

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY

SAMBURU WATCHMEN IN NAIROBI:  
WHO CARES FOR THEM SPIRITUALLY?

BY

MICHAEL KOSKI

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FOR THEM SPIRITUALLY?

BY  
MICHAEL PAUL KOSKI

A Thesis submitted to the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
of Master of Arts in Missions

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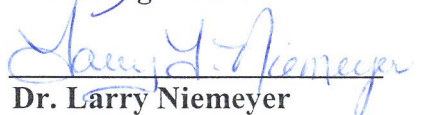
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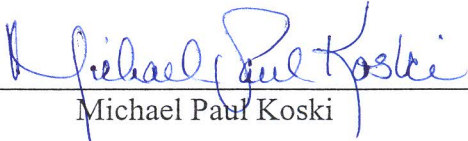
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Student's Declaration

SAMBURU WATCHMEN IN NAIROBI: WHO CARES  
FOR THEM SPIRITUALLY?

I declare that this is my original work and has not been  
submitted to any other College or University for academic credit

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners

(Signed)   
Michael Paul Koski

July 8, 2000

## ABSTRACT

### THE SAMBURU WATCHMEN OF NAIROBI: WHO IS REACHING THEM SPIRITUALLY?

BY

MICHAEL PAUL KOSKI

This study involved a particular people within the urban context who may be considered “hidden” because of their type of employment and maintained cultural identity. The target group is widely scattered in the city of Nairobi, Kenya, and live in the many slum areas or within the compounds in which they provide security.

A qualitative study using focus groups of the Samburu watchmen was conducted throughout the city of Nairobi. Two hundred four Samburu watchmen were interviewed in twenty-three focus groups. A quantitative study, using a questionnaire, was completed by eleven leaders of different denominations ministering in Nairobi. Fifteen denominations were targeted for this part of the study because these churches have Gospel ministry in Samburu District in Kenya. From these two instruments came conclusions concerning the spiritual care of the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi.

Information from the watchmen was gathered by using open-ended questions concerning their physical life and spiritual life in the Nairobi context. Close-ended questions in the church leaders’ questionnaire provided the data for evaluation from the denominational aspect of this study.

The Samburu watchmen in Nairobi are being reached by the Gospel according to the definition that we are using. From the church attendance figures of the target group (in both the urban and rural contexts) it has been shown that more than 20% consider themselves practicing Christians. The need for Samburu language outreach to these Samburu watchmen is evident in this study and further suggestions for ministry are made.

Another important feature of this study is the finding that two of the eleven denominations do have focused ministry outreach to the Samburu watchmen in the city. The other nine denominations have not yet considered this since their ministry approach is to the whole people of the city. The application of this research could be multiplied to other unreached pastoralists, or homogeneous units within the African urban context. The concept of linking Christian ministries to the same people group in both the urban and rural contexts needs further consideration and research.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the last sixty years a significant change has taken place within the society of the Samburu people of northern Kenya. The tribe has moved from a cattle-based economy to a money-based economy. Young people are now attending public schools with some students going for higher education. Modern medicine, the influx of non-Samburu people and the Church have affected the worldview of the Samburu. A number of Samburu people have moved to the city to earn money to send to their families at home in Samburu District. The Gospel was introduced by the Roman Catholics and Anglicans about fifty years ago, which also impacted the lives of the people (Tablino 1989, 34). In fact, about five years ago the Samburu were removed from the “unreached” peoples groups of Kenya in a study done by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (Bergman 1994, iii). A segment of this people group, the Samburu who are employed in Nairobi, were researched, here, to determine to what extent they are involved in the churches of Nairobi.

According to the *Summary of the Nairobi Church Survey*, approximately ten percent of the total Samburu adult male population is working as watchmen in Nairobi (Downes, Oehrig and Shane 1989, 10,11). These men seem suited for this work. They have a reputation for honesty, loyalty and fearlessness. The job has relatively few constraints or pre-conditions and allows a certain amount of freedom within the city. Social contact is maintained among themselves in the city and with



their people up-country. Their high number in Nairobi is significant and especially so in a gerontocratic society<sup>1</sup>, as the Samburu society is. Are these watchmen participating in the urban church? What is being done to reach the urban Samburu at present? Are there any specific urban church programs targeting these watchmen? What factors would inhibit or enhance a ministry to these urban Samburu? Do urban churches have any Samburu-focused ministries? What do the Samburu watchmen themselves think of the Church? This study focuses on the analysis of the Gospel witness to the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi.

## **Background or Setting**

### Brief Historical Background of the Samburu People

The Samburu tribe, pastoral nomads of north central Kenya, is a people group of about 150,000 members. Their traditional cattle grazing land stretches from the Waso Ng'iro River north to Lake Turkana, covering an area of about 11,000 square kilometers. In post-colonial Kenya this area is called Samburu District. The Samburu move their cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and more recently, camels between water and grazing sources. Families build their houses (small bread-loaf shaped structures made of sticks, mud, dung, and hides) within thorn-enclosed settlements called *manyattas* in their geographic clan-claimed areas. Certain family members take their cattle far distances to graze, especially during dry seasons. With an annual trimodal rain pattern in their district (Fumagalli 1977, 48), movement is necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a society in which power is essentially in the hands of the older men. Concerning the Samburu society, Spencer writes, "...social values point upwards to respect for the older men, there is an emphasis on collective ritual practices and a developed concept of the curse which acts as a sanction against competition (from their younger men in the society)" (Spencer 1965, 300).

The name Samburu has different meanings. “The name ‘Sampur’ which means ‘those with the bag’, traces its origin back to the 1880’s when a smallpox epidemic decimated the herds of the Samburu, threatening their very existence as pastoralists” (Pedenzini 1978, 12). Others say that the name has something to do with butterflies (Consolata n.d., 3). The neighbouring Rendille people call them *Burkineji* and historians refer to them as such (Spencer 1973, 1). The Samburu themselves prefer “*Ltungana Lolokop*” which in their language means “people of the land or earth”. They are of the eastern branch of Nilo-Hamitic peoples related to the Maasai, Njemps, Turkana, Bari, and Lutoko (Spencer 1973, 146). They have been further classified as identifying only with the Maasai group of Para-Nilotic speakers, who together with the Njemps and Maasai, are called ‘MAA’ speakers (Whiteley 1974, 23). Although similar in many ways to the more numerous and more famous Maasai people, they prefer to be recognized for who they uniquely are. “The date when the Samburu left or were forced out of a close relationship with the Maasai (presumably the Laikipak Maasai) remains unclear. It is possible to find the names of Samburu age sets that must date to the mid 1700s” (Larick 1984, 21).

#### The Urbanization Process among the Samburu People

“If urbanization is examined in terms of levels of participation in urban institutions or as a way of life, then the Samburu are, even within their district, a marginal group” (District Socio-cultural Profiles Project 1983, 113). The numbers of Samburu living and working in businesses, government offices, educational and health institutions in Maralal, Baragoi, Wamba, and smaller centers within Samburu District remains few to this day. This same study showed that the net out-migration of the Samburu people from their home area grew significantly from 1969 to 1979 to about 25% of the population. These people went to the neighboring districts of

Marsabit, Laikipia and Isiolo. They also went to other urban areas such as Karatina, Nakuru, Naivasha, Mombasa, and Nairobi. “A general characteristic of the migrants is their low educational status” (District Socio-cultural Project 1983, 103).

Employment is generally found in the security industry within the urban centers.

Droughts, insecurity, employment, and educational opportunities continue, even today, to push and pull the Samburu away from their traditional lands.

### The Witness of the Gospel among the Samburu

Traditional beliefs of the Samburu people include the following points:

1. belief in the supreme being, Nkai
2. belief in special places where Nkai resides: mountains, rocks, caves
3. serious sins are those against Nkai e.g., murder, incest, and neglect of parents
4. not so serious offenses are against humans
5. man is mortal, the present is emphasized, Nkai blesses now
6. certain elders have the power to curse, there is an evil force out there

(Fumagalli 1977, 126-128)

In the 1950s the Roman Catholic church (RC) and the Anglican church began witnessing the Gospel to the Samburu people. Through the years they developed mission stations in the more populated towns of Maralal, Wamba, Baragoi and Barsaloi. The RCs particularly developed medical and educational facilities which were (and arguably may still be) the best in the District. A study done by Daystar as recently as 1978 (Oehrig, 1978) showed the southwestern section of the District (Larroki Plateau) with much mission/church activity. The remaining northern (Baragoi) and western (Wamba) sections had little evangelistic activity except for the

presence of the Africa Inland Church (AIC) on the Laisamis side of the Ndoto Mountains.

At about this same time a Lutheran mission moved into Arsim in the Ndoto Mountains and Ngilai in the Matthews Mountains and the area opened up somewhat to more evangelistic work. This writer lived among and witnessed to the Samburu at Ngilai from 1982 – 1986. Several other Christian groups have since moved into the Wamba area specifically, and into Samburu District in general.

#### The Present Situation of Samburu Watchmen in Nairobi

Most Samburu men who travel to Nairobi are in search of employment. This is particularly so during the periodic times of drought. The distance to the capital is from 350 to 500 kms depending on their home location within Samburu District. Travel by means of lorry, bus and matatu are the most common and the total trip costs between 250/- and 500/- at today's fares.

