A BIOGRAPHY OF CHIEF NJAGI KAVUNGURA, 1922 - 2000

MOSES RUTERE KITHINJI

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD
OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF ARTS IN HISTORY OF EGERTON UNIVERSITY

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

APRIL 2014
DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to this or another institution for examination.

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Date: .......................................................................................

Name: ........... KITHINJI, MOSES RUTERE..................

.........A25 / 0307 / 2000.............................................

Recommendation

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our recommendation as the University supervisors:-

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Date: .......................................................................................

Name: ........... PROFESSOR H. S. K. MWANIKI.............

(2) Signature: ..................................................................................

Date: .......................................................................................

Name: ........... PROFESSOR REUBEN MATHEKA.........
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the contribution the late Chief Ephantus Njagi wa Kavungura of Ngandori Location in Embu County made towards my endeavours to collect information on his life during my undergraduate days in spite of his failing health. He bore with my hearing impairment as if it was not a problem at all. The information he provided enabled me to write Bachelor of Arts (BA) dissertation titled ‘A Biography of Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura of Embu District, Kenya’ and it formed the backbone of this thesis. For without the revelations he made, the accuracy of this text would be very much in doubt and questionable.

I am also grateful to Njagi’s family for their support they have been giving me since Njagi died on 18 January 2000. They were helpful in many ways, including providing information on Njagi and identification of informants.

The many informants who gave information on Njagi in particular and the Embu society in general, are hereby commended for work well done. The information they provided was crucial in portraying the path that the life of Njagi took which made this thesis a reality.

I appreciate the in-put of the teaching staff of the Department of History of Egerton University in my scholarly pursuit. To my supervisors, Professor H. S. K. Mwaniki and Professor Reuben Matheka, I say thanks a lot for your patience, confidence in me, and the guidance that drove me to achieve my goal. The others are Dr. Isaac Tarus, Dr. Josiah Osamba, Dr. Dorothy Nyakwaka, Dr. Daniel Kendagor and Dr. Chacha Babere. These played a great role in my success as they, too, had a positive view of what I was doing. Their concern was instrumental in keeping alive my determination to soldier on in spite of the setbacks I face. But I do not forget their colleague, the late Dr. Kipkoech Mosonik arap Korir.

Dr. Mosonik was the Chairman of the Department during my undergraduate days and part of the duration of the Master’s programme.¹ He prepared me to succeed in the field of historical scholarship. He supervised my afore-mentioned BA dissertation, which I started researching on after the first year of my undergraduate studies. For years, he made time to give me advice and guidance on how I could succeed in historical scholarship. On 9 March 1994 he presented me a memorandum ‘The use of Footnotes and Bibliography in Scholarly Writing’ which impressed on me the importance of reliance on factual information in the writing of history and showing the source of that information. He stressed that “historians do not rumour-monger, they proceed from evidence”. I submitted to him my preliminary study

¹ He left the Department to serve as a commissioner in the defunct Constitution of Kenya Review Commission.
on Chief Njagi on 29 June 1994. After reading it, he noted that it was fantastic and added that historical biography has tremendous potential in the pursuit of tapping modern history of Kenya. Further, he pointed out my capability to contribute hugely in that regard. He has an imprint in my successful writing of this thesis.

I registered for the Master’s studies as a self-sponsored student; however, I did not have enough money to cover all the requirements thereof. And along the way, the going got tough as finances got finished. Were it not for the support I received from some people, I could not have made progress. Dr. Esther Keino, Simon Mugo Rutere and the late Agostino Gakono Ngari assisted to get loans from the Higher Education Loans Board by committing themselves as witnesses. Former Member of Parliament for Manyatta Constituency, Honourable (Hon.) Peter Njeru Ndewiga, too, did wonderful work in the quest for the funds. He impressed on the committee of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) of Manyatta to sponsor my research programme and I benefitted. I had been barred by the District Commissioner of Embu from carrying out research without adequate funds to do the needful conclusively. Furthermore, I had been discontinued by the University because of failure to make progress in my studies due to lack of funds. It was upon receiving the funds towards the end of 2007 that I was able to ready myself to continue (I was in a position to apply for re-admission to the Master’s programme). I am hugely indebted to who helped me to get funds.

I cannot forget the contribution of my research assistant, Renison Muriithi. He boldly met many challenges so as to see the research programme completed. Among other things, he covered so many kilometres on foot, up the ridges and down the valleys, sometimes in wet conditions, in search of informants and successfully getting information from them.

My course mate in the graduate programme, Parcleas Stanislaus Kibet, offered some assistance to me. This happened as I was grappling with a financial crunch during course. Lawrence Ndaba Kariuki (who was member of staff at the University during that period) and his family, too, were greatly positive to me. Moreover, around the same time, my sister, Mary Marigu, lend me money for the programme. What these people did was pivotal in preparing me to reap forward and reach this far.

There were some other people who gave a helping hand to me in one way or other in the course of the study programme. Be that as it may, they are not mentioned herein fore. Therefore, I would like them to bear with it; however, knowing that what they did was not in vain.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of: Haron Rutere Kwigirira (1930 – 1989) and Lilian Wanjoka (1932 – 2006).²

² The two were parents of this student.
“Until lions have their own historians, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.”
- A Kikuyu proverb

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACK</td>
<td>Anglican Church of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADC</td>
<td>African District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIPCA</td>
<td>African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAP</td>
<td>British East Africa Protectorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoG</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAA</td>
<td>Chiefs’ Authority Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAO</td>
<td>Chiefs’ Authority Ordinance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBK</td>
<td>Coffee Board of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>Commissioner for Co-operative Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCE</td>
<td>County Council of Embu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>Consolata Catholic Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE</td>
<td>Common Entrance Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHSC</td>
<td>Cambridge Higher School Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Church Mission Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNFCS</td>
<td>Central Ngandori Farmers’ Co-operative Society Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPK</td>
<td>Church of the Province of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Church of Scotland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>District Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCO</td>
<td>District Co-operatives Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>District Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoB</td>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoI</td>
<td>Date of Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECCU</td>
<td>Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Embu Co-operative Union Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDALCC</td>
<td>Embu District Advisory Land Consolidation Council</td>
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*CPK was the title that the Anglican Church in Kenya adopted when it became a province in 1970. This followed split of the Anglican Province of East Africa that had been created in 1960 and included the Anglican Church of Tanzania. The title province was used given that the Anglican Church of the world, which is also known as the Anglican Communion, is divided into units called provinces. These units are made of dioceses. A diocese in turn consists of a number of units called archdeaconries, which are divided into unit that are known as deaneries. A deanery is made of a number of parishes. However, much later the CPK was renamed Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK).*
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<tr>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>EDCU</td>
<td>Embu District Co-operative Union Limited</td>
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<td>ESU</td>
<td>Embu Social Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCS</td>
<td>Farmers’ Co-operative Society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAS</td>
<td>Government African School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon</td>
<td>Honourable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBEACo</td>
<td>Imperial British East African Company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANU</td>
<td>Kenya African National Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAPE</td>
<td>Kenya African Preliminary Examination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAU</td>
<td>Kenya African Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCA</td>
<td>Kikuyu Central Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSh</td>
<td>Kenya Shilling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKM</td>
<td>Kiama Kia Muingi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>KKNI</td>
<td>Kiama Kia Nyangi Na Irungu</td>
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<td>KNA</td>
<td>Kenya National Archives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNCU</td>
<td>Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Union Limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPCU</td>
<td>Kenya Planters’ Co-operative Union Limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPU</td>
<td>Kenya Peoples’ Union</td>
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<td>Legco</td>
<td>Legislative Council</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLB</td>
<td>Local Land Board</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACU</td>
<td>Meru-Arusha Co-operative Union Limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMS</td>
<td>Methodist Mission Society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCGCS</td>
<td>Ngandori Coffee Growers’ Co-operative Society Limited</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NLDC</td>
<td>Ngandori Location Development Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NoI</td>
<td>Name of Informant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSSC</td>
<td>Ngandori Secondary Schools’ Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSSF</td>
<td>Ngandori Secondary Schools’ Fund</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Provincial Commissioner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEO</td>
<td>Provincial Education Officer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PoB</td>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>Salvation Army Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>School Committee</td>
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ABSTRACT

The study of chiefs in the history of Kenya is neglected yet the position has been a cause of contention over its relevance to proper governance of the country in the post-colonial era. Kenya’s history has been silent on the life of Chief Njagi Kavungura, his leadership qualities and those other chiefs. Njagi had a productive life in public administration in both the colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history. There was danger; therefore, of data concerning his leadership attributes being lost with time and possible informants dying. In a bid to document his tenure as a provincial administrator, the study attempted to explore his personal attributes. This was done because there was need for information concerning Kenyan chiefs and other administrators. Towards that end, the framework of the Great Man theory informed the study. It argues that history is the work of great men (heroes) because they have progressive aims and beliefs and they lead ordinary people in making them real. So on that premise, in a bid to write history, it would help a lot to write biographies of great men. Njagi was assumed to have done a lot to transform the lives of his people. In the efforts to get information to portray his attributes, the method of study involved collection of data through perusal of primary and secondary sources in archives and libraries. There were also interview schedules. Potential respondents were people who knew him. These included the residents of the location that Njagi administered, those whom had served with him in the Provincial Administration, local government, co-operative movement, management of educational institutions and church. Respondents gave information and told of other prospective respondents. Collection of information was started at Njoro Campus of Egerton University then in Nairobi and finally in Embu and Kirinyaga counties. The study established that Njagi was appointed as a colonial chief because provincial administrators, Christian missionaries and the public saw him as having good leadership qualities. Njagi remained a chief at the time of Kenya’s independence as he had proved to be a good leader. He cared for the welfare of his people in both colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history by contributing in the development of the society in areas such as: avoidance of high-handedness, liberation struggle, fighting corruption, modern education, reduction of tax burden, exemption of women from communal work, rehabilitating ‘ex-Mau Mau’ detainees, coffee farming, developing co-operative societies and implementation of the Swynnerton Plan (land reforms). He achieved that because he had values such as integrity, patriotism, diligence and conscientiousness. This study was made because there was much need for information concerning attributes of Kenyan chiefs and other administrators. The information that was realised has helped to fill the academic gap that was extant. Moreover, the study will be an inspiration to other scholars to write biographies of other chiefs and prominent personalities in Kenya before their attributes are lost. It was found out that the bad reputation of the office of chief was due to the duties of chiefs and their character.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Kenyan historiography has biographical writings on chiefs; however, the percentage of chiefs that is covered is very small considering that by the time of Kenya’s independence in 1963, there were 423 of them.5 This is in spite of the immense contribution such kind of works would make towards growth of Kenyan historiography and for the contentious issue in regard to the role and purpose of chiefs in the administration of modern Kenya. Failure by historians and other social scientists to give the matter the attention it deserves, poses danger of the information getting lost as people experience memory lapses and natural attrition takes toll.

The British started efforts to control and administer Kenya in the 1880s. However, they did not start doing so directly. At first they chartered the Imperial British East African Company (IBEACo) that had been established in 1888 to undertaken that task.6 With time the IBEACo established administrative stations in the coastal region as well as the interior of the territory at among other places Mombasa, Dagoretti, Mumias and Eldama Ravine.7 In spite of that, it was not able to exert effective administration and that prompted the British Government to take charge as from July 1895.8

After that the Provincial Administration, in which lies the office of chief, was established by the colonial government. The system of administration evolved slowly. Initially, there were white administrators only serving as Provincial Commissioners (PCs), District Commissioners (DCs) and Divisional Officers (DOs) in order of authority, from the top to the bottom. However, with time Africans appeared in the system as chiefs and headmen but were at the bottom of the hierarchy.9 The Village Headmen Ordinance (African) was enacted in 1902 to provide a legal framework for appointment of these Africans administrators.10

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9 Wanyoike, Wangu wa Makeri, p. 34
10 Ibid., p. 35
Throughout the colonial era, the office of chief was an extremely contentious issue. It was regarded as anti-people due to brutality, corruption and serving imperial interests. This was due to too much power that it was deriving from the Chiefs Authority Ordinance (CAO) that was promulgated in 1937. When independence was achieved in 1963, the new Government sought to retain the system as it saw it convenient to serve its interests just as it was the case with the one. However, there was mounting public discontent against chiefs with demands for their being sacked enmass. For that reason, the Government had to organise elections so as to wind out those chiefs that were not favoured by their people. Consequently, hundreds of them lost their jobs that way.

From 1967 the Government started using the CAO as the Chiefs Authority Act (CAA), in a bid to contain opposition politicians. The CAA made the office become as contentious as it had been during colonial times as the office bearers were having much authority and could not help misusing it. This made the office one of the key concerns of the advocates of multi-party democracy in the early 1990s. They were clamouring for it to be scrapped. Since general elections were anticipated by the end of 1997, the political parties that were represented in the National Assembly were trying hard to expand democratic space in the country. They formed the Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group and it reduced the powers that the CAA had given to the office of chief.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
In current Kenyan politics, the role of chiefs is extremely contentious. Many advocates of reforms in the governance system have called for abolition of the office of chief. On the other hand, other experts, including representatives of the government, consider chiefs as indispensable in as far as the governance of the country is concerned. No in-depth studies of individual chiefs have been done for a conclusion to be made.

In Kenya, there are a small number of historical biographical accounts concerning chiefs. Njagi has not been studied and the attributes which led to his appointment by the

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12 Oginga Odinga, Not yet Uhuru: An Autobiography (Nairobi, 1967) pp. 242-4


colonial administrators as chief of Ngandori Location in Embu District are not known. Unknown also are those attributes which enabled him to remain in office in both colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history, such as his level of formal education, good leadership and skills in public mobilisation.

1.3 Objectives of the Study
The study had the following objectives:

i. To find out what was happening in the Embu society from the advent of the British colonialists and in Njagi’s life to the time he became a colonial chief.

ii. To investigate the attributes that led Njagi to be appointed as a chief and whether he might have made endeavours to improve his area of jurisdiction socially, economically and politically during the colonial and independence eras of Kenya’s history.

iii. To find out if the authorities of the colonial and independence eras might have honoured Njagi for serving as a chief.

iv. To investigate whether in the course of his life, Njagi might have participated in the development of the society in a capacity other than being a chief.

1.4 Research Premises
The study proceeded from the following assumptions:

(i) There were developments in the Embu society since the advent of the British colonialists that might have had influence on Njagi’s life and attributes that led to his being considered for the post of chief.

(ii) During his tenure as chief of Ngandori Location in the colonial and independence eras, Njagi might have made efforts towards improvement of the well-being of his people, socially, economically and politically.

(iii) Governments of both the colonial and independence eras were rewarding public servants and they might have honoured Njagi for serving well as a chief.

(iv) Njagi might have contributed to the development of his society in some way other than being a chief.

1.5 Review of related Literature
Studies on African chiefs in Kenya have not been given adequate attention insofar as Kenyan historiography is concerned. Biographical studies on chiefs are particularly scant.
The situation therefore entails the need to undertake research and write historical accounts on the office of chief, including biographies and autobigraphies. Against that backdrop, plans were made to write biography of Chief Njagi of Ngandori Location noting that there were no studies on him. The study below, which is chronologically-styled, was of much help in the reconstruction of his life.

African chiefs have not been given adequate attention insofar as Kenyan historiography is concerned. Biographical studies on chiefs are particularly scant. The situation therefore entails the need to undertake research and write historical accounts on the office of chief, including biographies and autobigraphies. Against that backdrop, plans were made to write biography of Chief Njagi of Ngandori Location noting that there were no studies on him. The study below, which is chronologically-styled, was of much help in the reconstruction of his life.

Mboya\textsuperscript{15} vividly writes on issues pertaining to political history of Kenya. The work, for instance, tells how in 1917 the Chief Native Commissioner, John Ainsworth, asked District Commissioners to forward to the Governor for punitive measures all chiefs and headmen who were not cooperative in search for labourers for working on white settler farms.\textsuperscript{16}

In his autobiography, Odinga\textsuperscript{17} sheds light on his political life in the colonial and the early post-colonial eras of Kenya. He laments that colonial chiefs were excessively brutal and had no regard for elders. Chiefs would single out a person and their \textit{askari kanga} (Tribal Administration Policemen) would beat that person to a point of helplessness and near death. However, there were African chiefs who were humane. This is so since Odinga does not forget his good childhood experience with Chief Omuodo Alogo. The chief was sensitive to his people and took care of them in times of need. For instance, during the famine of Kanga in 1918, the chief distributed food to those who did not have. As a result of his humaneness, when Alogo died in 1934, people mourned, weeping and wailing. That personality of the chief profoundly influenced Odinga to mind about other people’s welfare and that was the principle that was to guide him in his political career. He tells of the independence government in whose cabinet, he served which did not see the need to jettison the Provincial Administration in which the office of chief was despite it being a creation of British colonialists. The book is important because it reveals that there were bad and good

\textsuperscript{15} Tom Mboya, \textit{Freedom and After}, (London, 1963) p. 48
\textsuperscript{16} A settler was a person of European descent who had acquired land in Kenya for agricultural purpose.
\textsuperscript{17} Odinga, \textit{Not yet Uhuru…}, pp. 1, 6, 7, 15, 21, 22, 27, 64, 67, 92, 241-2
personalities among colonial chiefs. This is confirmed by the account of the elections, which were held at independence in a bid to facilitate removal of unacceptable chiefs as nearly fifty per cent of them were dismissed by the masses.

However, Ochieng'\textsuperscript{18} tries to exclusively study African chiefs in colonial Kenya. He aims to find out whether colonial chiefs were solely interested in making personal gain with utter ignorance of the needs of their people. However, he shows that not all colonial chiefs were greedy given that there were those who were geared toward economic and social development of their people, with some of them being bold enough to stand against the excesses of colonialism like racial prejudice. Moreover, he reveals that colonialists were keen on the performance of African chiefs and those who could not execute their duties accordingly were punished, in some cases getting sacked.

Despite the colonialists having racial prejudice, they could not fail to recognise chiefs who performed their duties well. The colonialists had criteria of identifying the right personalities for chieftainship. So, not for everyone who presented themselves to District Commissioners saying that they were one thing or another could get the job. In the early colonial period, the favourite personalities were those who in the pre-colonial era were famous in leadership and well respected by their people. However, with time formal education became another criterion.

Be that as it was, Ochieng’ observes that people looked down upon chiefs because they were appointees of the colonial government. This situation became even worse following the rise of nationalism in the early 1920s. If chiefs happened to side with their compatriots, the colonialists would punish them severely. However, if they followed the instructions of the colonialists, the masses would turn against them. And, whereas it was the duty of colonial chiefs to improve the living conditions of their people, some never went beyond maintenance of law and order, collection of taxes and were never punished. The colonial government did not take action on that failure given that it was primarily concerned about security and taxation. However, those chiefs who were able to modernise their areas were only those who were suave in the face of opposition by their conservative people.

In the early years of the colonial era, some chiefs pursued modernisation consciously while others did so unconsciously. Many colonial chiefs joined forces with proto-nationalists in founding political associations, for instance, the Kikuyu Association, that were aimed at channeling the grievances of their people to the colonial government. However, whereas the

work of Ochieng’ is a milestone in the study of colonial chiefs, it is not exhaustive since it even fails to make in-depth accounts of the few cases of chiefs it dwells on.

In a survey on the history of the Embu and Mbeere of Kenya, Mwaniki\(^{19}\) gives a glimpse of activities of colonial chiefs. The book sheds light on the role that was played by some Kikuyu chiefs in the defeat of the Embu by the British in 1906. It also shows the ways in which the British got people to appoint as chiefs in Embu.

Another worthy account on African chiefs emanates from Koinange\(^{20}\) as he writes on events leading to Mau Mau war that was seeking to dislodge British colonialists from Kenya and how that turmoil could have been stopped. He potrays Chief Koinange wa Mbiyu as a fearless freedom fighter and relentless in the development of African education by constructing a teachers’ training college at Githunguri in Kiambu District.

In his book on Mau Mau war for recovery of land and freedom in Kenya, Maughan-Brown\(^{21}\) writes about the office of chief. The book shows that colonial chiefs were colonial government appointees and their ruthlessness made people dislike them. The book further notes that freedom to engage in economic activities and authority to collect taxes and fines without regulation enabled chiefs to accumulate much wealth. It also reveals that some chiefs became staunch supporters of the Mau Mau war for land and freedom. The importance of the work is that it shows that there were two categories of chiefs: some were corrupt and inept while others made efforts to meet not only what their masters desired, but also the needs of their people.

As Ochieng’\(^{22}\) writes general history of Kenya in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras, he tells about the office of chief. The uniqueness of the book is that it tells about the two laws that were enacted in the first two decades of the twentieth century that saw Africans included in the Provincial Administration as chiefs and headmen wielding immense powers over their people. It elaborates that chiefs were the link between the central government and the people in the villages. Their duties were to explain government policies to the people, to take care of security and to undertake development in their areas, among other things. However, the book fails in one respect. Even though it delves into the office of chief in the colonial era, it is silent on the same in independent Kenya.

\(^{19}\) H. S. K. Mwaniki, *The Living History of Embu and Mbeere to 1906* (Nairobi, 1973) pp. 43, 44, 47-49

\(^{20}\) Mbiyu Koinange, *The People of Kenya Speak for Themselves* (Detroit, 1979) pp. 27, 55, 62-65


As Moi\textsuperscript{23} as President of Kenya elucidates his principles and strategies of governance, commends chiefs and other Provincial Administrators for working with the local and central governments towards better administration of the country. He does not see anything wrong with the Provincial Administration having been carried forward from the colonial era to the post-colonial one. He points out that in the latter era; the system has a different style. He contends that whereas during the colonial era the system was showing loyalty to a colonial authority, in the post-colonial era loyalty is given to the President and Government of Kenya. The book is important because it explains the role of chiefs in independent Kenya.

Kanogo\textsuperscript{24} relates squatter problem in Rift Valley Province with the rise of the Mau Mau War. Among other things, she identifies brutality of colonial chiefs as having caused the Kikuyu to leave Central Province to work in settler farms in the Rift Valley in the first two decades of the twentieth century. She elaborates that the manner in which chiefs went about recruiting labour for communal work was disgusting.

Mau Mau movement, as Throup\textsuperscript{25} observes, consisted of the Kikuyu who were leading life beset by misery in towns, settler farms and congested reserves in Central Province of Kenya. After 1945, chiefs met stiff opposition from the masses in the process of implementing government policies. Soil conservation measures were one of the policies people were unhappy with. The measures were tedious and time consuming. It was chiefs who were implementing them and people were resisting. However, the continuation of the programme made people to rise against chiefs.

There is no doubt, as Furedi\textsuperscript{26} writes, that the Mau Mau revolt broke out due to economic and social crises in the Central and Rift Valley provinces of Kenya. The work is remarkable given that it brings to light the role of chiefs during the revolt. They were in a precarious position. They were regarded as traitors for their opposition to the Mau Mau struggle against colonial domination. Chiefs were some of the people who faced the wrath of the Mau Mau rebels.

According to Maxon,\textsuperscript{27} the 1920s in Kenya were marked by revolutionary activities due to class conflict. He asserts that colonial chiefs were at the centre of the problem. They were required by District Commissioners to recruit labour for settler farms after World War I

\textsuperscript{24} Tabitha Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905 – 1963 (Nairobi, 1987) p. 137
\textsuperscript{25} David Throup, Economic and Social Origins of Mau Mau, 1945 – 1953 (Nairobi, 1988) pp. 4-7, 12, 45, 72, 140-141, 145-165, 228, 232
\textsuperscript{26} Frank Furedi, Mau Mau War in Perspective (Nairobi, 1989) pp. 116, 156, 157
as per the circulars of the Governor, Sir Edward Northey. However, chiefs resorted to high-handedness so as to meet their recruitment targets. This angered the masses and irked missionaries in the colony. The circulars, too, drew criticism from various groups in Britain and the Colonial Office was impelled to censure them to stem the tide of uproar. The foregoing makes Maxon’s article worthy of note since it shows that in colonial Kenya chiefs were against the masses.

The political economy of Kenya during colonial era has been covered by Berman. The role of colonial chiefs in the political economy is brought out by Berman. Their duties included collection of taxes; recruitment of labour; arbitration of minor cases; maintenance of law and order; and gathering of intelligence information. Chiefs had been included in the Provincial Administration so as to facilitate establishment of colonial hegemony. This happened as there was shortage of European personnel and the need to lower the costs of administration as opposed to taking care of the interests of the masses.

Chiefs could be penalised if they were found wanting. Laziness aside, due to greed, some chiefs were corrupt and brutal. Excessive brutality and corruption could lead to dismissal. However, in some cases people would raise complaints with regard to the shortcomings of chiefs but nothing would be done even when some cases were well known to the authorities. They would be overlooked on the grounds that the accusers were just malicious and if they were to take charge, they, too, would behave likewise. What was important was to execute duties well. But the extent to which the government could get chiefs to work as per the official requirements varied with the characteristics that African societies had at the advent of colonialism.

The position was highly coveted as it had opportunities to grab wealth. In the early decades of the colonial era, in some societies lineages and clans were hotly competing to have one of their own appointed as chief. Some of those who succeeded became very powerful, served for very many years and various mechanisms were used to ensure that they were succeeded by their kinsmen. The government had much confidence in chiefs. As a result, some of them became powerful players in the politics of their areas. Such chiefs could be very oppressive and blocked the search for justice by people whose rights had been violated. However, the situation being chaotic as it was, there were chiefs who strived to meet the interests of their people but these were few.

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The Mau Mau revolt, which was anti-colonial, peasant-organised and geared towards an end to colonialism and establishment of a free nation is seen by Maloba\textsuperscript{29} as an essential event in the history of Africa. As the book focuses on the forces that were involved in, political stand and impact of the revolt on decolonisation in Kenya, it discusses African chiefs as well. During the uprising, African chiefs are noted to have sided with the colonialists. And for that, chiefs countered Mau Mau combatants and were brutal to the rest of the people in the Kikuyu reserves, too. That high-handed tendency made them to be despised by the people. However, the book benefits the study on the office of chief even more since it delves into it even in the period before the Mau Mau uprising.

African chiefs are said to have been appointees of the government and were given immense powers. However, the introduction of the office of chief destroyed the mechanisms of governance of the pre-colonial era since chiefs usurped the powers that elders had. Chiefs are described as an unscrupulous lot that was bent on self enrichment. The office was riddled with corruption; however, not all chiefs were corrupt and insensitive to the plight of their people. Some tried to have the concerns of their people addressed by the government. chiefs of southern Kiambu, for instance, are said to have been the first in Kenya to form a political organisation, the Kikuyu Association, in 1919 to articulate grievances of the people, which included land alienation for European settlement, taxation, labour recruitment, low quality formal education and kipande (passbook) to the colonial authorities. However, in the early 1920s, chiefs became the targets of young, school-educated nationalists. They were branded oppressors for working in cahoots with the colonialists. Come the clitoridectomy controversy in the late 1920s, chiefs got even more hated as they sided with the missionaries against that cultural rite whereas it was cherished by the people. However, that was not the end of antagonism between chiefs and the people given that in the 1940s, as nationalism was gaining momentum, chiefs stuck with the colonialists harassing the nationalists badly.

Mau Mau movement is put into perspective by Njagi\textsuperscript{30} as he discusses some of the personalities of the movement who persevered in the forest, where they had gone to fight to liberate Kenya from colonial domination, until self-rule was attained 1June 1963. The book is essential to the study as it shows the vulnerability of African chiefs in the Emergency years. For their service to the colonialists, whom the movement was feverishly against, chiefs were hunted and killed.

\textsuperscript{30} David Njagi, \textit{The last Mau Mau Field Marshalls, Kenya’s Freedom War, 1952 – 1963 and Beyond: Their Own Story} (Meru, 1993) p. 29
The assassination of Senior Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu of Ruiru Location of Kiambu District on 7 October 1952, his life before that, investigations on the crime and the subsequent trials are written about by Waruhiu. That assassination is said to have hastened the declaration of the State of Emergency in Kenya on 20 October of that year. The publication further shows that the chief was loyal to the government and his denunciation of the militant Mau Mau movement had caused him to be threatened with dire consequences for a number of times. The chief had been considered for the job in 1922 because he had been approved by his predecessor and had formal education. It was proper execution of duties that led to his promotion to a senior chief.

Chief James Matuku Muoka administered Ikutha Location of Kitui District from 1942 to 1964 and his biography has been written by Konga. He was recruited even though he had no formal education as he had leadership qualities. His leadership was good since it was appreciated by ordinary people and as well as senior administrators. People from elsewhere migrated to live in his jurisdiction and in 1956; a tax waiver was given by the DC to 50 poorest people because the chief was not delaying payment of taxes. He promoted education (for instance, by helping poor but bright pupils to get scholarships) and arbitrated cases fairly. Even though his location remained the least developed in the district, his efforts to develop it were recognised since in 1954 he became the second chief in the district to be promoted to the rank of senior chief. In addition, in 1958, he was among 9 Kenyan chiefs who were selected by the government to take a public administration course in Britain. However, he abused office since through intimidation he took another man’s wife.

Moreover, even in retirement, he was involved in government service. For instance, in 1984, even as he was 90 years old, he was appointed by the Ministry of Lands and Settlement to the Locational Adjudication Board so as to help in resolution of disputes as land demarcation and registration was being undertaken in Mutomo Division. He was elected chairman of that Board and determined cases impartially. Be that as it was, effects of old age made him retire voluntarily in 1989 as he could no longer cope to walk for long distances to the farms where there were disputes as it was necessary.

None of the reviewed works Chief Njagi. His name is not mentioned. However, the reviewed literature was helpful in understanding how Chief Njagi operated in both colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history.

31 Samuel N. Waruhiu, *Corridors of British Colonial Injustice: Chronicles of the 1952 Assassination of Kenya’s Senior Chief Waruhiu and of the Two Men Hanged for his Murder* (Nairobi, 2011)

1.6 Justification of the Study

Chief Njagi was an apt Provincial Administrator who had made endeavours towards social, economic and political development of his area of jurisdiction. But his life has not been studied. Like many other chiefs, Njagi’s story has been ignored by historians and other social scientists. This study fills that gap.

This case-study contributes to understanding whether chiefs have relevance in the pursuit of development in post-colonial Kenya or are merely a colonial relic that should be done away with. It is hoped that this study will inspire other scholars to write biographies of prominent personalities (including chiefs).

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Something that is destined to a given point needs guidance to reach there. Otherwise it cannot make it for lack of the right course to follow. So in readiness to study the life of Chief Njagi, a source of guidance had to be found. A number of theories that have been advanced by intellectuals were examined with a view to find a suitable framework for guidance. However, in the end only one was found to be up to par. Here below, firstly is coverage of those theories that were found wanting before the portrayal of the suitable one.

When European colonialists got down establishing administrative systems in their empires they had to grapple with the problem of not enough European staff. This problem was stemming from inadequate revenue. However, sometimes they the areas that were being handled were so vast. Furthermore, there was also the problem of not knowing the language and custom(s).\footnote{Jeffrey Herbst, \textit{States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control} (Princeton, New Jersey, 2000) pp. 81-2; Toyin Falola (ed.), \textit{Nigerian History, Politics and Affairs: The Collected Essays of Adiele Afigbo} (Asmara, Eritrea, 2005) p. 272}

This situation impelled them to look for alternatives and the answer was to rule through the governance systems (kingships, emirates, chieftaincies and even councils of elders) of the pre-colonial era.\footnote{Herbst, \textit{States and Power in Africa}…, p. 82; Falola (ed.), \textit{Nigerian History, Politics and Affairs}…, p. 271; Alan Forward, \textit{“You have been allocated Uganda”: Letters from a District Officer} (Dorset, UK, 1999) p. 12; Henry Francis Morris & James S. Read, \textit{Indirect Rule and the Search for Justice: Essays in East African Legal History} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972) p. 36} The British employed both Direct and Indirect Rules in their territories.\footnote{Matthew Lange, \textit{Lineages of Despotism and Development: British Colonialism and State Control} (Chicago, 2009) p. 5; Mahmood Yakubu, \textit{An Aristocracy in Political Crisis: The End of Indirect Rule and the Emergence of Party Politics in the Emirates of Northern Nigeria} (Brookfield, Vt, 1996) p. 1; Herbst, \textit{States and Power in Africa} …, p. 82} Frederick Lugard, who was charged with establishing administrative systems in the British colonies of Uganda and Nigeria, thought that the theory of Indirect Rule could
suffice in administering local societies. He tried the theory in Northern Nigeria and it was a success. It was eventually adopted by the British as the policy for their empire during the 1920s and the 1930s. Applications were made else in Africa. However, the trials posted mixed results. In the regions to the east and west of Nigeria it failed. There was also failure in the Gold Coast (later on Ghana) and Northern Rhodesia (later on Zambia). This was prompted by the need to prepare for takeover by democratic institutions since the Indirect Rule were not allowing young, educated Africans to participate in governance. However, the theory was not tried in Kenya. Furthermore, in the dusk of the colonial rule the theory was no longer in use. So, in the face of the fore-going, it is not convenient to apply it on the study of Njagi’s leadership style as he was a chief in the late colonial Kenya from 1958 to 1963.

There is the historical materialist theory. This interpretation of history draws from the teachings of the German-Jew social philosopher Karl Marx. It stresses that an individual makes history as s/he participates in material production. The nature of the aspects of social formations and relations - on the basis of material production and possession - cause the individual to defend some of them and make endeavour towards eradication of others. By so doing, s/he participates in class struggle over material control between his/her class and the opposing one. That way, the individual influences the process of history making. However, by viewing history from a material (economic) standpoint, this theory is restrictive insofar as the study is concerned. In his capacity as a chief, Njagi’s duties were such as maintenance of law and order, control of disasters and resolving petty disputes and they were not of economic nature. Moreover, in some other capacities, he may have made history by contributing into social and political development, however, that is not encompassed by this theory.

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36 Herbst, States and Power in Africa…, p. 82; http://voices.yahoo.com/frederick-lugard-policy-indirect-rule-in-3900060.html
38 http://voices.yahoo.com/frederick-lugard-policy-indirect-rule-in-3900060.html
42 D. I. Chesnokov, Historical Materialism, (Moscow, 1969) pp. 457-481

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The concept of colonial African chiefs as agents of imperial hegemony, which is propounded by Bruce Berman, who is one of the leading scholars on colonial Africa, was interrogated.\(^{43}\) It views things that way given that the duties of colonial chiefs were among others maintenance of law and order, recruitment of labour and collection of taxes and these were propping colonialism. The British colonialists recruited African chiefs as there was shortage of European personnel given that the finances there were. So, the use of African chiefs was found to be cost-effective.\(^ {44}\) Even in the early colonial era; chiefs were not being given salaries. This concept illuminates only the role that Njagi may have played towards achievement of the object(s) of colonialism. So, it is restricted and therefore not suitable as a guide to the study as it is of a biographical nature.

It was the theoretical framework of Great Man that is found convenient.\(^ {45}\) The theory was propounded by a Scottish man by the name Thomas Carlyle, who lived between 1795 and 1881. He was a historian, critic and sociological writer.\(^ {46}\) He theorised that history is what has been accomplished by man in this world. However, the accomplishments are not credited to everyone but great men. Those who are considered as Great Men are the leaders of the people. They are regarded as the modellers of what the people do (or in other words, whatsoever people desire to achieve and set out towards that end). So, what is accomplished in the world is realisation and embodiment of great men. Those men therefore are the soul of history.\(^ {47}\)

However, the actions of great men are determined by their religion. However, this religion is not in the sense of creeds like Christianity and Islam. Rather, it is those few things that a man believes undoubtedly and effortlessly. Those things are the determinants of his duty and destiny in this world.\(^ {48}\) Those beliefs, in addition to the conscious or half conscious aims of great men, are the drivers of history. The theory offers that in the writing history, the lives and work of great men should be given more consideration than political institutions or military episodes.\(^ {49}\) And from that premise, it should be seen that history consists of biographies of great men, no more, no less.\(^ {50}\) Moreover, it argues that biographers should endeavour to bring to light the character of their subjects in the same vein as painters of

\(^{43}\) Berman, Control and Crisis…, pp. 208-214

\(^{44}\) Falola (ed.), Nigerian History, Politics and Affairs…, p. 272


\(^{46}\) ‘Thomas Carlyle: A Brief Biography’ @ http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/carlyle/carlyle4.html

\(^{47}\) Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship…, p. 4

\(^{48}\) Ibid., p. 5; Spartacus Educational @http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jcarlyle.htm

\(^{49}\) Caine, Biography and History,...p. 12

\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 11
portraits of men show character thereof using gleams of light. The relevance of the theory therefore stems from being applicable to the whole of Njagi’s life hence what he did in all capacities. It is important to look into the whole of Njagi’s life since those things he was doing as a chief and in other capacities as well are inextricably intertwined. That is so since all what materialised through him were as a result of ideals that were emanating from or were dealt with by his mind and therefore they bring out his character wholesomely. In short, the theory of Great Man facilitates a proper assessment of who Njagi really was.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was to get information on the life of Njagi from birth to death. This entailed looking into his early life with the focus being when he was born, his family background, the way he was brought up and what was going on in the Embu society from the advent of the British colonialism. Then, study was to delve into his work in the early adulthood. This was to be followed by looking into when Njagi became a colonial chief, his appointment, his work in the colonial era, and other things he did in other capacities. To portray his life in the independence era, information was needed on how he remained a chief at independence, execution if his duties and what he did in other capacity while he was a post-colonial chief. Finally, it was exploration of his work in retirement.

Towards that end, primary archival materials - reports and documents of the local and central governments on Central and Eastern Provinces of the colonial and independent eras of Kenya’s history - were perused. In that process the problem that was encountered was refusal by Kenyatta University and the University of Nairobi for access to their libraries to read secondary materials.

Interview schedules for oral information were made in Embu and Kirinyaga counties and informants were co-operative. However, there were many setbacks in the process. In some cases, the routes that were used did not have matatu (public service vehicles) prying on them. Therefore, to save time taxi services had to be used but at exorbitant fares. Apart from that, some informants could be visited only to find that they were not at home and others insisting to be excused for some time. So efforts had to be made to see them another day, which meant spending more time and money than had been planned. In addition, there were situations whereby it was not possible to use motorised transport because rugged terrain as

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51 Lee, Biography..., p. 3
the area has many ridges and deep V-shaped valleys. So, some distances had to be covered on foot thereby taking a lot of time.

Bad weather was another cause of wastage of time. This was especially during the long rains season. Apart from getting wet, the earth would turn muddy thereby making it difficult to walk. Where there were steep slopes, it was nightmarish to walk.

Two prospective informants in Kirinyaga County who had worked in the Province Administration of Embu District in late colonial and early independence eras were not found. They had other homes outside Kirinyaga County and that made difficult to reach out to them. However, of those informants who were interviewed, one declined to reveal his identity even though he gave other information.

However, availability of research funds was a big problem. The programme should have been concluded by September 2002 as per the registration schedule in the University but it delayed for rather too long. In 2003, the DC of Embu stopped continuation of activities until when enough money was to be available to do the needful conclusively. This caused lack of progress in my studies and thereby the University discontinued me.

It was not until towards the end of the year 2007 that I got in a position to resume my studies. This followed sponsorship from the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) of Manyatta Constituency in Embu District. However, could not re-start the research programme straight away as I had to first of all seek re-admission to the Master’s programme. There was also the setback of the CDF having deposited the funds into the University’s bank account. It took some time before the matter could be sorted out. This saw the interview schedule start in April 2008 and continue until June of that year. I was doing so with difficulties given that by then I had got employed in the Civil Service and stationed in Nairobi, which was a long distance from Embu. I could be in the field during on at weekends.

With time inflation affected the budget which initially was 144,870.00 Kenya Shillings. There other contingencies like hiring taxi instead of using matatu and the spilling of the research programme beyond the designated area. In the end, the budget rose to KSh 231,704.00.

1.9 Method of Study

Acquisition of information on the attributes of Chief Njagi was done in a field research programme that involved collection of primary and secondary materials and oral evidence.

52 In the independence era, one was said to have risen through the ranks to head the Civil Service while the other became a DC. They would have shed more light on Njagi and Embu District in that particular time of Kenya’s history.
Various institutions and individuals inside and outside Embu County were visited in the process. The libraries of Egerton University provided secondary archival materials such as journals, newspapers and books. Primary archival materials, usually, reports and documents of the central and local governments’ operations for Central Province during the colonial era of Kenya’s history were accessed at the Kenya National Archives (KNA) in Nairobi. The same kind of documents that had emanated from Eastern Province during the independence era was also perused at the KNA. The offices of the DC of Embu District, PC of Eastern Province and the County Council of Embu (ECC) in Embu Town were also visited and valuable information was obtained there. Within Embu County, more primary archives materials were obtained at the office of chief of Ngandori Location, at Kairuri, the Embu District Co-operative Union headquarters at EMCO House, Embu Town; Kamama Boys’ Secondary School, Kamama; Nguviu Boys’ Secondary School, Gicerori; Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School, Nguviu; and St. Anne Girls’ High School, Kiriari. Moreover, the Central PC’s office in Nyeri Town also provided important information.

Oral information was collected through interview schedules. A sampling of at least 50 informants was to be covered. These were to have attained the age of at least 30 years. The reason for settling on a sampling of that age bracket was because those would have likely accumulated substantial knowledge of Njagi’s activities. They could also have given better consideration to what was desired. Moreover, the informants were to be residents of Embu County. To begin with, the family of Chief Njagi was to visited to provide information concerning Njagi as well as help in identification and tracking down of informants.

Preference was given to the chief’s close circle of family members, relatives, friends and associates. So, those who were covered were mostly his contemporaries, who consisted of his childhood friends, schoolmates, educationists, councillors, provincial administrators, co-operative movement leaders, Anglican Church faithfuls and business associates. As the programme progressed, some informants would not only give information on Njagi and history of the Embu, but also would mention other prospective informants and where they could be found. This resulted in the need to expand the limit of the study area. Consequently, the programme eventually spilled into Kirinyaga County. The number of informants who were covered was 77. During the course of the interview schedule, observations were also made on the projects that Njagi initiated. Some photographs, too, were taken. After all that was done, the process of analysing the information and converting it into thesis begun.
CHAPTER TWO
NJAGI'S EARLY LIFE, 1922 – 1945, AND THE EMBU SOCIETY IN
THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

2.1 Overview
Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Britain showed interest in territorial control in East Africa and swung into action.\(^{53}\) This chapter covers what happened to the Embu society as their country lay within the projected territory. They were required to yield to British power. However, as they did not accept the overture, force had to be used and it took years before the British could make a breakthrough. After subduing the Embu, British colonialists set out to establish their rule, which entailed replacing indigenous institutions of governance with new ones. The office of chief was introduced; however, people were not happy with those who were appointed as chiefs because they were not their traditional rulers. Colonial requirements such as taxation and labour demands were new and tedious and they caused people to get disquiet even more and embrace nationalist politics.

The entry of the colonialists in Embu was followed by the influx of European Christian missionaries who were interested in spreading Christianity. However, the missionaries were not only looking to make the Embu become Christians, but also change their whole way of life. Towards that end they engaged in community development activities introducing western medicine and education.\(^{54}\) That brought about fast and profound social change in the Embu society. However, the greatest impact emanated from modern education as it enabled people get jobs in the colonial system. Many people turned up at mission schools to get education and in the process they were converted to Christianity. By the mid 1920s, the missionaries had won many followers. However, the missionaries dislike for some indigenous cultural values made people to rebel. That development polarised the Embu society given that there were some who sided with the missionaries. The conflict caused the missionary enterprise to lose impetus and nationalism to escalate.

The nationalist thrust in Embu was led by a political organisation that was causing ripples in central Kenya. The men who were leading that organisation had ideas of how the interests of the people could be safeguarded. Therefore that shows that they were great men.\(^{55}\)

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\(^{55}\) Mwaniki, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Embu and Mbeere…’, pp. 36-7; Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, *‘Mau Mau’ Detainee* (Nairobi, 2009) p. 15
For that, they fit the argument of the theory that says that great men are makers of history.\textsuperscript{56} And as they were doing their bit, in the Embu society there was a boy and when he was of age, he, too, tried to something worthwhile for the society. He enabled his peers to co-exist and gave guidance to the traditional elders when they were wrong.

That boy was Njagi. His ancestors emanated from among the Meru of the southeastern side of Mount Kenya. They reached Embu by the dawn of the nineteenth. However, Njagi’s genealogy settled permanently on the western side of Embu, Ngandori area. This chapter examines his birth to the 1940s.

This was a period in which the Embu society was in throes of rapid social change. This was due to the coming of the white man who had brought new governance system. The colonial system was offering wage employment opportunities that required modern education and the higher one was educated, the better paying job one could get. This situation led to Njagi being taken to school. Modern education was being provided by the Christian missionaries as they wanted to change the people’s way of life through community development.

However, since the missionaries’ primary interest was to spread Christianity, they were trying to covert school children to that religion. As a result, by the time Njagi left school, he had not only acquired modern education but also he had become a Christian. Be that as it was, Njagi was also brought up in the indigenous way too. He learnt to be responsible and to avoid vices like alcohol. However, modern education he obtained enabled him to train as a school teacher. And while he was schooling, Njagi also ventured into another of the realms of the white man’s disciplines. This was scouting and was seeking to underpin the interests of both the colonialists and missionaries by seeking to see the youth grow up disciplined and prepared to serve the society and God.\textsuperscript{57} Njagi was one of the youths who learn scouting.

\textbf{2.2 European Imprints}

From 1885, the land that is today known as Kenya became a British sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{58} However, the British Government was not in a position to start administration the country straight away. So in 1888 it chartered the IBEACo to administer the country. The IBEACo was to do that whilst pursuing its capitalist interests. However, the IBEACo was not able to

\textsuperscript{56} Carlyle, \textit{Heroes and Hero Worship}…, pp. 4-5; Caine, \textit{Biography and History}…, p. 12; Lee, \textit{Biography}…, p. 3
\textsuperscript{58} Waruhiu, \textit{Corridors of British}…, p. 25
establish control therein effectively. For that, on 1 July 1895, the British government made the country a protectorate under the title British East African Protectorate (BEAP).\(^5^9\) Upon that, the British embarked on establishing hegemony over Kenyan societies.

Towards that end, an administrative system that eventually became known as the Provincial Administration was put in place. The country was divided into four provinces. Each of the provinces was sub-divided into a number of districts. The districts in turn were divided into administrative areas that were named as divisions.\(^6^0\) These administrative areas were put under the PCs, DCs and DOs respectively. These administrators were whites and were appointed by the Commissioner (later on renamed Governor) of BEAP. In the running of BEAP, the Governor would give directives to the PCs and the latter would relay them to the DCs. Then, the DCs would make the directives known to the DOs. That was the way the word of the Governor was getting known to the administrators on the lowest echelon, the DOs. The DOs would embark on implementation of the policies in their jurisdiction. However, like elsewhere in Africa, there was the problem of few officers and the areas they were to establish and maintain control over were vast.\(^6^1\) By 1897 the Provincial Administration had only 22 officers. Candidates were not easy to come by and they had to be searched for even from other British colonies like Uganda and South Africa. By 1914 the number of officers was 200.\(^6^2\) So in a bid to cope, officers started engaging Africans in the administrative system as chiefs and headmen. In the case of Charles Hobley, who became the first PC for Nyanza in 1900, he appointed a number of chiefs in that year.\(^6^3\) But one of the earliest appointments of chiefs was that of Kalinga Ngungu of Ikutha Location of Kitui District in 1896.\(^6^4\) Those who were being considered for appointment had influence in their societies.\(^6^5\) People would be asked to select them.\(^6^6\) But the move to appoint those African administrators was not a government policy.

\(6^0\) Wanyoike, *Wangu wa Makeri*, p. 34
\(6^1\) Herbst, *States and Power*…, pp. 81-2; Falola (ed.), *Nigerian History*…, p. 272
\(6^2\) Berman, *Control and Crisis*…, pp. 98-9
\(6^6\) Waruhiu, *Corridors of British*…, p. 38
It was not until 1902 that a legal framework for making those appointments, the Village Headmen Ordinance (African)\textsuperscript{67}, was enacted by the Acting Commissioner of the BEAP Fredrick John Jackson.\textsuperscript{68} The Commissioner or Sub-Commissioner (Provincial Commissioner, later on) was given authority to pick an African to work under a DO, who was to be given the title headman, to administer a village or a group of villages.\textsuperscript{69} The law defined the duties of chiefs and headmen. They were to maintain law and order, build and maintain roads, and collect taxes from their subjects.\textsuperscript{70} In 1905, they were added the onus of recruiting labour for communal work (and sometimes for the white settlers).\textsuperscript{71} But with time other duties such as control of disasters, prevention of production and consumption of harmful substances were added.

Chiefs and headmen were put under the authority of the DO. But chiefs were ranked above the headmen. The jurisdictions of the DOs, the divisions, were subdivided into locations that were in turn split into sub-locations and chiefs and headmen were put in-charge of the locations and sub-locations respectively. So, when the communiqué from the governor would reach the DOs, they would issue instructions to chiefs. Then, chiefs would tell the needful to their headmen.\textsuperscript{72} However, the British rule was not established in Kenya easily.

**Struggle to penetrate Embu**

Kenyan societies were not willing to surrender their freedom to the British invaders. As a result, wars of conquest had to be waged on those societies.\textsuperscript{73} British forces started their onslaught at the coast and then proceeded into the interior crushing one society after another. In 1899, Captain Francis Hall started attacks on the people of central Kenya. With much bloodletting, he was successful in making various sections of the Kikuyu (those of southern and central Kikuyuland) submit to British rule. However, he died in 1901 while there was much that needed to be done. So the British were impelled to send in a replacement to continue with the task.\textsuperscript{74}

The soldier who took over the mandate of containing the “obstinate niggers” that were resisting British rule was Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen. He was seconded to Kenya from

\textsuperscript{67} Maxon, *Conflict and Accommodation…*, p. 49; Wanyoike, *Wangu wa Makeri*, p. 35
\textsuperscript{68} Wanyoike, *Wangu wa Makeri*, p. 35
\textsuperscript{69} Salim P. Ndemo, *Epitome of State Power: The Provincial Administration in Kenya* (Nairobi, 2006) p. 20
\textsuperscript{71} Tarus, ‘A History of the Direct Taxation…’, p. 66
\textsuperscript{72} Wanyoike, *Wangu wa Makeri*, pp. 33-34
\textsuperscript{73} Mwaniki, *The Living History…*, pp. 42-49, 94; *Daily Nation* (Nairobi) 28 May 2000, p.17
\textsuperscript{74} *Daily Nation* (Nairobi) 28 May 2000, p. 17
the British colony of Burma (later on Myanmar) in April 1902. His next in command in central Kenya was Major Maycock. They were the first to try to establish British rule on the Embu. However, before could do that, they firstly mounted a number of bloody punitive expeditions against the Kikuyu, who had not yet been subjugated by Hall. By 1903 they were dealing with the Kikuyu of the northern territory, Nyeri. It was while Meinertzhagen was brutalising the Kikuyu of Nyeri, who by then were known as Gaki, that he turned his sights on the Embu, too. Meinertzhagen launched an attack on the Embu from Gichugu by the Ruvingaci River in 1903. However, furious Embu warriors repulsed his forces. Subsequent attacks were also unsuccessful. For instance, one attack was made in March 1904. However, this time a different tact was used. The invaders entered Embu stealthily. They camped at Kariari, close to the present day Manyatta market. However, they avoided showing that they were on a mission to cause trouble. They were passing themselves as ivory traders.

Then, the strangers left the camp and travelled northwards towards Mount Kenya forest. They found ivory at a place called Nvuvoori. However, instead of buying it, they started taking it by force. That turns of events made people sense danger. Consequently, Embu warriors were impelled to restrain the strangers. On their part, the strangers responded by opening fire at the warriors. The sound of gun shots did not deter Embu warriors. Eventually, the tide turned against the invaders. They were repulsed from Nvuvoori back to Kariari through Ngathika, Keruri and Karuganjavi (Kiamwenja). And, then, they exited Embu country. During the encounter, the invading force had a white soldier and a number of Africans killed. But the Embu lost a bigger number of lives. The invaders lost some of their weapons to Embu warriors. Some eighteen guns were captured. Three of those warriors who captured guns were Kathunga wa Kanyi, Mwendano wa Mukira and Kamunyi Macharia, who belonged to Marigu, Gitiri and Kithami (of the house of Marema) clans respectively. After that event, the British once again went back to Mbiri to review their plans for conquest.

77 Ochieng’, *A History of Kenya*, p. 92; Meinertzhagen, *Kenya Diary…*, pp. 147-152
Later on, the white man wrote the leader of the Embu demanding that the guns that had be captured be returned. However, at the time there was nobody among the Embu who could have read the letter since they were all illiterate.\textsuperscript{81} Be that as it was, even with the people not knowing what the letter was saying, they got very angry about it. To make the situation even more confusing, there was no central authority that could have received and responded to the letter. This was because the leadership of the Embu consisted of \textit{ciama} (councils of elders) and the members of the \textit{ciama} were of the same status. However, the matter did not end there.

The Embu made attempt to make the white man get to know his actions were unacceptable. Embu leadership had finger-millet and a leopard skin put in a \textit{kiondo} (a bag woven from plant materials). Then, the \textit{kiondo} was handed over to a messenger with instruction to take it to the white man as a feedback (to the letter). This was tact to intimidate the white man. It meant that Embu warriors were as many as those seeds of finger-millet. As for the leopard skin, it was implying that the warriors were as furious as a leopard. It was hoped that the white man was would fear to attack again.\textsuperscript{82}

However, the British were very determined to drive the Embu into submission. So there was no end to making plots against the Embu. However, every attack was contained. Given the situation, the approach had to be changed. By 1906, the colonial government had subdued the Kikuyu sub-groups of Gichugu and Ndia that were neighbouring Embu in the west and appointed such men as Njega wa Gioko, Gutu wa Kibetu, Murigu wa Irimu and Tugura as chiefs and it hugely used some of those administrators to defeat the Embu. Gutu wa Kibetu, who was the paramount chief of Gichugu area was the most useful of all. He had bravely resisted the British onslaught. However, after being defeated and having been appointed as a chief, his character changed completely. He became a traitor, who could have easily rivalled the biblical Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{83} Since Gutu was well versed with matters of warfare, after the British had defeated him, they sought to use him in conquest endeavours. So they took him to Mbiri, their headquarters, and shared him a stock of arsenal. After that, Gutu totally submitted himself to colonialism as he saw folly to resist British rule. He became a great asset to the colonial system. He plunged himself into exploring how the Embu, too, could be defeated. He organised espionage missions to gather intelligence in

\textsuperscript{81} Literacy was introduced by European Christian missionaries later on. The missionaries started their work in Embu in 1910. Mugambi (ed.), \textit{A Church come of Age...}, p. 10
\textsuperscript{82} Mwaniki, \textit{The Living History...}, pp. 42-49, 148-9
\textsuperscript{83} The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version (New York/Glasgow/Toronto, 1971), Matthew: Chapter 10, Verse 9; Chapter 26, Verses 23-26, 45-55; Chapter 27, Verses 1-3
Embu. In those endeavours, he made the most of Embu leaders. For instance, he used Mugane, one of the njama (a council member) of kiama gia ita (council for warfare) of the Embu, as they were close friends. That development enabled the British to finally contain the Embu in 1906.

They plotted an assault on 18 June 1906. The colonial forces were, however, led by Major Maycock. (This was so because in 1905 Meinertzhagen had been recalled from Kenya due to his excesses. So many people had been killed during the military expeditions that he had carried out.) A number of Kikuyu chiefs aided Maycock in the making of the assault. However, it was Chief Gutu who played the greatest role. He provided not only men to boost the number of the invaders and as well as supplies, but also intelligence (which was so much needed to plan the assault). The other Kikuyu chiefs who were involved were Murigu wa Irimu and Tugura.

During the assault, the tactic that was used was quite different from the previous ones. Attacks were not made at one but six points simultaneously along Ruvingaci River in the west of Embu. Intelligence had shown that the number of Embu warriors was very small hence not capable of making meaningful defense. At the time, most of the Embu warriors were away in Chuka on cattle raids. So, when the invaders attacked, the small number of warriors who had been left behind tried to counter attack, spreading themselves thinly and were incapable of making meaningful defence. The enormity of the attacks confused them greatly. So as not to lose the war, the warriors who were in Chuka numbering between 10,000 and 15,000 had to be sent for. Meanwhile, the invaders were gaining ground fast.

The resistance did not last long. By the time the warriors from Chuka arrived, almost all parts of Embu had fallen to the enemies. Another setback was the weaponry of the Embu warriors. They had spears, bows, arrows, swords and clubs. However, the enemies had advantage of using rifles and maxim guns, which were many times more effective. Consequently, after one month of combat, the Embu had to capitulate. A ceasefire was called

84 Ambler, Kenyan Communities in the Age of Imperialism..., pp. 152-3
86 Ambler, Kenyan Communities in the Age of Imperialism..., pp. 152-3
87 Attacks were being made along Ruvingaci River. However, the land that lay between there and Kiir River was part of Embu country and it had not yet been settled due to security reasons. It was many times easier to launch defence along Ruvingaci River than along Kiir River because the former was big and therefore difficult to cross. That land was called Nginda and it was eventually occupied after the establishment of the colonial rule in 1906. That happened because security improved given that raids were outlawed.
88 Kinyatti, History of Resistance in Kenya..., p. 17
on 19 July 1906. The defeat was a huge loss to the Embu. Their freedom vanished as the colonial government took over administration of the country. There was also massive material loss. The colonial government reported some 407 people killed during the confrontations. However, the number of the dead might have been greater than that since the government would not have liked the reality to be known. Additionally, a large number of livestock was taken away. It was indicated that 3,180 heads of cattle and 7,150 goats and sheep were seized by the conquerors.

After the surrender of the Embu, Major Maycock got down to institute British rule. He pitched camp at Gatituri (near the present day Kavutiri shopping centre). The first thing was to appoint chiefs so that they could help in administering the country. The first person to be appointed as a chief was Kiriamiti wa Nguu. He was from Murue and he was put in-charge of Murue area. The other localities of Embu were asked to send preferred persons for appointment to oversee administration of their respective areas. That way, Kangoco, Mwea wa Ithinu and Mutero were appointed chiefs for Kyeni, Kagaari and Ngandori areas respectively. Later on, more men were appointed as chiefs and this kept the number of locations to rise. For example, Kabuthi wa Kuthathura became chief of Kigari-Kirigi area and its environs. Rungai was given the same responsibility over Kangaru area. These chiefs were assigned duties such as (i) maintenance of law and order; (ii) collection of taxes; and (iii) recruitment of labour for public work. These duties were also being executed by the other provincial administrators. Chiefs worked under DOs while DOs worked under DCs with PCs being at the top of the hierarchy.

And while the number of chiefs kept on rising, so was the number of locations. This made the size and the boundaries of the locations to keep on changing. But by the end of colonial rule, the area that was occupied by the Embu had just four locations: Ngandori, Gaturi, Kagaari and Kyeni. Some of the locations that disappeared were those of Kabuthi wa Kathathura and Rungai, that is Kigari-Kirigi and Kangaru respectively. They were made part of Ngandori Location under Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato, who was appointed in 1926. Another location that was scrapped was Murue. This happened in the period after 1945. One

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89 The place was infested with dangerous wild animals and the confrontations forced people to flee to Mount Kenya forest for safety. In such a situation their safety was not assured. Furthermore, even the settled area was under cover of dense vegetation and that would not have allowed some of the dead to be seen.
90 Mwaniki, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Embu and Mbeere…’ pp. 11-12
91 Mwaniki, The Living History…, p. 94; Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age…, p. 10
part of it went to Ngandori Location and the other to Gaturi Location. All in all, the conquest of the Embu and the subsequent appointment of chiefs was just one step in the direction of establishing colonial hegemony.

More work was to be done. But Maycock did not remain at Gatituri for long. He moved southwards and set up another camp at a place not far from Makengi market. He instructed the chiefs he had appointed to oversee the surrender of all the weapons held by their subjects. All the spears, clubs, machetes, bows, arrows and shields as well as the guns that had been captured in 1904 were to be sent to the new camp. This move was aimed at incapacitating the Embu from resisting the British again. Then, people started referring to that place where the weapons had been surrendered as ngo–iri (where the shields are). Eventually, the place became known as Nguiri.\(^3\) That did not see the last of Maycock’s relocation of his camp. Still in 1906, he moved out of Nguiri heading southwestwards to Iga-murinduko, which was near Murinduko Hill, by western bank of Ruvingaci River. However, in the same year he shifted again, this time northwards to Nthithiari. It was at that point he eventually settled on as the administrative headquarters for the entire Embu. The name of the place was later on changed to Embu and with time Embu town evolved there.\(^4\)

The colonial administrators, the chiefs, of Embu did not find the going easy. This happened due to cumbersomeness of the mandate. This was due to two things: The nature of the tasks and the prevailing economic conditions. Practices like provision of labour and payment of taxes were alien to the Embu and therefore unnerving. To complicate the situation, by the time the colonial rule was imposed in 1906, tax payment in kind was on the wane hence giving things like livestock was becoming unacceptable.\(^5\) The Embu were impecunious and this made it very hard for them to meet the tax demands. Since chiefs were required to execute their duties failure to which they would be penalised, they resorted to coercion. This made their subjects hate them very much. The situation was not helped by increase of the duties of chiefs with time. This was because chiefs made more demands to their subjects.

In 1912, the government enacted the Native Tribunal Ordinance. This law enhanced the responsibilities of chiefs.\(^6\) The law gave authority to chiefs to do the following tasks: (i) arbitration of petty cases; (ii) stoppage of manufacture and consumption of illicit brews; (iii)

\(^3\) Mugambi, J. N. K. (ed.), A church come of Age..., p. 10
\(^4\) Mwaniki, The Living History..., pp. 41-49; Roman Mutambuki Kariungi, O. I., 17 & 20 March 1970, in Embu Historical Texts, p. 94; Ambler, Kenyan Communities in the Age of Imperialism..., pp. 148, 152
\(^5\) Tarus, ‘A History of the Direct Taxation…’, p. 66
\(^6\) Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 106
containment of disasters like floods; and, (iv) elimination of harmful substances like *cannabis sativa* (bhang). Then there were the circulars that were issued by Governor Northey from 1919. Circulars required DCs to see to it that a chief recruited a certain quota of labourers for the settler farms.\(^97\) The DCs made it clear to the chiefs that failure to meet the targets was punishable. That being the case, the situation was aggravated by the DCs failing to monitor the way in which chiefs were getting labourers.

Due to the oppression by chiefs, people rose against them. In addition to doing their work inhumanely, chiefs were also hated for their being appointees of colonialists. They were considered associates of the oppressors. Furthermore, these chiefs were not the preferred leaders of the people. This was so because they did not have background in leadership prior to their appointments. Chiefs were authorities but by the time colonialists arrived at the scene, Embu society did not have such kind of leadership. Instead, there were *ciama* (councils of elders) and the members of these councils, *athamaki* (elders/governors) were of equal status.\(^98\) To add insult to the injury, chiefs awfully lacked in leadership qualities. For instance, Chief Kangoco of Kyeni had been an outcast. The people of Kyeni had presented him for appointment just because of that status and they feared that the white man was a man-eater and they did not like a worthy person to be devoured.\(^99\) The shortcoming chiefs had was that they did not understand the interests of their people. As such chiefs never eased the conflict with their subjects. Consequently, they hit hard on their subjects.\(^100\)

Embu chiefs were brutal to a fault. They would punish people severely for offences such as failure to meet tax obligations, to provide labour, to attend group or chief’s meetings and failure to keep one’s compound tidy. For tax defaulters, for example, they would be tortured severely. After arrest by a chief’s *njama* (members of a chief’s council of elders), a person would be beaten thoroughly. The experiences were so traumatising and physically injurious such that victims would be affected for life. Since they had their ears pierced at the lobes, with wide holes, a string would be passed through the ear slots on the same side in a file. This tactic was intended to facilitate them being driven to the chief’s camp with ease. As they moved along, the string would cause them to suffer extreme pain at the ears due to the


\(^98\) Most of Kenyan societies, did not, before British colonialists took charge over them, have their governmental and political systems manned central figures. B. E. Kipkorir, ‘The functionary in Kenya’s colonial system,’ in B. E. Kipkorir (ed.), *Biographical Essays on Imperialism and Collaboration in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1980) p. 6

\(^99\) Mwaniki, *The Living History…*, pp. 47, 52, 53

\(^100\) Ibid, p. 107
friction it caused. The suffering was even worse when the file had people of varying heights. For the pain, the victims had no alternative but to comply and walk slowly to the desired destination as the ear lobes threatened to tear apart. The treatment was so dehumanising that relatives of the victims would make effort to pay the required sum of money so as to secure their freedom. Those who reached the chief’s compound would be confined there to do manual work to compensate for the unpaid taxes. Some would be released when a chief was satisfied that the work done was enough or he was given a bride. There were other horrific treatments. In some cases, victims would have bits of flesh removed from their bodies using nguuri (a pair of pincers of the Embu, which was normally used to pull out beards). But that was seldom done. Some tax defaulters even had their genitals pulled with the same tool. That was very painful. Be that as it was, those were not the only atrocities Embu chiefs committed. Some people would have their hands and legs tied together. Then, they would be suspended upside down from a branch of a tree. A fire would be lit under them. The fire would be made smoky so that the victims would suffocate as they breathed or called for help. Very few victims would not make confession before suffocation. There was also sexual immorality.

Chiefs plunged Embu society into a crisis as they abetted moral decadence with regard to sex. This would happen since chiefs were duty-bound to summon able-bodied people to do public work like road construction. Since both men and women would be involved, at the end of the day, chiefs would detain unmarried young men and women to spend the night at their camps. The tactic was to ensure that detainees would be available for work very early in the morning of the following day. The detainees would be made to sleep under one roof like couples. The shelters in which they stayed were called nduka. But with time, young men built micengo, singular, mucengo (shelters made out of trenches dug at suitable grounds, with covers at the entrances for protection against rain) to sleep in. But whether they spent the night in a nduka or a mucengo, young men and women slept together. This practice had been copied from a Kikuyu custom called nguiko. Nguiko, as it was practised by unmarried Kikuyu young men and women, involved embracing and fondling for mutual benefit but without having sexual intercourse.\footnote{Kikuyu anake (young men) and mumo (young women) practised nguiko from time to time. However, as custom required that actual sex should not happen, mumo were instructed on how to protect their vaginas from being penetrated. Towards that end, the vulva was not supposed to be touched. So mumo cover it with their clothes, mwengu (an apron that covered the pubic area) and muthuru (a skirt with a long piece at the back), which would be put between the thighs. However, they were free to allow the fatty tissue that lay in the pubic zone to be caressed. Men, too, were educated on how to do nguiko responsibly. They were to avoid touching the vulva. Be that as it was, there was no certainty that the rule to avoid sex intercourse was observed hundred per cent because it could not be ruled out that one or both of the parties could not be swept away by pleasure. In some parts of Kikuyuland, nguiko was not observed even by the unmarried. However, if there was no way to avoid the intimacy of the men, the women who were involved would be instructed to cover their vaginas with their clothes, mwengu and muthuru. The men, too, were told to avoid touching the vulva.} However, Embu young men and
women were not educated on how to go about nguiko. So with the men and women left to their devices, the y went on sexual sprees. This resulted in very many unwanted pregnancies. The pregnant women would not find suitors for marriage. And if they were lucky to get married, rurayio (bride wealth) would not be paid for them. This was so given that Embu girls were required to be still virgins at the time of marriage. For a woman to get married without her family getting rurayio meant that she was worthless and that was a great insult to her and her family. That was an embarrassment she and her family had to bear for as long as they lived. But problems brought about by colonialism kept on sprouting.

There was the disappearance of so many Embu men who had gone to take part in Mbara ya Njirimani (German War or World War I, 1914 - 1918). Failure of those men to return home was a great concern. The British had conscripted them to work as labourers in the war. They were among 150,000 men whom the British had engaged in Kenya for that war effort and nearly 24,000 of them died. They were part of the force that became famously known as the Carrier Corps. The Corps were assisting in fighting against German forces in Tanganyika, which were under Colonel Paul Erich von Lettow-Vorbeck. The German forces had made incursion into Taveta area of Kenya. By then Tanganyika was a German colony. The Embu men who were involved in the campaigns were especially of the Mande, Murigi, Gatumu and Rumemo circumcision sets. The disappearance of many of them contributed in soaring up discontent with colonialism and therefore more hatred for the British. Against that backdrop, the Embu kept on getting more politically conscious.

Due to the troubles colonialism had brought about, when a political organisation that known as the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) arrived, the Embu welcomed it enthusiastically. The KCA had been founded in Murang’a in 1924. (It started branches all over the then Kikuyu Province so as to rally people against colonialists. That province had

done in a githunu (a large building that could accommodate even as many as fifteen couples. H. E. Lambert, Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions (Oxford, 1968) pp. 56-7
102 Mwaniki, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Embu and Mbeere…’, pp. 21-22
104 Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 112
108 Over ten thousand African soldiers from British colonies died during the war. At the same time there were About 195,000 African labourers in the campaign and more than 50,000 died. Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 112
109 Kariuki, ‘Mau Mau’ Detainee, p. 15
110 Berman, Control and Crisis…, p. 230
been created in 1920 and was covering the central region of Kenya. After review of administrative boundaries in 1933, it was renamed Central Province and it remained like that until 1963 when its boundaries were altered.) This was over land alienation, restriction on cash crop farming, the carrying of *kipande* (passbook), forced labour, low quality education, denial of representation in the Legislative Council (LegCo), taxation, and rule by the high-handed chiefs, among other ills. The KCA was a force for the colonial government to reckon with. The founding chairman and secretary of the Embu KCA were Jesee Muruafundi and Kamwocere wa Nthiga respectively.

However, the KCA was mostly focused on the land issue, which was becoming increasingly emotive in Central Kenya in the 1920s. Land was being alienated for European settlers fast. In the first decade of the twentieth century alone, vast tracks of land were alienated in southern Kiambu District. Between 1903 and 1906, for instance, an estimated 60,000 acres had been alienated. In central Rift Valley, Lord Delamere, who was the leader of the settlers, had by 1906 acquired huge ranches. The one on the shores of Lake Naivasha alone measured 160,000 acres. And, due to the insatiable thirst for land by the settlers, Delamere was of the argument that it was not reasonable for the government to prescribe the limit of the acreage one could own as they were helping to develop Kenya. Further, he was contending that the land they were holding was hitherto uncultivated.

The Colonial Government had passed laws giving leeway to the settlers on land management in Kenya. The one that had most far-reaching effects was the Crown Land Ordinance of 1915 as it made a declaration that all the land in the protectorate to be Crown Land and therefore putting under the control of the Governor. Against that backdrop, the Governor could do anything with it, including alienation. The KCA was not only determined to check further alienation of land, but also get back that which had been lost returned. That being the case,

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113 Mwaniki, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Embu and Mbeere…’, pp. 36-7
114 Waruhiu, *Corridors of British…*, p. 41
118 Ibid, p. 16
120 Waruhiu, *Corridors of British…*, p. 41
the Embu relied on the KCA very much as they strove to safeguard their land rights. They had to act because even though so far no part of their land had been alienated, they could not rule out that happening after Kikuyuland had been swallowed.

The arrival of ahoi (Kikuyu language for ‘borrowers of tenancy’) in the 1920s seeking to settle in Embu and some of them going past to Meru for the same reason helped to stoke the fear of land being alienated. Additionally, that showed how bad things could be as a result of land alienation. Ahoi were Kikuyu by descent and those who were the first to arrive in Embu emanated from Kiambu District. (With time, however, there were those came from the other districts of Kikuyuland.) Ahoi, which in singular is muhoi, were wandering because it was no longer possible to get tenancy back home as there was shortage of land due to alienation. However, those who pitched camp in Embu did so incidentally. Initially, they were destined to settle in Meru, where they had heard that there was vast, empty land, which was good for settlement. Upon finding that in Embu, too, there was unoccupied land that was good for cultivation, they decided not to go further and settled there.

However, with time the British government sought to resolve the conflict that was simmering between the settlers and Africans over land. In 1928-29, it sent forth the Legislative Council Select Committee on Land Management, which was also known as the Hilton Young Commission, with a mandate to peek into the administration of land resources in Kenya, *inter alia*. Kenyan societies had their representatives appear to air their concerns land resources. The KCA branch of Embu dispatched its secretary Kamwocere wa Nthiga to articulate the interests of the Embu. He was valiant in his submissions arguing for the need to respect the rights of the Embu to land. The Embu had attachment to land due to its economic significance to them. Indeed, even when the white man debuted in Embu; people were suspicious that his eyes were on their land. For that reason, when he asked them where they had originated, they asserted that they had been living there from the beginning.

