit was the clan. Clan was made up of various related families believed to have a common ancestry. The leadership of the clan was exclusively bestowed on the council of elders which acted as final court of law where cases within the clan were heard and determined. Njuri Ncheke was the highest political authority on the land which was in charge of the entire community. Criminal cases were brought before it for hearing and ruling. It was tasked in organizing socio-political ceremonies such as circumcision, marriage and raiding. The institution was extremely regarded by all society members” (O.I, Mbiti, Marimanti, January 13th 2021).

From the above data, it is clear that the Tharaka people had a well-defined political structure during the pre-colonial period. There existed various political institutions that administered the society based on the community norms and traditions. Disputes that arose among the members of the community were impartially heard and determined at different levels of administration.

4.3.4 The Economic Organization of the Tharaka during the Pre-Colonial Period

During the pre-colonial period, Ameru had a well-coordinated and organized economic production system (Were and Wandibba, 1988). They were crop growers, livestock keepers, and hunters and gatherers. They practiced subsistence farming that ensured food security throughout the year. The surplus foodstuff was bartered for other items they were in need of from the neighboring communities. Those who resided in the lowland areas, ostensibly because of low rainfall, often produced millet and sorghum in shift cultivation. Millet, one of the crops that did very well in lowland was used in preparation of local beverages and flour for cooking food.

The Tharaka people like other Northern tribes kept livestock such as goats, sheep and cattle (Middleton and Kershaw, 1972). The possession of domestic animals was commonly used as a measure of wealth among the members of the society. Those with ten to twelve heads of cattle and goats were considered as men of standing within the society. The Northern tribes borrowed the art of tapping blood from the cattle from the Maasai. The blood was only consumed by warriors. Of all the animals, cattle were most valued and kept due to their socio-economic value, they produced milk, meat and most importantly they were used for the payment of bride price.

During the pre-colonial period, among the Ameru there existed hunters and gatherers (Kithinji, 2019). The Meru people inhabited highly forested region that favored the art of hunting and gathering. They hunted and gathered wild animals and, wild honey and fruits. While citing Fadiman (1993), Kithinji points out that even British colonists met the residents of Meru practicing hunting and gathering.

To diversify their sources of livelihood, the Ameru at large practiced bee-keeping (Were and Wandibba, 1988). It should be noted that they both harvested honey from the naturally occurring and man-made bee hives. Bees were available, in plenty, in the dry parts of Tharaka and Igembe where the bee-keeping dominated. Honey was greatly valued among the Tharaka people because of its diverse uses. It was used for brewing local beer, production of medicines for various diseases, used in socio-cultural rituals and as food preservatives.

In support of the above information, an informant Mauki (O.I, Marimanti, January 14th 2021) notes that:

“The bee-honey was another product produced by most of Tharaka people. It was collected from traditional bee-hives. The bee honey was used to prepare traditional liquor which was largely drunk by the old people, although it was also taken by the warriors.”

The Ameru traded among themselves and with neighboring communities. According to Middleton and Kershaw (1972), the Ameru practiced pure barter method of trade, items such as pottery, salt and salt-earths, ochre and, iron and iron articles being the main items of trade. Additionally, they traded with traditional liquor, strings, foodstuffs, tobacco, fat and so on. Tharaka traders, for example, traded with the Kamba. They exchanged their grains with beads and wire from the Kamba.

The same views are expressed by an informant, Ciampui (O.I, Gituma, February 2nd 2021) who observed that:

“Apart from hunting wild animals for meat, the Tharaka hunters killed elephants for ivory which was a precious trade item during the pre-colonial period. Further, the Tharaka people traded with rhinoceros’ horns, spotty leopard’s skin and ivory tusk with other communities like the Akamba.”

Potting was another valuable economic activity that the Tharaka people practiced before the advent of colonialism (Middleton and Kershaw, 1972). The manufacture of pots was a preserve for the elderly women. Women made two halves of the pot using clay soil which were later joined together to form a complete pot. They also made nozzle-like pipe which was attached to smith’s bellow. Bellows were used by the blacksmiths for blowing air into the furnace when forging iron tools. Historically, pots were categorized into two based on their purposes; wide-mouthed and narrow-mouthed pots used for cooking and brewing traditional beer respectively.

Gichere and Ishida (2007) summarized the occupations that existed among the Meru sub-tribes. Gichere and Ishida note that among the Ameru, there existed various professions acquired through apprenticeship. Children were trained to become specialists at their tender age to enhance professionalism as early as possible. To qualify to be a professional, one had to take an oath to promote the occupational ethics and discipline. To Gichere and Ishida, the following occupations were common among the Ameru people:

Table 5:
Traditional Professionals

Professional	Singular	Plural	English Translation
Ugwe	Mugwe	Agwe	official with spiritual with responsibility
Urimi	Murimi	Arimi	farmer/cultivator
Uga	Muga	aga	medicine men
Uturi	Muturi	Aturi	black smith
Waathi	Mwaathi	aathi	Hunter
Utea	Mutea	Atea	artisan/woodcarver
Ugaambi	Mugambi	Aagambi	judge/politician/orator/ambassador
Uriithi	Muriithi	Ariithi	one who engage in animal husbandry
Utani	Mutaani	Ataani	Circumciser
Ukiama	Mukiama	Akiama	delegate/ambassador/prime minister

About the economic organization of the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period, Chiakuthi (O.I, Chiakariga, January 15th 2021) pointed out that:

“Tharaka people had diverse economic pursuits that gave them multiple means of livelihood during the pre-European era. Majority of people were peasant farmers who grew crops such as millet and sorghum. They also kept livestock for meat, milk, hides and skins. Such livestock are goats, sheep and cattle. The Tharaka people also traded with the Akamba, Maasai, Imenti, Chuka and Tigania to acquire items they lacked. Other economic activities engaged in during the precolonial era are bee-keeping, iron working, carving among other occupations”

From the above information, the Tharaka people were quite industrious since the ancient times. They engaged in various economic activities ranging from farming, livestock keeping, bee keeping, trading, iron working, carving and so on as source of their livelihood. The people with highest number of cattle was considered rich and was accorded great respect by fellow tribesmen.

According to Were and Wandibba (1988), there existed two systems of property ownership among the Ameru. These systems of ownership were operational during the pre-colonial and colonial period before the colonial authorities entrenched fully their rule in the region. These systems are communal and individual systems of ownership.

4.3.4.1 Communal System of Ownership

Before the colonial period, land among the Ameru was owned communally with the council of elders being the custodian of the clan land (*mwiriga*). The clan elders had the responsibility of sharing the fields of land to the members of the clan. The doctrine of egalitarian never applied in distribution of land in regard to gender because land was only given to male members of the clan. Although, the land was appropriated to individuals and one had the right to utilize it as he wished, the clan elders had some authority over it. They could appropriate the same land for communal use when need arose; grazing and so on. The head of the family could further sub-divide it to his wives or his married sons. In case the head of the family died before sub-division was done, with the guidance of the clan elders, the eldest son shared the land among his brothers. Traditionally, women had no right over the ownership of the land, surprisingly, they were considered as part of the property owned by their husbands.

4.3.4.2 Individual System of Ownership

In communal ownership of land, the ownership was further devolved to the men who happened to be the head of the family. The father further sub-divided land to his married sons. Contrary to communal land ownership where women owned almost nothing, women owned variety of items like farm produce and household articles. Subsistence cereals such sorghum, peas, finger millet, black beans and sweet potatoes were exclusively owned by the women. Sugar-cane, yams, tobacco and bananas belonged to men. Like crops, livestock were owned by both the men and women.

Either a man or woman could own a domestic animal based on means of acquisition. In most cases, cattle were owned by men because of its value. Hides and skins were used by men to make basic items like clothes and shoes. Women possessed goats and sheep as long as they acquired them by their own means. Animal products such as milk and ghee were the prerogative of either men or women on account of the amount produced. When produced in small scale, they were given to children and women but if produced in large quantities then they were possessed by men who bartered them with other items.

The research sought to examine the systems of ownership among the Tharaka people, Kabete (O.I, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021) expressed the same views with Were and Wandibba by stating that:

“There existed two main forms of property ownership before the colonial period. There was individual system of ownership which was common among the Tharaka people, in this case, a man owned some property at personal level. For example, a man could be given a portion of land, goats and cattle by his father. Neither women nor children possessed any property. All property at the homestead irrespective of who acquired them belonged to the head of the family. The second system of ownership was the communal ownership. Clan was in charge of clan land and other areas such as hills and mountains although elders could give some tracks of land to individuals.”

In pre-colonial Tharaka, both individual and communal system of ownership existed. Although, the clan had the upper hand on matters of land, individuals owned a significant number of items. However, gender inequality dominated the ownership of property since most of the property including land was owned by the man.

4.4 The Pre-Colonial Cottage Industries in Tharaka South Sub-County

This section discusses the findings on the first objective of this study, which was to examine the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County by 1907. Understanding the forms of cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County is imperative to this study because cottage industry was one of the methods employed by the Tharaka people to exploit the raw materials in their environment to earn a living during pre-European period. The cottage industries examined in this section are: iron working, weaving, wood-works, local brew production, flour and gruel production, pottery, textile production, herbal medicine extraction, snuff production and salt extraction.

4.4.1 Iron Working

Tharaka people practiced iron working during the pre-colonial period. The iron was used to manufacture various tools which was derived from a black iron sand which was readily available along some rivers. After collection, the iron ore was worked on by the smiths to produce variety of iron tools. The blacksmiths used traditional bellows made from goat skin to direct draught into the furnace. Iron weapons were highly valued as they were used by the hunters and warriors to hunt wild animals and for protection against external attackers (O.I, Nkuno, Marimanti, January 13th 2021).

A letter written by the District Commissioner of Meru in 1938 on Meru material culture, supports the idea that iron working industry existed before colonial period among the Tharaka people by stating that:

“I have taken considerable pains to buy only genuine Meru articles- without paint of Kamba and Masai influence and have tried to obtain history of each article as fully as possible. Another point- there are one or two things it is, I believe, impossible to obtain, e.g. an MBUI ya MBONGO which is a clan or family talisman and consists of small pieces of each and every article, animal, vegetable or mineral, used by the men. They are not many in existence- roughly one per clan- and they are closely guarded. Another point. Even before government came here 30 years ago Masai and Kamba influence existed here- particularly in Meru arms. For instance, the traditional Meru shield was more like a large unstrung bow than anything else but several generations ago they took to hide shields like the Masai. I may be able to get one of the old ‘shields’ or I may not. The same applies to spears- I believe the oldest Meru spears were of the broad leaf type but for at least two generations they have been using spears of Masai type more or less” (KNA/DC/MRU/2/1/2).

Informants like Nyaga further allude that the skill of iron working was a preserve of a few people who were very respected by all members of the society because of their high degree of innovation and creativity. The skill of blacksmithing was dominated by men. The reason for the exclusion of women from this noble profession is that the process of forging was so laborious and therefore required a lot of physical strength and endurance. It is believed that women were not as strong as men and their physical endurance was extremely weak (O.I, Nyaga, Gituma, February 10th 2021).

The above information is supported by Njeru, an informant who asserts that:

“The production of iron tools started by making an iron rod from which various tools were made. The rods were made from ferruginous sand collected from a river. The sand was mixed with honey before it was heated at high temperature in a furnace. The activity of blacksmithing was not done by one individual, the blacksmith required an assistant who happened to be his son who wished to acquire the skill. The assistant was tasked with the responsibility of pressing the bellow directing the draught into the furnace. The smithy was located adjacent to the homestead of the smith. The blacksmithing profession was either seasonal or permanent. Some did it alongside other activities like farming while others did it throughout the year. The skill of forging was imparted through apprenticeship from the father to the son. There was no payment of the acquisition of the skill for family members and close relatives. However, other members of the society who wished to be trained as smiths were required to give a training fee paid in form of livestock, honey and grains” (O.I, Njeru, Gituma, February 10th 2021).

