ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF NAIVASHA TOWN, 1895-2013

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A Thesis Submitted to the Board of Post Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in History of Egerton University

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

AUGUST, 2015
DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has not been presented for examination in any other University.

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Recommendation

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

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God, for making the study possible and to my parents Loise Gathoni and Joseph Chege for supporting my education fully.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writing and completion of this thesis would not have been successful if it were not for the grace of God. I would like to thank Egerton University for giving me a chance to undertake the study. There are also those people without whom this thesis would never have been written, or even if it had, would not have appeared in the form it does. To begin with, I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. Isaac Tarus and Dr. Dorothy Nyakwaka for their constant spring of ideas that gave shape to this work. Special appreciation goes to Dr. B. K. Chacha, of Laikipia University, for the encouragement he gave me to undertake the study and for taking his time to read through the work. In the circle of appreciation, I include the staff at the Kenya National Archives at the Nairobi and Nakuru branches, the Kenya National Library Services at Nakuru and Egerton University Library. I am indebted to my parents, Joseph Chege and Loise Gathoni, for their confidence in me which kept me going. With all my heart I thank you. I thank my brothers and sisters for their encouragement as I went about the work. In particular, the assistance I received from my brother Chege Gitau. I thank my classmates Allan Chore and Lilian Anode for their priceless encouragement; they have been friends and confidants for which I have nothing to pay with except to express heartfelt gratitude. Lastly, grateful acknowledgements are to numerous others who are unmentioned, who gave help, suggestions and encouragement.
ABSTRACT

This study is a historical analysis of Naivasha town. The study does so by focusing on three main periods. First, it traces the origin of the town from the pre-colonial period when the Maasai inhabited the Naivasha area. Secondly, it is an analysis of the colonial period, when the foundations were laid for the most prosperous sector of Naivasha economy. Lastly, the study extends to post-colonial period which attempts to answer the socio-economic questions that have had significance on the recent history of the town’s development. The main purpose of the study is to fill the exact knowledge gap on the origin and development of Naivasha town. The study is helpful to urban development agencies and policy makers and also underdevelopment theory. Modernisation approach is a description and explanation of the processes of transformation from traditional or underdeveloped societies to modern societies. Underdevelopment and dependence theory show how the core nations exploit the peripheral ones, through a system of multinationals.

The study utilised primary data collected from the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi and its branch in Nakuru. Archival data collected were corroborated with oral data collected through in-depth interviews. Informants included: elderly, present and past administrators, white settlers present, flower farm owners and workers, businessmen/women and other residents. Secondary data was sought from the internet, Egerton University Library, British Institute of Eastern Africa in Nairobi, University of Nairobi Library, Macmillan Library in Nairobi and Kenya National Library Services in Nakuru. Data analysis included theoretical reflections, content analysis and documentary review. Data was categorised into research questions, objectives, sub-themes and chronologically. Findings of the study traced the origin of Naivasha town to when the Maasai occupied the area along Lake Naivasha. The twentieth century saw the colonial government signing an agreement with the Maasai and moving them to the Reserves. Consequently, the construction of the railway led to the introduction of settler agriculture and in turn influx of migrants. This led to the establishment of colonial capitalism and Naivasha became important to the settler economy due to agriculture. In the post-colonial period, there has been enormous growth through horticulture farms, tourism and increased social amenities. These have led to increase in population and hence increase in demand for service and retail sectors. Further research could be directed on migrant labour and welfare of the workers in the horticultural farms.
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