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122 Parsons, ‘Being Kikuyu in Meru…’, p. 69
123 *Ibid*, p. 76
126 Kamwoocera wa Nthiga, O. I., 16 April 1970, in Mwaniki, *Embu Historical Texts*, p. 121
127 Gaakara wa Wanjau, *Mau Mau Author in Detention: An Author’s Detention Diary* (Nairobi, 1988) p. 185
was out of fear that they could be driven out away. However, even though Europeans had shown interest in alienating land in Embu, they never got to do that throughout the colonial era.

While the KCA strove so much to protect the land of the Embu, the situation was calm, however, that was not the case when it was dealing with cultural imperialism. Cultural nationalism caused a whirlwind in Embu in particular and central Kenya region in general in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Things started getting out of control in 1927 due to resistance that was mounted by Protestant missionaries against clitoridectomy. The KCA was trying to prevent the rite from being eradicated for its centrality to the graduation of girls from childhood to adulthood. The phenomenon was like a volcanic eruption. In Embu, the KCA turned the controversy political in 1929. Embu Christians left Church Mission Society (CMS) churches in droves. The school system of CMS Kigari mission was also very adversely affected as pupils were withdrawn in big numbers. The happening helped the thrust independent churches and schools into Embu since those Christians who left CMS churches had to look for alternative for their spiritual nourishment and as well as continuation of education of their children. The missionaries had come to Embu hot on the heels of the colonialists. They had pitched camp at Kigari in 1910.

Enter Christian Missionaries

Christian missionary enterprise had a long history. Efforts to spread Christianity all over the world started from the time Christ Jesus was ministering. Jesus wanted his followers, the Christians, to spread his gospel all over the world. For that reason, in 1799 the Church of England (the Anglican Church) founded the CMS. The CMS would become the pioneer Christian society in East Africa, when its missionary, Dr. Johann Ludwig Krapf, established a mission at Rabai, in Mombasa, in May 1844. The CMS was the first society to start

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130 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church Come of Age…*, pp. 23-4; Sifuna, “Nationalism and Decolonisation”, in Ochieng’ (ed.), *Themes in Kenyan History*, p. 191
131 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church Come of Age…*, p. 10
132 The Holy Bible…., Matthew Chapter 10, verses 1-8; Luke Chapter 10: Verses 1-4
Christian missionary work in Embu. It established a mission station there in 1910. Rev. Douglas Handley Hooper was the first CMS missionary to visit Embu. He arrived at Kigari in 1908. His visit to Kigari was facilitated by Kabuthi wa Kuthathura, a colonial chief, who was administering Kigari-Kirigi area. Hooper did not stay there for long as he returned to his base at Kahuhia, in Mbiri (Murang’a) District. He visited Kigari again in November 1909. He preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of Kigari and those who believed the word; he gave them gifts for that year’s Christmas celebrations. Then, he departed for Kahuhia again.

After the visits to Kigari by Hooper, the CMS sent Rev. Dr. T. W. W. Crawford and his wife, Mary, to start missionary work there. The two were from Ontario, Canada. They arrived at Kigari on 9 September 1910. Dr. Crawford identified the site where a church was to be built. When Hooper visited Kigari again, he applauded Dr. Crawford for the decision on church construction. He confirmed the site and the construction started.

Chief Kabuthi was of much help to the Crawfords in their work. He was the one got young men to fetch the Crawfords’ luggage from Nairobi and strived to see to it that the people of the surrounding area turned up at the mission station for evangelism. And, so was he committed to that endeavour he would even punish those women who failed to go there for worship. Moreover, he also assisted in the acquisition of land for establishing the station. The Crawfords were evangelising not only among the Embu, but also the Mbeere as well as among the two sub-groups of the Meru, who were living close to the Embu in the east, the Mwimbi and the Chuka. However, in spite of the successes of the Crawfords in the missionary enterprise, they abruptly quit missionary work in 1913. However, that early

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138 ‘The challenges of the early Christians at Kigari’

139 Ibid

140 KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927 as well as the report of Sgd. F. Cecil Miller on the CMS mission at Kigari to Embu District Commissioner on 5 April 1946
departure had not been part of their initial plan. It just happened that Mary’s health was failing and that impelled them to leave in search of her recovery.

Indeed, due to the urgency of the situation, they left Kigari before their replacement could arrive. However, even though the mission was in its infancy, it could not be just left on its own as it would have died. So Dr. Crawford did something to keep it going before their departure. It happened that he had a younger brother by the name Rev. Edmund W. Crawford, who was the founding missionary and in-charge of the CMS mission station at Kabare in Gichugu area.  

(The place was by then part of Nyeri District.) So they made arrangements and Rev. Edmund was assigned to keep watch at Kigari as well. And, from Kabare he would visit Kigari from time to time. Furthermore, he took to Kabare the boys who had joined Kigari mission so that they could continue with their studies. His visits continued for nearly three years. However, the premature departure of Dr. Crawford did not mark the last of his being seen at Kigari. Having had a passion for missionary enterprise and being beholden to Kigari mission, he could not forget it. As a result, after so many years, in 1938 he made a visit there so as to see what had become of it. By then, the mission was still under the missionary who had been posted there as his successor.

The overseer whom the CMS sent to take over at Kigari - after the exit of the Crawfords - arrived there on 24 May 1915. This was Rev. John Comely. He was from Cowhill in the county of Gloucestershire, England. This Comely was a godly man and strived hard to see the Embu become Christians. Like Dr. Crawford, Comely evangelised in Embu and beyond. However, he did not venture into the lands of the Mwimbi and the Muthambi in the east. Between 1919 and 1933, he saw establishment of sixteen stations

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141 ‘The challenges of the early Christians at Kigari’
142 ‘The challenges of the early Christians at Kigari’
143 KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927 as well as the report of Sgd. F. Cecil Miller on the CMS mission at Kigari to Embu District Commissioner on 5 April 1946; Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 March 2002
144 He had been born in 1877 at a farm in Cowhill in the county of Gloucestershire, south-west of England. In 1905, he had joined the CMS College at Islington in London that was preparing men for missionary work. After completion of the training, the CMS sent him together with four other young missionaries to minister among the Dinka of Sudan. However, the performance was dismal and after three years he chose to go back home in 1908 and prepare more for the missionary enterprise. He enrolled at Cambridge University to study for degree in theology so as to become a priest. After graduation, he was ordained as a minister of the Church of England in 1914. In 1915, the CMS posted him to Kigari. Julius Gathogo, Mutira Mission: An African Church Comes of Age in Kirinyaga, Kenya; 1912 – 2012 (Limuru, 2011) p. 37; Robert W. Strayer, The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa: Anglican Africans in Colonial Kenya, 1875 – 1935, 1 Edition, (Nairobi, 1978) pp. 146-7
there.\textsuperscript{146} The stations were as follows: Kiriari (1919), Munyori (1919), Nyangwa (1920), Karungu (1923), Gatunduri (1923) and Kianjokama (1923).\textsuperscript{147} The others were Karambari, Kiambere, Kianiki, Kirima, Kiamuringa and Kanyuambora and they were founded in 1924, 1925, 1926, 1928, 1933 and 1933 respectively. All of the stations, like the one at Kigari, were operating as three units in one: a church, a school and a dispensary.

Comely was a stern pastor. He very much abhorred those things that he deemed to be outside the domain of Christian values. One of these was sexual immorality. In those days Embu chiefs were still putting young men and women in the situation whereby they would engage in sexual intercourse freely. However, just like his predecessor Dr. Crawford, Comely was neither at ease with practice, nor could he fail to do something to check it. He fought the chiefs fiercely. He was not only vocal in trying to get the chiefs to rethink their perverse ways, but also he could turn physical. in the cover of darkness he would organise raids on the chiefs’ camps in which those deviant activities were going on.\textsuperscript{148} Some of the camps that he invaded were those of Chiefs Kabuthi and Rungai at Kigari and Kangaru respectively. However, the CMS remained the only Christian mission in Embu for more than a decade.

The Consolata Catholic Mission (CCM) as the second Christian mission to enter Embu. Those Catholic missionaries, who were also called Consolata Fathers, arrived in Embu in 1922.\textsuperscript{149} The CCM had started missionary work in Kenya at Kikuyu in Kiambu District in 1902. From there it then spread out to other parts of Kikuyuland reaching as far as Mathari in Nyeri in the north. Between 1911 and 1913, it set up four stations in Meru.\textsuperscript{150} In the early years of their arrival, those missionaries had also shown interest in working in Embu District. However, they took time before they could execute their plans due to the position of the colonial government in that regard. It had objected to their opening stations beyond Sagana (Tana) River. This was because earlier on the CMS and the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) had established ‘spheres of influence’.\textsuperscript{151} The CMS had obtained exclusive right to operate in the region to the east within which Embu lay.\textsuperscript{152}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Mugambi (ed.), \textit{A Church come of Age...}, p. 19
\item \textit{Ibid.}, p.19
\item Mwaniki, ‘The establishment of colonial rule in Embu and Mbeere...’, p. 45
\item KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927
\item KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927
\item Note that in western Kenya, Protestant and Catholic missions had established borders on the areas of their
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The thrust that saw the CCM reach Embu was launched from Mathari in Nyeri. In 1922, it started out-schools at Baricho (Karema), Kianyaga, Karuco, Kiamutugu, Ngaro, Gatumbe, Kethata (later on Karue), and Makoria (later on it was moved to Kevote) and Nganduri (later on renamed Kyeni). However, among the afore-mentioned schools, it was the last three were the ones that lay within Embu District. This was because between 1912 and 1932, the others were in an area that was part of Nyeri District. Those endeavours of the CCM to reach out to Embu were being spearheaded by Rev. Father J. Maraviglia. The missionaries were starting stations without setting camp there since they were few. However, in 1923, more missionaries were dispatched from Nyeri and Egoji (in Meru) to assist in the supervision of the schools and one of them was named Fr. Perino. But, unfortunately, that Perino died in December 1926. The limited number of the missionaries that the CCM had on the ground made it take a long time before it could establish permanent settlements in Embu.

The missionaries were initially going about their operations from a central point. They would move from one school to another doing evangelisation, giving modern educational instructions, and treating the sick. But of all the CCM stations that were established in Embu, the one at Kevote became the most influential. It had firstly been set up at Makoria. But since the site was not good enough, that led to its eventually being relocated at Kevote as the terrain was relatively flat. Given the suitability of the site at Kevote for settlement, many people got attracted to live there. Eventually, they got converted by the missionaries. The school, too, contributed a lot in drawing people to live next to the station as they got interested in modern education. Consequently, a village grew there very fast. With time, the CCM strived to increase the number of its schools thereby spread its reach all over Embu. However, by the close of the 1920s, the CCM had not made impact in Embu society as the CMS had done.

Initially, the missionaries did not have a problem doing their work in Embu. But there was a turn of events after they started a campaign against the rite of clitoridectomy. The rite

interests in 1905. The move was intended to avert a conflict similar to the one that had occurred in Buganda which had culminated in deaths in 1880s. See, Simon S. S. Kenyanchui, Nabongo Mumia (Nairobi, 1992) p. 35


KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927


KNA / DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Political Records, Part II, Embu District Commissioner reporting on Christian missions on 25 July 1927
was regarded highly by the Embu because it was vital for initiation of girls to adulthood. This was because during the rite, girls were being educated on how they were supposed to function as responsible, full members of society. The opposition to the missionaries by the Embu over clitoridectomy was a manifestation of cultural nationalism. The conflict greatly impacted on Embu society as the situation panned out in a manner that was akin to a civil war. Members of the society who supported the missionaries’ stand against clitoridectomy clashed bitterly with those who were opposed to it.

However, the fight against clitoridectomy was the Protestant missionaries’ affair. The Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) was the one that started the call for the end to the rite. That was around 1915 and 1916. The onslaught was led by Dr. John W. Arthur, who was also a qualified medical doctor. However, the situation started getting explosive after the other Protestant missions joined the CSM in the year 1928 in expelling their members who supported the rite. Then it turned political when the KCA joined the fray in 1929. The KCA stunningly used its political clout to mobilise the masses to rise against the Protestant missionaries. All over Central Province, the situation was chaotic.

In Embu, conflict between the KCA and the missionaries had started well before the emergence of the clitoridectomy controversy. The KCA had wanted the missionaries to support it over some grievances it had against the government, but the missionaries had not obliged. Then, sometimes in August or December, 1928, the KCA sent a delegation to see the missionary in-charge of Kigari, Rev. John Comely, but he refused to have an association with the KCA in whatever way. Worse still, he maintained that clitoridectomy had to be abolished. Given his stand, on 1 January 1930, Bishop Richard S. Heywood sent a letter to Kigari in search of a compromise. However, Comely declined to change. The administration, too, tried to talk him otherwise, but he maintained his stance. But his remaining adamant was largely due to the influence of four leading church elders. These were Petro Gacewa, Johana Muturi, Musa Njiru and Paul Gatema.

Due to the agitation of the masses, the church and school system of Kigari was adversely affected. For instance, whereas in 1930 there had been about 500 people in

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157 Ibid, p. 121
159 Maxon, “The Years of Revolutionary Advance …’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), A Modern History of Kenya, pp. 100-107
161 Ibid, p. 144
162 KNA /PC / CP / 8 / 1 / 2, Harold E. Lambert, writing to La Fontaine on 15 July 1931
attendance at Kigari church, in 1931 those who were remaining were just 20. Baptism suffered greatly. In 1930 there were 107 people who were baptised, but in 1931 the number fell to 54. And, in 1932 it slipped down to 14. As for the school system, even though in 1930 there were 38 schools, 13 of them were closed by 1931. The number of pupils declined from 1734 in 1930 to 346 in 1931.\(^\text{163}\) In Mbeere, as church activities there were being coordinated from Kigari, the situation was even worse. All church members bolted.\(^\text{164}\)

The church members who were left the CMS in Embu were dubbed *aregi*. But rather than stay in spiritual cold, they found solace in the Salvation Army Mission (SAM). SAM had started services at Manyatta in 1930. It accommodated not only the Christians who were pro-clitoridectomy, but also the polygamists. However, the SAM was conducting itself that way because although it was sponsored by European missionaries, none of them was available there. This allowed its African leaders to do things out of convenience.\(^\text{165}\) But not all the deserters of the CMS ended up in the SAM.

Many other anti-CMS Christians joined the independent churches. These were the churches that did not have links to the missions. In these churches, members were free to practice their customs - such as clitoridectomy and polygamy - that the missionaries were up against. One of the independent churches was the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa (AIPCA). The SAM, which was usually referred to in Kiswahili as *Jeshi la Wokovu*, was also a sanctuary for those Christians who had got into the bad books of the CMS missionaries. It was in a position to do so because there were no European missionaries to keep watch thereby leaving Africans to do as they pleased. Those Christians also had to look for an alternative in the field of education as they withdrew their children from the mission schools. In this regard, they found solace the independent schools, which were under the aegis of two groups: the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association and the other the Kikuyu Karing’a Schools Association.\(^\text{166}\)

However, the CCM avoided opposition to clitoridectomy like a plague. It also did not have a quarrel with other African customs like polygamy. This made it to be perceived as people-friendly. Therefore, people got increasingly attracted to it as they were feeling free to fulfill their traditional obligations. However, the conflict between the CMS and Embu society


\(^{164}\) Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age*..., p. 24

\(^{165}\) Strayer, *The Making of Mission*..., p. 149

over clitoridectomies had huge negative impact on the development of modern education even though the conflict started waning with time. That happened since the CMS had predominant presence in Embu and therefore was better placed to provide modern education to the people thereof. Church elders started discrimination against children from attending school on spiritual grounds thereby affected the number of children who could get modern education. The injustice continued for many years. The trend was still causing ripples even in the late 1940s. Besides that, the desire by the Embu to acquire modern education was dealt another blow by the colonial government as it had a limit to what extent Africans could advance in that regard. Even as late as 1953; the British government did not want African children in Kenya, who were within the age bracket of going to school and studying up to Standard 8 and Form 4 to exceed 3.7% and 0.08% respectively. The Embu made spirited attempts to address the problem of lack of educational opportunities for their children. Even so, they grappled with that problem throughout colonial era.

And, it took many years after the independence was attained in 1963 before the problem was adequately addressed. Ephantus Njagi wa Kavungura of Kithami clan in the house of Mirori, who was born in Ngandori in the first half of the 1920s and was lucky to get a good modern education in the 1930s and early 1940s, contributed enormously in that regard. During the late colonial era, he also played a great role in politics of liberation of Kenya from British rule.

2.3 Emergence of Njagi's Genealogy

Njagi was a Muembu by ethnicity. This was because his parents were members of the Embu society that occupies the southern slopes of Mount Kenya. His place of birth was in Ngurukiri village of Ngandori Location, Embu District.

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He was born in the year 1922. But there is no record of his birthday in the form of a birth certificate or other documentary evidence. This happened given that no literate person was present so that he could tell which day and month and year it was. All that Njagi’s parents could remember about the birthday was that around that time an elephant was killed at a place called Gakurungo. This place was not far from Ngurukiri village. Njagi learnt that the killing of the elephant occurred in 1922 much later in his life. This was after having gone to school and learnt to read and write. He narrated the event to those people who during its occurrence were literate and they, having heard of or were eye-witnesses to it, put its date as 1922.

Njagi was the last-born in his family. His parents had fourteen children in total. All of these were boys. However, eleven of them died at an early age. For that, Njagi was not even lucky to see them. The cause of their deaths was linked to witchcraft. This was because in those days witchcraft was rife in Embu society. Due to belief in witchcraft, the Embu were given to seeking the intervention of andu-ago (traditional medical healers) whenever they were faced with a problem that was beyond their understanding. Andu-ago would in turn reinforce the belief that witchcraft was affecting them. But one of the children of Kavungura who died early was called Muriithi. He may not have died while a very little kid since people used to remember him and the others were not getting mentioned at all. And he might have been alive during the time of Njagi. It was only one of Njagi’s brothers who grew into

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175 The killing of the elephant is remembered for it was a great and rare spectacle. The Embu regarded an elephant as a ‘person’. And, for being a ‘person’, it was considered as unclean hence it was a taboo. This meant that it had thaahu (evil) and for that it could harm people who were alive. A person who would touch it when dead, they had to be cleansed by a mundu mugo (traditional medical practitioner) just as it would happen in case of touching a human corpse. KNA / DC / EMBU / 3 / 6, Political record, part II: “Witchcraft”, prepared by Embu District Commissioner, H. E. Lambert

176 In the period before introduction of academic education in Embu, all knowledge was kept in memory and passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth. That was how people would get to know about events like famines, wars and epidemics that had occurred even many generations ago. For example, events like Yura ria Ngwaci (famine of sweet potatoes, 1898), Mbaara ya Njirimani (World War I, 1914 - 18), Yura ria Kithioro (famine of twists/corner, 1918) and Ngige cia Kivata nja (ground-sweeping locust invasion, 1928-1931), among others. The kind of events that were memorable would become part of the society’s oral tradition. To gauge the age of a person, for example, reference would be made to the event that may have happened about the time of his birth. For instance, it would be remembered that a person was born shortly before or during or after a particular event and the number of seasons that had since gone. As a result, a person’s day of birth, initiation, wedding and death’ among other things, would be relative. Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake, O. I., 15 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’; See also Jan Vansina, Oral Tradition as History (Nairobi, 1985) pp. 1, 13
adulthood. His name was Robert Munyi. He was said to have been born about 1911 and died in 1992.\textsuperscript{177}

Njagi’s parents were Kavungura wa Mwiringia and Weveti, mwari wa Kuvorera. The former was the father and the latter the mother. Njagi belonged to the \textit{Mbari ya Njue} (Lineage of Njue) in the \textit{Nyomba ya Mirori} (House of Mirori). These were of the \textit{Muviriga wa Kithami} (Kithami clan).

His genealogy\textsuperscript{178} was something like this. Whereas the father of Njagi was Kavungura, the latter’s father was Mwiringia. Mwiringia was son of Njue. This Njue was the patriarch of the \textit{Mbari ya Njue}. Njue’s father was Mirori and the latter was the patriarch of the \textit{Nyomba ya Mirori}. Mirori was son of Kithami. And this Kithami was the patriarch of the \textit{Muviriga wa Kithami}. Kithami was son of Nyaga. Nyaga was son of Njagi.

Njagi the grandfather of Kithami, was said to have been of the \textit{nthuke} (generational age-set) that was known as Kubai. But that is not likely. This is because although in the Kimanithi division of the Embu there were \textit{nthuke} that were bearing names Kubai and Kubai Kuranja, he might not have been a member of \textit{nthuke} given that Kithami is said to have settled in Embu having emigrated from the direction of Meru.\textsuperscript{179} Furthermore, although the Imenti sub-group of the Meru did not have generational age-sets but circumcision regiments, some of them were bearing the name Kubai.\textsuperscript{180} So the people of Embu might have mixed up things.

Kithami was among the last clans, if not the last one, to get established in Embu. Kithami had come to Embu accompanied by his elder brother, Kirai.\textsuperscript{181} They might have been born in Tigania-Igembe or Imenti areas of Meru. At one time they were at a place called Urukuu, which is near Nkubu town. They crossed Thuci River to Embu, passed through Kegonge, close to Kyeni, and entered Mwenendega grove. This grove was by then a great settlement of the Embu. The time of arrival there may have been by the dusk of the eighteenth or the dawn of the nineteenth centuries.


\textsuperscript{178} A genealogy consists of names of a person’s ancestors of generations exceeding four or five in number. John S. Mbiti, \textit{African Religions and Philosophy} (Nairobi, 1969) p. 164

\textsuperscript{179} Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake, O. I., 15 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’

\textsuperscript{180} Lambert, \textit{Kikuyu}…, pp. 42-50

Later, Kithami and Kirai left Mwenendega in search of another place to stay. Going westwards, they found Karuigi area, near Nthagaiya, suitable.\textsuperscript{182} But while at Karuigi, a conflict arose between these two brothers. This happened given that for a number of times Kithami had to perform kaurugo. Kaurugo was a solemn rite that involved taking an oath. It being performed in a situation where by a man wanted to divorce his wife or he had impregnated a girl but he did not want to marry her. However, it is not known whether Kithami’s wrongdoings were only divorces or he had only impregnated a number of girls and dumped them or it was both divorces and pregnancies. In the performance of the rite, the man was required to declare that after that no matter what, he would never again get interested in that lady. He had also to swear that he would never attempt to bewitch her. The lady, too, was required to make a vow similar to that of the man. This would happen before a gathering. The clans of the man and the woman in question had to be in attendance. Furthermore, they were totally involved in the organisation of the ceremony. The man had to provide two ndegwa (bulls, singular ndegwa), a ndurume (ram, plural ndurume) and a nthenge (he-goat, plural nthenge) for the rite to take place. But the nthenge could be substituted with a ndurume.\textsuperscript{183} It was very hard to get the animals that were needed. And as Kithami had no livestock, to take kaurugo he used to rely on his brother to get the necessary animals. Given the costs, with time, Kirai got fed-up with his brother.\textsuperscript{184} As a result the two brothers found it unfavourable living together any more.\textsuperscript{185} So they parted ways.

Kirai headed southwards into Weru as it was good for his livestock. His family kept on getting bigger and bigger. After his parting with Kithami, one of the children he begat was called Murinda.\textsuperscript{186} His descendants evolved the clan called Igamatau. This clan inhabits the southern end of Kagaari. It also has presence in Karurumo and beyond.\textsuperscript{187}

As for Kithami, he travelled westwards. For his frequent migrations, he was nicknamed Muthami, which means migrator. With time the nickname was modified to

\textsuperscript{182} Nginyane wa Mukuru & Maitha Kithae, O. I., 12, 13 & 15 March 1970, in Mwaniki, \textit{Embu Historical Texts}, p. 63

\textsuperscript{183} The Embu society was not lawless. It had an instrument of power, the constitution and customary canons by which it was governed. For that reason, during ndaiko (hand-over of power from one generation to another), leadership of the two social divisions of the Embu society had to swear under oath that they would preserve that constitution and adhere to those canons. Lambert, \textit{Kikuyu…}, p. 64

\textsuperscript{184} Getanguthi wa Mutundu, O. I., 6 & 22 October 1969, in Mwaniki, \textit{Embu Historical Texts}, p. 34


\textsuperscript{186} Nginyane wa Mukuru & Maitha Kithae, O. I., 12, 13 & 15 March, 1970, in Mwaniki, \textit{Embu Historical Texts}, p. 63

Kithami, meaning great migrator. He ended up being called so for the rest of his life.\(^{188}\) He, finally, settled at Kiini in Ngandori.\(^{189}\) He had six children: Marema, Mirori, Kirugi, Mbogo, Muki and Wambugi. All of them were boys except Wambugi. However, while the five sons got wives and started families, Wambugi never got married. Kithami persuaded her to remain on at home as she used to look after his goats and sheep better than her brothers. There she bore children just like her brothers.\(^{190}\)

After the six families of the children of Kithami got grandchildren, each became a distinct *mbari*: Marema, Mirori, Kirugi, Mbogo, Muki and Wambugi. Then, after they had great grandchildren, each *mbari* became a distinct *nyomba*. But whereas the names of the five *nyomba* of the male children of Kithami (Marema, Mirori, Kirugi, Muki and Mbogo) remained the same, that of Wambugi did not. The name Wambugi was with time corrupted to Mbugi.\(^{191}\) As such, you may hear the people of the five *nyomba* of Kithami clan introducing themselves this way: ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Marema*’ (We are of Kithami clan of the people [descendants] of Marema); others might say, ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Kirugi*’; others, ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Mirori*’; others, ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Mbogo*’; others, ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Muki*’; and others, ‘*twi a Kithami kia andu-a-Mbugi*’.

As the generations of the descendants of Kithami increased, so did their population. As a result they started experiencing congestion at Kiini. Furthermore, they were not the only people who were living as, for instance, there were the people of the clan of Ndiri. To ease the situation, some of them started emigrating. They spread out to various parts of Ngandori. They occupied Kirigi, Manyatta, Ngurukiri, Kavuria, Kamama, Kairuri, Kiamwenja, Njoguri, Mukangu, Kathangari, Njukiiri and Kathakakaumu area.

Following the establishment of the colonial rule in 1906, the descendants of Kithami started crossing Ruvingaci River to settle in Nginda. But they were not alone in this movement westwards as people from other Embu clans, too, needed to acquire more land. In Nginda, the descendants of Kithami settled at the following areas: Kiambugi, Kiandari, Mutuandu, Gatiiguru, Ngviu, Kivaki, Kiaweru, Kiamuvuro, Mwithi, Kiandome, Ndunduri, Kirungu, Kiangucu, Kibugu and Kithiria.

As some other descendants of Kithami were were migrating to Nginda, Njagi’s family was also making movements. But his family did not leave Ngandori. They left Ngurukiri and

\(^{189}\) Nginyane wa Mukuru & Maitha Kithae, O. I., 12, 13 & 15 March 1970, in Mwaniki, *Embu Historical Texts*, p. 63
\(^{190}\) Abraham Gakoru, O. I., 28 February 2002 & 27 June 2013
\(^{191}\) Abraham Gakoru, O. I., 28 February 2002 & 27 June 2013
went southwards to start a new home at Kavuria. But after some time, they went back to Ngurukiri. However, after a period of time, they yet again moved out and went back to Kavuria and remained there for good. The British rule and the influence of Christian missionaries led to rapid social change in the Embu society and that made Njagi savour a great deal of indigenous and modern lifestyles.

2.4 Acquiring Education

In the year period of his life, Njagi was one of the not so many youngsters who led a mixed lifestyle. This happened as he received not only the indigenous education of the Embu society but also some other forms of education. The latter had come to existence courtesy of the white man. But given that socialisation starts at home, he firstly learnt the ways of his Embu society.

Embu Indigenous Education

Social responsibility was highly valued in the Embu society. This enabled it function properly. As such, the Embu society extolled a number of values. One was expected to be industrious, adept, kind, considerate and cooperative. So that one knew those values, as s/he was growing up, efforts would be made to enable him/her learn them. Learning would occur formally and/or informally. So education was valued highly due to its immense importance.

As he was growing up, Njagi learnt the values of the Embu society. Knowing how to look for food in a just manner was paramount. The Embu were livestock keepers and agriculturalists. So Njagi had to learn to herd livestock and cultivate crops. To learn herding livestock one used to be taken out to the grazing places by his father and brother when they were driving out their goats and sheep to graze. This could have been from the time he was aged between eight and ten years. Then, after he got acquainted with the surroundings and he learnt fully to take care of the goats and sheep, he was left to do the work on his own. Later he began to look after not only his parents’ goats and sheep, but also the livestock of one of their close relative who was called Musa Njiru. Musa’s father was named Ngai son of Rubuca; the father of Rubuca was Njue son of Mirori and Mirori was son of Kithami. The afore-mentioned Njue, the great grandfather of Musa was also the great grandfather of Njagi. This Njue was the patriarch of the mbari to which they belonged. This was the mbari of Njue of the nyomba of Mirori in the mviriga of Kithami.

Musa was deemed a wealthy man. This was because he owned not only many goats and sheep, but also cattle. Cattle were regarded as wealth. But in those days, not so many
people had cattle. He had managed to acquire cattle due to his association with the CMS Kigari mission. He was one of the first people to join the mission. He converted to Christianity and got modern education as well. He had a reputation of being a staunch Christian. This saw him become one of the leading church elders at Kigari. He joined the clergy. Catechists, priests, teachers, guards and chiefs, were positions that had emerged in Embu society after the establishment of the colonial rule. People in these positions were few and earned salaries. Since they had money, they had the capacity to buy things like cattle and land, which were by then regarded as wealth. Njagi was doing the work responsibly. While he was learning herding, he also got knowledge of cultivating crops.

From a very early age Njagi was accompanying his parents to the farm. That way he got to learn farming. When he was about ten years old, he would help out in the various chores. Crop production entailed land preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting. Land preparation involved clearing of virgin land. This had to be done from time to time since land had to be left furrow for some time to regain fertility. This was the hardest of all the activities and that was what men did. Men would also build stores for the harvests, the granaries. In addition, they constructed houses, cattle sheds and fenced the homesteads. In these activities, women would assist by fetching the building materials.

The Embu had food crops like maize, beans, millet, sorghum, finger-millet, sugarcanes, pumpkins, cassava, yams, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes and arrowroots. However, there were those crops for men and others for women. Yams and sugarcanes were the preserve for men. Some of the crops were annual while others were perennial. Embu has two rain seasons in the year and some crops mature in just one season. Due to the high rainfall, people would produce enough food and store some, usually cereals, for the future. However, sometimes the harvest would not be good or there would be none at all. When that happened, there would be a food shortage. Poor harvest or lack of any was usually as a result of a drought or a locust invasion.

Njagi told this research of one great locust invasion that occurred during his life time. It was famously known as \textit{Ngige cia Kivata Nja} (literally, the locusts that sweep the land bare). It was the greatest of all the invasions he had witnessed. The invasion occurred in

\footnote{192 By the time Musa Njiru left the priesthood of the Anglican Church, he was a canon. This was one of the honourable statuses in the Anglican Church. He had reputation of being the second African in Embu to be ordained to priesthood. He was appointed as a deacon in 1934. Then, he went for theological studies at a college in Limuru. After that he was ordained a priest in 1939. \textit{Ten Great Decades of Faith}, p. 26.}

1928.\textsuperscript{194} It was akin to the one that occurred in Egypt in order to induce the Pharaoh to release the Israelites from captivity there.\textsuperscript{195} The invasion in Embu found people reeling from a serious drought that occurred in the previous year. The insects were in vast swarms. Some of the swarms stretched for kilometres on end and flew very fast. They originated from somewhere on the shore of the Red Sea. But the exact location remained unknown. From there they would fly out in all directions. While some flew out southwards to East Africa and the southern end of the African continent, others went westwards to the Sahara and West Africa. Others flew to the Middle East and beyond.\textsuperscript{196}

The swarms were covered the sky like clouds. When they descended on the land, they would cover large areas. The locusts resembled grasshoppers but were several times bigger. They would eat all green leaves as if with a vengeance. Branches of big trees could not bear the weight of the insects and broke off. They would deplete leaves in a given area very fast. Even Mount Kenya forest was not spared the ravage. When they had nothing left to eat in a given place, they would fly to another place.\textsuperscript{197} In their wake, the whole country would be left without vegetation cover. That was why they were called \textit{Kivata Nja} as the terrain resembled the bare ground in homesteads.\textsuperscript{198} The locust invasion continued until 1931.\textsuperscript{199}

During those years, the locusts would destroy any crops in the fields. This would lead to famine as there would be no harvest. During such difficult times, people relied on root crops: the cassava, sweet potatoes and arrowroots.\textsuperscript{200} While the locust ate the leaves of these crops, the roots remained intact. The other crops that were not destroyed by the locusts were the bananas and sugarcanes. This was because the locusts only feasted on banana leaves. As sugarcanes, the locusts were interested in the leaves only, sparing the stems which people ate. As for the livestock, they suffered greatly every time locusts struck. This was so because the grass and foliage they depended on would be consumed. But in such situations, livestock would be fed on \textit{mikona} (banana stems).

\begin{itemize}
\item The Holy Bible…, Exodus, Chapter 10, Verses 4-6, 12-15
\item Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake, O. I., 15 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’
\item Huxley, \textit{White Man’s Country…, Vol. II…}, p. 256
\item In its efforts to contain the effects of famine, the colonial government emphasised cultivation of cassava and sweet potatoes since they were drought-resistant. Haugerud, \textit{The Culture of Modern Politics…}, p. 228
\end{itemize}
Despite the destruction, sometimes the coming of locusts was not a problem. This was the case when there were no crops in the fields as they would not cause food shortage. People cherished such times since locusts could make a delicious meal. They would be caught, cooked and preserved. After they were caught, they would be put into gourds so that they would not fly away. When the catch was big enough, it would be poured into a pot that had boiling water. After they were cooked, their wings would be plucked off. Finally, they were preserved by being put into another pot that was on fire, but without water and they would dry. When they were preserved, they could stay for a long time without going bad. People used to feed on them with gumption.

Life used to be hard whenever there was a famine. Sometimes people died of hunger.\(^{201}\) While everyone suffered, mothers with little children were affected most. This was because they had to contend not only with their own hunger just like everyone else, but also they had to bear nagging by their children. Little children were a thorn in the flesh of their mothers as they expected to be given food and they would not understand it was not available. When Njagi was a little boy and there was a famine and his mother could not find food to feed them, she had a trick. This trick was being used by almost, if not all, mothers who could not find food to give their children. She would go out into her garden in the evening and get \textit{ciinja cia ndigu} (banana tubers) since they were similar to arrowroots in appearance. When it was dark and without being seen, she would put the \textit{ciinja} in a pot on fire to cook them just like she did arrowroots. When Njagi would ask her for food, she would tell him to be patient a bit as the arrowroots would be ready soon. She would busy herself stoking the fire. This would calm Njagi down. After some time Njagi would find that his mother was not serving out the ‘arrowroots’, and would lose patience and remind her that he was hungry. But she would appeal to him to be patient again. She would keep on repeating that as the night wore on. Then, it would get late and Njagi would be overcome by sleep. When he was asleep, his mother would be a bit at ease.\(^{202}\)

\(^{201}\) For instance, during \textit{Yura ria Kithioro} (famine of corner or twist) that occurred in 1918, very many people died. People were leaving their homes to look for food elsewhere. People from the Meru direction were passing through Embu. And on finding that they could not get food, they would move on into Kikuyuland. Since during the day the sun shine was scorching mercilessly, some of the people weak with hunger and tired, would lie down to rest in the shades of trees. Unfortunately, they would catch sleep and many of them would not wake up as they had died. As a result, the country was littered with rotting human corpses. Mwaniki, \textit{The Living History...}, pp. 38-40; Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake, O.I., 15 July, 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief...’

As Njagi was growing up, he made friends among his peers. The friends were Ireri wa Kivuti, Erasmus Mugo Rumutu, Moses Nthiga, Isaiah Mbogo wa Bwana Johana, Kiragu wa Jonathan, Mwaniki Mwandiko, Phineas Kangi, Njeru Nthama, Josephat Tai and Godfrey Mugo Gaita. All of them were close relatives. Njagi used to play with them. They had a number of games to play. The most notable of the games were *kuthii mbathari* (slipping down a wet ground) and *gwikia nthungu* (throwing stone pebbles). When they were taking part in the games, Njagi used to be the leader of his group and he was executing that role justly. He used to deal with them politely.

He used to teach his friends rules of good behaviour. He was a good arbitrator. When disagreements arose among his friends, Njagi used to hear and determine those cases fairly. All the conflicts that were ensuing, he was able to deal with them amicably. Nobody else led as he did. When he was away, if a disagreement started, none could handle it well like him and for that it would degenerate to a fight. For that ability to lead well, he was loved by his peers very much.

Ensure that people conducted themselves responsibly; the Embu society had values it extolled and vices it discouraged. Drunkenness was one of the behaviours that were frowned upon. This was not because it was wrong to make beer and drink it. Rather, it was how much beer one took that was concern. Beer used to be made from time to time and people would even invite their neighbours to a beer party. During important occasions like marriage negotiations and initiation ceremonies, a lot of beer used to be made. However, not everyone was free to drink, for instance, the youth. As for those who were free to drink, they were required to do so responsibly. To drink to the extent of getting disorderly was abhorred. This entailed taking just a little so as not to induce drunkenness. Getting drunk would attract sanctions. *Ciama* (traditional councils of elders) had the responsibility of ensuring that people behaved well. *Njama ya Ita* (warriors’ council), for instance, had been helpful in the maintenance of law and order by disciplining those people who got into beer-drinking in an unbecoming manner.

However, the establishment of colonial rule brought negative changes. Some of the things that were affected were the mechanisms which were controlling human behaviour by taking step(s) to correct deviation(s). This collapse made the social side of the society to start
rotting due to freedom. One of the mechanisms that were affected was the indigenous governance structures, *ciama*. The efficiency of *ciama* fell greatly as they were stripped off their powers to deal with unacceptable behaviours like drunkenness. Furthermore, elders could not help since even themselves embraced drunkenness. It was also not easy for the elders to monitor the situation even if they were determined to check the problem. This situation arose due to the coming of processed sugar as it made it easy to make beer. Unlike the indigenous beer that relied on sugarcane and a lot of labour, with processed sugar, which was not bulky hence making transportation easy, one person could prepare a lot of beer without causing suspicion. The youth previously were not supposed to take beer and they begun to drink without reservation. The emergency of moneyed African elite (such as teachers, catechists, priests, interpreters and guards) due to colonial capitalism compounded the problem as they could afford to employ the youth thereby making money available to the latter with which they could buy beer.\(^\text{207}\) The youth could also work as domestic- and farm-hands, clerks and police.\(^\text{208}\)

The colonial government tried to prevent the making and consumption of beer through chiefs but it was not successful.\(^\text{209}\) The Native Tribunal Ordinance of 1912 had given chiefs power to eliminate beer brewing. But due to worsening of the situation, the colonial government had to pass yet another law on the same problem, the 1930 Native Liquor Ordinance. But even this law did not safe the situation. even the church grappled with the problem of drunkenness in the 1930s, especially, among the youth.\(^\text{210}\) The CMS prohibited drunkenness and in Embu Christians who were involved used to get a penalty of six-month suspension.\(^\text{211}\) When Njagi was a youth, his peers were involved in drunkenness just like a duck takes to water.

However, his parents were aware of the danger of drunkenness was posing to the youth. They were alive to the fact that as parents they owed it to their children to guide them properly. Therefore, they did not let their children to be swept away by the current as many other parents did. They advised their children to avoid the vice.


\(^{210}\) Karanja, *Founding an African Faith…*, p. 242

\(^{211}\) Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age…*, p. 21
However, neighbours were not happy with the position taken by Njagi’s parents. The neighbours felt that it was wrong for Njagi and his brother Robert Munyi to deviate from what their peers were doing. The other parents told Njagi’s parents that what they were doing was not right. However, Njagi’s parents did not succumb to the criticism and their sons obeyed their parents. This had great influence on Njagi as it contributed to his remaining a teetotaler for the rest of his life.

However, regardless of how much one learnt in his life, that education was inadequate, insignificant and meaningless without having undergone the rite of circumcision. This was because the rite graduate one from childhood to adulthood. One could not be considered as a man unless he had undergone the rite. It was performed on boys when they were mature and big in size. This was from the time they turned fourteen years old. But some could have initiation delayed for one reason or other to the time they aged eighteen or more years. This could happen for a number of reasons. A boy of small physique could be required to wait so that he could grow bigger. Such a requirement was important because once one was circumcised, there was no stopping them from joining warriorhood and warriors had to be strong enough so that he could counter his enemies successfully. One could also be asked to build his house and if he failed, that meant he was not yet prepared to play the role of an adult and therefore the initiation would be postponed. Njagi underwent the rite at the age of seventeen years. This was in 1939.

The rite was valued highly by the society and for that, both candidates and their parents had to prepare a lot for it. Candidates needed to be educated on what was awaiting them, for instance, they were not supposed to show cowardice. Boys of a given locality would be circumcised together and they had to build a gaaru (a hut for men), where they would be secluded after undergoing the rite. A locality used to be inhabited by people of different clans and initiates thereof would stay in the same gaaru. After the rite, initiates would be secluded until they healed and education. They were educated on responsible behaviour as they would be healing. They could continue staying together for as long as they wanted. However, one was free to leave and live elsewhere. This usually happened in case, for instance, one felt need to get married. However, it was not mandatory for initiates to seclude together. One could build his own gaaru and stay there alone.\footnote{Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, 'A Biography of Chief…'}

In readiness for the rite, custom entailed the candidates’ parents to give mburi ya ndonyo (a goat for ear-piercing) to the candidates to take to their maternal grandparents,
uncles and aunts. When they would go visiting, the candidates would inform their maternal relatives that time was ripe for the next stage of their lives, adulthood. Then, they would request to be blessed so that things would go well. After that, the maternal relatives would just agree to the plan.

On the big day, each candidate was supposed to have a *mutiri* (sponsor) for the occasion. The *mutiri* was sought by the father of the candidate. He was supposed to be already initiated and older than the candidate, however, he could be from any of the Embu clans. The initiate was supposed to view his *mutiri* as his own father. The father of a candidate was also supposed to give the *mutiri* a *nthenge* (he-goat) as fees. The *nthenge* would be slaughtered, roasted and eaten by the people who attended the circumcision ceremony. That gathering would consume all the meat, however, the *muruithia* (circumciser) was customarily entitled to take away the head and skin of that *nthenge*.

The circumcision ceremony would be held at dawn. A stream or river would be identified where candidates would bathe as a sign of purification and also to numb their bodies. After that the *muruithia* would get down to work. He would severe the foreskin at a lightning speed. A lot of pain and bleeding would ensue. One was not supposed to show that he was in pain as that was regarded as a sign of cowardice. Additionally, there would be no attempt to alleviate the initiates’ pain. They had to bear it as it was regarded as integral to the process of becoming a man.

When Njagi was circumcised, his *mutiri* was Kanake wa Mbora. Kanake belonged to Kithami clan in the house of Kirugi. He hailed from Kamama. The circumcision ceremony was held at the stream that lay between Kavuria, which was the ridge where Njagi’s home was, and Nthuguni, the ridge that lay in the east of it. At the circumcision ceremony, Njagi was together with four other candidates. The other candidates hailed from the environs of Kavuria. They were Njagi Kobuta, Elijah Kaviu, Kinyua Kavatha and Kinga’ng’i wa Mbora. Njagi Kobuta and Kaviu were from Nthuguni. They belonged to Kithami clan in the house of Andu a Mbugi and were friends of Njagi for a long time. Their friendship had started from when they were little boys. They used to sing, dance and play together.

After Njagi and the four others were circumcised, they were graduated from boyhood to manhood, which in other words was leaving childhood to move to adulthood. They attained a superior status in the society. But in spite of that feat, they did not become warriors. In the pre-colonial Embu society, after boys were circumcised, next phase of life was warriorhood. However, the establishment of the colonial rule in 1906 had abolished warriorhood. The new administration put in place measures that curtailed some of the
freedoms the Embu had hitherto enjoyed. For example, Njagi and his group did not form a circumcision set as boys circumcised in a given time span, which could be two or three or more years, had been doing.\footnote[213]{Another example of the traditional order that was affected by the colonial rule was nduiko (ceremony for hand-over of power from one generation to another). The two social divisions of the Embu, the Nyangi and Kimanthi, performed their last nduiko in 1925 and 1932 respectively. They could have done so earlier were it not for the Mbaara ya Njirimani (the World War I, 1914 - 1918) because so many Embu men, who belonged to the Mande, Murigi, Gatumu and Rumemo circumcision sets were involved and that was due to colonialism. The reason for the discontinuation of nduiko was that the colonial government was strongly against the custom. Even the nduiko of 1932 was done with a lot of difficulties since the government was resisting so much. Lambert, Kikuyu..., pp. 24, 42, 62-4; Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake, O. I., 15 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief...’; Mwaniki, Embu Historical Texts, p. 165} This turn of events started from around 1930.\footnote[214]{John Ngari Zacharia, O. I., 25 March 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief...’} However, Njagi’s circumcision set became known as Riika ria Njavani (circumcision set of Japan).\footnote[215]{Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief...’} It was so named because it coincided with the coming of Japanese household goods. The goods had debuted in the market in 1937.\footnote[216]{The term riika (circumcision set; plural mariika) was not originally used by the Embu. It might have been borrowed from the Kikuyu of Kiambu, Murang’a and Nyeri districts, who were known as Kabete, Metumi and Gaki respectively. They used to call their circumcision sets mariika and the regiments also had the same name. But the Kikuyu of Gichugu and Ndia were calling their circumcision sets marua whereas their regiments were known as mariika. Up to the early 1930s, the Embu had been using the term karua (plural turua) for circumcision set and irua (plural marua) for the regiment. Karua consisted of boys circumcised in a given time span. It could be two or three or four years or more. A number of turua would constitute an irua. The turua could be two or three or four. But this system of regimentation was disintegrating due to colonial influence. For instance the three turua that preceded riika ria Njavani, Njanduru (1935 onwards), Ngichiri (1924-34) and Rumeno (1922-24), were not put in a regiment like their predecessors. The last irua was Gatumu. Its turua were Gatumu (1918-21), Kiamate (1913-17) and Kiamatama (1909-12). The other known marua were Kithambura (1896-1908) and Mwathamo (1883-1895) respectively, with the dates being approximate. Lambert, Kikuyu..., pp. 23-5} However, noting that the initiates of those days were not able to join warriorhood due to the impact of colonialism, it also affected their social lives in some other ways.

In the Embu society, girls were supposed to be virgins at the time of their getting married. That setting meant that even men had to remain virgins before marriage. The society had mechanism for ensuring that the regulation was observed. However, the colonial rule led to relaxation of the system that safeguarded social order. As a result, society had become permissive and that situation had sort of given the youth a green light to be wayward with regard to sex. When Njagi was a youth, his peers used to be in an out bid to prove their manliness by fucking girls. The situation was so bad such that even those who had been converted to Christianity and therefore had been taught the seventh commandment of God, “You shall not commit adultery”, could not keep from seeking girls just for pleasure.\footnote[217]{The Holy Bible..., Exodus: Chapter 20, verse 14; Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 242} Even
in the 1930s Rev. John Comely of the CMS Kigari mission had a difficult time getting young men to refrain from that sin. Consequently, he had to resort to suspending them from church for six months as deterrence. Njagi was born in 1922 and accounts of Francis Ndwiga, Bedan Ireri Jonah and Joel Mwigaruri, whose births were in 1920, 1922 and 1928 respectively, confirm that sexual immorality was a problem in the Embu society of the time. They confessed that in their youth they relished catching girls for sexual escapades. The youth would become sexual immoral more so after circumcision. Even those who had become Christians could not resist the temptation. The problem was also prevailing not only in Embu, but also in Kikuyuland.

It started in the 1930s due to rise in bride price. Since young men could not raise the required bride price, they were delaying their marriages but end up indulging in casual sex. Rise of brideprice was in fact a threat to social order. In 1957 Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location, for instance, was impelled to go to talk to the African District Council (ADC) of Embu – even though he was not a member – in a bid to have bride price regulated so as to help the youth get married. However, Njagi was able to restrain himself from sexual immorality and that hugely benefitted him socially. Having a morally strong character, made elders to respect him a lot. As a result, he could talk to them on issues that the society was experiencing and they would listen. He would correct them when they were wrong and they would accept that counsel. But in those days, another kind of education that had been brought by the white man had become so important in Embu and Njagi made bid for it as well.

218 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 21; Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., pp. 62-3, 241
220 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 63
221 Ibid, p. 242
222 However, the messy scenario was a product of British colonialism. Although the ADCs had authority to make by-laws on important issues in their jurisdiction, the pre-colonial governance system of the Embu society had mechanism for regulating bride price, which used to be uniform all over Embu, depending on circumstances so that young men could get married early and that was helpful in the maintenance of social order. When there was an economic crisis due to, for instance, drought that killed livestock, nthuke would lower the bride price and vise-versus and when things would look up, it would raise the bar. However, colonialism wrecked that governance system. Additionally, colonial rule had done away with warriorhood and organisation of raids for livestock from the neighbouring societies and that was the main way through which young men were getting to meet their bride wealth obligations on time (after getting circumcised). Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ’A Biography of Chief…’
Modern Education

Following the coming of the white man to Kenya, life changed greatly. British colonialists established a new system of administration. People were required to pay taxes and sometimes to provide labour. These requirements were new and onerous to Africans. Christian missionaries wanted to spread Christianity and some of them were also interested in community development so as to change Africans’ way of life. Where they established churches, for community development purpose they also started schools and dispensaries. The system brought by the colonialists needed African labour. People could be employed as clerks, messengers, guards, chiefs, preachers, teachers, artisans, gardeners, cooks, herders and farm hands. Those who got into those positions became highly respected in society. This was because they earned money in form of salaries. With money they had no problem meeting their needs like payment of tax. Furthermore, they could invest in livestock and other things. In Embu society of the 1930s, livestock was a sign of wealth. They could also buy land. So people were envious of those who worked in the colonial system. In an attempt to achieve the new status, many people decided to get modern education and that impelled them to go to school.

In Embu, after the advent of the colonial rule in 1906, Christian missionaries put up a mission station at Kigari in 1910. Those people who joined the missionaries not only became Christians but also got modern education. They would learn to read and write as well as get vocational training like carpentry and masonry. These people got work elsewhere as preachers, teachers or artisans. One of them was Musa Njiru, who was a close relative of Njagi. Njiru was among the first pupils at the mission school. After getting some education he became a preacher in 1931. Then, he was ordained to priesthood in 1939. It was clear that he had a good lifestyle as he lived in comfortable without suffering want. Furthermore, he had acquired livestock especially cattle, which was out of reach for many people. For instance, in the 1930s, although Njagi’s parents owned goats and sheep, they did not have cattle. If one did not have money to buy cattle, he could use his goats and sheep to do so since there were a specific number of these animals that could be exchanged for a cow or a bull. However, many people could not manage that because they had very few goats and sheep. The cases of people like Musa Njiru, whose lives had been transformed by their getting

226 Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 24
modern education, opened the eyes of Njagi’s parents to see the benefits of that education even though Njagi’s parents had not yet converted to Christianity.\textsuperscript{227}

They were among a few people in Embu who were seeing that the society was changing and saw the need to embrace that change. Modern education became a measure of a person’s value in the society as it was opening the way to good lifestyle.\textsuperscript{228} In those days, people had little to do at home and for that they mostly sang and danced.\textsuperscript{229} As a result, Njagi’s parents decided that their children were to change with the times. That entailed getting modern education. Njagi’s elder brother, Robert Munyi, was the first to go to school at Kigari mission. However, the date when he did so was not known but probably it was in the late 1920s. He ceased schooling in 1935. Then, in 1934, Njagi, too, was enrolled there.\textsuperscript{230}

However, Njagi’s going to school became a problem to the society. This happened because society was not at ease with the missionaries.\textsuperscript{231} People ridiculed Njagi’s parents a lot seeking termination of his schooling.\textsuperscript{232} Their desire was for Njagi to continue herding livestock as the tradition was.\textsuperscript{233} People were opposed to modern education because they did not want Christianity, which the Christian missionaries had introduced.\textsuperscript{234} Christianity was hated because those people who were embracing it were turning their backs to Embu traditions. Indeed, in 1932, the Embu DC had noted that local people were very unhappy about the missionaries.\textsuperscript{235} The missionaries were regarded as a problem because they were opposed to some Embu traditions. One of the traditions was clitoridectomy, which was considered very important as it enabled girls to transit from childhood to adulthood. Without having undergone the rite, a girl was neither considered a mature person regardless of how old she got nor find a suitor to marry her. The missionaries’ opposition to the rite had polarised Embu society into two camps. There were people who supported the missionaries and those who were against them. Even majority of Christians had turned against the missionaries, which was underlined by mass withdrawal from the church. Between 1930 and

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{227} Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gachora, O. I., 16 May 2008
\bibitem{231} Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gachora, O. I., 16 May 2008
\bibitem{232} The trend was not like that in Embu only, but also in other parts of central Kenya such as Meruland, Kikuyuland and Ukambani. Bogonko, \textit{A History of Modern Education}..., p. 21
\bibitem{233} Karanja, \textit{Founding an African Faith}..., p. 50
\bibitem{234} Bogonko, \textit{A History of Modern Education}..., p. 21
\bibitem{235} Karanja, \textit{Founding an African Faith}..., p. 189
\end{thebibliography}
1932, for instance, baptism of adults fell by over 86%. Meanwhile, the number of pupils at school plummeted by more than 80%. However, in spite of Njagi’s parents being pressed by the people to remove Njagi from school, they did not give in.

When Njagi started schooling, Kigari mission was a great place to be. The missionary who was in charge, Rev. Comely, was very friendly to pupils. Comely was in that disposition as he was interested making converts since the object of the missionary enterprise was to spread Christianity. He, therefore, strove to see that as many people as possible got converted. Getting children to start schooling was one way of creating opportunities to make conversions. However, the process of making conversions was tactical. Unknown to neither the pupils nor their parents, as modern education was introduced, so was Christianity. Comely had indirect ways of appealing to the pupils to keep on going to school. He was giving them incentives in the form of sweets and prizes. In addition, getting education was free of charge. The reason for not charging school fees was to avoid burdening parents with the cost of education of their children. That had to be done since by then Embu society was impecunious.

In those days, cultivation of remunerative crops like coffee by peasants had not yet started in Embu and for that it was very difficult to make money. Even though plans to introduce coffee farming had got under way as from 1933, people had to wait up to 1944 before they could be allowed to get involved. Delay to get the farming introduced in Embu had been caused by a discriminative legislation, the Registration of Coffee Plantations and Coffee Dealers Ordinance of 1910, as it had ignored that Africans aspired to uplift themselves economically through coffee farming. The circulars that were issued by

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236 Ibid, p. 189
238 David P. Sandgren, Christianity and the Kikuyu: Religious Divisions and Social Conflict (New York, 1989) p. 36-8
240 Although following the establishment of colonial rule peasant commodity production had begun in some parts of Central Province – for instance, in Kiambu District, cultivation of potatoes for sale in the ever expanding Nairobi Town had begun at the dawn of the twentieth century – in Embu District the situation had remained more or less the same, subsistence. Unavailability of a market nearby for such goods made Embu economy remain virtually subsistence as it had been before the beginning of the colonial rule. For that, peasants had no way of benefiting from the emerging colonial capitalist system. It was just a very tiny number of people working in the colonial system such as Chiefs, Headmen, teachers, clerks and guards and those in the church hierarchy who had opportunity to earn money. Tiyambe Zeleza, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule, 1905 – 1920’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), A Modern History of Kenya…, p. 46
241 Abraham Gakoru, O. I., 28 February 2002 & 27 June 2013
242 Victoria Mucai-Kattambo, Co-operatives: Formation, Management and Settlement of Disputes (Nairobi, 55
Governor Edward Northey as from 1919, too, were a hindrance as DOs were given prerogative to determine who could be issued with coffee farming licence while European settlers supported the discrimination. Due to racial bias, the DOs would not consider Africans for cultivation of that remunerative crop. Instead, Africans were wanted to work on white settler farms. As such, parents could not have found money for school fees and that could have kept children away from school. However, the missionary were aware that that situation could not have boosted the enterprise of spreading Christianity.

Be that as it was, there was a turn of events at the school in 1935 as tuition fee was introduced. That made schooling very difficult as money was hard to come by. To ensure that Njagi’s pursuit of education did not suffer, his parents would sell their goats and sheep to raise fees. However, even as education became costly, its quality was wanting. Kigari schools’ system was not meant to facilitate pupils to get academic education of good quality. This was so given even though all over Kenya the missionaries were given to talking so much of the education they were providing to Africans the reality was different. Instead, it was mostly religious indoctrination on top of which was reading, writing (in vernacular) and arithmetic. There was also vocational training like carpentry, masonry and tailoring. However, the situation changed with time.

By the time Njagi started schooling, there was on-going push to have the curriculum of the Kigari schools’ system reviewed. This had been triggered by the establishment of the Government African School (GAS) at Kagumo in Nyeri District in 1930. The school was in process of raising modern education in Central Province a notch higher. It had been founded due to increasing Africans’ outcry for high-quality education since it was lacking in African education. The interest in better education by Africans was stirred by realisation that the more educated one was, the better-paying job one could get. The colonial government had in 1929 authorised the Local Native Councils (LNCs) of North Nyanza, South Nyanza and Nyeri to establish one secular school each so as to satisfy the urge of Africans for

1992) p. 6
244 Furedi, The Mau Mau War…, p. 10
245 Bogonko, A History of Modern Education…, p. 64
248 Oijamo, ‘Quality Education in National Development…’, p. 136
249 Berman, Control and Crisis…, p. 225
education of good quality. In the early 1930s, those LNCs established GASs at Kakamega, Kisii and Kagumo respectively.\(^{250}\) Kagumo GAS was admitting pupils from the mission schools of Kiambu, Fort Hall, Nyeri and Embu districts. The schools thereof were required to upgrade their curricula so as to reach the bar that had been set for admission to Kagumo GAS. However, while the other schools strove to make curriculum changes so that their pupils could meet the desired requirements, the Kigari schools’ system had not. H. E. Lambert during his times as the Embu DC from 13 March 1929 to 31 July 1931 and from 25 February 1932 to 18 June 1933 had determinedly persuaded Comely to take government aid for the system but he could not sway the latter’s resistance. So, the quota of pupils that Embu District was required to give could not be met. The situation was so bad such that in 1933/4 the Kigari schools’ system had just three teachers who had been formally trained.\(^{251}\)

However, by the mid 1930s, pressure was mounting greatly from various quarters to have Comely to accept the much-desired reforms. Comely did not want Africans to get advanced education as he feared it would destroy their Christian faith. But his refusal to change his mind to accept the reforms irked the bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Mombasa. Consequently, the bishop issued an ultimatum telling Comely to either accept the reforms or he be removed from Kigari. Comely chose the reforms.\(^{252}\)

Following that, plans were made to introduce secular education in Kigari schools system. A missionary by the name W. H. Cantrell was posted to Kigari in 1937. The following year he started Kigari Teacher Training Centre in a bid to train teachers the Kigari schools’ system.\(^{253}\) Its pioneer trainees were numbering ten and they enrolled there in January 1938.\(^{254}\) (However, later that centre was renamed St. Mark’s Normal School.)\(^{255}\) The reforms that were undertaken saw many pupils of Kigari schools’ system progressing to join Kagumo GAS and the other two junior secondary schools of central Kenya, which were in Meru District (one was at Chogoria and sponsored by the Church of Scotland Mission [CSM] and the other at Kaaga under the Methodist Mission Society [MMS]).\(^{256}\)

\(^{250}\) Ojiambo, ‘Quality Education in National Development…’, p. 136
\(^{251}\) Strayer, *The Making of Mission…*, p. 149
\(^{252}\) *Ibid*, p. 149
\(^{253}\) Karanja, *Founding an African Faith…*, p. 237
\(^{254}\) *Ibid*, p. 259
\(^{255}\) KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 14 / 22, Minutes of the Board of Governors of the St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College, 1951 – 1963
With the standards of education raised, many pupils were able to progress in their studies. Those who pursued secondary education in the late 1930s and early 40s included Bedan Ireri wa Jonah Munyi, Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana, Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, Joel Mwigaruri and Njagi.\(^{257}\) Bedan and Isaiah enrolled at Kagumo GAS in the 1930s.\(^{258}\) In the case of Levi, Joel and Njagi, they went to the school that ran by the MMS at Kaaga.\(^{259}\) To qualify to join junior secondary school, this had Forms I and II, one needed to have finished Standard Six and sat examinations thereof. However, initially, when the standards of education were lower, pupils were being admitted to Kagumo GAS at lower classes.

Njagi completed Standard Six in 1942. The examinations that they took were prepared by the CMS. He was not only good academically, but also socially. He was polite and getting along well with other pupils. Pupils loved him much. Among his friends were Phides Habbakuk, Jerusha Wanjira, Olidah Stephano and Josephat Tai.\(^{260}\) He proceeded to Kaaga in 1943.\(^{261}\) He went through Forms I and II within the stipulated two years and left there by the end of 1944.\(^{262}\) At the end of Form II, Africans would sit the Kenya African Preliminary Examination (KAPE). The Form-II education of the time was equivalent to the Standard Eight of the 8-4-4 system of education that is currently in place in Kenya.\(^{263}\)

At Kaaga, he continued the streak of performing well in his studies. He had passed all the examinations at the school impressively. For that, he had been given many prizes. At one time he was presented with a material for making his school uniform. That gesture benefitted him hugely since it was a tall order to raise money for buying school uniform. His performance was best in languages, English and Kiswahili. He was doing fairly well in mathematics and geography. He passed the final examination so well that he qualified for higher education. But he did not continue.\(^{264}\) Instead, he chose to get employed. He took that

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\(^{258}\) Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March, 2002; Joel Mwigaruri, O. I., 21 May 2008


\(^{260}\) Jerusha Wanjira wa Murua Rui, O. I., 1 May 2008


\(^{263}\) Edith Wanginda Ndwiga, O. I., 19 April 2008

step because at the time, there was a high demand for Form II school leavers in the colonial public service. They were employed as teachers and clerks and the salaries were good. The colonial public service was experiencing shortage of staff at the lower echelons as there were very few qualified Africans. The situation was like that because African education - unlike that of the other two races in Kenya, Europeans and Asians - had been neglected for a long time. The colonialists, as they had a racial bias, had neglected African education as they would not have liked Africans to compete with Europeans and Asians for the top and middle level jobs respectively.

In the education sector, there was an acute shortage of trained teachers for primary schools. Those school leavers who had Form II education used to train as T4 teachers. However, teacher training was also available to those people who had not reached Form II because there were two other examinations, the Common Entrance Examination and Primary School Certificate at Standards 4 and 6 respectively. In 1944, those who graduated as teachers from various colleges in Kenya numbered 215. In 1945, 1946 and 1947, the number of graduates was 269, 216 and 340 respectively. Although there was yearly improvement in the output of graduates, the numbers were too low to satisfy the demand. For instance, in 1945 when there were 200,000 pupils in 2,000 primary schools in Kenya, majority of the teachers for those pupils had not reached Standard Six. In the Kigari schools system for instance, some people were getting engaged to teach vernacular only. There was also a time when just knowing the letters of the alphabet and numerals would get one considered for employment as a teacher.

Since Njagi wanted to be a school teacher, he decided to get training first. In 1945, he joined St. Mark’s Normal School at Kigari to train as a T4 teacher. The course took one year and he graduated at the end of 1945. One could train for various grades of teachers in Kenya depending on the level of education. However, the highest grade one could train for by 1945 was T2. The training was offered only at Kagumo Teachers’ College in Nyeri District. The training was available to people who had passed the Form IV examinations, the Kenya African Senior Secondary Education (KASSE).

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265 Ibid
267 Eshiwani, Education in Kenya..., p. 34; Bogonko, A History of Modern Education..., pp. 32, 62, 63
268 Bogonko, A History of Modern Education..., pp. 59, 60
271 Ndewga Citita, O. I., 15 April 2008
Though T4 teachers were few in Kenya by 1945, T2 ones were much fewer. This had something to do with the few opportunities for training the latter. In 1945, for example, 43 people graduated as T4 teachers while only 8 graduated as T2 ones in the whole country.\textsuperscript{272} This situation obtained because whereas there was a small number of schools in Kenya that were providing junior secondary education (Forms I and II), the number that was offering senior secondary education (Forms III and IV) much smaller. To make matters worse, these schools lacked structures and other resources; they therefore had to admit a small number of students even though those who were eligible were many. All in all there were four grades of trained teachers in Kenya by 1945. These were KT1, T2, T3 and T4. While T2, T3 and T4 were trained in Kenya, those who wanted grade KT1 had to join Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda.\textsuperscript{273} Those who were qualified to train for grade KT1 were those who had Form VI level of education. The examination for that level was known as the Cambridge School Certificate (CSC). It was taken in Kenya for the first time in 1940 at Alliance High School and the Holy Ghost College (the latter day Mangu High School). At graduation, the KT1 teachers were awarded diplomas. However, the qualification they got was equivalent to that of a P1 teacher in Kenya today. (The tests that Makerere College administered were known as London Higher Matriculation Examinations.) People with KT1 training by 1945 were few. In Embu District (it was covering the present day Embu and Kirinyaga counties), for example, there was just one person who had it.

This was Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga and by then he was a teacher trainer at the Normal School at Kahuhia, Fort Hall District. However, in the early 1950s, he studied for a diploma in education at the University of Oxford in Britain, after which he became an Assistant Education Officer in Kiambu District in 1953.\textsuperscript{274} Later, the fame of having studied at the prestigious Alliance High School and Makerere University College enabled him to become a leading political figure in the late colonial and independence in Kenya. Njagi had known Nyaga from their childhood. Nyaga had been born at Kigari Mission in 1920 and begun schooling there.\textsuperscript{275} That happened because Nyaga’s father, Nthiga, was living there even though he was from Mbeere. However, Nyaga’s mother was of Embu parentage. Nthiga had moved to Kigari as he was one of the people in Embu and Mbeere who were first to convert to Christianity and joined in the endeavour to spread the gospel. Unfortunately, Nyaga’s

\textsuperscript{272} Eshiwani, \textit{Education in Kenya...}, p. 34; Bogonko, \textit{A History of Modern Education...}, pp. 32, 62, 63
\textsuperscript{273} Makerere College was made a university college affiliated to the University of London in 1949.
\textsuperscript{275} Kul Bhushan (ed.), \textit{Kenya 79 Uhuru 15 Yearbook} (Nairobi, 1979) p. 210; \textit{en.wikipedia.org/wiki/jeremiah_j.m._nyagah} (Read on 10 May 2013)
mother died in 1932 and that prompted Nthiga to return to Mbeere. Later Nyaga transferred to CMS Kabare Primary School before proceeding to Kagumo GAS. In 1937, he was enrolled at Alliance High School, which he left in 1940 to join Makerere College. He trained there as a teacher up to 1943. It was in January 1944 that he started training teachers at Kahuhia.

KT1 teachers instructed trainee teachers at the highest levels. They also taught senior secondary school students, Forms V and VI. Those with T2 and T3 training would handle students at the lower secondary school levels and trainee teachers of the lower grades. T4 teachers taught in primary schools. However, majority of teachers in Kenya had no training. Most of them had not gone beyond Standard 4. However, in 1950, teacher grades T2, T3 and T4 were renamed P2, P3 and P4 respectively. As for KT1, it could be the grade that is nowadays known as P1.

Modern education and training were part of the community development that some mission societies - among them was the CMS - had envisaged would help to draw Africans out of their ‘hearth’ cultures so that they could embrace European modernity, which they assumed had civility. In that pursuit of modern education and training, Njagi spent a total of thirteen years in missionary-sponsored institutions. However, that stay, as the missionaries had envisaged when they attracted children to school as potential converts, was able to produce the most desired impact insofar as the interest of the missionary enterprise was concerned, faith.

Christianity

During his days at CMS Kigari primary school, Njagi not only acquired academic education, but also a new faith, Christianity. Every pupil who joined the school had to take academic lessons and also learn catechism. This was part of the efforts by missionaries to convert pupils to Christianity. They were doing so because Jesus Christ had given instructions to his disciples to spread his teachings to the whole world and to baptise those who believed in the gospel. The converts were to be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The CMS evangelism was encapsulated in four principles: (i) to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a society that was living in sin; (ii) God’s grace for those who would accept

276 Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi, O. I., 24 May 2008
279 The Holy Bible... Matthew: Chapter 28, verses 19 and 20; Anglican Church of Kenya, Baptism Lessons Book (Nairobi, 1977/1981) p. 27
the Gospel; (iii) converts could stand by themselves with the help of the Holy Spirit; and, (iv) all the converts could do the preaching successively.\textsuperscript{280} It was solely in that very spirit of evangelism that the missionaries had come to Kigari.

The first baptism ceremony at Kigari was conducted in the Easter of 1918 by Rev. Comely. During the occasion, only six people were baptised. They were Paulo Gatema, Johanna Muturi (who later became a priest), Stefano Cingano, Petero Gacewa, Miriamu (wife of Petero Gacewa) and Musa Nyaga (he was a close relative of Njagi and later he was ordained to priesthood and was usually called Bwana Musa Njiru).\textsuperscript{281} However, in the following year, the number of those who were baptised rose tremendously as more than seventy people underwent the rite. The number kept on swelling as new congregations were founded in Embu and Mbeere. By 1934, congregations had exceeded fifteen as efforts were being made to draw more and more people to the church (hence to Christ).

The converts had to be prepared well before undergoing baptism so that they could be in the know insofar as the terms on which they were to agree were concerned. The preparation had three stages and would take at least three years to complete. Stage one of the baptism course was known as \textit{Kirathi kia Uthikiriria} (Listening Class). In that stage, students were required to just listen to what the catechist had to say about God’s teachings. Students would attend lessons for at least one hour every week for a ten-month span. The topics that were touched on were the creation of the world, the origin of sin, the exodus from Egypt, the exile of the Israelites in Babylon, the coming of Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sin, the repentance of sin, the receiving of salvation, among others. When the catechist had completed the curriculum, he would administer an examination in verbal form to the pupils. Those pupils who would pass the examination would proceed to stage two. A pass-out ceremony that was known as \textit{Kurugama} (Stand-Up) would be held in the church to that effect.\textsuperscript{282}

Stage two of the course was known as \textit{Kirathi kia Ucaria} (Seeking Class). Pupils would be taken through a revision of what they had learnt in stage one. In addition, there were new lessons in other biblical teachings. The new topics would be like the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed of the Apostles, among others. When the lessons for that stage were completed after duration of about a year, the pupils would be tested. Those who would pass would be graduated in a ceremony in the church and they would embark on the next stage.\textsuperscript{283}

\textsuperscript{280} Ayot, \textit{A History of the Luo-Abasuba...}, p. 203
\textsuperscript{281} All in all, during his time at Kigari - from 24 May 1915 until his death on 14 December 1938 – Rev. Comely had administered baptism on 1,127 people. \textit{Ten Great Decades of Faith}, p. 28
\textsuperscript{282} Mugambi (ed.), \textit{A Church come of Age...}, p. 15
\textsuperscript{283} \textit{Ibid}, p. 15
Stage three was called *Kirathi kia Uthomagi* (Reading Class). By the time students were in that stage they had so far gained a lot of literacy and expectations were that most of them could take themselves through the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer (these books were written in Kikuyu as there was no church literature in *Ki-embu*). Studies of stage three dealt on more complex subjects like the Holy Trinity, the sacraments as well as the covenant among others. Most of the time was spent in cramming what the catechist had taught. Pupils would be asked questions orally and they were expected to give answers. 

They would be asked who gave their baptism name. They would be expected to say that they were given the name by their godfather and godmother in the case of boys/men and girls/women respectively in baptism wherein they were made members of Christ, the child of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. They would be asked how many sacraments Christ had ordained in the church. In response, they would say that there were only two sacraments as it was generally necessary for salvation. These were: (i) baptism and (ii) the supper of the Lord. They could also be asked what they meant by the word sacrament. The answer would be the sacrament was an outward and visible sign as ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby they receive the same and a pledge to assure them therefore. In this stage, like in the earlier stages, an examination would be administered to the pupils and it was only those who would pass would be baptised.