According to an informant, Kiome (O.I, Karocho, February 26th 2021), the smiths made various products such as hoes, swords, cow bells, knives, arrow heads, spears, and axes. The iron working technology was a precious profession among the Tharaka people. This is because of its socio-economic importance. Iron items enhanced the hunting and gathering and ensured peace and security among the people. For instance, arrow heads were skillfully manufactured by local blacksmiths, *aturi*. They were extremely light primarily for shooting fast running wild animals. The arrow heads meant for killing large animals such buffalo and elephant were smeared with deadly poison; *ibai* that shortened the time taken by the shot animal to die. Farm implements such as hoes and axes expanded the agricultural sector resulting to increased food production.

From the above, blacksmithing was a key socio-economic activity that existed among the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period. It is no doubt that forging was the reserve for men, women could only assist their husband. Truly, iron working played a

pertinent role in improving the living standards of the indigenous people in Tharaka South Sub-County. Manufactured iron items were used for a wide range of activities ranging from domestic duties, farming, hunting as well as arming during warfare.

4.4.2 Wood-Works

According to Ciota (O.I, Marimanti, February 13th 2021), most of the woodwork activities were reserved for men since the work was strenuous such that it was inappropriate for women. The success of the woodwork in Tharaka was attributed to plentiful trees in the area that provided raw materials for industry. Woodwork was a seasonal or part-time professional, mainly done during the dry season after harvesting the farm produce. This is due to the fact that majority of Tharaka people were farmers and they only got adequate time for woodwork after harvesting.

The woodwork profession was both an individual and communal type of work. The craftsmen producing articles on small scale did it alone but those who mass produced items required a sizeable labor that was either family or hired. Family labor was offered for free while the hired labor was paid in form of honey, grains and livestock; goats and sheep. The Tharaka people made a variety of items from wood (O.I, Karea, Gituma, January 24th 2021).

4.4.2.1 Bee Hive Making

According to Kathenya (O.I, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021), Tharaka people were actively involved in bee keeping industry before the colonial period. At first, they used some herbs to weave bee hives. They used cow dung to smear the walls of such bee hives. Later, the idea of bee hive making by hollowing trunk of tree was discovered and was widely adopted by the bee keepers. Bee hives were used to shelter bees with the main aim of harvesting their own honey rather than wandering in the forests searching for wild honey. The process of making bee hives and harvesting honey was the preserve of the men. Honey was a very precious and valued product. It was consumed at the family level by the members of the family. It was also used in the preparation of the traditional liquor.

The above sentiments are echoed by Nkunu (O.I, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021) who states that:

“The art of making bee hives was predominantly men occupation. The skill of bee hive making was passed from one generation to another through apprenticeship; young boys learnt the skill as they assisted their fathers in making bee hives. Bee hive making was a part-time occupation which was largely done during the dry season when the people were free from farming activities. This is because most of the Tharaka people were farmers and a few pastoralists and they only had adequate time for woodwork after harvesting. Bee hives were made from hardwood tree for durability reasons. Men fell trees in the forest, logs were cut into appropriate sizes using an axe. The carver hollowed pieces of log using a chisel blade; it was laborious and tiresome. This was followed by making of two wood lids used for covering the open ends of the bee hive. They also made *mpogoro* used to hold the bee hive at the center for hanging the hive up the tree. Bee hive was so important among the Tharaka people because of its social and economic value.”

On the importance of the bee keeping, Ruuchue states that bee keepers were among the few people in the society who were extremely rich. Honey could be exchanged with other commodities such as goats, sheep, cattle and grains. Honey served various purposes. It was used in payment of dowry during marriages. During marriage ceremonies, apart from giving raw honey to the bride’s parents, the bridegroom took local liquor prepared using honey (O.I, Ruuchue, Karocho, February 22th 2021).

The researcher concludes that like any other wood item, the process of making bee hive was quite tedious, however wood carvers could not give up owing to the benefits attached to bee hives. The harvested honey was highly valued by the Tharaka people. From the above data, honey was not only used as a foodstuff but also as an important ingredient for brewing tradition beer; the most preferred beverage among the elderly men in the community.

4.4.2.2 Mortars and Pestles

Among the Tharaka, wood-work was achieved due to abundance of hardwoods in nearby forests. Some woodcarvers produced mortars, *ntiri* and pestles, *miuthi*. As mentioned above, the skill of making pestles and mortars was practiced by the men because the work was exceedingly demanding to an extent that women could not manage (O.I, Mauki, Chiakariga, January 14th 2021).

On process of making the mortar and pestle, Mwoga recorded the following:

“Mortars were made from a piece of hardwood trunk cut down using an axe. The carver hollowed the trunk up to the middle level using a specially made chisel blade. On the other hand, pestles were made from a long and round piece of a tree branch. They were skillfully curved by the crafts to achieve the desired texture. Mortar and pestle were used for various purposes such as husting sorghum” (O.I, Mwoga, Gituma, January 24th 2021).

It is true that the wood carvers among the Tharaka people produced incomparable wood items such as mortars and pestles which improved the living standards of the residents. Mortars and pestles were used in husting and threshing cereals.

4.4.2.3 Three-legged Stools, Serving Ladles, Shields, Cooking Sticks and Digging Sticks

According to Gatura (O.I, Marimanti, January 12th 2021), before the advent of colonialism in Tharaka some carvers produced some wood items that did not require specialized technical skills. They could therefore be manufactured by anybody in the society who needed them. Some of the tools that required less skills are: shields, granaries, clubs and calabash dishes. This view is corroborated by KNA/DC/MRU/4/16/2/1956:

“Meru womens’ ceremonial shield, *ngaa* was made of miring wood. It was used by already circumcised Meru women at female circumcision ceremonies. It was lightly struck on reverse with a *rungu* or baton (*kachuguma*) in time to music of drums during the dances. It is also carried aloft in the left hand, the right hand carrying the *kachuguma* at the trail, while women leap about uttering warlike cries- a burlesque of warriors about to give battle or after a successful battle. Both shield and *Rungu* are made by the men although only used by women”.

In support of the above sentiments, Makembo (O.I, Marimanti, January 12rd 2021) asserts that Tharaka woodcarvers made variety of simple implements used to perform various domestic chores. All wood articles were made by men. The craftsmen carved a sizeable piece of tree trunk to produce wood products of different sizes. Traditional craftsmen patiently carved pieces of log into a round shaped seating stools using a knife. Serving ladles were produced by making a bowl-like hollow on one side of a small piece of wood. A small piece of wood was carved to produce a shield. It was in a half sphere shape with a handle at the center inside the curved surface. It was mainly used for personal protection by men during the war. Other products made from wood are: cooking sticks, *muurugo* and digging sticks, *miro*. They were

produced from a hard wood tree called *muruti*. The digging sticks were long enough and sharpened at one end. They were used for tilling the land, planting and weeding.

From the aforementioned, woodwork, one of the indigenous knowledge practiced by the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period, produced a number of wood products that marveled whoever came across them. Such traditional wood products were under great demand owing to their socio-cultural and economic uses. Of great importance was the production of bee hives whose honey had diverse uses. Some acquired it for its medicinal value while others for brewing the local brew.

4.4.3 Weaving

The Tharaka people were well experienced in weaving during pre-colonial period. Weavers mostly used fiber and bindings of the palm leaves which were readily available to manufacture a number of items. They produced baskets of all sizes used for storage of cereals. Weaving was mainly performed during leisure time especially in the evening as the family members waited for food. Women took the advantage of this time to impart useful traditional skills, knowledge and attitude to their young girls (O.I, Mbui, Gituma, February 10th 2021).

Similar views are expressed by Kariu, an informant who believes that:

“Weaving was momentous economic endeavor among the Tharaka people as it produced different items which were of great use. Such products manufactured under this profession are: traditional granaries, poultry cages, fishing traps and wicker doors. Further, men used to make mats and baskets though in rare cases. Baskets and winnows were made out of yarns, vegetable fibers, reeds or splint creepers and so on. Baskets had economic importance like harvesting farm produce, storing grains and carrying solid items both at home and outside the homestead. Winnows were used for winnowing grains such as sorghum, maize, cowpeas, millet among others. They were also used in separation of mixture of cereals by handpicking the undesired grains out of the baskets. Ropes were used for livestock tethering, carrying loads such fire woods, gourds of water, gruel, fermented milk and honey harvesting. Tharaka people spread mats on their beds where they slept at night. Wicker doors were put at the entrance of the hut to prevent the people from strong wind and cold at night” (O.I. Kariu, Marimanti, January 12th 2021).

From the above data, it is evident that the Tharaka residents were talented in various ways. Weaving is seen as one of the traditional skill that really transformed the lives of majority of weavers as they produced items which were highly patronized by many

within and beyond the boundaries of Tharaka. Of great importance were baskets which served various functions ranging from domestic to farm duties.

4.4.4 Traditional Medicine Production

Were and Wandibba (1988) states that all Meru sub-ethnic groups believed in preventive medicines. The traditional herbal occupation was guided by two main principles. To adhere to principles of honesty and fair play all the time when manufacturing herbal medicines and when treating patients. The authors posit that traditional medical practitioners were well trained in manufacturing indigenous medicines from natural plants and animal products. Plants' products could be used alone or be mixed with animal products depending on the type of the ailment at hand.

Among the Tharaka people, the traditional medicines were used to treat myriad sicknesses like diarrhea, stomachache, snake bite, pneumonia, malaria and so on. Moreover, some wild and domestic animals' products were also used for medication. For instance, sheep and crocodile oil were used to treat chronic cough. Not only human medicines, livestock drugs were also produced by the specialists in herbal medicines. Due to the complexity of the field of traditional herbal medicine, there existed different specialists who specialized in treating different illnesses (FGD, Marimanti, January 24th 2021).

The idea of existence of traditional herbal medicines among the Tharaka people before colonial period is supported by Mikua, a respondent by stating that:

“The occupation of making traditional herbal medicine had a considerable socio-economic standing in the community. Traditional herbalists among the Tharaka people were greatly respected because they possessed special and unique art that was so imperative to human survival. The Tharaka herbalists discovered the art of producing traditional medicine following several instances of deaths caused by different diseases. Consequently, they discovered both preventive and curative medicines. The traditional herbalists succeeded in making these medicines due to readily available plants from the surrounding whose roots, bark and leaves had ingredients necessary for the production of such medicines. Leaves, barks and roots from different plants were carefully collected by the herbalist, cleaned them before crushing and grinding them into powder. Some were mixed with water to form a liquid that was taken by the patients while others were taken in powder form. They were kept in small gourds for future use” (O.I. Mikua, Karocho, February 22nd 2021).

As per the above information, it is evident that medicine men existed in Tharaka South Sub-County. It is beyond doubt that the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) on manufacture of traditional medicine saved lives of many residents from deadly illnesses including snake bites. It is important to note also that, Africans in Tharaka South Sub-County were knowledgeable on the appropriate medicinal herbs appropriate for the production of various medicines.

4.4.5 Pottery Manufacturing

Langenkamp (1999) carried out a study on potting in Meru, he found that pot-making was a seasonal activity that was alternated with agriculture during its peak period. The potters took the advantage of dry weather that was being experienced during the months of July and August to produce as many pots as possible. However, pottery could be performed even during the agricultural peak seasons in case a need arose and there was adequate time.

