A HISTORY OF THE PERKERRA IRRIGATION SCHEME IN BARINGO COUNTY, KENYA, 1954 - 2013

SYMON BARKACHAI KEITANY

A Thesis Submitted to the Board of Postgraduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in History of Egerton University

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

JULY 2016

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration
This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other institution.

Signature…………………………      Date……………………………
Symon Barkachai Keitany
AM11/3325/12

Recommendation
This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors

Signature…………………………       Date……………………………

Prof. Reuben Matheka
Department of Philosophy, History and Religion
Egerton University

Signature……………………………   Date………………………………

Dr Isaac Tarus
Department of Philosophy, History and Religion
Egerton University

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DEDICATION
Dedicated to my mother Elizabeth Sergon and my siblings, Irine Keitany, Sheila Keitany, Daniel Keitany, Kipsergon Keitany and Kandagor Keitany.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
I thank God for creating me and giving me this great opportunity and the capacity that has shaped me to what I am in writing this thesis.
My sincere gratitude also goes to Egerton University and the many individuals and institutions that have been a source of words, wisdom and historical data that were instrumental to the writing of this work. I am particularly grateful to Egerton University for offering me a chance for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies.
My sincere and genuine thanks go to Prof. Reuben Matheka and Dr Isaac Tarus who not only supervised my work but also greatly assisted by recommending sources and giving me
inspiration and encouragement at various stages of my research. I give lots of thanks and appreciation for their spiritual, moral and material support. I am also greatly indebted to the staff of the Philosophy, History and Religion Department, especially Dr Boaz Onyancha, Dr Joshia Osamba, Dr Dorothy Nyakwaka, Mr Mwangi Njau and Ms Mary Chepchieng. Their guidance, suggestions, criticisms, ideas and technical assistance were of prime importance to my work.

My special thanks go to my mother Elizabeth Sergon for nurturing and bringing me up with proper moral values and an independent mind up to the writing of this thesis. I acknowledge the following friends for assisting me in different ways: Emmy Korir, Ishmael Lagat, Gladys Jeptoo, Timothy Kibet, Mercy Rutto, Joyline Jeptoo and Richard Cheruiyot. Their financial support and moral guidance saw me through this work. I would like to thank especially my fellow Master of Arts (History) students: Ruth Njoroge, Benson Kanyingi, Allan Chore and Caroline Kiprop. Together, we promised to fulfil our intellectual objectives. Finally, my sincere gratitude goes to my mother, Elizabeth Sergon to whom I promised to produce this work.

ABSTRACT
This study examines the history of the Perkerra Irrigation Scheme from 1954 to 2013. The scheme was started in 1954 to harness water from the Perkerra River for irrigation. This study explored how the Tugen and IlChamus communities, in spite of their pastoral resourcefulness, were persuaded to embrace mixed farming. These communities were able to change from pastoralism to arable irrigation farming despite some resistance during the colonial period and after independence. Recent studies indicate that several irrigation schemes in Kenya were set up to increase food production and to make semi-arid lands productive. Perkerra Irrigation Scheme was among the projects set up with the same objective. Initially, communities living around the scheme being primarily semi-pastoralists resisted the establishment of the project as their pastureland was being converted to farmland. Mau Mau detainees were used to provide manual labour in the project at its early stages as part of their rehabilitation. Establishment of the irrigation project had various social, economic, ecological and political effects on the area during the period of the study. The area also experienced various challenges in the period 1954 to 2013. The study utilised political
ecology theory to explain how policy decisions were influenced by environmental factors in the Perkerra area. The policies in turn influenced the ecology of the area. The study integrated data from primary and secondary sources. The archival documents consulted included District Development Plans, minutes of various meetings, National Irrigation Board annual reports and files on the irrigation scheme. Snowball. An interview schedule was used to gather information from workers in the irrigation scheme, old residents in the farm and members of the neighbouring community. Secondary sources comprised of books, journal articles, research papers, theses and the internet. These sources were accessed from the Kenya National Library Services library at Kabarnet and the Egerton University Library. Historical method was carried out in line with the objectives of the study which comprised the tentative chapters. The study contributes to the historical analysis of irrigation agriculture and its significance in Kenya.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ALDEV  African Land Development Board
CCSP   Community Capacity Support Programme
CSR    Corporate Social Responsibility
DC     District Commissioner
FAO    Food and Agriculture Organization
HCDA   Horticultural Crops Development Authority
KARI   Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
KCB    Kenya Commercial Bank
KSC    Kenya Seed Company
KWAL   Kenya Wine Agencies Limited
MFCS   Marigat Farmers Cooperative Society
NIB    National Irrigation Board
PIS    Perkerra Irrigation Scheme
PPS    Perkerra Primary School
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