Having commenced schooling at Kigari in 1934, Njagi went through the baptism-preparation and was baptised in 1937. The baptism ceremony was conducted by Rev. Comely (who was the priest in-charge of Kigari mission) and was given the name Ephantus. At baptism some water would be poured on a convert’s fore head by the priest. Then, the priest would exclaim that he did so in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. After that was done, the pupil was assumed as having repented his sin; having faith in Christ Jesus; and, having readied themselves to follow the Lord Jesus. The name that was given at baptism was an identity to differentiate Christians from those people who were not so. Njagi became one of the 1,127 converts whom Rev. Comely baptised during his tenure at

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284 *Ibid*, p. 16
286 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age...*, pp. 12 - 16
288 ACK, *Baptism Lessons Book*, p. 27
289 *Ibid*, p. 27
290 Rogers, *The Catholic Doctrine...,* Article XXVII, p. 274
Kigari mission that spanned from 24 May 1915, until his death on 15 December 1938.\textsuperscript{291} However, he may have completed his baptism course in just three years; however, it was not a simple matter.

Preparation for baptism was a tough exercise that had many people strained. It was only those people who had sharp brains who could get through in the three years. This was so given that in case of failure at a given stage one had to start that stage all over. If one happened to fail again, there was no reprieve; he had to repeat again and again regarded less of the number of times. It was not until at the time he satisfied the examiner that he could be allowed to move forward. For that reason, some people would take so many years before getting baptised, some even over ten. There was an old man whose name was Levi Kenda. He was baptised after nine years of preparation. It was for that reason he got the name Kenda, which is \textit{Ki-embu} (language of the Embu) for the numeral nine. After he got nicknamed Kenda, with time his first name sank into oblivion completely.\textsuperscript{292}

Those who got baptised were happy to become members of the community of Christians. Therefore, they would confidently join evangelism. After Sunday service, they would go out to evangelise about repentance and forgiveness of sins to those who were not yet converted. However, baptism was not the end of the journey.

After baptism, converts were supposed to seek confirmation and it was after that they became full member of the church. In the rite of confirmation, one would accept the promises that God made to him at baptism. This showed ones continuation in the faith of Jesus and preparation to witness in public his/her faith in Jesus. God would confirm his promises to the converts and these promises were: (i) provision of life in Christ, (ii) forgiveness of sins, (iii) the power of the Holy Spirit, and (iv) eternal life with him - make them his children. Preparation for confirmation involved further biblical studies. The class in which these studies were offered was known as \textit{Kirathi kia Moko} (Confirmation Class). And the studies were very strenuous. The converts would be reminded of the promises God made to them. They would be re-assured that God does not change and for that his promises were always available to them. The studies included the Creed of Nicene, the Creed of the Apostles and the place of martyrs.\textsuperscript{293}

In the ceremony, those who were to be confirmed would be required to move and stand in front of the congregation. They would be asked questions by the bishop and they

\textsuperscript{291} Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 28
\textsuperscript{292} Mugambi (ed.), \textit{A Church come of Age....}, p. 15
\textsuperscript{293} Ibid, pp. 16-7
would answer them. They would promise to reject the Devil and do away with sin; trust God and his salvation through Christ. They would submit to obey the will of God and his commandments. And, by so doing, they made a statement confirming their acceptance Christ and promise to abide by him alone for the rest of their lives. Then, the bishop would lay his hands on them and pray that the Holy Spirit might enable them each day of their lives to keep on growing in his power. The laying of the hands was a sign of two things: (i) blessings of God, and (ii) being selected to give service to him.

After that was said and done, the successive students would join the league of athomi (readers). Athomi were the Christians who had attained full membership of the church and were also qualified to share in the Lord’s Supper (Eucharist). However, it was very tasking to reach the rank of athomi. Those who had accomplished that feat in Embu in the 1930s and the 1940s were not so many as they were less than one hundred converts. They were all from congregations close to Kigari Mission. As for Njagi, having been baptised in 1937, he was confirmed in 1944. But he did not the reason for that long wait. Life was not easy for the converts as they were supposed to watch their ways because if they digressed, there were bound to be penalised.

The community of missionaries was mindful about the faith of converts. The concern had firstly been raised in the seventeenth century and revisited from time to time to guard against memory lapses. This stance had been taken in a bid to protect Christianity from influence(s) that could make it lose distinctiveness. Towards that end, the missionaries were making endeavours to see to it that converts led a lifestyle guided by Christian values only. They would be urged to abandon all forms of their communities’ religious and cultural values. Contamination of the faith of the converts was feared would happen in various forms. These included the manner of worship that had regard to ancestors, polygamous marriages and traditional medical practices. So a convert was supposed to forsake them and such like.

Perhaps with a view to make Christianity appealing to Africans and therefore make more converts, in Kenya, CMS missionaries were contemplated to put some African cultural values into church worship. However, the idea was not actualised because it met stiff resistance from African church leaders. That happened because in 1921 the Anglican Diocese of Mombasa formed its Synod and it was constituted by both European and African church leaders. But it was also because of the idea for that long wait.

295 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., pp. 17-9
leaders. That diocesan synod was the highest organ of the Diocese for making decisions on both spiritual and administrative affairs and its decisions were bidding whatsoever. As such, African Christians had opportunity to voice their concerns and they would get consideration. By then the Anglican Church in Kenya had two branches, one for Europeans and the other for Africans. And, whatever the diocesan synod decided on with regard to African Christians it was taken by the top organ of the branch of the church for Africans, which was known as African Church Council or Central Council. The African Church was divided into Districts and they were being administered by District Councils. The Districts were in turn divided into Pastorates and those pastorates were made of a congregation or a number of congregations. The first Pastorates were formed in 1917 and they were Kabete and Weithaga.298

Pastorates were run by Pastorate Committees and they enabled African Christians to participate in the governance of their local church. (Later, the name of pastorate was changed to parish.) This happened since apart from the African clergy of a Pastorate being members the committees, at least five other Christians of the same had to be included there. The duties of the Pastorate Committees were among other things, to ensure that Christians of their respective Pastorates upheld the values of the Church teachings. They advised the presiding African pastor or European missionary on the disciplinary action to administer in case a deviation from the approved ways.299 (But that development of getting Africans to participate in the administration of the church had a downside. This was the case, for instance, in the Kigari Pastorate. Church elders had so much influence in the running of church affairs with disastrous consequences. The clitoridectomy controversy of the late 1920s and early 1930s could not have become as explosive as it turned out to be had it not for the hardliner position by elders Petro Gacewa, Johana Muturi, Musa Njiru and Paul Gatema.300) But it was not just at the pastorate level discipline was a concern. The Diocese identified a number of activities it deemed immoral. They ranged from polygamy to clitoridectomy, from traditional dances and songs to consulting with traditional healers, from drunkenness to fornication, among others.

In keeping with that, when a four-day conference of European and Kikuyu church elders was held at Tumutumu in Nyeri District in early March 1929, discipline among converts took centre stage. But during the conference, two vices, clitoridectomy and beer-

298 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 99
299 Ibid, pp. 100, 117
300 Strayer, The Making of Mission..., pp. 128-9, 144; KNA / PC / CP / 8 / 1 / 2, Harold E. Lambert, writing to La Fontaine on 15 July 1931
drinking were focused on. The conference recommended that members who engaged in these vices be excommunicated. But for how long, it was not definite. Then, on 1 January 1930 and 12 October 1931, Bishop Richard S. Heywood wrote two pastoral letters to the elders of the CMS Pastorate Committees of the Diocese of Mombasa on the discipline of Christians. In the letters, since clitoridectomy had long become an explosive issue pitting missionaries and their supporters on one hand and the opponents of the rite on the other, Heywood had urged caution in handling the issue. This was because he understood that there was no way the society could be persuaded to abandon the rite given how important it was for girls to graduate from childhood to adulthood. For that, although he did not say the opposition should stop, he did not rule out Christians who practiced it could be disciplined. But Rev. John Comely was strict on discipline of converts and that made him not to heed the advice of the Bishop to trend carefully in opposing the rite. This led to a crisis in Kigari Pastorate as almost all members left. School system also suffered greatly as angry parents withdrew their children.

Rev. Comely had prepared a code of conduct to be adhered to by his flock. Some of the things that were considered sinful were polygamy, clitoridectomy, adultery, working on Sunday, seeing traditional healers, theft, traditional songs and dances, traditional marriage rituals, puberty rites, taking snuff, traditional death rituals, among others. Such practices were said to be forbidden in the Bible, which considered them works of the flesh and it warned that whoever got involved in them would not inherit the kingdom of God as these practices angered the Holy Spirit.

To ensure that the norms were observed, Comely worked closely with the members of the Pastorate Committee, the church’s governing body. Upon conversion, one was supposed to avoid the above sins. Failure to which, they would be penalised. A convert who would turn polygamous would be excommunicated. As for those who would engage in clitoridectomy, adultery and seeking traditional healing, they would get suspended for one year. Those who would be involved in alcoholism and working on Sunday would suffer a six-month suspension. The same punishment would be handed to a young man dating a girl in secrecy.

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301 Strayer, *The Making of Mission*..., pp. 144, 149
303 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age*..., pp. 21-4
304 The Holy Bible..., Galatians, Chapter 5, verses 17, 19 - 21
305 Comely was a disciplinarian per excellence. For instance, in regard to sexual immorality, he had tried a lot to check it not only among church members, but also in the society as a whole. He had a reputation for raiding chiefs’ camps to free girls held there at night as they would get involved in sexual activities
Be that as it was, excommunication due to polygamy was the severest of all the punishments. A ceremony would be organised and Rev. Comely would declare the convert in question as excommunicated. The offender would from henceforth be avoided by other converts like a plague. He would suffer isolation. To recover from the trauma, with shame, he would end up seeking solace in the community of non-believers for social integration. This was a very difficult undertaking given that Christians and those who had not yet got converted did not have the same interests. So one had to watch out or else go against the church rules and consequently be punished. In the 1930s, drunkenness and sexual immorality were the main forms of indiscipline, especially among the youth. Njagi was never involved in these vices. But in the early 1940s, the church plunged in a crisis that was akin to the clitoridectomy controversy of the late 1920s and 1930s as Revivalists came to preach with a view to revitalise the faith of converts.

The doctrine that CMS missionaries had introduced in Embu and elsewhere in the world was Anglicanism. This doctrine was also called Anglican theology or the theology of the Church of England. It borrowed from the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century of the Christian era that persuaded Christians to seek justification by faith only. The Reformation had its roots in the words of Apostle Paul to the Romans that if one was made perfect through faith, he/she could live. But Revivalists aimed at reviving spirituality of the church by urging Christians to be faithful and embrace salvation that Jesus Christ provided for through his blood. Faith in the saving power of Jesus would cleanse unrighteousness and make one a child of God. Furthermore, even before the coming of Jesus, the great men

with young men. This was happening with the full knowledge of the administrators. Mwaniki, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Rule in Embu and Mbeere…’ p. 45

306 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., pp. 21, 22
307 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 242
310 The Holy Bible..., Romans, chapter 1: verse 17; Additional biblical reading on justification of man by faith are in: Rogers, The Catholic Doctrine..., Article XI, pp. 108-111; John, chapter 1: verse 29; Romans, chapter 3: verse 24; chapter 5: verse 12; 1 John, chapter 1: verse 7; Hebrews, chapter 10: verse 9, 10
312 The Holy Bible..., Acts of Apostles, chapter 16: verse 30; 1 John, chapter 1: verse 9
313 Ibid, John, chapter 1: verses 12-13, 17
of God such as Noah, Moses, Abraham and David had obtained the approval of God by faith.  

That revival movement arrived in Embu in 1942 courtesy of the East African Revival Movement, which was simply known as Revival Movement. This Revival Movement had started in Rwanda when in 1927 a CMS missionary doctor called John E. Church (popularly known as Joe Church) began missionary work there. Joe initiated the Revival Movement in collaboration with his aide, Simeon Nsibambi. The two had taken cue from another renowned CMS missionary by the name George Pilkington, who had claimed to have had a vision on spiritual revival. Church and Nsibambi prayed to God for spiritual revival and eventually the wave of the Revival Movement spread to Uganda. It was Joe’s blood brother, Rev. Howard Church, who was in-charge of the Highlands Deanery (it covered Kiambu, Fort Hall, Nyeri and Embu districts), invited Joe and his team to Kabete for revival work and they arrived in April 1937. Joe’s spirituality had acquired profundity in that regard while he was studying at Cambridge University due to influence of the Keswick and Moral Re-Armament movements that had sprung up in Europe in nineteenth century. The first one advocated practice of holiness and the other transformation of morality and spirituality through confession of sins, submission and sharing.

The move was due to two reasons. Firstly, need to help the church recover from the vagaries of clitoridectomy controversy of the late 1920s and 1930s. In its wake, the controversy caused about seventy per cent of converts to join independent churches where they were free to have clitoridectomy performed on their daughters and as well as to practice polygamy, among other African traditions. Secondly, the church had a weakness arising from its fast expansion due to popularity of modern education. Many people had therefore flocked to the church to get modern education rather than for the desire of genuine spirituality. For that, all what they were doing was a mere display that they were following Christian beliefs and practices whereas they had not completely immersed themselves to the central Christian doctrine. Going to church was just a ritual and sacraments did not have meaning. As a result, among the flock, abominable behaviours like beer-taking and sexual

314 Ibid, Hebrews, chapter 11
316 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 245
317 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 23
immorality were the order of the day. The missionaries had often decried the problem and longed for a time when there would be real adherence to Christian teachings. So some missionaries thought that the Revival Movement would put the church on the right track. The Revival Movement was spearheaded to Embu by five preachers who had attended revival meetings at Kabete and Kahuhia. They were Samuel Mugaru (who was blind), Gerishon Wangiri, Joshua Mukunga, Zipporah Murugi and Hannah Paul.

When these revivalists arrived at Kigari they boldly told converts that even though they were full members of the church by baptism and confirmation, they were still steeped in sin because the two rites did not necessarily lead to salvation. They elaborated that to receive salvation, Christians needed to acknowledge their sinful ways, confess their sins and the blood of Jesus Christ would wash them clean. The revivalists elaborated that even themselves had done that and for that they were sure they would go to heaven as they were ‘saved’. They challenged church members to be decisive as their time was up. To become ‘saved’ church members had to undergo a ‘new birth’ just as Nicodemus, the Nabi Jesus advised to get born anew. Emphasis was made on the need to believe in the saving power of the blood of Jesus and to make known in public ones faith. This doctrine unsettled converts because it did not appear to have been included in catechism while preparations were being made for the rites of baptism and confirmation.

As a result, the teachings of revivalists were not well received in Embu as was the case elsewhere. All in all, a small number of Christians accepted Christ as their personal saviour which meant that they had become ‘saved’. So having undergone that transformation, the ‘saved’ became ‘born-again’. Those who were the earliest to claim that experience were

318 Obadiah Kariuki, A Bishop Facing Mount Kenya..., pp. 47–48; Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 246
319 The Revival Movement was intended to invigorate the Protestant churches in eastern Africa. It was Rev. Howard Church of the CMS who organised the coming of the Revival Movement to Embu. He had his base at Kabete and was in-charge of Highlands Deanery that consisted of Kiambu, Fort Hall, Nyeri and Embu. He invited Joe Church who had started the Revival Movement in Rwanda to central Kenya and the work was started at Kabete in April 1937. Kariuki, A Bishop Facing Mount Kenya..., p. 132; Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 246
320 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 25
321 Ibid, p. 25
323 The Holy Bible..., John, chapter 3: verse 21
325 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 26
327 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., pp. 26, 28
328 Ibid, pp. 26, 27, 28; The Holy Bible, 1 John Chapter 1: Verse 9
Rev. Musa Njiru, William Njuguna, Timothy Munjuga, Godfrey Mugo Gaita, Nathaniel Gachoki, Isabella Wakina, Junius Mbugu, Francis Ndwiga, Jemimah Nguru and Bedan Ireri Jonah. But they did not get ‘saved’ at the same time and place. For example, Bedan got ‘saved’ in 1943 while he was a teacher trainee at the Normal School Kahuhia in Fort Hall (later on Murang’a) District. They formed a fellowship so as to flourish spiritually and be in a position to reach out to other people, too. As a result, with time more converts accepted to get ‘saved’ and the fellowship expanded. However, it was not smooth-sailing for the fellowship because the church hierarchy was against the Revival Movement. The climate was very hostile. What did not please the church hierarchy were mainly confession of sins in public and speaking in tongues. The fellowship could neither be allowed to meet in the church hall nor any of its members be allowed to address congregation there. To survive spiritually, revivalists had to look for alternative places for fellowship. Sometimes they could converge at their homes and at others even somewhere under a tree.

However, despite being rejected by the church hierarchy, the fellowship expanded with time. More people got ‘saved’ because the fellowship made problems of life bearable. Revivalists were friendly. They prayed, read the Scriptures and mutually tried to boost courage of one another. That way, their spirituality was greatly boosted. So Njagi, too, eventually got ‘saved’. But as he became a Christian because of going to school, so did he become a scout.

**Scouting**

In colonial Kenya, the administration pushed Africans to support the interests of the British Empire while the missionary enterprise endeavoured to convert the same to Christianity. Then, came the Scouts Movement (herein after referred to as Scouting), which was founded to make young people lead their lives in morally upright manner and doing virtues. Scouting was to excellently prepare the youth to work in the military and civil service of the British Empire and to execute their “duty to God”.

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329 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age...*, pp. 26-7  
330 Karanja, *Founding an African Faith...*, p. 246  
332 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age...*, p. 27  
335 Parsons, *Race, Resistance and the Boy...*, pp. 61, 67
purpose of moulding Africans to serve both the interests of colonialism and Christianity. In Kenya, participants were being urged to serve the Queen (the British monarchy) and God. However, in Kenya Scouting was started as an institution of the whites. The first Troop was sponsored by the Anglican Men’s Society at CMS St. John’s Church at Pumwani in Nairobi. That was on 24 November 1910.

But Scouting was started in 1907 by Robert Baden-Powell of Gilwell in Britain. He was an accomplished soldier in the British military. By the time he left the army in 1910, he was ranked as a lieutenant-general. By 1900 he was well known in Britain for defending Mafeking town in South Africa, which was besieged by Boers for 217 days in the Second Anglo-Boer War (October 1899 - May 1902). But due to the humiliations that the British army suffered, Baden-Powell realised that there was risk Britain disintegrating and its empire falling apart. So in a bid to prevent such an occurrence, he started scouting for boys. The first group to be trained had 21 boys was engaged on 25 July 1907. They learnt reconnoitering hence tracking, observation and organisation of elaborate games. This was at Brownsea Island in Dorsetshire Southern England. Scouting became so popular such that by the close of 1908 membership had reached 60,000.

Baden-Powell wanted to transform young people so that they could be disciplined and able to serve society. They were to be inculcated international, voluntary, non-political and educational outlook and dispensation. The Movement was to make young people embrace the following values: trustworthiness, obedience, law observance, respect to God and people, patriotism, usefulness to society, service to others and kindness. In addition, they were to learn about nature and contribute towards its conservation; cheerfulness and bravery in spite of difficulties; making the most of the available resources; and smartness in appearance, word, thought and action.

The Movement was envisioning creating a better world. And, its mission was to educate young people on how to play useful role in society. This was based on the principles

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337 Ngugi wa Thiong’o, *In the House of the Interpreter* (Nairobi, 2013) p. 68
338 Parsons, *Race, Resistance and the Boy…*, p. 119
339 Thiong’o, *In the House…*, p. 68; www.kenyascouts.org/scouts/scouts_info/kenya_scouts_association.htm (Read on 5 May 2013)
340 www.history.com/this_day_history/boy_scouts_movement_begins (Read on 5 May 2013); *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scouting* (Read on 5 May 2013)
341 *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Baden_Powell,1Baron_Baden-Powell* (Read on 5 May 2013); *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scouting*
344 www.history.com/this_day_history/boy_scouts_movement_begins; *en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scouting*
of (i) acceptance, commitment and loyalty to God, (ii) loyalty to ones country and promotion of harmony, peace and co-operation locally, nationally and internationally, (iii) endeavours towards development of oneself. In a bid to see the enterprise flourish, a person was not to be allowed to become a member of the movement unless he was to abide by the above principles. However, it was not until 1927 that Africans formed their first troop.\footnote{345 www.kenyascouts.org/scouts/scouts_info/kenya_scouts_association.htm}

While he schooled at the MMS Kaaga School in Meru, Njagi got interested in scouting. Back home, he was doing scouting together with Bedan Ireri Jonah, Joel Mwigaruri, Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, Stephen Nthiga Muraci, Ephantus Nyaga and Jacob Ezekiel. All of them were from within Embu District and had been pupils at Kigari. Njagi was playing a major in training activities. He was brave but polite. For this, his colleagues respected him a lot. Since he had a posture that was upright, it was wonderful to see him leading in marching. He was a good model to the other scouts. But he was not the overall leader of the group.

It was Bedan who was the chief scout in Embu.\footnote{346 Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, O. I., 8 May 2008} He was an outstanding scout; one in a class of his own. Born in 1922 at the CMS Kigari mission station in Embu, he schooled there until 1937. Enrolled in Kagumo GAS in 1938 and got involved in scouting. Due to his impressive leadership, he was honoured in 1941. This came about in the wake of the death of the founder of scouting, Lord Baden-Powell, on 8 January 1941. During his visit to Nyeri many years before his death, Baden-Powell had found the place so good to the extent that he made it his abode in the final period of his life. And not only that, he decided that after his death, his remains were to be interred there. So when the time came, Bedan was among those who were appointed to lay wreaths on Baden-Powell’s grave.

Moreover, Bedan greatly contributed to the growth of scouting in Embu. After completion of his studies in Kagumo GAS, he proceeded to the CMS Normal School at Kahuhia in Fort Hall District for teacher training. It was after that he became a teacher in Kigari Primary School in 1944 and eventually its headmaster in the same year. On July 13 1944, he started Troop 2 of Scouting of Embu District. He continued working ardently to advance scouting by training to scouts. He did that until 1955. In that year, he decided to switch from being a school teacher to a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. So he stopped teaching in readiness to study theology. He left Kigari and went to a theological college to train as a priest.\footnote{347 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002}
Njagi and Bedan had good time in scouting. He and Njagi were getting along very well and he respected the latter very much.\(^{348}\) Njagi’s experience in scouting could be said to have enhanced his character a lot. That was because besides other values, scouts were taught that there was honour in trustworthiness and that one should strive to make the most of the little resources available.\(^{349}\)

### 2.5 Summary

The entry of Europeans into Embu society in the first decade of the twentieth century brought great changes therein. The colonial rule was a thorn in the flesh of the society. This is because the rule by chiefs was inhuman. Chiefs were not handling people with dignity. They were brutal as they made people meet the requirement of the government. They were wrong in making young men and women to embrace moral decadence by engaging in casual sex, the results of which threw the society in a crisis as, for instance, as some of the affected women would fail to get marriage partners due to pregnancy. Therefore, colonialism as it was practiced in Embu was not safe at all since the phenomenon was disruptive to the established order.

But the colonialists were not the only ones wrong. Christian missionaries, too, were problematic. They contributed in making worse the chaotic situation the colonialists had created. By their rising against Embu customs such as clitoridectomy and polygamy, the people became restive as that was cultural imperialism. The missionaries divided the Embu into two opposing camps. This was so given that as one section of the society opposed the missionaries; the other one was supporting the same. This was a bane to the Embu since they needed to remain united if at all they were to fight the colonialists successfully.

It was in that turbulent scenario Njagi grew up. At home, his parents saw to it he underwent proper socialisation as he learnt which things were right to do and those that were not. They took him to school to prepare to live a life that would be up to par with his rapidly changing society. He studied well and trained as a teacher. Moreover, he did not leave mission school with only modern education, but also a new faith. Christianity entailed discipline. He also tried scouting. Scouting, just like Christianity, required discipline. All the afore-mentioned four influences prepared Njagi to be a responsible person in his society that was taking a plunge into modernity.

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\(^{348}\) Bedan Ileri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002

\(^{349}\) Thiong’o, *In the House…*, p. 68
CHAPTER THREE
NJAGI’S WORK BEFORE AND AFTER BECOMING A COLONIAL
CHIEF, 1946 – 1963

3.1 Overview

After getting modern education and training, Njagi was ready to plunge into the colonial labour market. As a result, in this chapter is a revelation of the activities that Njagi got involved in. First of all, he got employed as a school teacher and worked with passion. Due to impressive performance of duties, he was promoted to a school headmaster. After that he was sent for further teacher training and eventually elevated to supervising schools. But his activities were not limited to employment.

His being a staunch Anglican faithful led him to be appointed as a church elder. He sat in various organs of the church, including the diocesan synod. However, his services to the church were terminated due to a personal problem that led him to go against church rules. During the Emergency (1952 – 1960), European missionaries and African Christians who were not allied to mission-independent churches were in trouble at the hands of Mau Mau combatants who were up in arms to end colonialism in Kenya. This situation was obtaining so because the missionaries supported things such as denying Africans adequate education and fighting some indigenous cultural practices. This chapter tells how Njagi was coping given that he worked with the missionaries as an educator, church elder and a Home Guard. He was nominated by the colonial government to the Embu ADC. His conduct as a councillor is a matter of interest here. He was regarded highly for being courageous to team up with his colleagues to oppose to the colonial government’s use of military force against the Mau Mau movement.

Njagi was concerned about low development of modern education in Embu and desired to see the situation changed. He joined hands with other leaders to establish a secondary school at Kangaru. He became a member of the school’s board of governors (BoG). He also worked in the same capacity at the teachers’ training facility that was at Kigari. That, addition to being a philanthropist by supporting poor pupils made him contribute a lot in the promotion of education in Embu. Meanwhile, he keenly took care of his interests too. He ventured in coffee farming and commerce so as to boost his income. His joining the leadership of co-operate societies made him get to play a major role in the growth of the then nascent coffee industry in Ngandori.
In the examination of the leadership qualities Njagi in this stage of his life, the theoretical framework that regards great men as the makers of history was used.\textsuperscript{350} The theory was relevant throughout. That was so because it was found out that like great men, Njagi did things such as fighting discrimination in schools and supporting liberation struggle, which contributed to the development of his country.

The chief of Ngandori Location of Embu District died in 1958 while Kenya was under a state of emergency declared by the colonial government with a view to quell a violent uprising by the Mau Mau movement that bade to see Kenya regain freedom. Since the office of chiefs was immensely involved in the management of security, during the Emergency period the administration was careful while appointing chiefs so as to lock out Mau Mau sympathisers. This chapter dwells on the leadership attributes of Njagi from 1958 up to 1963 when Kenya gained independence from the British. Light is shed on how Njagi got appointed as the new chief of Ngandori Location in 1958 and his handling of the office to 1963 among his other activities during the same period.

Njagi’s appointment was done with much secrecy and caution. The office of chief had onerous tasks and he found the work quite demanding. Apart from that, the office was contentious as people were not at ease with chiefs because they were colonial servants and high-handed. But Njagi did not want to go against his moral values and that discouraged him the more and he wanted to quit. But he changed his mind and soldiered on. His working style was not usual as he tried a lot to reform the administration style by fighting impunity, easing tax burden and intensifying coffee farming among other things. But that was not the only government work that he did. He was a councillor on the Embu ADC. He was appointed to lead some of its committees. His reliability enabled the ADC to make progress in the fields of education and livestock development. His ability to work well made him to be respected.

In spite of their racial bias, the colonialists appreciated the work of African servants who contributed immensely in the running of the country. As a chief, Njagi worked excellently and the administration rewarded him with promotions. He was also honoured for his services as a councillor by being sent out on an education tour in Britain. But in those days, he had other contributions to the society, too.

He gave leadership to coffee co-operative societies. Under his watch, the society in which he was the chairman ran well as members were pleased with the payments they were getting for their coffee. But in order to improve the performance of that society, he organised

\textsuperscript{350} Carlyle, \textit{Heroes and Hero Worship}…, pp. 4-5; Caine, \textit{Biography and History}…, p. 12; Lee, \textit{Biography}…, p. 3
an education tour for its management and staff. But he did not limit himself only to the aforementioned roles. He desired to scale up his income. So he explored possibility for getting extra cash and that led him try commerce.

As a chief and otherwise, Njagi provided leadership of high quality. This was in the fields such as checking impunity, land reforms, promoting coffee farming and cooperative development. His accomplishments show that his leadership qualities enabled the society to make progress. Those qualities are what are described as the attributes of a great man by the British scholar Thomas Carlyle.351

3.2 Community Service
After school and completion of teacher training, Njagi started working in Embu District. There were many fields that were yearning for leadership of good quality especially from people with modern education. In this regard, with his credentials, Njagi was in good stead.

School Teacher
Njagi started working as a school teacher in 1946. He was one of the not-so-many-lucky people among the Embu who had attained a junior secondary education352 and undergone teacher training in those days. For instance, in the whole of Kenya, in 1945 when Njagi graduated as a T4 teacher, the other people who obtained the same qualification were numbering forty-six.353 At the time shortage of teachers in Kenya was acute so the job was not hard to get. He was pleased with the job because it was well-paying. He had strove so much to get education and training so as to escape the shackles of poverty. His starting salary was Shillings 45.00 and he recalled that that money was a lot by the standards of the time. It was sufficient for his family’s needs, for example, with Shs. 1.50 he would buy enough milk for one month. That money enabled them to live in comfort. He was lucky to get a job not-so-far away from home.

His first posting was at CMS Kagaari Primary School in Kagaari location of Embu District.354 He worked there as an ordinary teacher. The school’s headmaster was Ezekiel

351 Reference is made into Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship…, pp. 4-5; Caine, Biography and History…, p. 12; Lee, Biography…, p. 3
352 The structure of education system in Kenya was changed in 1952 and among other things ‘junior secondary education’ was renamed ‘intermediate education’.
353 Eshiwani, Education in Kenya…, p. 34; See also Bogonko, A History of Modern Education…, pp. 32, 62, 63
Nguu. The other teachers included, Timothy Njeru Elisha and Trizah Wamugo. Njagi got along well with them. Indeed, he even went as far as marrying Wamugo in 1947. Furthermore, Nguu the headmaster helped a lot in the process of the two getting married. But Njagi’s personality and style of working contrasted sharply from that of his colleagues.

He did his work intelligently and responsibly. He was mindful about his pupils and handled them with dignity. When pupils did something wrong, he would not give them corporal punishment as it was the case with the other teachers. Indeed, the use of corporal punishment as a correction measure was common in Kenya throughout the colonial era not only by school teachers but also parents and chiefs (and other administrators). But Njagi would instead talk to errant pupils and ensure that they understood their mistakes. He was accessible to pupils and for that, when they had problems that were beyond their power, they would approach him for intervention. His kindness to pupils was well known. Even pupils from the other schools that belonged to the CMS Kigari schools system used to turn to him when they had difficulties and he would help them out. As a result of that dispensation, he was loved by pupils very much. He organised scouting for boys. Moreover, he had a reputation of being the only teacher who read books. However, for all those years though, he did not teach at Kagaari only.

In 1949, he was transferred to his former school, Kigari. He was working together with Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana, Josiah Njue, Jamleck Mugo, Godfrey Mugo Gaitta, Bedan Ireri Jonah and Leah Mukami. At Kigari he continued with the streak he had started at Kagaari. He related well with his colleagues and treated pupils well. He was polite, good to people and liked by pupils. He was good arbitrator of cases as his decisions were fair. He was hard working and did things in an exemplary manner.

This impressed his masters, the missionaries who were at Kigari, very much. The missionaries were Rev. H. J. Church and Rev. William. The former was the one who was in charge of Kigari Mission. As for William, he was alternating between Kigari and Kabare

356 Timothy Ezekiel Nyaga Karanga, O. I., 17 May 2008
360 Edith Wanginda Ndwiga, O. I., 19 April 2008
363 Eliatha Ireri Kathuri, O. I., 19 April 2008

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mission stations. These missionaries used to monitor how CMS schools were being run as they were the sponsors. They were interested in knowing how teachers were working. In 1951, these missionaries recommended Njagi to the Department of Education for promotion as a headmaster. He was appointed headmaster and transferred to CMS Kiriari Primary School.

The missionaries were instrumental in the teachers’ promotion. This was so for apart from the educational qualifications one had, spirituality was also an important factor. It was deemed as the indicator of a person’s moral standing. Teachers were required to conduct themselves like priests. They had to follow the same rules as the clergy. The CMS had instituted rules to provide guidance on particular subjects. A person, for example, would not be hired as a teacher in the CMS schools if he was polygamous or alcoholic. One was supposed to follow the canons to the letter. Unless one was a faithful Christian, one would get nowhere.

Even at Kiriari Primary School, Njagi’s work continued to impress. Consequently, he was promoted to a grade P2 teacher. This was a great feat. During that time, it was only him and Isaiah Mbogo who had that rank in Embu. As a result of the great service Njagi was offering as well as his good conduct, the missionaries decided to prepare him for greater responsibilities. So they arranged for his further teacher training. He was sent for one-year training at Thogoto Teachers’ Training College, Kikuyu. He was there in the course of 1952-53. There, he specialised in languages and science.

**Assistant Supervisor of Schools**

After his return home from college for further teacher training at Thogoto in 1953, Njagi went back to teach. However, since he had for long showed capacity to handle tasks remarkably well, greater responsibility awaited him. In 1954, he was promoted to the post of an Assistant Supervisor of Schools in the Department of Education. The post was officially

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365 Leah Mukami Josiah Njue, O. I., 2 May 2008
366 Isaiah Kiura Karingi, O. I., 9 May 2008
367 The Anglican Church of Kenya Constitution: Adopted on 14 February 2002 and became effective on 16 March 2002 (Nairobi, 2002), Article 1 – 1, p. 1
368 Isaiah Kiura Karingi, O. I., 9 May 2008
369 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
370 Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
designated as African Advisory Council, Assistant Supervisor of Schools. He was ranked as Supervisor Grade II. In the register, his reference was Certificate No. T3/1950/327 R. Sc.\textsuperscript{373} Given that he had been his work well, colleagues in the CMS Kigari Schools System appreciated that promotion. They had no doubt that he merited getting it.\textsuperscript{374} The promotion brought Njagi great financial boost as his rose from Shs. 45.00 to Shs. 95.00 per month. This was a big sum of money by the standards of the time.\textsuperscript{375}

The Department of Education could not make such a promotion without recommendation from the missionaries. To make it, Njagi was recommended for the post by Rev. A. N. Langford-Smith, who was based at Kigari mission.\textsuperscript{376} Langford-Smith was the chairman of the African Education Board of Embu District.\textsuperscript{377} The process was such that the missionaries would recommend a person to the Advisory Council Supervisory Team of Embu District. Then, the team would forward the same to the Department of Education.\textsuperscript{378} For an African to get such a recommendation there was a number of requirements to meet. First of all, one had to be a teacher.\textsuperscript{379} The others were commitment to Christian faith, intelligence and high performance in the execution of duties.\textsuperscript{380}

The supervisory team in which Njagi was working was multi-racial. There were both European and African personnel even though there was the problem of segregation along racial lines in Kenya in those days. Those who were European were all missionaries. These were the ones who were holding top positions with Africans taking the lower ones. However, those Europeans were more educated than Africans. The missionaries who headed the team between 1950 and 1957 were Rev. Langford-Smith (1950 – 1951), Rev. E. K. Cole (1952 –

\textsuperscript{373} KNA / BB /14 / 40, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Education Department, File No. 200, District Education Officer, Embu District writing to the Provincial Education Officer, Central Province, 18 May 1956

\textsuperscript{374} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008


\textsuperscript{377} KNA / PC /EST / 2 / 14 / 22, Minutes of the Board of Governors of the St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College, 1951 – 1963, Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Board of Governors held at Kigari Mission on 5 February 1954, Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994


\textsuperscript{379} Alex Njue Nhakanielo, O. I., 21 June 2008

\textsuperscript{380} Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, O. I., 16 April 2002
1953), Michael Lapage (1953 – 1954) and Morris (1955 – 1957). The African colleagues of Njagi were Jotham Nguri Ngucu, J. Ithiga, J. Njogu, A. J. Nyaga and Marclus Njiru Kaguongo. But in the late 1955, Jotham left the team after he was appointed a chief of Kabare Location in Gichugu Division of Embu District. He started his new job on 1 November 1955. Before that, there had been other African assistant supervisors of schools who appointed to the office of chief and they were Stephen Ngige Macere and Bernard Makanga. However, the two had left the team before Njagi joined it.

The supervision of schools was a great deal of work which involved a lot of travelling. This was around Embu District visiting CMS schools. It was a large area as by then Embu District covered the current Embu and Kirinyaga counties. Supervisors were required to find out whether the schools were being run well or not. In this regard, there were a number of things to look into. At each school, the supervisors would see the head teacher. He was supposed to give an account of how his school was fairing and what it may have been in need of. They would also see all the teachers thereof. Teachers were supposed to be at their work station all the time and doing their work properly. In addition, the supervisors would seek to see how the teachers were going about their work. They would enter the class to assess what the teachers were telling their pupils and see what they were doing. In short, they were interested in knowing how the teachers were conducting their lessons. Teachers were supposed to have lesson plans. They had also to keep well maintained records of the goings-on in their classes. The moral standing of the teachers was also a concern. They were supposed to be of good behaviour as that had great influence on their pupils. Towards that end, teachers were to follow canons of the Anglican Church in the same way as the priests. In case things were not according to the book, the supervisors had authority to take remedial action. Attendance of school by pupils was another important thing. The supervisors

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382 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008; Marclus Njiru, O. I., 13 June 2008, KNA / BB / 14 / 40, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Education Department, File No. 200, District Education Officer, Embu District, writing to the Provincial Education Officer, Central Province, 18 May 1956; Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 14

383 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008; Marclus Njiru, O. I., 13 June 2008, KNA / BB / 14 / 40, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Education Department, File No. 200, District Education Officer, Embu District, writing to the Provincial Education Officer, Central Province, 18 May 1956

384 Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008

385 Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 14


387 Margaret Murangi Mbogo, O. I., 13 May, 2008
had to ascertain whether children were going to school. The discipline of the pupils mattered, too.

School buildings and the compounds were another concern. The supervisors had to inspect them. These had to be well-kept and clean. The buildings had to be in good condition. The walls had to be stable and well-plastered. The floors, too, were supposed to be clean and dust-free, with a good coat of plaster. As for the roofs, they were to be leak-free during rains. These conditions were aimed at creating conducive environment for learning. After inspection, the supervisors would prepare a report on the condition of each school. Then, they would brief church elders on the same. However, Njagi was multi-tasking.

Njagi was also involved in recruitment of teachers for CMS schools. This was happening as the schools were highly understaffed. There was acute shortage of teachers in those days. In a bid to cover the deficit, Standard VIII school leavers were being scouted for to fill the void. One of those people he netted was Alex Njue Nthakanio from Kawanjara, Embu District. His KAPE results had just been released and he had performed very well. He went to teach at Kigari. However, Njagi was multi-tasking.

The missionaries who were in the supervisory team were very friendly to African colleagues. This was despite there being segregation on racial lines in Kenya, which was was legally sanctioned. The situation was such that Europeans, Asians and Africans were divided as first-class, second-class and third-class citizens respectively. Africans being third-class citizens were regarded as inferior to all the rest hence they were looked down upon. As result, in the case of employment, for instance, wage rates were different. An Asian worker earned 10 times and a European worker 24 times more than an African one for the same job. In the schools’ supervisory team, African staff was not restricted on anything. They were free to use the all the things there were for work. As such, Njagi used that opportunity to train himself how to drive a motorcar using the Land Rovers they were travelling by while

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389 His performance in the examinations was so great to the extent that he got admitted to study at Alliance High School, Kikuyu. And for his failure to report there, Carey Francis, the Principal of the school came looking for him. However, he never went there as his father impressed on him that since he had already started teaching there was no need for further education. But he quit teaching in 1963 upon becoming the first Chairman of the Embu County Council. Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008
391 The situation that was obtaining in Kenya by then was that people were ranked on racial lines. There were four tiers. At the top were Europeans. They were considered as first-class citizens. For that, all the best of things (land, housing, schools health facilities and jobs, among others) in the country were their preserve. Then there were Asians, Arabs and Africans in the second, third and fourth tiers respectively with the quality of the things they were getting varying in that order.
working. Then, he went for a driving test at Embu Town and he was issued with a driving licence. He attributed the goodness of those European supervisors to their being Christians.\textsuperscript{392} They would not have liked to portray themselves in a way that was against the faith they were professing and they would have liked other people to emulate them.\textsuperscript{393} But Njagi also did a lot in promotion of education.

**Educationalist**

Less than two decades before Njagi was born, the British had colonised the Embu. Colonialism paved the way for introduction of western values to counter the indigenous ones. Modern education was one of them and it stirred rapid social change. This was because it enabled one to get employment in the colonial system as school teacher or a clerk and get paid good money. Njagi was one of those who were lucky in their childhood to go to school and obtain a good education. As a result in the end he was in a position to get trained and in 1946 employed as a school teacher. But that education came at a great cost. After primary education at Kigari, he endured walking more than 100 kilometres from home to the MMS School at Kaaga, which was beyond Meru town, at the beginning and end of each school term as he pursued junior secondary education in 1943 and 1944.\textsuperscript{394} This was because development of standards of education in Embu lagged behind other districts of central Kenya.\textsuperscript{395}

To discuss the issue, in 1946, the two chiefs convened a meeting at Kangaru of all leaders of Embu District, who included chiefs, teachers, councillors and church elders. The leaders came from all the four divisions of the district: Embu, Mbeere, Gicugu, Ndia and Mwea. There were Chiefs Muthang’ato, Muruatetu, Arthur Mairani, Gathara, Naaman, Habili, Justin, Mugera, Jokton, Johana Ngungi, Joshua, Mugushu, Fausto, Kiathi wa


\textsuperscript{393} For Jesus exhorted his disciples thus, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. *The Holy Bible*, Matthew, Chapter 5, Verses 14 - 16


\textsuperscript{395} In the 1930s, Chiefs Njagi wa Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location and Njagi Muruatetu of Gatuti Location were concerned about lack of a school in Embu that could offer education of good quality to their children. Due to dissatisfaction with the CMS School at Kigari, Njagi wa Muthang’ato had to take his children, Clement Kiragu and Tarasio Kathuri, to the CMS Kabare and the CSM Chogoria missions’ schools before finally turning to CCM School at Kevote. [Clement Kiragu , O. I., 10 March 2002] In 1943, the two chiefs started working towards improvement of education in Embu. They rallied their people to contribute funds for purchase of land at Kangaru, near Embu Town, with a view to starting an advanced school. [KNA – DC / EBU / 3 / 2, Political Records Part II, “Educational Establishments – Embu’] In 1946, they felt that it was high time Embu got a secondary school of its own since after Standard VI Embu children had to continue their education outside the district. The schools they were admitted to were the CMS School at Kahuhia in Fort Hall District, Kagumo GAS in Nyeri District and the tow junior secondary schools in Meru District: MMS School at Kaaga and CSM School at Chogoria. In planning to establish a secondary school at Kangaru, Njagi was greatly involved in liaisons between the two chiefs. Together with Moses Nthiga, he would be sent by Muthang’ato to deliver messages on that account to Muruatetu and they would return with feedback. [Phides Ngima Muruatetu, O. I., 10 May 2008; Duncan Munyi Elasto Kabusoro, O. I., 15 May 2008]
Mugwetwa, Kombo wa Munyiri and Manunga. Njagi was one of the teachers and they included Jotham Nguri Ngucu, Stephen Ngigi Macere, Bedan Ireri Jonah, Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana and Bernard Makanga. They resolved to start a secondary school at Kangaru without delay.

After that, they were advised by the CMS missionaries of Kigari Mission to consult the Embu DC, Mr. Wainwright, for authorisation of the project and assistance. The DC told them to divide themselves into two groups each of which was to go on a distinct mission. He told one group to go the provincial headquarters at Nyeri town to see the PC. They were to inform him about their intention. The other group was told to go to Nairobi to tell the same to the Director of Education. Those authorities accepted the request but told the leaders that they were to make their own arrangements to get teachers.

Following that, the DC, as he was the chairman of the Embu LNC, took the matter before the LNC on 30 December 1946. The LNC agreed to support the project and it organised construction of the necessary structures (classrooms and hostels) as from 1 January 1947. This went on well as by the thirteenth day of that month, the structures were complete. However, they were temporary as they were made of timber, mud, and roofed with banana fibres. In the endeavours, Chiefs Muthang’ato and Muruatetu played very great roles as they, for instance, mobilised their people to provide labour and building materials. Very early in the morning, they would summon them from even the remote areas in the northern crannies of their jurisdictions to Kangaru and they would return home in the evening. But there was still a lot to be done as there were no teachers and their houses.

It was very hard to find teachers for Post-Standard VI classes. The situation was like that as there were very few people who had studied beyond Form II. By then there was only one person in Embu District who had graduated for the highest teacher certificate in Kenya and East Africa, Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga. By that time, Nyaga was the principal of the CMS Kahuhia School in Fort Hall. He was the only qualified teacher who could be found, and this made the Embu leaders to reach out for him no matter what if at all the school was to open. So Njagi and his comrades went to Kahuhia and impressed on Nyaga to take the post of the principal at Kangaru. Nyaga accepted their entreaties even though at Kangaru there was not a

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396 The list of chiefs of Embu District was corroborated by a report by the Agricultural Officer of Embu dated 14 August 1946 on agricultural instructors, who were overseeing soil conservation measures, construction of terraces and gabions,

397 Matthew Munyi, O. I., 17 April 2002 and 1 January 2009


house to stay in. Nyaga started working as the principal and the only teacher at the school. He was teaching all the subjects. It was not until 1949 that two other teachers were recruited. However, Nyaga left the school in 1952 as he went on a study leave for a diploma in education at the University of Oxford in Britain. The starting class had 35 students, 30 of them being boarders. The students enrolled for Forms I and II, which was to take two years and they were to sit the KAPE examination. The opening of the school was great news to many people in Kenya and beyond. The pupils who got admitted there and the people of the surrounding area were very happy. Administrators, too, found the opening of the school quite rather appealing. The DC of Embu, Ronald Wainright, visited the school and even asked the Embu LNC to assist it with funds. The other administrators who visited the school were the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) for Central Province, Mr. Ottaway; the PC for Central Province, Mr. Wayn Harns; the Governor of Kenya, Sir Philip Mitchell, as well as the British Secretary of State for Colonies. The school also got a visitation from the advisor to the British Secretary for Colonial Education, Miss (later Dame) Margery Perham. The school became popularly known as Kangaru Government African School. But Njagi’s services to the school did not end with its founding.

He became a key player in its management as a member of its Board of Governors (BoG) and remained on it for very many years. In that capacity he continued to contribute to its development and saw it grow from a humble beginning as a junior secondary school admitting pupils who had just completed Standard VI, to one of the highest-ranked secondary schools in colonial Kenya, even with international students. A large percentage of its students were performing very in the CSC examinations, which that were sat at the end of Form IV, and getting admission to Makerere University College in Uganda and other institutions of higher learning in other parts of the world. Thereafter, they were taking high-level careers, both locally and internationally. The school continued to surprise. Political
developments that were taking place in Kenya in the late colonial era had great influence on the school.

By the mid 1950s, the colonialists had realised that Kenya was no longer in their control. So they had to prepare for handover of the administration to Africans. But given that colour-bar had created a situation that discriminated against Africans such that they could not take high-level careers, which was achieved through limitation of educational opportunities for them, efforts had to be made to prepare them for takeover of various roles in the country’s public service. This entailed rethinking the education policy. Secondary and higher education had to be expanded in a bid to scale-up production of man-power. Since Kenyan students after sitting the CSC examinations at the end of Form IV had to go for pre-university course at Makerere University College, in the early 1960s plans were mounted to offer that course locally. Consequently, in 1961, five secondary schools were up-graded to pioneer the pre-university course in Kenya. The course was called Cambridge Higher School Certificate (CHSC) of education and its classes were Forms V and VI. Surprisingly, Kangaru GAS happened to be one of those schools and the others were the Alliance High, Alliance Girls’ High, Shimo la Tewa Boys’ and Kakamega Boys’. That was an enormous achievement for Kangaru GAS. But had the school not made remarkable strides in development, it could not have been considered for the up-grade. But in that regard, Njagi had contributed greatly as, among other things, he was a member of its BoG. But the school was not the only post-primary educational institution Njagi was involved in its management in the 1950s.

In 1954, he was co-opted by the CMS onto the BoG of the St. Mark’s Normal School at Kigari. In the beginning, this institution was known as Kigari Teacher Training Centre. But for sure it was not known when its name had changed. It was significant in the development of education in Embu as it had a long history in training of teachers for primary schools as it had been founded in 1937. Its establishment had been prompted by incessant demand for reformation of the CMS education system of Kigari in Embu, which for a long time had dwelled on religious education and vocational training at the expense of academic advancement. The institution had admitted its first batch of trainees in 1938. But early

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406 Ojiambo, ‘Quality Education in National Development...’, p. 137
407 But in the early independent era, the CHSC was renamed East African Advance Certificate of Education and then Kenya Advance Certificate of Education before it was scrapped in the wake of the 8-4-4 system in 1985.
408 Eshiwani, Education in Kenya..., p. 37
410 KNA / PC/EST / 2 / 14 / 22, Minutes of the Board of Governors of the St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College, 1951 – 1963, Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Board of Governors held at Kigari Mission on 5 February 1954
411 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 237
412 It is even worth note that in 1933/4, the system had only three teachers who had obtained formal training. Strayer, The Making of Mission..., p. 149
trainees were prepared to each in elementary schools.\textsuperscript{413} Njagi was on the BoG with Sgd. F. Cecil Smith (Principal), Miss Powell (Assistant Principal and Secretary), Rev. N. Langford-Smith (Chairman, African Education Board), Rev. Daudi Petro (African Education Board), Rev. D. Lamont (CCK), Rev. C. Muhoro (CCK), M. C. Lapage (CMS), A. Bromley (Provincial Education Officer, Central Province) and R. Wilkinson (DC, Embu).\textsuperscript{414} The mandate of the BoG was big.

They had responsibility to develop the facility so that it could increase the rate of teacher out-put. This was very important given that there was high demand for teachers which many times out-stripped supply. In those days most of the teachers were just school leavers. They came up with great policies in that regard. For instance, on 9 April 1957, they resolved to buy more land at Kigari and put up a demonstration school there. The school was to be well-staffed and well-equipped to serve as a model of what a properly-run primary school should be to, not only trainee teachers, but also the primary schools of Embu District. The school was to be under supervision of the teacher-training facility. The BoG raised funds and procured the needed land at a cost of Shs. 46,146.30.

In addition, they arranged to start admission of female teacher trainees. They decided to admit the female trainees from Embu who were at the Normal School – Kahuhia, in Fort Hall District to be the pioneers. They built more classrooms so that they could admit a bigger number of trainees.\textsuperscript{415} Eventually, in 1959, the facility was renamed St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College. Njagi was working with CMS missionaries in the development of modern education in Embu District because he was a Christian. He had become so after he started schooling in the CMS Kigari schools’ system.\textsuperscript{416} Njagi being a responsible Christian provide services to the church in the late 1940s and 50s.

**Revivalist and Church Elder**

As a result of his being a staunch Christian, Njagi gained prominence in the Church in the late 1940s and the greater part of the 1950s.\textsuperscript{417} Since his conversion in the 1930s, he had not looked back. He was a keen observer of church rules and that made him to be respected

\textsuperscript{413} Ibid, p. 259
\textsuperscript{414} KNA / PC/EST / 2 / 14 / 22, Minutes of the Board of Governors of the St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College, 1951 – 1963, Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Board of Governors held at Kigari Mission on 5 February 1954, Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994
\textsuperscript{415} KNA / PC/EST / 2 / 14 / 22, Minutes of the Board of Governors of the St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College, 1951 – 1963, Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Board of Governors held at Kigari Mission on 9 April/, 1957
\textsuperscript{417} Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March 2002
highly. He was one of the people who got ‘saved’ early in Embu following the coming of the Revival Movement in 1942 impressing on converts to embrace salvation that the blood of Jesus proffered. He was one of those who enthusiastically strove to strengthen the Revival Movement.

In Embu, just like elsewhere in East Africa, revivalists suffered setback because of opposition by the church hierarchy. This situation obtained because of requirements such as the need to make commitment wholly and to treat believers as equals (whereas the institutional church had strata of senior and junior members). But despite the persecution, revivalists soldiered on. They painstakingly persisted in urging people to confess their sins and embrace salvation ‘through the blood of Christ’ and impressing on them the need to be of good morals. That won heart of many people and the number of the ‘saved’ increased. Negative effects of social change due to colonial orders also contributed to making people embrace salvation. Traditional institutions like the extended family that had provided strong social support had been destroyed. This scenario had engendered loneliness and vulnerability to many and thereby prompting them to look for security in large groups. As such, the Revival Movement began to play the role of a substitute group as those who accepted salvation were welcomed into the fellowship, where they would pray, study the Bible and encourage one another mutually. Meanwhile, revivalists strove to get the institutional church to accept them. With time, in Embu and as it was elsewhere in Kenya, opposition by the church hierarchy started waning and by the end of the 1940s, it was considerably weak. The church hierarchy ceased to be reactionary and revivalists were accepted in the institutional church. As things started to look up, revivalists tried to harness the gains and leap forward.

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420 Thiong’o, In the House of the Interpreter, p. 56
422 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 29
423 Ibid, p. 27. Note that even in other places, as time went, the Revival Movement started getting acceptable to some degree. See, Ward, ‘A History of the Church in Uganda,’ in Nthamburi (ed.), From Mission to Church..., p. 104
They organised conventions at colony-wide, provincial, district, divisional and parish levels. Colony-wide conventions were organised once a year and they attracted thousands of people from various parts of Kenya. The first one was at Kahuhia in Fort-Hall District in 1947. Attendees were 3,000. The one that followed in 1948 was at Kagaari in Embu District. Those who turned up numbered 5,000. After those conventions and others that were organised at provincial level, other conventions and meetings would be organised at district, divisional, parish and village levels so as to share the spiritual knowledge that had been learnt. Njagi enthusiastically participated in the strengthening of the Revival Movement. In the late 1940s He attended many youth fellowships in Kagaari. During such occasions, they would testify about their experiences, encourage one another, pray, read the Bible and sing praise to God. In addition, they would receive those who accepted to get ‘saved’. He was taking part accompanied by some revivalists from Ngandori. These were Moses Nthiga, Josephat Tai, Godfrey Mugo Gaita and Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana. This saw the Revival Movement gain tremendous strength. The development portended good things but that was short-lived.

Things turned up-side down as violent activities of the Mau Mau movement to liberate Kenya from colonial domination escalated in 1952 followed by the declaration of the State of Emergency in Kenya in October of that year. The Mau Mau movement was not only raging against colonialists and their associates, but also Christian missionaries and their followers. The reason the Mau Mau movement fought Christians of mission churches was because of the report by a government-appointed commission on education in Kenya that was done in 1949. The report recommended continuation of vocational training for Africans - just like the Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1925 had urged - until the end of the colonial era. The commission was headed by Rev. Leonard J. Beecher of the CMS. Missionaries supported the report whereas Africans craved for increment of the quality of the education they were getting. Another cause of bad blood was the missionaries’ continued opposition to African cultural practices such as clitoridectomy. The operations of the Mau Mau movement in Embu District (Embu, Mbeere, Gichugu and Ndia divisions) were headed by ‘General’

427 Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gachora, O. I., 16 May 2008
428 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age…*, p. 28
429 Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gachora, O. I., 16 May 2008
430 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age…*, p. 31; Ojiambo, ‘Quality Education in National Development…’, p. 136
431 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age…*, p. 31
Kassam Njogu, whose lieutenants were such as Ndaya, Kubukubu and Benson Njogu. Before his arrest in 1954, Kassam dealt ruthlessly with Europeans, Christians, chiefs, headmen and any other people who passed as traitors of the freedom struggle. Even after his departure, those who were left maintained the tough stance. Christians underwent a lot of suffering and many of them were killed. In Embu and Mbeere, among those who were killed were Shem Njeru, Timothy Munjuga, Joseph Karuri, Ephantus Kiura, Perminus Ndewiga, Gideon Murangai, Joseph Gakonya, Benjamin Kairici, Daniel Gacanjia, Wilson Muriuki, Zacharia Karani, Madam Josephine Kiura Erasto, Samuel Mbogo Kaunyu and Hannah James Watira. But even other things that were associated with the missionaries were not spared during the upheaval.

The Mau Mau movement also directed its anger on the institutions that belonged to the missionaries. Many mission churches and schools had to close down due to insecurity and some of them were destroyed. The situation was so grim such that according to a report by the Provincial Administration, in the period between June 1953 and June 1954, sixty-seven schools in Embu District were set on fire. In Embu division, for instance, Kiamuringa and Kanyuambora schools were razed down and the one at Gicherori was closed. The hardship that revivalists went through was so great such that they concluded that the signs of the end time that were foretold by Jesus – that were to be accompanied by great tribulations and extreme suffering – were at long last coming to pass.

However, even though Christians were having it rough at the hands of the Mau Mau movement, Njagi being a well-known Christian, church elder and greatly involved missionary-sponsored educational system as a teacher and later as an assistant supervisor of schools did not face any trouble throughout the Emergency years. His case was extraordinary since he was not only involved in just the afore-mentioned positions, but also appointed by the missionaries to head a security squad armed with guns to guard the emergency camp at Kigari mission station that accommodated mission-aligned Christians as

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432 The rag-tag army of the Mau Mau movement was divided into groups each of which was assigned to fight in a particular section of Mount Kenya and Aberdare forests. Each group was being led by a general. The general had field commanders each of whom was overseeing operations in a subsection. Kinyatti, History of Resistance ..., pp. 166-7
433 Ibid, p. 166
434 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 31
436 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 32
438 The Holy Bible..., Matthew, Chapter 24, Verses 1-31
they feared being attacked by the Mau Mau movement. The men he was commanding were such as Nelson Muturi, David Kiria, Dishon Kindoro, Mwaniki wa Nyaki, Jesee Mwaririe, Habakkuk Mugo, Stephen Nthiga Muraci and Eliud Ndwiga Micumano. In that capacity and although he was not appointed by the colonial government, he was considered as a Home Guard and therefore enemy number one of the Mau Mau movement. For that, nothing could have prevented him from being sought after and killed. However, that did not happen. The camp, too, was not attacked. Njagi was not even harassed as it happened to other teachers of mission schools. To make his case more puzzling, as an assistant supervisor of CMS schools he travelled a lot with the missionaries around Embu District. Sometimes doing the rounds alone riding a motorcycle and it was producing loud noise thereby announcing his movements far and wide but the Mau Mau movement did not bother him. Above all, the Mau Mau movement did not attempt was made to administer oath on him even though it tried to reach out to everyone among the masses. The reason for his being left alone was because he was in good terms with the Mau Mau movement. He respected what the Mau Mau movement was doing and thereby he got respected in return. He supported the Mau Mau movement morally. However, he did not do so openly to avoid the risk of being uncovered. When going around he would pose to be on the side of missionaries and the colonial government. Unlike many Christians of mission churches, Njagi liked the Mau Mau movement because he craved to see British colonialists leave Kenya so that African leadership could take charge. Despite the suffering that Christians faced during the Emergency period, the Revival Movement did not sink.

The Revival Movement in Embu remained afloat by faith. Revivalists kept on organising fellowships at their homes and that made their faith to remain steady. That situation turned out to be a boost to the institutional church because that way it was able to remain alive. But although Njagi fervently participated in the Revival Movement, he was not among its leadership. The leaders were Rev. Musa Njiru, Rev. Herbert Ndwiga, Rev. Bedan Ireri Jonah, Rev. Lazaro Ngari, Madam Nereah Wathumu, Obadiah Gakunju, Epaphras

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440 Njogu Gating’u, O. I., 1 May 2008
443 For example see Branch, ‘The Enemy Within…’
Kariuki, Daudi Karigi and Julius Mbugu. But Njagi was in the leadership of the institutional church.

Njagi became a church elder in 1946. He was drafted on to the Parish Council (formerly, Pastorate Council) of Kigari Parish. The parish was headquartered at St. Emmanuel Church, Kigari. The Parish Council made Njagi its secretary. And not long after that, he was given more positions of responsibility in the church leadership. He was appointed as secretary to the deanship and archdeaconry councils. (A deanship council was the administrative organ of a deanery, which was made of a number of parishes. As for the archdeaconry council, it was the administrative organ of an archdeaconry, which was made of several deaneries. In turn, several archdeaconries constituted a diocese with a number of dioceses making a province. The administrative organs of dioceses and provinces were known as diocesan and provincial synods. Provinces were the first divisions of the worldwide Anglican Church or in other words, the Anglican Communion. Parish, deanery, archdeaconry, diocese and province were headed by vicar, dean, archdeacon, bishop and archbishop respectively. The archbishop of Canterbury was also the head of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion, too. But in the latter case, he led nominally because dioceses and provinces enjoyed autonomy.) In those days, Kigari Parish was in the Highlands Deanery, which covered Embu, Nyeri, Fort Hall and Kiambu districts. This was part of the Diocese of Mombasa in the Province of Canterbury. The province was under Archbishop Geoffrey Francis Fisher (1945 - 1961). Around 1956/57, Njagi was made a member of diocesan synod.

Diocesan synod was chaired by the Bishop of the Diocese was Leonard James Beecher (1953 – 1960). Diocesan synod had ultimate authority to make and amend the constitution of the diocese. It also had mandate to pass resolutions on all matters that pertained to the diocese. Its membership was drawn from all the parishes of the diocese. For meetings of diocesan synod, each parish was required to send two representatives and they would be accompanied by their Vicar.

Kigari Parish was expansive and had eleven congregations. They were Kiamatogi, Kiini, Manyatta, Kianjuki, Kiriari, Makengi, Gacengi, Kirigi, Kiamavuro (Mukangu), Kibogi

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445 Mugambi (ed.), *A Church come of Age...*, p. 32
446 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March 2002
449 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March 2002
450 Bishop Beecher had succeeded Bishop Reginald P. Crabbe, who was in charge from 1936. Gathogo, *Mutira Mission...*, p. 176
and Ena.\textsuperscript{452} In this parish the elders that Njagi served with were Rev. Musa Njiru, William Njuguna, Eliatha Ireri Kathuri, Francis Njoka, Petero Gacewa, Jonah Munyi, Gerishon Karuri, Paul Gatema, Henry Kimani and Phineas Kangi. But of these elders, it was Rev. Musa who had most interest in Njagi. Not only was he the senior most, but also a close relative of Njagi. He loved Njagi a lot and craved to see Njagi become a lay leader (untrained preacher). He held that view because Njagi was highly regarded due to his strong Christian character. For example, Bedan Ireri Jonah, who in 1955 resigned as a school teacher to go for training as priest, had preference for Njagi being godfather to his children.\textsuperscript{453} Rev. Musa was even of the suggestion that Njagi goes to college for theological studies to prepare for priesthood. But Njagi did not embrace those views. Meanwhile, Njagi held not only the afore-mentioned posts in the institutional church. The CMS also involved him in its education system as a member of the Standing Committee on Education.\textsuperscript{454} Additionally, in 1954 the CMS co-opted him to the BoG of St. Mark’s Normal School, Kigari. Founded in 1937, the institution trained teachers for primary school.\textsuperscript{455}

He hugely contributed towards its construction of a new hall for St. Emmanuel Church at Kigari. The extant hall was temporary. Walls were made of mud and wood with a thatch-covered roof. But the new one was to be permanent. He marshalled various resources to get the project undertaken. He mobilised the youth to provide assistance, more so labour, given that a lot of water was needed for making concrete. He accomplished that with assist from Moses Nthiga and Josephat Tai.\textsuperscript{456} Additionally, he chipped in a lot of his money into the building of that hall.\textsuperscript{457} The hall was completed in 1952 and then consecrated by Bishop Beecher in 1955.\textsuperscript{458} The youth could have accepted his persuasion because he had a reputation of adhering to Christian values.

That was evident, for instance, when he decided to get married in 1947. He followed Christian rules on marriage as he organised a church wedding at Kigari. That showed what the youth were supposed to do. And not only that, Christians were required to choose life partners among Christians and Njagi did so. His bride was a staunch Christian. Her name was Trizah Wamugo and her father Karugano, who hailed from Kagaari, was a court elder. She

\textsuperscript{452} Mugambi (ed.), \textit{A Church come of Age...}, pp. 17-19
\textsuperscript{453} Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March, 2002
\textsuperscript{454} Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
\textsuperscript{456} Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gachora, O. I., 16 May 2008
\textsuperscript{457} Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 16 May 2002
\textsuperscript{458} Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002; \textit{Ten Great Decades of Faith}, p. 12
and Njagi had met at Kagaari Primary School, when the latter started teaching there in 1946. She had studied at the CMS Kagaari Primary School and then proceeded to the CMS School at Kahuhia in Fort Hall District, where she trained as a monitor up to 1944. The wedding ceremony was conducted by Rev. Robert. The holding of the church wedding was appreciated by so many people, far and wide. That happened given that he was a teacher at CMS Kagaari Primary School and in those days, school teachers and Christians were highly respected. Furthermore, Njagi had a reputation of being a good teacher to his pupils. That was stemming from his concern for their problems in addition to not administering corporal punishment on them like the other teachers when they did something that was wrong. The wedding was attended by a lot of people. Many pupils of CMS Kagaari Primary School were in attendance.

Njagi’s holding of a church wedding enhance his social status because Anglican faithful in particular and the rest of people in general respected him the more. That happened given that in those days very few couples wed in church. Around that time, in the upper parts of Ngandori and as well as Nginda and Ruguru areas, among Njagi’s the peers who had wed in church were Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana and Godfrey Mugo Gaita. Their decisions were regarded as judicious and they were held in high esteem in the society. But that honour lasted until he took a second wife. That happened in the early 1958. The lady that Njagi took as a second wife was aged 19 years and her name was Annette Wanjira. She was daughter of Naaman Kweveria wa Rugano. Their home was in Kirigi area of Ngandori Location. By the time of the marriage, she was working as a nurse at the Embu District Hospital, Embu Town. Njagi appointed his bosom friend, Chief Jotham Nguri Ngucu of Kabare Location in Gicugu Division of Embu District, to head negotiations for the marriage.

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462 Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
466 Jotham was his long time close friend and Chief of Kabare Location in Gicugu Division of Embu District. They had become
Given that had happened, whosoever would have argued that it was the bug that had made Kithami wa Nyaga, the ancestor of Njagi, to have a reputation for running after women and leaving them in a mess as he had taken kaurugu a number of time about one hundred and fifty years earlier had at long last caught up with Njagi, would have been forgiven. But that was not the case. His reason for taking the path of polygamy was something quite different. Rather than greed for women, it was the issue of the status of his family. After Njagi married Trizah Wamugo in 1947, they got their first-born child, Jane Gikuu, in 1948. She was born at Kerugoya Hospital in the present Kirinyaga County. Kerugoya was in Kikuyuland and it was for her having been born there she was given the name Gikuu for the memory. Gikuu is Kiembu (the language of the Embu) for Gikuyu, which is the name for Kikuyuland, its people and their language. But there was a twist in the saga.

During the birth of Gikuu, Wamugo developed complications to the extent that she would never have another child. So Njagi and his had one child, a girl. For that, as years passed, Njagi was in a quandary as he did not have a son to be his heir and there was no possibility of having one with Wamugo. The situation was a difficult one to him given that Embu society was patriarchic. Njagi’s daughter, Gikuu, would grow up and get married. And given that the Embu society was patriarchal, after she got married, she would have to leave for her matrimonial home. As a result, all the children she was to bear were to belong with the family and clan of her husband. This put him at a loss as there was not one who would perpetuate his line.

So with Njagi being confronted by the lurking family succession crisis, he felt that he had to do something. That was the reason he got another wife so that he could try to have a son. However, the option was problematic given that the church would not have had anything to do with it. Worse still he was holding a prominent position in the church as an elder. The church had canons that among other things did not allow its married members to have more than one partner. The canons were applicable to all members even to those who were leaders.
in the church. And, violation of the canons attracted penalties. Njagi was an elder who sat even on the Diocesan Synod and the Christian Council of Kenya (CCK). The former organ was the one that was setting canons for the church while the latter was umbrella body of all churches in Kenya. The CCK was the precursor of the current National Council of the Churches of Kenya. And since church leaders were supposed to be good role models to the rest of the faithful, there was no way church was likely to relent on him. However, despite having knowledge of the way the church was bound to respond to his taking a second wife, he did not keep it in the dark.

He approached fellow church elders and explained his situation to them and his option a well. As expected, the elders did not consent. Instead, they made efforts to dissuade him from executing the plan given it was against church rules and he was an elder. But he maintained that he was not going to change that plan. After he left the elders, they appointed three emissaries from their midst to go to make another try at talking him otherwise. The emissaries were Rev. Bedan Ireri Jonah, Phares Ndwigia Mairani and Phineas ‘Karico’ Nyaga (later he joined the clergy and became an archdeacon). They tried their level best to impress on him to rescind the plan but it was an exercise in futility. His wife, Wamugo, was also opposed to the marriage. She, too, made a bid to persuade him not to do it, but failed. Finally, the church left him alone.

So he went ahead and executed his plan. However, after he did his thing, the church took action on him fast. It removed him from all the committees he was involved in. Moreover, he was suspended from taking the Holy Communion. But he was not barred from attending church services. It was upon seeing what he had done that the other church members came to understand why he had not accepted the entreaties of Rev. Musa Njiru that he joins the clergy. It dawned on them that his reluctance was wholly due to his desire to go for a second wife.

The church was intolerant to indiscipline. It was against the mixing of Christianity with African customary practices as that was to allow syncretism. This stand emanated from the missionaries and it was centuries old. The missionaries had taken it as they sought to

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472 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., pp. 21, 22
474 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March 2002; Phineas Nyaga Karico, O. I., 8 March 2002
475 Onsesmus Mumo, O. I., 27 March 1995 in Kithinji, 'A Biography of Chief...'
476 David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
protect the Christian faith from dilution. In the CMS community of Kigari, rules against polygamy among other African customs and traditions had been formulated during the tenure of Rev. John Comely in the early 1930s. But even in the earlier days of the church in Embu, there were attempts to insulate converts (they were children) from traditions and rituals so that Christian culture could get instilled in them. But what the missionaries were pushing for as Christian moral norms did not have their roots in the Bible. Rather, they were from European context from which the missionary enterprise had stemmed. It was for that reason of the missionaries viewing things through the prism of their home background that they tended to dismiss all values of African origins as ungodly and therefore anti-Christian.

By mid 1930s, the church had wrapped up a list of what behaviour and practices it perceived as ‘evil’ and prescribed punishment for each of them. The ‘evils’ and their punishments were as follows: those who would do polygamy would be excommunicated; those who would do adultery or clitoridectomy or seek the help of a traditional healer would be handed a one-year suspension; those who would engage in alcoholism or do manual work on Sunday would be suspended for six months. In addition, doing traditional songs and dances, traditional marriage and death rituals, puberty rites, snuff-taking, among others were also deemed ‘evils’. For that, the faithful were advised to give them a wide berth if at all they were to remain at peace with the church authorities. For to the church leadership, all those were ‘sins’ and whoever did them could not purport to be a Christian and therefore drastic measures were bound to be taken against them.

Those Christians who could not resist polygamy in the 1930s and suffered the fate of excommunication were many. Among them were Nathan Nyaga wa Kagoce, Reuben Mugo wa Mugane and Daniel Kinyua. It was dreadful experience. Jesus Christ had set the guidelines for excommunication of a Christian. Among other things, he stressed that those who would be excommunicated to be put in the same league as the Gentiles and tax collectors. This was a very harsh treatment as it meant that they would be shown no mercy at all. Article thirty-three of the doctrine of the Anglicanism spelt the fate of the excommunicated Christians. At Kigari Mission station such Christians would be subjected to extreme humiliation. The church would publicise the matter prior to the execution of the

479 Nthamburi, The Pilgrimage of the African Church..., p. 33
480 Mugambi (ed.), A Church come of Age..., p. 12
482 Mugambi (ed.), A Church Come of Age..., pp. 21, 22
483 The Holy Bible..., Matthew 18: 15-17; Also see 1 Corinthians 1: 5-8; 2 Corinthians 2: 5-11; Romans 16: 17; 2 John 1: 10-11
484 Rogers, The Catholic Doctrine..., p. 307
punishment. This punishment was usually done in a ceremony. The big day would be announced and it was usually a Sunday, when worshippers had congregated at the church. When it came to excommunicating the errant member, the church bell would be rung seven times. After that, the priest would make a declaration that the member in question now stood excommunicated. From that time that member would suffer isolation as the other members would be avoiding as they would a leper. Due to the harsh treatment, that person, as he had now ceased to be a church member, had to seek solace among the non-Christian fraternity. But that was a very difficult thing to do because before that they had not been getting along. The society had become polarised from the late 1920s due to the clitoridectomy controversy. The situation was sort of a civil war pitting supporters of the missionaries against the rest of the society. But there were independent churches such as the AIPCA and they did not care whether one did traditional cultural practices or not.