Traditionally, the occupation of potting was culturally dominated by women. Pottery had been practiced in Tharaka South Sub-County since time immemorial. They were made by aged women largely grandmothers. The skill of potting was passed through apprenticeship from one generation to another. Potters did not charge training fee to the trainees. Potters produced pots of different sizes for various purposes. Big pots were used for storing water, grains and preparing traditional local brew commonly known as *maroa* while the smaller ones were used for cooking food and gruel (O.I, Gaciri, Chiakariga, January 15th 2021),

The process of manufacturing pots was tiresome and time demanding. It involved multi-step procedure as stated below:

“Potting was done at potting site. The site was situated away from the homestead, mainly near the source of the raw materials such as water and the clay. An appropriate potting site was required to be surrounded by large trees that could provide adequate shade. Shade was instrumental in providing cool conditions necessary for drying pots without the risk of cracking. Not all soils were used for making pots but clay soil locally known as *yumba* was collected from specific places mainly on the hills and along some rivers. The soil was rubbed between the palms of the hands to make it fine. All foreign materials were removed by hand-picking. This stage was crucial as the presence of large particles in the clay could lead to the breaking of the pot when firing. The soil was thoroughly mixed

with water before molding pots. They were left to dry under the shade for four to five days after which firing was done to harden them. After firing the pots were ready for use” (O.I. Ciampui, Gituma, February 2nd 2021).

Indeed, pottery was another important traditional technology mainly performed by elderly women in Tharaka South Sub-County. Old women trained their fellow women who wished to be potters. The skill was cultural in nature as it was guarded by community norms. For example, men were not allowed in the pottery sites. Potters manufactured pots of different sizes for different uses. Pots were crucial in performing basic social and economic chores such as cooking, beer brewing and storage of farm produce.

4.4.6 Cloth Making

Before the colonial period, the Tharaka people were good in making variety of clothes from animal skins. The specialists in cloth making first tanned hides and skins by scrapping off fur using scrappers produced by local ironsmiths before softening them by pounding the skin with a strong stick and applying some oil. The skin was then cut into various sizes to make all kinds of clothes (FGD, Gituma, February 10th 2021).

This information is corroborated by an archival data as recorded below:

“The materials used for dress in pre-European days consisted mainly of skins supplemented with beads and ornaments. Thira was a young girl’s attire consisted of a short skirt made of skin which was cut into narrow strips. Over this she wore shells. She wore no clothing above the waist but numerous ornaments and necklaces. *Ntuuri* was a young girl garment, it was a wide strap which was highly decorated with beads. It was cut at the center so that it can be fitted over the head” (KNA/MRU/7/1/1943).

The above idea is echoed by KNA/DC/MRU/2/1/2/1958. Meru married women wore a skirt locally known as *kigutio*. It was produced by the men from goat skins. The goat skin was sewn together by men and decoration was done by women. The skin was worn after cutting, sewing and decorating it with the castor oil and red clay.

About the leather work, views were sought from two experienced respondents, Njagi and Kanyamu. Njagi pointed out that:

“Tharaka people had experts in making textile products even before the advent of colonialism. Before the skill of making textile products came into existence, men wore no clothes; they walked naked. This occupation was largely dominated by

men, albeit women participated, it was in small-scale. The need to protect their bodies from strong wind, cold, cover their nakedness and plentiful skins in the area motivated the Tharaka people to start making garments. They made different clothes for every member of the family’’ (O.I. Njagi, Marimanti, January 12nd 2021).

Kanyamu (O.I, Chiakariga January 14th 2021) confirmed the above information by stating that the Tharaka people knew how to treat their hides and skins to attain the required texture. They spread out hides and skins in an open field using several sticks, exposing them to direct sunlight. After they were fully treated, they scraped off the fur and removed all the flesh that could have been left out. Kanyamu went ahead to state that hides and skins were skillfully cut into required shape and sizes. The resultant sections of skins were sewn together using animal or fish bone needle and tendon strings. Several beads were fixed on threads to form long strips which women placed at their waists to cover their front part of the body. Men had several fly whisks affixed on a long string which were used to cover the front part of the body.

From the above data, dress production undeniably was one of the important traditional technology that aided the production of crucial garments that transformed the lives of the pre-colonial Tharaka people. The manufacture of skin clothes was one of the important aspect of the socio-economic advancement of the Tharaka people.

4.4.7 Flour and Gruel Generation

Njara (O.I, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021) revealed that flour manufacturing as one of the cottage industries that existed in Tharaka South Sub-County before the arrival of colonialists. The flour production industries were owned by the family members and therefore labor was not remunerated as it was provided by the family members. The flour was produced by grinding cereals such as finger millet and sorghum.

According to Karigu (O.I, Karocho, February 26th 2021), the process of making flour and gruel was the occupation of the women. It involved the use of two stones which were collected either by a man or a woman from the surrounding environment. Owing to the fact that not all stones were suitable for grinding, collection of such stones was the duty of an elderly man or woman who could identify appropriate ones. The main grains used for producing flour and gruel were millet, sorghum and finger millet. The production of flour entailed crushing or grinding the grains into flour using the big

and the small stone. The big stone was a little bit rough and curvy on the surface while the small stone had a concave shape. The grains were placed on the surface of the big stone before being crushed by small stone repeatedly to give fine flour. The flour was pushed into a vessel, usually a calabash placed in front of the stone.

On her part, a respondent Kauma recorded the following about flour and gruel production:

“The preparation of the gruel involved mixing of the millet with water. The wet millet was ground until such a time when the solution attained the required thickness. The solution was cooked using a pot producing a very sweet gruel. It could be consumed fresh or could be fermented using a big gourd. All families possessed a grinding stone although one could request for an assistance from the neighbors in the event she had a social ceremony like circumcision of boys which required plentiful gruel. Young girls assisted their mothers in grinding as they informally learn the skill, hence labor was not remunerated. Gruel was so precious such that it was the main stuff that visitors were served with before served with anything else” (O.I, Kauma, Karocho, February 26th 2021).

It is clear that women in Tharaka South Sub-County took part in local manufacturing before the colonial conquest. The making of flour and gruel was extremely tedious and one required a lot of time to produce enough porridge and flour to satisfy the family members. Gruel drinking was an important part of social functions such as wedding and circumcision.

4.4.8 Local Brew Production

The traditional brew and liquor production was the work of both men and women. Water, sorghum or finger millet flour were the main ingredients in the preparation of the local brew. The main method of liquor production was by steaming. The traditional liquor was mainly drunk by the elders. The traditional alcohol was commonly used in social ceremonies such as child naming, initiation and wedding celebrations (O.I, Karigu, Karocho, February 26th 2021).

Gatumba a respondent, when asked about the production of the traditional beer in Tharaka South Sub-County, she stated that:

“Tharaka people adopted the skill of traditional liquor production even before the coming of the white man. The production of the local brew was performed by both men and women. *Maroa* was a traditional brew prepared by women. It was

produced from the mixture of thin fermented gruel and millet flour. Millet or sorghum was soaked in water for three days to sprout after which it was ground to produce gruel that was then put into a big pot to ferment for four days. It is the fourth day that the millet flour was added to the fermented gruel. After one day the beer was ready for consumption. Local brew was reserved for elderly in the society; both men and women. It was a taboo for any young boys and girls to take beer” (O.I, Gatumba, Gituma, January 24th 2021).

Men prepared local brew using bee honey (O.I, Kaindi, Marimanti, January 14th 2021). Harvested honey was mixed with water and then put in special vessel locally known as *kithiri*. *Mirigi* were added to the solution that acted as a catalyst to fasten the process of brewing. The local liquor was ready after two to three days depending on the number and quality of *mirigi* used. It was mainly consumed during social ceremonies such as circumcision, marriages and naming ceremonies. Traditional local beer was also drunk during communal work. One could request his or her friend to assist him or her in farm duties such as clearing the bush, sowing, weeding and harvesting. In such occasions, the climax of it all was the taking of the local beer. It was drunk in the evening and at night after attending farm activities.

From this data, it is true that the Tharaka people manufactured traditional beer which was the most valuable drink among the elderly men. Unlike other traditional professions that were dominated by one gender, traditional liquor was prepared by both men and women. Mostly, the traditional brew was drunk during leisure time especially in the evening. It was also an imperative beverage for socio-cultural functions such as birth, marriage and circumcision.

4.4.9 Snuff Production

According to Kabao (O.I, Marimanti, January 13th 2021), tobacco production was one of the professions carried out in Tharaka South Sub-County during the pre-colonial period. In most cases, tobacco was used to produce sniffing tobacco. Some people in Tharaka puffed tobacco using indigenous dry pipe. Others consumed tobacco by sniffing.

The aforementioned information is corroborated by Karuuyi an informant, who states that:

“The occupation was a reserve for the elders only, both men and men. The tobacco farming was done in small scale by family members. Young boys and girls assisted their parents in planting and weeding the tobacco leaves. Snuff production was a part time or seasonal professional, mostly practiced during the dry season when demand for agricultural labor had fallen significantly. The occupation was greatly valued because of its proceeds which were used to meet the necessities of life among the family members” (O.I, Karuuyi, February 22th 2021).

On process of snuff processing, Gatundu (O.I, Karocho, February 26th 2021) pointed out that when the tobacco plants were mature enough, its leaves were plucked off. Leaves were kept under the shade away from direct sunlight covered with other leaves to ensure that the chemical compound necessary for production of the snuff was not lost through evaporation. After three to four days, leaves were crushed using mortar and pestles to produce small particles which were further ground into a powder. The powder was added some animal oil. Further, the mixture was dried by exposing it to direct sunlight for a few hours before it was collected and put in snuff boxes ready for consumption. For commercial purposes, tobacco was put into a big basket or leather bag from where the owner could be scooping the snuff to individuals for grains, livestock and honey. In case of mass production of the tobacco, the owner could hire labor that was paid with processed snuff, grain and chicken.

4.4.10 Salt Extraction

Salt industry was considerably valued among many Tharaka people. Some people produced salt by burning some plant's leaves (O.I, Gaciri, Chiakariga, January 15th 2021). The produced ash was mixed with water and filtered using a porous pot. The salty solution was received by a receiving container. Some people used salt in its liquid form while others boiled the filtrate at high temperatures whereby the water evaporated leaving behind salty powder. The powder was further hardened by exposing it to sunlight to be ready for consumption.

In support of presence of salt manufacturing among the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period, Gakii pointed out that:

“Salt was an important item among the Tharaka natives during the pre-colonial period because it added flavor to food. Primarily, salt extraction in Tharaka was exclusively done by elderly women as they could locate a salt site easily. Salt existed naturally along the river banks and on specific sites. It was mined individually or in groups. To separate salt from other particles such as soil, the collected salt ore was thoroughly mixed with water, the mixture was decanted whereby the residue was left on the calabash while salt solution passed to the collection container. The salt solution was then added to food. In some cases, salt was added direct to food in its natural form. There was no need for hiring labor because salt was required in small quantities, family labor was adequate” (O.I, Gakii, Gituma, February 2nd 2021).

4.5 Conclusion

The chapter has examined various pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County prior to 1907. The study revealed that the Tharaka people were specialists in various fields of indigenous industry that they used as an economic tool for transformation of their living standards. It was also noted that the Tharaka people began manufacturing traditional tools and products mainly because there existed bountiful raw materials within their reach that aroused their curiosity in traditional manufacturing. Knowledge and skills in manufacturing indigenous items was acquired through apprenticeship. They were passed from one generation to another through listening, observation and imitation. In Tharaka, there existed various cottage industries. These are: Iron working, wood work, textile production, pottery, gruel and flour production, herbal medicine manufacturing, tobacco production, weaving, traditional liquor production and salt extraction.