These men are, for the most part, uneducated and therefore not qualified for high paying positions in the urban workforce. Security is a primary need in Nairobi and as such requires thousands of men to be watchmen. Most Samburu men are hired either privately or by the hundreds of security companies within the city.

Salaries vary but the minimum monthly government salary for watchmen in June 1999 was K.Sh. 2,886/- or U.S. \$45.00 for a 48 hour a week for a day watchman and K.Sh. 3219/- or U.S. \$50.00 for a 60 hour a week for a night watchman (Kenya 1999, 1131). Most Samburu watchmen receive little more than this. With high unemployment in the city (estimated at 25 to 30%), jobs, even the lowest paid, are at a premium. This study shows that of the 204 men interviewed, 89 were looking for employment. From their salary, a Samburu man must pay rent, buy food and clothes,

and have money left over to send home each month. The demands from home are high.

Samburu watchmen, if fortunate, have housing provided at their job site. However, most rent rooms in the slums of Nairobi with the lowest rent being about K.Sh. 700/- per month. This writer has observed the following arrangement: two men (day watchmen) sleep in an 8' x 10' room (at night) and two men (night watchmen) use the same bed during the daytime hours. This agreement saves 75% of the rental outlay per person. Good urban housing was one of the issues that most concerned the men who were interviewed. Other ways of economizing, such as walking instead of taking public transport in the city and limiting food intake, are sought in order to be able to send the maximum amount of money home each month.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study is an analysis of the extent of the Gospel witness to and Gospel acceptance by Samburu men who are employed as watchmen in Nairobi.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to learn to what extent a particular people group is being ministered to in Nairobi by the urban church. Special attention is given to the denominations that have ministry among this people group in their home area.

### **Research Questions**

The questions listed below are the focus of this study.

1. To what extent are the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi involved in the urban church?
  - a. What factors encourage or inhibit witnessing to the Samburu watchmen?

- b. What do the Samburu watchmen themselves think of the urban Christian church?
  - c. Do any urban Samburu watchmen worship God in their own groups outside of the church?
  - d. Are these watchmen members of congregations in their home areas?
  - e. Are these watchmen aware of any church links between their urban setting and their home setting?
2. To what extent is the urban church aware of these Samburu watchmen?
    - a. How many Samburu watchmen attend their Sunday services?
    - b. Is there any focused ministry to them within the church?
    - c. Is there an intentional link between ministry to the Samburu in the rural setting and ministry to them in Nairobi?
    - d. Are there any full-time Samburu church workers in their churches who are working in Nairobi?
    - e. Are these leaders aware of any past, present or future plans for ministry to the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for the following reasons: 1. The scope of urban outreach to a particular “reached” people group is examined. 2. This research investigates the possible church link between urban and rural Christian ministry to this particular people group and any possible function that this link serves. 3. Implications for mission strategy concerning this people group and similar urban migrants is considered. 4. Perceptions concerning the role of the Church in both the urban and rural context of this particular people group is discussed.

## **Research Hypotheses**

In response to the research questions four hypotheses were generated. These hypotheses were:

1. The extent to which a Samburu watchman was involved in his rural church will determine his involvement in the urban church.
2. The extent to which the Samburu watchman sees his needs (physical and spiritual) being met by the Church will determine his involvement in the urban church.
3. Urban churches with focused ministries to Samburu watchmen will have more Samburu membership and participation.
4. Churches with intentional bridging of Samburu outreach between urban and rural ministries will have more participation by Samburu watchmen.

## **Assumptions Made**

Samburu watchmen have had some contact with the Christian church either in their home areas or in the cities where they work and therefore would have some preconceived ideas about what the Church is. Samburu watchmen would be willing to be interviewed in focus groups of 7 or 8 men at a time.

It is more probable that denominations working in Samburu District would have Samburu members in their Nairobi congregations. Likewise, among Nairobi churches, these denominations would be most likely to have specific ministries to the Samburu watchmen.

## **Limitations and Delimitations**

Because Samburu watchmen work throughout the city and are many in number, it was impossible to interview each one. Sample groups were drawn from

the different urban areas where the Samburu work and live. The researcher was dependent on informants to find where these watchmen live. They looked to areas where larger numbers of Samburu watchmen congregate and utilized the social networks to call others to be interviewed.

Some watchmen work during the day and others at night, therefore, it became necessary to interview different groups during the day and during the night. Because of the difficulty in gathering day watchmen due to their relatively smaller number and their scattered proximity, the number interviewed was insignificant compared to the number of night watchmen. Their responses varied little in the total findings of the focus group discussions.

The Swahili language is used in the interviews. The Samburu men's level of comprehension varies with the amount of exposure to the national language of the country. It was necessary in some of the groups to have the questions translated into the Samburu language and allow time for discussion in that language before receiving a response in the Swahili language. The men who had a difficulty with the Swahili language were not shy in asking for help. The research informants were very helpful in translating the Samburu language discussions into Swahili for the benefit of the researcher. The researcher is conversant in the Swahili language. This research is translated from the Swahili to the English language for the final report. Any questions or doubts about the responses could be checked with the audio tapes of the focus group discussions.

Interviews were conducted with urban church leaders of those denominations currently witnessing in Samburu District. The assumption was that there would be more interest in reaching the Samburu in the city with the Gospel in those Nairobi denominations which already have a witness among the Samburu people.



## Definition of Terms

*unreached*....There are a variety of definitions for the terms reached and unreached. For the purpose of this study we shall follow the definition used in the Daystar research of 1981 (Shingledecker 1982, 3). “ These people groups can be correctly classified as ‘unreached’ or as having less than 20% of the people who are practicing Christians.”

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Overview of the Chapter

The literature read in preparation for this thesis was broad by nature due to the complexity of the problem. It was necessary to study the Samburu society in order to know more about the culture of the people, their worldview, their society, their traditional religion, and their economic base. The issue of the Samburu migration into the city and its effect on their society had to be analyzed. The M.A. thesis by Ongwara (Ongwara, 1997) concerning support networks of recently urbanized pastoralists in Nairobi, including the Samburu, proved to be insightful. Literature on urban Africa and the reason for the tremendous growth of the cities on the continent needed to be understood in the context of this study. One of the phenomena studied was the urban-rural migration and its effect on a people group. Living conditions within the cities was looked at as well as employment opportunities. Missionary effort traditionally concentrated on the rural areas of Africa and only recently have mission and Church realized the importance of urban ministry. Indeed, it is estimated that over fifty percent of the African population will be living in urban centers by the year 2035 (Obudho 1996, 24). The urban reality should impact the focus of the church in the new millennium.

This researcher looked at the issue of the church in the city and more specifically, at the missiological issue of unreached peoples in the city. God is bringing representatives of all peoples to live in the urban centers of Africa and the

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world. Missionaries need no longer live in remote areas to share the Gospel with these unreached peoples. Readings on such rural/urban strategies are found in the following section of the literature review.

### The Samburu Society

Paul Spencer's two volumes (Spencer, 1965, 1973) proved to be invaluable in the anthropological studies of the Samburu people. It is necessary to understand the people's worldview, their traditional beliefs, their felt needs and their socio-economic situation in order to effectively share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them.

Fumagalli's ethnographic study (Fumagalli, 1977) was equally helpful as the process of change within that society is analyzed. No society is stagnant. Some societies are more open to change than others. The Samburu are experiencing pressure on many fronts to change from their traditional ways: modern education, tribal land policies, the Church, government policies, and modernization, to name a few.

Anthropological studies are very important as they bring out the traditional religious beliefs of a people group. The study, by Pedenzini, on the Samburu method of worshipping God through prayer shows the importance to the Samburu people of the presence of God (Pedenzini, 1978). Prayers are said in the morning and in the evening by the elders of the society. Prayers are said during celebrations. Prayers are said during times of need and times of celebration. The role of prayer in the life of the Samburu watchman in the city was investigated to see whether or not the relevance of prayer remains, regardless of his particular context.

Much of the current literature on the Samburu people is written with tourism in mind, such as, *Samburu* by Nigel Pavitt (Pavitt, 1991). The people are photogenic and their lifestyle is surrounded by an aura of mystery. Life is changing rapidly for

them. Some changes are good while many are not wholesome, such as the introduction of modern weaponry into the Samburu District that causes widespread insecurity.

### Urban Africa Today

The cities of Africa are growing at approximately 6 percent yearly for many reasons (Obudho 1996, 36). Drought, war, overcrowding, social problems, unemployment and lack of social amenities push people from the rural into the urban areas. “Bright lights”, hope for employment, educational opportunities, medical resources, etc., pull people into the cities. It is a combination of all of these factors that draws Samburu men into the city, but the main reason is employment. Margaret Peil in her book, *African Urban Society*, highlights the socio-economic realities of life in contemporary African cities. Peil, as well as Andrew Hake in *African Metropolis: Nairobi's Self-Help City*, emphasizes the large populations in African cities who are marginalized. Indeed, Nairobi has up to 70% of its 3.5 million population living in the low-income, no-income slums (Greenway, Monsma 1989, 47). There is tremendous wealth in the cities of Africa, too. Distribution of wealth seems to be a major problem (Shorter 1991, 140).