Butluckily in the 1950s things had changed a lot insofar as dealing with indiscipline in the church was concerned. It seems so because Njagi was not even merely suspended from the church, leave alone be excommunicated, after getting a second wife. The wind of change had made things different. By the beginning of the 1940s, some Christians had started doubting whether church regulations were helpful in getting the grace of God. Moreover, by that time, the regulations that were being followed in central Kenya region had lasted many years. In addition, they were varied. In 1941, it was decided that the regulations be consolidated and after two to three years, they be reviewed. This was what helped Njagi escape excommunication and its accompanying extreme embarrassment that some fellow church members who had joined the club of polygamists in the 1930s had suffered. Meanwhile, Njagi was in the leadership of coffee co-operative societies.

Managing Co-operative Societies

Even though when Njagi became a school teacher in 1946 he started with a monthly salary of Shillings 45.00, which was by then considered as a lot of money and indeed it was meeting his family’s needs, he also itched to venture into coffee farming to boost his income. To seek to venture into coffee farming when he already had another source of income was neither a surprising nor strange move. The trend that was prevailing in central Kenya in those days was that young men who had gone through mission schools were inclined towards those

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485 Mugambi (ed.), A Church Come of Age..., pp. 21-2
486 Ibid, pp. 23-4
487 Karanja, Founding an African Faith..., p. 244
things that proffered opportunities for investment and commodity production happened to be one of them.489 The industry was by then most profitable in Kenya. In 1950, he became a member of Ngandori Coffee Growers Society Limited, which was also known as Ngandori Coffee Growers Co-operative Society Limited (NCGCS). This society was the one that was facilitating coffee farming in Ngandori Location. In the same year he established his coffee farm and by 1953, the trees had a crop that he started harvesting and delivering to Mwiria coffee factory. The factory was receiving and pulping coffee harvests from the upper Ngandori area.490 The NCGCS was the pioneer co-operative society in Embu District. It had been founded in 1945.491

By becoming a coffee grower, Njagi joined a clique of the famous in Ngandori. In those days not everyone could venture into coffee farming in spite that African people were aspiring to do so. This was pertaining as the administration was restrictive to Africans on that account due to colour bar.492 Indeed, the restrictions were so stringent such that even after one had been cleared to start a coffee farm, he was not supposed to plant more than one hundred trees. To complicate the matter, that was not the only restriction. The other stringent measures were like requirements for land preparation and soil conservation as they were not always enforced with sensibility. These were frustrating many interested people from trying the industry and thereby remaining steeped in abject poverty.

Coffee farming in Ngandori had been started due to spirited clamour by Chief Muthang’ato.493 In that endeavour, he received encouragement from Rev. John Comely of the CMS Kigari mission. Muthang’ato took bold steps to get the industry established as he wanted people of his location to get a source of income because they were poor and for that it was difficult for them to pay taxes and send their children to school.494 It was the biased colonial system that had delayed Muthang’ato from embarking on coffee farming.495
Steps to commence coffee farming in Embu began in 1933. The project started in 1935. It was undertaken on experimental basis and a block was marked at Kithungururu, on the lower end of Ngandori Location. That meant those who were to be the first to undertake coffee farming would not do so on their farms. The project was overseen European staff from the Department of Agriculture. Nurseries for seedlings were established and people were allowed to plant a maximum of one hundred trees (which occupied a plot whose size varied between a fifth and a quarter of an acre depending on topography). As those Europeans did experiments, in 1937 they delved into organisation of a co-operative society and in that regard they recruited Karanga Munyambu to work with them. When planting of coffee started, Muthang’ato and his njama (members of his council, who included headmen) among other associates, were the first to establish coffee farms. People were not eager to take up coffee farming but Muthang’ato was astute and indefatigable and he pressed on. He challenged his associates to be role models to people. In the early 1940s, he urged the Embu LNC to assist people to start coffee farming. Growers individually processed their coffee by hand and this was one of the things that contributed to low-quality coffee. So the LNC constructed a coffee factory, which was operated manually, at Kavingaci, near Kangaru, in 1942. But it was not until 1944 that coffee farming was allowed in the other parts of Ngandori. People resisted the move but Muthang’ato dealt with them firmly. In the upper Ngandori, among those who were pushed to plant coffee in 1944 were two of Njagi’s relatives: Abraham Gakoru and Moses Nthiga, the sons of Mbogo wa Ngicuru.

But after Njagi became a member of the NCGCS and planted coffee in 1950, he also joined the society’s management committee. Pioneer members of the management committee of the NCGCS were Muthang’ato, Mugwimi wa Kavuthi, Ayub Kithimo, Muruanjamiu Njau, Rev. Musa Njiru Nthiga and Ndwiga, with the Embu DC as the chairman and Karanga Munyambu as the secretary. They had their first meeting at Mutunduri on 29 April 1945.
Muthang’ato eventually became its chairman when it was registered by the government on 20 November 1946 and he retired in 1951 and upon that Njagi took over the mantle. But in 1952 Njagi resigned from the post. He took that step given that he was to go for further teacher training at Thogoto Teachers’ College, Kikuyu. Following that, the post fell to Ben Mbogo wa Riandai. But Njagi returned to that management committee after completion of the teacher training in 1953 and around 1955/56 he took over the chairmanship from Ben. He served in that capacity until 1960 when he was succeeded by Stephen Nthiga wa Muraci. Njagi alternated as the chairman of the committee with Nthiga until the NCGCS was liquidated in 1963. The other members of the committee were Lameck Mbogo, Perminus Njeru, Patricio Katharanjau, Njoroge Nguuri, Christopher Njagi Kwenja, Meshack, Jonathan Mbogo, Boniface Njiru Ngari, Ben Mbogo and Phineas Kangi.

When Njagi was chairman of the NCGCS in the early 1950s, the secretary to the committee was Godfrey Mugo Gaitta. Mugo had started working as an assistant secretary in 1947 and became full secretary in 1951. But in 1954 he resigned to become secretary to the management committee of the union of the co-operative societies of Embu District that were involved in the running of coffee industry, the Embu Coffee Co-operative Union (ECCU), which was formed in that year. Then, Gerishon Mbogo was recruited for the post but he left in 1956 for unknown reason(s) and eventually Nelson Mwaniki Gatema became his replacement.

The NCGCS had its head office at Kavingaci where coffee factory was located. The factory was some distance from Kithungururu where initial coffee farms were located. That was so because of availability of water from Kavingaci River. But from the time coffee farming spread northwards to the middle and upper zones of Ngandori Location, it became difficult for the factory to cope with increased volumes of coffee harvests. Furthermore, the distance to the factory was rather long for the farmers of northern Ngandori and therefore an inconvenience. As a result, it became necessary to put up another factory at a convenient point and Mwiria was found suitable. The factory became operational in 1953. After the
rise of the NCGCS, ten more co-operative societies that were dealing with coffee were registered in Embu District. They were Kagaari (1 September 1950), Kyeni (1 September 1950), Gaturi (4 October 1950), followed on. In Gichugu Division, Baragwi (26 October 1953), Kibirigwi (15 December 1953), Kabare (18 January 1954), Ngariama (4 April 1954), Inoi (6 April 1954), Mwirua (8 May 1954) and Mutira (22 May 1954).\(^{514}\) In order to boost the running of the coffee industry in Embu District, leaders of these eleven co-operative societies formed ECCU, which was registered on 22 November 1954 under the Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1945.\(^{515}\)

The ECCU had the mandate of transporting pulped and dried coffee beans to the Coffee Marketing Board (CMB) in batches for initial payment.\(^{516}\) From there the beans were taken to the Kenya Planters Co-operative Union (KPCU) - as every coffee co-operative society was a member of the KPCU - for hulling and sale in auction, after which a second payment was made.\(^{517}\) Njagi was also a notable player in the running of the ECCU because while he was the chairman of the NCGCS, he was also required to sit on the management committee of it. That was possible since the ECCU committee was composed of the chairmen of the affiliate societies.\(^{518}\) He was chairman of the ECCU committee in 1955-7 and 1959.\(^{519}\)

Co-operative societies played a great role in the development of modern agriculture among Africans in colonial Kenya. This was more so after the passage of the Co-operative Societies Ordinance in 1945. This was so given the legislation was intended to promote participation of Africans in the co-operative movement, which before that was not possible due to lack of a legal framework.\(^{520}\) Co-operative societies helped so much since Africans lacked capacity to individually undertake processing and marketing of agricultural products. Coffee was one of the crops that impelled Africans to form co-operative societies as it was so demanding to process and market.\(^{521}\) Njagi had been involved in the leadership of co-operative societies from the early 1950s. In 1960, he became chairman of the NCGCS and went through trying

\(^{514}\) KNA / TR / 8 / 332, Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Ltd, 1954 – 1960. See “THE MEMORANDUM ON CENTRAL PROVINCE IMPOSITION OF COFFEE LEVY ON BOTH CHERRY AND MBUNI” by the Chairman of the Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Ltd writing to the chairman of the Central Province Marketing Board on 5 March 1960

\(^{515}\) This ordinance was crafted with a view to promote participation of Africans in the co-operative movement so as to improve their economic standing. Ibid

\(^{516}\) The CMB was later renamed Coffee Board of Kenya with authority to issue licence to coffee producers and processors; to monitor how they were going about their work; and to co-ordinate research on coffee production. Mwangi (ed.), Coffee Growers..., pp. 9, 10

\(^{517}\) Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture..., pp. 119-120; Mwangi (ed.), Coffee Growers..., pp. 9, 10

\(^{518}\) Marclus Njiru, O. I., 13 June 2008

\(^{519}\) KNA / TR / 8 / 332, Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Ltd, 1954 – 1960


\(^{521}\) Matson, ‘Agriculture’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, p. 32
experiences because the administration very bitter with leaders of co-operative societies on various issues.\textsuperscript{522}

When the Commissioner for Co-operatives Development, M. E. W. North, visited Embu between 10 and 15 January 1960, he, too, registered displeasure on the pathetic maintenance of coffee farms to the officials of the departments of co-operatives and agriculture. He lamented that coffee societies in the district were not doing enough insofar as observance of coffee farming guidelines was concerned. He strongly advised the societies’ leaders to avoid being lenient on errant farmers. Further, he urged them to work closely with the departments of co-operatives and agriculture to see to it that the said cultural practices were taken into account. Moreover, he warned that if the matter was not given due consideration, the drive to plant more coffee in the area risked being halted.\textsuperscript{523} However, the afore-discussed was not the only problem leaders of Embu coffee co-operative societies were faced with.\textsuperscript{524}

In order to ensure that co-operative societies were run well and thereby benefit their members, the 1945 ordinance had placed the responsibility of supervision of co-operative

\textsuperscript{522} In 1960, the Director of Co-operatives (DoC) came out blazing at co-operative societies’ leaders for the poor management of those institutions. (Ochieng’ (ed.), \textit{Themes in Kenyan History}, pp. 177-8, pp. 177-78; KNA / BB / PC/ EST / 1 / 120, Minutes of meetings of District Commissioners, Central Province, 28 September 1959 – 2 November 1961, Minutes 81/61, Coffee Standards and Culture) In addition, he was concerned that they were not doing their bit with regard to coffee farming as it was not at par with rules of proper of its husbandry. They had responsibility there since coffee co-operative societies were required to monitor coffee farming as that was what the rules of the year 1951 stipulated. With regard to the said rules, they were spelt out in the two subsidiary legislations that were passed in 1951: the African Grown Coffee (Amendment) Rules GN 100/1951 and the African Grown Coffee (Amendment No. 2) Rules GN 1062/1951.

The Colonial administration had a penchant for laws, rules and regulations and taking steps to see to it that they were observed so as to ensure that things in the country run well. In the case of coffee farming, attention was given early. In 1904, the Coffee Leaf Disease Ordinance No. 2 was passed. It was aimed at ensuring that diseased coffee plants were not brought into the country. Then, in 1910, another statute, the Diseases of Plants Prevention Ordinance No. 7 was enacted on the same for all plants. However, coffee got more attention than the other plants. Apart from seeking to prevent importation of infested plants and seeds, the law wanted coffee farms visited for inspection whether coffee trees were taken care of well and it was against movement coffee plants from Kiambu, Ruiru, Thika and Fort Hall as they were designated places for coffee farming. Whosoever did so was reliable to be slapped with a fine or an imprisonment or both. In colonial Kenya, Africans were allowed to start coffee farming in 1934. However, this was limited to Embu, Meru and Kisi areas. Following that move, in 1934, the Native-grown Coffee Rules were put in place. Coffee farming could not be allowed where control and supervision were seen as not economical to be carried out. An African had to obtain a permit from officials of the Department of Agriculture before s/he could establish a coffee farm. But a permit could not be issued to whosoever asked for it. Firstly, the officials had to visit the farm in question to see whether it was prepared well. In 1949, the year in which Africans of Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri districts were allowed into coffee farming, even more stringent rules on the industry were made. (Koith-Ogendo, \textit{Tenants of the Crown…}, pp. 182, 116-9; Kanogo, ‘Kenya and the Depression…’; in Ochieng’ (ed.), \textit{A Modern History of Kenya}, p. 124; Mwangi (ed.), \textit{Coffee Growers Hand-Book}, p. 9

\textsuperscript{523} KNA / TR / 1 / 266, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operatives Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 5 / 5, Commissioner for Co-operatives Development, M. E. W. North writing on 27 January 1960

\textsuperscript{524} There was rampant corruption among the co-operative societies in Kenya, which was a serious threat to very their existence. Africans formed very many co-operative societies after the passage of the afore-mentioned ordinance. By 1952, they had registered 160 and by 1958 the number reached 400. Due to the urge to leap from the providence of colonial capitalism, Africans scaled up their drive to register co-operative societies so rapid such that it did not need even a one-fifth of the time span that had elapsed since 1945 to even more than double the number as by the end of 1960, the country had 847 co-operative societies. However, it was not all well for the sector because so many of these institutions did not function well due to the lack of managerial skills, finance and supervision. There was also the problem of rampant theft. As a result, many of them were falling by the wayside. (Kanogo, ‘Co-operatives’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), \textit{Themes in Kenyan History}, pp. 177-8; Mucai-Kattambo, Co-operatives..., p. 12)
societies on the Registrar of Co-operatives. Under Section 42 thereof, the registrar had authority to make an inquiry into the running and dealings of a co-operative society so as to check mismanagement. If he could not be available to undertake that task, he was at liberty to appoint a person to do the needful for him.\textsuperscript{525} The law also created a favourable atmosphere for the registrar to do his work. Under Section 59, any society that would have refused to give the information that the registrar would require in the course of an inquiry was said to have committed an offence. The same also applied to an official of a society or its member if they refused to cooperate in that regard.\textsuperscript{526} However, in spite of the mismanagement of co-operative societies that obtained, the registrar was not doing his work as required. This was due to acute shortage of staff that the Department of Co-operatives grappled with.\textsuperscript{527}

On the issue of supervision of co-operatives societies, leaders of co-operative societies of Embu District were at odds with the administration. The situation had arose due to failure by the Department of Co-operatives to send out inspectors to see how the societies were doing and then pass that mandate to the management committees. The committees were thus required to ask co-operative members to contribute money towards salaries for the inspection officers through deductions from their coffee earnings. The committees were also charged with recruiting to officers. However, it was not just Embu district co-operative societies only that were required to shoulder that responsibility, but also all the others in the country. With regard to the case of those of Embu District, in 1960 things were not moving according to the book because members were vehemently opposed to the arrangement. They did not want to have their money spent on the salaries of the inspection officers. Against that backdrop, the management committees suffered so much since they could not have the required deductions made without the consent of the members. The members’ refusal was fanatical. The situation continued to worsen since in 1961, the co-operatives officer of the district became so desperate such that he threatened taking the committees to court.\textsuperscript{528}

Even as corruption was rampant in Embu co-operative societies, the problem was with the staff rather than the management committees. The problem was so serious that in 1959 the police was sometimes called in to investigate cases.\textsuperscript{529} In one of the cases, the general manager of the ECCU stole money and flew to Britain. To aggravate the situation, the person who replaced that manager also engaged in theft of money. He could not account

\textsuperscript{525} Mucai-Kattambo, Co-operatives..., p. 8
\textsuperscript{526} Ibid, p. 8
\textsuperscript{527} Kanogo, ‘Co-operatives’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, pp. 177-8
\textsuperscript{528} KNA / BB / PC/ EST / 1 / 120, Minutes of meetings of District Commissioners, Central Province, 28 September 1959 – 2 November 1961, Minutes 81/61, Coffee Standards and Culture
\textsuperscript{529} KNA / DC / E / 1 / 18, Embu District Annual Report - 1959
for Shs. 30,000.00 (which was a very large sum of money in those days) belonging to the ECCU. As a result of those thefts, there was much discontent among co-operative societies' leaders in the district.\footnote{KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 19, Embu District Annual Report - 1960} The Provincial Administration tried to assist to get the situation under control. The Embu DC, Peter Hindley Brown, strove to get the suspects prosecuted. In the case of the general manager who had fled to England, the DC was making frantic efforts to get him brought back to face the law. It was just by sheer luck that the general manager had bolted before the DC got wind of the alleged crime.\footnote{KNA / DC / E / 1 / 20, Embu District Annual Report – 1961; KNA / BB / PC / EST / 1 / 120, Minutes of meetings of District Commissioners, Central Province, 28 September 1959 – 2 November, 1961, Minutes 81/61, Coffee Standards and Culture}

Good management of co-operative societies was vital for good results. This entailed use of efficient and effective management practices. In the case of coffee co-operative societies, although what coffee farmers could get as payout depended on the quality of their harvest and price at the auction, the way co-operative societies ran their operations, had great bearing as well. If the harvest was of good quality, the way it was processed at the factory could retain its quality or lose it. The process was very delicate. So the factory staff had to handle coffee with uttermost care. And for it to do so, the management committee and the managerial staff of the society had to vigilant. If they failed on their part, farmers stood to suffer losses. Therefore, the capacity of the factories to process coffee well was one of the indicators of whether co-operative societies’ leadership was capable and responsible. Njagi had joined the leadership of co-operative movement in the early 1950s.\footnote{Jerusha Wanjira wa Murua wa Rui, O. I., 7 May 2008; Leah Mukami Josiah Njue, O. I., 2 May 2008} He alternated as chairman of the management committee of the NCGCS with Stephen Ntihiga Muraci.\footnote{Nelson Mwaniki Gakunga, O. I., 27 May 2008; 14 and 18 January 2011} In 1960, he took over the chairmanship.\footnote{Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008}

He contributed greatly to the development of the NCGCS. Members were able to get the most from their coffee harvests. This happened as he was stickler for good management. The affairs of the NCGCS were run well as the payouts were good.\footnote{Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, O. I., 16 April 2002} It was in 1961 that members got a payout of Shs. 3.00 per 1 pound (0.4536 kilogrammes) of coffee harvest.\footnote{John Njagi Nyaga Gakungi, O. I., 30 April 2008} Due to the good returns for coffee, the people of Ngandori were able to improve their standards of living. Women, for instance, started buying dresses of a material that was known as tindigo. This material was popular as it was of very high quality. The women even lyrically registered their pride in the material and the glory of Ngandori. The song they composed went in part as follows:

\begin{quote}
KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 19, Embu District Annual Report - 1960
KNA / DC / E / 1 / 20, Embu District Annual Report – 1961; KNA / BB / PC / EST / 1 / 120, Minutes of meetings of District Commissioners, Central Province, 28 September 1959 – 2 November, 1961, Minutes 81/61, Coffee Standards and Culture
Jerusha Wanjira wa Murua wa Rui, O. I., 7 May 2008; Leah Mukami Josiah Njue, O. I., 2 May 2008
Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, O. I., 16 April 2002
John Njagi Nyaga Gakungi, O. I., 30 April 2008
Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008
\end{quote}
Wona mwiritu uria wina tindigo,  
Niwa Ngandori, vururi wa mbeca.\(^ {537} \)

An English version of the stanza is here below:
If you see a lady dressed in tindigo,  
She is from Ngandori, the land of money.

To improve on the management of the NCGCS, Njagi knew the importance of education to its management committee and staff. In 1963, he organised an education trip for the management committee and the staff of the NCGCS to Tanganyika. They were to learn better skills for managing co-operative societies and methods of farming and processing coffee.\(^ {538} \) Coffee had diseases such as antestia, mealy bug, thrips, stem borer, leaf rust and coffee berry disease\(^ {539} \) and the management committees of co-operative societies were responsible for taking disease control measures like spraying.\(^ {540} \) Coffee processing involved pulping, fermenting, washing, grading and drying.\(^ {541} \) If that was not handled well, quality would be compromised, which would affect returns. On the He took that step as the co-operative movement of Tanganyika was many times ahead of that of Kenya. Earlier, co-operative societies’ leaders of Embu had made some visits there and they had talked about the great wonders they had seen.\(^ {542} \) Just like in Kenya, coffee farming had been introduced in Tanganyika by the end of the nineteenth century.\(^ {543} \)

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\(^ {537} \) Jeremiah Njeru Gatwa, O. I., 30 April 2008  
\(^ {539} \) Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture…, p. 34  
\(^ {540} \) KNA / TR / 8 / 332, Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Ltd, 1954 – 1960  
\(^ {541} \) Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture…, p. 34  
\(^ {542} \) For instance, there were leaders who had toured there in October 1961 courtesy of the ECCU. See, KNA / TR / 1 / 283, Republic of Kenya, Director of Co-operative Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 7 / 1  
\(^ {543} \) Coffee farming in Tanganyika had been started by Christian missionaries in 1899. This was at Kilema on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. [Hans Ruthenberg, Agricultural Development in Tanganyika (Berlin, 1994) p. 1] There was no restriction on Africans growing coffee in Tanganyika. [Maxon, Conflict and Accommodation…, p. 101] The Chagga, who were the inhabitants of the area, were able to start cultivating the crop in 1908 and they did not look back. By 1916, they had planted some 14,000 coffee trees.\(^ {544} \) Fast forward to 1946, coffee farming had spread far and wide in Tanganyika, with Kilimanjaro area alone having 12,000,000 coffee trees.\(^ {545} \) Participation of Africans in the making of co-operative societies had started in the 1920s. On 18 January 1925, coffee growers among the Chagga formed The Kilimanjaro Native Coffee Planters Association (KNCPA) to facilitate the running of their coffee industry.\(^ {546} \) The following year, on 4 June 1926, the name of the KNCPA was changed to Kilimanjaro Northern Province Planters Association and abbreviated as KNPA. In 1932, the members thereof, who numbered 12,577, formed a union and named it Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Union Limited (KNCU). [Roger J. M. Swynnerton & A. L. B. Bernett, All about ‘KNCU’ Coffee (Moshi-Tanganyika, 1948) p. 11] The KNCU had 27 affiliate societies. By 1961, its number of members was 44,800 and was handling one-third of Tanganyika’s coffee sales, which were in the amount of 2,164,000 Sterling Pounds. In general, co-operative movement of Tanganyika had grown tremendously. There were by 1960 some 691 co-operative societies, although not all of them were involved in coffee industry. For instance, there was Victoria Federation of Co-operatives Unions, which was an umbrella body of co-operative societies that dealt with production and marketing of cotton in Sukumaland. [Ruthenberg, Agricultural Development…, p. 99]
To travel to Tanganyika, a bus was hired. The journey started on 6 March 1963. The entourage consisted of the management committee that was as follows: Njagi (chairman), Stephen Nthiga (vice-chairman), Lameck Mbogo (treasurer) and committee members Perminus Njeru, Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, Boniface Njiru Ngari, Njoroge Nguuri, Christopher Njagi Kwenja, Levi Mugo, Meshack Njagi and Jonathan Mbogo. As for the staff, there was Wilfred Nguru (supervisor), Nthiga Njeru (sprayer), John Ngari Zechariah (book-keeper), and Nelson Mwaniki (secretary). There were other people and these were the bus crew: Kathuri M'Magiri (bus driver) and his turn boys, Munyi Mbiti and Nyaga Muchina. After its departure from Embu, the entourage went through Nairobi and on to Namanga, at the border of Kenya and Tanganyika. From there they proceeded to the town of Moshi, which was on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. It was in this town the headquarters of the famous KNCU was situated. The KNCU was the most advanced of all co-operative unions of Tanganyika. In addition, it had reputation of willingness to give education on how it had made that feat of phenomenal advancement.

At the headquarters of the KNCU, the entourage met Mr. Ndolo, who was the manager. They learnt that the KNCU was renowned for milling and marketing of coffee. It was unique because, of all the co-operative societies in Tanganyika, it was the only one that had registered steady growth up to 1950. It coordinated the work of its affiliate societies and the running Tanganyika Coffee Growers Association, which was an association of coffee estates, transported, processed and then marketed of the products of its affiliate societies. In addition, it was involved in milling of at its mill. Its headquarters had a huge storey building. The KNCU offices did not occupy the whole of the building and the extra space was rented out.

The entourage was taught that proper management of co-operative societies entailed good record-keeping. Then, it was taken to see two affiliate societies of the KNCU: Machame Uswaa and Machame Shari. It found out that unlike in Embu, the members of these co-operative societies were the ones who pulped and dried their coffee harvests before taking

544 Rugendo rua committee na aruti wira rua guthii Tanganyika tondu wa kwirotera ukuria wq kahawa o hamwe na kumenya mirutire ya wira ikonii kahawa thiini wa ma office thiini wa Tanganyika
545 Moshi town had derived it name from smoke-like spume that was descending on it from the mountain due to cool temperatures. John Gunther, Inside Africa (London, 1955) p. 394
546 The splendor of the KNCU was best captured by an author who visited Tanganyika in 1955. He noted that the management of the KNCU consisted of African farmers themselves and only its secretary, A. L. G. Bennett, was a white. The headquarters of the KNCU were something to behold. Under its roof were shops, a printing press, laboratories, and a recreation centre, with good hotel rooms. He described the hotel as an ideal rendezvous for those who had need for first-class hospitality. The rooms were noted as being better than those of the Graham Greenish Hotel, which was exclusively for whites and was also located within the town. The author saw the KNCU as an excellent model that East Africa and African continent at large needed in the stride to prosperity. This African undertaking was a challenge to people imbued with prejudice and bigotry who thought that Africans were incapable of doing something inspirational. See , Ibid, p. 394
them to their societies. After that, it visited the premises of Tanganyika Curing Co-operative Union Limited. Here, coffee from each of the affiliate societies was treated separately. But the trip did not end there.

The next destination was Arusha town. It was about 40 kilometers from Moshi and was high up on the slopes of Mount Meru. The area was of interest because there was coffee farming and many co-operative societies. At Arusha, the first place that was toured was the Meru-Arusha Co-operative Union Limited (MACU). Its manager, S. L. Kaaya, informed them that the MACU had seven societies. They were Akeri, Pole, Ngyani, Nkwawrua, Koi Mere, Seela and Songoro. The MACU purchased supplies for its affiliate societies and marketing of their coffee. It had a demonstration farm, where instructions on spraying, weeding, coffee seedling preparation and manure application were given. There were also instructions on pruning of coffee bush and as well as control of pests and diseases. The entourage went to see how MACU’s affiliate societies worked.

Ngyani Coffee Co-operative Society had a coffee factory. When a member would arrive with his harvest for pulping, first of all it had to be inspected by a committee member. If it met the stipulated standards, it would then be put on a weighing machine before a clerk. After this, it would be delivered into the machinery for processing. Finally, a member would be given an advance of 20 Cents for every pound of that harvest. After the harvest had been sold, the member would be given more money.

The entourage visited a number of other coffee co-operative societies as well as coffee farms. But among the societies they saw, the most fascinating was one called Osamesua. This was because it had just 250 members. This number of members was very small given that by 1959 the NCGCS had 1,529 members. However, in the subsequent years so many people happened to have become its members. By 1963 the members were in so many thousands since by the end of 1961, they numbered 3,771. Nobody before that had ever imagined that a co-operative society could be viable with the size of membership as that of Osamesua. The entourage returned home on 10 March 1963. The trip was a great experience. It impacted on coffee farming in Ngandori and the future of the NCGCS. Work started on transformation of the way coffee farming was done in

547 'Rugendo rua committee na aruti wira rua…'
548 Gunther, Inside Africa, p. 392
549 'Rugendo rua committee na aruti wira…'
552 Boniface Njiru Ngari, O. I., 20 April 2008
553 'Rugendo rua committee na aruti wira…'
However, that was not all. There were effects of the Osamesua phenomenon, which started causing ripples within the leadership of the NCGCS. Soon after their arriving back home, some leaders of the NCGCS hatched an idea of dividing it into smaller societies like the Osamesua. To do that, it meant marking the end of the NCGCS since the division entailed it be dissolved in the first place. From 1961 to 1963 Njagi was also very busy in the running of the ECCU.

His being considered for leadership in the co-operative movement happened because he was well educated, sociable and responsible. For instance, he was supportive to people of his home area. Few of them had planted coffee in the early 1950s and therefore they had to struggle to get incomes. As a result, they would approach him for casual work on his coffee farm and he would gladly accept their requests. He was humble and he treated them with dignity. As he was doing that, the need to decolonise Kenya was his concern as well.

Contribution to Nationalism and Decolonisation

British rule in Kenya was unwelcome and oppressive. That made people to start resisting it. Since it got entrenched, to bring it to an end, it took great efforts and sacrifices. Different people of different genders, descents, places, ages and creeds were involved in those endeavours. They made different contributions of different degrees in different ways at different times and places. Njagi was in the theatre.

The British conquered Kenyan societies starting from the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. They established colonial rule that was oppressive as it subjected people to many ills. They made African people to suffer lose of freedom, land alienation, brutal rule by chiefs, colour bar, forced labour and poverty, among other things. To bring the colonial rule to an end, it took great endeavours. Different people of different genders, descents, places, ages and creeds were involved in those endeavours. They made different contributions of different degrees in different ways at different times and places. Njagi was in the theatre and took part in that drama. The play had been started before he was born.

In the early 1920s, the people started organising themselves politically in an attempt to rectify the situation. But the colonial government did not address their concerns. All along

556 Virginia Munyi Melchizedek, O. I., 6 May 2008
557 In the case of academic education for Africans, the situation was such that it was not being given proper consideration by the Colonial Government in spite of complaints that were being made. The situation was being aggravated by the report of 1949 on education in Kenya that had been made by a commission of the government headed by Archdeacon Leonard James Beecher.
it tried to stifle the nationalist efforts. To make the situation worse, in 1939 the colonial government banned African political organisations, among them the KCA. Kikuyu squatters in the Rift Valley got even more discontented with their settler hosts as life was very hard without land to cultivate and wages not commensurating with labour. Consequently, the squatters started an underground society that was geared towards speedy recovery of the alienated land and freedom and it administered an oath to unite them against the settlers. With time the society eventually became popularly known as the Mau Mau and it was discovered by the police in March 1948. On 12 May 1950, the administration arrested 39 people in Naivasha area over participation in a Mau Mau oathing exercise. By that year, squatters’ resistance had shifted gear from resisting colonial rule by civil approach to application of force and damage against Europeans and Asians. The situation kept on spreading. In 1950, Muhimu (the central committee or parliament of the Mau Mau movement) started oath administration in Nairobi among the community of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru. This increased militancy in the country. In 1952, Muhimu dispatched agents from Nairobi to administer oaths in Central Province.

As a result, the militancy shot up in the area. The whites and their collaborators would be attacked and killed and their properties destroyed. However, in a bid to neuter the Mau Mau movement, the new Governor of Kenya, Sir Evelyn Baring, who had arrived in the country on 30 September, declared a state of emergency in the night of 20 October 1952. In the same night, security forces launched Operation Jock Scott to mop up leaders of African political organisations, the KAU and the underground KCA, as they were deemed to be behind the rise of the Mau Mau movement. After the declaration of the State of Emergency and arrest of leaders, the community of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru got even more restive and many of them poured into the forests of central Kenya to bolster the Mau Mau war efforts. In 1953, the Government banned African politics. KAU, which was the only national-wide political organisation, was proscribed on 8 June 1953. But the war escalated. In 1954, another security operation against the Mau Mau movement, Operation Anvil, was carried out. Nineteen thousands of Kikuyu, Embu and Meru men were swopped from Nairobi.
among other places and detained.\textsuperscript{565} There were thousands of others who were sent back to their respective home reserves.

The Mau Mau war was a matter of great concern not only in Kenya but also in Britain. More so the Colony Office, as it was the one responsible for the running of British colonies worldwide, had a hectic time due to the upheaval. Sir Oliver Lyttelton, who had replaced Sir James Griffiths on 28 October 1951, as the Colonial Secretary, visited Kenya many times between October 1952 and February 1954 in search of a way to end the turmoil. However, in March 1954, he offered a new constitution. The constitution became known as Lyttelton Constitution. It provided for a multi-racial government.\textsuperscript{566} However, the people opposed it because of that provision which they saw as an attempt to perpetuate the status quo.\textsuperscript{567} Rather than forming a partnership with Europeans, the people wanted every adult to be granted their right to vote.\textsuperscript{568} Due to resistance to the provision for a multi-racial government in 1955, the colonial government started making changes. In June 1955, African politics was re-introduced.\textsuperscript{569} But this was a half-hearted gesture as African people were not allowed to do politics freely.\textsuperscript{570} They could not organise themselves politically at the national level, but rather at the district one.\textsuperscript{571} To make the move even more farcical, in Central Province, the home of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru, no political organisation was allowed.

While the people tried to figure out the direction in which things were taking, in 1955 the government nominated some Africans to the Legco. This happened in spite of the people yearning for an election to be called. The nominees were Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, W. W. W. Awori, Muchohi Gikonyo, Jimmy Jeremiah, Eliud Mathu and Beniaih Apollo Ohanga.\textsuperscript{572} An assault to the injury was added as B. A. Ohanga, an African, was appointed as a minister in 1956.\textsuperscript{573} These steps were a slap in the face of the people. So their leaders called for scrapping of the Lyttelton Constitution; free election of Africans to the LegCo; and, formation of a majority government.\textsuperscript{574} In 1955 Njagi was among the leaders who criticised the government for mishandling the concerns of the people. He did that leveraging on the

\textsuperscript{565} Percock, ‘Mau Mau and the Arming of the State’, in Atieno-Odhiambo & Lonsdale (eds.), Mau Mau and Nationhood..., p. 131
\textsuperscript{566} Berman, Control and Crisis..., pp. 395-6; Bennett, Kenya..., p. 135
\textsuperscript{567} Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 138; Blundell, A Love Affair..., p. 105; Bennett, Kenya..., p. 135
\textsuperscript{568} Bennett, Kenya: A Political History..., p. 135
\textsuperscript{569} Ochieng’, ‘Kenya and the End of Empire’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, p. 207
\textsuperscript{570} Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots..., p. 165; Furedi, The Mau Mau War..., pp. 150-1
\textsuperscript{571} In that light, when in December 1955, C. M. G. Argwings-Kodhek came up with an idea of forming a country-wide political organisation by the name Kenya African National Congress which was seeking to rally various regions of Kenya, the colonial government declined to put it in the register. See, Furedi, The Mau Mau War..., pp. 150 - 151; Argwings-Kodhek contented himself with a district-based party, the Nairobi District African Congress, which he was allowed to register on 18 December 1955. See, Ochieng’, ‘Kenya and the end of empire’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, p. 207
\textsuperscript{572} Odinge Odera, My Journey with Jaramogi: Memoirs of a Close Confidant, (Nairobi, 2010) p. 41
\textsuperscript{573} Blundell, A Love Affair..., p. 105
\textsuperscript{574} Leys, Under Development in Kenya..., p. 42
Embu ADC platform. He insisted on the government paying respect to the dignity of the people. He craved for a situation whereby the people would be left to govern Kenya as he was confident that their leadership was capable of steering the country. He was very passionate about getting the whites out of power.

The persistence of African leaders in trying to get the colonialists out of the way and the violence by the Mau Mau movement made the British to rethink their stand on Kenya. It was Europeans who had made Baring to declare the State of Emergency when he had not even spent a month in-charge of the country. Apart from that, no arrangement had been made for him to meet African leaders so as to get to know their position on situation that obtained in the country. Europeans were of the hope that the Emergency would see the Mau Mau movement neutralised and therefore life continuing without alteration. But due to the stiff opposition there was an idea to yield to wishes of the people, without letting in European and Asian leaders on what was going on, in 1954 Lyttelton had agreed with African leaders that in 1956 the people would be allowed to elect their representatives to the Legco. So in 1956 efforts started to prepare for the election. The Legco passed the Under Legislative Council (African Representation) Ordinance that provided for the country to be divided into eight electoral regions: Nairobi, Ukambani, Central, Coast, Nyanza Central, Nyanza North, Nyanza South and Rift Valley in readiness for an election.

Njagi was ardent in the push for election of African representatives to the Legco and the formation of the Central electoral region. The region encompassed Central Province, which consisted of Embu, Meru, Nyeri, Thika, Nanyuki, Fort Hall and Kiambu districts. The election of Africans to the Legco was scheduled for March 1957. And, Njagi decided that his friend, Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, should contest for the Central Region seat. Since Nyaga was at the time working in Kiambu as an Assistant Education Officer, Njagi went there and persuaded him to join the race. To make it to Kiambu, since at the time there was the Emergency Regulations that did not allow of people of the community of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru to travel out of their home areas without certificate of loyalty, he made the most of his privilege as a councillor on the Embu ADC.

575 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
576 Warnhui, Corridors of British..., p. 32
577 Blundell, A Love Affair..., p. 105
578 Aseka, Jomo Kenyatta, p. 30
579 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
Nyaga had long shown his mettle in the fight against colonialism. While he was the principal of Kangaru GAS, in 1950, white teachers at the school driven by pride due to their colour, had refused to share the staffroom with their black colleagues. They asked for a separate staffroom set aside exclusively for them. But Nyaga did not see that being right at all. He refused to be intimidated as he did not acknowledge the perceived superiority of the white race. He made it clear to them that all the teachers at the school were of the same status irrespective of their colour and for that, there was no way two staffrooms could be established there. He stressed that if they could not agree with him, they could leave the school as well. However, the teachers persisted in ranting and Nyaga sought to see the Embu DC to settle the matter. The DC affirmatively pointed out that there was no alternative to Nyaga’s argument. The practice of colonialism in Kenya, which was styled on the South Africa’s apartheid, was at long last on the road to the end.

The race for the seat of the Central Region was tight as there were many contestants. Apart from Nyaga, the other contestants included Bernard Mate (Meru), David Waruhiu (Kiambu), Elisha Mathu (Kiambu), Dr. Julius Gikonyo Kiano (Fort Hall) and Timothy Musa Kagondu (Nyeri). In the endeavours to see Nyaga take the seat, Njagi and Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi assisted him a lot in the campaigns since he was their age-mate. Another person who supported that noble cause was Jotham Nguri Ngucu, who hailed from Kabare Location of Gichugu Division. But at the end of the day, it was Mate who triumphed. The winners in the other regions were Tom Mboya (Nairobi), James Nzau Muimi (Ukambani), Ronald Ngala (Coast), Oginga Odinga (Nyanza Central), Masinde Muliro (Nyanza North), Lawrence Oguda (Nyanza South) and Daniel T. arap Moi (Rift Valley). The election of Africans to the Legco did not make African people complacent because that change was of little, if any, significance since even universal adult suffrage had not been allowed in the election. Rather, they continued to clamour for more reforms that included facilitation of election of more African representatives to the Legco. They felt that what had been handed over by the colonialists fell short of the expectations of the African masses. Due to the hostilities that ensued from the tussle by political leadership, the British government had to get between the two races again not long after.

583 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
585 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
Lyttelton left the Colonial Office on 28 July 1954, thereby leaving the onus of overseeing the implementation of his constitution in the hands of his successor, Sir Alan Lennox-Boyd. After the election in March 1957, those elected African representatives refused any one of them being appointed onto the Council of Ministers as par the constitution. Instead, they wanted another 15 seats to be created for election of more African representatives. In the face of that, there ensued an unbearable conflict. Consequently, Lennox-Boyd was impelled to come back to Kenya in October 1957. However, he could not agree with what Africans clamoured for. He left the country for Tanganyika but he made it clear that he would not return home without passing through Nairobi. When he showed up again in November 1957, the situation was even more complicated given European and Asian members of the Council of Ministers had since resigned. This development meant that the constitution had broken-down. However, noting that the said constitution was providing that in case of such an eventuality, the Secretary of State was to take charge of the situation, Lennox-Boyd did just that. On 8 November 1957 he called a meeting of all the members of the Legco of the three races (Europeans, Asians and Africans) to the Government House. He offered a new constitution that ended up going by his name as Lennox-Boyd Constitution. It provided six more elective seats for Africans in the Legco. This made the number of African elected members equal to that of Europeans. The existing eight electoral regions were subdivided to create six new ones. Njagi contributed a lot in seeing to it that the Central Region was subdivided into three electoral regions, which were Kiambu-Fort Hall, Embu-Nyeri and Meru. The new election was to be held in March 1958. However, Njagi got down again assisting Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga to join the new race to the Legco by contesting for the seat of Embu-Nyeri Region.

This time Nyaga was lucky. He was famous in Embu District (it consisted of the present day Embu and Kirinyaga counties) as he was the only person from there who had studied at Makerere University College in Uganda. That fame swung the vote in his favour. Voter turnout was very high as 80 per cent of the registered votes were cast. Nyaga won the race with a landslide. He garnered 6,030 votes, which accounted for more than 78 per cent of all the votes cast. His sole rival, Timothy Musa Kagondu, who hailed from Nyeri, got 1,675 votes.

591 KNA / DC / E / 1 / 17, Embu District Annual Report - 1958
votes. However, all the eight African members of the Legco: Mboya, Muimi, Ngala, Odinga, Muliro, Oguda and Moi, who had been elected in March 1957, retained their seats. The other members who made debut into the Legco with Nyaga in 1958 were Justus ole Tipis, Taita arap Towett, Julius Gikonyo Kiano, Joseph Khamisi and D. M. Muimi. For Nyaga having accomplished that, he joined the league of Kenya’s top political leaders of the late colonial era.

This development was a great achievement, indeed it was a wonder, in Embu. The people were optimistic that it was a step towards overcoming colonial domination. But it was favourable to Njagi standing as well. For having contributed immensely in enabling Nyaga make that great feat, he became highly respected in Embu in the 1950s. He was regarded as one of the personalities who contributed greatly towards advancing the interests of Africans.

**Philanthropy**

When Njagi started teaching in the CMS Kigari schools system in 1946, it was not conducive for learning, especially for children whose parents were not Christians or if they were, their faith was deemed to be not strong enough. Church elders were discriminating against such children. They would be denied admission to school. If they were lucky to get admission, then their advance up the academic ladder would not be possible or would not come so easily, regardless of how intellectually gifted they were. But no obstacle was put before children of Christian and educated parents. Indeed, such were being given preferential treatment in as far as academic education was concerned.

When children would appear at school for admissions, if child’s parents were familiar to the elders, and the elders had misgivings towards them, the child would be rejected straight away. Where the elders did not know a child’s parents, they would subject the child to an avalanche of questions aimed at establishing his parents’ backgrounds. The questions could be like this: Are your parents Christians? Do they go to church? Which church do they attend? Are they baptised? Do they take beer? Do they sniff snuff? Do they perform clitoridectomy on your sisters? Do they consult mundu mugo? Is your father a mundu mugo? All the above concerns were deemed as ‘evils’. But in those days, not many of the children had their parents not involved in at least one of them. And to make matters worse for the

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592 Odera, My Journey with Jaramogi..., p. 33
593 Ibid, p. 33
594 Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 18
children, it was not easy for them to hide the truth since those who were confronting them were their parents’ peers and children were brought up being encouraged to be honest. So if their parents were found to be involved in one or more of the ‘evils’, they would be dismissed. As a result, many children were unable to start schooling on that basis.

However, those who would manage to get admissions would not escape hounding by the elders if their parents did not measure up to the set standards, faith wise. However, if it happened that a child had escaped expulsion from school, progressing up in studies would be a pipe dream. He would be made to repeat a class year in, year out. That would happen even if he performed well in class. It never mattered to the elders for how many years a child repeated a class as they were bereft of feeling of guilt. One of the children who suffered that fate was Daudi Njeru Ayub. Although he had been born at Kigari Mission in 1927, he could not start his schooling there. Instead, he was taken to the CSM School at Chogoria in 1933 as the elders at Kigari mission station did not allow to enroll. However, he kept trying to enroll at Kigari and he made it in 1936. However, things did not pan out as he would have liked. He was made to repeat the same class up to 1952. As he desired to get a good education, in 1952 he decided to try another school and joined the CCM School at Kevote, in Embu. But things did not turn out well given that the school was being run by the Catholic Church whereas he was an Anglican faithful. Consequently, that marked the end of his quest for education.596

The elders who were involved in discrimination of some children at Kigari included Rev. Johana Muturi, Rev. Musa Njiru, Rev. Herbert Ndwiga Gataara, Habakkuk Mugo, Petero Gacewa, Jackton Mwiti, Josiah Mwikiriri and Paul Gatema. But the worst of them in that regard were the first three of the aforementioned.597 They might have been predisposed to behave that way due to the fact that they were more senior and therefore more influential. They were the only ones who were priests, which was the highest rank in the church. Rev. Johana, Rev. Musa and Rev. Herbert had become deacons in 1929, 1934 and 1943 respectively. Then, their ordinations to priesthood happened in 1935, 1939 and 1945 respectively.598 (But the negative influence of Rev. Johana and Rev. Musa in the running of the church affairs dated back to the 1920s. The two together with Petero Gacewa and Paul Gatema were to blame for the disastrous turn that the clitoridectomy controversy of the late 1920s and early 1930s took.599 The churches and schools of the the Kigari Pastorate were

596 Daudi Njeru Ayub, O. I., 23 May 20008
597 Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi, O. I., 24 May 2008
598 Ten Great Decades of Faith, p. 24
599 Strayer, The Making of Mission..., pp. 128-9, 144; KNA / PC / CP / 8 / 1 / 2, Harold E. Lambert, writing to La Fontaine on 15 July 1931
nearly deserted.\textsuperscript{600} However, when Njagi started teaching in the schools system of Kigari in 1946 he did not follow the path that had been set by these elders.

Instead, he became some kind of a savior to the discriminated pupils. He was honest, polite and always sought to pursue the truth to the logical conclusion. So he would make intervention when and where something went wrong for a child. He would try hard to see that justice prevailed. His becoming a church elder in the same year he started teaching enabled him to deal with the situation better as he could know the inside intrigues.

One of the cases he handled was that of a pupil called Edith Wanginda. This happened in 1947. She was schooling as the CMS Primary School that was at Kangaru. However, she had sat for the examination that was being done at the end of Standard Six and passed well. Following that, she had received admission to the CMS School at Kahuhia, in Fort Hall. However, conspiracy was made against her so that her place could be taken by a daughter of the priest who was in-charge of the CMS church that was at Karungu, in Embu. The priest in question was the afore-named Rev. Herbert Ndwiga. When Edith learnt that the odds were stacked against her, she approached Njagi and explained the matter to him. He straight away obliged to help. His intervention finally enabled her to proceed to Kahuhia in 1948. She studied there and sat the KAPE examination in 1950. She could have continued further with her studies had it not for inability to raise school fees.

The reason for the elders to discriminate against her was the Christian standing of her father. His name was Kandara wa Karuoya. They were not considering him as following the tenets of Christian spirituality. This was because even though he had become a member of the church, he had after some time left as the church prohibited members from practising clitoridectomy.\textsuperscript{601} The church had become a strong opponent of the cultural practice from the late 1920s.

Njagi’s thrust against the discriminatory bent of the elders was enhanced after he was promoted to an assistant supervisor of the CMS schools in Embu District in 1954. This was facilitated by his working in conjunction with the Provincial Administration, especially chiefs. When a pupil would get admission to further their studies, he would strive to see the letters were delivered to the chiefs of those pupils. This won him much respect from pupils and their parents in particular and the rest of the people in general. Most of the pupils who


\textsuperscript{601} Edith Wanginda Ndwiga, O. I., 19 April 2008; Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi, O. I., 24 May 2008; Sifuna, ‘Nationalism and Decolonisation’, in Ochieng’, \textit{Themes in Kenyan History} p. 191
suspected foul play in their failure to have opportunity to further their education would seek Njagi’s intervention.\footnote{Joel Mwigaruri, O. I., 21 May 2008, Joel Mwigaruri, O. I., 21 May 2008} He would assist them without minding whether they were his relatives or not. However, that cancer of discrimination was at its peak in the 1930s and 1940s. For instance, when a pupil called Richard Gatumu passed exams in the 1930s and Kagumo GAS admitted him, it was a son of Rev. Johana Muturi who went instead.\footnote{Joel Mwigaruri, O. I., 21 May 2008}

Njagi was also helping pupils in some other ways. For example, when Henry wa Nguru was admitted to Alliance High School, at Kikuyu, and transport became a big problem, Njagi took him there by bicycle. And, in the same way he took James Mbogo Ngaara for an interview at Kerugoya town in 1948. Moreover, not long afterwards did Njagi offer help to Ngaara again. Ngaara got admitted to Kagumo GAS in Nyeri but he did not want to go there. Instead, he was aspiring to join Kangaru GAS. So he approached Njagi for an intervention. Njagi took the matter to Jeremiah J. Nyaga, who was the principal of the school and the case was solved. He studied there from 1949 to 1953.\footnote{Anonymous informant, O. I., 17 May 2008}

Another case was that of a student who had completed his studies at Kamama Intermediate School and got admitted to Thika Technical Training School in 1956. His letter of admission was sent to Kigari Mission while he was living at Nguviu emergency village. Even though it was dangerous to travel around as Mau Mau war was raging, Njagi did not mind he could be attacked. One Sunday he travelled all the way and delivered the letter to Chief Njagi Muthang’ato’s home at Nguviu.\footnote{Anonymous informant, O. I., 17 May 2008}

### 3.3 Colonial Local Government Service

**Councillor on the Embu ADC**

In 1955, the colonial government nominated Njagi to the Embu ADC.\footnote{KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 9 / 51, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, File No. 206 / 4 / 1, Minutes and Agenda of the Embu African District Council, 1947 – 1957; Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’; Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008} He served in that capacity until 1958. The ADCs had been around for a long time since the system had been initiated in 1924. The aim of establishing the system was to contain African resistance to colonialism.\footnote{Berman, Control and Crisis..., p. 312} Initially, the ADCs were called the Local Native Councils (LNCs) and they were established in those districts that were perceived as politically sensitive. They increased
in number with time and there were 22 of them by 1938. By 1945 they were numbering 26.\footnote{Leigh A. Gardner, Taxing Colonial Africa: The Political Economy of British Imperialism (Oxford, 2012) p. 166} The LNCs were based at the district administrative area and were being controlled by DCs.\footnote{Berman, Control and Crisis..., pp. 216} They were dealing with concerns such as health care, education, agriculture, taxation, settlement and making by-laws.\footnote{Bogonko, A History of Modern Education..., p. 47; Angelique Haugerud, The Culture of Politics in Modern Kenya (Cambridge, 1993) p. 217} In 1925, the Embu LNC debated drunkenness among the youth as it had become a serious social problem and strongly emphasised that they be stopped from engaging in the vice.\footnote{Charles H. Ambler, ‘Drunks, Brewers and Chiefs: Alcohol Regulation in Colonial Kenya, 1900 – 1939’, in Susanna Barrows (ed.), Drinking: Behaviour and Belief in Modern History (California, 1991) pp. 176-7} In addition, it supported establishment and development of coffee industry in Embu by, among other things, building the first coffee factory in Embu District at Kangaru in 1942 and still in the 1940s, organising for its members to tour Tanganyika to learn about coffee farming and management of co-operative societies.\footnote{KNA / PC / CENTRAL / 2 / 12, Embu Local Native Council, Minutes of the meetings held from 12 February 1942 to 12 August 1950} However, the creation of the LNCs had an ulterior motive. It was aimed at keeping African nationalist politics from progressing to colony-wide level. Membership of the LNCs was based on nomination. The members, who were known as councillors, consisted of African chiefs and Christians. The colonial government preferred them as it deemed them loyal.\footnote{Ollumwullah, ‘Government’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, p. 99; Ndemo, Epitome of State Power..., p. 19} The formation of the LNCs was facilitated by the passage of the Local Native Council Ordinance of 1924. This law was conjured due to complaints by Africans against their being denied representation in the Legislative Council (Legco). The Legco had been around from 1906. It was responsible for making laws and policies for governing the colony.\footnote{B. A. Ogot, ‘Kenya under British rule’, in B. A. Ogot and H. A. Kieran (eds.), Zamani: A Survey of East African History (Nairobi, 1968), p. 280} With Africans being unrepresented, the Legco had leeway to mind solely about the aspirations of Europeans without giving due consideration to those of Africans.\footnote{Read about land alienation in Mirella Ricciardi, African Saga (London, 1982), p. 11; Kitbwana, ‘Land tenure’, in Ochieng’ (ed.), Themes in Kenyan History, p. 234} But the LNCs could not satisfy the political yearning of Africans. So Africans were not at ease with them. Due to the growing discontent among Africans over the colonial government’s ignorance of their interests, the LNCs concerned the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, James Griffiths, when he visited Kenya in 1950 to explore how advances in the constitution could be made so as to take care of the aspirations of Africans.\footnote{Michael Blundell, A Love Affair with the Sun (Nairobi, 1994) p. 94} There was also the problem of managing the LNCs and their affairs since their budgets had become big and they were providing funds for projects that were undertaken by other government
departments.\textsuperscript{617} Their reformation saw undertaken under the ADC Ordinance of 1950, which scaled up their authority and responsibility over local affairs and as well as status.\textsuperscript{618} They became elective and re-named the ADCs in 1950.\textsuperscript{619} Their operations came formally came under the supervision of the Department of Local Government even though DCs were still having immediate control.\textsuperscript{620}

Be that as it was the situation that ensued in Kenya after the declaration of the State of Emergency on 20 October 1952 greatly affected the ADCs. In a bid to contain the Mau Mau revolt, the colonial government reversed political reforms that it had instituted so as to limit the influence of Africans in the governance system. While he was closing the Embu ADC on 15 June 1955, the Acting Provincial Commissioner for Central Province, A. C. C. Swan, made it clear that the new members were going to be determined in a different way from the one that had been used. He pointed out that due to the Emergency, new members were to be nominated rather than elected. He asserted that that was the government’s position and it was to be followed.\textsuperscript{621} The move was calculated to prevent the Mau Mau elements from infiltrating the ADCs since they were governance forums that were deeply involved in dealing with important issues such as security. The nomination process was thorough. Potential members were vetted with the aid of the Provincial Administration, the Special Branch and the Church before they were nominated by the government.

Njagi was nominated because no report faulted him. That happened because he was highly respected by nominated by the government people of Ngandori Location, the Provincial Administration and the missionaries, who were based at Kigari. The people of Ngandori knew him as a faithful church elder and a good teacher, who had been promoted to an Assistant Supervisor of Schools. He had renown for fighting discrimination of pupils whose parents were not Christian or strong Christians by church elders in the CMS Kigari schools system. The CMS missionaries knew Njagi as a steadfast church elder because he was even a member of the Diocesan Synod and the Christian Council of Kenya (CCK).\textsuperscript{622} Nobody could be considered for nomination without the missionaries’ approval.\textsuperscript{623} Moreover, Njagi had worked as a councillor on the Ngandori Locational Council for many years. Furthermore, they were involved in the establishment of Kangaru GAS in 1947. The chief

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{617} Berman, Control and Crisis \ldots, p. 216
\bibitem{618} Maxon, Conflict and Accommodation \ldots, p. 140; Gardner, Taxing Colonial Africa \ldots, p. 186
\bibitem{619} Odinda, Not yet Uhuru \ldots, p. 90; Haugerud, The Culture of Politics \ldots, p. 218
\bibitem{620} Berman, Control and Crisis \ldots, p. 312
\bibitem{621} KNA / PC 2 / 2 / 51, Minutes of the Embu ADC, 18, 19 and 29 March 1955
\bibitem{622} Bedan Ireni Jonah Munyi, O. I., 2 and 21 March 2002
\end{thebibliography}
was ardent in the war against the Mau Mau movement and his location was well developed in the fields of education, transport and agriculture. So his recommendation on Njagi for the post was accepted. There was also the Special Branch, which gathered intelligence and worked closely with the Police Force and the Criminal Investigations Directorate and it was useful in the determination of the one who was a Mau Mau sympathiser or not. However, no problem was found with Njagi.

The ADC of 1955 had twenty-seven members and they were usually called councillors. There were chiefs Stephen Ngige, Bernard Makanga, Kombo Munyiri, Mugushu Mukathwa, Mwandiko Ngira, Manunga Ngochi, Philip Muchiri and Joel Karubiu. The others were Alexander Mikinyango, Dan Gichoni, Elias Kaboro, Heshibon Mubari, Isaiah Mbogo, Japheth Kagondu, Paul Muthathai, Simeon Kibara, Hezekiah Ngondi, Kimani Gaitarai, Samson Mukenia, Johana Karuigi, Jotham Nguri, Johana Karuga, Mwangi Igati, Kathuku Maguu, Paul Muthathai and Madam Mary Wangechi. In addition, there were the Embu DC, F. R. Wilson, who was the President (in other words, the Chairman); Joel Gatungo (as the Treasurer) and James P. Nyaga (as the Secretary). They started sitting on 13 August 1955. At the time the ADCs had multifarious and quite onerous responsibilities, which was more so in Central Province due to the Mau Mau uprising. So the Embu ADC had a difficult mandate and the burning issues were: financial shortfall, insecurity (the Emergency), food shortage, promotion of agriculture, land reforms (consolidation and registration), Mwea settlement scheme, people’s departure from the Emergency villages and as well as resettling ahoi. The ahoi question was quite vexing because it was very difficult to find where to resettle them as they were foreigners. Their presence started controversy as early as the 1930s. Councillors were supposed to support the government stand on all issues in total. But they were free to express themselves on those issues.

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624 The Provincial Administration was at the forefront in efforts to prevent agitators from accessing the ADCs from the late 1940s. Whereas there had been elections of members through queuing, during the 1945-6 elections Locational Councils, whose members were chiefs and traditional elders, served as electoral colleges. Berman, Control and Crisis…, p. 311

625 On 2 July 1956, the DO for Ndia Division of Embu District reported that since August 1954, seventy-five of the headmen of that division had been detained due to their support for the Mau Mau movement. The Special Branch implicated Chief Stephen Ngigi as an associate of the Mau Mau movement; however, it was the DO who rescued him. Gathogo, Mutira Mission…, p. 51


627 Ahoi had emanated firstly from Kiambu district and later on from others places like Fort Hall (Murang’a). Their movement from there had begun in the 1910s and firstly they started going to look for better life on white settler farms in Central and Rift Valley provinces. By the time land had become a sensitive issue due to its scarcity in the wake of alienation for the white settlers. In addition, probably, the hosts were fearful that ahoi could, with time, seek to settle permanently, which would have been a big lose. Frank Furedi, ‘Kikuyu squatters in the Rift Valley, 1918 – 1929,’ in Bethwell A. Ogot (ed.), Hadith 5: Economic and Social History of East Africa (Nairobi, 1976) p. 181; Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots…, p. 10

628 Parsons, ‘Being Kikuyu in Meru…’, p. 76
With that atmosphere, some would criticise the government on one thing and support it on another. As for Njagi, he supported the government in most cases. This may have been made necessary by the fact that with the rise of the Mau Mau war, the colonial government was under pressure to meet the aspirations of the people in such fields such as agriculture, education, health care and transport. But these fields were very much neglected. So in a bid to transform social and economic standards of the people, as it was extreme poverty that had, to some extent, contributed to the rise of the Mau Mau revolt, the government was seeking to make ends meet - to undertake development and reconstruction – with the help of the ADCs. Against that backdrop, it would have been disservice to the people if the councillors and Njagi in particular had opposed the government’s policies that were seeking to alleviate poverty.

But with regard to the policy on the Mau Mau war, Njagi begged to differ. The government was of the position that military action was the answer in dealing with the Mau Mau. On the day the Embu ADC was opening, on 13 August 1955, in his address, its President spoke about the violent liberation struggle that was going on in the country. He told the members about the government’s aim to suppress the struggle and stressed that the members had been nominated in spirit of leadership and their strong attitude against the Mau Mau movement. So they were expected to fervently fight it to the end. The government was bent on using military force against the Mau Mau. But Njagi and his colleagues argued that it was important for the government, the Mau Mau and as well as the rest of the people to dialogue on the problems that the country was going through. They took that position given that they did not believe the gun could restore peace in Kenya. In their view, the concerns of the Mau Mau were genuine given that people were downtrodden by the colonialists for rather too long and this had been happening in their very own country. They were decided that it was the high time the British left Kenya so that the people could manage their affairs.

But even as Njagi supported the Mau Mau movement, he had not taken their oaths which meant to unite the people against imperialism in Kenya. Be that as it was, he loved
African people very much and that was the reason he supported what could benefit them. But
it was not on the Embu ADC only did the colonial government seek the services of Njagi.

**Land Tenure Reformer**

At the advent of the British colonialism in Kenya in the late nineteenth century, the Kikuyu,
Embu and Meru in the country’s central region had two kinds of land tenure. There was
communal land tenure, which was predominant and individual ownership.\(^{634}\) But colonialism
changed things greatly. People got increasingly interested in using land for commodity
production as the need for cash grew.\(^{635}\) In addition, people who benefitted from the colonial
system as teachers, clerks, guards, chiefs and traders, among others could afford to buy land
and that contributed to the increase of private land ownership.\(^{636}\) That situation coupled with
rise in population had helped to trigger competition for land in Kikuyuland even by the early
1920s.\(^{637}\) As that situation escalated, by the beginning of the 1940s the competition was very
tight.\(^{638}\) As a result, some land owners could not help feeling insecure over their land and
they embarked on calling for adoption of private land ownership with registration. This had
begun in Kiambu District even by the dawn of the 1920s.\(^{639}\)

By the 1940s, the trend had become widespread in Kikuyuland. In the vanguard was,
among others, Chief Muhoya Kagumba of North Tetu Location in Nyeri District. Muhoya
was progressive and wanted to develop his land and for that reason he felt the need to protect
it from being encroached on or being interfered with in any other way. He began a campaign
for the land reforms around 1945.\(^{640}\) The people of his location, too, shared the idea of private
land ownership and they supported him. Some of them had become owners of exotic breeds
of cattle, which they wanted to protect from diseases that could be spread by roaming

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\(^{635}\) For instance, Chiefs Muhoya and Nderi Wang’ombe of Nyeri District had each of them become owners of tracks of land that were way beyond 140 acres. Such pieces of land were exceptionally too large by the standards of those places. [Throup, *Social and Economic Origins of Mau Mau*, 1945 – 1953, p. 140] Chief Kariuki wa Njiri of Murang’a too is cited as another big example in land-grabbing mania at the expenses of landless people. [Kipkorir, ‘The functionary in Kenya’s colonial system,’ in Kipkorir (ed.), *Biographical Essays*, p. 7]

\(^{636}\) From the early 1930s, communal landholding had begun to crumble in favour of individual ownership due to scarcity of land. This had been brought about by heightened acquisition of land by people with money buying from willing sellers. In Ngandori Location of Embu District, for instance, Njagi wa Muthang’alo, who had worked as an askari (Tribal Policeman) with the Provincial Administration from 1919 and then became a chief in 1926, was able to buy a large piece of land at Nguviu, which he bequeathed his children later. But throughout the colonial era, there was no scarcity of land in Embu.Clement Kiragu, O. I., 25 June 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’; Angelique Haugerud, ‘Land tenure and Agrarian Change in Kenya’ in *Africa: Journal of International African Institute / Vol. 59 / No. 1 / 1989*, p. 75; Shadrack Mugo Kanyenyeu Gititu, O. I., 31 May 2008

\(^{637}\) Berman, *Control and Crisis…*, p. 222-3

\(^{638}\) Curtin, *et al.*, *African History…*, pp. 560

\(^{639}\) Berman, *Control and Crisis…*, p. 223

\(^{640}\) Thurson, *Small Holder Agriculture…*, p. 47
indigenous livestock from their neighbourhoods. The idea was given consideration by liberal field officers of the Department of Agriculture as they saw that it could foster agricultural development among Africans. So they pushed for its adoption by the government. As a result, by the year 1952, many people of North Tetu who had multiple plots had them consolidated.

The people were steeped in poverty. To check the problem, the government decided to facilitate households to own land with title deed to support claim to it so that they could freely develop it and therefore raise their income. Towards that end, it wanted a plan drawn to that effect. In the late 1953, it gave that mandate to Roger J. M. Swynnerton, who was an Assistant Director of Agriculture, as he was the senior most of those liberal officers. He came up with a policy paper titled ‘A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya’. The government adopted and inaugurated it in 1954. The plan argued that land consolidation, demarcation and registration would lead to increased agricultural production, foster land marketability and transfer, facilitate acquisition of credit and thus spur investments. This argument resonated well with the interests of the masses. Due to its popularity, the plan eventually started going by the author’s name as ‘Swynnerton Plan’.

The government started implementation of the ‘Swynnerton Plan’ in pilot schemes in 1955. This was in the districts of Kiambu, Fort Hall, Nyeri and Embu districts of Central Province. In Embu District, the process was begun in the two divisions that lay in the west and were inhabited by the Kikuyu. This was in Thumaita and Kiamutugu areas of Gichugu Division and Kaitheri in Ndia Division. However, the people thereof were not contented with pilot schemes. So they insisted on the programme being done comprehensively.

Njagi was deeply engaged in the process of reforming land tenure in Embu District. In 1956, the government formed the Embu Tribal Land Board (ETLB) to deliberate on account of land of ownership among the Embu. Njagi was one of the people who were appointed as

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641 For example, in the case of Leslie Brown, the Provincial Agricultural Officer for Central Province and formerly District Agricultural Officer in Embu from 1947 to 1951, he even wrote a paper in that regard that was titled ‘Report on Agrarian Policy for Dealing with Population Increase, Land Tenure and Fragmentation in Kenya’ in November 1951. He submitted it to the government in Nairobi and it was later forwarded to the Colonial Office in London. Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture, p. 62

642 Ibid, p. 48; Throup, Economic and Social Origins, p. 212

643 For instance, a memorandum prepared by W. E. Wainwright and Leslie H. Brown titled ‘Report of the Committee on Agricultural Credit for Africans’

644 Swynnerton, A Plan to Intensify, ...

645 But Swynnerton’s work did not end with the drafting of the plan. He was also given the onus of overseeing implementation of the plan. Towards that end, with the help of the Governor of Kenya, he was able to secure some Sterling Pounds 5,000,000.00 from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund (CDWF). KNA / VO / 1 / 32 / 18, Memorandum from R. J. M. Swynnerton, ‘Agricultural Development: Central Province,’ c. October 1953 p. 125; Tiymabe Zelezia, ‘Kenya and the World War II, 1939 – 1950’, in Ochieng’, ed.), A Modern History of Kenya, p. 157; Mucai-Kattamb, Co-operatives, p. 11

646 KNA / VO / 16 / 101, Embu District Annual Report, 1955
the members of that board. After that, in 1957, the government created another organ on land reforms, the Embu District Advisory Land Consolidation Council (EDALCC), to plan for implementation of the ‘Swynnerton Plan’. However, unlike the ETLB, which focused on the Embu only (note that in Embu District there were also the Mbeere and Kikuyu), the EDALCC encompassed the whole of Embu District. Again, Njagi was crafted onto the new organ. The other members of the EDALCC were Chief Stephen Ngigi, Perminus Kabau, Stephen Gachoki, Kinyaru Githenge, Japheth Kagondu, Alexander Mikinyango and Gikama Gachunge. In addition, the EDALCC had the Embu DC, F. B. P. Derrick, as its chairman and B. Mangeli as the secretary. In the execution of its mandate, the EDALCC prepared the procedures that were to be followed in the exercise and released them on 3 June 1958.

While they were at it, they did not ignore the plight of the people who were likely to miss out land allocation. This was bound to happen for some reasons. Land allocation, for instance, was not allowed for people who were aged below eighteen years. So this policy was bound to cause those people inconvenience since without land allocation, they were to become homeless once the programme was implemented. To avert such an occurrence, a decision was made to have those people given plots in post-consolidation villages. And upon being allocated plots in those villages, those people were to be issued with certificates of ownership for the plots just like the other land owners. This was aimed at enabling them to be in a position to put their plots on sale or use the certificates as collaterals to get credit just like the other land owners could do. However, since all the land had owners, for the purpose of establishment of the villages, in the course of the consolidation process, at some places the land owners were to be prevailed upon to surrender some parts of their land. On that account, things were to be done in the same way as it was in the search for land on which schools and markets were to be established. And in the 1950s, too, Njagi worked in the development of co-operative societies.

3.4 Colonial Chieftaincy Service

Becoming a Chief

As the late 1950s advanced, the Provincial Administration of Central Province was in high gear contemplating making some changes in the office of chief. There were a number of chiefs who were being considered for removal from office because they had become too old.

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647 Matthew Njagi Munyi, O.I., 17/ April 2002 & 1 January 2009
648 KNA / PC / EST / 1 / 11 / 11, Minutes of the Embu District Advisory Land Consolidation Council, 3 June 1958
649 For instance, the land on which Nguviu Intermediate School lay, which today is occupied by St. Angela Girls’ Secondary School, was provided for by the people of the Kirugi house of the Kithami clan.
for their continued execution of their duties. Senior Chief Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location of Embu District was in that category of chiefs. He was aged 75 years as he had been born in 1883 and had taken the office on 12 July 1926. And, a person who had known him well said that by the time of his appointment, he was rather very old. In the process considering who was to take that post, Njagi appeared to the administration as a potential candidate. However, before the administration could do the needful, Muthang’ato died suddenly on 15 August 1958. He was by then aged some 75 years as he had been born in 1883. His death came as a surprise as he had not been ill. The death was caused by choking. He had gone on a visit to Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi’s home in the lower Ngandori and they were served boiled green maize. It was as he ate that his windpipe got blocked causing him to die instantly. The turn of events impelled the administration to hasten his replacement. Eventually, Njagi was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Muthang’ato was famous within Embu District and beyond for his administrative acme and his jurisdiction was one of the most developed in Kenya. His achievements were among others cultivation of coffee and wattle trees, modern education, road construction and fighting the Mau Mau movement. He was regarded highly by the administration. The Embu DC, F. P. B. Derrick, for instance, while making announcement of the death to the Embu ADC he hailed the chief’s efforts to see the people of Embu get in a position to engage in coffee farming. Be that as it was the death drew mixed reactions in Ngandori. His family members, relatives and friends were very sorrowful. As for his enemies, they jubilated beyond measure. They were people whom he may have treated badly for failure to meet things such as tax payment and communal labour. In spite of the urgency there was to see Ngandori get a new chief, the Provincial Administration took considerable steps before doing the needful.

Since the beginning of the colonial chieftaincy, different criteria were used in the appointment of chiefs. This was because persons of different qualities were needed in different periods of time. The responsiveness of the office to the administrative needs

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KNA / DC / E / I / I / 7, Embu District Annual Report II – 1958
KNA / DC / E / I / I / 7, Embu District Annual Report II – 1958
Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, O. I., 8 May 2008
KNA / DC / E / I / I / 7, Embu District Annual Report II – 1958
mattered a lot. From the beginning colonialists were interested in persons with leadership qualities. However, there were cases in which such people could not be found. This was because almost all Kenyan societies did not have centralised governance systems. There happened to be councils of elders and their members were of the same status. So people could end up choosing a person who was not one of their elders. That happened, for instance, in Embu after it was takeover in July 1906. The people of Murue forwarded Kiriamiti wa Nguu and those of Kyeni proffered Kangoco for appointment as chiefs. There were also cases in which those persons who were fast to understand what was at stake seized the opportunity to present themselves for appointment claiming they had been this or that in their societies. Failure by the colonialists to find out whether what they were told was true or false led them to appoint persons who lacked leadership qualities. Such cases were arising due to urgency to establish hegemony.