Both men and women participated fully in local manufacturing. Women, in most cases, specialized in less demanding occupations, although, they greatly assisted their husbands in performing duties perceived to be difficult by members of the society. Examples of the industries operated by men by virtue of their difficult were: iron working, bee hive production and textile production. Women on other side were in charge of pottery, salt extraction, and gruel and flour production. Some local industries were operated by both men and women. Weaving, snuff production, local brew production and herbal medicine production industries were operated by males and females. These local industries were highly valued by Tharaka people because of

their socio-economic and cultural value. They produced farm implements, war weapons and domestic items.

Agricultural tools improved the agricultural sector hence increasing food production. War weapons such as swords, spears, arrows and shields were used by Tharaka people to defend themselves against their enemies. The cottage industry also provided the community with domestic tools such as pots, gourds, calabash, stools, winnows and serving ladle for domestic use. Bee hives made by the Tharaka carvers produced sweat honey that was used by family members either in raw form or production of traditional beer that could not lack in any a single social function. Other important products produced by professional crafts are skin clothes worn by people to prevent them from strong wind and cold. Traditional gruel was also another product of Tharaka cottage industries and it was so nutritious for human consumption.

CHAPTER FIVE

COLONIAL POLICIES ON COTTAGE INDUSTRIES IN THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, 1907 TO 1963

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the policies introduced by the British colonial government on cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963. The establishment of colonialism in Tharaka South Sub-County is also discussed in this chapter. The colonial policies analyzed in this chapter are: imposition of high taxation, land alienation, disregard of Tharaka culture, biased labor relations, introduction of western manufactured medicines, forced labor and introduction of western education. This chapter is guided by the articulation of modes of production theory. The theory is used to analyze various policies adopted by the colonial capitalist authorities in regard to cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County.

5.2 The Establishment of Colonialism in Tharaka Land

During the Berlin conference held in Berlin in Germany in 1884 to 1885, the European powers agreed to share the African continent peacefully in absentia of Africans. It was decided that for any power to claim any part of Africa, she had to establish effective occupation over the region. Consequently, the British government established her rule in Kenya in 1895 as a way of claiming the ownership of the protectorate. Due to high cost of running the protectorate, the British colonial government sought the services of the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) to administer on her behalf. The IBEAC was unable to administer the protectorate due to numerous challenges such as inadequate trained personnel, financial constraints and local resistance. As a result, the colonial government decided to take over the administration of her protectorate (Wangari, 2010).

Ndubai (2016) carried out a research on the participation of Ameru in the Mau Mau from 1954 to 1965. The study notes that the entire Meru region came under the colonial rule after the arrival of the first colonial District Commissioner (DC), Edward Horne in Meru. Horne was nicknamed 'Kangangi' because of his small body size and his roaming tendency. This is because Horne used to move from one place to another to oversee the implementation of the colonial government projects in the entire region. The Meru region included the Tharaka, Chuka, Imenti, Tigania and Igembe. Horne resided in Meru town locally referred to as 'Mutindwa jwa Kangangi,' loosely

translated as the place where Kagangi resides. The DC appointed the traditional chiefs directly to assist him in the administration. The entire Meru region was officially declared a district; Meru District in 1910. Horne ruled in consultation with the Njuri Ncheke.

The above argument is supported by Fadiman (1993) on his book, “When We Began There Were Witchmen; An Oral History from Mount Kenya.” The author points out that the colonial rule was extended to Meru region in 1907. This was witnessed by the arrival of the Edward Horne, a colonial DC. He arrived with his entourage composed of warriors from Maasai, Gikuyu and Embu. To scare the Ameru, Horne arrived riding a white horse while highly guarded by a group of Maasai spearmen.

According to a respondent Mwigana (O.I, Gituma, February 2nd 2021), a former colonial chief, Kenya was declared a British protectorate in 1895, but colonial administration in Tharaka was felt in 1907 with the arrival of the first District commissioner, Edward Butler Horne in Meru district. This was after the colonial government came up with various administrative units for easy administration. These units were: provinces which were headed by the Provincial Commissioners, districts administered by the DCs, divisions administered by the District Officers(DOs), locations under the chiefs and villages headed by the headmen.

On the coming of the Kangangi in Tharaka, Ndunga an informant asserts that:

“The first white colonialist came to Tharaka at a place called Chiakariga. Horne arrived in Tharaka riding on a horse because there were no well-constructed roads that could allow the use of motor vehicle. Although, Horne was widely known as Kangangi in entire Meru region, Tharaka people nicked him *Kiuno* because of his complexion that majority of the residents likened to a preemie. The colonial authorities recruited chiefs and soldiers from the natives to implement the colonial government’s policies within the region. Among the responsibilities played by the chiefs and the police were: recruiting laborers from the local population and forced them to reside in the polices’ camps for not less than three months. They also acted as a link between the subjects and the colonial administrators. They communicated to the residents the directives from the DC. They also organized meetings where the colonial authorities met the people. African chiefs also collected taxes from the local populace during this period” (O.I, Ndunga, Gituma, February 2th 2021).

As mentioned above, the European administrators came in Tharaka South Sub-County in 1907. Horne arrived at the place called Chiakariga before proceeding to

the rest parts of Tharaka. The colonialists disregarded the traditional system of administration and instead appointed African chiefs and police to assist in the execution of the government policies. The British regime introduced various social and economic exploitative policies which had pronounced socio-economic impacts on Tharaka people.

5.3 The Colonial Policies on Cottage Industries in Tharaka South Sub-County

According to Kitharia (O.I, Gituma, February 2nd 2021), it is during the colonial period the colonialists transformed the Tharaka people into primary product producers. The Tharaka people were expected to produce raw materials which were used by the European industries. Africans were conditioned to depend on the white man's manufactured goods. The British brought various goods such as clothes, containers, cooking items and shoes to Tharaka. Gradually, majority of Tharaka people neglected the use of skin clothes, gourds and calabashes in favor of the imported items.

The same sentiments are expressed by Kanyii (O.I, Karocho, February 10th 2021) whose report is recorded below:

“The introduction of manufactured clothes affected negatively the textile industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. The Europeans flooded the local markets with western manufactured products as a strategy of checking the blooming traditional cottage industry in the region. The locals involuntarily shifted to production of primary products needed by the European industries. Local markets became major destination of the western manufactured items.”

It quite clear that the British colonial rule changed the local natives from traditional manufacturers into producers of the raw materials which were under high demand by the modern industries in the Europe. Consequently, majority of the people depended on imported goods from European to sustain their lives. This is in line with the articulation modes production theory where the European imposed their capitalist mode of production on the Tharaka people neglecting the pre-capitalist mode which had dominated the Tharaka economy earlier.

A research conducted on structural changes of potter's crafts in Kenya by Langenkamp (1999) observed that the existence of the spiritual powers and traditional

beliefs in Meru were mainly contributed to pottery in the region. For example, it was believed that in case a woman carrying newly made pot on her back crossed through a herd of cattle, the livestock could fall sick or even die. The study further revealed that Christian missionaries strongly condemned and opposed these beliefs and powers of the Ameru.

Gichere and Ishida (2007) agrees with Langenkamp by stating that the traditional beliefs in Meru were exceedingly challenged not only by the European missionaries but also by the British colonialists. The Christian missionaries intensified the war against the African way of doing things by referring to it as evil and urging Africans to practice Christianity at all time. In addition, the position of *mugwe* was taken over by the clergy.

Similar vies are expressed by Ndubai (2012) who points out that:

“In Meru, the new converts to the white’s man religion (Christianity) had to wear different European-type clothing and emulate the missionary in every possible way. Those with traditionally elongated ear-lobes had them medically cut and sewn.”

While addressing the Meru Native Council meeting, the chairperson confirmed the above argument where he stated the following about female circumcision:

“Circumcision of females is dangerous and usually results in difficulties when a woman is giving birth, and sometimes when a baby is born is found to have a deformity on one part of its body; therefore, the circumcision of the females should be strictly controlled because it has no significance except that it is a custom of the tribe. It definitely should be abandoned” (KNA/MRU/1/9/3/1957).

This data is confirmed by a respondent Mucee who asserts that Tharaka cottage industry was highly influenced by their traditional beliefs. For instance, they made pots because they also believed they were important for spiritual purposes. These pots were used for storage of apparatus used by witch doctors. The pot making industry was strongly opposed by missionaries who preached against witchcraft. The Christian missionaries also disrespected traditional beliefs such as female circumcision and polygamous marriages which were behind the manufacture of some traditional items such as blades and traditional skin clothes. In fact, they directed their followers to neglect the traditional skin clothes and instead wear the western made clothes (O.I, Mucee, Marimanti, January 12th 2021).

Secondary, archival and oral sources unanimously agreed that the European Christian missionaries significantly affected the operations of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. The Tharaka traditional knowledge was a socio-cultural phenomenon, therefore, any attempt directed towards the destruction of the Tharaka culture inevitably influenced the traditional cottage industry. It should be understood that some cultural practices such as female circumcision is attributed to the manufacture of a number of traditional items such as blades; *irunya*, women club; *rungu*, headdress and shields. It is therefore needless to say that these policies were aimed at undermining the Tharaka independent peasantry which had thrived for a long time.

By 1928, the colonial government had alienated a total of 10,572 square miles, 1,395 square miles surveyed for alienation and 242 square miles reserved for government (KNA/DC/MRU/2/4/7/1930). An informant Kareia (O.I, Gituma, January 24th 2021) emphasizes the importance of farming in the local manufacturing. The expansion of agricultural sector appreciably contributed to the production of some crucial indigenous articles used at home that could enhance the living standards of the people. The need to store and cook food, for example, largely led to discovery of pots. Further, baskets were required for harvesting and storing farm produce. However, the colonial rule destabilized the operations of the cottage industry by alienating large pieces of land owned by the Tharaka people.

A respondent Kariu (O.I, Marimanti, January 12th 2021) has this to say with regards to the land alienation:

“Most of the fertile and grazing land was taken away by the colonialists. For instance, Ruau and Makironi were grabbed by the colonial authorities forcing the natives to vacate the land. This development caused a lot of landlessness among the people. The locals moved to other regions in search for land for cultivation and grazing. Due to scarcity of land in the new lands, there was need for minimal cultivation and destocking livestock. Destocking livestock means reduction in supply of hides and skins necessary for leather industry. Less food crop production in turn reduced the manufacture of the farm related items such as hoe, axe, baskets and pots.”

The above observations show that African land alienation by European administrators is one of the colonial policies that fundamentally impacted the cottage industry. This is because agriculture and animal rearing enabled the production of

various indigenous items. Land alienation by the colonial authorities therefore, affected the performance of the cottage industry among the Tharaka people. The researcher therefore deduces that as the British colonialists in Tharaka developed policies aimed at improving their economic status they were clearly making the Tharaka traditional crafts dependents and consequently, leading to the underdevelopment of the area.

The colonial agents forcefully arrested the Tharaka residents and subjected them into forced labor. They were required to dig trenches in areas deemed to be vulnerable to soil erosion. They worked under unfavorable conditions with no payment. Tharaka people were fined two hundred shillings or a he goat for the failure to attend such an important duty. The cottage industry was therefore denied valuable workforce necessary for production of diverse products (O.I, Mwigana, Gituma, February 2nd 2021).

According to Kithendu (O.I, Gituma, January 24th 2021), the European colonialists forced the Tharaka people to offer free labor in their camps. Women plastered the walls of the houses built by their men counter parts for purposes of sheltering the colonial African chiefs, police, and the (DO). They also assembled construction materials such as hard cores, sand, poles and thread for construction of bridges. They further cleared roads using their wooden sticks for easy movement of the colonial administrators to various parts of Tharaka.