Oucho's paper (Oucho 1986) is helpful in understanding the idea that many people who move to the city for employment perceive the move as only a temporary measure. Men leave their wives and children in the rural area on their farms. The cost of raising a family in the city is high. Affordable housing is scarce and living conditions in the city for the majority are crowded and unhealthy. Homesteads need to be tended. Because this move is temporary, the goal is to spend as little money as possible in the city in order to send the maximum amount home. The transition into

the city is most difficult for pastoralists according to Ongwara (Ongwara, 1978) for a number of reasons. Among these reasons are the following: familiar support and coping mechanisms are left behind, the urban job market may be flooded with skilled people, hi-tech equipment is entering the security business and pastoralists are entering urban life with little knowledge of urban survival.

In the case of the Samburu watchmen, these men seldom have the opportunity or funds to travel home. Going home is only permissible during the one holiday month of the year or with special permission from the employer, two times yearly. This has implications on family life as other people raise the watchmen's children. Wives do not normally travel to the city because of the expense and also lack of privacy in the urban living situation. This means that the Samburu watchmen are only with their wives approximately six weeks of the year. When they do travel home, expectations are high that they bring goods and gifts, not only for their immediate family, but also for the whole manyatta. These returnees are respected in their villages. They "bring with them new ideas, new fashions, new terms, new technologies...it is, therefore, understandable that rural people should have an inferiority complex with regard to urbanites and that they should strive to imitate all that they see or hear of the city" (Shorter and Onyancha 1997, 123,124).

### Missiological Implications

It has been shown that Gospel-resistant peoples are more receptive to the Good News of Jesus when they move away from their traditional society to an urban center (Greenway and Monsma 1989, 46). This is true for a number of reasons. First, there are fewer traditional social restraints in the city. Secondly, the migrants are experiencing change and are open to new messages and, as we have already seen, are expected to bring some modern ideas home. Thirdly, the migrants have to cope

with the new urban reality. Hiebert and Meneses describe this new reality as the scale of cities (in numbers of people, levels of social organization, and cultural diversity); the centers of power, wealth, knowledge, etc.; and places of concentrated religious diversity, specialization and change (Hiebert and Meneses 1995, 263). This new reality hits the Samburu watchman as soon as he enters the city. The discussions showed that this adjustment is never easy.

The whole Church needs to minister to the whole city. Shorter and Onyancha point out that the church in Nairobi is viewed as a rich person's church. They call for a "new evangelization" that involves the rich and poor together in the whole process. "New evangelizers need to be deeply spiritual people. They also have to have their feet on the ground. To be spiritual is not to be romantic, but to be a realist" (Shorter and Onyancha 1997, 131). Many mega-congregations in the city have the resources to greatly impact the lives of the less fortunate. This study determines that the Samburu watchmen have little expectations of material help from the church in the city but would request help if given the opportunity.

### **Methodological Literature Review**

In this study the researcher used both focus groups and a more structured interview format. This procedure has become more common in certain areas of research. "Increasingly, researchers are recognizing the benefits of combining qualitative and quantitative procedures, resulting in greater methodological mixes that strengthen the research design" (Krueger 1994, 29). The focus group or qualitative measurement preceded quantitative procedures. The former was helpful for insights and perceptions concerning the Samburu watchmen's faith and interaction with the Church. The latter research was in the form of a questionnaire that was administered to church leaders in Nairobi and utilized closed ended questions. These were

analyzed statistically in a quantitative study that answers the questions raised by the research questions of this study.

In Peter Mann's book, *Methods of Social Investigation*, the strengths and weaknesses of informal interviews (focus groups) are discussed. Difficulties such as recording all of the responses and appraising them in a systematic way are noted. Analyzing the data can be problematic, also. Other issues include not "loading" the interview and ensuring that there is no interference in the responses. "Good social researchers are skeptical (in a healthy way) and take nothing on trust. They must be convinced by the evidence" (Mann 1985, 116). Mann suggests using this informal interview technique in an exploratory way or in social situations which are not well researched. This researcher structured the interview, somewhat, but allowed free expression as well. It was key to find patterns of response that allowed for the drawing of conclusions.

Focus groups, because they have common characteristics (Samburu and watchman) are not random but are selected. Members of the focus groups are all working in the urban environment and share a common experience of coming to the city for employment. The focus group procedure "presents a more natural environment than that of an individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others – just as they are in real life" (Krueger 1994, 19). It is an appropriate method among the Samburu whose decision-making is largely a group activity (Spencer 1965, 175ff).

The "grounded theory" approach was utilized with the data gained from the focus groups. Rather than using previous data, of which there is very little, the immediate data formed the basis for constructs and laws. "The usefulness of the constructs and laws can be tested in subsequent research (Gall, Borg, Gall 1996, 10).

From the analysis of the focus group data this researcher developed both open-ended and closed-ended questions to which church leaders responded. Appendix C is the questionnaire that church leaders were asked to answer and which was analyzed in the final findings of this study.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Description of Research Approach**

Qualitative field research was used with focus group interviews of the Samburu watchmen themselves. The purpose of this was to gather preliminary qualitative data. The next stage was the use of questionnaires with church leaders using an analytical research approach. An analysis of the information gathered in the focus groups helped to formulate statements concerning the condition (spiritual and physical) of this people group in the city. The data from the questionnaires was processed and analyzed to determine first, the spiritual condition of the Samburu watchmen and second, the awareness and response of the Church to the Samburu watchmen population in Nairobi.

#### **Scope of the Study**

It is difficult to estimate the number of Samburu watchmen in the city. The 1999 census, when it becomes available, might reveal some exact figures on the makeup of the urban population. Certainly there must be over one thousand men and that number could be much higher if, indeed, ten percent of Samburu men are in Nairobi. The high rate of migration continues. Of the men interviewed, over one-half have come to Nairobi since 1998. This large number makes the target population unmanageable. Furthermore, these men are scattered in every corner of the city. The researcher used nine paid Samburu and Maasai informants to gather together Samburu

watchmen from various locations throughout the city. A representative number of randomly chosen Samburu watchmen (as sample groups) were selected in most of the areas of the city (see Appendix F). These locations represent upper-class residential, lower-class residential, commercial and industrial sections of the city. The groups were both night watchmen and day watchmen but were mainly the former. This was because the number of night watchmen far outnumber the day watchmen and are therefore easier to locate and to gather. The nine informants were told the reason for this survey and they then informed the sample groups. The watchmen agreed to give one-hour maximum to discuss their lives in the city (see Appendices A and B). They were given a cup of tea and *mandazi* (donut-type pastry) for their help. The informants were paid a certain amount for each group that they assembled. The aim was to have focus groups of 7 to 10 men but the groups varied from 3 to 19 participants. The informants were very helpful in crowd management and supervising the tea time after the interview.

The second phase involved urban leaders of the national churches which currently have church work in Samburu District. It was determined that at least fifteen denominations work and witness in Samburu District. Christian workers of various denominations currently in Samburu District were helpful in collecting this information. It was hoped that fifteen meetings (one with each denomination) would have been held in Nairobi, to administer the questionnaire. This proved impossible as two of the churches could not be located in Nairobi and perhaps have no urban ministry. Of the thirteen remaining, one could not be contacted and another denomination was reluctant to share any information.

Who is the appropriate person within the denomination to interview? This was an important question to ask at each denominational office. The researcher was

often directed, first, to administrative offices within the denomination and then transferred to more “urban ministry aware” leaders. Some leaders referred the researcher to church workers who had experience in Samburu District. A few of the denominations only allowed the “bishop” or top administrator to answer the questionnaire. Two leaders admitted that no one person in their Nairobi outreach would have all of the answers required but these two answered as accurately as possible.

## **Focus Group**

### Rationale for this Method

Groups of Samburu watchmen rather than individuals were used, for a number of reasons. The Samburu congregate together in the city and the use of a group allowed for the maximum number of participants at this stage of the research. It is appropriate, culturally, to discuss matters in a group of men such as this. Everyone in the group was well-informed concerning the topic and had opinions to share (either in the Samburu language or Swahili language). Each idea was shared and expanded upon in the group. “Qualitative researchers...are finding that the interactions among the participants stimulate them to state feelings, perceptions, and beliefs that they would not express if interviewed individually” (Gall and Borg and Gall 1996, 308). Confidentiality (no names mentioned) was stressed from the beginning also. Everyone was assured that there were no right or wrong answers but that the truth concerning these matters was being sought.

### Sampling

The sampling technique in the initial qualitative research (focus groups) allowed for more flexibility than the quantitative research that followed. Seven

Samburu informants and two Maasai informants (who knew of many Samburu watchmen but who did not participate in the discussions themselves) who were willing to help conduct the research, had an opportunity to discuss the purpose and procedure of this research with the researcher. Relevant instruction concerning bias was given. Also the method of data collection, using written and taped responses, was reviewed. Initially, a list of Samburu watchmen from different wards within Nairobi was compiled but this became too cumbersome and unreliable. This method was not followed up in this research. The nine informants were contacted and after discussing the purpose of this study, etc., were asked to make an appeal for volunteer respondents. Arrangements were then made to interview the volunteers (in groups of seven to ten men) at an agreeable venue and time.