A new criterion was adopted as from 1920. It became necessary for a person to be approved for and on behalf of the British Crown. DCs were supposed to decide who was to be appointed because the post was not suitable for advertising. The colonialists did not agitators. The other persons who were not wanted were those who thought of themselves as qualified. Modern education also became a desired quality. But before 1920 the colonialists did not mind lack of it because educated people could not be found. Even the whites were not finding it easy to get work in the Administration if they lacked education. The British Government had raised the bar early. By 1907 one was required to have either a University degree. For those who did not have such, they could be considered if they had a regular commission in the armed forces, professional training in law, or sat an examination by the Civil Service and not score less than 1500 marks. However, it was impossible to find educated Africans to appointment. So the colonialists had to compromise on that account. That explains the appointment of Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato in 1926 even though he was illiterate. In his case what mattered was that he had been a Tribal Policeman and had

659 Maxon, Conflict and Accommodation..., p. 35
660 Waruhui, Corridors of British..., p. 38
661 Mwaniki, The Living History..., pp. 45, 48
662 Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 106
663 Waruhui, Corridors of British..., p. 38
664 Education, for instance, enabled Waruhui wa Kung’u to get considered for the post of chief of Ruiru in Kiambu District in 1922. He had joined missionaries of the Gospel Missionary Society at Kambui, in Kiambu, in 1899. He became a Christian and got academic education to the extent that he even helped a missionary start another mission station. That education facilitated his becoming an interpreter to his uncle, Waweru Kanja, who was chief of Ruiru Location. He was also writing reply to letter for the chief. The chief may have recommended him for appointment as were the missionaries. Ibid, pp. 36-39
665 Berman, Control and Crisis..., p. 99; Ndemo, Epitome of State Power..., p. 22
worked in the Provincial Administration in Lamu, Meru and Embu from 1919. Moreover, since African education remained poor throughout the colonial era, even by the time Muthang’ato died there was no chief in Embu Division who could speak or write English.

To be considered for the post of chief in the late colonial era, apart from requirement for academic education, more in Central Province during the Emergency, one was not supposed to be linked with the Mau Mau movement. The colonial government did not want its opponents to infiltrate the Provincial Administration as it was vital for the management of security. So, one had to be a loyalist to be acceptable. Vetting was very rigorous.

The office of chief was highly coveted throughout the colonial era given the economic benefits that went with it. Apart from the monthly salary, wayward chiefs could use the office for person gain, ranging from money to women. This saw the vacancy in the office of chief for Ngandori Location attract a motley of characters. They set out on campaign manouvres trying to out-do one another for the job. The most notable personalities were Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana and Benson Njeru Kanja with the former in the lead. Isaiah was well known to the people of Ngandori, Christian missionaries of the CMS Kigari mission, and the Provincial Administration. He was a school teacher for many years and a councillor in the Embu ADC (1952 – 1955). In addition, his proficiency in English he had earned reputation as an interpreter for Chief Muthang’ato. He bought a car for his campaign. Besides easing his movement, the car also induced people to respect him more. However, what those who were interested in the office were doing was not what the government desired. It was not for those persons who were bent on agitation and as well as those assumed that they had what it would take to be hired.

The government wanted to vet potential candidates secretly. In March 1958, the Embu DC, H. C. F. Wilks, endorsed Njagi wa Kavungura as a suitable successor to Chief Muthang’ato. Wilks did so in a handing-over report to his replacement, A. P. Palmer. He

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666 A pamphlet prepared for commemoration ceremony of fifty years since the death of Senior Chief Njagi Muthang’ato.

667 Kinyatti, History of Resistance..., p. 128

668 KNA / PC 2 / 2 / 51, Minutes of the Embu ADC, 18, 19 and 29 June 1955; KNA / PC / EST 2 / 9 / 51, Minutes of the Embu ADC, 18 - 29 August 1958. During the opening of the new EADC, the Embu DC, F. R. Wilson, stated strongly that leadership needed to be anti-Mau Mau.

669 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008


671 KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 9 / 51, Minutes of the Embu African District Council, 15 – 18 November 1957; Moses Nthiga, O. I., 2 March 2002; Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, O. I., 16 April 2002

672 Andrew Nyaga Kithimo, O. I., 4 January 2002

673 Waruhiu, Corridors of British..., p. 38

674 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008;
elaborated on a plan to retire some chiefs in Central Province on account of their advanced age. Among them was Muthang’ato.\textsuperscript{675} The DC’s suggestion was very important.

Then, one day the Embu DC, F. P. B. Derrick, set out on tour of Ngandori. And rather than be in official attire, he was dressed like settler farmer. So since people were not used to seeing him and therefore not familiar with his face, he could hardly pass for a Provincial Administrator. As he reached Kavurukori, he saw some elderly men and boys looking after livestock in the area between Kavurukori and Kavuria. He approached them and impressed on them that he was a settler with many grade cows that he wanted to sell and he wanted to know if they were interested. Grade cows were by then in great demand in Embu as they were famous for yielding milk many times more than the indigenous ones.\textsuperscript{676} So after they were mentioned, the men were hooked instantly. This gave the DC an opportunity to execute his mission.

As the men were excited, the DC digressed. He pointed out that before they could discuss a deal on grade cows, first of all he had to know their chief. After hearing that, the men became sorrowful. They explained that they did not have a chief as he had died and nobody had been appointed as a replacement. The DC said he was very sorry about their being without a chief. Then, he asked them who in Ngandori Location they thought could make a good chief. They said that they knew two men, Isaiah Mbogo wa Johana and Njagi, as they were well educated.

They firstly profiled Isaiah as a former teacher, councillor and interpreter to Chief Muthang’ato. However, they expressed reservation on him due to his untoward conduct. They argued that he was given to drinking alcohol beyond measure. Whenever beer was available, he would drink himself silly even to the extent of urinating on himself in spite of his high social status. They said that this was very disgusting in the eyes of the public. So they maintained that they were not seeing him as the type that could make a good leader. As for Njagi, they made a glowing recommendation. They noted that he was an Assistant Supervisor Schools and a councillor on Embu ADC, among other things. They expressed confidence that he could do the work responsibly. However, they voiced concern that chances of him being released by the missionaries who were at Kigari were very slim as he was very reliable to them in the supervision of schools. The DC having heard those revelations, he felt

\textsuperscript{675} KNA / DC / E / I / I / 7, Embu District Annual Report II – 1958
\textsuperscript{676} Thurson, \textit{Small Holder Agriculture}…, pp. 124-6
that he had made a milestone. He did not revisit the talk on grade cows and he immediately said he was leaving and did just that.677

Throughout colonial era, the government had a close working relationship with the missionaries, which was symbiotic.678 No one could be considered for the post of chief without the missionaries’ recommendation. So the Provincial Administration sought their verdict.679 The missionaries who were running the CMS Kigari mission station strongly recommended that Njagi was suitable for the post.680 They did that for two reasons. They knew him as reliable in the supervision of schools and a lead supporter of the government.

So far, with all the parties that the government was to refer to on the replacement of the chief of Ngandori Location having portrayed Njagi well, the DC as well settled on him. So even though Njagi had not shown interest in the office, three months after the death of Muthang’ato he was appointed onto the post.681 The DC wrote a letter to him. He required that Njagi to report at his office in Embu town. But the letter did not indicate for what purpose he was to go there. All the same, Njagi just acted as per the instruction. When he met the DC, the latter revealed what was in store. That left Njagi aback. He could not help wondering how come that he had been appointed, yet he had neither applied for the job nor ever showed interest for it in any way. He was not flattered by the news in spite of how many people craved for it.682

There were a number of reasons that had made Njagi hate the office profoundly. The job was onerous as it was dangerous. The duties of a chief had been amplified by the Chiefs’ Authority Ordinance (CAO) of 1937. A chief was required to oversee implementation of government policies in his jurisdiction, collection of taxes, maintenance of law and order, undertaking public projects such as construction of roads, summoning able-bodied people to do communal labour, prevention of consumption of harmful substances, elimination of illicit brews, among other duties.683 The job was difficult given that the policies that chiefs were to implement - such as taxation and communal labour - were not pleasing to the people. So the

677 Andrew Nyaga Kithimo, O. I., 4 January 2002
679 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
681 Moses Nhiga, O. I., 2 March 2002
people would exert stiff resistance. Furthermore, brutality and corruption of chiefs made them to be hated very much by the people. For that, it was very hard for chiefs to do their work.

However, the situation became worse and very dangerous after the beginning of Mau Mau war. This was more so in the areas that were in the theatre of the war. Chiefs were required to combat the Mau Mau relentlessly. The people were pro-Mau Mau, but chiefs had to obey the instructions of their masters. If they would fail to do so, they lose their jobs. Being antagonistic to the Mau Mau, chiefs were first-class traitors. Therefore, they were targets for elimination. For instance, Senior Chief Waruhiu wa Kung’u of Ruiru in Kiambu District was assassinated on 7 October 1952, for his tough stance against the Mau Mau. For instance, on 25 August of that year he was involved in the organisation of a meeting of prominent Kikuyu leaders including Jomo Kenyatta at Kiambu town at which the Mau Mau was denounce. He had been warned to desist from following that path for a number of times and even there had been a bid to kill him in February 1952. However, he had failed to avoid treading along that path. There was Chief Kasina Ndoow of Kitui District who, was not killed, but had both of his arms cut off on the night of 22 September 1953, for being an obstacle to Mau Mau operations in Ukambani. There was the case of stage-managed arrest and detention of Senior Chief Muruatetu of Gaturi Location of Embu District in 1953 over his spirited opposition to the freedom struggle. Paraphernalia for administration of Mau Mau oath was planted in his home compound and a report was made to Embu DC that the he was involved in Mau Mau activities. The DC went there and found the paraphernalia as reported. That made a water-tight case against him.

By the time Njagi became a chief there was insecurity due to the State of Emergency that had started in October 1952. However, the situation was not as bad as it had been in the period prior to 1955. The situation had relaxed a bit to the extent that from 1957, the people who had sought refuge at Kigari Mission due to violence had returned to their farms. However, it was not all that safe, more so for those people who worked for the

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684 Waruhiu, Corridors of British..., p. 51
686 Waruhiu, Corridors of British..., pp. 19-20
689 Blundell, A Love Affair..., pp. 88, 95, 104
690 Mau Mau’s combat capacity had been significantly weakened; constitutional changes had been put in place that had seen re-introduction of African politics in 1955 and election of fourteen Africans to the Legislative Council and these had somehow helped reduce the hostilities. Moreover, those people who had been put into detention for their alleged association with the Mau Mau were being released in large numbers.
government in Central Province, for instance, chiefs and headmen. The Mau Mau movement had been organised by the people due to lose of freedom and living in privation due to land alienation, among other ills that were committed by the colonialists and their African allies. However, by 1955 its combat capability had been weakened so much by the colonial security forces. So in March 1955 another revolutionary organisation, the Kiama Kia Muisingi (KKM, the Society of the People), had emerged and it had since become a force to reckon with. The KKM was a wing of the Mau Mau and it was intended to further the objects of the latter. It wanted to bring an end to colonialism and ensure that those who were still in detained or imprisoned on allegations of supporting the Mau Mau did not miss out on land to settle on as there was concern that land consolidation programme was being undertaken in a way that was fostering inequalities and injustices. For that reason, the KKM’s concerns were all the programmes that the government was putting in place.

In Embu District, for instance, as early as 1955, the KKM was reported as being involved in disruption of land consolidation programme in Gichugu Division. Then, in the early 1956, fifty of its members were arrested in Kithimu area of Kagaari Location, and Kihumbu area of Gaturi Location in Embu Division. Those who were arrested were taken to Manyani Detention Camp in Voi. The KKM was eventually proscribed in January 1958. However, that did not make it wither. By December 1958 it prevailed strongly in Embu and Fort Hall districts. It had generated violent resurgence to the extent that although the
presence of British troops in the country had been reduced significantly as from 1955, they had to be increased again.699

But the Mau Mau/KKM was not at all a nightmare to Njagi as it may have been the case to other chiefs. He got along with them well.700 He had many acquaintances among them, for example, Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi. Kariuki was a member of the KKM and was a close friend and business associate of Njagi’s. Together, with some other people, they had partnered in 1952 and established a trading company known as ‘Gatavi na Ngua’ and it did very well.701 He was viewed positively by the Mau Mau/KKM as he was not opposed to their activities.702 For his good relationship with the Mau Mau, he was not even administered oath703 although he worked with the missionaries.704 Even after relaxation of the six-year Emergency Regulations on movement and curfew, thereby causing insecurity to soar up in the district, Njagi never got into trouble with anti-colonial forces.705

So Njagi’s concern was how he was to run the office of chief. He wanted an approach that was different from that of his predecessor, Muthang’ato and many other chiefs in Kenya. They were brutal towards the people and to him that was not acceptable as it was inhuman. He could not figure out abusing a person, let alone beating them for whatever reason. This was due to his Christian background. His experience with the missionaries had made him yearn to lead a godly life and abhor violence. For that, even when he was a school teacher, he had avoided giving pupils corporal punishment as the other teachers did.

He found the requirements of the office daunting. They were enormous as opposed to those of a supervisor of schools. Supervision of schools required him to travel around to find out whether: the schools run well; teachers were doing their work accordingly; children were attending classes and were disciplined; and the classrooms and the compound were in good condition. That was not big deal to him.706 However, as a chief, he was expected: to collect taxes, to maintain law and order, to eliminate harmful substances, to prevent making and consumption of illicit liquors, to construct roads, and to control disasters like floods. In addition, he was: to facilitate the work of the employees of the ADC and the central government; to gather intelligence; to handle government mail, respond without delay and

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699 Ibid, p. 133; Odinga, Not yet Uhuru..., pp. 161-2
700 Simon Njiru Murua wa Mbura, O. I., 14 May 2008
701 Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, O. I., 8 May 2008
702 Simon Njiru Murua wa Mbura, O. I., 14 May 2008
703 Jeremiah Njeru Gatua, O. I., 30 April 2008
705 KNA / DC / E / I / 17, Embu District Annual Report – 1958
keep record of the same; to make the people loyal to the British Crown and other things, too. In a bid to fulfill these requirements, he found that there was no time left for his own affairs. He could attempt them on Saturdays only.

That prompted him to contemplate resignation. However, it was his two kinsmen, Robert Munyi and Rev. Musa Njiru, who saved the day. They sympatistised and encouraged him not to resign. So he took heart and decided to soldier on. Since in those days the salary of Chiefs was good, in 1959 he bought a car, a Ford Cortina, for travelling with around the location. Indeed, such tours were necessary from time to time because that was the way he could ensure that his headmen did their work. He then used it while making a familiar tour of the location’s settings. After that he planned what he was to do and how he was to do it. In that year, he saw Governor Sir Evelyn Baring visit his camp at Kairuri. And, that visitation might have helped to boost his confidence. The following year (1960) he got down to work full-throttle. But his working style had a difference from that of his predecessor as he was bent on reformation because he did not want to oppress his people.

Fighting Impunity

When Njagi became a chief, he was concerned about impunity of that office. From its inception, the office was recognised as the face of colonialism. This was partially due to brutality and corruption. These vices were some of the things that were making the people resist the authority of the office–bearers. Some of the things the people had to do were alien and oppressive, for example, taxation and labour. The worst would come when brutality would be used to make them comply. Embu chiefs, right from the beginning of colonial rule, were not the exception, but the rule. They continued with the trend more or less the same way throughout the colonial era. During the Emergency, for instance, Senior Chief Muruatetu of Gaturi Location was...
very dangerous to his people. He had power to have a person jailed or detained on the allegations that they were Mau Mau sympathisers. And, in the case of a jail term, he had authority to determine the length of time one had to lose his/her freedom. He would do so by simply putting a key chain on the accused person’s index finger then count the number of times it wound around. Each of the times meant one year in jail. He never cared to find out whether the allegations were true or false. His word was law. And, he himself, too, was law. His decisions had no one to challenge them. His counterpart in Ngandori Location, Chief Muthang’ato, was another embodiment of cruelty. Apart from torturing those people who failed to pay tax, among other things, he was using his office, the (British) Crown, to prevail on women. He was getting wives, whom at the peak numbered more than thirty, by force.

He used to catch them while touring his location. People were supposed to compulsorily attend his meetings and he used to threaten them with dire consequences if they were to fail to comply. People knew that those threats were not empty and they would try their best to turn up. While at the dais before the gathering, Muthang’ato would scan for beautiful girls. After he spotted the right one, he would stealthily direct his aides to go for her. The aides would pounce on her like ravenous hyenas and it was very embarrassing. This was subversion of Embu culture as it required that if a man was interested in a girl for marriage, he had to approach her directly or through intermediaries and handle her with dignity. If she declined his request, he could try again and again, at different times. However, if he was not lucky, he was supposed to try another one. The use of force to make ends meet was out of question.

The coming of the Emergency in 1952, more in Central Province, gave chiefs leeway to commit all manner of injustice on their people. This happened as chiefs were greatly

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717 Helonica Wakiini, O. I., 1 & 17 June, 4 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’

718 However, not all of his wives were from within Ngandori. There were some who were even from outside Embu, in Meru and Kikuyuland. He was getting those from beyond the boundaries of Ngandori with the help of his counterparts. This was so given the immense powers the CAO placed in their hands. They were seeing it as natural to get to use anything that was within their area of jurisdiction without caring about their legitimate owners. And, women were just like any other property and chiefs were free to get possession of them whenever they pleased. So while Njagi would travel out to visit his counterparts and see what they were doing insofar as development was concerned, they would express their gratitude by among other things catching girls like chicken and gift them to him for wives. Colonial chiefs did not even have qualms using their office to snatch other men’s wives. For instance, refer to: Kongo, The Making of a Colonial Chief…, pp. 85-86
involved in the management of security. They could arrest, torture and detain a person on allegations that they were Mau Mau sympathisers without trying to find out whether it was true or not. They could make some men suffer that fate solely in a bid to take their wives or daughters or properties such as land and livestock. However, the worst came after villagisation was undertaken in 1954.720

However, on assuming the office of chief, Njagi avoided impunity. He would not even brutalise those who were suspected of having committed crimes. Rather, he would hand them to the Police for the law to take its course. If he needed people to do communal labour, he would not force them. Instead, he would use the spoken word and it would suffice.721

Chiefs were corrupt and used every means to amass wealth. They used the authority of their office to intimidate and manipulate the people. For instance, tax collection offered them opportunity to make illegal levies in cash or livestock or women. During the Emergency, in the Kikuyu districts of Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri, chiefs were even dispossessing the people of their land just because they had been put in detention. However, Njagi did not allow corruption in his watch.722 He also made efforts to check corruption by government officials who were not under his command. For instance, during the time of Chief Muthang’ato, an agricultural instructor could not attend the farm of a person who wanted to plant coffee without getting a kickback.723 First of all, they had to be served beer to their fill. Njagi got such practices stopped.724 Colonial administration introduced taxation in Kenya but due to poverty many people could not cope with that obligation and for that they had it rough at the hands of chiefs. But even as one of his duties was to correct taxes, Njagi made the suffering of the poor one of his concerns.

Easing the Tax Burden
Colonial chiefs in Kenya had the duty to collect taxes from their people. But the people were at pains to pay as they had difficulties getting money. This was so given that Kenyan

720 People were uprooted from their farms and made to live in villages around Home Guard posts on account of security. That proffered The Home Guards opportunity to terrorise people. Chiefs knew it but they did not care and in fact they were pleased with the cruelty. Torture, murder, theft or destruction of property, and rape and other sexual abuses of women, among other crimes were committed on Mau Mau sympathisers. In every respect, those villages were concentration camps of sorts.Branch, The enemy within…, pp. 303-304

721 Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’; Like Njagi, another example of a colonial chief who was not bent on brutality in dealing with his subjects was Charles Karuga Koinange of Kiambu District. People arrested in Nairobi in a Mau Mau crackdown would say they were from Karuga’s place even though they might have been from outside Kiambu District for they were sure that with him, they were in safe hands. They would be taken there in the morning, get punished and returned to Nairobi. The people’s preference for Karuga was stemming from fear of being taken home as their chiefs could maim or even kill them. See, Itote, Mau Mau in Action, p. 189

722 Abram Njogu Kathutwa, O. I., 29 June 2008
723 Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
724 Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
societies did not have monetary economies by the time colonialists arrived. To matters worse, rather the colonialists make efforts to see to it that Africans were exposed to capitalist economy through agricultural production, they planned to make the latter available to work on settler farms for very little wages. Chiefs would be punished for failing to meet their tax targets and therefore they would try their level best to make the people comply. High-handedness was the answer.\textsuperscript{725} Confiscation of property, beatings, rape and murder were the crimes which chiefs used to commit routinely in the name of collecting taxes.

During the State of Emergency in the 1950s, colonial government used taxation to punish the people of Central Province (the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru) for their support to the Mau Mau, who waged war for independence. Taxation wrecked the society. This was noted by no other person but H. E. Lambert, who had served as DC in Embu and Meru districts as he termed it a corrosive force.\textsuperscript{726} The government introduced a special tax of Shs. 20.00 per year on the province to cater for the cost of the Emergency.\textsuperscript{727} This was a lot of money during that time. However, in spite of that, the people did not budge as the activities of the Mau Mau were not negatively affected by that tough measure. In the face of that, the government became even more reactionary. It raised the tax to Shs. 22.00. Moreover, that was not end of the scorched earth tactics of the government as it raised the tax yet again to Shs. 25.00.\textsuperscript{728} This made the people go through very difficult times as due to the Emergency regulations, it was even very hard to get food to eat let alone have money to pay taxes.

This pushed the people to an abyss of anguish. To matters worse, in 1954, they were removed from their farms to the emergency villages.\textsuperscript{729} This restricted their movement and that hindered engaging in economic activities. In the same year, the people were made to start construction of micingi (moats, singular mucingi) on the fringes of the forests of Mount Kenya and Aberdare Ranges ostensibly for security reasons. People would be rounded up by their chiefs at six o’clock in the morning to go to work there and they would return home at six o’clock in the evening. This happened from Monday to Saturday. It was only on Sunday the people had time to attend their affairs. In spite of that, in Ngandori Location, Chief Muthangato was very harsh on tax defaulters. Even the elderly and widows had it rough at his

\textsuperscript{725} Ayot, A History of the Luo-Abasuba..., p. 194
\textsuperscript{726} Parsons, ‘Being Kikuyu in Meru…’, p. 74
\textsuperscript{727} Branch, ‘The enemy within…’, p. 302
\textsuperscript{728} Clayton, The Killing Fields of Kenya..., p. 11
hands if they failed to meet their tax obligations. Apart from beatings, he could stuff millet in the anus of elderly man.\textsuperscript{730}

However, even though as a chief, Njagi had a duty to collect taxes from his people but being aware of the pains they went through, he did not handle the matter as unusual. He was sensitive to the plight of the people and took steps to alleviate their suffering. He failed to see how a person without money could pay tax. Therefore, he made efforts to enable them start coffee farming as a way of getting income.\textsuperscript{731} In addition, he stopped taxation of elderly people and widows.\textsuperscript{732} For a chief to give people a tax waiver was something extraordinary.\textsuperscript{733} This was so given that in the first place it was not an easy task to collect taxes.

Towards the end of the colonial era, it became very hard for public servants to do their work. The situation became even more complicated following the lifting of the State of Emergency in 1960. People were difficult to deal with because they had heard that independence was around the corner.\textsuperscript{734} Chiefs had very hard time meeting their tax obligations as there was a certain amount of tax each of them was supposed to submit.\textsuperscript{735} For instance, the people of Ngandori Location did not want to pay at all. To them, taxation was part and parcel of colonialism that they were fighting to end.\textsuperscript{736} In spite of there being difficulties to do work, Njagi did not fail to collect the required amount of tax.\textsuperscript{737} The need to liberate Kenya from colonial rule forced many people to take arms after their voices were ignored. For that, if they were not killed, they were taken captive and they were treated inhumanely even after their release. African chiefs had the reputation of being brutal to them but Njagi had a different view.

Rehabilitation of ‘ex-Mau Mau’ Detainees

Mau Mau supporters mainly consisted of urban workers, peasants and squatters in Central and Rift Valley provinces. They were fighting to end colonial rule in Kenya so that, among other things, they could recover the alienated land and freedom. Their violent uprising led to declaration of a State of Emergency on 20 October 1952.\textsuperscript{738} This was followed by Operation

\textsuperscript{730}Joseph Mbogo Muturi, O. I., 7 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’
\textsuperscript{731}Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May, 2008
\textsuperscript{732}Cosmas Nyaga Njeru, O. I., 16 April 2008
\textsuperscript{733}See what happened in 1956 in Ikutha location of Kitui District. Kongo, The Making of a Colonial Chief…, p. 64
\textsuperscript{734}KNA / BB / 3 / 99, DC - Embu Reporting Deposit I, D. 136; Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture…, p. 127
\textsuperscript{735}Sixty per cent of the amount of tax a chief would collect was remitted to the central government in Nairobi, through the DC’s office, and the remainder would go to the ADCs. Abram Ng’ogu Kathutwa, O. I., 29 June 2008; Gardner, Taxing Colonial Africa…, p. 170
\textsuperscript{736}Abram Ng’ogu Kathutwa, O. I., 29 June, 2008
\textsuperscript{737}Abram Ng’ogu Kathutwa, O. I., 29 June, 2008
\textsuperscript{738}Throup, Economic and social origins…, p. 233; Olumwullah, ‘Government’, in Ochieng’(ed.), Themes in
Jock Scott, which saw nearly 200 African leaders of the KAU, KCA and trade union movement, among other organisations arrested.739 By so doing, the Governor of Kenya hoped that the Mau Mau movement would collapse.

However, that was not to be. Many Kikuyu, Embu and Meru went into the forests of central Kenya to bolster the struggle. More and more arrests were made. Those caught by colonialists were either detained or prosecuted in court and jailed. Since the uprising kept on surging; more efforts were made to get the situation under control. Operation Anvil was launched in 1954 and as a result, by 1955, the number of inmates in various detention camps in Kenya had soared up to 90,000.740 The camps were at Wamumu, Kandonguu, Kamiti, Kirigiti, Hola, Manyani, Shimo la Tewa, Sayusi, Mageta Islands and Kowop, among other places. They had horrid conditions and the inmates were inhumanely treated. There were no beddings and latrines, food was poor and inadequate. Torture was the order of the day, both physically and psychologically. From the suffering, many of them were maimed and others died.741

However, the holding of those so many captives was very costly. So the British government asked for release of the inmates. In 1955, a process started towards that end. The inmates were taken through a programme that was called the ‘Pipeline’ for rehabilitation. Ironically, they were subjected to more torture so as to induce them to confess their role(s) in the Mau Mau. This would be made even when one was not involved at all.742 However, more suffering was awaited the ex-detainees, the ordeal of the ‘Pipeline’ notwithstanding.

Once they were released, the ex-detainees would face the Restrictions Order. This required them to go back home straight away as soon as they were out of the camp.743 At home, they were not to engage in politics. They were also to undertake communal labour for six months under the supervision of their chiefs and headmen. Failure to observe these rules would put a person in dire consequences, included being detained again.

At home, life continued being difficult for the ex-detainees. They would find that their home areas had changed much. Where their farms and homes were was now desolate land. The people lived in emergency villages and one could not tell where their families’ houses

Kenyan History, p. 6; Clayton, The Killing Fields of Kenya..., p. 21; Wanjau, Mau Mau Author in Detention..., pp. 213-218
740 Odinga, Not yet Uhuru..., pp. 113-115
741 Ngugi wa Thion’o, This Time Tomorrow (Nairobi, 1970), p. 23
742 Wandibba, J. M. Kariuki, p. 36
743 Njagi, The Last Mau Mau..., p. 113
were as there were new settings. They would find their families having suffered great neglect. In some cases, a wife or a child or a parent may have died. Or find that one’s wife had a child after being raped by a Home Guard or white officer. Or find that one’s wife had been taken away by a Home Guard or some other man. It was horrific for the ex-detainees. They came face to face with very hard realities. This was because they had thought the suffering was over, with things at home being in order. Some of them were unable to bear the humiliation and they opted to even commit suicide.\footnote{Elkins, \textit{Britain’s Gulag…}, pp. 269-271; Thiong’o, \textit{This Time Tomorrow}, pp. 26-28}

In Ngandori Location of Embu, the ex-detainees had a rough time at the hands of Chief Muthang’ato. Everyone who was associated with the Mau Mau was his enemy. He would make suffer badly both physically and psychologically if he got hold of them. So when ex-Mau Mau detainees would return home, they would have it rough. They would be made to do hard work like construct roads. In the process they would be beaten seriously by home guards. However, when Njagi took over the office, he changed the situation. Since he did not believe in violence, he treated ex-Mau Mau detainees in a humane manner. He did not make them do communal labour nor even harass them. That atmosphere was good for ex-Mau Mau detainees. They got opportunity to recover the mistreatment they had endured intention. In the process they would adjust and integrate into normal life again.

The treatment that Njagi accorded the ex-Mau Mau detainees was an indication of his recognition of the significance of Mau Mau uprising in the struggle for Kenya’s independence. It was unique of him to do so because even the elected African members of the Legco, except Oginga Odinga even though he was not of the community of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru, had no time for the Mau Mau. Worse still, three of the elected African members, Julius Gikonyo Kiano, Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, and Bernard Mate, who were Kikuyu, Embu and Meru respectively while they addressed a rally at Nyeri town on 13 June 1959 even had gut to demean the uprising in public arguing that it was of no relevance to the attainment of independence.\footnote{Kinyatti, \textit{History of Resistance…}, p. 345} The British rule was unjust since it was against tenets of human rights. Mau Mau combatants were branded terrorists since they tried to forcefully remove the colonialists from the country whereas the colonialists were there illegitimately and to add insult to the injury, they had no time for reason. Women are regarded as weak and one of the yardsticks of determining a whether or not a society is just is the way it treats them. As the administrator of Ngandori Location, Njagi addressed himself to the plight of woman.
Relieving Women of Communal Labour

Colonial rule had plunged Kenyans into an abyss of abject penury. Agriculture, from which Africans could eke a living, was poor due to neglect by the government while people were made to pay taxes. In the early 1950s, agricultural experts observed that poverty among Africans could be checked if land was consolidated, demarcated and registered with individuals and extension services were provided. In short, Africans needed help to adopt a new land tenure system and modern agriculture. The government knew that it had responsibility on that account and it prepared the Sywnnerton Plan that was inaugurated in 1954 to get things done.

By the time Njagi became a chief, the reforms of the ‘Sywnnerton Plan’ got under way in Embu Division of Embu District. The programme had begun in 1954 in the three Kikuyu districts of Kiambu, Murang’a and Nyeri. In Embu District, pilot schemes of the programme had been started in 1955 in Kiamutugu and Thumaita areas of Gichugu Division and Kaitheri area of Ndia Division. With the people thereof pressing for its full implementation, it was up-scaled and completed in September 1958.

To undertake the programme in Embu Division, the government deployed six district assistants, twenty-six recorders, thirty-six surveying teams and clerks. But, firstly, this staff went on tour of Kiambu District to see how the programme had been done as that was where it had commenced. After that, they came back and convened meetings in the villages to educate people on the importance of the programme and the methods that were to be used in its implementation.

Demand for official recognition of private ownership of land with registration, for instance, had already started in Kiambu by the dawn of the 1920s. By 1940 that situation engulfed the rest of Kikuyuland. Around 1945, for instance, Chief Muhoya Kagumba of North Tetu in Nyeri embarked on land consolidation in his jurisdiction. He had no difficult doing so as his people aspired for the same. In Gichugu and Ndia divisions, land consolidation programme was started on experimental basis in 1955. But people were

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746 KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 17, Embu District Annual Report – 1958
747 KNA / VQ / 16 / 101, Embu District Annual Report - 1955
748 KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 17, Embu District Annual Report – 1958; Cone & Lipscomb (ed.), The History of Kenya Agriculture, p. 239
749 KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 17, Embu District Annual Report – 1958, Reposit II
750 Berman, Control and Crisis…, p. 222-3
751 Curtin, et al., African History., pp. 560
752 Cone & Lipscomb (eds.), The History of Kenya Agriculture, pp. 236-7; Throup, Economic and Social Origins…, p. 212
753 KNA / VQ / 16 / 101, Embu District Annual Report - 1955
eager to get it done comprehensively. But it was not easy for Njagi to do the needful although it had been well received in the Kikuyu areas.

The people of Ngandori Location in particular and Embu Division in general were very difficult to deal with. To impress on them on land consolidation was akin to driving round pegs into square holes. They did not see that programme as workable. So, they wanted to continue wandering around to attend one plot here and another there as they had done for ages. That was so because there was no scarcity of land. Even there was no restriction to cultivate on land that belonged to other people either communally or privately. On top of that, still there existed swathes of unused land. He organised barazas (public meetings at which government policies and directives were explained) for officials of the land consolidation programme to educate people on what was to be done and what they were expected to do. However, they did not co-operate. In spite of that, Njagi did not give up.

He was determined to succeed. After all, it was the responsibility of the Administration to consolidate and register land while the Department of Agriculture had the onus of making farm surveys and plans. In a bid to get people to toe the line, he used the magic of coffee farming. Since they were very eager to start coffee farming due to its high profitability, he suspended its planting until the land reforms were fully implemented. He knew that given that people suffered from the vagaries of nibbling poverty, they had no otherwise but to oblige as that was the only way they could have freed themselves. That idea was not far-fetched because their resistance cracked and therefore, he had things his way. But while he did the needful, he had concerns and he did not fail to address them.

He safe-guarded the interests of those who had already established coffee farms before consolidation started and at the end those farms became part of some other people’s land. He reasoned that such situations were bound to cause inconvenience due to the resources that one happened to have expended there right on land preparation, buying seedlings and tending the

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754 KNA / DC / EBU / 1 / 17, Embu District Annual Report – 1958; Cone & Lipscomb (ed.), The History of Kenya Agriculture, p. 239
755 In handing-over report on 21 March 1958, the Embu DO, J. R. M. Tennett, had painted a grim picture of the character of the Embu. He noted that they were conservative and therefore not eager to embrace change regardless of what benefits it accrued. They were also devoid of organisational ability. He attributed the first character to their genetic make-up and the second one to the repercussions of the State of the Emergency. He further argued that unlike the Kikuyu, the Embu did not have urge to engage in self-help activities which would have enabled them to develop and added that most of them languished in abject poverty for their lack of capacity to try new things that would bring them progress. Moreover, he was of the contention that emotionally the Embu ragged behind as they were overwhelmed by fear of witchcraft and acceptance of rumours without reservation. KNA / DC / EBU / 2 / 9, Embu District Handing Over Report - 1958, Embu Division - J. R. M. Tennett to P. Dempster, 21 March 1958, p. 1; KNA / PC / EST / 1 / 11 / 11, Minutes of the Embu District Advisory Land Consolidation Council – 3 June 1958
756 Shadrack Mugo Kanyenyeu Gititu, O. I., 31 May 2008
757 Parsons, ‘Being Kikuyu in Meru…’, p. 76
758 Shadrack Mugo Kanyenyeu Gititu, O. I., 31 May 2008
759 Ndwiga Cilia, O. I., 15 April 2008; Cosmas Nyaga Njeru, O. I., 16 April, 2008
760 Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture…, p. 76
761 Berman, Control and Crisis…, pp. 379-380
trees. So he directed that such people were to harvest their coffee trees for three years after consolidation and it was after the expiry of that period, the trees were to become the property of the person who had since got legal rights to that piece of land. That measure pleased people a lot given that those who were affected had time to recoup the cost they had incurred in the investments.\footnote{Shadrack Mugo Kanyenyeu Gititu, O. I., 31 May 2008}

To implement the programme, he worked closely with the clans’ elders. This was very important given that almost all the land in Embu was owned by clans and there were a number of them in Ngandori Location. There were both inter- and intra-clan conflicts over land and elders’ committees were very useful in the settlement of the conflicts.\footnote{Elders’ committees were also used on such matters in some other places, for example, see Haugrud, ‘Land Tenure and Agrarian Change…’, p. 75; Thurson, Small Holder Agriculture…, p. 103} In inter-clan conflicts, two or more clans would claim ownership of a swathe of land. To resolve the conflict, each of the concerned clans and their neighbours would be asked to send representatives for settlement of the dispute. The representatives of the neighbouring clans would be asked which of the rival clans they knew as their neighbour. The clan that would be regarded as a neighbour would be considered as the genuine claimant to that particular piece of land. The other(s) would be dismissed as liars. After a case was thus decided, no appeal would be entertained, whatsoever. But most of the inter-clan land issues, if not all, had been dealt with during the time of Chief Muthang’ato.

Intra-clan conflicts arose as clan elders had authority on how land consolidation officials were to sub-divide land among clan members. They would give direction on where one was to be allocated land and the size of it. If the direction was that one should not get anything, their fate was sealed. This would happen if, for example, one had failed to fulfil certain requirement(s) that had been agreed upon by clan members. These were like making monetary contribution to meet the expenses that were involved in the process of securing of clan land. Even in the case of Njagi, he was considered for allocation of the piece of land he got, which was twenty acres, by his clan, Kithami kia Andu aa Mirori. He had to abide by the rules that had been laid down by his clan just like other clan members, regardless of his high position in the society – and well-educated man, a councillor and the area chief.\footnote{Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’}

However, where there were cases of injustice, Njagi intervened. For instance, there were cases whereby clan elders would discriminate some members to get just a hectare and
prefer others to get much bigger plots. He would tell those elders no way.\textsuperscript{765} By standing firm against injustice, that facilitated the programme to be concluded peacefully.

The completion of the programme made him an outstanding administrator. He was successful due to use of consensus and fairness. To educate the people on the possibility and importance of sub-division of land and its registration was not a mean feat.\textsuperscript{766} This was a matter that had proved elusive to Alvan Karanga, who was the DO of Embu Division. This was in spite of being more senior in the Provincial Administration. Njagi was more skilful in dealing with the people.\textsuperscript{767} He knew how to use the power of diplomacy. The programme was implemented in Ngandori in 1961-62. The location was the first on that account in Embu Division.\textsuperscript{768}

After the conclusion of the exercise, he educated the people further. He told them that development had no limit and, therefore, they could work on their farms and realise it. Towards that end, he stressed the need to apply manure on their farms so as to raise the level of productivity. He saw that conflicts were likely to arise among the people over the boundaries that had been established on their farms. To avert that, he advised them to respect those boundaries so that they could live in harmony.\textsuperscript{769}

He made endeavours to help those people who had been left without somewhere to live as the programme ended. In 1957, the EDALCC had urged for establishment of post-consolidation villages to settle those people who had not yet attained eighteen years of age as they were not eligible for land allocations. As the consolidation went on he persuaded clans to donate some land for the villagisation at Kibugu, Kathangariri, Kairuri, Nvuvoori, Kiriari, Manyatta, Kirigi, Mutunduri, Kangaru and Kathangari. There were also the cases of those people who did not get land as they were not considered for it by their clans. He made arrangement for them to be moved to Mwea settlement scheme.\textsuperscript{770} As for the ahoi (they were Kikuyu and had originated from Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri districts),\textsuperscript{771} he had some of them resettled in Murinduko area of Gichugu Division.

The way Njagi conducted the implementation of the programme in sharp contrast with those of many other chiefs in Central Province. His approach ensured fairness as greed was not given room. Some chiefs saw opportunities for self-gain as the process of consolidation

\textsuperscript{765} Daudi Njeru Ayub, O. I., 23 May 2008; Haugerud, ‘Land tenure and Agrarian Change…’, p. 75
\textsuperscript{766} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
\textsuperscript{767} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
\textsuperscript{769} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
\textsuperscript{771} KNA / VQ / 16 / 101, Embu District annual Report – 1955
of holding was done through buying, selling and exchange of fragments. Chiefs Muhoya and Nderi of Nyeri District, for example, ended up with pieces of land that measured over 150 acres. As a result, many of their people got small pieces and others none at all. For that, they were hated by those who suffered inconveniences. The ‘Swynnerton Plan’ of 1954 under which land reforms were done was meant to promote development of African agriculture as a way of containing poverty because even as Kenyan societies were introduced to capital in the early twentieth century, few people had money to cater for their needs. So under his administration, Njagi sought to see to it that his people could get income through cashcrop farming.

**Promoting Coffee Farming**

Even as Embu was one of the three places in Kenya where in the early 1930s Africans were allowed to start coffee farming as a source of income, by 1947, in both Embu and Meru districts the combined area that was under coffee crop was 342 acres. This is an indication of how slow the pace of planting was given that initially in each of the two districts exercise was allowed on an experimental block of 100 acres. By In 1957, the area that was under coffee farming in Embu was 3118 acres. Still, it was a small percentage of people that had become coffee farmers. Things were that way even as people were eager to embark on coffee farming because it had become the most important economic activity. the ‘Swynnerton Plan’ of 1954, which was intended to open the way for Africans to engage in cashcrop farming was not all that helpful. The problem was the strict controls and supervision.

There were many requirements one had to fulfill in order to be licensed to establish a coffee farm. After land preparation, first, a person had to call an agricultural instructor to make measurements in readiness for terracing. It was after instructor was satisfied that the terracing met the desired standards he would make measurements for the holes in which coffee seedlings were to be planted and they had to be three feet in diameter and depth. It was after a person did the needful that the instructor issued a go-ahead for the holes to be filled with farmyard manure and then mulch them. That work was very tedious and therefore

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773 Thurson, *Small Holder Agriculture…*, p. 76
774 [Thurson, *Small Holder Agriculture…*, pp. 35, 121]
776 Swynnerton, *A Plan to Intensify…*
777 Berman, *Control and Crisis…*, p. 370
daunting. But unless one satisfied the instructor on all those counts, there was no possibility for being allowed to procure coffee seedlings.\textsuperscript{779} But that was not the only problem. Corruption by the instructors was stifling. Before they could do their bit, they insisted on being given beer to their contentment.\textsuperscript{780} Bribery was rife.\textsuperscript{781} To get the seedlings was also an uphill task given that they had to be obtained only at the nurseries that were at Kangaru.\textsuperscript{782} Apart from all that, one was not allowed to plant more than 100 coffee trees.\textsuperscript{783} Even as Chief Muthang’ato was famous for striving to get coffee farming introduced in the early 1930s with a view to tame poverty and then and pushing people to try the venture, he later became a problem as tax payment a requirement. Taxation was a big problem to most of the people because they lacked income. So during his time, those who had started coffee farming were mostly those who had benefitted from the colonial system as teachers, clerks, policemen, church elders, agricultural field officers, headmen and the members of locational, divisional and district councils, cooks, labourers and preachers. As a result, by 1959, the NCGCS, which was the only co-operative society in Ngandori Location that was involved in coffee business, had 1,529 members. But nearly 40 per cent of these had planted coffee less than three years earlier given that it was 133,186 out of the 218,830 coffee trees that were over three years old.\textsuperscript{784}

When Njagi became a chief in 1958, one of his priorities was to see people get into coffee farming to fight poverty. He knew the problem was the procedures that were followed in the course getting licensed to plant coffee and endeavoured towards elimination of the stringent requirements there was. He made it possible for one to plant more than 100 coffee trees. On the insistence that one had to clear his tax arrears first, he argued that the requirement was not justified since it was difficult for a person to pay tax without a source of income. He stressed that to ensure that people paid taxes, it was imperative they be helped to get a source of income and coffee farming was the answer.\textsuperscript{785} Then, on the tasking preparations that agricultural instructors required, he pushed for their relaxation. Moreover, he organised supply of coffee seedlings to farmers through the NCGCS.\textsuperscript{786} He was able to

\textsuperscript{779} Thurson, \textit{Small Holder Agriculture...}, p. 119; Swynnerton, \textit{A Plan to Intensify...'}
\textsuperscript{780} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
\textsuperscript{781} Thurson, \textit{Small Holder Agriculture...}, p. 118
\textsuperscript{782} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
\textsuperscript{783} Eliatha Ileri Kathuri, O. I., 19 April 2008; Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008; Thurson, \textit{Small Holder Agriculture...}, p. 37
\textsuperscript{784} KNA / TR / 1 / 266, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operatives Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 5 / 5, Commissioner for Co-operatives Development, M. E. W. North writing on 27 January 1960
\textsuperscript{785} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
organise the NCGCS to do that as he was chairman of its management committee up to 1959 and again from 1961 to 1963.\textsuperscript{787} What he did tremendously helped in easing the process of starting coffee farming.\textsuperscript{788} Consequently, by the end of 1961 the NCGCS had 3,771 members.\textsuperscript{789} Moreover, in 1962, the NCGCS received coffee harvests that weighed 502 tonnes, which was the largest produce among co-operative societies in Kenya.\textsuperscript{790} But Njagi tried to promote other fields of agriculture.

He initiated progressive measures in maize and tea farming. In those days, people planted maize randomly, which was wasteful. But he introduced a method of planting in rows.\textsuperscript{791} The new method was advantageous in two ways. First, a farmer could gauge the amount of seeds that a farm of a given size needed, therefore, wastage of seeds was checked. Secondly, since plants were in rows, weeding became easy. In 1962, he introduced tea farming in Ruguru area, the upper zone of Ngandori.\textsuperscript{792} This was to benefit the people of that area because climate was too cold for coffee farming as there was problem of frost.

Moreover, to boost agricultural development, he organised visits to the farms by agricultural extension officers to educate people on good farming skills so that they could use land well and increase crop yields.\textsuperscript{793} As a result of those endeavours, by the time independence from the British was achieved in December 1963, his area of jurisdiction was one of the most progressive in Kenya. That progression was also contributed by the co-operative societies which ran coffee industry and Njagi was in their leadership. Local government was instrumental in bringing about development in Embu and Njagi was one of the players in that regard. Colonialists valued a lot those they assigned duties and executed them well because the colonial enterprise depended on them and Njagi was counted as such.

**Winning Honours**

Although the colonial system was specifically designed to serve imperial interests, its public service was not entirely unjust to African servants. The colonialists recognised and rewarded those Africans who contributed greatly in the running of the country. In the office of chief - where Njagi served in the dusk of the colonial era - a number of chiefs were honoured for


\textsuperscript{788} Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008; Eliatha Iriki Kathuri, O. I., 19 April 2008

\textsuperscript{789} KNA / TR / 8 / 334, Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, 1962 - 1963

\textsuperscript{790} KNA / TR / 1 / 283, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operatives Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 7 / 1, Handing-over Report, G. Gregson to F. Kynoch, A. General, PUB / 4 / 1, 16 January 1963

\textsuperscript{791} Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008; Lawrence Iriki Mukonwe, O. I., 14 April 2008, Cosmas Nyaga Njeru, O. I., 16 April 2008

\textsuperscript{792} Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008; Eliatha Iriki Kathuri, O. I., 19 April 2008

\textsuperscript{793} Cosmas Nyaga Njeru, O. I., 16 April 2008
remarkable work. One such a case was Chief Musa Nyandusi of Nyaribari Location of the Gusii from Nyanza. He was appointed as a chief in 1947 and the South Nyanza DC described him as an outstanding administrator in 1949. He was eventually promoted to a senior chief in 1951. It was a very rare feat for him to have reached such a rank in just five years.\textsuperscript{794}

In his public service as a chief and councillor from 1958 to 1963, Njagi’s performance was outstanding. As a chief, for instance, he was the first to complete implementation of land reforms in Embu Division. This was despite the resistance people made to the reforms. He prevailed even as some other public servants failed to make an impression in that regard. For example, even though Alvan Karanga was a DO, people did not agree with him. Njagi facilitated so many people to plant coffee during his time.\textsuperscript{795} For that, the colonialists honoured him. Jotham Nguuri Ngucu, who was the chief of Kabare Location in Gichugu Division of Embu District from 1955 to 1963, noted that Njagi was an outstanding administrator and it was right that their masters rewarded him accordingly.

Jotham recalled that the office of chief had four ranks. These were grades A, B, C and D. At the entry, one would be ranked as ‘Chief Grade D’. Then, on the basis of performance of duties, one would be promoted through the ranks to ‘Chief Grade A’, which was the apex. Njagi having started in the late 1958, by 1963 he was ranked as ‘Chief Grade B’. This was a rare feat as it had no precedent in Embu District. It was very hard for one to make such progress even after many years of service. This was because the colonialists were very strict on performance. They made promotions only on the basis of performance. For that, there were some chiefs in the district who had started working very many years before Njagi and were yet to reach the rank he attained. In the case of Jotham, for example, having been appointed in 1955, in 1963 he was ranked as ‘Chief Grade C’.\textsuperscript{796} One had to perform his duties well to remain in office, let alone get promotion.

The colonialists were not lax at monitoring the way public servants did their work. If ones performance found to be below par, the colonialists would not wait to effect sackings. In Embu District, for instance, Chief Kiathi wa Mugwetwa of Evuorori Location in Mbeere Division was dismissed from office in 1947 due to inefficiency.\textsuperscript{797} Another chief who

\begin{itemize}
\item Simeon Nyachae, \textit{Walking through the Corridors of Service: An autobiography} (Nairobi, 2010), pp. 20-21; Another case was Chief Waruhu wa Kung’u of Ruuru Location of Kiambu District. Refer to: Waruhu, \textit{Corridors of British...}, pp. 15, 21, 24, 43-44, 45, 47; Clough, ‘Koinange wa Mbiiu: Mediator and Patriot’, in Kipkorir (ed.),\textit{Biographical Essays...,} p. 84; Blundell, \textit{A Love Affair...}, p. 101
\item In 1959 the NGCS, which ran coffee industry in Ngandori and had started operations in 1945, had 1,529 members and by the end of 1961 they had increased to 3,771. KNA / TR / 1 / 266, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operatives Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 5 / 5, Commissioner for Co-operatives Development, M. E. W. North writing on 27 January 1960; KNA / TR / 8 / 334, Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, 1962 - 1963
\item Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
\item KNA / DC / EBU / 7 / 6 ((The file contained accounts on individual chiefs of Embu District); See also Maxon, \textit{Conflict and...}}
suffered that fate was Marclus Mbebo of Kabare Location in Gichugu Division in 1955. He
had surrendered himself to drunkenness and failing to do his work properly. His sacking was
what opened the way for Jotham to be appointed to take charge starting from 1 November
1955.

In the Embu ADC, Njagi had distinguished himself by his efficiency in the making
and execution of policies. This was in fields of education, livestock development and
transport. White administrators in British colonies like Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria and Malawi
were keeping tabs on what African administrators were doing and they would then send
reports on the best performers back home. Then, the metropolitan government would arrange
to have such given training to increase their skills. The programme was known as the
‘Local Government Course’ and it was tailored for African administrators only. The
training was held in Britain. Those who were considered for it were few. Njagi he was
selected by the British Council its in April 1963. He was the third councilor/chief of Embu
ADC to get that honour. The two who had preceded him were Stephen Ngige Macere and
Bernard Makanga. A number of other Kenyan chiefs, too, took part in the programme, for
instance, there were those who were involved in late 1958. Njagi’s colleagues were
satisfied with his having received the honour as they were aware that he merited it. On 29
April 1963, he was congratulated by the Chairman of the ADC, Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, who
was also a member of the Legco. The other councilors applauded him.

He went to Britain together with two other Kenyan chiefs. They were Chiefs Robia
from Masheland in Mombasa District and Ndenyo from Western Province. The tour lasted
four months. They studied public administration and did some other things such as site-seeing

\[\text{Accommodation...}, \text{p. 47}\]
\[\text{Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008; KNA / VQ / 16 / 101, Embu District annual Report - 1955; KNA / PC/EST / 2 / 9 / 51; Minutes of the Embu African District Council, 15 – 18 November, 1957; KNA / BB / 14 / 40, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Education Department, File No. 200, District Education Officer, Embu District writing to the Provincial Education Officer, Central Province, 18 May 1956.}\]
\[\text{Kongo, The Making of a Colonial Chief...}, \text{pp. 50-51}\]
\[\text{Ibid, p. 51}\]
\[\text{Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008}\]
\[\text{They were Senior Chiefs Kasina Ndoo of Migwani location and James Matuku Muoka of Ikutha location both of Kitu District, Uku Mukima of Kangundo location and Mulumba of Kilungu location both of Machakos District, Nderi Wang’ombe of Nyeri District, Njiri of Fort Hall District, Waruhiu wa Kung’u and Koinange wa Mbiyu both of Kambilu District, Musa Nyandusi of South Nyanza District and Paul Mboya of Nyanza. Kongo, The Making of a Colonial Chief...}, \text{p. 50}\]
\[\text{KNA / BB / 30 / 33, Minutes of Embu African District Council, April 1962 – May 1963}\]
and shopping. Commendations were also given to them by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, in London, for their great service to the British Empire.\footnote{Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’}

However, of the three chiefs, Njagi was shown more respect and got preferential treatment because he was the leader of the group. The situation was so given that, for instance, he was the only one who was invited by the Queen to an Afternoon Party in the Garden of Buckingham Palace in London on Tuesday of 23 July 1963. During the occasion, he dined with the Queen and her husband, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. The party was also attended by some top British public personalities. Apart from that occasion Njagi had with the royals, he got another invitation by the Chairman and Members of the Fire Brigade Committee of the Cambridgeshire County Council. He was to attend a parade and review held in connection with annual visit of one of Her Majesty Inspectors of Fire Brigades. The occasion was at the Shire Hall in Castle Hill, in Cambridge, on Tuesday of 30 July 1963.

While he was there, it was arranged that he deliver a public lecture on coffee farming in Kenya at the University of Cambridge. This was done in recognition of him as a good coffee farmer and as the British were buyers of Kenyan coffee. He was viewed as an authority on management of coffee industry. The coffee co-operative society he was chairman to, the NCGCS, was the largest producer of coffee in Kenya.\footnote{KNA – TR / 1 / 283, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operatives Development, Embu District, File No. ADM / 7 / 1, Handing-over Report, G. Gregson to F. Kynoch, A. General, PUB / 4 / 1, 16 January 1963} Furthermore, the union of coffee co-operative societies he was vice-chairman to, the ECCU, was the best performing in Kenya, too.\footnote{The ECCU, had the highest rate of returns in Sterling Pounds 88.3930 (Shs. 1,767.86) per acre in Kenya. The closest union, Meru, had a rate of Sterling Pounds 50.1292 (Shs. 1,002.584); with some of the others performing as follows: Fort Hall, Nyeri and Kiambu having rates of Sterling Pounds 37.0252 (Shs. 740.504), 29.7880 (Shs. 595.76), and 7.8219 (Shs. 156.438) respectively. Thuerson, Small Holder Agriculture…., p. 121} He travelled extensively around England as well as in Wales and Scotland. He stayed in top hotels and resorts, one of which was Central Hotel on Victoria Street in London. He shopped a lot of personal effects. Some of the things he bought were twelve high-quality suits for himself and two beautiful handbags for his two dear wives. But he did not have to foot his bills because the British Council took care of that.\footnote{Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’} There were many opportunities for capitalist ventures in Embu as the dusk of the colonial period was setting in but it was those who had capital and they knew where and how to invest who made use of them successfully. Njagi was one of them.

### 3.5 Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurial spirit gripped Njagi before he became a chief. He was chairman of a company that was called ‘Gatavi na Ngua’. Although the company had been started in 1952 and none of the directors had prior involvement in commerce, it flourished fast and became a force for dukawallas to reckon with. However, after he was appointed chief, he found the roles conflicting. So as to cope as a chief, he decided to relinquish the chairmanship of the company. He handed over that mantle to Elijah Kaviu, who was serving as the manager of the company.

Although Kaviu, like Njagi, led the company well, fate did not allow him to hold the post for long. While returning from a business trip to Nairobi, the lorry he travelled on - whose driver was called Muya Weru - was involved in a tragic road accident. Kaviu died there. His death was a heavy blow to the company because nobody else was able to rise to the occasion. So the business collapsed. But that did not mark the end of Njagi’s involvement in commerce as he still longed to increase his income.

With things being like that, another opportunity for commercial venture came his way in 1963. Like earlier when he started a business venture that was called ‘Gatavi na Ngua’ he had to pool money with some other people for capital, even this time he did the same. He partnered with Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, Eustace Kagau Kangerwe, Njoroge wa Nguuri, Simon Kanai and some other personalities from Kirinyaga District and all of them numbered ten. Their interest was in the petroleum industry as retailers. This was because by then there was no fuel filing station in Embu District. Their plan was to set up one in Embu Town. To do that, they needed a plot. So they approached the Embu ADC to be allocated a plot and it was granted. The allocation was made on Kenyatta Highway at the site of the present Kobil Petrol Station, which is opposite where the Treasury of Embu County is situated. They named the filing station, ‘Wiyathi (Agip Petrol Station)’. They chose the name Wiyathi because the venture was born in the year Kenya was destined to gain independence from the British as the word wiyathi is Ki-embu language for freedom. As for the word Agip, it was used because the products that the filing station retailed came from Agip Oil Terminal in Mombasa. Agip was acronym of the Azienda Generali Italiana Petroli (General Italian Oil Company) that was established by the Italian Government in 1926 to undertake oil and natural exploration and mining in Italy. But Njagi and his partners did not have that filing station as the only

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810 However, by 1963 the firm was known as AgipENI since it was a subsidiary of the ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi, which in English translates as ‘National Hydrocarbons Corporation’), an Italian conglomerate that was incorporated in 1953. The ENI came to existence after the Italian Government by put together the Agip and its other companies that were involved in the oil industry.

### 3.6 Summary

From the foregoing, it is clear that Njagi was an apt leader which is because he was conscientious. He had the audacity to refrain from supporting those things that were unjust in the society. For instance, he fought discrimination of children in the Kigari schools system even though one of the people who were involved in the vice was his senior and a close relative. His ability to work with the missionaries and the government, and maintain good terms with the Mau Mau, was quite incredible considering that the two camps were bitter rivals and getting caught in the crossfire had dire consequences. The feat leaves no doubt that Njagi was a genius.

The leadership of Njagi as colonial chief was highly impressive. This obtains since he was not accused of being anti-people like his predecessor, Muthang’ato, and many other chiefs. He made endeavours to reform the office and he treated people with dignity. He eliminated brutality, fought corruption and eased tax burden. He was not always doing things as the government desired which shows that he not pliant like his contemporaries. This marks him out as conscientious person. He took steps to improve people’s living standards as he intensified coffee farming and introducing tea farming, too. Those undertakings served to provide households which were steeped in poverty with source income.

As councillor he performed brilliantly on the ADC. He headed a number of its committees and they executed their mandates very well. He also served in the co-operative movement and in the realm of commerce. This ability to execute his office as a chief successfully and at the same time engage in other activities without conflict of interest indicates that he commanded creativity and integrity. He was honoured for doing his work well in the Provincial Administration and the ADC, which makes it clear that the colonialists were not entirely unjust.

The AgipENI was a marketer of petrol, diesel, liquefied petroleum gas, lubricants and bitumen among other petroleum-derived products. \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agip}; \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eni}
CHAPTER FOUR
NJAGI AS A CHIEF AND RETIREE IN THE INDEPENDENCE
PERIOD, 1964 – 2000

4.1 Overview
When time came for Kenya to be left free by the British, Africans were excited so much. They were so because under colonialism, they were treated as inferior and suffer badly yet they were in their own land. However, that joyous occasion was not music to everyone since the people were craving to get rid of chiefs as they were oppressive like the colonialists. Consequently, so many chiefs lost their jobs. Somehow Njagi was among those who did not go down that path even though he was being fiercely fought. It was his good work that saved him from the storm of decolonisation.

The office of chief became anti-people as it had been during colonial era as those who were in power made use of it to check the opposition. However, as a chief, Njagi was not high-handed like many of his counterparts were. While executing his duties, Njagi ensured that he handled his people well. He was respected by his people. He guided his assistant chiefs accordingly and helped them to deal with difficult tasks. This was helped the advance their careers and for that they liked him very much. For his sharp administrative skills, he was honoured by his colleagues in the whole of Embu district. His masters were appreciative of his work as he was given promotion and a presidential award.

While he was a chief, he also served in the leadership of co-operative societies. He was able to check mismanagement and put them on the path of development. That also contributed a lot advancement of coffee industry since co-operative societies were the ones that were processing and marketing coffee produce. Other agricultural activities too benefitted as farm in-puts were being supplied to farmers at favourable prices and even those who did not have cash could get them on credit.

Njagi was also providing leadership to the church in its community development activities. He was appointed to manage a number of post-primary educational institutions. Under his watch those institutions made a lot of progress. He promoted modern education by establishing secondary schools. He achieved that by mobilising the community to pool their resources towards that end. His integrity and diligence was what facilitated achievement of the set goals.

Njagi had ability to lead his people successfully in development activities, for instance, in the fields of modern education and cooperative movement. It is an indication that he was a modeler of what people could do to transform their lives. That disposition is in
accordance with the Great Man Theory as it argues that such people are the ones who make history.\textsuperscript{812}

\section*{4.2 Chieftaincy Service and other Government Work}

\subsection*{Surviving Decolonisation}

Kenya having come under British rule on 1 July 1895,\textsuperscript{813} on 1 June 1963 it became self-governing country. On that occasion, Jomo Kenyatta became the Prime Minister, with Governor Malcolm MacDonald as the head of state. By the time the country was declared a free state, there were high expectations among the people for a good life under the new government since it was under their elected leaders. So the new government was feeling mandated to do something to actualise the dreams of the people. Therefore it was set to differentiate itself from the colonial one. This was in relation to the administration of the country. The government was to avoid being oppressive. This made it formulate of new policies that were to be sold to the people regardless of whether they were black or white, citizens or expatriates, public servants or otherwise. In the government that was appointed in June 1963, Kenyatta did not include Oginga Odinga in the cabinet; he had him as his deputy. After the independence was achieved, Odinga took the portfolio of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The two leaders made an agreement on the way government policies were to be made known to the people. Odinga was to go on a country-wide tour, holding meetings with the officials of regional and national governments as well as the public telling them what the government was contemplating to do.

He told public servants that they must submit to the authority of the new government. He warned that failure to comply with the directive would lead to their sacking. Chiefs and their assistants had been diehard supporters of the colonialists and were supposed to change their loyalty with the times or face the consequences of not doing so.

As for the masses as they had been craved to be ruled by their own leaders who were now in power, he urged them to support the new government as it was going to safeguard their interests. However, since the masses were not at ease with those people who had been serving the colonial government, they asked that once independence was achieved, all chiefs be dismissed as, like the colonialists, they were oppressors.\textsuperscript{814} This tough stance by the masses was obtaining more so in the districts of Kiambu, Murang’a, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Embu

\textsuperscript{812} Carlyle, \textit{Heroes and Hero Worship}, pp. 4-5; Caine, \textit{Biography and History}, p. 12; Lee, \textit{Biography}, p. 3
\textsuperscript{813} Ochieng’, \textit{A History of Kenya}, p. 86; Ayot, \textit{A History of the Luo-Abasuba}, p. 191; Wanyoike, \textit{Wangu wa Makeri}, p. 33
\textsuperscript{814} Odinga, \textit{Not yet Uhuru}, pp. 241–2; Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009; 20 January 2011
and Meru as chiefs thereof had been fervently against the Mau Mau struggle for independence from the British. Things had taken that turn in the last years of the colonial rule, especially following the end of the State of Emergency on January 1960 and the circulation of news about the constitutional talks in London on the future free Kenya. These developments were indications to the masses that colonial power was indeed in the death bed. The masses understood decolonisation as meaning not only getting rid of the colonialists, but also those who were collaborators. But the focus was mainly on chiefs and headmen. They were the most-hated of all public servants as they were regarded as the face of colonialism. In Embu District, for example, chiefs had very difficult time collecting taxes and getting communal work done.

Although the chieftaincy had been anti-people from its inception in 1902, the passing of the CAO in the 1937 had made it even more dangerous. The colonialists had crafted the CAO with a view to subdue Africans fully and thereby serve colonial interests well. Then, in 1958, it was enhanced by (an) amendment(s). Chiefs were short of having a free hand to supervise every aspect of their subjects’ lives. They were even more powerful than the current the DOs. They would harass their subjects with impunity.

However, the government did not want to jettison the office of chief in particular and the Provincial Administration in general. It was fearful that it would not be possible to administer the country without the system as there was no alternative. Security situation was still volatile. There were freedom fighters that were restive because they were landless. For that, the system was deemed to be of help as it had been to the colonialists. The government was of the feeling that the office of chief was not the problem, but the bearers.

Therefore, a way had to be found to make the office people-friendly. To solve the equation, the government decided that the bad elements within the office needed to be rooted out. The people were to be involved in that process so that in the end they could accept the reformed office. To do the needful, a method was adopted that was similar to an electoral system. Before the Independence Day, Odinga explained to the people that the popularity of chiefs was to be tested. The people were to decide whether they would have liked to be led by their respective chiefs any more or not. Then, he added that all those people who were interested in the office needed to apply for the job. The applicants were required to avail

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815 Berman, *Control and Crisis* ..., p. 409
816 KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 3 / 13, Eastern Region Annual Report – 1963, Civil Secretary for Eastern Region, P. E. Walters, reporting to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1 July 1964, Ref. No.: C.I/I
817 Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009; 20 January 2011
818 KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 3 / 13, Eastern Region Annual Report – 1963, Civil Secretary for Eastern Region, P. E. Walters, reporting to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1 July 1964, Ref. No.: C. II/I; Berman, *Control and Crisis* ..., p. 426
themselves at public meetings in their respective locations for election by their people.819 One way of choosing a new chief was to introduce each of the applicants to public gathering and see how that gathering was going to respond. Whosoever of the candidates was to be cheered the most by the gathering was to be considered as the most popular and therefore as having been preferred for the job. Another way was to make all the candidates of a given location to stand before the gathering and then their supporters be asked to queue behind them. The candidate who was going to have the longest mlolongo (queue) was to be deemed as having been the right one to take the job.820 The exercise was carried out and since the country had 423 chiefs, by January 1964, 205 of them had lost their jobs as they had failed the popularity test.821

In Embu District, the election of chiefs was done by queuing. People were required to make mlolongo behind their preferred candidates. Two of the seven chiefs in the district were replaced. In Embu Division, which was later on re-named Runyenjes Division, there were four chiefs and the election had the following outcome. Chief Josiah Njue of Kyeni Location had his place taken by Fred Nthambiri; Chief Kagundu of Kagaari Location lost to Benjamin Njue Mugucu; while Chief Mbugi wa Mikkavo of Gaturi Location was replaced with Nicasio Nyaga Ng’endu. The chief who was spared the sack was Njagi of Ngandori Location. As for the case of Mbeere Division, two chiefs out of three lost their jobs. They were Ngari wa Kiene of Nthawa Location and Samson of Ivurori Location. It was Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi of Mavuria Location who retained his office.822 However, this administrative unit that was now called Embu District with two divisions and seven locations had not been like that for long.

This happened due to reconfiguring of administrative units in the run up to independence. In 1963, the two divisions that were on western side of the district, which were known as Gichugu and Ndia and that had been added to it - from Nyeri District - in 1933 were hived-off to form Kirinyaga District. As a result of that development, the boundaries of Embu District were a long Thuchi River in the east and along Ruvingaci and Kii rivers in the west while in the south the limits were running along the banks of Tana River. Moreover, by the end of 1963, the district was no longer in Central Province, where it had been together with Meru, Nanyuki, Nyeri, Fort-Hall (Murang’a), Thika, and Kiambu districts from 1933. The situation changed because in 1962 the colonial government appointed a commission to

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820 Odinga, Not yet Uhuru…, p. 244
821 Ibid, p. 242
review the boundaries of administrative units with a view to facilitate creation of majimbo (regional) governments. These governments were to be based at the provincial administrative units. From 1933, there had been seven provinces, namely, Central, Nairobi, Rift Valley, Nyanza, Northern, Southern and Coast. However, the way they were structured could not allowed proper representation because, for instance, the size of Northern Province was more than half of the country’s land mass. New boundaries were drawn and the number of provinces rose to eight, namely Central, Eastern, Nairobi, Rift Valley, Nyanza, North Eastern, Western and Coast. Embu District (as it is seen hereinafter the district was without the divisions of Gichugu and Ndia since these were taken away at that time to create Kirinyaga District, which became part of Central Province) was made part of Eastern Province together with Meru, Machakos, Kitui, Isiolo and Marsabit districts. However, whereas Meru District, like Embu District, had been removed from Central Province, the other four were from two other provinces. Machakos and Kitui districts emanated from Southern Province while Isiolo and Marsabit districts were hived-off from Northern Province.

In Embu District as it is noted herein fore there were chiefs who lost their jobs during the elections but that were not the case with Njagi and Kagina. The two were not even subjected to the election process. This happened because the government had confidence in them due to their impressive performance of duties. In the case of Njagi, his record was considered impressive. In the period he had been in office, which was just over five years, he had developed his jurisdiction a lot. He had helped many people to pursue academic education. There were students pursuing university education within Africa and elsewhere. Some were in America and they included Nyaga Henry, Zephaniah Nthiga (from Nguviu) and Kiura Zachariah (from Manyatta). In addition, the people of Njagi’s location were deemed enlightened in comparison with those of other parts of the district. He had developed agriculture a lot. During his tenure, many people were able to start coffee farming, which was earning them income. He had also taken steps to introduce tea cultivation. As a result of the afore-highlighted ventures, his people were found to be contented with his

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823 Apart from the County Council, each of the Divisions of Embu District had its Area Council. See KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 30 / 11, Local Government Election – 1963, Embu District,
824 Karanja, Founded an African Faith, p. xi
825 Haugerud, The Culture of Modern Politics..., p. 223
826 Stichter, Migrant Labour ..., p. xi; Karanja, Founded an African Faith, p. xi
828 Elijah Kamuri Mburugu, O. I., 9 May 2008
leadership. Apart from the above credentials, he was young, well-educated (by the standards of those days). Moreover, he had experience in public service. However, be that as it was, not everyone in Ngandori Location was happy with him remaining a chief.

Furthermore, it was on the basis of his excellent work that Njagi had been promoted very fast within not so many years of service. He had started in the late 1958 as Chief Grade D that was lowest rung of the office of chief and he had reached Grade B by 1963. That was considered a tremendous feat. Being at that level, he was next to the rung of Chief Grade A and those who were on it were the ones called senior chiefs. Additionally, in 1963 that impressive record prompted the British Government to honour him even more by selecting him to undergo the Local Government Course. The course was being offered in Britain to African administrators from British colonies. Moreover, while both Njagi and Kagina had set themselves aside as administrators who knew to do their work, age was in their favour. Both of them were young (by the year 1963, Njagi 41 years old while Kagina was aged 37 years) and energetic.

In Eastern Province, following the tempest that struck the office of chief, a total of 41 chiefs lost their jobs. However, not all of them met that fate due lack of popularity. There were those chiefs who were required to retired because of their advanced ages. The independence government wanted them to leave so as to pave way for young chiefs so as to stimulate the office of chief. Some chiefs were rather too old. That situation was obtaining given that during colonial era, unless a chief was not equal to the task insofar as his official responsibilities were concerned, which he could cause their getting sacked, they could continue serving until death. There were so many chiefs who were more than sixty years old and they had to go, their popularity notwithstanding. Such chiefs received their letters of retirement from the Ministry of Home Affairs in Nairobi without knowing what was impending. Due to how deeply colonial chiefs were loathed, there were places where the situation was quite volatile with regard to dealing with them. One such place was Gatundu
area of Kiambu District. The people thereof were furious. They did not even want their chiefs and headmen to feature at the elections. Rather, they called for instant dismissals as soon as the independence was attained on 12 December 1963. The prayers were duly granted by the government.\textsuperscript{838}

However, inasmuch as Njagi had been doing his work without blemish – since he had cared much about the interests of him people – leading to his being exempted from going through the rigours of the election, still he was far from enjoying good time. His tribulations were due to greed that some people had. During colonial era the office of chief was highly coveted and it remained so even with the coming of independence causing ripples. In Ngandori there were many people who were interested in taking the office. The dawn of Independence had come to an unsettled atmosphere. There was need by the masses to complete decolonisation process, which entailed sweeping out all those public servants who had a colonial background. Those who had interest in the office of chief in Ngandori chose to ride on the crest of that wave. That atmosphere ensured that Njagi got a whole measure of hassle. Among those who were disgruntled with his remaining a chief was a man by the name Matenjagwa (himself a reputed Mau Mau veteran who hailed from Kamviu), Njuguna Njuku wa Rugumo (he hailed from Kanvara area, just a stone throw from Njagi’s home), Mugo Mundu wa Mbora, Benson Njeru Kanja (from Kiamwenja village), Ringanya wa Njoya (from Kanvara) and Kanini wa Kavatha (she was from Kivaki village of Kibugu Sub-location).\textsuperscript{839} These were all prominent people within Ngandori Location. They had much influence within the location as they were officials of the ruling party of Kenya, the Kenya African National Union (KANU). As for Njuku, Ringanya and Kanini, they were commanding more political influence as they were representatives of Ngandori Location on the Embu Area Council.\textsuperscript{840} They detested Njagi so much and for that, they wanted to dislodge him from the office of chief whatsoever. To ensure that Njagi fell on the way side, those detractors decided to forge a common front. They got united and valiantly committed to support Njuku’s bid to replace Njagi.\textsuperscript{841}

They made propaganda spewing all manner of accusations against Njagi. Apart from pointing out that he had been a colonial chief, they also accused him of having been a Home Guard during the Emergency (as the colonialists were fighting the Mau Mau) rather than

\textsuperscript{838} Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009 & 20 January 2011
\textsuperscript{840} Apart from the County Council, each of the Divisions of Embu District had its Area Council. See KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 30 / 11, Local Government Election – 1963, Embu District
\textsuperscript{841} Matthew Njagi Munyi, O. I., 17 April 2002 & 1 January 2009
giving support to the liberation struggle. Indeed, Njagi had been the leader of security guards who were protecting an emergency village that was being run by CMS missionaries at Kigari mission station. The missionaries had established it provide refuge to Christians from around Kigari who had fled their homes in fear of being attacked by the Mau Mau. (The Mau Mau was against Christians who were associated with mission churches since the missionaries were against advancement of African education and some African cultural practices like clitoridectomy, for instance. Njagi had been appointed to head the squad by “Ngunja”, the missionary who in-charge of Kigari mission. In that squad, Njagi was working with others who included Nelson Muturi David Kiria, Dishon Kindoro, Mwaniki wa Nyaki, Jesse Mwaririe, Habakkuk Mugo, Stephen Nthiga Muraci and Eliud Ndwicha Micumano. However, those people who were opposed to Njagi remaining as a chief were dismissed as traducers.

