

**THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MASENO URBAN CENTER: 1895-2001**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

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I, Elekia Ouma Osuga, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented to any other University for the award of any degree.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my late Grandmother Grace, beloved parents Henry and Pamela, Sons Victor, Verolian and Vaughans and all those scholars who are interested in History.

## ABSTRACT

Urban centers were already in existence before the advent of colonialism in Africa. Such centers included Jenne-Jeno, Yoruba towns, Cairo, Meroe and Kilwa that could be found in different parts of the continent. Some of the factors that led to the establishment of these centers were war, transport, strategic placement, local and international trade, mining, agriculture as well as cultural developments, unlike Maseno urban centre which sprung up as a result of missionary factor with the arrival of the Europeans. The rise in the life style ultimately transformed the area in improving the infrastructure and consolidating the services at a central place. This changed the settlement from a rural like to an urban like area. It is from such developments, that towns emerged and even transformed into cities. Consequently, even though various studies from various disciplines have been carried on urbanization, concentrations have always been based on bigger towns and cities. There was lack of adequate studies on smaller towns from the hinterland particularly Maseno, and more so from the historical approach. Given that Maseno urban center exists coupled with the fact that the missionaries came in 1903, the problem is therefore based on how Maseno Urban Center evolved and developed within the Christian foundation in line with intra-trade as opposed to inter-trade in other smaller towns and it's first establishment of a fully fledged University contrary to it's contemporary urban centers that the study intends to explore. The development of this town involved the growth of institutions like Maseno School, Siriba Teachers College, Government Training Institute, Maseno University, Maseno Hospital, and Maseno Theological College that have contributed to the socio-economic and political development of this urban set up. The general objective of this study was to examine the origin and development of Maseno urban center. The specific objectives were to investigate the migratory patterns and settlement of communities that settled in Maseno since 1895; to examine the role of the policies of the government and the Church Missionary Society on the emergence of Maseno town; and finally to investigate the role of the institutions of learning and commerce on the growth of Maseno in terms of its expansion and settlement. The study employed the Central Place Theory of Walter Christaller who believed that a town acted as a focus of the surrounding countryside and it was from then that the general functions were derived. This made the town to function as a central place and having the central place functions as applied by Christaller. It was further emphasized that an economy required that certain goods and services which could not be provided anywhere should be made available at central places for the benefit of the population within the defined tributary areas. The study employed descriptive research design. The study used primary and secondary data where purposive sampling and snowballing were applied. The targeted groups were the educationists, the clergy, businessmen, Maseno High School alumni, politicians, the provincial administration, university lecturers and the local community. The above mentioned people named the others whom they knew until the number of cases required was obtained. Oral interviews using question guidelines were used for collecting data. The data was analyzed qualitatively through thematic and content analysis. Policy makers may find the study useful for planning purposes and it may also be relevant for future researchers on Urbanization. It may also expand the opportunities for quality basic education, maternal health, and environmental sustainability in line with the Millennium Development Goals to be met by 2015. The research concluded that the colonial land policies and township ordinances of 1903 and 1930, including the powers which were given to the Provincial Commissioner to upgrade urban centers and townships had a very big impact on the development and expansion of Maseno Township.

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## **ACRONYMNS**

CMS	-	Church Missionary Society
ACK	-	Anglican Church of Kenya
USA	-	United States of America
LUTATCO	-	Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation
LNC	-	Local Native Council
ADC	-	African District Council
LATF	-	Local Authority Transfer Fund
KIA	-	Kenya Institute of Administration
GTI	-	Government Training Institute
PC	-	Provincial Commissioner
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
DC	-	District Commissioner

## GLOSSARY OF LUO TERMS

<i>Ngado Guok:</i>	Assign of Peace
<i>Kech mar Apomo:</i>	Kind of famine during that period
<i>Okoche:</i>	Swahili People.
<i>Tongo Lowo:</i>	Fixing a boundary.
<i>Liend Dhok:</i>	A Place where many cows died.
<i>Nyawang'a piny ogwonyo:</i>	A place where Ogolla's house was burnt.
<i>Ong'iyoy:</i>	Facing one another.
<i>Bilo:</i>	Paraphanellia.
<i>Jo-bilo:</i>	Custodians of Paraphanellia.
<i>Piny Owacho:</i>	The Government.
<i>Owita:</i>	Thrown away.
<i>Luo kungo gi ohala:</i>	Luo saves through business.
<i>Kinda piny ema nyalo gi Moro:</i>	Perserverance shall win through.
<i>Panyako:</i>	Pioneer Corps who went to the World War 1
<i>Ogwe maonge lake</i>	Docile and weak