The projected number of the sample was to be approximately five percent of the Samburu watchmen population or one hundred fifty volunteers. It worked out that two hundred and four watchmen were interviewed in twenty-three focus groups. The men work and live throughout the city and come from all corners of Samburu District (see Appendix D). It was hoped that at least half of the focus groups would be located within two kilometers of a congregation of a denomination which is involved in Samburu District. With the total number of congregations and preaching points of these eleven denominations numbering 836, this became a distinct possibility.

#### Instrument Used

A scenario was prepared which was the “ice breaker” for the discussion. It was what the researcher calls “a newcomer comes to Machakos Airport.” It was used in all of the groups to begin the discussion. All of these men have experienced the transition from rural to urban life. All had reactions concerning this topic. In a qualitative research focus group the discussions may be more broad than in a

quantitative research focus group, “At the stage of analyzing the data, the researcher may choose to identify quantifiable variables or broad themes and patterns” (Gall and Borg and Gall 1996, 309). A loose guideline was used in all of the focus groups and all of the men were encouraged to share their thoughts and their experiences (See Appendices A and B).

### Interview Format

The interview format was not closely structured. It allowed for spontaneity. Indeed, most of the venues were conducive to uninterrupted discussions (the arboretum, or vacated plots in town) but some locations were a bit more difficult (in a small restaurant at 7:00a.m.). After the “ice-breaker” discussion, the standardized open-ended interview proceeded and the information was audio taped and also written down. There was no difficulty with or objection to the audio taping of the interviews. There was opportunity to allow the discussion to vary, especially if the topic was still generally being followed and expanded. The actual time together did not exceed one hour in any of the focus groups.

### The Interview

#### Permission Obtained

Depending on the location of the interview, it might have been necessary to first visit the chief’s office in the area to inform the authorities of what was taking place. The researcher allowed the informants to take the appropriate steps. Proper identification was carried. One policeman was curious about the nature of our meetings because a prominent politician had his home nearby. There was no problem with this person after he was given an explanation of the purpose of the gathering. Permission was granted by the members of the focus group themselves before

commencing the interview. A further explanation of the exercise was given after the focus group discussion.

### Pre-testing the Interview

The interview guide and procedures were given a pre-test to determine any bias in the questions and/or procedure, to determine any difficulty with the language and especially with understanding the questions. It was noted that the concept of church membership varies between churches and was often misunderstood and therefore “usual attendance” replaced “membership” in Appendices A & B questions 1-3 in Part Three. A ninth question was added after the pre-test to determine whether the idea of asking the Church for aid, in the urban context, would be in the thinking of the watchmen and what type of aid would be welcome. Pre-testing was done with the first informant who worked alongside this researcher in the first focus group. No further changes were made and none were suggested by the other eight informants.

The instrument was pilot tested on a group similar to the target population. The pilot test group came from an area of the city that had more than one group interviewed. The men worked in various parts of the city (Runda, Garden Estate, Village Market and Lavington) and came from different corners of Samburu District (Maralal, Wamba, and Arsim) and therefore were most representative of the whole. Because of the nature of the focus groups (a qualitative study) and the small amount of changes made after the pilot study, the pilot groups responses were taken into consideration in this study’s final results.

### Conducting the Interview

With the use of informants, the Samburu watchmen were informed of the desire to interview them concerning their situation in Nairobi. They knew that their

urban situation was to be discussed as well as their opportunities to worship God. It was stressed that it would only take an hour of their time and that their anonymity would be maintained. In fact, the tape recorder was activated after introductions were made. Tea and *mandazis* were provided as an incentive to participate and a “thank you” for their time. They were promised that the results of the research would be made available to them (translated) in a verbal fashion (or in certain libraries in the city) after July of this year, if they so desired to follow up on our discussions.

An hour-long appointment was scheduled at a time convenient for the watchmen, the informants and the researcher. Most of the interviews were conducted in the morning hours between 7:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. One interview with day watchmen took place at 7:00 p.m. The latter venue was at a location near to where the watchmen live. Most interviews were held outdoors in a relatively quiet and undisturbed place. Again, the informant was invaluable in arranging for these groups. After the interviews the groups went to a local cafe for tea and *mandazis*. Following this, the researcher and informants took some time to review what had just taken place and record any impressions about the discussion. The informant was normally paid after these discussions.

## **Data Processing**

### Using the Grounded Theory Approach

The grounded theory approach allowed the researcher to derive constructs from the data collected and not from prior research and theory. This approach was used to give further information to the church leaders in the city and also to consider further research on this topic. Data needed to be broadly sifted for categories of information. Results were compared and themes discovered. From the data gleaned

through this approach further questions were raised in the questionnaire to church leaders.

### **The Church Leader Interview**

It was necessary not only to receive data from the Samburu watchmen themselves but also to receive information from the Church in the city, to ascertain whether or not it is ministering to this target group. Statistics concerning Samburu membership and participation in church life were obtained. It was necessary to inquire about focus ministry to the Samburu, e.g. using Samburu language services, special evangelistic initiatives for watchmen, fellowships, Samburu language written materials, etc. The topic of bridging work with their ministry in Samburu District was also broached.

### **Selection of Sample Churches**

The researcher determined the names of the denominations working in the Samburu District by inquiring of workers in denominations known to work in the district. The next step was to determine whether the same denominations have urban congregations in Nairobi. It was determined that two of the denominations do not have Nairobi congregations. The researcher contacted each denominational office and inquired as to whether or not the denomination had ministry in Samburu District. He further explained the purpose of this research and asked to speak with the most appropriate leader who would have knowledge of their urban situation. A visit was scheduled and appointment made by the researcher. The urban leaders of these denominations were requested to complete the questionnaire concerning their possible outreach to Samburu watchmen.



The response to this request varied. Some wanted the questionnaire to remain with them and have the researcher return. Others responded that they had no idea what the situation was with the Samburu watchmen. Still others requested that the questionnaire be filled out by others within their denomination who were better informed. If this was the case, the other leaders were contacted and the procedure continued. Finally, some of the leaders completed the questionnaire immediately.

The questionnaire was prepared in light of the research questions asked in chapter one and the information needed for this study. Unfortunately, not all of the thirteen denominations were able to or desired to complete the questionnaire. This study is based on eleven responses from the denominations working in Samburu District.

#### Pre-testing the Survey

It was necessary to pre-test the questionnaire to avoid confusion, bias, threatening or inappropriate questions. Appropriate corrections would have been made before the actual survey was conducted. In this researcher's opinion, none were necessary. The questions were a combination of closed-ended and open-ended inquiry and focused on the research questions posed in part one of this proposal. The main question for the pre-test was, "How accurate is the instrument used in making the measurement required?" (Leedy 1985, 26). Did it measure what it was intended to measure? This was what the researcher was seeking in the pre-test before continuing with the actual survey with the church leaders. Having completed the focus group discussions, question 15 was written as follows: "According to the Samburu watchmen themselves, the urban church is "distant and uninviting". Do you agree, disagree or don't know?"

The pretest was done with the leaders of a randomly chosen denomination which was one of the fifteen denominations working in Samburu District. Since no changes were deemed necessary, being chosen for the pre-test did not disqualify this denomination from the actual survey. Actual discussions with these denominational leaders on methods of ministry within the city – focused ministry, the homogenous unit principle, and ministry to the whole body of Christ - proved to be worthwhile.

### Validity

“Basic to the validity of a questionnaire is the asking of the correct questions phrased in the least ambiguous way” (Best and Kahn 1998, 310). The items on the survey signified an aspect of the purpose of the investigation. The meaning of the terms were clear and appeared to have the same meaning to all of the respondents.

### Conducting the Survey

Attempts were made to contact the leaders from the fifteen denominations working in Samburu District. Appointments concerning the questionnaire were made with twelve of the denominations. A verbal introduction on the telephone presented the researcher and the purpose of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was self-administered and designed to take no longer than thirty minutes. Results were promised, if requested. Personal anonymity was guaranteed.

### Collation of Data

Data was tabulated and analyzed using the appropriate means for the specific questions. The open-ended questions from this questionnaire were not designed for statistical manipulation. Qualitative analysis, such as the grounded method, has been applied for analysis of trends.

The structured nature of the other interview questions with the urban church leaders allowed for quantitative analysis. Analysis was done by appropriate means that allow acceptable conclusions of the research to be reached. Where possible and helpful, graphs and tables are used to show the results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS OF THIS RESEARCH**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter gives a report of the findings of this research from both the Samburu watchmen focus groups and the church leader interviews. It was necessary to study the accumulated data in a qualitative and quantitative fashion to determine whether the research has successfully analyzed the extent of the Gospel witness to and Gospel acceptance by Samburu men who are employed as watchmen in Nairobi. Measurement is in terms of church attendance that gives some indication of receptivity to the Gospel. As mentioned earlier concerning the measurement of being “reached” as a people group, a people is reached if 20% or more are practicing Christians. One cannot search the inner hearts of these men to know exactly where they stand with the Lord. Neither should one make a value judgement based on the particular church that they usually attend.