There were those critics who were just charged with envy. This was because he was neither taking beer nor used his position to get riches. They regarded him as weak and hoped that he could be pushed over easily. However, their plan did not work. Even as those critics stared failure in the face, they did not just give up. They then enlisted the support of the area Member of Parliament (MP), Hon. Gerishon Mbogo, as he, too, hailed from Ngandori Location. In spite of that, their manoeuvres failed again. This was because the youth of Ngandori had confidence in Njagi. The youth were working very closely with him. Moreover, Njagi was also being regarded highly by the rest of the public and as well as church leaders and the government. In addition, John Njue M’Nthama made a very a bold move to protect Njagi’s job. John used his position as a councillor on the Embu County Council (ECC) and chairman of Ngandori Location branch of KANU to safe Njagi. John visited the Embu DC’s office and impressed on the DC not to allow the detractors of Njagi to get things their way arguing that people had attained independence so that they could rule themselves, but not to arbitrarily sack those who were in public services. That step by John led to the manoeuvres against Njagi getting nowhere.

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842 Matthew Njagi Munyi, O. I., 17 April 2002 & 1 January 2009
844 However, that was not the real name of the missionary. He had been nicknamed ‘Ngunja’ by the locals.
847 O. I., 28 May 2008
848 Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008
849 John Njue M’Nthama, O. I., 22 April 2002

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However, the war on the chiefs who had a colonial background did not end in 1964. A report by the Eastern PC, Eliud M. Mahihu, to the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the President dated 5th May, 1965 reveals how the situation was. Mahihu indicated that petty politicians were still hounding chiefs. He noted that those politicians were trying to taint the office so that it could become irrelevant. Chiefs were being treated that way so that would not be in control of their areas. In Embu District, even in 1965 the situation was still tense due to the activities of politicians. Here, two organisations namely, Embu Social Union (ESU) and Kiama Kia Nyangi na Irungu (KKNI), which in English translates to ‘Party of Nyangi and Irungu’, were being viewed by the government as a security threat. The ESU was in existence legally. However, as for the KKNI, it was not registered by the government and its object was to counter government policies. The KKNI was thus fighting the government. Be that as it was, the ESU, too, was being seen as a cause of insecurity because of associating with the KKNI.

However, the government was determined to improve security in Embu District by taking stern measures to bring an end to the influence of the two organisations. The police were under instruction to arrest the leaders of the KKNI. But it was not easy to catch them since on learning what was afoot, they had fled to Nairobi. But by May 1965, they were still at large. To ensure that chiefs continued working in Kenya, the government did not relent on giving them support. After the collapse of the ouster bid, Njagi was able to progressively continue with his work.

**Excellent Service**

The independence government of Kenya inherited the Provincial Administration of the colonial era as it considered it convenient for running the country. No reforms were made on the system despite the fact that it had been created by colonialists whose interests were against those of Africans. The only change that was instituted was in personnel as European staff was replaced by Africans. However, with time, the independence government started using the office of chief in more or less the same way as the colonial one. Things were done that way for political expediency.

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850 KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 3 / 19, Government of Kenya, Regional Veterinary Department, File No. REPT / 54, Administration Annual/Monthly Reports – 1965; Eliud M. Mahihu was PC for Eastern Province from 24 December, 1964 to 30 April, 1971

851 KNA / PC / EST / 2 / 3 / 19; KNA / BB / 45 / 40, Embu District Annual Report - 1966
Kenya had attained independence with a constitution that supported liberal democracy.\(^{852}\) For that, since at the time of independence most of the people steeped in abject penury, people were feeling free to voice their views as that was a matter of public interest. That led to a division in political leadership over the way socio-economic problems the country was facing were to be dealt with. There were leaders who were in preference of a capitalist path while the others wanted a socialist one.\(^{853}\) The former camp was of the view that the land that had been in the hands of the White settlers should remain under the ownership of the whites or be acquired by African entrepreneurs without fragmentation as that was the only way it could be of economic benefit to the country. However, the latter camp wanted that land to be given to the landless people so that they could be in a position to eke a living and hence get out of the rut of poverty. President Kenyatta was in the capitalist camp and he was faced with stiff criticism. As such, he feared to lose political control and therefore he started manoeuvres to tighten his grip on power. In those endeavours, just like the colonialists had been using the Provincial Administration to get their opponents in check, so did he. That started in 1964 by Africanisation of the Office of PC by President Kenyatta. Furthermore, he put the system to work under the Office of the President.\(^{854}\)

However, the people as they had been fiercely against the Provincial Administration, they persisted to regard it a colonial relic that needed to be done away with. So Kenyatta had to find an excuse to use the system. He started claiming that public security was in danger and therefore he needed to do something to safeguard it. In 1965, he reached out for one of the colonial legal weapons, the Preservation of Public Security Ordinance, that was enacted in November 1959 so as to give the Governor power to take such drastic measures as restriction of movement and detention without trial after the end of the Emergency, all in the name of safeguarding security of the public.\(^{855}\) The law was renamed the Public Order Act (POA), Chapter 56 of the Laws of Kenya. After that he instructed the Provincial Administration (which contained the office of chief) to issue licences to MPs whenever they wanted to hold public meetings. This scheme was calculated to inconvenience those MPs who were leaning on the left since as it turned out, even when meetings were to be in their electoral areas, they had to apply for the same. This was providing opportunity to block those


\(^{853}\) Blundell, A Love Affair with the Sun..., p. 132; Ochieng', 'Independent Kenya...', in Ochieng' (ed.), A Modern History of Kenya..., p. 204

\(^{854}\) Berman, Control and Crisis In Colonial Kenya..., p. 426; Odinga, Not yet Uhuru..., pp. 242-44

\(^{855}\) Percock, 'Mau Mau and the Arming of the State', in Atieno-Odhiambo & Lonsdale (eds.), Mau Mau and Nationhood..., p. 135
who were not toeing the line. Worse still, even if they were given a licence, it could be cancelled any time.856

However, it was the continued use of the CAO, which in 1967 was renamed Chiefs’ Authority Act, Chapter 128 of the Laws of Kenya, for political expediency which saw the office of chief morph to a monster it had been during colonial era.857 This came to pass after President Jomo Kenyatta fell-out with his Vice-President, Oginga Odinga, and had him thrown out of the ruling party, KANU, in 1966. Odinga responded by forming an opposition party, the Kenya Peoples’ Union (KPU). However, Kenyatta became fearful of that political machine and saw it necessary check Odinga’s political influence. Towards that end, the CAA was applied to give potency to the Provincial Administration so that it could subdue the people. For instance, under Section 10 (k) of the CAA, a chief or an Administrative Officer (a Provincial Administrator for that matter) had power to authorise organisation or participation in gatherings such as dances and meetings within their jurisdiction. Therefore, any person residing or being within the boundaries of a location who wished to hold a dance or a meeting had to first of all ask for permission or a licence from his/her chief or Administrative Officer.858 Failure to observe that law carried dire consequences. The concerned chief claiming backing by that law would move with speed to stop the offenders (all those people who may have been gathering there). This would be done with devastating force. Impunity would be displayed in the form of beatings, arrests, demand for bribes in terms money, livestock and sex. This would happen as they had the help of the Administration Police and a legion of misguided aides, who were known as KANU Youth Wingers. The Youth Wingers enjoyed the feeling of being close to powers that be (sic chiefs) and lacked of knowledge, were behaving in a manner akin to that of thugs as they prowled in the countryside with impunity infringing on people rights to associate, among other things. This was being done under the guise that when the people were gathered, subversive feelings were likely to fomented.859

857 Bagaka, ‘Restructuring the Provincial Administration...’; p. 4
858 Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, ‘Chiefs Authority Act, Cap. 128, Chief’s Standing Orders, 1982’, dated 27 January 1982
859 The most notable instance in which the CAA was used to suppress people occurred after the murder of popular politician Josiah Mwangi Karuku, who was fondly known as JM, the then MP for Nyandarua North, in March 1975. JM was a very popular politician all over Kenya. In the run up the parliamentary elections of 1974, the government did not allow him to campaign in his constituency for re-election. In spite of that, he was able to recapture his seat with a landslide. (The government was treating him that way because he was a fierce critic of the government of President Kenyatta for its failure to stem the tide of nibbling poverty among the masses while a few powerful people were amassing much wealth.) JM was reported as having disappeared on 2 March 1975 and then he found murdered in Ngong Forest. The people of Central Province, as they were Kikuyu by ethnicity like JM, became suspicious that the government was involved in the murder. To register their disappointment towards the government for its failure to provide security, they turned to their faith in Christ Jesus in search of a solution. They
Chiefs could also invoke the CAA to arrest people just as it was happening during the colonial era.\textsuperscript{860} That way chiefs and the rest of the Provincial Administrators were used by the government in the efforts to repress the KPU.\textsuperscript{861} However, throughout his tenure, the CAA notwithstanding, Njagi was able to conduct himself with humaneness. He was an exception rather than the rule in as far as high-handedness among chiefs was concerned. There were no allegations of him having misused his office to mistreat people in any way. Even where people had engaged in criminal activities, his style was to arrest them but without application of torture and then hand them over to the police for prosecution in the court of law. Many a chief relished to brutalise their people under guise of executing their duties.

Beer-drinking was one of the social problems from the colonial era that the independent Kenya had to grapple with. Both the government and the church were against the practice for its damaging effect on social and economic fabrics of the country. In Embu District, beer-drinking was a very serious problem. People were mostly drinking traditional liquors brewed mostly with sugar cane juice. These had names such as cang’aa, karuvu and matheng’eta. For instance, when Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, the then Vice-President, visited Kairuri, the headquarters of Ngandori Location, on 2 November 1967, he took time advising the wananchi to avoid getting drunk beyond measure.\textsuperscript{862} Even after he took over the presidency in August, 1978, he continued to fight the problem vigorously\textsuperscript{863} and, consequently, illicit liquors were made illegal.\textsuperscript{864}

The Provincial Administration, especially chiefs and assistant-chiefs, were given the onus of eradicating the menace. In the process, Njagi had a tall order as many people in Ngandori Location had for long got used to drinking the liquors and therefore it was hard to

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\textsuperscript{861} Berman, Control and Crisis, p. 426

\textsuperscript{862} KNA / BB / 45 / 41, Government of Kenya, Embu District Monthly Reports, November 1967 - A.244 / 161, Civil Secretary reporting on 28 December, 1967


\textsuperscript{864} Willis, Potent Brews..., p. 214
\end{footnotesize}
dissuade them. However, he was not brutal when dealing with those who were involved. He was caring and sometimes he would find a man lying on the road in a drunken stupor unable to reach home and he would drive him home.

The jurisdiction of Njagi was divided into ten sub-locations. They were Kibugu, Nguviu, Kathangari, Kirigi, Mukangu, Kairuri, Kiamwenja, Manyatta, Kiriari, Nvuvori and Kangaru (it was moved to Mbeti Location in 1967). The assistant-chiefs who were in-charge there were Difatha Njue (Kibugu), Esbon Ngaraci (Kathangari), Cosam Gatumu (Kirigi), Daudi Nthiga Zaphaniah (Mukangu), Josphat Tai (Kairuri), Misheck Njagi (Kiamwenja), Isaiah Kiura Karingi (Manyatta), Muriithi Ndava (Kiriari) and Rivai Mugo (Nvurori). As for Nguviu Sub-Location, it was initially being headed by Kamanja wa Mbataru, however, he was succeeded by Julius Ngoroi in 1977. However, of these sub-locations, Kibugu and Kangaru were notorious for criminal activities. The crimes included muggings, robberies (with violence) and murders. In Kibugu Sub-Location alone, eleven people were murdered during the independence era (1963 and 1983). However, unlike in the other sub-locations where internal factors were the only contributors to crime, in Kibugu and Kangaru external factors, too, were to blame. These two sub-locations had adverse influence from the outside world. In the case of Kangaru, its being adjacent to Embu Town had a lot of bad things happening. Kibugu was bordering Kirinyaga District. Criminals would visit the two sub-locations, commit crimes and then go back to where they had emanated so as to avoid arrest. For that, it was not possible to apprehend suspects after a crime was committed since they were nowhere within to be found. The two sub-locations were also leading in the manufacture and consumption of illicit brews as well as in smoking of cannabis sativa (which was being obtained from the forests of Mount Kenya and Njukiiri as that was where it was being cultivated). Apart from their being unlawful, these substances had great influence in the occurrence of crimes.

To work with his assistant-chiefs well, Njagi had a weekly timetable for meeting them. On Monday they would go his office at Kairuri. He would explain government policies to them, what they were to tell their respective people and what the people in turn expected of them. Wednesday was a special day for the assistant-chiefs who had difficult cases to forward them to him so that he could assist in settling them. He was a good arbitrator and he would determine cases fairly. He used to advise them a lot on how to go about their work well. He was aware that the people’s confidence was vital in public administration and he wanted his assistant-chiefs to be mindful about it. Towards that end, he was telling them to avoid taking bribes, making sexual advances on other men’s wives or any other thing that could damage
their images in the eyes of the people as that would trigger complaints. He was emphasising to them the need to be good role models to their people in whatever they did. For instance, he urged them to adopt good agricultural practices on their farms like terracing sloppy grounds. He wanted them to impress on their people to try the same. He was of the view that people could easily follow what they saw their leaders doing.\textsuperscript{865} Due to guiding his assistant-chiefs that way, during his tenure none of them was sacked for inadequacy or misbehaviour. He himself valued to lead by example. He was of high integrity and a good farmer. Due to how well-managed his farm was, agricultural officers used to call farmers from far and wide for field days there. But Njagi was a respected administrator beyond the boundaries of Ngandori, too.

He was working well with his counterparts in Embu Division, which was later on renamed Runyenje’s Division. The division got African DO in 1965. The chiefs thereof were supposed to meet at the DO’s office once every month. During the meetings, they would discuss the progress they were making and the challenges they were facing in their work. Since Njagi had worked for more than five years before his counterparts were appointed (hence he was more experienced) and was older than them, too, he would make initiative to share his knowledge with them. He would advise them on how they could do their work efficiently, the need to be loyal to the government and to avoid those things that would attract criticism from the people. He was telling them that if the people had grievances, the right thing was to refer them to the government, especially, the DO of Runyenjes. He would challenge them to be good role models to their people as well as families. He wanted them to be leading in activities such as farming, livestock keeping and education of their children. He would tell them to avoid drunkenness, adultery and other things that could cast them negatively to the people. He was urging them to be disciplinarians, advising young people just as they would their own children.\textsuperscript{866}

Whenever Runyenje’s Division did not have a DO, he would hold brief until another one was posted there. During that time he was working in an acting capacity, he used to chair the meetings of the chiefs of the division. At the meetings, he would tell them what they were required to do by the government. He would receive communiqués from the Embu DC and give feed-backs accordingly. He was noted to have been running the office very well and sometimes he would perform even better than the DOs. Whenever a new DO would arrive, he would take him around the division for orientation. This was so given that apart from being

\textsuperscript{865} Isaiah Kiura Karungi, O. I., 9 May 2008
\textsuperscript{866} Nicason Nyaga Ng’endu, O. I., 7 May, 2008
senior among his counterparts, he had good knowledge of the geography of the area. He had become familiar with it during his days as an Assistant Supervisor of Schools in 1950s.

It was as a result of that high degree of his conscientiousness and dedication to his work that led him to eventually get promoted to a senior chief in 1966. He was acknowledged as an accomplished leader by his counterparts in Runyenje’s Division. So when the area DO was in need of one among them to be promoted to a senior chief, he consulted them privately. They impressed on him that Njagi was the one suitable for the post. After that, the DO advised the Embu DC in that regard on the basis of the chiefs’ views. He was the first chief to hold that rank in Embu District in the independence era. And throughout his time, that rank was attained by Chief Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi of Mavuria Location in Mbeere Division.

When he became a senior chief, the people of Ngandori were appreciative as they knew that he merited it. Moreover, he also used to be recommended for promotion as a DO. However, whenever it was offered, he would decline. He would do that as he did not want to be separated from the people of Ngandori Location. This was so given that as a DO, he could be posted to work anywhere in Kenya.

However, he was renowned as an accomplished Provincial Administrator throughout Embu District. The chiefs of Mbeere Division, namely, Kariuki wa Mutavi (Mbeti), Cyrus Ita (Nthawa), Samson Mwandiko wa Ngira (Ivurori) and Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi (Mavuria) regarded him highly. He was being seen as the Paramount Chief of Embu District. That was manifested, for instance, when Mbeti Location was created in 1967. The location was curved out of the lower parts of Ngandori and Gaturi Locations of Runyenje’s Division and upper parts of Mavuria and Nthawa locations of Mbeere Division. Since a person needed as a chief for the area as in those days chiefs and assistant-chiefs were being identified through that process, Njagi featured there greatly even though he was not a resident. The election was to be held in April 1967 and there emerged 39 contestants. He was in the campaign trials in support of the bid of Kariuki wa Mutavi, as they were long-time friends. Despite being an outsider there, he was able to rally the people of Mbeti Location, especially the youth, to vote for Kariuki. Kariuki won the poll with an overwhelming majority. He garnered 3,700 votes.

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867 Nicasion Nyaga Ng’endu, O. I., 7 May, 2008
868 Isaiah Kiura Karingi, O. I., 9 May 2008
869 Isaiah Kiura Karingi, O. I., 9 May 2008
870 Nicasion Nyaga Ng’endu, O. I., 7 May 2008
871 Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, O. I., 8 May 2008; Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki, O. I., 16 April 2002
872 Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi, O. I., 8 May 2008
Njagi was very successful in dealing with the people because he was highly professional in his work. He took care that whatever he said and did was respectful to the people. As he was appealing in his speeches, that would impel the people to be receptive. He handled people very well and for that, he had no difficulties executing his duties that needed the input of the people.

During Njagi’s time, since the Provincial Administration was a department in the Ministry of State in the Office of the President, both presidents Kenyatta and Moi used it to manipulate the electoral process so that their opponents could be defeated. Provincial Administrators would be instructed to ensure that certain personalities won the elections so that power equation would not be disrupted hence ensure that the grip that they had on power was not loosened. However, the DCs were the ones who were playing the greatest role in the schemes as they would be the returning officers. This was so given that holding that position, at the end of the day they were the ones who had the mandate of announcing the elections results and if a candidate who was not favoured by the establishment happened to win, they had to interfere with the results so that the favoured candidates were the winners.

In Embu District, during the general elections 1979 and 1983, for instance, in Embu North Constituency the electoral process was compromised by the Provincial Administrators. The constituency consisted of the four locations of Runyenje’s Division (namely, Ngandori, Gaturi, Kagaari and Kyeni). Although most of the contestants were from Ngandori Location, for instance, there was Morris “Kivanga” Njagi, Kithinji Kiragu and Kagondu during 1979 elections, the winner was always from Kagaari. It was Njagi Mbarire who won in 1979 and Stanley Njeru “Kithung’a” in 1983. The two were from Kagaari.

Chiefs were very active in the electoral process as officials. They were required to obey all the instructions that were issued by their DCs. If they would not comply, they were bound to face dire consequences. They (chiefs) had to campaign for the preferred candidates as they were agents of the ruling party, the KANU, and the Government. They had no alternative but to comply with what they were told for it was part of their duties during time.

873 Bagaka, ‘Restructuring the Provincial Administration…’; pp. 3, 4
875 Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008; Even when it was not electioneering time, the DCs had the responsibility of issuing licenses to those politicians who wanted to hold public meetings. MPs, too, were not spared the hassle as they had to seek the same when they wanted to address their electorates. Those politicians who were critical of the government would not be given license. Furthermore, even when it was issued, it could be withdrawn there being no notice at all. Bagaka, ‘Restructuring the Provincial Administration…’; pp. 3, 4
876 Morris Njagi, O. I., 20 April 2008
877 The other contestants for parliamentary seat for Embu North Constituency in 1979 elections were Njagi Mbarire, Gicovi wa Munyi, Vincent Munyi Karukenya, Stanley Njeru Kithung’a, Kivuti Murualetu, Njeru wa Muruandaci and Njeru wa Ngonge. Morris Njagi, O. I., 20 April 2008
of elections. The way the Government relied on chiefs in the electoral process is indicated by a confidential letter written by the DO for Runyenjes Division of Embu District, C. I. Butoyi, to chiefs of his jurisdiction on 6 July 1978. He pointed out that the PC for Eastern Province had made a directive on the elections that were to be held in the year 1979. The directive was that chiefs and assistant-chiefs were not allowed to retire before the date of that election unless their retirement application papers had been processed by 30 June 1978. Those who would have liked to retire but did not have their papers for that matter ready were therefore required to wait until the elections had been concluded.\textsuperscript{878} Njagi used to adhere to the instructions that were made by the administrators who were above him insofar as the elections were concerned. However, he was receptive and courteous in his dealings with the contestants. He would invite those from Ngandori Location to his home for advice. He had an accommodative wife and she would treat them very well.\textsuperscript{879} However, even in the other areas of administration, Njagi was committed to do what was expected of him.

He was highly efficient in execution of his duties. For instance, on 9 July 1975, Njagi was instructed by the Embu DC, Maclean R. Mbui, to make the necessary arrangements with Archdeacon Bedan Ireri Jonah for the consecration ceremony of the Bishop of the newly-created Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Diocese of Mount Kenya East. The ceremony was scheduled at Kigari on Sunday 20 July 1975.\textsuperscript{880} It was Rev. David M. Gitari who was to be consecrated to head the diocese. The arrangements that were to be made entailed overseeing preparation of the venue: cleanliness, sitting places, parking space, decorations and security. The other parties Njagi was to work with were the DO of Runyenjes Division, the assistant-chiefs of Ngandori Location and the Police of Manyatta Police Station. He coordinated the work successfully and the ceremony went on smoothly.\textsuperscript{881} But there were issue faiths.

Ngandori Location was wholly Christian; however, there were very many denominations. There was the Anglican Church, Roman Catholic Church, Jeshi la Wokovu (Salvation Army), AIPCA, National Independent Church of Africa, Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, Gospel Pentecostal Church of East Africa, African Orthodox Church, Apostolic Church and Seventh-Day Adventist Church. There also several groups of the Akurinu, who were also known as Arathi (prophets; singular \textit{murathi}) - and one of which was the Holy Litan

\textsuperscript{878} 'General Administration', a Confidential Letter by C. I. Butoyi, DO for Runyenjes Division, Embu District, to all the Chiefs of his Jurisdiction dated 6 July 1978
\textsuperscript{879} Morris Njagi, O. I., 20 April 2008
All these denominations had the Bible as their reference point. They believed in one God, whom they regarded as living, true and everlasting as well as the creator and preserver of all things. Be that as it was, these denominations had some beliefs, which they were not sharing. The diversity of Christian faiths in Ngandori and the friction they could cause. Njagi was an Anglican faithful but he had no problem working with religious leaders who were not ascribing to the same beliefs as him. He was able to do that because of his understanding and friendly disposition. He was appreciated by religious leaders across the divide as he was not discriminating on religious lines. This was unlike the hostility some other chiefs had towards religious leaders if they were of a different faith(s). In 1974 Njagi assisted the Catholic Church to relocate Nguviu Vocational Training Centre from Nguviu Mission to Kiriari, which in 1975, was taken over by the Government and upgraded to a youth polytechnic and was renamed Kanorori Youth Polytechnic.

Moreover, during his time, the transportation network of Ngandori was well maintained. When the roads would get in bad shape, especially, as it would happen during the rainy season, he would strive to see it restored. He would ask the ECC to repair them. It would send machinery and they would be fixed again. For executing his duties with due diligence, Njagi was honoured by the authorities.

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882 By the 1960s there were more 17 churches and groups of the Akurinu in Kenya. Abraham Macharia Prince, *In Search of Identity: The Akurinu Community Demystified* (Nairobi, 2012), pp. 71-4

883 The Holy Bible..., Exodus 20: 3; Deutoronomy 5; 4; Psalms104; 1; Matthew 2: 10, and 10: 29-30; Hebrews 1: 2; 1 Corinthians 8; 4; 2 Corinthians 13: 14; Colossans 1: 16; 1 John 5: 7; Rogers, *The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England...,* Article I, pp. 35-45

884 Those beliefs could easily cause friction between the denominations. For instance, the Roman Catholics had different position from the other denominations with regard to cleansing of sin(s). Faith in the blood of Jesus Christ was not the only way to make a person clean of sins but also intervention by the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ, Rogers, *The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England...,* pp. 110-111; *The Constitution on the Church of the Vatican Council II* (New Jersey, 1965), pp. 177-190

885 As a result of that disposition, for instance, he did a lot of work with the Catholic Church. This was in the field of community development as it had sponsored many institutions of learning in Ngandori Location. When a Catholic priest from Slovenia (in Eastern Europe), whose name was Father Peter Primieri, who came to Kenya as a refugee in 1971 arrived at Nguviu Catholic Mission, Njagi had no problem with him. This was even though they could not communicate well because the priest did not know English or Kiswahili or Kiembu and he took a long time to learn those languages. Njagi welcomed him warmly and thereafter they were working well. This was, especially, in the development of the four Ngandori secondary schools that were at Gicerori, Nguviu, Kamama and Kiriari that Njagi had helped in their establishment in the late 1960s. Fr. Peter had expertise in building design and construction, Njagi had no problem with him working as a building contractor in those schools, even in those two that were sponsored by the Anglican Church. [Peter Primieri, O. I., 7 June 2008] For instance, by the time Lilian Waweru took over at Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School as the headmistress in January 1976, there was no house for her. This caused her a lot of difficulties in her attempt to settle down there. In the face of that, Njagi being the chairman of the school’s BoG, during the meeting of the BoG on 6 December 1976, he made emphasis on the need to construct the headmistress’ house. Despite the school being sponsored by the Anglican Church, he advised the headmistress to approach Father Peter to do architectural work. [KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 1, St. Anne’s Girls’ High School - Kiriari, Chairman, B.O.G., Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 1]

886 The church had been experiencing hardship because the mission compound was too small to accommodate even the training centre. It had tried a lot to find an alternative piece of land for the centre but failed. He appealed to the ECC for a piece of land for that purpose and it was provided for at Kiriari. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, *A Biography of Chief...*, Rufus Irii Hezron, O. I., February, 2002 & Tobias Njeru, O. I., 9 January 2011

Recognition

Njagi was an outstanding administrator and for that he was respected highly by his counterparts in Runyenje’s Division.\textsuperscript{888} It was in view of that they had impressed on the area DO that he was suitable promotion as a senior chief in 1966.\textsuperscript{889} Moreover, for a number of times Njagi was offered promotion to the rank of a DO. Among the places he could have been posted was Murang’a District. But he declined all the offers. Lest to his refusal to accept promotion, the Eastern PC, Eliud Mahihu, threatened to report him to President Kenyatta. However, in spite of that, Njagi did not change his mind. Njagi observed that had he accepted promotion to a DO, he could have even progressed through the ranks of the Provincial Administration to the position of a DC as he was a strikingly able administrator.

However, for his refusal to take the offers for promotions, was not taken kindly in Ngandori Location. He was criticised heavily for it. It was being argued that by taking that stand, he blocked upward social mobility of the people of Ngandori Location. This was because had he left for the higher post, somebody from Ngandori would have been appointed as chief to fill the void.\textsuperscript{890}

The promotion to the rank of a senior chief and the offers for the post of DO were not the only recognition Njagi received from his masters. There was a medal that was sent to him by President Kenyatta through PC Mogaka.\textsuperscript{891} President Moi also recognised his excellent service as a chief. Moi valued the Provincial Administration highly as he heavily relied on it in the administration of Kenya.\textsuperscript{892} He was arguing that the system was the link between ordinary people and the local and the central governments, especially, in as far as the implementation of government policies was concerned.\textsuperscript{893} He honoured Njagi with the Head of State’s Commendation (Civilian Division) on 22 October 1980.\textsuperscript{894} Njagi’s execution of his duties was noted to be up to par. He was going about his work with energy, from a position of information and commanding the respect of both local leaders and ordinary wananchi throughout Embu District. Further, he was firm in the maintenance of law and order and had successfully contained criminal activities such as consumption of illicit brews and other

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Nicasion Nyaga Ng’endu. O. I., 7 May 2008
\item Isaiah Kiura Karingi. O. I., 9 May 2008
\item Onesmus Mumo. O. I., 27 March 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’
\item John Njagi Nyaga Gakungi. O. I., 30 April 2008
\item Wanyande, ‘The Public Service and the Politics of Succession,’ in Mute, et al (eds.), *Building an Open Society…*, p. 161
\item The information was obtained from: ‘Burial Service for the Late Ex-Senior Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, HSC, Thursday, 27 January 2000’
\end{thebibliography}
harmful substances like *cannabis sativa* in his jurisdiction.\(^{895}\) At independence there was the problem of inadequate educational opportunities for Embu children and he tried to ease the situation.

**Grappling with Challenges**

Njagi was serving as a chief and at the same time deeply immersed in development endeavours of Ngandori community. He did a lot to promote education, co-operative societies and agriculture. Due to his good leadership, the society came to respect him a lot. He became prominent. Unfortunately, just as there were people rallying behind him, so there were opponents. Those who not comfortable with what he was doing were inclined that way due to the huge sums of money that were involved in implementation of the community development activities. As in the case of co-operative societies, they were handling a lot of money from the coffee they were marketing for farmers. Most of the funds that were used in community development activities were emanating from coffee as people were undertaking them on *harambee* basis. Given that situation, some people were seeing opportunities for self gain. Some did try to position themselves to make a kill. However, to make ends, they had to either compromise Njagi or get out of the way altogether.

One of those personalities whom Njagi contended with was Eliud M. Mahihu. This Mahihu was one the top bureaucrats in Kenya. He was the PC for Eastern Province from 24 December 1964 to 30 April 1971. And how powerful he was and the arrogance that he was adding to that was not a matter for dispute. He was one of those personalities who regarded themselves as larger than life. In the process, he would flaunt that in public without restraint. He even had guts to step on the toes of big-time political personalities putting them in unfathomable embarrassment and helplessness.\(^{896}\) Two cabinet ministers from Eastern Province, Hon. Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga and Hon. Jackson H. Angaine, had it rough at his hands. The two were among a group of 28 MPs, who on 4 August 1969, wrote to the Minister of State in the Office of the President, Peter Mbiyu Koinange, as they sought help to get President Kenyatta’s intervention against PCs. The politicians were concerned that the PCs had become so big-headed such that they could go as far as commenting on them shamefully at public meetings.\(^{897}\) PCs (under whose command were chiefs) were really very powerful.

\(^{895}\) *Ibid*

\(^{896}\) Kamau Mutunga, ‘Mbiyu Koinange, the Powerful Force behind the Kenyatta Presidency’, in *Sunday Nation* (Nairobi), 30 October 2011, pp. 4-6; Kamau Ngotho, ‘When PCs were Demigods’, in *The People* (Nairobi), 9 June 2013, pp. 1, 4

\(^{897}\) Mutunga, ‘Mbiyu Koinange, the Powerful Force behind the Kenyatta Presidency’, in *Sunday Nation*. pp. 4-6
because they were representatives of the Office of the President. They were notorious for exercising powers, which were more than what the law allowed, unlike other bureaucrats in the Civil Service. And, indeed, they were a law unto themselves. The zenith of their high-handedness was during the Kenyatta and Moi regimes. Their provinces were their fiefdoms.\(^{898}\)

Mahihu was very uncomfortable with Njagi’s popularity. He attempted to frustrate Njagi with a view to gain control of the money Ngandori community was pooling for building schools. Mahihu was aware that that money was emanating from coffee harvests that were being marketed through co-operative societies.\(^{899}\) In an attempt to get control of the situation, Mahihu tried to compromise Njagi. However, Njagi did not yield. So, due to the refusal, Mahihu was bitter and he had no kind word for Njagi.\(^{900}\) What is more, Mahihu did not stop there. He used various kinds of manoeuvrings in attempts to get Njagi out of the way. These ranged from promotion to sheer intimidation. In the case of promotion, since Njagi was a chief within Eastern Province, Mahihu thought that he would use his position to tame Njagi easily. After Njagi was promoted to a senior chief, Mahihu decided to use the trick of elevating Njagi to the rank of a DO. He tried that several times. That would have caused Njagi to get posted to work anywhere in Kenya and hence leave Ngandori Location. In the process, Njagi would have moved far away from Ngandori and thereby lose control of the things he was doing. However, Njagi did not swallow the bit.\(^{901}\) After Njagi refused to take the promotions, Mahihu threatened to report him to President Kenyatta.\(^{902}\) However, even that failed to make Njagi change his mind. However, Njagi’s experience with Mahihu was not the only one of that kind.

Another big force that Njagi reckoned with was Hon. Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga. He was the top-ranked politician in the district as he was the MP for Embu South and a cabinet minister in both the Kenyatta and Moi administrations.\(^{903}\) And like Mahihu, Nyaga, too, had his eyes on coffee money. However, given that Njagi was not a pushover, Nyaga decided to deal with Njagi in a way similar to that of Mahihu. He reasoned that if Njagi left Ngandori, things would fall into place. Towards that end, he tried to use political influence to get things his

\(^{898}\) Ngotho, ‘When PCs were demigods’, in The People, pp. 1, 4  
\(^{900}\) Alexander Mwaniki Kinyua, O. I., 28 May 2008  
\(^{901}\) Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008  
\(^{903}\) Ndwiga Ciitia, O. I., 15 April 2008; Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008
way. And, just as Mahihu was doing, Nyaga tried to get Njagi promoted to a DO so that he could be sent to work somewhere outside Ngandori in particular and Embu District in general. However Njagi did not accept the offer(s). Even so, Nyaga did not give up trying to gain control of the situation. Consequently, he changed tact. He thought that Njagi’s immense power emanated from the size of his area of jurisdiction. So, he reasoned that by splinting the location into two, that would demoralise Njagi and thereby cut him down to size. However, Njagi resisted the move to subdivide Ngandori. He did that by rallying Ngandori leaders not to submit to the design. That way Njagi was able to remain in control of the things up to the time he retired by the end of 1983.

However, even with Njagi having left the scene, it was not until 1985 the bid to get the location sub-divided succeeded. It was split into two from the north to south along Thambana and Ruvingaci rivers. The location that was on the eastern side retained the name Ngandori and the one on the western side became known as Nginda. However, of all the challenges Njagi faced while in the office of chief in the independent Kenya, none could compare with the one that emanated from the national political scene.

It was shock waves emanating President Kenyatta’s struggle for more power brought the worst nightmare to Njagi as it nearly cost his life. From the early days of the independence era, Kenyatta made attempts to consolidate power and to protect neo-colonial interests of the British and the new ruling class (African elite). The situation got more complicate with time, as Kenyatta’s closest allies (such as Mbiyu Koinange, James Gichuru and Dr. Njoroge Mungai, who were from Kenyatta’s home district of Kiambu) started scheming to succeed him. This came to pass as Kenya had gained independence with the leadership divided into two camps on ideological lines. There were those leaders who wanted the economy of the country to be run the capitalist way and others favoured the socialist one. The former camp was against the poor, landless Mau Mau gaining possession of the

904 Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008
905 Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008
906 It was not until in 1985 did the location get splint. This happened along rivers Thambana and Ruvingaci. The area to the east of the rivers was carried the name Ngandori Location while that to the west was named Nginda Location. But the splitting was done after wide consultations with leaders thereof. It was, especially, those who were in the Sub-District Development Committee for the location, the NLDC. They included Kiura Karingi, Cosam Nyaga Njeru, O. I., 15 April 2008; Gitari Mwando. Ndwiga, O. I., 15 April 2008; Ndwiga Ciitia, O. I., 15 April 2008
908 Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru…, p. 256
910 Blundell, A Love Affair..., p. 132

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land that was being held by European settlers. As for the latter camp, it was strongly pushing for the landless masses being given land so that they could have a source of livelihood. After some time, rumours of some Kenyan leaders networking with communists to remove Kenyatta from power started doing rounds. On 24 February 1965, Pio Gama Pinto, who was a well-known advocate of socialism and an associate of the Vice-President Oginga Odinga, was assassinated outside his home in Westlands area of Nairobi. The conflict continued. In March 1966, Odinga, who was the leader of the socialist-inclined camp, was removed from the vice-presidency of the ruling party, KANU. Due to that drastic move, Odinga resigned from the government and KANU on 14 April 1966. Upon that, he formed an opposition party, the Kenya Peoples’ Union. This development helped to scale up the political contention that was simmering in the country. However, with time Odinga was pushed to the periphery and by 1969, he was in political bustbin.

In these manoeuvres, Kenyatta’s camp was using Tom Mboya as a Trojan horse. However, with Odinga having been got out of the way, the Kenyatta’s camp turned to Mboya. He was targeted because he was seen as a serious threat to their calculations as his political popularity was thought as superseding that of Kenyatta. Mboya had immense political influence in the country as he was an outstanding political player, whose charisma and organisational skills were unrivalled. Therefore, he had to be tamed early enough. He was eventually assassinated in broad day light in a Nairobi Street on 5 July 1969. The allies of Odinga claimed that the heinous crime had been organised by powerful people who were close to Kenyatta. The murder nearly pushed the country into an abyss of tribal conflict. It was argued that those people, who were responsible for Mboya’s murder, were also responsible for the removal of Odinga from the Government. Against that backdrop, since Odinga belonged to the society of the Luo, its members solidly backed him. He was given that consideration given that they perceived him capable of articulating their cause. There started a shift of political allegiance by the public towards Odinga. Tension built up

910 Furedi, *The Mau Mau War*…, p. 188  
911 Odinga, *Not yet Uhuru*…, p. 254  
917 Bailey, *Kenya*…, p. 173
even more in the country as other Kenyan societies joined the Luo in giving support to Odinga. This led to clashes in western Kenya pitting the Kikuyu against other societies and many members of the former were killed.

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918 Gekara, ‘The incident that transformed Kenya into a defacto one–party state’, in Saturday Nation, 24 October 2009
919 Odinga, Not yet Uhuur..., p. 256
921 Blundell, A Love Affair..., p. 132
922 Furedi, The Mau Mau War in Perspective, p. 188
923 Odinga, Not yet Uhuur..., p. 254
924 Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya p. 224; Also see Stewart Smith, US Neo-Colonialism in Africa (Moscow:, 1974) p. 117; Odinga, Not yet Uhuur..., p. 299; Kinyatti, History of Resistance in Kenya..., pp. 397-8, 406 and Philip Ochieng’ & Joseph Karimi, The Kenyatta Succession, p. 21
925 Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya..., p. 224; Ochieng’, A History of Kenya, p. 154
926 Furedi, Mau Mau War in Perspective, p. 208; Throup & Hornby, Multi-Party Politics in Kenya..., p. 18
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However, seeing how things were turning out in favour of Odinga, Kenyatta countered decisively. He organised a secret administration of the traditional oath to the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru with threat of death. The oath was intended to reduce to nil chances of a non-Kikuyu person ever succeeding Kenyatta. It was being administered at Gatundu, which was Kenyatta’s home area. Scouts were dispatched across Central and Eastern Provinces to get people to visit Gatundu. Those who were preferred were prominent personalities like Provincial Administrators, politicians and businessmen. However, they were not being told the purpose of the visit. People were not eager to go there. So to get them to go, they would be told that the occasion was just *cai* (a get-together party). They were being ferried there

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929 Bailey, *Kenya*..., p. 173
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at night in vehicles that were marked ‘KANU PRIVATE’. It was upon arrival there that people would know the plan. The exercise involved making people to drink blood. If one was not willing to do that, they would be tortured mercilessly and threatened with death. Since it was at night nobody could identify the oath administrators. That was another way of enhancing secrecy.

The exercise then was spread out to other parts of central Kenya. For instance, close to the western side of Embu District, the oath was being administered at Kiamutugu in Gichugu Division of Kirinyaga District. It was expanded to cover all the mass of the people, including children. People had to pay a fee. Endeavours were also made to reach out to the people who were not of Kikuyu, Embu and Meru descent, for instance, the Kamba. They were being told that it was necessary to protect the independence and land they had fought for from being taken away by other tribes of Kenya. In the process of administering the oath, people were harassed, tortured and some of them even killed. That notwithstanding, the scheming by Kenyatta and his inner circle on the leadership of Kenya continued. The process saw in the formation of a tribal organisation that was called Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association in 1971 that, eventually, became well-known by its abbreviation GEMA.

However, when the oath administration started in Gatundu, Njagi and Ben Mbogo wa Riandai were the known people from Ngandori who were forcefully taken there for it. The two were living very close to each other as their homes were less than a kilometre apart. They were close friends, too. By that time, together with J. J. M. Nyaga, who was a cabinet minister, they were involved in procurement of grade cows such as Jersey, Aryshire, Guernsey and Friesian from the former European-settled areas of Central and Rift Valley provinces, which they were supplying to local farmers. They were doing that in a bid to promote dairy industry. However, when Njagi and Ben arrived at Gatundu, they were met

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935 Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009
938 Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008; Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009
939 Effort to introduce exotic breeds of dairy cows had been started by the Embu ADC in 1957. In the month of November that year, the ADC was able to procure just one Guernsey bull and put it at an experimental farm at Kianjokoma for interbreeding with indigenous cattle. The bull was to serve the people of Kanja scheme. They were required to pay 10.00 Shillings for each service. However, not much could have been achieved since the price was very high by the standards of those days and people were very poor. Meanwhile, the ADC was working on a plan to procure those cows from the former White Highlands and sell them to the people. However, by 1960, very little had been achieved insofar as trying to get
with untold hostility. Allegations were made against the two that they were traitors. In addition, they were severely beaten.

Njagi was accused of having been a Home Guard during the Emergency rather than being on the side of the Mau Mau. Further, his accusers pointed out that he had not taken Mau Mau oath. However, the truth was that throughout the Emergency he used to be in contact with the Mau Mau and therefore they were aware of his status. Furthermore, no efforts had been made to oath him. He had a cordial relationship with the Mau Mau and it was for that reason that unlike other teachers, the Mau Mau had not even tried to harass him. This was in spite that he was a well known Christian, was serving as an elder in a mission church and working for mission schools system. The Mau Mau had been bitterly against the missionaries. However, He had never disparaged the Mau Mau like many loyalists did. He supported the Mau Mau after he became a councillor on the Embu ADC in 1955. He maintained the feat after he was appointed chief in 1958. He also did the same in the post-colonial era. Be that as it was, the beating that was meted him was severe. However, after their return home, he prayed to God very much. That was what enabled him to recover.

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940 Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008
941 Jeremiah Njeru Gatua, O. I., 30 April 2008;
942 Njogu Gating’u, O. I., 1 May 2008
944 Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008
945 Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008
946 Throup & Hornby, Multi-Party Politics in Kenya…. p. 14
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947 Odera, My Journey with Jaramogi..., p. F126
948 Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009
950 Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009
953 Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008; Timothy Njiru, O. I., 1 January 2009
promote dairy industry.\textsuperscript{954} However, when Njagi and Ben arrived at Gatundu, they were met with untold hostility. Allegations were made against the two that they were traitors. In addition, they were severely beaten.

Njagi was accused of having been a Home Guard during the Emergency rather than being on the side of the Mau Mau. Further, his accusers pointed out that he had not taken Mau Mau oath.\textsuperscript{955} However, the truth was that throughout the Emergency he used to be in contact with the Mau Mau and therefore they were aware of his status. Furthermore, no efforts had been made to oath him.\textsuperscript{956} He had a cordial relationship with the Mau Mau and it was for that reason that unlike other teachers, the Mau Mau had not even tried to harass him. This was in spite that he was a well known Christian, was serving as an elder in a mission church and working for mission schools system. The Mau Mau had been bitterly against the missionaries.\textsuperscript{957} However, He had never disparaged the Mau Mau like many loyalists did.\textsuperscript{958} He supported the Mau Mau after he became a councillor on the Embu ADC in 1955.\textsuperscript{959} He maintained the feat after he was appointed chief in 1958. He also did the same in the post-colonial era. Be that as it was, the beating that was meted him was severe. However, after their return home, he prayed to God very much. That was what enabled him to recover.\textsuperscript{960}

\textsuperscript{954} Effort to introduce exotic breeds of dairy cows had been started by the Embu ADC in 1957. In the month of November that year, the ADC was able to procure just one Guernsey bull and put it at an experimental farm at Kianjokoma for interbreeding with indigenous cattle. The bull was to serve the people of Kanja scheme. They were required to pay 10.00 Shillings for each service. However, not much could have been achieved since the price was very high by the standards of those days and people were very poor. Meanwhile, the ADC was working on a plan to procure those cows from the former White Highlands and sell them to the people. However, by 1960, very little had been achieved insofar as trying to get people acquire the exotic cows was concerned. (KNA / BD / 5 / 5, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Veterinary Department, Vol. V, File No. Committee / 21 / 7, Minutes of the African District Council – Embu, January 1958 – December 1960). The ADC was not able to do things fast due to logistical reasons and at independence in 1963; it was splint in two, Embu and Kirinyaga county councils. So the trio of Njagi, Ben and Nyaga was trying to fill the void that was existing in the field of livestock development since the independence government was not fast in that regard, among other things, as it was overwhelmed by the needs of Kenyans as it was facing a number of setbacks, one of which was financial crunch. Moreover, from the time Kenya attained independence, Embu leaders, and Njagi being one of them, had made endeavours to spur dairy industry in Embu by starting a dairy co-operative society. Despite that, not so many people could have benefitted from it since they were rearing indigenous cattle, whose milk yield was very low regardless of how well they were fed. However, the efforts of the trio to see indigenous cattle substituted with exotic ones was being greatly hampered by the disease called East Coast Fever as it was killing many of those new cows. (Timothy Ezekiel Nyaga Karanga, O. I., 17 May 2008).

\textsuperscript{955} Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April, 2008.
\textsuperscript{956} Jeremiah Njeru Gatua, O. I., 30 April, 2008;
\textsuperscript{957} Njogu Gating’u, O. I., 1 May 2008.
\textsuperscript{959} Jotham Nguri Ngucu, O. I., 18 May 2008.
\textsuperscript{960} Jacknes Kambura, O. I., 14 April 2008.
However, with regard to what was going on during the Emergency, the case of Ben was different. Ben had gone public dismissing the Mau Mau’s struggle for independence as ill-advised. He regarded British colonialists as supreme. His disdain for the Mau Mau was so deep to the extent that he declared that if at all the independence was ever to be realised, he would give away his first-born child to be killed. That stand did not please people. However, following the beating he was meted on at Gatundu, his health was badly affected. He never recovered. What is more, his health kept on failing more and more. Consequently, after some time, he eventually died. Njagi retired as a chief in 1983. But even as he retired, the Kenya Government still needed his services.

Government Service in Retirement
Njagi left government service in 1983 as he had attained the mandatory retirement age of 60 years. But by then he had long established himself as a reliable public servant. That streak would over time see him called upon by the government to provide services again. He was offered two public posts in 1988. The first one came by the middle of the year. He was appointed onto the Board of Directors of the Nyayo Tea Zones Development Corporation (NTZDC). Appointment of directors of this corporation was based on the areas in which it had operations. Those were the areas where there were government tea farms that were called Nyayo Tea Zones (NTZs). It was those NTZs that the NTZDC had been founded to manage. Njagi was appointed to represent Embu-Meru area.

The NTZs were producing tea and conserving the environment, they were also providing economic benefits to the people who were living around there. Since plucking tea
was a labour-intensive activity, it was offering work opportunities. Those people were offering their labour there. The wages they were getting were a boost to their incomes.\textsuperscript{966} Njagi ceased to be a director in the early 1990s. But he had been doing two government jobs concurrently.

It was in the year 1988 he got the second government post. However, unlike the directorship, the second job was in the world of politics. In that year, the general elections in which parliamentary and civic seats were to be vied for were held. This happened towards the end of the year. However, Njagi was not interested in any elective post. However, apart from the elective seats, there were also seats that could be taken through nominations in parliament and as well as in county councils. After the elections, the Embu County Council (ECC) nominated Njagi as a councillor.\textsuperscript{967} A man called Namu, who hailed from Mutunduri area, also received the same consideration. Those who joined the ECC as elected councillors were Njeru Ngari (Kagaari North Ward), Humphrey Kamani (Kyeni North Ward), Katama (Kyeni South Ward), Lewis Godfrey Wambugu Mugo (Gaturi South Ward), Andrew Nyaga Kithimo (Ngandori Ward), Njeru Nyaga Kirachi (Nginda Ward), Miti Njuki (Mbeti Ward), Mugo Mutie (Ishiara Ward), Joseph Muriuki (Siakago Ward) and Josephat Njeru, who was representing a ward on the Mbeere side.\textsuperscript{968} The onus of the ECC was enormous. They were charged with overseeing improvement transport and communication through undertaking construction and maintenance of roads and bridges; facilitation of trade through issuance licences to investors and maintenance of markets; allocation of land for both public and private use; promotion of public health and educational services; offering custody for public utilities such as land, among other things.

Njagi was respected by his colleagues. This was stemming from his good understanding of what they were supposed to do. He had ability to grasp issues and to make relevant contributions in debates.\textsuperscript{969} He was greatly enabling the ECC execute its mandate.

However, with time, failing health started impacting negatively on his work.\textsuperscript{970} He took ill in 1990 and was hospitalised for some time.\textsuperscript{971} That situation could not allow him to attend the business of the ECC as it was necessary.\textsuperscript{972}
4.3 Community Service

Promoting Education

At independence, the newly formed ECC had twenty-three councillors. Seventeen of these were elected in August 1963. They were Alexander Njue Nthakanio (the Chairman), Francis Nyaga Ngari, Nicasio Nyaga Ng’endu, Njagi Mbarire, Ruri Saverio Njuiri, Ephaphra Njue, Solomon Mbura, Magu Mutie, Corando Njiru, Gabriel Ireri Mugo, A. Githinji, M. Gichunje, Stephen M. Kisilu, Elisha Njururi Migwi, John Njue M’Nthama, Cypriano M. Njagi and Stanley Muturi. The other six made it there through nomination. They were Chief Njagi, Chief Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi, Chief Cyrus Ita, M. H. Motiga, Ruth Muthoni (Mrs.) and Beatrice Kanini Mathew (Mrs.). The nominations were made by the Minister for Local Government under the Local Government Act (Chapter 265) of the Laws of Kenya. To identify the nominees, the Minister had to scout for them as he had to get people who were suitable for the posts. To do that he used state machinery such as the Provincial Administration and the Directorate of Security Intelligence (was commonly known as the Special Branch and in the year 2010 it was renamed National Intelligence Service). He would be provided with profiles of suitable personalities in a given county from which to select those he needed to nominate. These were usually those people who had good leadership qualities. Njagi was picked because he had been an outstanding Provincial Administrator (1958 - 1963) and accomplished councillor (1955 - 1963), among other things. But Njagi served there until he resigned 1966. He was impelled to do that because the government required him to do so. The government was concerned that those councillors who were also chiefs were drawing two salaries from the same employer. As councillors, they were drawing salaries from the political side and as chiefs from administration side. It was felt that this was not healthy to the well-being of the country given that there was an acute unemployment problem. Therefore, it was only prudent to release the council posts to be taken by other people who were not fortunate to be in wage employment so as to aid the endeavours to even the distribution of the country’s resources.

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973 KNA / PC / EST / 1 / 30 / 10, Embu County Council, Minutes of the Education Planning Committee, 24 January and 12 August 1964; Appendix ‘T’ – Deliberations of the Finance and General Purpose Committee.
975 Alex Njue Nthakanio, O. I., 21 June 2008
976 Nicasio Nyaga Ng’endu, O. I., 7 May 2008
977 Even from 25 September to 1 October of that year, the government organised a conference at Kericho that dealt with, among other things, how the problem of unemployment that was besetting country could be solved. Sheffield (ed.), Education, Employment..., pp. 13-20
In those days of the early independence era of Kenya’s history, one of the things the ECC was greatly interested about was secondary education as it was poorly developed. There was acute shortage of secondary educational facilities in Embu District in particular and Kenya in general. In 1963 there were 151 secondary schools in Kenya. These had overall enrolment of 30,120 students. To improve this situation in its jurisdiction, the ECC - through its Education Planning Committee - started delving into the matter on 24 January, 1964. Njagi was the Chairman of the committee and the other members were Cyrus Kagina, Stephen Kisilu, Njue Nthakanio and Cyprian Njai. They noted that those pupils who were to sit for the KAPE, which were being sat in Standard VIII, were likely to perform well enough to proceed for secondary education, while facilities were acutely lacking in the district. So they made a proposal to start some three day secondary schools at Kamama, Kegonge and Siakago. At the time, Embu District had just two secondary schools, Kangaru GAS and CCM St. Paul’s School, Kevote, which had very limited capacity for admission of KAPE graduates. In 1964, the Government of Kenya appointed the Kenya Education Commission with a view to examine the education system in the country. The commission noted that out of the 110,600 children, who had completed primary education, 67,000 of them stood no chance of furthering their education. That was noted to be due to government secondary schools being very limited and there were no alternatives.

As the ECC looked into how it could develop secondary education in Embu District, Njagi contemplated the same in his jurisdiction of Ngandori. He was concerned that without a good education, the children of Ngandori stood no chance of getting well-paying jobs in Kenya. So he felt obliged to help them get in a position to compete well with children of other parts of Kenya for good jobs. In the independence era secondary education had since become a pre-requisite for one to proceed for tertiary education or training, as these were the ones that could enable a person to get qualified for a well-paying job. And, towards that end, firstly, Njagi came up with the idea of starting a secondary school at the site of Kamama Intermediate School. Then, he decided to tell other leaders of Ngandori. Firstly, he broached that idea to Councillors John Njue M’Nthama and Elisha Njururi Migwi. They discussed it

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978 Bogonko, A History of Modern Education..., pp. 125, 131
979 Ibid, pp. 125, 134
980 A document that was seen at the office of chief of Ngandori Location at Kairuri in Embu District in the year 2002
981 Jeremiah Nyaga Macere, O. I., 6 July 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief...
982 Sheffield (ed.), Education, Employment..., p. ix
983 Ibid, p. 24

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and decided that apart from Kamama, three other secondary schools should be built as well. So they started plan to build Nguviu Boys’, Nguviu Girls’ and Kiriari Girls’ and Kamama Boys’ secondary schools. They were to raise funds for that purpose through spirit of *harambee* (self-help) as they projected that the community of Ngandori could contribute enough resources since they were farming coffee and it was fetching good money.\(^{985}\) They were to persuade coffee farmers to contribute two cents per pound of coffee they delivered to the factories.

After that, they decided to inform other Ngandori leaders about the plan to start the four secondary schools. The leaders they broached the subject to were members of the Ngandori Location Development Committee (NLDC), which used to make development plans for the location and coordinating their implementation. This committee dated from the time of Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato.\(^{986}\) They agreed to take the matter to the NLDC. Njagi was its chairman. M’Nthama and Njururi Migwi were also its members. The other members were Patricio Njagi Katharanjau (Vice-chairman), Edward Ndwiga Njamiu (Secretary), Nyaga Kithinji (Treasurer), Andrew Nyaga Kithimo, Nyaga Kithinji, Levi Mugo, Stephen Nthiga Muraci, Richard Karanga, Solomon Njagi Kimani, Kanini Kavatha, Njuku wa Rugumo and Ringanya wa Njoya among others.\(^{987}\) However, having undertaken to involve more leaders in the endeavours to start secondary schools, there emerged the risk of that noble idea failing to materialise.\(^{988}\)

There appeared deep divisions within the NLDC that led the plan to come to a standstill. There were those members who wanted Kamama secondary school started first while others were for Nguviu secondary school. Yet there were those who were steeped in the decolonisation politics. They were in opposition to Njagi’s leadership since he had been a home guard during the Emergency.\(^{989}\) Then, he was appointed as a colonial chief.\(^{990}\) Under the circumstances, the NLDC could do nothing. It was something akin to what was happening

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\(^{985}\) Application of the *harambee* spirit was the way communities in Kenya at the time were trying to solve the problem the poorly developed secondary education system in the country. Kyale Mwendwa, ‘Constraints and strategy in planning education’, in Sheffield (ed.), *Education, Employment…*, p. 278; Ominde, ‘The structure of education in Kenya and some planning problems’, in Sheffield (ed.), *Education, Employment…*, p. 292

\(^{986}\) Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, O. I., 6 April 2002

\(^{987}\) Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, O. I., 6 April 2002

\(^{988}\) A document that was seen at the office of chief of Ngandori Location at Kairuri in Embu District in the year 2002; Matthew Njagi Munyi, O. I., 17 April 2002 & 1 January 2009

\(^{989}\) During the Emergency, he had been appointed by the missionary who was in-charge of Kigari Mission as the lead guard to protect the mission in case of an attack by the Mau Mau. Eliud Ndwiga Micumano, O. I., 8 May 2008; Nelson Muturi David Kiria, O. I., 24 April 2008

during the construction of the biblical Tower of Babel. This state of affairs worried some people very much and they had to act to get things right.

One man, Matthew Njagi Munyi of Matiru area, near Kigari, felt that he should do something to save the day. He was at the time working as a clerk in the Judiciary Department at Embu Town but was not a member of the NLDC. However, he got to know what was going on in the NLDC as he was interested in what was going on in Ngandori. He approached Thomas Ireri Katharane (who by then was a trade in the town, dealing in baskets which he was fetching from Ishiara Market) to discuss how the problems that were impeding the starting of the schools could be solved. He impressed on Thomas that starting the schools was of utmost importance and he agreed. They thought about how to unite the wrangling leaders so that they could do the needful. He stressed that Kamama Secondary School needed to be started first since there were permanent classrooms that were extant at site of Kamama Intermediate School and then it be followed by the second school at Nguviu the following year. Thomas agreed with that suggestion, too. However, it became very difficult for the two men to meet the wrangling leaders as they were not members of the NLDC.991

However, they were determined to succeed. They reasoned that they could use John Njue M’Nthama and Elisha Njururi Migwi, who were councillors of the Ngandori Location Council, to do the needful. They were able to meet Njue after two weeks and Njururi after three weeks. However, after Njururi got to know what was afoot, he asked that he be given some time to think before taking action. After four weeks, the four men were able to meet for deliberations. It was at that junction that Matthew and Thomas came to learn that biggest obstacle to the schools being started was opposition to Njagi being chairman of the NLDC and chief of Ngandori Location due to his having been a home guard during the Emergency. The opposition consisted of Kanini, Njuku and Ringanya, who were Area Councillors, among other people as they were striving to get Njagi replaced by Njuku.992

Matthew advised Njue and Njururi to go and impress on Kanini, Njuku and Ringanya - given that these three were the most formidable opponents of Njagi - that even after getting Njagi sacked; the schools would be still needed. So it was wise to first of all think about starting the schools and afterwards, they all team up to get Njagi sacked. However, he advised them to present the views as if they were their own so that they could be accepted. He did so since he feared that some of the leaders were not likely to accept the views if they knew the source as they were his enemies. One of them was Njagi. They could not see eye to

991 Matthew Njagi Munyi, O. I., 17 April 2002 & 1 January 2009
992 Ibid
They had collided as they could not agree on how reform of the land tenure could be carried out. Matthew was secretary to that board. Although he made an indirect intervention, the NLDC members got united and got on with the schools’ plan.993

They agreed to establish two schools for boys and two for girls. But before they could make any move, they had to notify the government about the plan.994 They formed a delegation to go to Nairobi to see see government officials. The delegation consisted of Njagi, Patricio, the area MP, Gerishon Mbogo, among others. They met the Minister for Education, Dr. Njoroge Mungai. After Mungai heard about the plan, he asked them whether there was land on which to put up the schools. They said that land was not a problem at all. However, he cautioned them that the government was not in a position to provide material support for the schools since it was experiencing financial constraints. They told him that the community would fully meet the costs of the plan by pooling its resources. After that, Mungai told them to go ahead with their plan. So they returned home to try to make ends meet.995

Njagi organised *barazas* (public gatherings) to inform Ngandori community what was afoot. He explained to them the vitality of education to development endeavours. He averred that since Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato had “planted” coffee in Ngandori Location, he in turn was going to “plant” education. He elaborated that the schools were going to benefit the children of Ngandori who had passed their examinations to further their education but had not qualified to join secondary schools like St. Paul’s High School, at Kevote, and Kangaru School.996 He impressed on them to contribute money to build the schools since they were farming coffee and it was providing income. He pointed out that they could make their contributions through their respective coffee societies.997 The community was happy about the plan. In addition, it agreed each of them contribute KShs. 50.00 for that purpose through their respective coffee co-operative societies.998

The leaders mandated the NLDC to raise funds for the schools. Then, they formed two other organs that were to focus only on the affairs of the schools. They were Ngandori

993 *Ibid*

994 John Njue M’Nthama, O. I., 22 April 2002

995 Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, O. I., 6 April 2002; On account of the Government not being able to give material support for the proposed schools, for more information read Republic of Kenya, *Economic Survey*, 1967 (Nairobi, 67) p. 110

996 *Ibid*


998 Clement Kiragu, O. I., 11 March 2002
Secondary Schools Committee (NSSC) and Ngandori Secondary Schools Fund (NSSF). The NSSC was charged with the task of establishing the schools and ensuring that they were running smoothly. Its functions were: (i) to receive funds from the NLDC, (ii) to ensure that all the funds that were received for the schools reached the NSSF (iii) to allocate the funds to the schools (iv) to assess the material requirements of each of the schools and provide for those needs. Members of the NSSC consisted of among others Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, Archdeacon Bedan Ireri Jonah, and Andrew Nyaga Kithimo, with Njagi as the Chairman. As for the NSSF, it was charged with receiving funds from the NSSC and taking care of them. It opened a bank account into all contributions for the schools could be deposited. Njagi was also the one who was elected to chair the committee of the NSSF. The secondary schools that were founded were Kamama Boys’, Nguvii Boys’, Kiriari Girls’ and Nguvii Girls’ and they were opened in 1966, 1967, 1968 and 1969 respectively. However, establishing the schools was one difficult thing and keeping them running was another.

To ensure that the schools were properly managed, the leaders reasoned that it was important each of them to be ran independently even though they were community-owned. This entailed that each school should have its own BoG. Phineas I. Nyaga was appointed to chair the BoG of Kamama Boys’ Secondary School. Francis Njoka Mwenda was put at the helm of that of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School. As for Nguvii Boys’ and Nguvii Girls’ secondary schools, their BoGs were put under the chairmanship of Patricio Njagi Katharanjau. However, the membership of the BoGs was diversity.

The schools were started hurriedly. For lack of enough funds, initially, the schools had temporary basic physical facilities. But through Njagi’s leadership, the NLDC kept on urging the community to continue contributing additional money for the schools. From 1967, each member of the community started contributing KShs. 0.03 for every kilogramme of cherry that they delivered to the factories. Njagi also marshalled support of leaders from various parts of Kenya to take part in harambee (fundraisers) for the schools. Two of the instances in which he brought people from outside to help in those endeavours occurred in

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999 Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, O. I., 6 April 2002

1000 The latter problem was due to a number of factors. There were not only difficulties looking for funds for expanding the physical facilities, but also for employing both teaching and non-teaching staff. It is more, even getting that staff, let alone paying their salaries was quite a daunting task. In those days, Kenya was grappling with acute lack trained manpower, including teachers. It was very difficult to find even untrained teachers for the secondary schools. This was obtaining given that it was a very small number of people who had studied beyond Form IV level. Those who happened to have attained that level had an eleven-year education. The situation was so bad such that in 1965, among primary school teachers; it was roughly twenty per cent who had obtained more than primary education, which was a seven/eight-year affair. Moreover, of the secondary school teachers there was, only twenty-seven per cent of them were Kenyans and of these, it was just one-sixth who had university education. [Kyale Mwendwa, ‘Constraints and strategy in planning education’, in Sheffield (ed.), Education,Employment..., pp. 282, 290]

1001 Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, O. I., 6 April 2002; Kamama Boys’ Secondary School, Minutes of the BoG, Meeting of 28 March 1966

the late 1960s and 1970s. The first one was on 13 April 1969, which involved Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, who was the then Private Secretary of President Kenyatta and a popular politician to preside over a *harambee* for Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School.\(^{1003}\) The *harambee* netted some KShs. 30,000.00.\(^{1004}\) As for the second one, it was on 19 July 1978. Daniel T. arap Moi, the then Vice-President of Kenya, led in a *harambee* for the four Ngandori schools and some KShs. 1,300,000.00 were raised.\(^{1005}\)

The establishment of the above four schools was successful because Njagi was an ingenious, reliable leader. He was of the understanding that him alone could not do much and tried a lot in every way to get as many people as possible to contribute something for the schools. Even though he knew how things could be done, he understood that he could not do everything and therefore employed delegation of tasks. He created good organs – the NLDC, the NSSC, the NSSF and the BoGs – with clearly-spelt out functions and used them well. Lastly, he kept corruption at bay by observing openness, accountability, honesty, integrity and discipline.\(^{1006}\) For the beginning of the 1990s Njagi’s health started failing and eventually he had to discontinue all the work he had been doing including management of educational institutions. But that did not mark the end of his promoting of education.

What he had done for the society so far was worth scholarly attention. But in spite of the failing health and when he was required to give an account of his work he did not disappoint. That happened as from April 1994. By then he was so weak such that even walking a few metres was a big problem. However, despite the illness, he continued to serve with dedication. It was in April 1994 this student approached him for the first time seeking information about his life. The student was from Egerton University, at Njoro campus, where he was pursuing Bachelor of Arts Degree. He was taking History, Sociology and Religious Studies. Communication between Njagi and the student was poor because the latter had severe hearing impairment. However, Njagi was not deterred.

Despite vagaries of disease having taken toll on him, he would grant interviews with inflexible determination. After being called to meet the student, he would take a long time to

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\(^{1004}\) Lilian Wanjeri Waweru, I. O., 8 May 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’


reach the sitting room as getting on his feet and making those few steps was a struggle of a kind. When he was finally seated, he would time some time to settle down as he would be thoroughly fatigued, the eyes looking vacantly. But he would not retreat. He would determinedly move forward. He would then make greetings and enquire in what way he could help. Question would follow another but he would hold on until he was assured that there was nothing else for him to do. Not even once did this student visit there and leave unattended. It was a great sacrifice. This dedication to serve – even though the body was not willing – inspired the student so much.

He was very kind to the student. He wished him success in all his undertakings and entreated him to be visiting there. In addition, he appealed to his family to be helpful to the student in getting the information that was needed. They were cooperative. The information that Njagi and his family provided up to 1996 enabled the student to write his BA dissertation ‘A biography of Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura of Embu District, Kenya’. Moreover, that information was immensely helpful in the writing of this thesis. The church needed Njagi’s services in its endeavours in community development and he committed himself well.

Church Work
On 20 July 1975, Rev. David M. Gitari was consecrated as the Bishop of the newly-created Diocese of Mount Kenya East of the Anglican Church of Kenya. This happened at the grounds of St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College – Kigari, Embu District. The diocese was carved out the Diocese of Mount Kenya, which was under Bishop Obadia Kariuki. The need to splint the diocese arose out of the necessity to ease administration. It was covering a very large area – as it was encompassing the administrative districts of Kiambu, Murang’a, Nyeri, Embu, Meru and Marsabit - and as such, something had to be done to ensure that administrative services were available closer to the faithful. Njagi was fully involved with the process that led to the slitting of the diocese, election of the new bishop and his consecration. He even on his volition bought the official chair for the Bishop. However, he could not take part in the committees that were making deliberations as he was polygamous. This was so since church canons did not allow such a member to get there.

Bishop Gitari revolutionised his diocese. He noted that polygamists were suffering a lot due to exclusion from the church activities. So he saw that it was necessary to integrate

1007 Okullu, Quest for Justice..., p. 108
1008 Ten Great Decades of Faith, pp. 11-26
1009 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002
them. He did this by ensuring that the diocesan constitution facilitated that. He undertook that
drastic step without causing offence since in the Anglican Church, a diocese hence the
Bishop, was independent - essentially an ecclesiastical and judicial unit - in as far as decision-
make was concerned. The Bishop was independent of the other Anglican Bishops and the
Archbishop of the Province of Kenya. He was also not under control of the head of the
Anglican Communion in the world, the Archbishop of Canterbury, England. This was so
given that the dioceses and provinces were independent as the head of the Anglican
Communion was just nominal. This was unlike the case of the Pope of the Roman Catholic
Church, who had full, supreme and universal power over the Church (both the pastors and the
rest of the faithful).\textsuperscript{1010} There was that contrast even though the English Church, the mother
of the Anglican and the Episcopate Churches of the Communion, had emanated from the
Roman Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{1011} Moreover, even though the Communion had three instruments of
unity, namely., the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference (bishops would meet
on ten-year intervals) and the Anglican Consultative Council (bishops, priests and the laity
would meet at intervals of two or three years) to consult, explore and express opinions on
important issues, they just advisory capacity as decision to adopt or not to adopt what was
agreed on lay with bishops and archbishops.\textsuperscript{1012} However, the \textit{modus operandi} of the Roman
Catholic Church provided the Pope with authority on the order of bishops as it could not
exercise its power without his consent.\textsuperscript{1013}

So the power that was vested with the Anglican Diocesan bishop allowed Gitari
leeway to take steps towards development of his jurisdiction in the way he desired without
seeking a view from some other quarters, not even minding the position of his colleagues.
Gitari’s bold move opened a window for polygamists who were accomplished community
leaders to participate in development committees of the Church even though they still could
not get involved in preaching.\textsuperscript{1014}

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\textsuperscript{1010} The Constitution on the Church of the Vatican Council II (New Jersey, 1965) p. 106
Holmes III, \textit{What is Anglicanism?} (Harrisburg, 1982) p. 15; Christopher L. Webber & Frank T.
Griswold, III, \textit{Welcome to the Episcopal Church: An Introduction to the History, Faith and Worship}
(Nashville, 1999) p. 109; David Hamid, ‘The Nature and Shape of the Contemporary Anglican
Communion in the Twenty-First Century} (New York, 2001) pp. 82, 84 & 94
\textsuperscript{1013} The Constitution on the Church…. pp. 105-6; Okullu, \textit{Quest for Justice}…. p. 101
\textsuperscript{1014} David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
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As Njagi was an Anglican faith who had become polygamist and had good leadership credentials in community development, his church life was greatly changed by the initiative that Gitari had made on polygamists. The church roped him in to lead in its development activities. To begin with, the diocese needed a cathedral and Gitari started contemplating how it could be built in the year of his consecration. He appointed a committee to look into that matter. It was mandated to plan on raising funds and overseeing construction of the facility. He appointed Njagi as one of the committee members. Njagi played a significant role in the building of the cathedral until it was completed.\textsuperscript{1015} Meanwhile, he was involved in community development activities of the church.\textsuperscript{1016}

When Archdeacon Bedan Ireri Jonah became the Vicar of Kigari Parish of the Anglican Church in 1977, he saw it necessary to construct a new church hall at Kigari. Towards that end, he formed a committee to organise that work. He respected Njagi highly and he appointed him to chair that committee. The committee did great work.\textsuperscript{1017} After Bedan left Kigari Parish, he was succeeded by Rev. R. Z. Karani. Even Karani found Njagi as a reliable leader. On 29 January 1981, he appointed him as the chairman of the development committee of the parish. Njagi was appointed along with Josephat Njiru as the secretary and Nelson Mwaniki (not the afore-mentioned Nelson Mwaniki Gatema who was a book-keeper of the NCGCS and EDCU, who also went to Tanganyika) as the treasurer. The other members were Onesmus Mumo, O. Kithaka, E. Nyaga Kaugi, E. Njogu, P. N. Kamau, Eustace Kagau Kangerwe, M. Ndwigia (Mrs.), Godfrey M. Gaita and Edward Ndwigia Njamiu.\textsuperscript{1018} Njagi was also deeply involved in the community development endeavours of the church.