This information was confirmed by KNA/DC/MRU/5/16/1956:

“A chief may require any able-bodied adult male person under his jurisdiction to work for not more than six days in any quarter without pay upon such minor communal service or services as he may direct. Any person who fails to comply with any requirement pursuant to By-law 3 of these By-laws shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred and fifty shillings or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two months or to both fine and imprisonment.”

This discussion made the researcher to conclude that cottage industry being a labor intensive endeavor, forced labor played a key role in denying the traditional cottage industry the personnel required for its growth and development. Most of those arrested for provision of labor in European camps and farms were invariably key in propelling the industry to the next level.

During the colonial period, the Tharaka people were required to pay various taxes such as hut, pool and breast tax as an elaborate strategy of acquiring sufficient labor. Further, all traditional made items attracted huge taxes that made some of them unsaleable due to high prices at which they were sold at. Most of locals were unable to raise the enough money to cater for their basic needs and pay tax. Those who failed to pay the required amount of money were imprisoned a jail term of two to three months (FGD, Marimanti, February 20th 2021).

This was further illustrated by archival source (KNA/MRU/1/9/3/1957) of a meeting held by the African Meru Native Council which agreed on payment of taxes among the Ameru as indicated below:

“The council agreed to raise the Meru African District Council Rates for 1957 to meet additional expenditure. In respect of the year 1957 there shall be levied on and collected from every native inhabitant of the area in, and from, which the Meru African District Council has jurisdiction a rate of Shs.23/=. It was further agreed that every native inhabitant of Tharaka, lower part of Chuka, lower Mwimbi, and lower Muthambi shall pay a rate of Shs.19/=. These amounts including Shs.5/= in each case shall be collected for educational purposes.”

This information is corroborated by (KNA/MRU/5/16/1938) which pointed out that the Meru African District Council in 1954 enacted by-laws that demanded the licensing of Trades and Occupation as shown in the table below.

Table 6:
Licensing of Trades and Occupations

Professional	Tax In Shillings
Hide dealer	15
Miller (for every two stones rising by sh. 5 for every Additional stone)	11
Maize buyer	15
Launderer	5
Blacksmith	2

Concerning the payment of the unpaid tax for the previous years by the Meru residents, the data from Kenya National Archives indicates that:

“Throughout the district (Meru) there has been a great effort made by the native to make up lost ground in the payment of taxes and by the sale of stock at good prices and by money earned as wages they succeeded in paying arrears of 289,116 shillings of the 1923 tax by the end of July, 1924, and 403,104 of the 1924 tax by the end of December, 1924. 91,896 remained to come in” (KNA/DC/MRU/1/1/1934).

On payment of taxes by the Tharaka people, Mayowe an informant attests that:

“Every member of the society had to pay tax for his livestock. I can remember having failed to pay the tax together with my elder brother. The DO accompanied by his police came to our home for the purpose of recovering the evaded tax. They forcefully confiscated my three bulls. Fortunately, in their midst there was a police who was my friend, he lied to them that I was his servant and he promised to pay tax on my behalf. That is when they released my bulls. Further, they got into my father’s pen and took the biggest bull in order to compensate the tax evaded by my brother. However, the bull resisted to move and the DO angrily shot it on the fore head to death, they took it and went with it” (O.I, Mayowe, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021).

From this information, the colonial government imposed variety of taxes to Africans in Tharaka South Sub-County. Taxes paid by the business people and traditional technologists affected their work negatively as discussed in chapter six of this document.

Before the colonial period, the acquisition of the traditional skills on various indigenous occupations were impacted through informal education, that is, the IK was passed from one generation to another through listening, observation and imitation (O.I, Mikua Karocho, February 22nd 2021). Apprentices spent their very valuable time in the manufacturing sites with the technologists as they learnt the traditional skills. It is during the colonial era the colonial government disrupted the process of disseminating IK to young boys and girls by introducing the western education. The western system of education replaced the informal education which was richly endowed with indigenous skills which were necessary for the growth and development of the cottage industry in the region. The coming of the colonialism cut off the African young people from the skilled and experienced specialists who were so instrumental in disseminating IK.

These sentiments are refuted by a monthly report written by the District Commissioner Meru in 1958. The extract of the report reads:

“Since my arrival in the district, I have been concerned with the inauguration of the first “Apprentice Course” at Gitoro and in generally travelling round the district introducing myself and getting to know the people and district. The first full apprentice course commenced on the 1st April, 1959 when 63 boys were enrolled. They are splint up into groups: - Shoe making, leatherwork and tanning 22, blacksmithing 12, tailoring; 10 and carpentry 19” (KNA/DC/MRU/2/19/1958).

The introduction of western education by colonialists among the Tharaka people vastly hampered the process of imparting the young people with the necessary skills in traditional manufacturing. This is because the foreign system of education imposed to Tharaka people by the colonial capitalists lacked the African cultural aspects which were instrumental in the promotion of development of the traditional industries.

In Meru, the traditional knowledge in herbal medicine was referred to as evil by the colonial authorities. They equated the African herbal medicines to witchcrafts. Moreover, the Christianity gospel directed African Christians to neglect that which regards Africans' indigenous knowledge and skills such as traditional herbal medicines. The indigenous African herbal medicine was pronounced 'witchcraft' in 1925 by the colonial government. Such medications were banned by the Act of Parliament and those found practicing them were prosecuted in the court of the law (Gichere and Ishida, 2007). Those found guilty of such as offences were excommunicated from the religion.

The DC in Meru wrote a letter to the officer in charge of District hospital on the use of western medicine to control malaria in Tharaka, the letter reads:

“There is an epidemic of malaria in Tharaka at present, and the medical staff are treating over 1000 patients a week. It is not possible to control the mosquitoes which transmit the disease, so it is now intended to control malaria parasite in the blood of the human patients by giving everybody in Tharaka a sufficient dose of chloroquine to kill all the malaria parasites in their blood. This means although the mosquitos will remain and will continue to bite and feed on humans, there will not be any malaria parasites to be transmitted to other humans” (KNA/DC/MRU/2/16/1).

The same ideas are expressed by a report from KNA/MRU/2/16/7. Meru had reported several cases of poliomyelitis by 1959. The disease had been specifically reported in Tharaka, Mirigamieru, Upper Abothugochi, Nkuene, Kianjai, Muthara, Igoji and Akachiu. The colonial authorities initiated mass awareness campaign in addition to inoculation of all children under the age of five years. Further, the colonial authorities staged mass campaign to vaccinate as many people in shortest time possible using the Sabin vaccine which was highly effective in controlling the poliomyelitis.

On the introduction of the European medicines among the Tharaka, a respondent noted that:

“During the precolonial period, Tharaka people had various traditional medicines for various diseases. For instance, they treated headache by taking boiled *muthuka* leaves. Perennial coughing was treated by chewing *mwangua* roots for two to three days consecutively. However, the arrival of the Europeans with western medicines affected the production of Tharaka made drugs. This is because the whites brought western medicines for various diseases which they used to treat the African patients at no cost” (O.I, Kabete, Chiakariga, January 15th 2021).

As discussed above, the British regime introduced fierce socio-economic policies that affected the lives of the Tharaka people. The importation of European made medicines interfered with the production of the indigenous products. This is mainly because the imported medicine and vaccines had a high healing and prevention effects respectively compared to the traditional herbal medicines.

5.4 Conclusion

The chapter has examined the establishment of colonialism in the region. The study found that before the Europeans came to colonize African continent, they first held a conference in Berlin in 1884-1885 to discuss how to divide Africa peacefully. It was noted that the first European landed in Meru at around 1907. Edward Horne was the first and the longest serving DC in Meru who resided in Meru town.

The study also evaluated the colonial policies on cottage industries in the area. It was noted that the colonial government introduced a number of policies on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County. The colonial economic policies examined in this chapter are: the imposition of high taxation to local manufacturers in order they can work for the Europeans to earn money to settle their tax. It was also revealed that the colonialists transformed the Tharaka people into primary product producers. The British government further introduced western education that contradicted the traditional knowledge. It should also be noted that the colonialism disregarded Tharaka culture. Arbitrary arrest and forced labor was another notable colonial policy introduced by the colonial government. The colonial rule also championed the policy of land alienation among the local population. Finally, the British colonial government advocated for the use of western medicines in Tharaka South Sub-County.

CHAPTER SIX
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE COLONIALISM ON THE COTTAGE
INDUSTRY IN THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY FROM 1907 TO 1963

6.1 Introduction

The present chapter presents the findings of the third objective of this study. The findings of the study are based on the articulation of modes of production theory. The theory is appropriate because it demonstrates the contribution of the penetration of the capitalist mode of production into the Tharaka pre-capitalist mode of production that existed there during the pre-colonial period specifically on the cottage industry.

6.2 Contribution of the Colonialism on Cottage Industries in Tharaka South Sub-County

According to Kauma (O.I, Karocho, February 26th 2021), the Tharaka people were famous industrialists even before the coming of the colonial capitalists. The decline of the traditional technology is attributed to colonial rule and the spread of Christianity. Christian converts were required to abandon the traditional clothing and instead put on the western made clothes. Moreover, the importation of western manufactured goods also dealt a big blow to the traditional cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. Additionally, the colonial government followed exploitative policies such as high taxation, forced labor and conversion of locals into primary products producer. These oppressive policies led to the decline of the cottage industries.

M’Mugiira (O.I, Marimanti, January 12th 2021) concurred with the above views by reporting that:

“Colonialism had far-reaching consequences on the traditional technologists. Punitive colonial economic policies such as high taxation and forced labor led to the decline of the cottage industries. Professions such as pottery, blacksmithing and medicine were appreciably affected since majority of their products lost both domestic and international markets because their demand dropped drastically. Gradually the traditional professionals stopped producing the indigenous items. Pottery-related items were replaced by European made cooking items, plates, and tanks. The arrival of the modern machete, axe, spear and swords pushed most of iron made items out of use. The use of modern medicines by the Africans marked the end of traditional herbalists’ profession.”

From this information, the colonial rule is to blame for the decline of the cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County. The importation of the manufactured goods to Tharaka markets led to the decline of the local production as majority of the local

population preferably patronized the European made goods at the expense of the locally manufactured items.

The introduction of western manufactured items in Tharaka South during the colonial period by the British colonizers rendered most of traditional crafts jobless. European made articles were relatively cheap compared with the traditional items. As a result, the local markets which were previously dominated by indigenous items were taken over by the British goods. Although, the British succeeded in slowing down the traditional industry, it was not able to completely kill it. In fact, the ruin of the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County led to acute unemployment among the traditional artisans (O.I, Nyaga, Gituma, February 10th 2021).

An informant Murimi subscribes to the above ideas by pointing out that:

“The traditional manufactured articles were bartered with other items such as grains and livestock during the pre-colonial period. With the advent of colonialism, the Africans were introduced to money economy where they could offer their labor in the European farms for meagre wage. The European imported goods were acquired through money. Tharaka people being paid with money, they comfortably afforded the European goods which were so appealing on their eyes. For instance, majority of African people rushed to purchase European made cooking items, plates, spoons and containers at the expense of the locally manufactured articles such as pots, calabash, wooden made spoons and gourds. Most of the Tharaka people preferred western imported goods because they were cheap, long lasting and felicitous to carry unlike traditional items which were very expensive. As a result, the traditional manufactured goods appreciably lost demand and therefore, if not all, a good number of items were obliterated from the market leading to mass loss of employment among the traditional crafts in Tharaka South Sub-County” (O.I, Murimi, Chiakariga, January 2021).

The colonial rule in Tharaka South Sub-County caused irreparable damage in the field of cottage industry. As observed above, the decline of the traditional craftsmanship obviously led to loss of jobs among the Tharaka people. This was quite unfortunate to thousands of artisans whose main source of livelihood was the traditional cottage industry.