#### **Focus Group Findings**

Research question number 1 concerns the Samburu watchmen themselves. “To what extent are the Samburu watchmen involved in the urban church?” Five sub-points further clarify this question. We shall look at each one and the results from the focus group discussions. The questions in part three of the focus group discussion format concern the religious life of these men.

The watchmen were asked about their church attendance both in Samburu District and in Nairobi. They were asked to discuss what the Christian church means to them and if they are active in any way in the urban church. They were asked if they share their Christian faith with other Samburu watchmen and if they were aware of any focused Christian ministry, in their language, especially for Samburu watchmen. Finally, they were asked if they themselves organize any prayer or worship among themselves.

### Factors Encouraging or Inhibiting Witness

Research question 1 (a) states, “What factors encourage or inhibit witnessing to the Samburu watchmen?” The response to this comes from focus group questions 6 and 8 of part three. Question 6 reads, “How can you share your faith (presuming they say they are Christian) with other Samburu watchmen in the city?” Responses were as follows:

Table 1. Group responses concerning sharing one’s faith with others

It is difficult to gather the Samburu watchmen together in the city (one said that they want to be paid in order to gather).
Because we love Christ and we are not working, we can witness to other Samburu people.
We could do this, we could pray together.
One could explain spiritual matters to them (Samburu watchmen) but it is necessary to go slowly.
Our time to do this is limited, half an hour and the person we are speaking to wants to go to sleep.
We could share our faith but it takes practice.
Understanding about salvation is difficult.
Some work during the day and others at night.

From these results it can be seen that motivation to gather together is needed and therefore can be a liability. It is not an easy thing to share the Gospel for both the one who shares and for the listener. One has to go slowly. “Understanding about salvation is difficult.” Practice in sharing one’s faith is needed. The fact that these men work shifts causes difficulties. On the positive side, it seems that some were

willing to try and share their faith. They have the time since many are unemployed.

Prayer together would, it seems, be a way to gather these men together.

Question 8 reads, “Is there anything else you would like to say concerning the Christian church in Nairobi?” The responses were as follows:

Table 2. Group responses concerning the church in Nairobi

Life in the city is very difficult.
The Church could help when there is a time of sickness.
Prayer is needed and we like to hear the Word of God.
We need someone to help us as we would like to hear more.
There are many churches here in Nairobi and they are not filled with one tribe only.
Some people act (in the church services) as though they are drunk. This is not prayer.
We don't see anything good or bad here because we don't go to church here.
There are Christian radio broadcasts in the Maasai language that I listen to.
There are many temptations in the city.
Jesus helps change lives.
The distances to the churches in town are great and there is no transport money to help us reach these church services.

It can be seen that there are many factors encouraging and inhibiting witnessing to the Samburu watchmen. No one said, “We are doing it already.” This might be the most discouraging factor concerning this question. Many groups indicated that life in the city is difficult and for various reasons church attendance must be a secondary priority. Worship style and with people other than their own seem to be a concern as well.

#### What about the Urban Church?

From the research question number 1 (b), “What do the Samburu watchmen themselves think of the urban Christian church?” came the following question in the focus group discussion format. Question number 5 in part three reads, “What does the Christian church mean to you?” The following were the most common responses:

Table 3. What does the Christian Church mean to me?

The church teaches us how to live.
To pray to God is good.
Your life is changed by God.
We don't see any good or bad in the church because we don't attend church here.
The church has no meaning and does not help.

Most comments about the church were positive as the Samburu men could be helped in their prayer life which would draw them closer to God. Some groups responded that the Christian church had no meaning and that it was distant and not welcoming. Two groups mentioned that they would like to be helped as there are many churches. The types of help they would like to see, both spiritually and physically, were shared in question No. 9 of this same section.

#### Is There Samburu Worship In Nairobi?

Question number 7 in part three reads, "Have you participated in any organized prayer meetings for Samburu watchmen? Explain" The following were the most common responses:

Table 4. Group responses about worship in the Samburu language

There are no Samburu language services in Nairobi.
Traditional prayers are said in the rooms we stay in and are led by the older men.
We have not tried to have Christian prayers in our language – it could be done.
There used to be such prayers (in our language) in Kibera long ago.
In 1997 there was four days of prayer sponsored by someone and held at the Bomas of Kenya.
We are only "Maasai" here. We are not known.

Five groups mentioned that there are prayers in some of the urban homes "in the Samburu way". Traditionally, in the *manyattas*, the elders lead in prayer morning and evening in an antiphonal chant to "Nkai", the Samburu creator God. Apparently, this practice continues in the urban context. Older men lead prayer but not "in the Christian way." Not one group was aware of any Christian worship being done in the Samburu language currently. One respondent had attended worship and Bible study

some years ago in Kibera, Nairobi with Maasai and Samburu watchmen. Organized by a Lutheran missionary and held regularly for a period of years, this ministry to Maasai and Samburu watchmen no longer exists. Two groups saw Christian prayers, in the city and in their vernacular, as a possibility for the future.

#### Do these Samburu Watchmen Attend Church Services at Home and In the City?

Research question 1(d) concerns the habit of attending church services. It reads, “Are these watchmen members of congregations in their home areas?” The question to the groups concerned regular attendance. Questions 1 through 3 in Part three concerned the issue of church attendance. The results are as follows:

Table 5. Church attendance in the rural and urban contexts

Those attending services in Nairobi	Fifty-six responded – yes.
Those attending services in Samburu District.	Eighty-nine responded – yes.
Those not attending services in Samburu District.	One hundred fifteen responded – no.
Those not attending services in Nairobi	One hundred forty eight responded – no.

43.6 % responded that they do regularly attend church services in Samburu District. This is surprisingly high. Fewer, that is, 27.4% claim to regularly attend church services in the city of Nairobi.

In answer to question 3 from part three, “Which churches do you regularly attend in Nairobi?” the following responses were given:

Table 6. Denominational breakdown of church attenders

Roman Catholic Church	Forty responses given	71.5%
Full Gospel Church	Six responses given	11%
Lutheran Church	Four responses given	7%
Lighthouse Church	Two responses given	3.5%
Africa Inland Church	Two responses given	3.5%
Joy and Redeemed Church	One response given	1.75%
Baptist Church	One response given	1.75%
Totals:	Fifty-six responses given	100%



From this response it can be seen that the Roman Catholic Church has 71.5% of those Samburu watchmen attending church in the city. The other churches can claim 28.5% of the church-goers. Of the total number of respondents, we find the following:

Table 7. Church attendance by percentages

Church non-attenders in Nairobi	148	72.5%
Roman Catholic attenders in Nairobi	40	19.5%
Full Gospel attenders in Nairobi	6	3%
Lutheran attenders in Nairobi	4	2%
Lighthouse attenders	2	1%
AIC attenders	2	1%
Joy and Redeemed attenders	1	.5%
Baptist attenders in Nairobi	1	.5%
Totals	204	100%

The urban church most attended is the Roman Catholic Church. A large percentage attend church in their home areas and a smaller percentage attend urban church services. It is not surprising that the Roman Catholic Church is dominant as it is much larger and widespread in Samburu District.

What about involvement in the churches that they attend in the city? Question number 4 of part three concerns this question. It reads, "Are any of you active on any committees (or in any other way) in the urban church?" The responses were as follows:

Table 8. Church involvement by Samburu watchmen

I only attend the services	Forty seven responses	84%
I help lead the church services	Three responses	5.4%
I sing in the choir	Two responses	3.6%
I am attending a class	One response	1.75%
I work with the sound equipment and translate	One response	1.75%
I help preach	One response	1.75%
I help usher	One response	1.75%
Totals:	Fifty six responses	100%

Nine of the fifty-six men who attend the urban church responded that they do something within the urban church. This means that 16% of those who attend do more than just attend. Looking at the whole, nearly 4% of the target population in this study are active in their church in the city.

### Are There Any Links between the Urban and Rural Churches?

Research question number 1(e) reads as follows: “Are these watchmen aware of any church links between their urban setting and their home setting?” This question was answered in part through the responses concerning Samburu language church services. No mention was made of any connection in any of the focus group discussions concerning the church. No, they were not aware of any connection. Another focus group question responding to this research question was number 9 in part three, that reads, “If you were meeting urban church leaders and could ask them about help, what would you ask them for?” The responses concerned both their urban and rural situations and they were asking for some linkages. The responses were as follows:

Table 9. Type of help requested of the Church by the Samburu watchmen

Any help (anywhere) would be good.
Help keep us at home (up-country) by starting businesses for us.
Help us to get work with a good salary.
Spiritual help would be good for us.
Some of us have already studied but others would like an education.
Build churches near us – both here in the city and at home.
Help us to preach to others.
It is not necessary to be a watchman. Help us to start businesses.
Other responses concerned personal needs that each one has such as, school fees, transportation expenses, housing expenses, hospital bills, clothing and food expenses.

Not one group responded that they wished to be in Nairobi, but they all said that they were here because of hardship at home. Are there linkages with their churches in their home areas? The Samburu watchmen were not aware of any but

would welcome them if it meant having more contact with their homes and families. They would be happy to be at home instead of needing to work in Nairobi due to the economic reality in which they find themselves. Six groups asked that the church give them spiritual help but did not define what that help might be.