In the independence era of Kenya’s history religious institutions were playing a great role in the education sector. Their position in that regard was clearly-spelt out by legal framework on education in Kenya.\textsuperscript{1019} The church had a long history insofar as the establishment of Western education in Kenya was concerned. That could not be overemphasised since it Christian missions that were responsible for the introduction of

\textsuperscript{1016} Republic of Kenya, Office of the President, Provincial Administration, Eastern Province, Ngandori Location Chief’s Office: File No. RSG I / Vol. 1, 1975 – 1985
\textsuperscript{1017} Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002
\textsuperscript{1018} Republic of Kenya, Office of the President, Provincial Administration, Eastern Province, Ngandori Location Chief’s Office: File No. RSG I, Vol. 1, 1975
\textsuperscript{1019} See the Education Act of the Republic of Kenya of the year 1968 and the amended one of 1970; Eshiwani, \textit{Education since Independence}, p. 99

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Western education in the country. During colonial era, the Anglican Church was involved through the CMS. In Embu, the CMS had started that work when it founded a mission at Kigari in 1910. It was due to the massive contributions that mission societies had made towards establishment and running educational institutions throughout the colonial era that the government of independent Kenya had found it convenient to partner with the church in the development of education sector.\textsuperscript{1020} And, through that partnership, Njagi would become a big player for the church in the education sector of Embu District.

After the establishment of the ACK Diocese of Mount Kenya East, Bishop Gitari had obligation to ensure that the church’s involvement in the development of education flourished. In so doing, he had to see to it that all those educational institutions that were within the area that was covered by his diocese that were sponsored by the ACK, were well run. This was so for under the Education Act (that was enacted in 1968 and amended in 1970), religious institutions had mandate over education institutions they had sponsored.\textsuperscript{1021} For that, soon after he took charge of the diocese, he formed the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) with himself as the chairman to oversee education in the diocese. Then, on 3 March 1975, he appointed Njagi as one of the members of that board. The others were Hon. Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, John Nyaga, Johnson G. Ndegwa and Joel Gatungo. The DBE was to oversee the running of some 30 government-aided and harambee secondary schools as well as some 100 primary schools. Those institutions were within the present day Embu and Kirinyaga counties. Whereas in the government-aided secondary schools the bishop was recognised as the sponsor with only spiritual responsibility, in the case of the harambee secondary schools, he was the manager as opposed to the head teacher or the chairperson of BoGs holding that role. Therefore, in the latter schools, he was answerable to the Minister of Education on their condition. So the DBE had the onus of assisting the bishop in his endeavours to manage those schools.

Religious institutions were also - under the Education Act - supposed to appoint the people who were to chair committees of primary schools, which are hereinafter referred to as School Committees (SCs), and BoGs. It was those chairpersons who were to take charge in ensuring that the sponsored schools were being run in accordance with code of management of the sponsoring religious institutions. Things were being done that since religious institutions required were to oversee maintenance of discipline and standards in their schools. In addition, they were to ensure that religious instructions in those schools were being

\textsuperscript{1020} Eshiwani, \textit{Education since Independence}, p. 99
\textsuperscript{1021} Ibid, p. 99
conducted as per the pastoral programme they had made and had been approved by the Minister for Education. Njagi had a fair share of that work.

He was in-charge of several BoGs. He was, firstly, appointed as the chairman of the BoG of Kamama Boys’ Secondary School in 1973. He was with Archdeacon Bedan Ireri Jonah, Councillor Solomon Njagi, Nderitu Muta, Edward Ndwicka Njamiu, James Njue Kavanda and Jacob Ngari. Then, in December 1976, he was given the same charge at Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School. The other members of this BoG were Stephen Njeru, Jeremiah Njeru, Meshack Njagi, M’chovia, Charles Njeru, Justus Mwathi, Zakayo Karigi and Rev. Meshack Soo.

Then, on 23 September 1977, Bishop Gitari called a meeting of the BoGs chairmen of the secondary schools of the diocese. He wanted they discuss about the running of those schools. Njagi was there as the chairman of the afore-mentioned two schools. His counterparts in the schools that were in Embu District, who were participating with him, were Nelson Kivuti (St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College), DO of Runyenjes Division (M’Tetu Secondary School), Ephantus Njeru (Mbiruri Sec. Sch.), Hon. Kamwithi Munyi (Kanyuambora Sec. Sch. and Chief Nthambiri (Kegonge Sec. Sch.). However, the chairman of the BoG of Kavuutiri Sec. Sch. was not present. (In that year the chairmanship of Kavuutiri was changed. Henry Mwaniki Kabeca who had been in-charge from 1969 was replaced with Rev. Elias M’Chandi.) There was also absence of the chairman of the BoG of Karaba as there was not one at the time. the chairmen the schools of Kirinyaga District who were present were Geoffrey Karekia Kareithi (Kianyaga Boys’ and Mugumo Mixed), Bishop Gitari (Kabare Girls’ and Ngirimbu Girls’), Chief Jotham Nguri Ngucu (Mutige Boys’), Jeremiah Gateri (Kiamuciri), Joseph Gachie (Kiine), Chief Mugueru (Kiburu), John Matere Keriri (Mutira Girls’ and Kamuiru Boys’), Danson Karingi (Karia), Bernard Ciuri Murage (Njega’s), Simon Kanai (Kasaro Girls’), Moses Kariuki (Wanguru) and Chief Harrison Nyamu (Kagio). But the chairmen of the BoGs of Kiamwathi and Mutithi secondary schools had not yet been appointed. Moreover, in 1981/82, Njagi was also the chairman of the

1022 Ibid, p. 104
1023 Ngandorii Location Chief’s Office, Kamama Boys’ Secondary School, Chairman Ephantus Njagi Kavungura,
Minutes of the BoG, 1973 - 1977
1024 KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 1 - Chairman, BoG of St. Anne Girls’ High School - Kiriari, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 1

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BoG of St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College – Kigari. Be that as it was, those were not the only responsibilities the church gave to Njagi in the field of modern education.

The church was trying to expand its wings in the provision of education. On 14 March 1980, there was meeting of chairmen of the SCs and BoGs and head teachers of the schools that were sponsored by the ACK Diocese of Mount Kenya East. During the meeting, the participants decided to establish a boarding primary school. They constituted a committee to start the project. Its mandate was to deliberate on the site of the project, its funding, management and other matters pertaining to the establishment and running of that school. Njagi was one the people who were considered for appointment as members of that committee.\(^{1026}\) As he was apt in management of schools, Njagi continued to serve in that capacity for many years.

The Diocese needed his services in its endeavours to develop Kamama and Kiriari realise more development considering that they were in dire need of more physical facilities. For that he was preferred as the chairman of their BoGs until up to the early 1990s. He had big a mandate to fulfill.\(^{1027}\) On 27 January 1986, being the chairman of the BoG of Kamama Boys’ Secondary School he had a challenge thrown at him. It happened during a meeting of the school’s BoG. The chief of Ngandori Location, Ephantus Nyaga Njamiu, informed the BoG that the location was experiencing shortage of secondary school facilities as the number of primary school graduates was on the rise. He noted that, for the lack of the facilities, many pupils were terminating their education after sitting the end primary education examination.\(^{1028}\) In face of that, Ngandori community had approached their leaders seeking help to put things right. He pointed out that, towards that end, the leaders had recommended that Kamama and Kiriari secondary schools be expanded in order to take more pupils on board, which entailed that the two secondary schools start new harambee streams. As such, there was urgent need to put up new physical facilities like classrooms, laboratories and staff.

\(^{1026}\) Government of Kenya, Office of the President, Provincial Administration, Eastern Province, Ngandori Location, Kairuri Chief’s Camp, Administration, 1979 – 1993; The letter of Kavungura’s appointment to the committee by the diocese was dated 22 August 1980.

\(^{1027}\) The church as the sponsor of those two schools was working closely with the government in the provision of education services in the country. This was provided so by the Education Act Chapter 211 of 1968, which was revised in 1980.\(^{1027}\) Under Section 11, the Minister for Education had power to establish a BoG with duty of management of a school as it was specified by that Act or the Teachers Service Commission Act and any regulations made under the Act. The office of the chairman of a BoG needed to be executed with great care since failure to do the needful properly would have compromised education of children. This would not have been entertained by the Government was that would have been to undermine development of the nation of Kenya. Indeed, under Section 12, the Minister was authorised to suspend a BoG for one year if he/she saw that the BoG was not executing its functions in accordance with the specifications of that Act. [The Education Act, Chapter 211 (Nairobi, 1980)]

houses, purchase textbooks, recruit new staff, among other things. Njagi was equal to the task.

He diligently started efforts to see the schools get in a position to admit more students. At Kamama the new programme needed at least KShs. 700,000.00 to see it start in 1986 and run through smoothly to 1989, when the first lot was expected to complete Form IV. However, there were funds to do the needful. However, while he begun the search for funds, he advised the school administration to immediately embark on construction of a new classroom with the little money there was even though it had not been budgeted for that purpose. That facilitated admission of extra 43 students in 1986. And they were selected from within Ngandori Location. 1029

The school soldiered on with the little money that would be found from time to time. Then, Njagi organised a harambee at the school on 28 November 1987. The money that was realised facilitated construction of a dining-cum-assembly hall as the structure that had been extant was inadequate. He arranged for another bigger harambee in March 1988. That saw the programme get fully completed as all the physical facilities that were necessary for the school to function well as a three-streamed institution were put in place. Njagi had enabled the school to make a break through. Unfortunately, Njagi relinquished the chairmanship of the school’s BoG in 1993 because his health was failing. Following that, it was Cyrus Gituai, who was given the mantle. 1030

Some years later, in recognition of Njagi’s contribution to the school’s foundation and progression to what it had become starting from 1965, with him being the chairman of BoG from 1973 t0 1993, it decided that he should be honoured. Since the school needed a new hostel, a one-storey hostel was built. Then, in honour of Njagi, it was named Kavungura House’. The hostel was thus christened given that people fondly saluted Njagi by the name Kavungura. The hostel was officially opened on 24 June 2000, by the Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka. However, at the sister school of Kamama’s Boys’ Secondary School, things were not taking the same course, but very much worth of reckoning. 1031

Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School lay some kilometres to the north of Kamama. In that school, Njagi and his team were able to realise development with distinction. However, although the school became a wonder, the work outs were quite different. It was not possible

1029 ibid
1030 ibid
1031 Some of the information was obtained from a plaque that was fixed on the wall of that hostel.
to start another stream in 1986 as it was desired. The reason for that situation was due to unavailability of funds. However, Kiriari Girls’ was looking forward to establish to build an administration block, agriculture workshop and two teachers’ houses in addition to undertaking electricity installations. There was also great need to do general maintenance to the school. All that work was budgeted to cost about KShs. 1,560,000.00. However, given the difficulties that were involved in the process as there were no funds, the school took time before it could commence implementation of the plan. It was not until 1988 did efforts to raise funds started.

On 27 July 1988, as the Chairman of the BoG, Njagi convened a meeting of stakeholders to discuss the way forward. It was attended by among others the Deputy PEO for Eastern Province, J. Ndegwa. This was followed by another meeting on 1 October 1988. Those who graced it were the education officials of Eastern Province, the education secretary of the ACK Diocese of Mount Kenya East and the parents. It was decided that the raising of the KShs. 1,560,000.00 be shared equally between the parents who had children at school and the BoG. So the parents were to raise a sum of KShs. 780,000.00 with each of them contributing KShs. 2,500.00. The BoG was to raise the rest.

So that the BoG could meet its obligation, they decided to organise a harambee. Towards that end, Njagi invited Joseph arap Leting, who was the Head of the Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet, to be the guest of honour at that harambee. The harambee was held on 7 October 1990. However, Leting was not available to grace the function. Instead, he was represented by Antony Oyier, who was the then PC for Eastern Province. The harambee surpassed expectation. It overshot the KShs. 780,000.00 mark as it netted KShs. 918,225.35. With this money and that which the parents had contributed, the school was able to scale up development of its physical facilities significantly. But the school was also doing well academically. All that enabled the school to do well in 1990 in a competition for secondary schools in Kenya emerging among the top three schools that focused on progression in terms physical development, management and performance and leading to the award of the National Presidential Award for Secondary Schools.

The schools were assessed by a panel that was commissioned by the Government of Kenya and Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School was ranked second best in the country. Its impressive results were as follows. It was ranked first in the following fields: (i) Financial Management, (ii) Environmental Conservation, (iii) Cleanliness and Welfare, and (iv)
Maintenance and Care of Buildings. Then, it took second position in Administration and Discipline. Moreover, it came fourth in the area of Service to Community. In the other categories, it was numbered ninth in Academic Programmes; twelfth in Co-curriculum Activities; and, thirteenth in Agricultural Activities. The brilliant showing by the school in that competition was unbelievable. That was so considering that the school had started as a *harambee* institution and was on the level of district schools, which meant that it was being assisted by the Government with teaching staff only. However, national and provincial schools were getting government support not only in terms of teachers, but also non-teaching staff and infrastructure requirements. Therefore these schools did not have to worry about finances for development. And yet Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School had beaten so many such schools. The award that the school was to get was to be presented by President Moi at the State House in Nairobi. The occasion was to be on 9 October 1990. On the material day, Njagi - as the chairman of the BoG - led the school to receive the award.\(^\text{1034}\)

The achievement that the school made, unexpectedly, helped so much in its quest for more development. On the day it visited the State House to receive the presidential award, elsewhere things were taking a turn in its favour. PC Oyier who earlier on had lauded what was going on at the school wrote to the Head of the Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet, requesting him to assist in getting the school upgraded from a day school to provincial boarding one. Oyier did that so that the school could qualify to get Government assistance to run its boarding facilities since they were not officially recognised. (Those facilities had been classified by the Ministry of Education as private hostels).\(^\text{1035}\)

The move by the PC bore fruits in less than two years. On 25 June 1992, as President Moi set out to visit the school, so did the fortunes of thereof change for better. The school did

\(^{1034}\) Since the inception of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School in 1968, Njagi had been contributing towards its growth a little by little. However, due to persistence, by the end of the 1980s the school had become a wonderful phenomenon. The PEO for Eastern Province, Muraya, was the first government officer to notice and appreciate that the school was making strides on the path of progress. He did that while he was on a visit to the school on 5 June 1984. He praised the school for being among the best in Kenya in terms of cleanliness, high academic standards, discipline, *inter alia*. In particular, he was very happy with the BoG’s efforts to maintain discipline there. [St. Anne Girls’ High School Registry, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. I, KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 1] Another appreciation that the school was gaining hugely in terms of development happened on 27 July 1988. On that day there was a meeting of the school’s BoG and stakeholders. The meeting had been convened to discuss how funds could be raised to put up the physical facilities that the school was in need of. The Deputy to the Eastern PEO, J. Ndewga, was one of those government officials who had been invited to the meeting. After touring the school compound, Ndewga remarked about the good facilities there were and as well as the good results in the defunct KCE examinations that were being posted. He attributed the outcome to cooperation between the school’s teachers, parents and the BoG. Then, there was the take of the Eastern PC, Antony Oyier. He registered his having been impressed by the way things were at the school. This was during the fund-raising drive that he was presiding on 7 October 1990. He observed that the school was double-streamed and its piece of land was very well utilised. He added that that the school’s physical facilities were significantly adequate. [St. Anne Girls’ High School Registry, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 2, KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 2]

\(^{1035}\) St. Anne Girls’ High School Registry, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 2, KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 2 - Letter from the PC to the Head of the Public Service referenced, EDU. 12 / 11 / Vol. III / 173

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not only have the pride of having the president as their visitor, but also had its status raised. During the tour, Moi elevated the school to the league of provincial schools. This level was the second-highest for secondary schools in Kenya. The highest was the one on which national schools lay. The elevation was a boon to the development endeavours of the school since it had many financial benefits. From then on, the school’s responsibility for running boarding facilities, which had been a very costly undertaking, became the onus of the Government. From that time, the Government took to bear for the school the costs of among other things the following staff: a matron, a cateress, an artisan, a driver and cooks. It was a great leap forward for the school. And the work of Njagi as the chairman of its BoG became less tasking. The school had been charging students high fees because of the running of the hostels. Had that money been going to meet development needs of the schools, Njagi could not have been struggling to raise funds and the school could have been transformed long time ago. But with the school having reached that far, it was like Njagi’s work was over.

That which has a beginning has an end, too. Njagi was instrumental in the inception of the school way back in 1968 and all along kept on helping in the pursuit of its growth. However, having helped it to reach that far, so there came a time for him to leave it. In 1993, he relinquished the chairmanship of the school’s BoG. However, the turn of events was not brought about by his design or that of somebody else. It just happened that his failing health - due to ravages of diabetes - could not allow him to discharge his duties properly. He had battled the problem from the year 1990 and so far he needed to rest. The spirit was willing to do the needful, but the body could not rise to the occasion. He was too physically weak such that even stepping out of the house had become a challenge. In the face of that, the Anglican Church of Kenya which was the sponsor of the school and under the Education Act was supposed to appoint the chairman of the BoG picked Prof. Jesse N. K. Mugambi, who was a renowned religious scholar, to succeed Njagi. However, even though he left the school, his great work was not forgotten.

Veterans of the Swahili of Kenya’s coastal region encapsulated their wisdom in an adage that *wema hauozi* (virtues are everlasting). For his immense contribution towards the development of the school, Njagi was fondly remembered there. So, when it was time for the school to take stock of the progress it had made, it organised a function and dubbed it ‘Silver Jubilee Celebrations’. The function was to be held at the school on 18 February 1994. The

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1036 St. Anne Girls' High School Registry, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 2, KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 2
‘A Biography of Chief…’
school invited Njagi as one of their guests. In addition, the school wanted to honour Njagi. So, during the occasion, the school inducted him into its ‘Roll of Honour’. The other guests Njagi met at the school included Henry Chakava, who was the Managing Director of the East African Educational Publishers Limited. Chakava was the one who was the guest of honour. He opened the school’s library and donated books for it. During the occasion, the school’s headmistress, Madam Lilian Waweru, who from the year 1976 was a witness to the endeavours that Njagi had made towards the development of the school, testified on that account. She glowingly hailed Njagi as having been the one who enabled the school to realise all the development it had attained so far.

During the time was Njagi was chairing the BoGs of Kiriari and Kamama secondary schools, he was also involved in the management of some other post-primary educational institutions in Embu District. He was a member of the BoGs of Kangaru School (at Kangaru, Embu town) and St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College (at Kigari, Embu). However, just as the failing health had impelled him to cease chairing the BoGs of Kiriari and Kamama secondary schools, so did it make him to stop sitting on these other two. But Njagi was not only useful to the ACK just by holding chairmanship of BoGs of some of its educational institutions, whereby he had the mandate of spearheading development of those schools, but also in some other areas.

The church needed to raise funds for its other development activities and in that regard it found Njagi useful. In the course of 1980s, for instance, he helped very much in the building

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1038 Lilian Wanjeri Waweru, O. I., 8 May 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’
1039 Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996; Trizah Wamugo, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996; Annette Wanjira, O. I., April-May 1994, March & June 1995 & June 1996 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’ (However, even as Njagi retired from the chieflaincy in 1983, which led him to cease sitting on the BoGs of the other two Ngandori secondary schools, namely, Nguviu Boys’ and Nguviu Girls’, it did not mark the end of his getting concerned about their development needs. [Raphaela Wangai Njagi, the headmistress of Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School, explained that in her message of condolences to the family of Njagi on the day of his burial on 27 January 2000. He had died on 18 January 2000. She had made the message for and on behalf of the BoG of the school; Lilian Wanjeri Waweru, O. I., 8 May 1995 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’ They were still having inadequate physical facilities and that time there was neither emergent alternative leadership nor new way(s) to solicit funds. In the case of Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School, for instance, there was need to construct an administration block, which was to contain not only offices but also a staffroom and therefore it was an undertaking that required a lot of money. All along, he was assisting the schools in raising funds for development. [Raphaela Wangai Njagi, O. I., 15 May 1994 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’ That was possible especially as he was in the leadership of co-operative movement, which from the time those schools were founded in the 1960s was a big player in contributing funds. He became a member of the management committee of the CNFCS in 1984, [Central Ngandori Farmers’ Co-operative Society Ltd, Minutes of Committee, Annual General and Special Meetings, 14 May 1984 – 28 September 1987] Then, he started chairing it in 1985 and remained in that position until the early 1990s. Moreover, He was a member of the executive committee of the EDCU from 1985 and rose to become its chairman in 1987 the position which he held until the year 1990. [Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, Minutes of the Full Management Committee, 17 June 1983 – 17 September 1990] Madam Raphaela W. Njagi who was the head teacher of Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School from 1973 through to the turn of the new century, praised Njagi’s maintenance of the spirit to ensure the two schools met their development needs, retirement notwithstanding. [Raphaela Wangai Njagi, O. I., 15 May 1994 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’])
1040 Eliud Ndwiga Micumano, O. I., 8 May 2008
of a new ACK church at Kairuri market, which was named St. Catherine Church. He did that more so in raising the funds that were necessary for the project. The funds had to be raised given that in the first place there was no money for that purpose. It was the responsibility of the worshippers to explore how they could get money to do the needful. The church hall was completed in 1987. The need to establish the church at Kairuri arose due to the need to make church service available closer to the people. In addition, congestion was being experienced at the ACK St. Immanuel Church at Kigari and it had to be checked. The population of worshippers was rising fast as new generations were coming up. It was at that church Njagi and his family was going for worship. He had a long attachment to it. He had been converted to Christianity there. This was after he started schooling there in 1934. He also had got baptised at the same place in 1937. However, after the completion of the church at Kairuri, Njagi shifted base to this new venue. He did so given that the new venue was nearer home than Kigari. However, Njagi’s leadership in the church was not limited to just where the administration thereof had sanctioned.

In 1986 he led about twenty church members to the offices of the head of the ACK Diocese of Mount East, Bishop Gitari, at Embu town. Those church members were all from Embu District like Njagi. The reason for their visit was to complain over alleged favouritism by the bishop for church members from Kirinyaga District when giving out jobs in the diocese. The allegations were being level because the bishop hailed from Kirinyaga District. However, after Njagi and his group made their concern known, Gitari explained to them how things were. They understand that there was no biased against church members from Embu District insofar as employment in the diocese was concerned. However, with the things having turned out that way, Njagi was remorseful. As a result, later he went back to see Gitari and apologised for the wrong accusation they had made. On top of that, he added that they had been given misleading information by Archdeacon Phineas Nyaga, who was also going by the nickname Karico. In the Anglican Church, the position of an archdeacon is just next below that of the bishop. So in view of the position of Karico in the diocese, Njagi and the other church members had easily thought that the information they were given was reliable. However, if Karico could create such an issue and take it to church members, when he should have raised it before the Diocesan Synod, if at all it existed, is an indication that he was not a trustworthy person. What he had told Njagi and others could have easily stirred a serious

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1041 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002
1042 Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi, O. I., 21 March 2002
conflict in the diocese. Gitari, who had since become the Archbishop of the ACK Province of Kenya and retire, pointed out that Karico was a very bad man.\textsuperscript{1044}

Gitari left Embu in 1990.\textsuperscript{1045} That came to pass in the wake of the ACK Diocese of Mount East having been split into two dioceses, Embu and Kirinyaga, in that year. He became the head of Kirinyaga Diocese because he hailed from within it. He continued serving in that capacity until 1997 when became the Archbishop of the ACK Province of Kenya.\textsuperscript{1046} He relinquished the post of archbishop when retired in the year 2002. This student obtained information in interview with Gitari at the latter’s home near Difatha market on 13 June, 2008. Gitari remembered having got to know Njagi in 1955 at Kabare mission. While the former was schooling there, the latter was visiting for unknown reason. Gitari observed that Njagi was a good leader. However, he added that the problem with Njagi was having taken a second wife. And for that shortcoming, he firmly maintained that Njagi was a bad Anglican faithful.\textsuperscript{1047}

Such faithful were regarded as deviant as they had taken the path that the church was against. For that they had been pushed to the periphery of the church. However, it was Gitari when he became bishop of the Diocese of Mount East in 1975 that saw their suffering and sympathised making it possible for them through diocesan constitution to participate in church.\textsuperscript{1048} However, since there was necessity that the church was led by unblemished people so that they could be good models to others, it was for that reason even though Njagi and the like could even chair church committees that handled development activities, neither could they sit on the ones on governance nor be allowed to preach although they were highly respected.\textsuperscript{1049} The troubles that beset coffee co-operative societies of Embu in the early years of the independence era proffered Njagi opportunity to leave a mark in the development of the co-operative movement in the independence era.

**Managing Co-operative Societies**

After Njagi led the management committee and staff of the NCGCS on an education tour to Tanganyika in March 1963, they made great changes to the way they had been doing things.\textsuperscript{1050} One of the wonders they had seen in Tanganyika was Osamesua Co-operative

\textsuperscript{1044} David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
\textsuperscript{1045} Gathogo, *Mutira Mission…*, p. 92
\textsuperscript{1046} Ibid, p. 96
\textsuperscript{1047} David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
\textsuperscript{1048} David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
\textsuperscript{1049} David M. Gitari, O. I., 13 June 2008
\textsuperscript{1050} James N. J. Njau, O. I., 20 and 27 March 2002
Society in Moshi area. It was unique as it had 250 members. This membership was very small compared to that of the NCGCS as it ran into very many thousands assuming that members thereof were numbering 3,771 by the close of 1961. Indeed, that was the reality noting that people were joining the society in reaps and bounds as they sought to get into coffee farming. So they decided to splint the NCGCS into small societies. By 1962, the NCGCS had established five coffee factories that were at Kavingaci, Kibugu, Thambana, Gakundu and Mwiria. Therefore, it was planned that five societies would be created each of which was to take possession of one factory. However, to get things taking that course, that entailed first of all the NCGCS being dissolved and then its members being made to choose which one of the five societies they wished to join. Njagi, who was the chairman of the management committee of the NCGCS, was against that idea. However, by taking that stand, he was in isolation since all the other committee members - Stephen Nthiga Muraci (Vice-Chairman), Lameck Mbogo (Treasurer), Perminus Njeru, Patricio Njagi Katharanjau, Boniface Njiru Ngari, Njoroge Nguuri, Christopher Njagi Kwenja, Levi Mugo, Meshack Njagi and Jonathan Mbogo - were craving for the splitting. However, that scenario did not last for long because after some time, Njagi agreed with what the other anted.

After that, they organised for the five factories to be registered by the relevant authorities. They were inspected and registered on 31 August 1963 by the Chief Inspector of Factories under the Factories Ordinance of 1950. The next step was application for liquidation of the NCGCS. Njagi wrote a memorandum to present to the Commissioner for Co-operative Development (CCD) in Nairobi requesting for the liquidation and registration of five new societies. Njagi went to Nairobi to see the CCD accompanied by Jonathan, Lameck Mbogo and Nelson Mwaniki Gatema. Surprisingly, the CCD did not want the NCGCS splint. However, after a lengthy persuasion, he consented. On 20 February 1964, the Registrar of Co-operatives liquidated the NCGCS. Following that, the farmers’ co-operative societies (FCSs) that were registered and chairmen of their management committees were:

1051 Boniface Njiru Ngari, O. I., 20 April 2008
1055 See a copy of the certificate of registration of Mwiria coffee factory of NCGCS in the ‘Appendices’
Kavingaci FCS (Phineas Kangi), Kibugu FCS (Samuel Njiru Kiavia), Thambana FCS (Meshack Njagi), Gakundu FCS (Perminus Njeru) and Central Ngandori FCS (Stephen Nthiga).

On the side of the staff, Nelson Mwaniki who had been the Secretary of the NCGCS was employed by the Thambana FCS in the same capacity. However, the clerks who had been in-charge of Kavingaci, Kibugu, Gakundu and Mwiri coffee factories, who were Daniel Ndwiga Obednego, Njeru wa Nguvi, Nyaga Ngiriri and Njiru Nthitu, were promoted to secretaries of Kavingaci FCS, Kibugu FCS, Gakundu FCS and Central Ngandori FCS, respectively.

In the new arrangement, Njagi became a member of the Central Ngandori Farmers’ Co-operative Society (CNFCS). This was because the CNFCS had taken charge of the coffee factory that was at Mwiria, where Njagi had been delivering his coffee harvests from 1953. However, he was a member of the NCGCS’ management committee. Those who were sitting on it were Stephen Nthiga (Chairman), Patricio Njagi Katharanjau (Vice-Chairman), Meshack Njeru (Honourary-Secretary), Elasto Munyi (Treasurer) and Meshack Gicovi. Njagi remained out of the leadership of co-operative movement until May 1966.

The return of Njagi thereto happened after elections of new management committees of the co-operative societies of Embu District were held on 13 May 1966. He was elected to the new management committee of the CNFCS and became its Chairman. The other members were Julius Ngoroi (Vice-Chairman), Japhanson Njururi (Honourary-Secretary), Elasto Munyi (Treasurer) and Meshack Gicovi being just a Committee Member.

Njagi continued serving the CNFCS as the chairman until 1969. He stayed out since when election of the management committee was held, he did not seek re-election. He featured in the leadership of the CNFCS again in 1977. And, this time too, he was the chairman. From that time he kept on alternating on that post with Onesmus Mumo and Elijah Kathuri. He resigned from the leadership in 1982. The move was prompted by a presidential directive that civil servants and politicians stay out of the management of co-operative societies. President Daniel arap Moi had issued the directive as he was not seeing those he
had referred to adding any value but causing mismanagement to the movement as they had other responsibilities. This meant that their involvement in the leadership of the co-operative movement was not without conflict of roles and interests and thereby endangering the interests of co-operative members.\textsuperscript{1060} Coffee co-operative societies of Embu district were mired in vices such as mismanagement, corruption and failure to make pay outs to members. As a result, there was a lot of wrangling among both leaders and members. In some societies, conflicts were so deep such that the factions could not reconcile but insist of going in separate ways thereby resulting in splitting. However, in so doing, due to suspicion a faction could refuse the idea of being supervised by state officials while the other could be for it. The DCO was trying to save the situation by advising co-operative members not to import politics there stressing that it was only going to worsen the situation.\textsuperscript{1061} However, the state officials were interfering in the management of co-operative societies and thereby worsening the mess, for instance, the Provincial Administrators were openly intruding. Sometimes there was refusal to license meetings or delay for the same.

During the time Njagi was in the leadership of the CNFCS, the running thereof was smooth. The members were contented because they were getting good pay-outs for their coffee harvests. They were also being helped to procure farm inputs such as fertilisers, pest and disease control chemicals, machetes, jembes, saws, hammers, scatters, wheelbarrows, sprayers, iron sheets, nails, fencing wires, grade cows, livestock feeds, certified seeds and sometimes there were food stuffs too. Members could buy in cash or on credit. Those who would buy on credit would have their debt recovered from their coffee earnings. The credit facility used to help those members who had cash crunch a lot.

While Njagi was in the leadership of the CNFCS, he was also involved in the running of the union of co-operative societies of Embu District. And just like in the CNFCS, he greatly contributed in the growth of the union. That came to pass after he became chairman of the Embu Coffee Union (ECU) on 28 May 1966.\textsuperscript{1062} This was facilitated by his election as the Chairman of the CNFCS on 13 May 1966.\textsuperscript{1063} The ECU had been formed on 13 May 1964.\textsuperscript{1064} This was by the co-operative societies of Embu District that were involved in coffee

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{1061} Haugerud, The Culture of Politics… pp. 221-2
\bibitem{1063} KNA / TR / 8 / 799, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operative Development, Embu Co-operative Union Ltd, 1964 – 1967, A letter written to the AG, Senior Co-operative Officer, Eastern Province by the District Co-operative Officer, Embu District, Ref No.: CS / 1017 / CCR / Vol. III / 255 on 30 May 1966
\end{thebibliography}
industry. According to the ECU’s constitution, its management committee was to be constituted by the representatives of its affiliate societies. And, the chairmen of the management committees of the affiliate societies were the first representatives. Apart from CNFCS, the other affiliate FCSs of the ECU were, Kyeni, Kibugu, Kavingaci, Thambana, Gakundu, Murue, Gaturi, Kagaari and Kirurumue. The pioneer management committee had Stephen Nthiga Muraci (Chairman), Alexander Mikinyango (Vice-Chairman), Samuel Njiru Kiavia, Phineas Kangi, Meshack Njagi, Perminus Njeru, Phares Ndwiga Mairani, Pharis Mathara, Shem Munyi and Lawrence Mucungu. Their respective FCSs were Central Ngandori, Kyeni, Kibugu, Kavingaci, Thambana, Gakundu, Murue, Gaturi, Kagaari and Kirurumue. The ECU had been registered by the CCD on 15 November 1964 and it was the successor of the ECCU, which had been formed in 1954. But it had been dissolved in 1963 in the wake of the splitting of Embu District into two new districts in that year. The western two divisions of the district, Gicugu and Ndia, had been carved off to make Kirinyaga District. As a result of that development, the societies of the new districts decided to form their own unions since they were in distinct administrative areas. The cooperative societies that were in Kirinyaga District were Ngariama, Kabare, Mwirua, Inoi, Mutira, Kibirigwi and Baragwi. Furthermore, whereas Kirinyaga District was in Central Province, the new Embu District was in the newly-created Eastern Province. The management of the ECCU had explained the situation they were in and their intention to dissolve so as to form two new unions to the CCD, I. M. Merlyn and he had consented. That had happened during Merlyn’s stop-over at Embu town on 3 April 1963 while on his way to Meru.

The election of Njagi as the chairman of the ECU on 28 May 1966 happened while there was controversy among the co-operative societies of Embu District. The election had been facilitated by the District Co-operative Officer (DCO) of Embu, George Morris Othieno.

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1067 The member societies of the ECCU were by Ngandori, Gaturi, Kagaari, Kyeni, Ngariama, Kabare, Mwirua, Inoi, Mutira, Kibirigwi and Baragwi. KNA / TR / 8 / 332, Embu Coffee Co-operative Union Ltd, 1954 - 1960

1068 ECCU had a total of 11 affiliate societies. Of these, 4 were from Embu Division, 3 were from Gicugu Division and 4 from Ndia Division. KNA / TR / 1 / 283, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operative Development, Embu District, File No.: ADM / 7 / 1, Handing over Report, G. Gregson to F. Kynoch. A. General PUB / 4 / 1 dated 16 January 1963

The DCO had wanted the ECU’s management committee replaced for two reasons. Firstly, the term of the committee had expired. Secondly, the ECU was in grip of mismanagement of its finances, among other problems, which risked making it insolvent.\textsuperscript{1070} And, since the ECU’s management committee could only be replaced upon election of new representatives by the affiliate societies, the DCO had arranged elections in the societies on 13 May 1966. The DCO was of the hope that the troubles that were in the ECU would be eradicated by the replacement of the management committee. The DCO was able to take that bold measure because there was authority provided for that purpose by the Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1945 as it had continued to prevail even as the country gained independence in 1963. The Ordinance had given supervisory power to the Registrar of Co-operatives over co-operative societies in Kenya. Under Section 42 thereof, for instance, the registrar could on his volition embark on carrying out an inquiry into the affairs a co-operative society. However, he could also delegate the onus to another person.\textsuperscript{1071}

Insofar as claims of prevalence of mismanagement among FCSs of Embu District were concerned, to underline that the members of those societies were impatient with the outgoing management committees, during the polls that were organised in 1966, it was just two chairmen, Phares Ndugia Mairani and Phares Mathara of Murue and Gaturi co-operative societies respectively who were re-elected. The newcomers, apart from Njagi, were Evans Njiru, Edward Ndugia Njamiu, Isaiah Gicovi, Peter Mugo, James Njeru, Francis Njagi and Patrick Mbogo and they were representing the following FCSs: Kagaari, Kibugu, Kavingaci, Thambana, Gakundu, Kyeni and Kirurumue respectively.\textsuperscript{1072}

When the new the ECU management committee met, it unanimously settled on Njagi as their chairman. This happened because he had good leadership qualities. He had reputation of having held various leadership positions in both public and private sectors and his performance had been impressively. In addition, he had good interpersonal skills. These were vital in getting the committee to work as a team.\textsuperscript{1073} He was also well-known as an

\textsuperscript{1070} KNA / TR / 8 / 799, Republic of Kenya, Department of Co-operative Development, Embu Co-operative Union Ltd, 1964 – 1967. See “Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd Staff Petition” dated 26 May 1966, that contained the complaints of the staff of the Union to the Commissioner for Co-operative Development following the drastic steps that were taken by the new management committee headed by Njagi to clean up the mess there was. In addition, the petition was copied to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Co-operative Development and Social Services, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, among other offices; and, “Management Committee of the Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd Sacked En-mass.” A statement made by George Morris Otieno, DCO, Embu District, copies of which he sent to the Commissioner for Co-operative Development and Senior Co-operative Officer, Nairobi, 23 May 1966.

\textsuperscript{1071} Mucai-Kattambo, Co-operatives…, p. 8


\textsuperscript{1073} Ndugia Citilia, O. I., 15 April, 2008
accomplished farmer. He was one of the best coffee farmers in the district and that was due to his use of good methods. These qualities left no doubt in the committee that he would endeavour determinedly to pursue what was in the interests of the members.1074

This was so given that the ECU was mandated to assist its affiliate societies in a number of ways. It was to provide the following services: (i) Management of their account books; (ii) Inspection of their account books; (iii) Provision of field advisory services that were previously being given by the Ministry of Agriculture; (iv) Facilitation of maintenance of affiliate societies’ factories; and (v) Transportation of produce from the factories to the railway station at Sagana for delivery to the KPCU for milling.1075 To see those services being provided well, there was need for leadership with excellent management skills.

When the management committee got down to work, it had to first of all get to terms with the shock of the ECU being bankrupt. In the circumstance, Njagi and his team decided to make investigations of the depletion of the finances first priority. On 6 June 1966, they formed a sub-committee of four people to carry out an inquiry on the financial position of the ECU in 1963/64, 1964/65 and 1965/66 financial years. Njagi was the chairman of the sub-committee and the other members were Edward Ndwiga Njamiu, Isaiah Gicovi and James Njeru. The investigations were to focus on six things. (1) The whereabouts of the net surplus of KShs. 79,848.89 that the ECU had made in the financial year of 1963/64 since the money could not be accounted for and yet the CCD had not approved it expended. (2) The monetary claims that had been made by two officials of the ECU over mileage they had covered for the time starting from 1 October 1965 to May 1966 as they had been using their private cars while executing their duties. (3) How the ECU had become bankrupt and yet it had been making profits for three good years. (4) The high expenditure of the ECU for seven months to May 1966 as it stood at KShs. 397,957.05 since in the financial years of 1964/65 and 1965/66 it had deficit of KShs. 89,131.03 and KShs. 94,384.93 respectively. (5) The role the manager of the ECU was supposed to play in the running of the primary societies because his involvement with their employees without having consulted their management committees was in some cases occasioning mismanagement. (6) All the mismanagement that had generally been wrought in the ECU.

To get the facts, the sub-committee had to travel far and wide. It, for instance, went to Nairobi to make enquiries at the business firms that had been supplying goods to the ECU. It

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1074 Lameck Andrew Mbogo Endelea, O. I., 18 April 2008

*Memorandum by ECU Ltd read and presented to the Honourable Minister for Commerce and Industry in the Boardroom of ECU Ltd at 11: OO on Saturday, 26 September 1964.
found out that the suppliers, in collusion with the managers of the ECU, had been inflating the price of goods. This had contributed in the ECU lose huge sums of money. Worse still, some of the goods that were being procured were not appropriate to the needs of the ECU and therefore a waste of money. In the arrangements, the ECU manager had even bought a Mercedes Benz car from one of the suppliers. The chairman of the ECU, too, was also to blame. He had been involved in shoddy practices. For instance, whenever there was an official travel, he would insist on being given allowances rather than use the official motor car. This was not wrong at all. However, the problem was that after getting allowances he would then take the official motor car.1076

In view of the above, the management committee felt obliged to take measures would correct the wrongs and prevent such occurrences again. Among the measures were sacking of corrupt staff, proper use of finances and restructuring (cutting-down on redundant staff).1077 The measures did save the ECU from falling over a precipice. The decisive action to get rid of the mismanagement at the ECU saved it - as well as its affiliate societies - from the fate that befell hundreds of co-operative bodies in independent Kenya to 1970. As decolonisation of Kenya was in full swing in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Africans were in a spree of forming co-operative societies to the extent that a deluge of these institutions ensued. By end of 1960, Africans had registered 847 co-operative societies. This number was more than one hundred per cent that of 1958. The trend continued even as Kenya got independence in 1963 and by the end of 1967, there were 1,783 co-operative societies in the register.1078 However, due to mismanagement during that period, so many co-operative societies were liquidated by the CCD.1079 In the case of Embu District, up to 1969, there were 34 registered co-operative societies. However, 13 of them were deregistered. Moreover, of the remaining 21, it was 17 that were in business for the two years up to 1969.1080


1078 Mucai-Kattambo, Co-operatives…, p. 12

1079 Some other studies give different figures insofar as the numbers of co-operative societies in Kenya at the dusk of the colonial and early independence eras were concerned but they, too, maintain that mismanagement was a setback to the co-operative movement. For instance, Jim Bailey says that from 1960 to 1964, there were 647 co-operative societies in Kenya and 65 of them were liquidated. The situation got even worse in the subsequent years. Then, in the period 1964 - 1969, there were 478 registered co-operative societies and out these 29 were deregistered for poor showing. Jim Bailey, *Kenya: The National Epic* (Nairobi, 1993) p. 220

By taming corruption, the ECU was able to get on the right track and grow. It was able to manage its finances and make great strides in development. From its inception, it had been operating from rented premises and that was nagging. But in Njagi’s watch, it started plans to put up its headquarters at Embu Town. The matter was discussed for the first time on 28 August 1967 and a sub-committee - comprising of Godfrey Mugo Gaitta, Francis Njagi, Evans Njiru and Silas Njoka – was formed to get the act together. On 9 April 1968, the ECU’s General Purpose Committee was given mandate to explore how funds for construction of the building could be raised. The foundation stone of the building was laid on 15 June 1971 by Masinde Muliro, the Minister for Co-operatives and Social Development. It was built in two phases and the first one was opened by President Jomo Kenyatta on 6 February 1973. It was constructed on a loan of KSh 526,350.00. The building was named ‘Emco House’.

The mismanagement that was rocking the co-operative movement in Kenya in the 1960s was stemming from lack of capacity to do handle things properly. This was pointing to the need to train the members of the management committees and staff. The ECU braced itself to embark on staff training. In August 1966, Njagi with Eugenia Nthia, Evans Njiru and Edward Ndwiga prepared a memorandum asking the Government to facilitate education of members of the management committee and staff by providing scholarships, which they presented to the Minister for Co-operative Development and Social Services.

Through training, its staff improved skills a lot. One of those who progressed a lot was John Ngari Zachariah. He had started working there as a book-keeper in 1966 and by the time he retired in 1988, he had risen to the position of General Manager. Over time, he would be taken to various places, locally and abroad, for training and that enabled to him to improve his skills tremendously. In 1967, for instance, he was among the pioneer trainees at the Co-

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27, 33
1081 ECU Ltd Committee Minutes, 11 October 1966 – 20 May 1968
1082 ECU Ltd Committee Minutes, 11 October 1966 – 20 May 1968
1084 Mucai-Kattambor, Co-operatives…, p. 12; KNA / TR / 11 / 150, National Co-operative College – Co-operative College of Kenya
1085 However, insofar as the need to train its leaders and staff was concerned, the ECU made the most of the Co-operative College of Kenya that was opened on 7 May 1967 on Allen Road in Nairobi. The college was part of Nordic Co-operative Aid Project to Kenya that had commenced its work in the month of August 1966. It was sponsored by four Nordic countries, namely, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden to run for between 5 and 10 years. The college was intended to offer advanced educational training on management of co-operatives at the national level. It was being run by the Ministry of Co-operative Development and Social Services whereas the expenses that were arising from renting the premises and purchase of equipments of the college were being taken care of by the Nordic Project. It had courses for both members of the Union Committees and Book-keepers of durations of one week and six weeks respectively. [KNA / TR / 11 / 150, National Co-operative College - Co-operative College of Kenya]
operative College of Kenya. The training started on 31 July 1967. On the part of committee members, Edward Ndwiga Njamiu, D. Ndwiga, Phares Mathara, Patrick Mbogo, James Njeru, and Godffrey Mugo Gaitta were the ones the ECU initially took for training at the Co-operative College in December 1967.

As the late 1960s was drawing to a close, the ECU was asked by the government not to restrict its activities in coffee industry only. It accepted that challenge valiantly. Following the construction of the phase one of the EMCO House in the early 1970s, there was ample office space and the ECU started a savings and credit co-operative society. The offering of financial services (banking and loans) was not open to a wide clientele base but just the ten affiliate societies of the ECU and their members only. However, around 1977 the ECU changed its name to the Embu District Co-operative Union Limited (EDCU).

However, Njagi did not hold the chairmanship of the ECU for long even though his leadership was brilliant. On 8 February 1969 he relinquished the post. After the elections that were held by the affiliate societies in that early period of 1969, Njagi did not remain on the management committee of the CNFCS. So he did not have opportunity to be the first delegate of the CNFCS to the ECU again. As a result, he was succeeded by Jackson Ireri of Kyeni FCS. But that was not the last time Njagi sat on the ECU’s management committee. In 1977, he elected as chairman of the CNFCS again and that enabled him to return to the ECU’s management committee. He was there together with Mark W. Macharia, Phares Mathara, Musa Njau, Harrison Njue, Njoroge Nguuri, Peter Mugo, Noah Ndwiga and Peter Nyaga Waweru. However, the last two of these were the ones who holding the posts of chairman and vice-chairman respectively. In 1982 Njagi resigned from the leadership of the CNFCS. This happened following a directive by President Daniel arap Moi that civil servants and politicians should not participate in the leadership of co-operative societies and Njagi was a chief. Moi did that because the co-operative societies’ sector was gripped by wrangles for leadership and that was not health to the interests of the members. By then Njagi had so far accumulated around 30 years in the leadership of co-operative societies at various levels. In the process, he had made a name in Embu District as an apt leader in that regard.


1087 KNA / TR / 11 / 150, National Co-operative College - Co-operative College of Kenya

1088 Ibid

1089 Ibid


During the colonial era he had chaired the management of the NCGCS and yielded brilliant results. Come the independence era, too, he had served remarkably as the chair of both the CNFCS and the ECU.1092

So after he retired from government service in 1983, and was therefore free from the restriction of the presidential directive of the year 1982 that had required civil servants and politicians to keep out of the affairs of co-operative societies, which was what had made him to resign from there, he once again decided to try for a leadership position in that sector once again. In the early 1984, he joined the race to be elected as a representative to the CNFCS and he succeeded. On the management committee of the CNFCS, the other members Njagi got to work with were Elijah Kathuri, Moses Njururi, Abram Njogu, Nehemiah Njeru, Njeru Nguu and Nathan Njuki Kithimo. However, Njagi became the treasurer of the committee, with Kathuri being the chairman, whereas Njururi took the position of the vice-chairman and Njogu holding the office of the honourable secretary. They served for one year and then an election for a new committee was called.

The election was held in March 1985. Njagi was re-elected and so were Kathuri, Njururi and Njogu. The newcomers were R. Mbogo, Julius Ngoroi Gacovia and Ephantus Nyaga Njamiu. Njagi was appointed by the committee members to hold the portfolio of the Chairman, while Kathuri, Njururi and Njogu took charge as the Vice-Chairman, the Treasurer, and the Honourable Secretary respectively. His popularity, in the subsequent elections Njagi would get re-elected and taking the chairmanship too. This continued until the early 1990s, when illness weakened him a lot. For about seven years he was in the management of the CNFCS, its operations were running well and its finances and assets were being used prudently and accountably. He was keen on education of the members so that they could increase their harvest and therefore get more income. He was organising field days for them on the farms that were well managed.

By 1985, the society had two coffee factories. They were at Mwiria and Kathangariri. However, due to increased production of coffee, the factories became increasingly unable to handle the volume of harvest. In 1985, their capacity was very much strained. By 15 January

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1986, they had processed 23 million kilogrammes of cherry. This made it necessary to expand the processing facilities. However, the management decided to buy another piece of land in Kirigi area to build a new factory. This was helpful in two ways since not only was the society’s coffee processing capacity increased, but also the distance the members of Kirigi area had to carry their harvest to deliver to the factory was significantly shortened.

Since being the chairman of the CNFCS entailed being automatically its representative to the management committee of the union of the co-operative societies of Embu District, the EDCU, Njagi started sitting there in March 1985. In addition to Njagi, the committee had Seleste Njoka (Chairman) and Jamleck Nyaga (Vice-Chairman), John Njue Mark, Gideon Nthiga, James Gicovi, Martin Njogu, Martin Njeru and Jackson Kanake. The EDCU was serving as the agent of itsaffiliate societies in marketing of coffee and procurement of loans. In addition, it was procuring bulk logistics such as machinery and farm in-puts, which was helpful in cutting the costs. Its other obligations were: to encourage development of co-operation among the affiliate societies; to supervise accounts of the affiliate societies by making regular inspections; and, to run savings and credit services. The EDCU had sub-committees for running its affairs.

Njagi was sitting on the sub-committee that was handling banking affairs. It had three members and the others were Martin Njeru and Gideon Nthiga, with the latter being the chairman. By the time Njagi joined this sub-committee, construction of a bank hall at Runyenjes town was under way. The EDCU had begun offering banking services at the town in 1975. However, as it did not have a building of its own, it was doing so in rented premises. So as a member of the sub-committee that was coordinating that project, Njagi was greatly involved there. However, that was not the only project for the sub-committee.

The EDCU was grappling with congestion of the banking hall that was at the EMCO House, Embu town. This problem had come about because by that time there was emerging a new generation of coffee farmers. These had to seek co-operative society membership so as to market their produce. To solve the problem, the sub-committee decided to open another branch at Kairuri market. It was to serve members of Central Ngandori, Gakundu, Thambana and Murue co-operative societies that were in the northwestern side of Embu District.

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1093 Central Ngandori Farmers’ Co-operative Society Ltd, Minutes of Committee, Annual General and Special Meetings, 14 May 1984 – 28 September 1987
1094 Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, Minutes of the Full Management Committee, 17 June 1983 – 17 September, 1990; Phares Ndwigia Mairani, O. I., 12 April 2008
branch was also conveniently placed to cut the long distances the members had to cover to reach Embu town.\textsuperscript{1095}

However, Njagi’s big day came on the 31 December 1987. He became the chairman of the EDCU.\textsuperscript{1096} The management committee he was chairing had the following members: Gideon Nthiga (Vice-Chairman), Jackson Ireri, Phares Ndwiga Mairani, Elijah Ndwiga, Justus Nyaga, John Njue Mark, James Gicovi and Martin Njogu. The committee had held its first meeting on 26 January 1988. In his address, Njagi told the committee that they needed to work hard to provide quality services to farmers. He stressed the necessity to unite with the staff and the government officials so as to realise development of co-operative movement in the district. Among other things, they were organising education activities for staff and members of the affiliate societies. In that regard, for example, in November 1988 the committee and the staff went on tour of Tanzania. They were to see how coffee farming and co-operative societies were doing there.\textsuperscript{1097}

However, in the late 1980s, changes were made in the coffee industry. Coffee farmers were supposed to take their produce only to their respective co-operative societies for pulping and marketing. To do the same to any other organisation or individual was illegal and punishable. This arrangement had been made to protect farmers from exploitation. However, the government allowed co-operative society members who felt that they had capacity to establish their own coffee factories and run them to seek license to do so. This move was being taken on the reasoning that if one did things on his own, they could cut down the costs significantly and thereby scale up the returns.

For a farmer to be issued with the license, they had to see their co-operative societies first. Then, the matter would be taken to the EDCU. After that, one would seek to be cleared by government agencies. These were the ministries that had the mandate of overseeing the co-operative movement, water and agriculture as well as the CBK in that order. For a farmer to be eligible to apply for the license, all that one needed was to have a minimum of 10 acres of coffee trees and show that there was ample supply of water where the factory was to be located. Then, one would inform the officials in the afore-mentioned ministries to visit the site for inspection to ascertain that the necessary conditions had been met. Then, the farmer would be issued papers to forward to the CBK, as it was the authority that was issuing the


\textsuperscript{1097} Phares Ndwiga Mairani, O. I., 12 April 2008

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license. The first farmer the EDCU cleared was Boniface Njiru Ngari. This was on the 5 February 1988. He wanted to establish a factory hailed at Kithiria village of Kibugu Sub-Location, Nginda Location. He was a member of Kibugu FCS. The second farmer was Charles Kabiru. He was given a go-ahead on the 20 July 1988. And, like Njiru, he was a member of Kibugu FCS. The third one was David Wachira Wambugu of Gaturi FCS and his application was granted on 23 January 1989.

Njagi left chairmanship of the EDCU on 12 October 1990. This was upon the end of his term. During the time he had headed the EDCU, he was adept at his work. For that, the EDCU commended him as having showed very good behaviour and excellent efficiency. In his service to the co-operative movement as the chairman of the CNFCS and the EDCU, he did his onus with dedication and due diligence.

Indeed, the CNFCS and the EDCU were doing so well such that they ranked among the best-managed co-operative societies in Kenya. Take the case of the EDCU, for instance. In 1988, it received a trophy from the Government for being the best managed co-operative union in Kenya. During Njagi’s watch over the two co-operative societies, the most important thing was to ensure that coffee farmers were paid well for their produce. And, the way to achieve that was by avoiding mismanagement. Njagi’s leadership in that regard was successful because he was a man of integrity and observed due diligence. According to John Ngari Zacharia, who worked for the EDCU as a bookkeeper in 1966 and had become its general manager by the time he retired in 1988, Njagi hated corruption and relished the truth very much. In every case in which things appeared as not adding up, Njagi always insisted the truth, no more, no less. However, the glamour that the co-operative societies that Njagi led were had was not being witnessed by all others in Kenya. Many a co-operative society in Kenya in the 1980s was sailing in stormy waters. This was due to mismanagement and that was emanating from bad leadership. As a result, the members of the affected co-operative societies were not getting their expectations of met accordingly. Those members were

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1098 Boniface Njiru Ngari, O. I., 20 April 2008 & 9 January 2011
1100 Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, Minutes of the full management committee, 17 June 1983 – 17 September 1990
1101 A certificate issued to Njagi by the Embu District Co-operative Union Limited for having served it well as its chairman from 31 December 1987 to 12 October, 1990
1102 Embu District Co-operative Union Ltd, Minutes of the full management committee, 17 June 1983 – 17 September, 1990
suffering since they were supposed to benefit from the movement socio-economically, which
the poor performance could not allow.\textsuperscript{1104}

At the time he left the chairmanship of the EDCU, Njagi remained at the helm of the CNFCS.
But he handed over the chairmanship of the CNFCS to Elijah Kathuri in 1991. The reason for
doing so was the turnout of events during the elections of the CNFCS that were held in that
year. Njagi wanted to retain the chairmanship. But Elijah, who had been vice-chairman, was
eyeing the chairmanship. Njagi could have carried the day were it not for the mistake he
made. On his card, rather than write his name in full, he jotted the initials ‘EK’, which stood
for Ephantus Kavungura. So when his vote was examined, it was impossible to tell whether it
belonged to him or Elijah Kathuri given that the initials of the latter were also the same. As
result, the vote was deemed as spoilt. Consequently, it was concluded that given that Njagi
had even refused to vote for himself and therefore it was also not right to have him hold the
chairmanship. So he was dropped from the chairmanship to the become vice-chairman. The
other committee members were Njeru Karuri (treasurer), Nelson Njururi (honourable
secretary), Hopson Ireri (committee member), Joseph Njururi (committee member) and Njeru
Nguu (committee member) with John Nyaga being employed as secretary/manager. But as
Elijah became chairman, he therefore replaced Njagi as the first representative of the CNFCS
to the management committee of the EDCU. That EDCU committee elected Elijah as the new
chairman and he remained in that position for many years.\textsuperscript{1105} But failing health did not
allowed Njagi to continue serving as he had been doing. So later within the early 1990s, he
eventually left the vice-chairmanship in particular and the committee of the CNFCS in
general.

4.4 Personal Affairs

Farming
In Embu, most of the people are dependent on land for livelihood. For that agriculture is the
most important economic activity. Coffee is one of the main cashcrops, the other being tea,
and its cultivation started during the colonial era. Even in the early 1980s, most of the people
had coffee farming as their source of income. They could not engage in wage employment
because few of them were lucky to have gone to school, which could have enabled them to
get wage employment and thereby not depend entirely on coffee farming which was
extremely tasking in terms of labour. However, even most of those who were schooled, their

\textsuperscript{1104} Mucai-Kattambbo, \textit{Co-operatives…}, pp. 12-5
\textsuperscript{1105} Elijah Kathuri, O. I., 16 May 1994 in Kithinji, ‘A Biography of Chief…’
levels of education were too low to enable them to get wage employment with meaningful remuneration. So many had hardly reached beyond Standard Two and yet they considered themselves as educated.

However, most of the people of Njagi’s generation were given to argue in favour of agriculture and biased against wage employment. They contended that it was a must for those people who worked in classrooms (as teachers) and offices (as clerks and other posts) at some day, which was after retirement, to return to the land to rely on it only as their source of income. Furthermore, they stressed that wage employment tended to make people lazy and therefore averse to farming. As Njagi was employed as a chief, he was one of those who were being hit at. It was as if money earned from tilling land was the only one that had value.

However, those who had farming as their only source of income were taking that position out of envy. They were doing so out of the knowledge that they had no alternative but to do back-breaking work on their farms so to get income while those who were in wage employment did not have to get so tired to get the same. Furthermore, those in wage employment could use part of their salaries to engage other people who had less income to work on their farms instead of doing it themselves. Even by the early 1980s, annual income of teachers and clerks was five times that a farmer with 350 coffee trees could get in a year.1106

However, while Njagi was in government service as a chief and therefore getting a salary every month, he was also interested in farming so as to make more money. He had started coffee farming in 1950. That was not because of lack of money. By the time he got employed as a school teacher in 1946, the salary he was getting was enabling his family to live in comfort.1107 He was one of the best coffee farmers and keepers of dairy cows in Embu District. So when he retired from government service in 1983, he just got to do agriculture with increased vigour since he had more time and energy for it. He had since become a proud owner of two farms. One had been allocated to him by his clan during the programme of land consolidation and demarcation in the early 1960s and it measured 20 acres. The other was sized 8 acres and it was adjacent to the first one. However, unlike the first, he had bought it later. He had done it because of his love for agriculture.1108

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1106 A study that was conducted at time showed that this was the average number of coffee trees. Haugerud, *The Culture of Modern Politics…*, p. 231
1108 *Ibid*
He scaled up coffee and dairy farming. So well was he doing it such that he was given accolades by the government several times. What is more, agricultural and veterinary officers liked to hold field days on his farms in bid to see other farmers improve on farming skills.1109 As Njagi strove to earn a living through farming, he had some other investments too.

**Entrepreneurship**

Njagi was an entrepreneur for a very long time. This dated from the early 1950s. He was the founding chairman of the first African-owned company in Embu that was known ‘Gatavi na Ngua’. After he retired from government service in 1983, he continued with his business activities. However, he just concentrated efforts on those ventures that he had started earlier on. One of them was a partnership in the oil industry. He had founded it together with among others Jeremiah J. J. Nyaga and Eustace Kagau wa Kangerwe in 1963. They were operating a fuel outlet at Embu town on Kenyatta Highway - just opposite the present Embu County Treasury - that was called Wiyathi Agip Petrol Station. In the beginning, the station was the only one in town for that it was hogging all the business there. However, with time other operators appeared on the scene. The petrol stations were Kenol, BP, Shell and Caltex along Kenyatta Highway; and Esso on Kubukubu Road. Their coming stirred stiff competition. Therefore for Njagi and partners to keep customers at Wiyathi and win ones entailed working harder. The quality of the services they were offering had to be raised so as to appeal to customers. However, the venture continued until 1996.

That came to pass due to a conflict over the ownership of the petrol station. Consequently, a protracted court battle ensued. In the end, it was Kagau who became the sole owner in 1996. Kagau was a great trader. His business interests could have been the largest in the whole of Embu. Kenol Petrol Station that lay next to Izaak Walton Inn was part of his business empire. The biggest wholesale firm there was in Embu town, the Embu Distributors Limited, was his. He was also handling the products of the Kenya Breweries Limited. He might have had other business interests too. What is more, he desired to keep that business empire expanding. After taking over Agip Wiyathi Petrol Station, he renamed it Kobil Petrol Station.

However, Njagi and those business partners did not have the petrol station as their only business. They had real estate undertakings within Embu town. This was in the Blue Valley section of the town. The buildings they had established there were residential houses

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to let. So Njagi continued managing his interests there. However, the businesses that were in Embu Town were not the only ones he had.

He had acquired plots at Kairuri and Manyatta markets. So while he was working as a chief in the post-colonial era, he was putting up commercial buildings there. In one part of the building that was at Manyatta, he was running a grocery shop. As of the rest of its premises, he rented out. And, at Kairuri he opened a hotel. So, when he retired, he continued taking care of the venture. However, in 1986 he changed his mind on the business that was at Kairuri. It happened that the EDCU wanted to open another outlet for savings and credit services to check congestion at Embu town. It also wanted to take services closer to the members who were living in the north-western side of Embu District. Those members belonged to Central Ngandori, Gakundu, Thambana and Murue co-operative societies. So the EDCU showed interest in Njagi’s building that was at Kairuri. In the face of that, Njagi decided to close his operations at Kairuri and rent out the building to the EDCU. However, in retirement, Njagi did not try more business ventures and for the rest of his life, the afore-mentioned remained of his entrepreneurial undertakings.

**Struggling with Failing Health**

The law of life is struggle. That argument is true because in life one has to struggle against one or more problems. In the case of Njagi, he was diabetic and the problem worsened in the early 1990s. In November 1990, he was taken ill and hospitalisation for months on end. He started at the Mater Miseri Cordiae Hospital in Nairobi where he stayed in its intensive care unit for seven days. However, there was no improvement of his condition. Then he was moved to the Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi. He stayed in the intensive care unit for 15 days. After that, he spent three months in the general ward of same hospital. However, that was not the end of his hospitalisation. After being discharged, he taken to the Sun Rise Hospital at Kangaru, near Embu Town, where he stayed for some time before he returned home. However, there was no end of his being treated because he had to keep on getting a jab of insulin every day. During his long stay in hospital, he could not do his work.

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1112 A letter the family of Kavungura wrote on 8 April, 1991 to the Headmistress / Secretary of the BoG of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School requesting financial support to offset the bills Kavungura had incurred during his period of hospitalization, which was also copied to the Provincial Education Officer, Eastern Province. See, KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 2 - St. Anne Girls’ High School, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 2
So when he started recovering, he strove to pick the pieces. On 22 July 1991, Njagi struggled and attended a meeting of the BoG of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School. It was his spirit that was still strong and not so much physical fitness that enabled him to make his way to the meeting. At the meeting, the other members and those who were in attendance did not fail to see that it was only great determination that had got Njagi to be with them. The school’s headmistress, Madam Lillian W. Waweru, appreciated the trial as it underlined Njagi’s great concern for the development of the school. She also made gratitude to God for enabling Njagi to try that hard. As for the PEO of Eastern Province, he commended Njagi for the excellent service he had offered to the school for many years, which had made it one of the best in Kenya. In spite of the setback of failing health, Njagi continued serving the school and other institutions in which he had been having engagements with dedication. However, the illness continued to get the better of him. In 1993, he had become too physically weak to cope with his itinerant. So this situation impelled him to reconsider his engagement in public life. One by one, he resigned from the many positions of leadership he was holding and confined himself at home to recuperate. For example, he stepped down from the chairmanship of the BoG of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School on 30 April 1993 and at Kamama Boys’ Secondary School, after its BoG meeting of 5 March 1994 he did not attend another.

On 9 January 2000, his condition worsened and he was hospitalised. This was at a hospital run by the Catholic Church near Wang’uru town in Mwea District. However, this time he did not leave the hospital alive because despite the treatment he was given, he eventually died on 18 January 2000. Arrangements were made for his funeral and he was buried on 27 January 2000. For that occasion, thousands of people thronged his homestead to pay their last respects. They were from far and wide. This student, for example, although he hailed from Nguviu, which was not so many kilometres from Njagi’s home, was at the time in the city of Nairobi. Upon learning about the sad turn of events, he travelled all

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1113 KIR / B / 1 / 4 / 2 - St. Anne Girls’ High School, Kiriari, Embu, Chairman, BoG, Mr. Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, Vol. 2


1116 ‘Burial service for the late Ex-Senior Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, HSC, Thursday, 27 January 2000’
the way from there, which was a distance of about one hundred and sixty kilometres, to attend.

Among the mourners were the notables such as Hon. Peter Njeru Ndwiga (MP, Manyatta), Hon. Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga, (ex-Cabinet Minister and ex-MP, Embu South), Elijah Kathuri (Chairman, EDCU and Director, KPCU), John Ngari Zachariah (Chairman, CBK and ex-General Manager, EDCU) and Madam Raphaela Wangai Njagi (Headmistress, Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School). Right Rev. Moses Njue, the Bishop of the ACK Diocese of Embu, was the one who conducted the burial ceremony. Njagi left behind his two wives (Trizah Wamugo and Annette Wanjira), five daughters, four sons and a number of grandchildren.

4.5 Summary
It was for his consonance with the populace and the government that Njagi was able to keep his job as a chief as many of his counterparts got sacked at independence in 1963. He continued to treat his people with dignity even after the government turned to use the CAA, thereby giving chiefs immense power to the extent that they became anti-people just as it had been during the colonial times. Throughout his career no complaints were raised against his leadership. He was honoured by the government for his excellent work. Meanwhile, he did some other things to the benefit of his people in the fields of education, co-operative movement and agriculture. There was no report of conflict of roles and interests as he worked.

In his early years of his retirement from the office of chief Njagi was very active as he had stamina. He was immensely productive in both private and public sectors. Wherever he was involved in leadership he performed well. But failing health later slowed him down and in the end he could do almost nothing. The attendance of his burial by multitudes that included the high and mighty of the Embu society was a testimony of the great respect he was commanding there.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion
By the 1940s, Embu society was in the grip of rapid social change such that there was not only indigenous education, but also modern education, Christianity and scouting. The latter three forms of education had appeared on the scene with the advent of Europeans. They came after the establishment of British colonial rule in 1906. However, all the four kinds of education were unique. They were all important in the development of an individual’s character. Njagi was one of the not so many children of the time who had experience with all the four kinds of education. At home, he learnt such values as herding of livestock, avoidance of alcohol and underwent circumcision (which the pinnacle of the indigenous education). He joined mission school in 1934. Then, in 1945, he enrolled for teacher training at Kigari Teacher Training Centre. Meanwhile, he converted to Christianity. In the 1940s, too, he was inducted into the Scouts’ Movement. All these education systems oriented Njagi to be a responsible person given that he was acknowledged leader of his peers, never embraced drunkenness, could reason with elders, not bent on chasing after girls and he was a staunch Christian. Later in his adult life, he became a teacher, school supervisor and councillor, among other things.

In colonial Kenya, those people who acquired modern education played a great role in the transformation of the country. But the colonial government very much neglected provision of modern education to Africans. However, the field of modern education was an initiative of the missionaries. But sadly, for a long time, they were not concerned about the need for advance education by Africans. Rather, they were geared towards rudimentary education in the form of literacy, arithmetic, vocational training and spreading Christianity. However, it should not be forgotten that the early secondary schools for Africans, for example, Alliance High School and Mang’u High School, were started by the missionaries. This situation made most of the Africans who made it to school to become mainly lowly-educated teachers, preachers, carpenters, masons and farm hands.

This was the trend that obtained in Embu District by 1945. There was not even a junior secondary school where those pupils who had completed Standard VI could be enrolled. They had to seek admission outside Embu District. This was at schools such as Kagumo GAS, CSM School Chogoria and MMS School at Kagaa, Meru. This situation was daunting for apart from the long distances that had to be covered on foot, it was just a few of the interested pupils who would be accepted due to lack of facilities.
Against that backdrop, in 1946, leaders of Embu District, who included chiefs, teachers, church elders among others, met to look into how they could deal with the problem. The move culminated with the opening of Kangaru GAS in January 1947. At the same place, a college for training teachers was later founded. The school grew fast and became renown in Kenya such that in 1961, it was among the first five schools in the country that were allowed to offer the Cambridge Higher School Certificate, which was pre-University education.\textsuperscript{1117} Njagi was involved in the founding Kangaru GAS and became a member it’s BoG. This shows that Njagi understood the needs of his society and he tried to transform it.

Meanwhile, as a school teacher, he was executing his duties well such that pupils would perform well in both academics and extra-curriculum activities. For the exemplary performance of duties, he was rewarded with promotions, firstly, as a headmaster and then an assistant supervisor of schools. This shows that Njagi knew how to do his work as required.

In the school system he was working, there was rampant discrimination of pupils by church elders. But he strived to stump out the problem. He did so even though his close relative was among the elders who were involved. In 1947, he offered to transport a pupil by bicycle for an interview at Kerugoya. He laboured so much even though they were not even related. Around the same time, he helped another one make it to Alliance High Kikuyu since there was nobody else with ability to do so. Even in the latter case, the pupil was not his relative. This underlines that Njagi was conscientious and willing to participate in solving the problem that his society was faced with.

Njagi joined the Embu ADC in 1955 and his performance there underpinned the cause of African people greatly. He was supportive of the government policies that were bound to uplift the living standards of Africans. Africans were steeped in abject poverty due to the government neglect of their agriculture among other things. Furthermore, by then the government was looking up to the ADCs to assist in developing African areas. He served impressively as the chair of the bursary committee as there was no bias when considering beneficiaries and many students from Embu were able to further their education, locally and abroad. He played a very great role in the ADC’s endeavours to introduce grade cows as he managed to secure the land that was intended for stocking them after other councilors had failed to do so. This streak of exemplary work culminated in his being considered for education tour of Britain by the British Council in 1963.

\textsuperscript{1117} Prior to that, this level of education was only available at the Royal College (later on the University of Nairobi) for those going to the University of East Africa, at Makerere, Uganda, or other universities elsewhere.
At the time he joined the ADC; African nationalist efforts were in full swing. The Mau Mau was up in arms against the British. Since the ADC was an extension of the government, ADC members were required to fervently support the government’s bid to suppress the uprising. However, members were opposed to British rule and therefore were against the onslaught on the Mau Mau. Njagi did not make dalliance with the government rather he sided with his colleagues in denouncing the government’s approach of dealing with the Mau Mau militarily and argued for dialogue between all the parties that had interest in the conflict given that it was crystal clear that the Mau Mau had genuine grievances.

Still on the ADC platform, he vehemently opposed the plan to establish a multi-racial government in 1955. This stand was quite necessary since that kind of governance system was bound to run counter to the interests of Africans, which was majority rule. The colonialists had long made a set up that was benefitting just themselves and oppressing Africans to the hilt and were trying to preserve the status quo. When it was time create electoral regions in readiness for electing African representatives to the Legco, he was one of the forces that pushed for the creation of the Central Region that consisted of the Central Province that had Kiambu, Fort-Hall, Nyeri, Embu and Meru districts. In the elections that followed in 1957, he urged Jeremiah J. M. Nyagah to vie for the Central seat. Then, in 1958, he supported the call to split the region, which culminated in its being subdivided into three elective areas, namely, Kiambu-Fort-Hall, Embu-Nyeri and Meru. In the subsequent elections, he underpinned Nyaga’s bid to represent Embu-Nyeri constituency and he won. Thus, it is arguable that Njagi was eager to see Kenya liberated from the British rules and he did everything in his power towards realisation of that noble idea. However, the above is not all what Njagi contributed to the nationalist cause.