Mugiira (O.I, Gituma, January 24th 2021) states that during pre-colonial period, the Tharaka traditional industry experienced enormous growth in various fields. However, colonialism had destructive impacts on the traditional industries in Tharaka South Sub-County. The colonial capitalism system basically wiped out the African manufactured goods such as pots, clothes and iron tools. The colonial policies such as

high taxation imposed on African made goods led to retardation of traditional manufacturing industries in the Sub-County. Consequently, majority of the traditional artisans were profoundly impoverished as their profession came to an end. They therefore struggled a lot as they tried to make ends meet.

To buttress the above sentiments Nkuno (O.I, Marimanti, January 13th 2021)), affirms that:

“The decline of the traditional cottage industry significantly affected the traditional crafts among the Tharaka people. The colonial rule left most of traditional technologists wallowing in extreme poverty after the western manufactured goods replaced their products in the local markets. Some of the affected technologists ventured into other economic pursuits in their efforts to satisfy their family needs.”

From the aforementioned, the researcher is convinced beyond no doubt that the destruction caused on the cottage industry among the Tharaka by the colonial capitalists was unbearable. This is because most of the traditional technologists were transformed into paupers after the decline of their industry which was sole means of livelihood. This is clearly in line with the articulation mode of production where the pre-capitalist society is underdeveloped as a result of penetration of the colonial capitalist system of production which is exploitative in nature.

According to Langankamp (1999), the decline in pottery activities in Meru led to mass importation of pottery-related items from other places, for example, Kikuyu made pots found their way to Meru markets during this period. In support of the above ideas, Njara a respondent state that:

“When the colonialists arrived in Tharaka land, they negatively changed the way of life of the native Africans. Truly the decline of cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County led to an influx of traditional goods and western made goods from the neighboring communities and other continents like Europe respectively. Europeans brought different types of manufactured goods like the modern cooking pots, machetes and plates” (O.I, Njara, Chiakariga, January 20th 2021).

Both the secondary and oral sources agree that colonialism played a great role in creating a state of dependency among the locals in Tharaka South Sub-County. The colonial government brought all manner of manufactured goods from Europe after wrecking the local manufacturing in the sub-county. The local populace continued to

depend on the foreign imported goods, a situation that continued to deny the cottage industry a survival chance.

The imposition of hefty taxation coupled with land alienation and forced labor resulted to harmful consequences among the traditional crafts (O.I, Kiraithe, Marimanti, January 13th 2021). In fact, the need to pay taxes led to the creation of wage employment among the Tharaka people. Additionally, many people went to urban centers in search for employment to get money to pay taxes and satisfy their basic needs after cottage industry was rendered unreliable means of livelihood by the colonialists.

An informant Mugure confirmed the above idea by declaring that:

“During pre-colonial period, Tharaka people could comfortably cater their basic needs and pay tax with proceeds from peasantry and local manufacturing. The decline of cottage industry and subsistence production due to policies adopted by colonialists led to migration of the local population to European farms and urban centers to seek an alternative source of livelihood. Majority of those who emigrated were young and energetic people who had lost employment as a result of the decline of the cottage industry in the sub-county” (O.I, Mugure, Karocho, February 22nd 2021).

From this information, the African socio-economic life which was dominated by local manufacturing of various items and social ceremonies was badly handicapped during the colonial period. In deed it was terrible for the local manufacturers who lost their employment after the decline of the cottage industry. Majority of them moved to European farms and urban centers to look for new employment in order to cater for their necessities of life.

In the pre-European period, men dominated the pre-colonial Tharaka economy. For instance, some forms of local manufacturing such as woodwork and blacksmithing were mainly reserved for men. Basically, women performed domestic chores. On a positive note, women started to produce variety of items using indigenous knowledge and technology during the colonial period. Although colonialism is blamed for the decline of the traditional cottage industry, it is worthwhile to note that it helped women realize their potential in traditional manufacturing. The European agents arrested men and forced them to provide free labor to European farms and camps while women were left behind to take over the positions previously held by their

husbands. Some women rose to be the heads of their families, prominent carvers, weavers and blacksmiths. This helped to water down all sort of prejudices associated with women in Tharaka South Sub-County (Stephen Nkuno, O.I, Chiakariga, 13th January, 2021).

The above statement was echoed by data from (FGD, 2021). Majority of women took part in local manufacturing during the colonial period after their husbands were arrested by the colonial authorities while others joined the Mau Mau movement. Their participation in production in cottage industry was to bridge the gap created by the absence of their men in the sector.

Although the decline of cottage industry among Tharaka was mainly as result of extension of colonial rule to Tharaka, it is evident that it is during the colonial period women excelled in local manufacturing.

6.3 Conclusion

The chapter examined the contribution of colonialism on cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County in Tharaka-Nithi County. As a result of exploitative colonial economic policies, the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County declined significantly. The decline of the cottage industries led to acute loss of jobs among the traditional manufacturers. It was also noted that there was widespread poverty and misery among the artisans as result of the loss of employment. Moreover, another detrimental contribution of colonial policies on local manufacturing in Tharaka South Sub-County is the influx of traditional items and manufactured goods into Tharaka markets from other regions. Colonialism is also attributed for the migration of majority of people especially the traditional crafts to European farms and urban centers to look for alternative source of livelihood. On a positive note, colonialism gave women an important opportunity to fully exploit their talents in traditional cottage industry where some became notable manufacturers.

CHAPTER SEVEN
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER
RESEARCH

7.1 Introduction

The study on cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County was carried out. The study was guided by the following objectives, to examine the pre-colonial cottage industries prior to 1907, the colonial policies on cottage industries and the contribution of the colonialism on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. Therefore, the present chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion and suggestions for further study.

7.2 Summary of the Findings of the Study

The first objective examined the pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County prior to 1907. It was found that there existed various forms of the cottage industries in the region that necessitated the production of important products that played a key role in the socio-economic transformation of the lives of the Tharaka people during the pre-colonial period. These are iron-working, weaving, wood-works, local brew production, pottery, textile production, textile production, herbal medicine extraction, snuff production and salt extraction. The knowledge on manufacturing traditional items was passed from one generation to another through apprenticeship. Females acquired the indigenous knowledge from their mothers while men taught their sons how to manufacture various traditional implements.

The second objective is to assess the colonial policies on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County from 1907 to 1963. The colonialism presented repressive policies on cottage industry. These policies are; the transformation of Africans into a mere primary products producer. The Tharaka people were required to provide raw materials such as minerals for the European industries. It was noted that the colonialists interfered with the African values and traditions. Christian missionaries strongly condemned and opposed some African beliefs that guarded most of the cottage industries. Moreover, the British government alienated mass tracks of land from Tharaka people. Loss of farming land impacted the cottage industry negatively because the two sectors complemented each other since time immemorial. The other colonial policy on Cottage industry was the forced labor and taxation. Various forms

of taxes were imposed to Tharaka people ranging from hut tax, poll tax and property tax. Traditional technologists were not an exception as they were also heavily taxed. The British government discouraged the traditional form of education which was endowed with indigenous knowledge and skills that culminated in cottage industry. Further, the colonial government outlawed the manufacture and use of the traditional herbal medicine.

The third objective was to investigate the contribution of colonialism on cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County between 1907 and 1963. The researcher found that the colonial rule contributed to the decline of the cottage industries resulting from colonial policies on the traditional Tharaka products. Additionally, Tharaka South Sub-County experienced serious influx of the western manufactured goods as a number of the indigenous items had been obliterated out the local markets. Another notable resultant outcome of colonialism is that majority of traditional manufacturers lost their jobs after the decline in the production of the indigenous products. The study further found that majority of the traditional professionals were left wallowing in extreme poverty after their industries collapsed. The colonial rule in addition, led to the migration of some traditional technologists from rural areas to urban centers and Europeans plantations to seek for alternative means of livelihood after they lost employment resulting from ruination of the cottage industry.

7.3 Conclusion of the Study

The study concluded that there existed numerous pre-colonial cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County. These industries played a significant role in production of basic tools and products that had great potential in improving the living standards of Tharaka people. Since the arrival of colonial rule in Kenya and particularly in Tharaka, several colonial policies on the traditional cottage industry came into effect. The study further assessed the contribution of colonialism on the cottage industries and the conclusion is that colonialism negatively impacted the cottage industry in Tharaka South Sub-County. It is absolutely true that colonialism is to blame for the decline of the traditional cottage industry among the Tharaka people. The decline of the cottage industries among the Tharaka people led to a lot suffering to the local crafts who lost their source of livelihood.

7.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

From the findings of the study the researcher suggests further research into the following:

- a) Change and continuity in indigenous industry in Tharaka south sub-county.
- b) Application of modern technology in the traditional cottage industry in Tharaka south Sub-County.
- c) Cottage industry as a socio-cultural phenomenon among the Tharaka people.

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APPENDIX I
ARCHIVAL SOURCES

KNA/MSS/7/1/1937	Meru names stages of individual's life-culture
KNA/C/S/1/14/100/1957	A.D.C. Meru minutes
KNA/DC/MRU/7/1/1938	Meru customs, values and norms
KNA/MRU/7/1/1943	Meru material culture
KNA/DC/MRU/2/1/2/1958	Loyalist and security force casualties
KNA/MRU/1/9/3/1957	Kikuyu Embu Meru Labor
KNA/DC/MRU/5/16/1956	A.D.C Meru annual reports
KNA/DC/MRU/2/4/7/1930	Boundaries-Meru District and Native Reserves
KNA/MRU/5/16/1938	Meru LNC minutes
KNA/DC/MRU/1/1/1934	Meru Annual Reports
KNA/DC/MRU/2/19/2/1958	Meru District monthly report and annual report
KNA/DC/MRU/2/16/1/1938	A Guide to the Prevention of Malaria in Kenya, Quinine supplies
KNA/MRU/2/16/7/1940	Public Health- Venereal Diseases, Oral Vaccination

APPENDIX II

MERU ETHNOLOGICAL MATERIAL

KNA/Ael MRD/21/12

CORYNDON MEMORIAL MUSEUM.
NAIROBI.

23/9/38

ETHNOLOGICAL MATERIAL

Sir, ---

with further reference to the circular sent to you asking for help in obtaining objects representing the native culture of the tribes in your area . I have the honour to inform you that already in several districts the Local Native Councils have voted sums of money to be spent in obtaining objects for the Coryndon Memorial Museum.

If the Local Native Council in your district were to consider doing likewise I should be glad to send you printed label forms to be attached to the objects and filled in with the requested data.

The Sub-Committee which was appointed to consider what objects from your district are required have formed the opinion that none of the objects in the Museum from your district are adequately labelled and we would therfor greatly appreciate any object that you can acquire for the Museum provided that they have adequate data attached to the labels.

Naturally the Museum is particularly anxious to obtain a representative series of objects of the type used by the natives before the effects of European civilisation became very marked.

Objects of the type used in the old days can still be obtained and we would be very grateful for your co-operation in collecting and labelling them.

R. Cunningham
Dd Ethnological Sub-Committee.
Coryndon Museum.

The classes of objects rquired have been fully set out in the Circular. We would add that photographs of typical native types of typical huts, villages etc of the tribe in your area would also be greatly welcomed by the Museum.

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APPENDIX III

LIST OF DESIRED MERU ETHNOLOGICAL OBJECTS

KNA/AC/MRW/2/1/2

(1a)

LIST OF DESIRED ETHNOLOGICAL OBJECTS.