### **Church Leader Interviews**

Research question number two concerns the church's awareness of the Samburu watchmen population in the city and whether there is any specific ministry to these men in the city. It reads as follows: "To what extent is the urban church aware of these Samburu watchmen?" This question is followed by five sub-headings that we shall look at in this section.

One presupposition of this study was that the denominations working and witnessing in Samburu District would be the most likely to have focused ministry to the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi. Fifteen denominations were identified as working in Samburu District. Leaders from eleven of these denominations were interviewed for this study. Eleven responses represent approximately 835 congregations and preaching points in the city of Nairobi. The following table shows the churches which have ministry in Samburu District, whether or not their Nairobi counterparts were contacted and their number of congregations and preaching points in Nairobi:

Table 10. Denominations and their urban outreach in this research

Denomination	Research Inclusion	Approx. Congregations
Kenya Assemblies of God	Contacted in Nairobi	75 congregations in Nairobi
Full Gospel Churches of Kenya	Contacted in Nairobi	35 congregations in Nairobi
Evangelical Lutheran Church	Contacted in Nairobi	6 congregations in Nairobi
Anglican Church in Kenya	Contacted in Nairobi	120 congregations in Nairobi
Friends Church (Quakers)	Contacted in Nairobi	40 congregations in Nairobi
Roman Catholic Church	Contacted in Nairobi	320 congregations in Nairobi
Presbyterian Church in E.Africa	Contacted in Nairobi	100 congregations in Nairobi
Africa Inland Church	Contacted in Nairobi	40 congregations in Nairobi
New Apostolic Church	Contacted in Nairobi	15 congregations in Nairobi
Baptist Convention of Kenya	Contacted in Nairobi	50 congregations in Nairobi
Seventh Day Adventist	Contacted in Nairobi	35 congregations in Nairobi
Faith Bible Baptist Church	Unable to contact in Nairobi	Unknown
Gospel Outreach Church	Contacted but unable to get information	Unknown
Pentecostal Assemblies of God	Unable to contact in Nairobi	Unknown
East Africa Pentecostal Church	Unable to contact in Nairobi	Unknown
Totals:	Eleven contacted in Nairobi	836 congregations

### Attendance of Samburu Watchmen In Their Sunday Services

Questions numbered 1 through 5 in part two of the leader's questionnaire (appendix C), concern the church leader's awareness of the presence of Samburu watchmen in the city and their denomination's involvement with them in ministry.

Question 1 asks the following: "In your estimation, how large is the Samburu watchmen population in the city?" The answers given were as follows:

Less than 50 – 1; 50 to 100 – 2; 100 to 500 – 0; More than 500 – 2; Don't know – 6

This response is significant in that two of the eleven denominations realize that the target population is large. Three believe that the target population is negligible while six do not have any idea about the size of the group. This researcher believes that this is so, because the idea of targeted ministry to the denominations is new and therefore, the idea of researching one particular group of the urban populace for Gospel outreach isn't happening. "The church doors are opened for everyone" commented more than one of these leaders during their interview for this study.

Combining questions 2 and 3 we have the following: “Are you aware of any Samburu watchmen attending services in your churches and if so, how many?” Aware – 5; Not aware – 2; and Don’t know - 4. “How many are attending?” Less than 10 – 2; 31 to 50 – 1; and Don’t know - 8.

Some of the leaders said that this is impossible to know as Samburu watchmen come as any other people come to their services. Others said that one would have to ask the pastors in the lower income areas for a more accurate number. Most agreed that the number of attendees is small in their churches but they could not give a figure.

Questions 4 and 5 concern the participation of Samburu watchmen in their congregations. The combined questions and responses are as follows: “Do Samburu watchmen actively participate in the life of your congregations and if so, how?” Yes they do – 2; No, they don’t – 5; and I do not know – 4

The description given by the leaders of this participation is as follows:

1. “They are deacons.”
2. “They don’t but we have started to link Samburu work and this will open doors for them to participate.”
3. “choir (vernacular), Bible study, Bible school student.”

Looking at these responses, it is seen that the denominational leaders do not see much church involvement by this people group in the city. Statistically, 18% of the leadership are aware of Samburu watchmen involvement in their congregations and 82% are either unaware or know that there is no involvement in the urban churches by this group.

## Focused Ministry to Samburu Watchmen

Research question number 2(b) asks the following: “Is there any focused ministry to them within the church?” Questions numbered 6 and 7 in part two concern this issue. The leaders responded as follows : Yes, there is focused ministry to them – 2 responses; No, there is not focused ministry to them – 7 responses; and I do not know if there is focused ministry to them – 2 responses. Of the eleven respondents only the Lutheran church and the Baptist church said yes, there is focused ministry. The Lutheran leader mentioned a church-based ministry that took place from 1987 to 1995 which targeted Maasai and Samburu watchmen. Presently, this church is collecting funds for famine relief in Samburu District. There have been Samburu choirs that have come to Nairobi to sing their Samburu-style Christian songs in the church services. Finally, ethnomusicology of the Samburu people is being studied by a music director of one of the main Lutheran congregations in the city. The other positive response came from the Baptist church that stated that an associate missionary from Maralal, Samburu District, has worked with Samburu watchmen in the Embakasi area of Nairobi in two week increments. Furthermore, there are two congregations in the city which focus on the Samburu watchmen.

Two of the church leaders said that they have not considered focused ministry but would like to learn more about it. Two of the leaders said that their doors are opened for everyone and they would not consider special ministry to different people groups. They admitted, though, that perhaps the Samburu watchmen might need a service in their own language and during a time convenient to them. Seven agreed with the Samburu watchmen, question 16 of the questionnaire, that the church services are distant and uninviting.

## Linkages with Samburu Ministry Upcountry?

Research question number 2(c) reads, “Is there an intentional link between ministry to the Samburu in the rural setting and ministry to them in Nairobi?”

Interview questions number 8 and 9 in the leader’s questionnaire concern this issue.

Question 8 reads, “Has your denomination in the city partnered with your Samburu-based ministry in any way? The response was, Yes – 4; No – 4; Don’t know – 3. The following table gives further explanation to the positive responses:

Table 11. Types of linkages between urban and rural Christian ministry

Yes, we do partner with our Samburu –based ministry.	Kenya Assemblies of God	We have churches in Samburu
Yes, we do partner with our Samburu – based ministry.	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya	Donations from urban congregations sent upcountry
Yes, we do partner with our Samburu – based ministry.	Presbyterian Church of East Africa	AIDS awareness teaching is church-wide.
Yes, we do partner with our Samburu – based ministry.	Baptist Convention of Kenya	Special services, choirs, Bible study started among them

The work of some of the denominations is autonomous in the different regions. For others, the idea of a ministry to a particular group in the urban context is new. One leader from the Africa Inland Church was aware that special ministry is being done for the Somali people in the city. Another leader from the Presbyterian Church of East Africa mentioned the desire to target the *matatu* touts (conductors for privately run mini-buses) for Gospel witness. Both realized that a special, tailor-made ministry would need to be implemented in order to effectively reach a group of people who are not attending church services normally.

### Samburu Church Workers in Nairobi

Research question 2(d) asks, “Are there any full-time Samburu church workers in their churches who are working in Nairobi?” Questions numbered 10 and

11 in part two of the questionnaire concern this issue. From these questions we get the following information:

Table 12. Full-time Samburu workers within the urban church

Yes, we have Samburu workers in Nairobi	Friends Church (a student)
Yes, we have Samburu workers in Nairobi	Roman Catholic (social worker and evangelist)
Yes, we will have Samburu workers in Nairobi	Baptist (an evangelist)

The significance of this question is the possibility for Samburu language outreach in Nairobi using Samburu people who have already been trained by the church. The Baptist church plans to have a Samburu national working in the city among the watchmen in the near future. More will be said about this in the next chapter.

Past, Present, or Future Plans for Ministry to the Samburu Watchmen?

Research question 2(e) asks the following: “Are these leaders aware of any past, present, or future plans for ministry to the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi?” Questions 12 through 16 in the leader’s questionnaire allow for the answer to this question. Question 12 concerns materials in the city written specifically with the Samburu people in mind. The Roman Catholic Church has been developing their prayer book and lectionary in the Samburu language. It is used in Samburu District but not in Nairobi. Other leaders are aware of Scripture portions, audio tapes and tracts in the Samburu language. These materials would be most helpful if targeting the Samburu watchmen with the Gospel.

Questions numbered 13 and 14 in part two of the questionnaire ask this research question (2e) and a description of this ministry. Responses reveal that eight churches are not aware of any past or present ministries and neither have they planned for future ministry with the Samburu watchmen. The Lutheran and Baptist churches are planning some further linkage with their work in Samburu District. The Lutheran



leader responded that their former ministry to MAA speaking watchmen needed to be revived. “I think that it is not yet a priority in churches because the churches are not aware of the situation.” The response from the Baptist church leader was that there is a plan for a Samburu church leader to come soon to work with outreach, especially with some Samburu watchmen in the Embakasi and Lenana areas of Nairobi.