After Njagi was appointed as a chief, he showed humane attitude to ‘ex-Mau Mau’ detainees. This was by not letting them suffer again as it was the government’s directive. Under the Restriction Order, the ex-detainees, upon being released, were required to go home straight away and report to their chiefs, who were to assign them public work to do for six months. In Ngandori Location, Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato had been making projects to construct roads. The ex-detainees were being punished unfairly since the wrong they were alleged or may have committed, was to engage in the quest to free Kenya from colonialism. And after having suffered cruelty in the detention, it was inhuman of the first order to make those people suffer again. Rather than be pliant and execute directives just because they were from the powers that be, Njagi chose not to. That was an excellent decision.
After converting to Christianity, Njagi not only made a staunch faithful, but also a great church leader. He served the church in various capacities. When he was getting married, he organise a wedding ceremony in the church and that very much showed other Christian youth the path they were supposed to trend. This was leadership by example, which was the best that could be done. He mobilised youth to contribute towards construction of church hall. He was crafted to sit among church elders. In 1946, he became a member of the Church Council of the Anglican Church. But he did not stop there as he rose to sit on the Diocesan and the Provincial Synods. Furthermore, in 1954, the church co-opted him to the BoG of St. Mark’s Normal School at Kigari (later St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College). Since the church had confidence to give him many positions of leadership, this means that he was a reliable person.

Njagi entered the office in 1958. His duties were among others, collection of taxes, maintenance of law and order, prevention of making of illicit brews, consumption of harmful substances, mobilisation of people for public work and arbitration of petty cases. Despite that African chiefs rode roughshod on their people when executing their duties, he did not take that path. Instead he undertook to reform the inhuman system. He took to root out highhandedness and corruption. The other reforms he made were: easing tax burden, intensification of coffee farming and suspending women from communal work. This not only made life easier for the people, but also raised their standards of living as poverty got in check. In the independence era, Njagi refused to become brutal after the CAO was reintroduced under the title the CAA. He conducted himself with restraint unlike many of his colleagues, who made the office anti-people and therefore maintain the streak contentiousness that was pertaining during colonial era. It is important to note that Njagi was able to execute his duties - containing crime in his jurisdiction, among other illegal things - to the satisfaction of his masters. For that he was promoted and honoured by being awarded the Head of State Commendation in 1981.

Meanwhile, he undertook community development measures that socially transformed Ngandori Location in particular and Embu District in general. He successfully mobilised the people of Ngandori Location in the spirit of harambee to build four secondary schools. This was great achievement. This was so as many people from Ngandori and later Embu District were able to access secondary education and the government had failed to do the needful. The church, too, was relying on him to carry out its community development activities as he was the chair of BoGs of a number of educational institutions and church development committees.
He led co-operative societies to the benefit of their members. This he did by eliminating corruption, which was a bane to many, a co-operative society in Kenya. The success of the co-operative movement helped to spur agricultural development in Embu as the movement was involved in the procurement of farm in-puts. He succeeded and was without conflict of roles arising, which is a pointer to his proficiency in management of both public and private affairs.

In retirement, Njagi continued to offer leadership in the church, educational institutions, co-operative societies and the public services. Wherever he was offering leadership, progress was realised. His leadership was successful because it was oriented to meet the interests of his people, without engaging in underhand activities.

Going by the above trend, suffice is to say that Njagi’s leadership as a chief in both colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history was successful. This is insofar as the need to serve the people is concerned as that should be the only benchmark for appraising public leadership if Kenya public service would ever stand up to account for its name. Njagi was appraised so because throughout his tenure in both colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history he showed a selfless commitment to duty, due diligence and people-friendliness, although the office he was in had a reputation of being anti-people, through and through. What made Njagi excel whereas many of his predecessors and contemporaries so woefully failed was the stuff of his character. He had integrity, patriotism, fairness, diligence, ingenuity, conscientiousness and dedication. Njagi was a successful leader and his achievements were enormous. In the twentieth century in which Njagi lived there was General Douglas MacArthur (1880 - 1964) of the US Army and his exploits.1118

As a soldier, MacArthur was in a class of his own. For his bravery and ingenuity during the World War I in France, he earned promotion to a brigadier–general in August 1918. He was aged 38 years and that made him the youngest man to take that rank in the history of the US army.1119 During the World War II, he was appointed the Commander in Chief of the Allied Forces in the South-West Pacific Area. His mandate was to tame the Japanese as they had charged southwards and by the spring of 1942 they had gained control of the southeast Asia from Korea to Philippines and as well as Pacific islands such as the Celebes, the Bismarcks and Wake. In that year, in broad daylight they launched 81 bombers from a carrier

in an invasion that flattened Darwin, which was the key port of Australia.\textsuperscript{1120} They could have taken Australia in a matter of time if they wanted.\textsuperscript{1121} But MacArthur contributed greatly towards getting the Japanese to capitulate in 1945. After the war, he was honoured to take the position of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers for the occupied Japan.\textsuperscript{1122} Then, he commanded the United Nations (U.N.) forces in the first nine months of the Korean War (1950 - 1953).\textsuperscript{1123} He has been by a military general alongside Julius Caesar, the Roman emperor and conqueror of 100’ and 44’, in terms of ingenuity in warfare, inspiration and charisma.\textsuperscript{1124} In 1950, a Japanese statesman described him as ‘not a simple man!’\textsuperscript{1125} MacArthur appears in the annals of history as the consummate soldier and a leader of men.\textsuperscript{1126} There is no doubt that he was a great man. Turning to Njagi, he did not scale the same heights as MacArthur. But going by his achievements, Njagi too was not an ordinary person. Undoubtedly, he belonged to the realm of great men, who are the makers of history.\textsuperscript{1127}

5.2 Recommendations

This study on the life of Chief Njagi has revealed his leadership qualities as he enormously contributed in the development of the society in fields such as public administration, liberation struggle, fighting corruption, modern education, coffee farming, co-operative development and land reforms. That exposes his place in modern Kenyan history with regard to the pursuit of good governance. Therefore, it would help a lot if other Kenyan chiefs and as well as other prominent personalities like technocrats and politicians are similarly studied.

In the face of the fore going, it is recommended that Kenyan universities should endeavour to encourage their students to venture into writing historical biographies. However, such activities would require research funds, which many researchers may not have and that would make them unable to do the needful. Therefore, the government of Kenya (and other institutions) would do well to provide support in that regard. Njagi as a chief was able to lead in the development of his area of jurisdiction due to integrity, conscientiousness and diligence. That is good governance. So in order to have responsible public servants in Kenya, it would help a lot to institute vetting of those aspiring for public appointments.

\textsuperscript{1120} Manchester, American Caesar..., pp. 264-5
\textsuperscript{1121} Ibid, p. 326
\textsuperscript{1122} Ibid, pp. 514, 525-6
\textsuperscript{1123} http://koreanwar60.com/biographies-general-douglas-macarthur
\textsuperscript{1124} Wainstock, Truman, MacArthur..., pp. 8-9
\textsuperscript{1125} Manchester, American Caesar..., p. 9
\textsuperscript{1126} http://koreanwar60.com/biographies-general-douglas-macarthur
\textsuperscript{1127} Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship..., pp. 4-5; Caine, Biography and History...,p. 12
APPENDICES

Appendix I: List of informants and their biodata

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Informant (hereinafter NoI):</th>
<th>Sex:</th>
<th>Date of Birth (hereinafter DoB):</th>
<th>Place of Birth (hereinafter PoB):</th>
<th>Society:</th>
<th>Clan:</th>
<th>House:</th>
<th>Lineage:</th>
<th>Date of Interview (hereinafter DoI):</th>
<th>Place of Interview (hereinafter PoI):</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, HSC;</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Ngurukiri, Kairuri, Embu;</td>
<td>Embu;</td>
<td>Kithami;</td>
<td>Mirori;</td>
<td>Njue</td>
<td>April-May 1994, March and June 1995, June 1996</td>
<td>Kavuria, Kairuri, Embu County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Triza Wamugo;</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Kagaari, Embu;</td>
<td>Embu;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April-May 1994, March and June 1995, 1996 and 2000</td>
<td>Kavuria, Kairuri Embu</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher at Kagaari Primary School, Embu; Wed Njagi in 1947.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Annette Wanjira;</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Kigiri, Embu;</td>
<td>Embu;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April-May 1994, March and June 1995, June 1996 and 2000</td>
<td>Kavuria, Kairuri Sub-Location, Embu</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>She was a nurse at Embu Hospital when she became second wife of Njagi in 1958.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Julius Ngoroi;</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Nvuvori, Embu;</td>
<td>Embu;</td>
<td>Mukiria;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14 May 1994;</td>
<td>Muvori, Nginda, Embu County</td>
<td>Committee member of CNFCS from 1960s through 1970; Appointed Assistant-Chief of Ngviu Sub-Location in Ngandori Location in 1977, working under Njagi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No. 6
NoI: Elijah Kathuri; Sex: Male; DoB: 1943;
PoB: Nguviu, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Muvandori;
DoI: 16 May 1994; PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu;
Background: Worked in the co-operative movement as a clerk, 1962 – 1967. After that he worked as an account in business enterprises; Joined leadership of co-operatives in 1978 and worked there with Njagi for many years; at the time of this interview he was Chairman of both CNFCS and EDCU.

No. 7
NoI: Lilian Wanjoka; Sex: Female; DoB: 1932;
PoB: Njoguri, Kiamwenja, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Mbugi; Lineage: Kariithi
DoI: 6-20 May 1994, 25 March, 1 June, 18 & 20 December 1995; PoI: Nguviu, Nginda, Embu
Background: She did mavyiko (communal work), especially, construction of mucingi (moat) on the fringe of Mount Kenya forest and Kairuri playgrounds under Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato during Mau Mau War; Was illiterate.

No. 8
NoI: Robert Kamaria Weru; Sex: Male; DoB: 1931;
PoB: Ngandori, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Mukiria;
House: Mbugi; Lineage: Getambu
DoI: 19 May 1994; PoI: Kibaki, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: Farming coffee and tea; Literate in Kiembu and Kiswahili.

No. 9
NoI: Mary Marigu; Sex: Female;
DoB: 22 August 1963; PoB: Nguviu, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Getambu
DoI: 20 May 1994; PoI: Kivaki, Nguviu, Embu;
Background: She was a polytechnic trained tailor and was plying her trade at Kathangariri Market, Embu County.

No. 10
NOR: Simon Mugo; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1960; PoB: Nguviu, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Getambu
DoI: 20 May 1994; 10 May and 19 June 1995; PoI: Kivaki, near Nguviu, Embu;
Background: Studied at Kitui High School for Forms I-IV from 1979 to 1982.

No. 11
NoI: Shadrack Nvuria Nyaga Njanake; Sex: Male;
DoB: About 1907; PoB: Kiamwenja, Ngandori, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Ritho;
Generational Age-Set: Muranja
DoI: 4 July 1994; PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: He sold a piece of land at Nguviu in the early 1980s for construction of St. Francis Primary School.

No. 12
NoI: Agostino Gakono Ngari; Sex: Male; DoB: 1939; 
PoB: Kibugu, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; 
House: Mbugi; Lineage: Kariithi 
DoI: 7 March and 2 August, 1995; Pol: Gicerori, Kibugu Sub-Location, Embu 
Background: Named Gakono as he was born during the time DC of Embu, I. R. Gillespie, as he was nicknamed so by the locals; Retired school teacher.

No. 13
NoI: Juliana Rwamba; Sex: Female; 
DoB: Yura ria Kithioro (1918); PoB: Kiamwenja, Embu; 
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; 
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Getambu; 
DoI: 21 March and 7 April 1995; PoI: Kathangariri, Nginda, Embu; 
Background: Never been to school and illiterate.

No. 14
NoI: Simeon Njiru Kivunguru; Sex: Male; 
DoB: Around 1910; PoB: Ngathika, Kairuri, Embu; 
Society: Embu; Clan: Igamuturi; 
Generational Age-Set: Nyangi; Lineage: Getambu; 
DoI: 21st March and 7th April, 1995; PoI: Kathangariri, Nginda, Embu; 
Background: Never went to school

No. 15
NoI: John Ngari Zachariah; Sex: Male; 
DoB: 1930; PoB: Kamavindi, near Kibugu, Embu; 
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; 
DoI: 25th March, 1995 and 4th July, 1995; PoI: Ndunduri, Nginda, Embu 
Background: Started working as a clerk in the co-operative movement of Embu in 1959 retired in December, 1988, being the General Manager of EDCU Ltd; Director and Chairman, Coffee Board of Kenya; Chairman, BOG, Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School from 1976.

No. 16
NoI: Onesmus Mumo; Sex: Male; DoB: 1936; 
PoB: Rugumu, Nginda, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kina; 
DoI: 27 March 1995; PoI: Nguthi, Nginda, Embu 

No. 17
NoI: Lilian Wanjeri Waweru; Sex: Female; DoB: Probably, 1947; 
PoB: Kara, Murang’a; Society: Kikuyu; Clan: Unjiru; 
DoI: 8 May 1995; PoI: St. Anne’s Girls’ High School – Kiriari, Embu 
Background: Had become headmistress of Kiriari Girls’ Secondary School from January 1976 following protracted, painstaking persuasion by Njagi in 1975 to leave Kyeni Girls’
High School to take up the post; she had come to know Njagi from 1969 when her husband, Newton Waweru, was teaching at Kamama Boys’ Secondary School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Clan</th>
<th>Place of Information</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Place of Residency</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Helonica Wakiini</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>During Kivata Nja (1928)</td>
<td>Mutuandu, near Kathangariri, Embu County</td>
<td>Kithami</td>
<td>Nguviu, Nginda Location, Embu County</td>
<td>1 and 17 June and 4 July 1995</td>
<td>Marema</td>
<td>Her father was Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location, Embu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Juliana Njura Nyaki</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Kairuri, Embu</td>
<td>Kithami</td>
<td>Nguviu, Embu</td>
<td>6 June 1995</td>
<td>Kirugi</td>
<td>Her childhood coincided with the establishment of a camp by the British at Manyatta in Embu; Her family left Kairuri for Kiangereko, near Nguviu, and that was where her brother, Informant (No.19), Bernard Njoka Nyaki, was born; She gave information together her brother; She never went to school and was illiterate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Bernard Kinya Kwenja</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Kiangereko, near Nguviu, Embu</td>
<td>Kithami</td>
<td>Nguviu, Embu</td>
<td>10 June 1995</td>
<td>Marema</td>
<td>School teacher from 1966 and was appointed Headmaster in 1980; His father, Kwenja wa Muthang’ato, was younger brother to Senior Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location, 12 July 1926 – 15 August, 1958.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Clement Kiragu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Kanyakiri, Ngandori, Embu</td>
<td>Kithami</td>
<td>Nguviu, Nginda, Embu County</td>
<td>25 June and 3 July 1995; 10 March 2002</td>
<td>Marema</td>
<td>His father, Senoir Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato, administered Ngandori Location from 12 July 1926 to 15 August 1958; Joined colonial police force in 1946 and retired in 1973 being an inspector; He was involved in community development activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Wilson Nyaga Gacewa</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>During Kivata Nja (1928)</td>
<td>Kiangereko, near Nguviu, Embu</td>
<td>Kithami</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No. 24
NoI: Paul Muriithi Kwigirira; Sex: Male; DoB: 1943;
PoB: Nguviu, Embu County; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; Lineage: Getambu;
DoI: 4 July 1995 and 17 February 2002; PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: He was a coffee and tea farmer; never went to school and was illiterate.

No. 25
NoI: Naomi Gicugu; Sex: Female;
DoB: Early 1940s; PoB: Gikirimia, Kibugu Sub-Location, Embu;
Society: Embu;
Clan: Rwamba;
DoI: 4 July 1995; PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: Never went to school and was illiterate.

No. 26
NoI: Phides Kathoni; Sex: Female;
DoB: Early 1920s; PoB: Kathakwa, Kibugu, Embu;
Society: Embu;
DoI: 4th July, 1995
PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: Moved to Nguviu shortly before the State of Emergency on getting married to Shadrack Nyaga Nvuria Njanake (Informant No. 11).

No. 27
NoI: Christopher Kinyua N. Kavanda; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1957; PoB: Kairuri, Embu;
Society: Embu;
Clan: Kithami;
House: u-a-Mbugi;
Lineage: Kavanda;
DoI: 30 March 1995; PoI: Gatiiguru, Nguviu Sub-Location, Embu

No. 28
NoI: Nicholato Njogu Mboco; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1932; PoB: Kiangereko, near Nguviu, Embu;
Society: Embu;
Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi;
Lineage: Muvandori;
DoI: 4 July 1995; PoI: Kiandome, Nginda Location, Embu County
Background: Tribal policeman under Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato for 7 years, up to 1957; His wife, Helonicah Wakiini, was daughter to Njagi wa Muthang’ato.

No. 29
NoI: Jacinta Ruguru; Sex: Female;
DoB: There was registration of births by Kanja (father of Kiriamburi Kigagu of Kathangariri market) - this might have been in 1937;
PoB: Kithiria, near Kibugu, Embu;
Society: Embu;
Clan: Kithami;
DoI: 4 July 1995; PoI: Kiamutithi, near Nguviu, Embu
Background: Stayed in Nakuru shortly before independence (1963) with her husband, John Njiru Karuga, *shamba boy* (farmhand), for white settler; Illiterate living at Kiamutithi.

No. 30
NoI: Joyce Tharaka; Sex: Female; DoB: 1934; PoB: Kithiga, near Nguviu, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Marema; Lineage: Kiringuri; DoI: 4 July 1995; PoI: Kiandome, Nguviu Location, Embu; Background: Never went to school and was illiterate.

No. 31
NoI: Jeremiah Nyaga Macere; Sex: Male; DoB: Around 1940; PoB: Gicerori, Nginda, Embu County; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Andu-a-Mbugi; Lineage: Chomba wa Mukondo; DoI: 6 July 1995; PoI: Gatiiguru, Nguviu Sub-Location, Embu; Background: Primary school teacher and then headmaster, 1966 – 1985; Appointed Chief Grade II, Nginda Location, November 1985; rose through the ranks to Senior Chief.

No. 32
NoI: Joseph Mbogo Muturi; Sex: Male; DoB: 1940; PoB: Mukonoku, Kathangariri, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Andu-a-Mbogo; Lineage: Gaconde; DoI: 7 July 1995; PoI: Kiambogo, near Kathangariri, Embu; Background: Had been a school teacher.

No. 33
NoI: Eliud Njeru Rimunya; Sex: Male; DoB: During *Kivata Nja* (1930); PoB: Gacuriri (now Kavari), near Kiriari, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Marigu; House: Kanyi; DoI: 30 May, 1996; PoI: Nthunguri, Nginda, Embu County; Background: He had retired from barber business but was cultivating coffee and tea. Migrated with his family from Gacuriri for Karumiri in Nginda while he was a boy probably in the early 1940s; Settled at Nthunguri after land consolidation and demarcation programme.

No. 34
NoI: Bernard Njeru Kavavi Mwiaweru; Sex: Male; DoB: Time of Gatumu – 1920; PoB: Muconoke, near Kavari, Kiriari, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kina; House: Andu-a-Mbogo; DoI: 25 June 1996; PoI: Mukonoku, near Kathangariri, Embu; Background: Wattle barks and charcoal trader, 1945 – 1991; Literate.

No. 35
NoI: Jane Gikuu; Sex: Female; DoB: 1948; PoB: Kerugoya Hospital, Kerugoya; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Mirori; Lineage: Njue; DoI: July 1996; PoI: Kiangucu, Kibugu Sub-Location, Embu;
Background: First-born child of Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura and Triza Wamugo; Wife to Dr. Timothy Ezekiel Nyaga Karanga, a veterinary doctor from 1969; Secretary to Town Clerk of Embu Municipality.

No. 36
NoI: Timothy Ezekiel Nyaga Karanga; Sex: Male;
DoB: 6 November, 1942 PoB: Nembure, Embu County;
Society: Embu; Clan: Marigu-ma-Nguruguta
DoI: July 1996 and 17 May 2008; PoI: Kiangucu, near Kibugu, Embu

Background: Diploma, Animal Health, Egerton College – Njoro, 1963 – 1965; Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, the University of East Africa, Nairobi College, 1965 – 1969; Veterinary Officer and retired being in-charge of Eastern Province, Kenya; Married Jane Gikuu, daughter of Chief Ephantus Njagi Kavungura, 1969.

No. 37
NoI: Andrew Njiru Kathendu; Sex: Male; DoB: 1928;
PoB: Kithiria, near Kibugu, Embu; Society: Embu;
House: Marema; Clan: Kithami;
DoI: 2 May 2000; PoI: Gicerori, near Kibugu, Embu

Background: Son of Chief Kathendu wa Njue of Ngandori Location, who was predecessor to Chief Njagi Muthang'ato. Took Mau Mau oaths while in Kiambu during the Emergency; denied land by his Clan, Kithami kia andu a Marema, during consolidation and demarcation and had to buy the one he settled on at Mwithi, near Kibugu.

No. 38
NoI: Andrew Nyaga Kithimo; Sex: Male; DoB: 1928;
PoB: Kavari, near Kiriari, Embu; Society: Embu;
House: Ngondi; Clan: Gicuku;
Lineage: Kanana;
DoI: 4 January 2002; PoI: Njoguri, near Kairuri, Embu

Background: Retired school teacher and was Headmaster, CCM Nguviu Primary School, 1964 – 1971; Was Councillor on Embu County Council and in 1966 requested it to provide land for Nguviu Primary School to move to Kathangariri to pave way for establishment of Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School.

No. 39
NoI: Patricio Njagi Katharanjau; Sex: Male; DoB: 1916;
PoB: Kairuri, Embu; Society: Embu;
House: Ndararu; Clan: Igamuturi
Lineage: Ngunga;
DoI: 6 January 2002; PoI: Mutuandu, near Kathangariri, Embu

Background: Acquintance of Chief Njagi Muthang’ato from 1927; Joined Ngandori Location Development Committee in 1944, its Vice-Chairman under Chief Njagi Kavungura; Together with Njagi Kavungura was among the team that in 1966 went to Nairobi to see the Minister for Education, Dr. Njoroge Mungai, seeking ascent to start Nguviu Boys’, Nguviu Girls’, Kiriari Girls’ and Kamama, Boys’ secondary schools; First Chairman of BOGs of Nguviu Boys’ and Nguviu Girls’ secondary schools.

No. 40
NoI: Rufus Ireri Hezron; Sex: Male; DoB: 1952;
PoB: Kathangari, Embu; Society: Embu;
House: Kirugi; Clan: Kithami;
Lineage: Nthiga
Residential Area: Gatondo, Itabua, Embu


No. 41

NoI: Abraham Gakoru;  
SEX: Male;  
DoB: 1925;  
PoB: Ngurukiri, Ngandori, Embu;  
CLAN: Kithami;  
LINEAGE: Njue;  
DoI: 28 February 2002 & 27 June 2013;  
PoI: Kavuria and Manyatta Market, Ngandori, Embu, respectively

**BACKGROUND:** He was a relative of Njagi Kavungura; Himself and his elder brother, Moses Nthiga (who herein fore is interviewee No. 44), were among the first Africans to plant coffee in Embu in the year 1944 and they were members of NCGCS with registration numbers 135 and 86 respectively; he schooled up to standard VIII from 1936 to 1949.

No. 42

NoI: Bedan Ireri Jonah Munyi;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 12 July 1922;  
PoB: Kigari Village, Embu;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Rwamba;  
House: Njeru;  
Lineage: Murianguu;  
DoI: 2 and 21 March 2002;  
PoI: Matiru, near Kigari, Embu County

**BACKGROUND:** Quit teaching at Kigari in 1955 to join Anglican clergy, trained locally and in India; Vice-Chairman, Synod of Diocese of Mount Kenya East; Member, BOGs of Kamama Boys’, Kiriari Girls’, Nguvui Boys’ and Nguvui Girls’ secondary schools and St. Mark’s Teachers’ Training College – Kigari; Canon, Anglican Diocese of Embu.

No. 43

NoI: Esther Njura Munyi;  
Sex: Female;  
DoB: 1929;  
PoB: Kigari, Embu;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Rwamba;  
House: Njeru;  
Lineage: Murianguu;  
DoI: 2 March 2002;  
PoI: Matiru, near Kigari, Embu

**BACKGROUND:** After Kenya attained independence, she, her brother, Bedan Ireri (Informant No. 42) and Njagi Kavungura made plans to start secondary schools in Ngandori Location; In 1966, they went to see Fr. Emilio Njeru at Nguvui Mission on on the matter.

No. 44

NoI: Moses Nthiga;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1918;  
PoB: Ngurukiri, near Kairuri, Embu;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Kithami;  
House: Mirori;  
Lineage: Nthiga;  
DoI: 2 March 2002;  
PoI: Mukangu, Embu

**BACKGROUND:** Same geneology with Njagi Kavungura; His father was Mbogo son of Ngicuru; Ngicuru was son Njue; Njue was son of Nthiga, who was son of Mirori; Mirori was son of Kithami; Worked in the Department of Agriculture up to 1959 when he was appointed as a Headman (later day Sub-Chief) and worked Chief Njagi Kavungura; Retire in 1973.

No. 45

NoI: Phineas ‘Karico’ Nyaga;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1930;  
PoB: Kiini, Ngandori, Embu;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Ndiri;
DoI: 8 March 2002; PoI: Mukangu, Embu County


No. 46
NoI: James N. J. Njau; Sex: Male; DoB: 1954; PoB: Gicugu (near Kianjokoma), Gaturi Location, Embu
Residential Area: Kiambogo, near Kathangariri Market, Embu
Society: Embu; Clan: Marigu;
House: Njiru; Lineage: Njiru;
DoI: 20 and 27 March 2002; PoI: ACK Church, Kathangariri Market, Embu
Background: Vicar in-charge ACK Kathangariri Parish from September 1993.

No. 47
NoI: Levi Mugo Reuben Njuki; Sex: Male; DoB: 1920; PoB: Kavari, near Kiriari, Embu
House: Ngondi;
DoI: 16 April 2002; PoI: Mukongoro, near Nvuvori, Embu
Background: His parents emigrated from Meru for which his mbai had Kimeru name, Kanana; Member, Management Committee of NCGCS, 1960 – 1964, with Njagi as Chairman; Assistant Chief, Nvuvori Sub-Location, 3 June 1966 – December 1982; in retirement he was offering leadership in community development.

No. 48
NoI: Matthew Njagi Munyi; Sex: Male; DoB: 1932; PoB: Kigari, Embu
House: Mutuamita;
DoI: 17 April 2002 and 1 January 2009; PoI: Matiru, near Kigari, Embu
Background: Secretary, Embu Land Tribunal Board, February – June, 1956; Clerk, Judiciary Department, 1957 – 1988.

No. 49
NoI: John Njue Muruanthama; Sex: Male; DoB: 1930; PoB: Kiriari, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Igamuturi;
House: Mutuamita;
DoI: 22 April 2002; PoI: Mukangu, Ngandori, Embu County
Background: Chairman, Kenya Africa National Union Partym Ngandori Location, 1960 - 1985; Councillor, ECC, 1963 – 1969; Chairman of Gikuyu, Embu Meru Association (GEMA) in Ngandori Location; , Member, School Committee, Mukangu Primary School, 1970 – 1973; Chairman, Plot Allocation Committee, Kathangari Market.

No. 50
NoI: Phares Ndwiga Mairani; Sex: Male; DoB: 1922; PoB: Kiamviti (Kamithumo);
House: Nthathai; Clan: Marigu;
Society: Embu; Lineage: Mairani;
DoI: 12 April 2008; PoI: Kianyangi, Kianjuki, Gaturi North Location, Embu

Background: Son of Chief Arthur Mairani of Murue Location, which later on became part of Gaturi Location under Chief Njagi Ruriga Muruatetu; Was Chairman of Murue Farmers’ Co-operative Society from its inception in 1963.

No. 51
NoI: Jacknes Kambura; Sex: Female; DoB: 1937;
PoB: Kathande, Gaturi North Location, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Marigu; House: Kamuri; Lineage: Muciri;
DoI: 14 April 2008; PoI: Kavutiri, Gaturi North Location, Embu County

Background: Schooled at Riagicini and then Kigari up to Standard VI from 1940 to the early 1950s; Knew Njagi Kavungura from the time he was teacher and supervisor of schools in 1940s and 1950s.

No. 52
NoI: Francis Mugo Waweru; Sex: Male; DoB: 1935;
PoB: Kibogi, Gaturi North Location, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Ngai; House: Kobuthi; Lineage: Ephanto;
DoI: 14 April 2008; PoI: Kibogi, Gaturi North Location, Embu County

Background: He schooled at Kibogi and Kigari primary schools, 1948 – 1949, and at the latter school he was taught English and Mathematics by Njagi Kavungura; Joined Kangaru GAS for intermediate education after which he became teacher/headmaster at Kavutiri Primary School.

No. 53
NoI: Lawrence Ireri Mukorwe; Sex: Male; DoB: 1929;
PoB: Matinori, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Gitiri; House: Mugo; Lineage: Mugo
DoI: 14 April 2008; PoI: Ntheruri, near Manyatta, Embu County

Background: Was Njagi Kavungura’s age-mate; Recruited by Njagi to teach at Kigari Primary School and stayed on for 38 years, 33 of them as headmaster.

No. 54
NoI: Ndwiga Citiitia; Sex: Male; DoB: 1936;
PoB: Kairuri, Ngandori Location, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Giciku; House: Gacai; Lineage: Mururio
DoI: 15 April 2008; PoI: Kamviu, Ngandori, Embu County

Background: Clerk in co-operatives, Embu, 1961 – 1975; Elected onto the leadership co-operative in 1975; Led Kenya delegation to an international co-operatives seminar in Czechoslovakia, 1982; Member, Sub-District Development Dcommitte (Locational Development Committee) chaired by Kavungura, 1956 – 1980.

No. 55
NoI: Cosam Nyaga Njeru; Sex: Male;
DoB: Some time before yura ria gatathan/ kithioro (1918) – about 1917
PoB: Murue, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Marigu; House: Matuto;
Lineage: Matuto; Circumcision Age-Set: Mwere;
DoI: 16 April 2008; PoI: Kivangua, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu
Background: Came to know Njagi when, the latter was a school supervisor and travelling around on a motorcycle; Was Headman (Assistant-Chief) in Kangaru, Gatunduri, Kirigi and Kamviu sub-locations, 1959 – 1964, Would act as Chief of Ngandori when Njagi was away; First person in Kirigi area to build a stone (permanent) House.

No. 56
NoI: Peter Nyaga Kaanake; Sex: Male; DoB: 1931; PoB: Kirigi, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Marema; Lineage: Ireri Migwi;
Circumcision Age-Set: Njenduru; DoI: 17th April, 2008;
PoI: Kirigi, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu County

Background: Worked as a clerk in the Provincial Administration and at Embu DC’s Office he was paying out salaries to staff, among them, Njagi Kavungura.

No. 57
NoI: Lameck Andrew Mbogo Endelea; Sex: Male; DoB: 1932; PoB: Kigari Mission, Embu County;
Society: Embu; Clan: Rwamba;
DoI: 18th April, 2008; PoI: Kianjokoma, in Mutunduri, Embu


No. 58
NoI: Eliatha Ireri Kathuri; Sex: Male; DoB: 1930; PoB: Ngandori n, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Kirugi; DoI: 19 April 2008;
PoI: Kirungu, near Kibugu, Embu

Background: Had been Chairman, School Committee, Kibugu Primary School, member; Member, BOG of Kibugu Secondary School; Member, Parish Council (in the 1950s he was together with Njagi) and Lay Leader in the Anglican Church for many years.

No. 59
NoI: Edith Wanginda Ndwiga; Sex: Female; DoB: 1932
PoB: Kangaru, Embu County;
Society: Embu; Clan: Gicuku;
House: Gacai; Lineage: Gacai
DoI: 19 April 2008; PoI: Kibugu Market, Embu County

Background: Became Divisional Community Assistant in 1958 and served for many years, during which time she worked with Chief Kavungura and Locational Community development Assistant, Mary Gicuku; Member of the Church Council in the Anglican Church from 1962.

No. 60
NOR: Morris Njagi; Sex: Male; DoB: 1949;
PoB: Kibugu, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Andu-a-Mbugi; Lineage: Kariithi;
DoI: 20 April 2008; PoI: Kithiria, near Kibugu, Embu;
Background: Was an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya; Member and Chairman of the Appeal Board, Capital Markets Authority of Kenya; Member of BOGs of a number of secondary schools; Contestant for parliamentary seat of Embu North in 1979 and 1983.

No. 61
NoI: Boniface Njiru Ngari; Sex: Male; DoB: 1937; PoB: Kibugu, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Andu-a-Mbugi; Lineage: Kariithi; DoI: 20 April 2008; PoI: Kibugu Market, Nginda Location, Embu

Background: Educated up to KAPE level, 1944 – 1953; Trained at the Institute of Agriculture - Kangaru, Embu, 1954 – 1955; Agricultural Extension Officer, Kibugu, 1956 – 1961; Member, Management Committee of NCGCS, 1954 - 1963; Businessman from 1962

No. 62
NoI: Eliud Njeru wa Mitambo; Sex: Male; DoB: 1922; PoB: Gakirima, Kithiria Sub-Location, Ngandori, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Gicuku; House: Gicuku; Lineage: Mugera
Circumcision Age-Group: Genduru; DoI: 23 April 2008; PoI: Muthigi, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu County

Background: Manager, Kavingaci Factory of NCGCS from 1948 until retirement.

No. 63
NoI: James Njeru H. Mugo; Sex: Male; DoB: 1935; PoB: Kigari, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Mukiria; House: Nowe; DoI: 23rd April, 2008; PoI: Kivangua, Kirigi, Embu


No. 64
NoI: Nelson Muturi David Kiria; Sex: Male; DoB: 1928; PoB: Kigari Mission, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Marigu; House: Nyingi; Lineage: Gaciriria; DoI: 24 April 2008; PoI: Matiru, near Kigari, Embu County

Life Experiences: Ran businesses such as butcheries, shops, hotels and bars at various places including Manyatta, Kerugoya and Meru; Got to know Kavungura while the latter was schooling in Meru together with Godfrey Mugo Gaita. During the Emergency, he together with Njagi Kavungura, Dishon Kindoro, Mwaniki wa Nyaki, Jesee Mwaririe, Habakkuk Mugo and Stephen Nthiga were appointed by “Ngunja”, the missionary in-charge of Kigari Mission, to guard people who had taken refuge there against the Mau Mau.

No. 65
NOR: Lewis Godfrey Wambugu Mugo; Sex: Male; DoB: 1925; PoB: Murue, Embu; Society: Embu; DoI: 24th April, 2008; PoI: Muchagori, Gaturi North Location, Embu

Background: School teacher who retired in June 1984; Elected Chairman, KANU, Gaturi Location, 1985; Councilor on ECC representing Gaturi Location, 1988 - 1992 and served together with Kavungura, who was nominated.
No. 66
NoI: Njagi Rurima alias Ndogo; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1933; PoB: Kathande, Manyatta, Embu County
Society: Embu; Clan: Njuki;
House: Kariria; Lineage: Rurima;
DoI: 24th April, 2008; PoI: Manyatta Market, Embu
Background: Never went to school; Travelled to Kiambu in 1951 and got casual work earning 6 shillings per month; Then went to Nairobi; returned home and established various businesses (timber processing, bars and pig rearing) at Manyatta Market.

No. 67
NoI: Moses Njiru M’Rumbia; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1935; PoB: Macengo (Kamviu), Manyatta, Embu
Society: Embu; Clan: Rwamba;
House: Kiguoya; Lineage: Gatitu;
DoI: 28 April 2008; PoI: Kamviu, Manyatta, Embu

No. 68
NoI: Nelson Mwaniki Karani, HSC; Sex: Male; DoB: 1943;
PoB: Kigari Mission, Embu County; Society: Embu; Clan: Rwamba;
House: Mwigi; Lineage: Kuthethura
DoI: 28 April 2008; PoI: Kivangua, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu
Background: School teacher, 1962 – 1998; Chairman, Gakundu Farmers’ Co-operative Society, 1970 – 1980; Chairman, Rianjagi Farmers’ Co-operative Society for 16 years and wasa rated as the best managed society Kenya; That reputation made go to USA to see coffee exhibition and was awarded the Head of State Commendation.

No. 69
NoI: Rudia Wanginda Nyaga Kamwaririe; Sex: Female;
DoB: About 5 years before Ngige cia Kivata-Nja (around 1923);
PoB: Ngathika, near Kairuri, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Andu-a-Mbogo; Lineage: Mwarara;
Generational Age-Set: Nyangi; Circumcision Age-Set: Ngiciri;
DoI: 29 April 2008; PoI: Kariari, near Manyatta, Embu
Background: Long before Independence (1963) she used to take young girls to Embu town for clitoridectomy; Was a singer and choir leader and many times in post-colonial era her choir would be called upon to entertaine guests; Member, Njama (Councils) of Chiefs Njagi Muthang’ato and Njagi Kavungura

No. 70
NoI: Josephat Njeru Kubuta; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1934; PoB: Ngurukiri, near Kairuri, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Andu-a-Mbugi; Lineage: Nyamu;
DoI: 29 April 2008; PoI: Kairuri, Embu County
**Background:** Was a school teacher until 1992; Elected Chairman, Gakundu Farmers’ Co-operative Society, 1992.

**No. 71**

**NoI:** Njoka Mwinja wa Macangia;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1922  
**PoB:** Kiaragana, Kiamwenja Sub-Location, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Gitiiri;  
**House:** Maciri;  
**Lineage:** Mugo;  
**Generational Age-Group:** Nyangi;  
**DoI:** 30 April 2008  
**PoI:** Kiarurigi, Kamviu Sub-Location, Ngandori Location, Embu  
**Background:** Was Mau Mau oath administrator in Nairobi, returned home and entered Mount Kenya forest to fight; then, captured and jailed for three years.

**No. 72**

**NoI:** Jeremiah Njeru Gatua;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1937;  
**PoB:** Kamviu, Manyatta Sub-Location, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Rwamba;  
**House:** Njagi;  
**Lineage:** Gatua  
**DoI:** 30 April 2008;  
**PoI:** Kamviu, Ngandori Location, Embu  
**Background:** Schooled until the beginning of the State of Emergency (1952); Became catechist and elder in the Catholic Church in 1958.

**No. 73**

**NoI:** John Njagi Nyaga Gakungi;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1932  
**PoB:** Kiamwenja, Ngandori, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Gicuku;  
**House:** Nyaga Nguru;  
**Lineage:** Gakungi  
**DoI:** 30 April 2008;  
**PoI:** …………………….., Embu County  
**Background:** Served in colonial police force, 1952 – 1962; Then a guard with the company publishing the Standard Newspaper; Contested for Area Council seat twice, 1964 and 1970, but did not win.

**No. 74**

**NoI:** Njogu Gating’u;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1909;  
**PoB:** Gicugu, Kirigi, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Kithami;  
**House:** Andu-a-Mbugi;  
**Lineage:** Andu-a-Ngari;  
**DoI:** 1 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Gicugu, Kirigi, Embu;  
**Background:** Veteran of World War II (in Egypt, Japan and India) and Mau Mau War.

**No. 75**

**NoI:** Jerusha Wanjira wa Muru wa Rui;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1931;  
**PoB:** Ena, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Kithami;  
**House:** Marema;  
**Lineage:** Ndiri  
**DoI:** 1 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Kiruari, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu  
**Background:** Schooled at CMS Kgari School and quit in the early 1940s; James Habakkuk, who later on went to study in America and settled there was her classmate; During those days Njagi Kavungura was also in attendance; During the Emergency she participated in *mavyeko* (communal work) in Mount Kenya forest to flush out the Mau Mau.

**No. 76**

**NoI:** Leah Mukami Josiah Njue;  
**Sex:** Female;
DoB: 1926; PoB: Kigari, Embu;
Society: Embu; LAN: Kithami;
House: Mirori; Lineage: Njue;
DoI: 2 May 2008; PoI: Kegonge/Karungu, Kyeni, Embu
Background: Daughter of late Canon Musa Njiru (one of the earliest African Church leaders at CMS Kigari and close relative of Njagi Kavungura); School teacher for 27 years, from 1949; Wed Josiah Njue in 1949, who became Chief of Kyeni Location in 1959.

No. 77
NoI: Virginia Munyi Melchizedek; Sex: Female;
DoB: 1907; PoB: Nthuguni, Kairuri Sub-Location, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami;
House: Mbugi; DoI: 6 May 2008;
PoI: Karumanthi, Kariari Sub-Location, Ngandori, Embu
Background: Got married to Melchizedek Gitari, a close relative of Njagi Kavungura, in 1932; Used to do casual work at Njagi’s farm from the beginning of the Emergency to the late 1960s; once lived in adjacent village to that of Njagi Kavungura for a long time.

No. 78
NoI: Nicasio Nyaga Ng’endu; Sex: Male;
DoB: October 1929; PoB: Kathigari, Kariari Sub-Location, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Marigu;
House: Kumenya; DoI: 7 May 2008
PoI: Gitengetenge, Kithimu Sub-Location, Embu
Background: KAPE examination, 1949; Teacher training, Mathari, Nyeri; Imprisoned for 3 years on Mau Mau charge during the Emergency; Chief, Gaturi Location, 1964 – 1988 and appointed Senior Chief in December 1983.

No. 79
NoI: Joseph Kariuki wa Mutavi; Sex: Male; DoB: 1925;
PoB: Kirigi, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Andu-a-Muthanga;
House: Muruanja; DoI: 8 May 2008
PoI: Matakari, Dallas/Stadium Location, Embu Town
Background: Taught by Njagi Kavungura at Kigari School; Chief, Mbeti Location, 1967 - 1983; Established ‘Gatavi na Ngua’ company together with Njagi among others, 1952.

No. 80
NoI: Eliud Ndwiga Micumano; Sex: Male; DoB: 1927;
PoB: Karuriri, Manyatta Sub-Location, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Ngiri; House: Gitana; Lineage: Murivia
DoI: 8 May 2008; PoI: Kamama (Kiamavuro), Kairuri Sub-Location, Embu
Background: Home Guard at Kigari Mission during the Emergency.

No. 81
NoI: Isaiah Kiura Karingi; Sex: Male; DoB: 2 February 1928;
PoB: ..........., Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Gitiri;
House: Mugo; Lineage: Mugo;
DoI: 9 May 2008; PoI: Kamviu, Embu
Background: Teacher trainee, Normal School, Kigari; Became a teacher at Kianjuki Primary School; sacked due to polygamy, 1953; Committee Member, Mirundi Co-operative Society, 1962 – 1968; Sub-Chief, Manyatta Sub-Location, 1968 – 1994.

No. 82
NoI: Francis Ndwiga Mwaririe; Sex: Female; DoB: 1920;
PoB: Ituri, Kavutiri, Embu County; Society: Embu; Clan: Igandu;
House: Andu-a-Ndangi; DoI: 9 May 2008; PoI: Ituri, Kavutiri, Embu

Background: Became lay leader, Anglican Church, Kibogi, Embu, 1950; Church appointee to preach ‘Mau Mau’ detainees and visited various camps; Chairman of Mirundi Farmers’ Co-operative Society twice - firstly in 1951 and the second term lasted until 1963, when the society split to form Murue Farmers’ Co-operative Society.

No. 83
NoI: Elijah Kamuri Mburugu; Sex: Male;
DoB: 1929; PoB: Ikarangu, Kiamwenja, Ngandori, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Igamuturi;
House: Kinyaru; Lineage: Mburugu;
DoI: 9 May 2008; PoI: Kamviu, Ngandori, Embu

Background: Worked on settler farms in Kiambu when young; returned home in the early 1950s and joined the Mau Mau in the forest to fight Europeans and hated Chief Njagi Muthang’ato; never went to school and was illiterate.

No. 84
NoI: Phides Ngima Muruatetu; Sex: Female;
DoB: About 9 years before Kivata-Nja (around 1919);
PoB: Kathunthuma (around Mukuori), Ngandori Location, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Andu-a-Ndiri
DoI: 10 May 2008; PoI: Kitharu, Gaturi Sub-Location, Nembure, Embu

Background: Window of Chief Njagi Muruatetu of Gaturi Location, Embu; had never been to school and was illiterate.

No. 85
NoI: Margaret Murangi Mbogo; Sex: Female;
DoB: 28 July 1930; PoB: Kigari Mission, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Rukwaro;
DoI: 13 May 2008; PoI: Kiangoci, Kirigi Sub-Location, Embu

Background: Her father, Paul Gatema, was among the first batch of people to be baptised at Kigari and later on became a member of the Synod of the Anglican Church; After KAPE examination, Kangaru GAS, and then teacher training, 1948 – 1950; School teacher upto 1986; Got married to Isaiah Mbogo, son of Rev. Johana Muturi, in 1952; Isaiah was opponent of Kavungura for the post of Chief of Ngandori Location in 1958.

No. 86
NoI: Simon Njeru Muruambura; Sex: Male; DoB: 1934;
PoB: Nyangeri (Gicugu), Kirigi, Embu; Society: Embu; Clan: Kathuci;
House: Andu-a-Mbogo; DoI: 14 May 2008; PoI: Gicugu, Kirigi, Rmbu;

Background: Went to school but quit after a few months due to being bullied to leave the bigger boys as it was happening in those days; As a teenager he worked as a ‘matatu’ tout at
Manyatta and Embu Town and later on became supplied milk from *ishagi* (villages) to markets, especially, Embu and Gatondo.

No. 87
**NoI:** Bedan Nyaga Muringi;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1924;  
**PoB:** Kiangoci, Kirigi, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Rwamba;  
**House:** Maritha;  
**DoI:** 14 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Kiangoci, Kirigi, Embu  
**Background:** Went to Nairobi after termination of schooling and did blacksmithing, among other casual jobs; Joined Mau Mau movement while in Nairobi and was involved in oath administration; returned back to Embu in the course of the Emergency and went entered Mount Kenya forest to fight there against the British until independence.

No. 88
**NoI:** Duncan Munyi Elasto Kavusoru;  
**Sex:** Male;  
**DoB:** 1925  
**PoB:** Ngurukiri, Kairuri Sub-Location, Ngandori, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Kithami;  
**House:** Mirori;  
**Lineage:** Njue  
**DoI:** 15 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Mukanga, Ngandori Location, Embu County  
**Background:** In boyhood lived in same village with Njagi Kavungura; Started schooling at Kigari in 1938 and was a few classes behind Kavungura, but they were both teaching there Kigari in 1947.

No. 89
**NoI:** Ann Njoka Kagau;  
**Sex:** Female;  
**DoB:** Around 1926;  
**PoB:** Kiamatogi (now Matiiru), near Kigari, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Marigu;  
**House:** Andu-a-Namu;  
**DoI:** 15 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Mukangu, Ngandori Location, Embu County  
**Background:** Got married to Eustace Kagau, who was a close friend of Ephantus Njagi Kavungura in both childhood and adulthood, in 1949; had never been to school.

No. 90
**NoI:** Joyce Njura Phineas Kangi Gacora;  
**Sex:** Female;  
**DoB:** Aged about 15 years during *Kivata-Nja* (1928-1931) hence born around 1913;  
**PoB:** Gikirima (Kamama), Ngandori Location, Embu;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Rwamba;  
**House:** Kaumbura  
**PoB:** 16 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Kairirrangu, Mbeti North Location, Embu  
**Background:** Did social work (caring for orphans, among them, Onesmus Kithaka, who were sponsored by Rev. J. Comely at CMS Kigari Mission) after leaving school; Got married on 1 January 1939, to Phineas Kangi Gacora, a prominent teacher, who was a very close friend of Njagi Kavungura.

No. 91
**NoI:** Herbeth Gakiri Joel Mwigaruri;  
**Sex:** Female;  
**DoB:** 1930;  
**PoB:** Runyenjes, Embu County;  
**Society:** Embu;  
**Clan:** Thara  
**DoI:** 16 May 2008;  
**PoI:** Rung’ang’a, Gaturi Sub-Location, Nembure Embu  
**Background:** Sister to Triza Wamugo, first wife of Njagi Kavungura, was the best lady during the wedding of Trizah and Njagi in 1947; got married to Joel Mwigaruri of Ndiri Clan in the Lineage of Kathondu in 1952.
No. 92
NOR: Anonymous informant;                        Sex: Male;
DoI: 17 May 2008;                                  PoI: Kyeni, near Kathangariri, Nguviu Sub-Location, Embu
Background: Schooled at Kathangari Primary School and Kamama Intermediate School; 
               Joined Thika Technical Training School in 1956, He was living at Nguviu emergency village 
               during Mau Mau war; He gave scant information about self and the research estimated that he 
               was about 69 years old.

No. 93
NoI: Jotham Nguri Ngucu;                           Sex: Male;
DoB: 1923;                                        PoB: Kavari Location, Gicugu, Kirinyaga County;
Society: Kikuyu;                                   Clan: Unjiru;
DoI: 18 May 2008;                                  PoI: Kiangwenyi, Kimunye Location, Kirinyaga
Background: Was among the founders of Kangaru GAS in 1947 and helped to persuade J. J. 
               M. Nyaga to become a teacher there; School teacher up to 1953; Supervisor of CMS Schools 
               in Embu District, 1953–1955; Appointed Chief of Kabare Location, 1955, and retired in the 
               1980s; Nominated to the African District Council of Embu, 1955; Played a key role towards 
               creation of Embu-Kirinyaga-Nyeri electoral region for the LegCo and supported Jeremiah J. 
               M. Nyaga for the seat; Lead negotiator for the marriage Njagi Kavungura and his second 
               wife, Annette Wanjira, in 1958; Life-long friend of Njagi.

No. 94
NoI: Margaret Wambugi Njagi Mbarire;               Sex: Female;   DoB: 1939;
PoB: Mukangu, Ngandori Location, Embu;             Society: Embu;
Clan: Kathuci;                                     Lineage: Mbogo
DoI: 20 May 2008;                                  PoI: Kavuturi, Kanja Sub-Location, Embu
Background: Was a pupil of Njagi Kavungura at Kigari Primary School; got married to 
               Njagi Mbarire, who later on became Member of Parliament for Embu North, 1974 – 1983.

No. 95
NoI: Benjamin Njue Mugucu;                         Sex: Male;   DoB: 8 February 1931;
PoB: Gichiche, Kagaari, Embu;                      Society: Embu;
Clan: Rwamba;                                      Clan: Kwamba;
DoI: 20 May 2008;                                  PoI: Mwenendega, Gichiche, Embu
Background: Son of Mugucu, Chief of Kagaari Location up to 1958; Studied at Kangaru 
               GAS from 1949 then trained as a teacher and taught in a number of intermediate schools; 
               Elected Chief for Kagaari Location in October 1964 to replace Kahundu; Became Executive 
               Officer, Office of the President, Harambee House, Nairobi, 1968.

No. 96
NoI: Joel Mwigaruri;                               Sex: Male;   DoB: 22 March 1928
PoB: Kiamatogi (later on Matiru), near Kigari, Embu; Society: Embu;
Clan: Ndiri;                                      House: Kathondu
DoI: 21 May 2008;                                  PoI: Rung’ang’a, Nembure Location, Embu
Background: Student, Kagaa School, Meru; Teacher, 1951- 1952; Headmaster, 1952 - 1953, 
               Detained under the Emergency Regulations on suspicion of being allied to the Mau Mau; 
               Later on blacksmith; Produce Inspector, Embu County Council; school teacher; Chairman, 
               Revival Movement, ACK Diocese of Embu.
No. 97
NoI: James Mbogo Ngaara; Sex: Male; DoB: 1935
PoB: Kiamaciri, Kiriari Sub-Location, Embu County; Society: Embu;
Clan: Kithami; House: Marema
DoI: 22 May 2008; PoI: Manyatta Market, Embu County
Background: Educated at Kangaru GAS, 1949 – 1953 and was assisted by Njagi Kavungura to get admission there; Trained as a teacher and then taught in Embu, Mbeere and Gicugu (in Kirinyaga).

No. 98
NoI: Daudi Njeru Ayub; Sex: Male; DoB: 1927;
PoB: CMS Kigari Mission; Society: Embu;
Clan: Kithami; House: Andu-a-Mbogo
DoI: 23 May 2008; PoI: Ngurukiri, near Kairuri, Embu County
Background: Had to start schooling at Chogoria in Meru in 1933 because church elders could not allow him enroll at Kigari Primary School; Joined Kigari P. S. in 1936 but the elders made him repeat the same class up to 1952; He left Kigari School in 1952 for Kevote School but things did not work wellthere leading to the end of his quest for academic education.

No. 99
NoI: Nehemiah Njeru Karuri; Sex: Male; DoB: 9 May 1929
PoB: Kiamavuro, Kairuri Sub-Location, Embu;
Clan: Kithami; House: Mirori; Lineage: Njue
DoI: 23 May 2008; PoI: Kiini, Ngandori Location, Embu
Background: He was a retired medical officer; Close relative of Njagi Kavungura, as they were of the Lineage of Njue of Kithami-kia-andu-Mirori Clan.

No. 100
NoI: Cyrus Kagina wa Gaconi; Sex: Male; DoB: 1926;
PoB: Karimari Village, Kithunthiri, Mavuria, Embu; Society: Mbeere;
Clan: Kithami; House: Ngithi
DoI: 24 May 2008; PoI: Kavondori, near Kiritiri, Embu;
Background: Chief of Mavuria Location, Mbeere, 1959 - 1983; Close friends with Njagi Kavungura and Jeremiah J. M. Nyaga; they used to hold joint meetings to sensitise people on matters of imoptance to the society, especially, education.

No. 101
NoI: Suleiman Njiru Caira; Sex: male;
DoB: 1943;
PoB: Macang’a, Mavuria Location, Mbeere;
Society: Mbeere;
Clan: Rwangondi;
House: Mbogo;
DoI: 24 May 2008;
PoI: Macang’a Market, Mavuria, Mbeere
Background: Sat KAPE examination, 1962; Tribal police (later on the Administration police), 1963 – 1974, worked in almost all locations of Embu County, including Ngandori, where he was under Chief Njagi Kavungura for 5 months in 1966; Appointed Assistant-Chief in 1974 and got promoted and by the time he retired in 2001, he was Chief Grade I.

No. 102
NoI: Simon Njururi Kang’eti, HSC; Sex: Male;
DoB: 15 May 1953;  
PoB: Kibugu village, Embu County;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Kithami;  
House: Andu-a-Mbugi;  
Lineage: Kariithi;  
DoI: 25 May 2008;  

No. 103  
NoI: Nelson Mwaniki Gatema;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1937;  
PoB: Kigumo Village, Ruguru Location, Embu;  
Society: Embu  
Clan: Mbogo;  
House: Kathuci;  
DoI: 27th May, 2008;  
PoI: Kigumo, Ruguru Location, Embu  
Background: Educated up to Standard VIII at Nvuvori, Kiriari and Kamama (1947 – 1953); Taught for for two years; Secretary, NCGCS, 1956 – 1966; Accountant, EDCU, 1966 – 1991; Worked under Njagi Kavungura when he (Njagi) was Chairman of the management committees of NCGCS and EDCU.

No. 104  
NoI: Alexer Mwaniki Kinyua;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1946;  
PoB: Mutuu, Nguviu Sub-Location, Embu;  
Society: Embu  
Clan: Kithami;  
House: Mbogo;  
DoI: 28 May 2008;  
PoI: Kavuria, near Kairuri, Embu  
Background: Member, Management Committee, Kibugu Farmers’ Co-operative Society Ltd, Treasurer, 1965 – 1973 and Chairman, 1973 – 1981; Knew Njagi Kavungura from the days of their youth as they were born in neighbouring villages.
No. 106
NoI: Peter Primieri;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1940;  
PoB: Slovenia, Czeshoslovakia;  
Society: Slovenia;  
DoI: 7 June 2008;  
PoI: Munyori, Mbeere, Embu County
Background: Came to Kenya as a refugee in 1971 and settled at Nguviu Catholic Mission and became the father-in-charge for many years until 1984; moved to head the Catholic Parish of Riamurai in Mbeere in 1984.

No. 107
NoI: David M. Gitari;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 16 September 1937;  
PoB: Ngiriambu, Kirinyaga County;  
Society: Kikuyu;  
DoI: 13 June 2008;  
PoI: Difathas, Gicugu Kirinyaga County

No. 108
NoI: Marclus Njiru;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1928;  
PoB: Kiambuu, Kirinyaga County;  
Society: Kikuyu;  
DoI: 13 June 2008;  
PoI: Difathas, Kirinyaga County
Background: School teacher, 1946 – 53; School supervisor, 1953 – 61; Member of the Management Committee of Embu Coffee Co-operative Union up to 1963; Member of the Coffee Board of Kenya during Colonial days.

No. 109
NoI: Alex Njue Nthakanio;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1935;  
PoB: Kawanjara, Embu;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Rukwaru;  
DoI: 21 June 2008;  
PoI: Nthagayia Market, Embu
Background: Grandson of Chief Muruangungi, Kagaari Location, 1912 – 1939; First elected Chairman of Embu County Council in 1963; Appointed District Officer III, 1965 and retired in 1988 being a Deputy PC.

No. 110
NoI: Timothy Njiru;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 1932;  
PoB: Kigari, Embu County;  
Society: Embu;  
Clan: Rukwaro;  
DoI: 1 January 2009 and 20 January 2011;  
PoI: Kirigi, Embu County
Background: Worked in Civil Service as a County Clerk in Embu, Nakuru, Narok, Central Nyanza and Kirinyaga from 1953 to 1970.

No. 111
NoI: Tobias Njeru;  
Sex: Male;  
DoB: 8 July 1950;  
PoB: Kibugu, Embu;
Society: Embu; Clan: Kithami; House: Marema; Lineage: Munyiri
DoI: 9 January 2011; PoI: Kivaki, near Nguiu, Embu

No. 112
NoI: Nyaga wa Mugwimi; Sex: Male;
DoB: 25 March 1953; PoB: Kianjokoma, Mutunduri, Embu;
Clan: Rwamba; House: Mwigi;
Lineage: Kabuthi; DoI: 23 January 2011;
PoI: Mutunduri, Embu
Background: Grandson of Chief of Kabuthi wa Kathathura (one of the early Embu Chiefs and was in-charge the area around Kigari up to 1937); Bachelor of Science Honours (Agriculture), University of Nairobi, 1979; St. Paul’s High School – Kevote, 1980 – 1990; Deputy General Manager, Embu County Co-operative Union, 1990 – 1993; Credit Controller, Sarova Hotels, Mombasa, 1994 – 2000
Appendix II
Photographs Collection

*Photographs from left to right:* Chief Njagi wa Kavungura in 1963; Chief Kombo wa Munyiri of the Mbeere. (The medals hanging from his neck and coat tell how greatly he was valued by British and there is a road in Pumwani, Nairobi that bears his name. He was councillor with Njagi on the Embu ADC from 1955 to 1958); Senior Chief Njagi Ruriga Muruatetu of Gaturi Location; and Senior Chief Njagi wa Muthang’ato of Ngandori Location; Chief Kabuthi wa Kathathura,[n about 1920. He was administering the area around Kigari, in Embu, until his death in 1937. He was instrumental in the coming of CMS missionaries and the establishment of Kigari mission; Middle.

*Left:* Two Mbeere chiefs in about 1920. *Right:* Embu District Commissioner, Peter Hindley Brown (centre in the front row) with his chiefs about 1959/1960. Chief Njagi is seated on the left side of the DC and Jotham Nguri Ngucu of Kabare Location is behind Njagi in an unbuttoned black coat.

The first photograph from left has Chief Njagi seated second from left. The others who are in uniform are his sub-chiefs. Seated on the extreme right is the DO of Runyenjes Division, Mr. Malova. The photo was taken on unknown date in the independence era at Kairuri office;
The second photograph shows the Management Committee of Central Ngandori Farmers’ Co-operative Society in 1991. Front row from left: John Nyaga (Secretary/Manager), Elijah Kathuri (Chairman), Ephantus Njagi Kavungura (Vice-Chairman) and Njeru Karuri (Treasurer); Back row from left: Nelson Njururi (Hon. Secretary), Hopson Ireri (Committee Member), Joseph Njururi (Committee Member) and Njeru Nguu (Committee Member).

Left: Front row from left to right - Peter S. N. Kathambara (Headmaster, Nguvui Boys’ Secondary School, Unknown, Unknown, Raphaela Wangai Njagi (Headmistress, Nguvui Girls’ Secondary School), Unknown and Unknown; From left to right, second row - Njagi, Unknown, Unknown, Andrew Nyaga Kithimo, Isaac Nyaga, Fr. Peter Primieri (Vicar, Catholic Parish, Nguviu) and Unknown. The photo was taken probably in the late 1970s at Nguviu Girls’ Secondary School.

Right: The then President of Kenya, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi (second right) on a visit to St. Anne Girls’ High School – Kiriari on 25 June 1992. Njagi who was the Chairman of the school’s BoG is at the centre and behind him, with the face partially covered, was the Minister for Education, Joseph Kamotho. The school’s headmistress, Lilian W. Waweru, is on the extreme right.

Left: First row from left to right - Unknown student, Njagi, Unknown priest, Prof. Jesse N. K. Mugambi (Chairman, BoG, St. Anne Girls’ High School - Kiriari), Henry Chakava (Chief Executive Officer, East African Educational Publishers) and Rt. Rev. Moses Njue (Bishop of ACK, Diocese of Embu). This was on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of St. Anne Girls’ High School – Kiriari on 18 February 1994. Chakava was the Guest of Honour and he donated books for the school’s library. Njagi was hailed for his tireless contribution towards development of the school. Most of the school’s physical development was accomplished under his watch as Chief of Ngandori Location and Chairman of the school’s BoG.

Right: Front row, from left to right - Prince Philip (the Duke of Edinburgh and husband to Queen Elizabeth II of the Great Britain); John K. Etumesi, Eastern PC (1982 – 1986); and Njagi in 1985. This was in 1985 at the opening ceremony of Thuci-Nkubu road, a long Embu-Meru highway, on the western bank of Thuci River. The road had been upgraded with funds from Britain. Njagi had been appointed by the Government to welcome Prince Philip at the function.
Appendix III

Chiefs’ Authority Act, Chapter 128 of the Laws of Kenya
(Standing Orders by Chief Njagi Kavungura dated 27 January 1982)
CHIEFS AUTHORITY ACT CAP 126 CHIEF'S STANDING ORDERS 1962

In exercise of the powers conferred upon me by Section 10 and 11 of the above act,

I Ephantus Mjagi Kavungura being the Chief of Ngandori Location hereby make the following orders:

ORDER NO. 1 SECTION 10 (a) (i)

No person residing or being within the Local limits of the said Location shall Manufacture distill consume or Possess traditional intoxicating Liquor unless such person has a written valid permit to do so from an Administrative Officer or Myself. A permit issued as above may have any conditions regulating the consumption of the Liquor and any matters incidental there to.

ORDER NO. 2 SECTION 10 (a) (ii)

No person residing or being in the Local Limits of My Location shall consume Native intoxicating Liquor in any authorized home by Me between the hours 10.00 A.M. - 6.00 P.M.

ORDER NO. 3 SECTION 10 (c)

No person residing or being within the Local Limits of the said Location shall cultivate any poisonous or noxious plants and no one shall manufacture, sell or possess noxious drugs or poisons.

ORDER NO. 4 SECTION 10 (a)

No person residing or being within the Local limits of the said Location shall without a written permit issued by an administrative Officer or Myself, at anytime carry the following arms:

(a) Bows and arrows of any description.
(b) Saws or axes of all descriptions.
(c) Clubs and sticks capable of causing bodily harm to any human being
(d) Knives of all descriptions.
(e) Panga or all descriptions except that of traditional panga could be carried between the hours of 6.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m.

ORDER NO. 5 SECTION 10 (f).

No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall pollute water in any well, water hall and no such resident of any Location or such person being within the local limits of the said location shall interfere with the flow of water in a stream or water course unless he/she is issued with a written permit by an authorized authority.
ORDER NO. 6 SECTION 10 (a).

No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall cut trees or destroy in any way unless such person has a written authority from an authorized Officer or from me.

ORDER NO. 7 SECTION 10(h).

(i) No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall eat or supply to any person any meat which has not been certified fit for human consumption by an authorized Medical Practitioner.

(ii) All animals shall be treated immediately as and when they fall sick person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall comply with the instructions or directives of the Veterinary Officer on respect of the said sick animals.

(iii) The residents in my location shall bury their dead animal in grave not less than four feet deep.

(iv) The residents of my location shall take their sick people to the hospital immediately they fall sick and shall comply with directives of the Medical Officer in respect of the said sick person.

(v) Every head of householder in the said location shall provide latrine accommodation to the satisfaction of the provided, the depth of the said pits shall not be less than twenty (20) deep.

ORDER NO. 8 SECTION 10 (j).

No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall block, damage or interfere with any Public road or path.

ORDER NO. 9 SECTION 10 (j)

No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall collect money or property from members of public without a written permit issued by an Administrative Officer.

ORDER NO. 10 SECTION 10 (k)

No person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall organise or participate in dances or meetings without having first obtained permission or licence from an Administrative Officer.

ORDER NO. 11 SECTION 10 (l)

No person or persons residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall burn grass or bush without my written authority and any person seeing grass or bush fire shall report the fire to the assistant Chief of the area shall immediately take steps to extinguish and or stop the spread of the fire.
ORDER No. 12 SECTION 11(b)
No person or person from outside my location shall settle within the local limits of my location without my permission.

ORDER No. 13 SECTION 11(c)
Any person residing with the local limits of my location who knows or reasonably suspects that any property in my location has been stolen outside the local limits shall report that matter to an assistant Chief or to me, to the nearest police station, or to any administrative Officer.

ORDER No. 14 SECTION 11(d).
Any person residing or being within the local limits of the said location shall act promptly upon the knowledge of the existence of animal or insect pests or plant pests noxious weeds or decease, and shall comply with directives and instructions given by the Veterinary officer or an agriculture Officer.

ORDER No. 15 SECTION 11(e)
Any person between the age of eighteen and sixty and residing within the local limits of my location shall attend when so required before any administrative officer, or Assistant Chief or myself at any place time appointed by me, or any Assistant Chief or any Administrative Officer.

ORDER No. 16 SECTION 11(f).
Any persons residing in my location or being with the local limits of the said location shall report to me or to any of my Assistant Chief without delay the arrival in or the passing through my said location of any livestock.

ORDER No. 17 SECTION 11(h).
The residents in my location shall bury their dead in a grave which is not less than four feet (4 ft) deep.
Any person who contravenes any of the afore-said orders shall be liable to prosecution.
Dated this day of January, 1982.

Signed by K. Njagi
E. K. NJAGI
CHIEF OF NGANDORI LOCATION.

Order Checked by
DISTRICT OFFICER,
RUNYENJE'S,

Orders Approved by
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER,
EMBU.
Appendix IV:
Interview Schedules

1. Questions on respondent’s particulars

NAME OF INFORMANT: ………………………. SEX: ……………………………
DATE OF INTERVIEW: ……………………………………………………………………
PLACE OF INTERVIEW: … (Village, Sub-Location, Location, Division, and District)
DATE OF BIRTH: ………………………………………………………………………
PLACE OF BIRTH: … (Village, Sub-Location, Location, Division, and District)
SOCIETY: ………………………………………. CLAN: ……………………………
HOUSE: ………………………………………. LINEAGE: ……………………………
GENERATIONAL AGE-GROUP: ……………………………………………………..
CIRCUMCISION AGE-SET: ……………………………………………………..

2. Questions on leadership attributes of Chief Njagi wa Kavungura

[I] Njagi’s early life, 1922 – 1933

i. Do you know about Njagi childhood?
ii. When was Njagi born and where?
iii. To which clan, house, lineage, generational age group and circumcision age group did he belong?
iv. What work was he doing at home before he started going to school?
v. Did his parents acquire modern education?
vi. What was his parents’ standing in the society?
vii. Who were his childhood friends who can tell us about his early life?
viii. Where does each of them live?
ix. How did he relate with his peers?
x. Did he exhibit leadership qualities in his childhood?
xi. Who were his siblings?
xii. Which of his siblings is still alive?
xiii. To what generational/circumcision age-groups did he belong?
xiv. What else do you know about his early life?

[II] School education and profession training, 1934 – 1945

i. When did Njagi start schooling?
ii. Which school(s) and college(s) did he attend?
iii. Who were the sponsors of the education institutions he went through?
iv. How was his school education financed?
v. How far did he go in academics?
vi. How was his academic performance?
vii. What were his co-curriculum activities?
viii. If he was participating, how was he performing and in which levels was he competing?
ix. Did he hold leadership position while in school and college?
x. Is there of his school and college mates still alive?
xi. Where are his school and college certificates? (To family members)
xii. What profession did he train for after leaving school?
xiii. Did have other activities after leaving school and college apart from what I have asked you? If you have other information, tell with details.


i. When did Njagi become a school teacher and in which schools did he teach?
ii. Are there prominent people he taught?
iii. When did he become supervisor of schools and where? And, were the responsibilities of the post?
iv. What was his inclination in politics of decolonisation? What part did he play in freedom struggle?
v. Apart from serving in the capacities mentioned above, what other involvements did he have between 1946 and 1958?


i. When did Njagi join the African District Council of Embu?
ii. Was Njagi elected or nominated to the council?
iii. If he was nominated, what qualities led to his being considered for the post? Who nominated him?
iv. If he was elected, were there other candidates or he was unopposed?
v. Was it his idea to vie for the post of a counselor he had been urged to do so?
vi. What qualities led to his election?
vii. How did he win?

viii. What were the responsibilities of councillors?
ix. Can you mention other people in Ngandori Location, other locations of Embu District and outside who were councilors during his days?

x. Was he active in making contributions during council meetings?
xi. Please, rate his contributions in the council meetings.

xii. Did he have influence in the council?
xiii. What was his political inclination?
xiv. Outside the council, how was he relating with other councilors?

[IV] Colonial Chief of Ngandori Location, 1958 – 1963

i. When did Njagi become Chief of Ngandori Location?
ii. How did he get the job and what attribute(s) led him to be considered for the job?
iii. How did people react to his appointment?
iv. How was he executing his duties and regarded by his subjects?
v. As an administrator, what steps did he take towards transformation of his people?
vi. Describe his leadership.

vii. How did the colonial government rate him?
viii. How did he conduct himself in regard to Mau Mau freedom war?

[V] Chief of Ngandori Location in independent Kenya, 1964 – 1983

i. At independence, how did the people of Ngandori Location react over Njagi’s position?

ii. At independence, was election for the post of Chief held in Ngandori Location, and if so, who were opponents of Njagi?

iii. If there was an election for the post, how was the campaign for the post conducted?

iv. Can you remember the speeches he and his opponents made during the campaigns?

v. How was the outcome of the election?

vi. As a Chief, how was he rated by the post colonial government?

vii. How was he rated by his subjects?

viii. Give more information concerning his administration in independent Kenya.

ix. Apart from the duties of the Provincial Administration, was he involved in any other activities?

x. What wealth did he have during his tenure?


i. When did Njagi leave the Provincial Administration?

ii. Why did he leave?

iii. How did the people of Ngandori Location react to his leaving the office?

iv. What activities did he get involved in there after?

v. How did he rate his past?

vi. What was his view of leadership in old age?
vii. In which way did Njagi consider people holding public office should behave? Give more information concerning Njagi’s life in retirement and twilight years apart from what I have asked you.


i. What was colonial masters’ view of his Njagi’s leadership?
ii. How were colonial masters comparing him with other Chiefs in Embu District?
iii. How was he rated by the people of Ngandori Location during colonial and post-colonial eras of Kenya’s history?
iv. What was his post-colonial master’s view of Njagi’s leadership?
v. What awards did colonial and post-colonial masters give him and why?
vi. Please, give any information on Njagi which I have not asked.

[IX] Clergy of the Anglican Church

i. Why is it important for a Christian convert to undergo the rite of baptism?
ii. Which Biblical and/or Anglican doctrines on which the rite of baptism is based.
iii. What is the importance of the rite of confirmation to a Christian?
iv. Which Biblical and/or Anglican doctrines on which the rite of confirmation is based.
v. Which is it advisable for a couple that is Christian and want to get together in marriage to wed in Church before a priest?
vi. On what Biblical teaching(s) is the need for Christians to wed in Church based?
vii. Why it is that Christian religion does not allow polygamy?
viii. Which Biblical teachings are prohibitive to polygamy?