1. Photographs, as large as possible of
 - (1) Natives in native dress (man, women, children).
 - (2) Head alone, on larger scale, of man and women, front face & profile
2. PHOTOGRAPHS, as large as possible, of
 - (1) "Villages."
 - (2) Individual Hut.
 - (3) Inside of Hut.
 - (4) Hut in course of construction.
3. SPECIMENS OF THE FURNITURE OF THE HUTS.
 - (1) Sleeping mats.
 - (2) Pillows.
 - (3) Stools, etc.
4. SPECIMENS OF MALE CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS. x.
 - (1) Ordinary attire of man and youth.
 - (2) War-dress of Chief and ordinary tribesman.
- SPECIMENS OF FEMALE CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS. x.
 - (1) Girl.
 - (2) Married woman.
- x. Ornaments made of beads, teeth, shells, wood, thorns, spines, nuts, etc.
5. SPECIMENS OF DOMESTIC APPLIANCES AND FOOD.
 - (1) Baskets & string work. Materials from which the string is made.
 - (2) Cooking pots.
 - (3) Combs.
 - (4) Needles.
 - (5) Thread.
 - (6) Snuff-boxes.
 - (7) Meat-dishes.
 - (8) Skin scrapers for preparing skins.
 - (9) Grain from which "beer" is made.
 - (10) Foods, especially specimens of plants and grain.
6. APPLIANCES FOR AGRICULTURE.
 - (1) Hoes.
 - (2) Ploughs.
7. WEAPONS.
 - (1) Battle axes.
 - (2) Bows and arrows.
 - (3) Assegais.
 - (4) Clubs.
 - (5) Shields.
 - (6) Traps and Snares for animals.
 - (7) Fish hooks.
 - (8) Rope.
8. APPLIANCES FOR MAKING IRON WEAPONS. FORGES.

Woods and fibres used in making bows and arrows; names of trees from which these are obtained.
9. ARTS.
 - (1) Carvings.
 - (2) Drawings.
 - (3) Etchings on bone, stone, etc.
 - (4) Musical instruments of all kinds, whistles, pianos, bows, drums.
10. MEDICINES, with their mode of application and the complaints they are supposed to cure, and the native and scientific names of plants or animals from which they are obtained. Specimens of the plants should be sent, complete with flowers, leaves and fruits. Botanical presses can be obtained from the Museum if systematic collecting is to be done; otherwise, pressing the specimens between newspaper and cardboard will suffice.
11. CHARMS of all kinds and their supposed virtues.
12. IDOLS and all objects of witchcraft and worship.

It is of course, very necessary that every specimen should be labelled with the source and name of the NATIVE TRIBE. Notes on the ~~USE~~ USES OF THE OBJECTS and their native names add greatly to the value of the specimens.
13. NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS on customs and beliefs, superstitions, etc., would also be welcomed.

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APPENDIX IV

INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN MEDICINES BY THE WHITE MAN

Ref. No. PH. 10/3/1939.

DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
MERU, 19th. October, 1944.

The Medical Officer,
Native Civil Hospital,
MERU.

USE OF M. & B. FOR TREATMENT OF GONORRHOEA
IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.

KNA Pael me 2/16/7
In confirmation of our conversation of
yesterday, I am writing to confirm the views I expressed
verbally, as follows:-

- a. Under the Inter-Relations Committee's recommenda-
tions all HOSPITAL services other than maternity work
are now entirely a charge on Central Funds.
- b. Formerly the Local Native Council paid for supplies
of M. & B. 898 for the treatment of gonorrhoea and the
Medical Officer was authorised to issue this on pay-
ment, or in certain instances free at his discretion,
to patients of any race.
- c. Whether Local Native Councils made a profit on this
or not is immaterial -- the fact remains that the
Local Native Council is no longer responsible for the
cost, or supply, of any drugs at Government Hospitals.
- d. Gonorrhoea and Syphilis are both diseases which
Government insists shall be treated vide Part V of the
Public Health Ordinance, but apart from this Govern-
ments purports to provide free medical treatment for
natives at Government Hospitals. Furthermore I have
never heard of an African being made to pay in a
Government Hospital for the treatment of Syphilis.
It seems illogical therefore that they should be made
to pay for treatment of Gonorrhoea.
- e. It is my opinion that a number of natives are
deterred from seeking treatment by reason of this
charge.
- f. It is also my view that the fact that a charge will
be made for treatment does not deter any native from
risking general infection.

2. In the circumstances I consider Government take
over, at cost, all Local Native Council supplies of
M. & B. and use them as it thinks fit. The Meru Local
Native Council has a balance of 7000 tablets value
Shs. 60/10 per 1000.

3. Since this matter appears to have been overlooked
till now, and sudden change may **embarass** your Department,
I suggest you send a copy of this letter to the Director
of Medical Services together with your comments.

VMMCK/PLR.

DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
MERU.

APPENDIX V

LIST OF INFORMANTS

Name	Gender	App. Age	Date of Interview	Place of Interview
M’Mugwiria M’Rugia	Male	86	12/1/2021	Marimanti
Hellen Gatura	Female	79	12/1/2021	Marimanti
Makembo Mukirimba	Male	67	12/1/2021	Marimanti
Mucee M’Gituma	Male	84	12/1/2021	Marimanti
James Kariu	Male	76	12/1/2021	Marimanti
Mary Ciota	Female	73	13/1/2021	Marimanti
Jiembu Kiraithe	Female	94	13/1/2021	Marimanti
Stephen Nkuno	Male	84	13/1/2021	Marimanti
Stella Kabao	Female	65	13/1/2021	Marimanti
Samuel Mbiti	Male	81	13/1/2021	Marimanti
Daniel Njagi	Male	76	14/1/2021	Marimanti
Matogi Kimatiria	Male	70	14/1/2021	Marimanti
Kaindi Mutea	Female	88	14/1/2021	Marimanti
Julia Kanyamu	Female	75	14/1/2021	Chiakariga
Karimi Mauki	Female	90	14/1/2021	Chiakariga
Ciakuthi Mauki	Female	66	15/1/2021	Chiakariga
Jelical Gaciri	Female	80	15/1/2021	Chiakariga
Mbeta Murimi	Male	71	15/1/2021	Chiakariga
Ann Karigu	Female	81	15/1/2021	Chiakariga
Joel Kabete	Male	92	15/1/2021	Chiakariga
Savelio Nyamu	Male	72	20/1/2021	Chiakariga
Kagwima Njara	Male	83	20/1/2021	Chiakariga
Kirugi Mayowe	Male	85	20/1/2021	Chiakariga
Robert Nkunu	Male	73	20/1/2021	Chiakariga
Gakundugu Kathenya	Female	86	20/1/2021	Chiakariga
Grace Gatumba	Female	68	24/1/2021	Gituma
Silas Mugiira	Male	89	24/1/2021	Gituma
Tabitha Karea	Female	78	24/1/2021	Gituma
M’Thungutha Mwoga	Male	83	24/1/2021	Gituma
Josphat Kithendu	Male	91	24/1/2021	Gituma
Kirero Kitharia	Male	78	2/2/2021	Gituma
Sebella Ciampui	Male	78	2/2/2021	Gituma
Kathare Mwigana	Male	81	2/2/2021	Gituma
Cecelia Gakii	Female	95	2/2/2021	Gituma
Esther Ndunga	Female	76	2/2/2021	Gituma
Monical Kangaria	Female	87	10/2/2021	Gituma
Mucee Mbui	Female	79	10/2/2021	Gituma
Musa Nyaga	Male	85	10/2/2021	Gituma
Jane Kanyii	Female	75	10/2/2021	Karocho
Kairiba Ntara	Male	80	10/2/2021	Karocho
Joyce Karuuyi	Female	70	22/2/2021	Karocho

Thiga Mikua	Male	78	22/2/2021	Karocho
Samuel Ruuchue	Male	82	22/2/2021	Karocho
Gachoma Ntankeni	Male	90	22/2/2021	Karocho
Doris Mugure	Female	74	22/2/2021	Karocho
Lucia Kauma	Female	75	26/2/2021	Karocho
Jane Karigu	Female	82	26/2/2021	Karocho
Peter Kiome	Male	67	26/2/2021	Karocho
Grace Gatundu	Female	83	26/2/2021	Karocho
Judith Gatue	Female	71	26/2/2021	Karocho

APPENDIX VI

KITHARAKA WORDS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

Bamwe	A term used to refer people of the same origin
Kumerua	A term that is used by Tharaka people to mean the act being swallowed by a mythical animal
Kirimo	A name used to refer to a mythical animal that used to swallow young men in Tharaka
Rungu	A name used by Tharaka people to refer to a traditional club
Nkara	A term used by the Tharaka people to mean non-swallowed young man
Muntu	A name used to refer to a person
Nthuke	Refer to age set made up of the young men who were circumcised at the same season.
Muntu wa nthuke yetu	A name used to refer to a fellow initiate of the same age set
Giciaro	A term used to refer to blood-brotherhood among the Tharaka people
Iriika/nthuke	A term that refers to people who were initiated at the same season
Maami wa muthenya	‘A daylight mother’ - a woman sponsor of the girl during the initiation
Bacigira	A name used to to a fellow lady of the same circumcision season
Mwiriga	A term used to refer to a clan
Nthaka	A term used by Tharaka people to refer to an initiated young man
Mugwe	Refers to a spiritual leader among the Tharaka people
Kiruka	A term used to refer to the oldest age set in Meru and the political party that first to took the leadership of the society
Ntiba	The younger age set that took over the Meru political leadership after the expiry term of the Kiruka
Gaarua	A term used to refer to a traditional hut built away from the homesteads that the warriors and elders
Kiama	A name used by the Tharaka people to refer to the council of elders
Iganda	A place where the smiths manufactured iron tools
Njuri ncheke	Another name used to refer to a council of elders
Aturi	A term used to refer to the smiths
Ibai	A term used to regard to a poison applied to arrows to fasten the death of a wild animal when shot
Mpogoro	A small long branch of a tree carved purposely to hug a bee hive up the tree

Kithiri	A small pot used by local liquor brewers to keep a beer meant for old men
Mirigi	A term used to refer to the traditional catalysts used to fasten the brewing of the local brew
Irunya	A name used to refer to the initiating blades for young girls
Njuri	A name used to refer to a council
Rugu	A term used to refer to a “swallowed” man
Bamo	A name used to refer to young man’s sponsor during initiation
Agaambi	A term used to refer to legislators
Ngaa	Another term used to refer to a traditional club
Mukiama	A member of the council of elders
Ntiri	A name used to refer to a pestle
Muthi	A term used to refer to a mortar
Kachuguma	Another name for a small club
Yumba	A special soil used by potters to make pots
Ntuuri	A garment worn by a young girl
Kigutio	A dress worn by a married woman
Kiuno	A term used to refer to a prematurely born creature
Muthuka	A name used to refer to herbs used to manufacture traditional herbal medicines
Mwangua	A hardwood tree used to make traditional digging sticks
Muurugo	A term used to refer to a traditional stick used to cook
Miro	A name used to refer to digging sticks
Muruti	A term used to refer to hardwood tree used to make digging sticks

APPENDIX VII
RESEARCH INTRODUCTORY LETTER

DAVID KIANIA MUGAO,
THARAKA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
P.O. BOX 193-60215,
MARIMANTI.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re: **Data Collection**

My name is David Kiania Mugao Registration number AM14/29271/2017, a Master of Arts (History) student of Tharaka University College. I am conducting a research on the Cottage Industries among the Tharaka of Tharaka South Sub-County, Tharaka-Nithi County, Kenya (1907-1963).

Kindly assist me with the information

Yours Sincerely,

David Kiania Mugao,
Tharaka University College

APPENDIX VIII

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE ELDERLY RESPONDENTS

Dear respondent,

This interview schedule is aimed at collecting data on the contribution of colonialism on cottage industries among the Tharaka of South Sub-County. I humbly request for your cooperation and appeal you to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. The information you will give will be treated with confidentiality.