These two denominations together have about 56 congregations in Nairobi or about 7% of the congregations in this study. The percentage is much smaller if compared with the total number of Christian churches in Nairobi. The larger churches could impact this ministry greatly through their participation. Seven of these denominations agreed with the Samburu watchmen statement (question 15) that the urban church is uninviting and distant. Only one denomination disagreed with this evaluation.

Response to question number 16 of part two, which gives the opportunity to write their thoughts concerning ministry to Samburu watchmen in Nairobi is as follows:

Table 13. Leaders responses concerning ministry to Samburu watchmen

“We need to ask God’s direction on how best to reach this almost neglected group.”
“I recommend research before anything else.”
“The Church should assist these people so that they can be able to know Christ.”
“This is an area which the churches should look into in a serious way.”
“The ministry should relate to be their own.”
“The language, urban style, cultural differences all contribute to the reason that the church may seem distant and uninviting. Most churches are unaware or lack vision with this large group in our midst.”

## Summary

### Gospel Response by the Samburu

After interviewing over 200 watchmen from around the city of Nairobi, who originate from every corner of Samburu District, it was found that the majority of

those who attend church services attend the Roman Catholic Church (40 out of 56). This is not surprising since the Catholic Church is widespread in Samburu District. The respondents have mixed opinions about the Christian church in the city. The Church is generally seen positively in terms of possible help and in teaching about God but the urban church is viewed as being remote and uninviting. The Samburu watchmen would welcome any help that the church could offer them, both spiritually and physically, to lesson the difficulty of living in the city. Better yet, they would be grateful if they could be living back in Samburu District with gainful employment.

Language is an issue since there are no services in the Samburu language and many of these men are not conversant in any other language. The time of services is a problem for some of the watchmen. Some watchmen are unable to attend Sunday services because they are not free from their work. As one respondent mentioned the radio media, perhaps this ministry could be expanded for broadcasting the Gospel during the evening hours when most watchmen could tune in.

Few of these men have been given (or have taken) any responsibilities within the urban church. Of the fifty-six who responded that they attend church services regularly in the city, only nine have any further opportunities for service in the church and the remainder of the target group attend worship only.

More Samburu watchmen attend church services in Samburu District than in the city of Nairobi. They are not aware of any linkages or cooperation between the churches that they attend in their home areas and the churches of the city of Nairobi. It is interesting to note that the trend, shown statistically, is that of larger numbers of Samburu coming into the city in recent years (see Appendix H). This may help explain why fewer attend services in the city than in their home area. Those who have recently become urbanized may not have had the opportunity to locate a

satisfactory church home as yet. Some respondents in the focus groups mentioned the great variety of churches in Nairobi and the different and confusing ways that people worship God.

The watchmen are unaware of any churches having services in the Samburu language. Many would welcome such an initiative. Some of the older men do organize prayer in their rented houses following their traditional way of praying. They pray in the mornings and evenings to “Nkai”, the supreme God of the Samburu. This prayer activity is significant. The Samburu have maintained their need to worship although their situation in the city is drastically different than that in their home areas. They still have a need to commune with God and pray for their situation in the city. It was pointed out that the older men lead these prayers. Whether the tradition can continue much longer is questionable. The younger generation will undoubtedly be farther removed from the traditions in Samburu District.

#### The Urban Church Response

Of the fifteen denominations working in Samburu District thirteen were found to have work in Nairobi. Of these, responses from eleven of the churches were obtained for this study. Significant findings were made.

Eight hundred and thirty-six congregations and preaching points in Nairobi were represented by these eleven denominations. It is significant that two denominations, the Lutheran and Baptist churches with a combined total of fifty-six Nairobi congregations, have done some intentional ministry with the Samburu watchmen. They are also linking their urban and rural ministry to the Samburu people. The Roman Catholic church has the most church attenders in Nairobi but there is no intentional outreach to the Samburu watchmen. This church does not

foresee any future targeted ministry to them in Nairobi according to their leader who was interviewed.

The Protestant and Pentecostal churches have attracted about 8% of the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi to their services according to this study. The Roman Catholic Church has attracted 19.5% of the same group. Again, this could be because the Roman Catholic ministry is more widespread in Samburu District. The denominational leaders, in general, did not know how many Samburu watchmen are in the city or how many are attending their urban church services. Some of these leaders were candid in saying that their ministry philosophy is not to target specific groups but to open their doors to all of the people in the city. They could not differentiate the Samburu people from others who attend their urban church services.

Two of the eleven denominations interviewed showed an interest in and some involvement in focused ministry to the Samburu watchmen. Indeed, one of them has already begun some intentional witness to them through their local congregation. Nine denominations admit that focused ministries have not been a priority. Some interest was shown to look into the issue further. Materials are available in the Samburu language to facilitate further outreach. Training Samburu evangelists to do the urban outreach, as the Baptist church is doing, seems a very positive way to this ministry.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will include a recapitulation of the earlier chapters, a brief analysis of the findings, the summary of the study and recommendations are given for further research of this topic.

The purpose of this study has been to research and analyze to what extent a particular people group, the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi, have been ministered to by the urban church in Nairobi. The denominations that are currently ministering in their home area, Samburu District in northern Kenya, have been targeted in Nairobi to participate in this research.

This study shows that people groups such as the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi are often forgotten people by the Church. Their temporary migration into the African urban context is not an isolated case. Nairobi is not alone in absorbing such groups in this type of situation either. There are some missiologists who would say that God is preparing a new missions frontier by sending the peoples, many of whom are hidden peoples or unreached peoples, to the cities of the world. Although missions and churches make specific efforts to reach these people with the Gospel in their home areas, often the migratory members of that same community are left to join the urban multi-ethnic, multi-socio-economic churches on their own. Opportunities to reach these people with the Gospel by intentionally linking the ministries in the rural and urban settings are often unrealized or missed altogether.

## Analysis of the Findings

It has been found that 27.5 % of the Samburu watchmen in the city of Nairobi, who were in the sample groups of this research, are attending church services regularly in the city of Nairobi. They could, therefore, be considered “reached” in the technical sense that we are using for this research. There obviously remains much to be done with this urban people group in terms of evangelization, discipleship, inclusion in the urban church and physical help. Samburu language ministry is needed in the city of Nairobi. Due to the nature of their work, special worship and Bible study times need to be organized for Samburu watchmen outreach. The men themselves would welcome an organized effort by the church to bring Samburu language worship services to them.

Only a few of the urban churches are targeting the Samburu watchmen in their ministries. Of the denominations working in Samburu District, two are linking their rural outreach with their urban ministry. The results of these efforts were not evident in church attendance in these two denominations in the focus group interviews with the Samburu watchmen. Certainly the results could have been different had the focus groups covered larger areas of the city.

The physical needs are great for this target group. Felt needs were ascertained through question number 9 of part three of the focus group discussion. “If you were meeting urban church leaders and could ask them about help, what would you ask for?” The responses (as we have already seen in Table 9) varied but are repeated here to emphasize the desperate situation some of these men find themselves in.

Table 14. List of help asked by the Samburu watchmen

Any help would be good
Help to keep us at home (an example was to ask for help in starting businesses)
Help us to get good work with a good salary
Spiritual help (teach us to preach, teach us the Word, build churches near us)
Some of us have an education and others would like to study
Silence (they would not ask for any help because they do not know the church)

These responses are included for on-going reflection into urban outreach to the Samburu watchmen. There is opportunity to meet physical as well as spiritual needs through Christian witness and outreach. Any future ministry to the Samburu watchmen should take into consideration the felt needs of the target people group.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study focuses on the Samburu watchmen in Nairobi, only. Samburu watchmen are in other urban centers of Kenya as well. Mombasa, Nakuru, Nanyuki and Nyahururu could be future target cities for study of these same issues. Not all Samburu people in the city are watchmen. Educated Samburu and those employed in the armed forces and elsewhere might further impact an evangelistic strategy to this people group. Another study on the whole urban population of this people group could be made with the thought of researching the better educated and better salaried Samburu. The question remains as to how the whole people group is involved and participates in the urban church.

The linkage between the urban and rural outreach among the Samburu could be researched further. Many of the denominational leaders who were interviewed thought that this strategy was new and worth pursuing further. Other denominations were only now beginning to bridge their ministries and further studies of their successes and failures would be helpful. A case study of a Christian watchman

returning to live in Samburu District would make an interesting sequel to this study. Would such a person have an impact for Jesus in his home community? How could such a person be a benefit to the local church? Could evangelistic teams from the urban centers be sent to an individual's home area? Research on these strategies could impact future ministries.

It would be interesting and worthwhile to track the activities of the two denominations that are making a specific effort to link their rural and urban ministries. The impact made on their work on both fronts could be of interest to mission strategists. Networking of ministries to the same people groups, in the urban context, would be worth researching and developing, too.

This study could be done with any number of "hidden peoples" within the African urban context. This writer recommends that it certainly be done and that it be done to the glory of God and to the extension of His Kingdom.



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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire for Samburu Watchmen working in Nairobi

Part One: The Icebreaker Discussion on “How did I feel when I first came to Nairobi to work”.