SECTION A

- 1) Name.....
- 2) Location.....
- 3) Age in years.....
- 4) Gender Female [] Male []
- 5) Level of education.....
- 6) How long have you been living in this location?.....

SECTION B

1. What were the early types of precolonial cottage industries in this area?
2. What were the articles produced in each form of the precolonial cottage industry?
3. Where did the traditional crafts get the raw materials for the industry?
4. What was the source of the finance for the cottage industry?
5. What were the uses of the items produced by the cottage industries?
6. When did the agents of colonialism arrive in this area?
7. What were the colonial policies on cottage industries in the area?
8. How did the craftsmen respond to colonialism?
9. What were the contributions of colonialism on cottage industries?
10. In which ways did the decline of the cottage industries affect the living standards of the people?
11. What would you wish to be done to improve the cottage industry in this area?

APPENDIX IX

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PROFESSIONAL CRAFTS

Introduction

The interview schedule is designed to analyze the contribution of colonialism on the cottage industries in Tharaka South Sub-County, Tharaka-Nithi County. Your responses will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality as they will be used for the purpose of this study only.

Section A

- 1) Indicate your name.....
- 2) Your age in years.....
- 3) Gender Male [] Female []
- 4) Location.....
- 5) Education level.....
- 6) Length of stay in the profession in years.....
- 7) Type of industry you are a specialist in.....

Section B

- 1) How did you learn to make indigenous products?
- 2) what motivated you to take part in manufacturing?
- 3) What are some of the tools do you produce?
- 4) At what age did you start manufacturing?
- 5) What economic benefits do you get from your industry?
- 6) How did colonialism undermine the production in cottage industry?
- 7) What were the consequences of the colonialism in the field of local manufacturing?
- 8) What is the future prospect of the traditional cottage industry?

APPENDIX X

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose for this study is to investigate the contributions of colonialism on the cottage industries among the Tharaka in Tharaka South Sub-County. Be comfortable as you respond to all questions because the information will be used only for the purposes of this study.

Section A

Indicate your name.....

Your age in years.....

Gender Male [] Female []

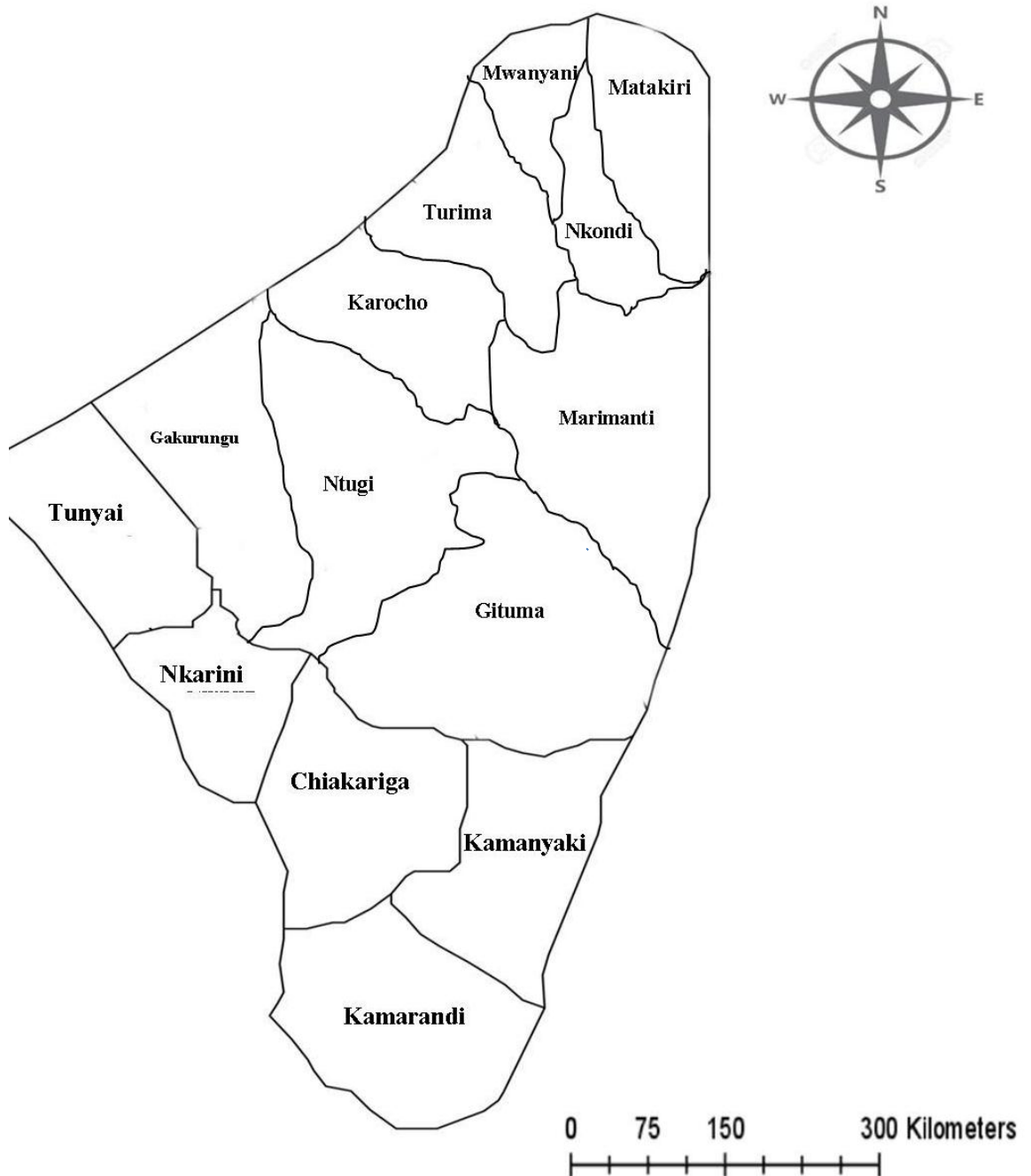
Location.....

Section B

- 4) Have you been involved in cottage industries?
- 5) For how long have you been in the industry?
- 6) What motivated the artisans to start producing the cottage items?
- 7) How did one learn how to produce the cottage tools?
- 8) In terms of gender, who were actively involved in the production of products in the cottage industries?
- 9) What were the earliest types of cottage industries in this region?
- 10) What purpose did the cottage industries serve?
- 11) When did the colonial agents come in this area?
- 12) What were the colonial policies that affected cottage industries in the region?
- 13) How did colonialism affect the operations of the cottage industries?
- 14) What would you like to be done to enhance the performance of the cottage industries?

APPENDIX XII

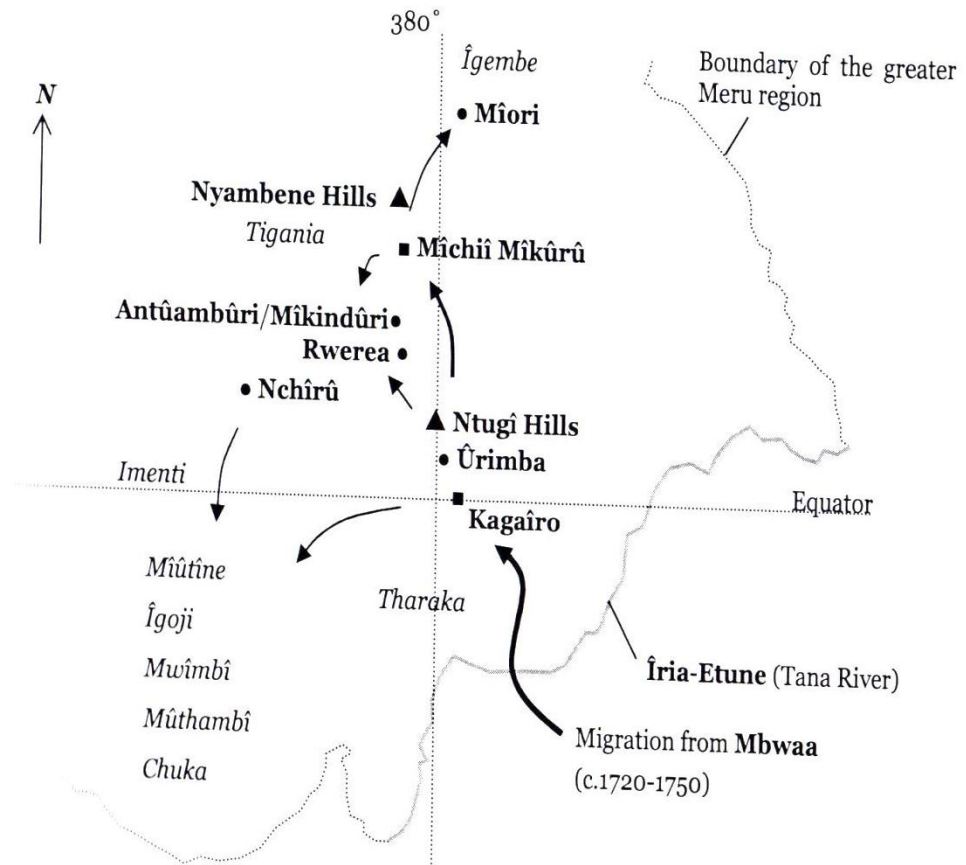
MAP OF THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY SHOWING LOCATIONS



Source: Ministry of Land Tharaka Constituency

APPENDIX XIII

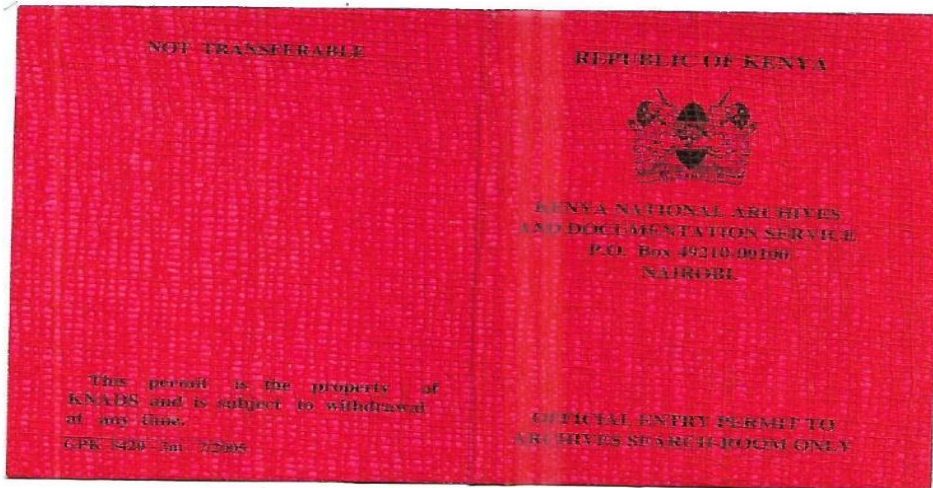
MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE MERU



Source: Gichere and Ishida (2007)

APPENDIX XIV

KENYA NATIONAL ARCHIVES PERMIT



Permit No. 30985 Valid from 26/1/2021 to 26/1/2022

Name: DAVID
KIANIA MUGAO

Address: 50-50215
MARIKANI






KENYA NATIONAL ARCHIVES
P. O. Box 49210
NAIROBI

Issued by [Signature]
for Director

RENEWAL DATES:
1
2
3

APPENDIX XV

NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 940594	Date of Issue: 06/January/2021
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr.. David KIANIA Mugao of Chuka University, has been licensed to conduct research in Tharaka-Nithi on the topic: THE COTTAGE INDUSTRY IN THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, THARAKA NITHI COUNTY, KENYA (1907-1963) for the period ending : 06/January/2022.	
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