Part Two: General Information

1. What area are you men from in Samburu District? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Where do you work in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you been in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How often do you travel home to visit your families? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How does your family feel about your working in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you like most about working in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you like least about working in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Part Three: Questions concerning their faith and involvement with the Church.

1. How many of you usually attend Christian church in Samburu District? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How many of you usually attend Christian church in Samburu District? \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. Which churches do you belong to in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Are any of you active on any committees (or any other ministries) of the church? \_

---

5. What does the Christian church mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. How can you share your faith (presuming they say they are Christian) with other Samburu watchmen in Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

---

7. Have you participated in any organized prayer meetings for Samburu watchmen?

Explain.

---

---

8. Is there anything else you would like to say concerning the Christian church in Nairobi? \_\_

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9. If you were meeting urban church leaders and could ask them about help, what would you ask them for?

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## APPENDIX B

### Maswali kwa Samburu ambao ni askari

Sehemu ya Kwanza: Zungumzana nini nyote kuhusu wakati mlipoingia mjini mwa Nairobi mara ya kwanza kufanya kazi. Mmesikiaje?

Sehemu ya Pili: Maelezo ya Kawaida

1. Je, ninyi mmetoka wapi upande wa Samburu? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Je, mnafanya kazi mjini upande gani? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Mmeingia hapa Nairobi mwaka gani? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Mnaweza kurudi nyumbani mara ngapi kwa mwaka? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Kitu gani kinawapendekeza wale wa nyumbani kuhusu kazi yako mjini wa Nairobi?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Kitu gani ni kizuri kuhusu kazi mjini wa Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Kitu gani ni kibaya kuhusu kazi mjini wa Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Sehemu ya Tatu: Kuhusu imani ya Kikristo na kuhudhuria kanisani hapa

Je, watu wangapi hapa wanahudhuria (kawaida) kanisa la kikristo kule nyumbani?

---



---

1. Je, wangapi hapa wanahudhuria (kawaida) kanisa la kikristo hapa Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

3. Ninyi mnafuata madhehebu gani hapa Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

4. Je, kuna watu hapa ambao ni wanakamati (kazi ye yote) kwa kanisa lao? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

5. Kanisa la kikristo lina maana gani kwako? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

6. (Ikiwa ni Wakristo, waulizwe) Mnawezaje kutoa ushuhuda kwa Wasamburu

wengine hapa Nairobi? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

7. Je, mmeshirikiana na wengine na maombi maalum kwa askari Wasamburu hapa

Nairobi?

---



---

8. Je, kuna mawazo mengine mgependa kusema kuhusu kanisa la kikristo hapa

Nairobi?

---



---

9. Ikiwa mgepata nafasi kuuliza viongozi wa kanisa mjiini kwa msaada, je, mgeuliza

kwa msaada gani? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Questionnaire for Church Leaders

#### Part One: General Information

1. Denomination of church \_\_\_\_\_
2. Position of Leader \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many congregations does your denomination have in the city? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part Two: Information concerning Samburu Watchmen

*Please take a few moments to answer the questions below. There are no right or wrong answers. Please select the answer that best describes your knowledge of the subject. Thank you.*

1. In your estimation, how large is the Samburu watchmen population in Nairobi?

Less than 50 ( )    50 to 100 ( )    100 to 500 ( )    More than 500 ( )

Don't know ( )

2. Are you aware of any Samburu watchmen attending services in your Nairobi congregations?

Yes, I am aware ( )    No, I am not aware ( )    I do not know ( )

3. Could you estimate how many Samburu watchmen attend your church services in Nairobi on a given Sunday?

Less than 10 ( )    11 to 30 ( )    31 to 50 ( )    More than 50 ( )

Don't know ( )

4. Do Samburu watchmen actively participate in the life of your congregations in Nairobi?

Yes, they participate ( ) No, they do not participate ( ) I do not know ( )

5. If the answer to No. 4 is yes, please describe how they do participate. \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. Does your church have any ministry specifically focused on the Samburu watchmen?

Yes, they do ( ) No, they do not ( ) I do not know ( )

7. If the answer to No. 6 is yes, how would you describe that ministry?

Social ( ) Evangelistic ( ) Other ( )

8. Has your denomination in the city partnered with your Samburu based ministry in any way?

Yes, they have ( ) No, they have not ( ) I don't know ( )

9. If the answer to No. 8 is yes could you please describe what was done. \_\_\_\_\_

---

10. Are there any Samburu church workers working in your church in Nairobi?

Yes, there are ( ) No, there are none ( ) I don't know ( )

11. If the answer to No. 10 is yes, what kind of work do they do in Nairobi?

Pastor/Priest ( ) Evangelist/Catechist ( ) Social work ( ) Other ( )

12. Are you aware of any Samburu language Christian materials that are available in Nairobi?

Scripture Portions ( ) Songbooks ( ) Tracts ( ) Audio tapes ( )

Don't know ( )

13. Are you aware of any past, present, or future ministries among the Samburu watchmen?

Yes, I am aware ( ) No, I am not aware ( )

If the answer to No. 13 is yes, could you describe this ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

---

14. According to the Samburu watchmen themselves, the urban church is distant and uninviting.

Do you....agree? ( ) disagree? ( ) don't know ( )

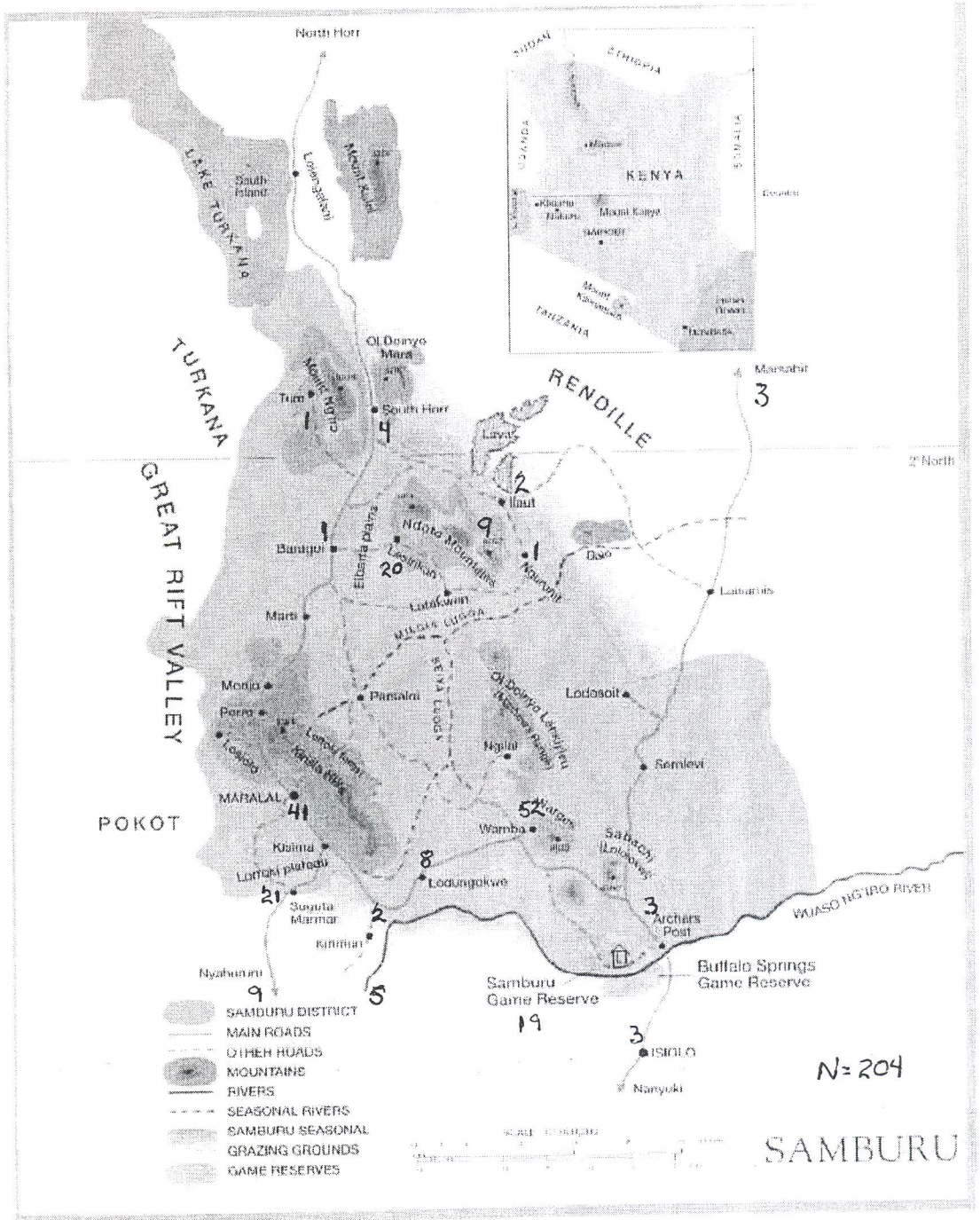
15. Please feel free to write your thoughts concerning ministry to Samburu watchmen

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Thank you for taking the time to provide these answers for me.

Michael Koski

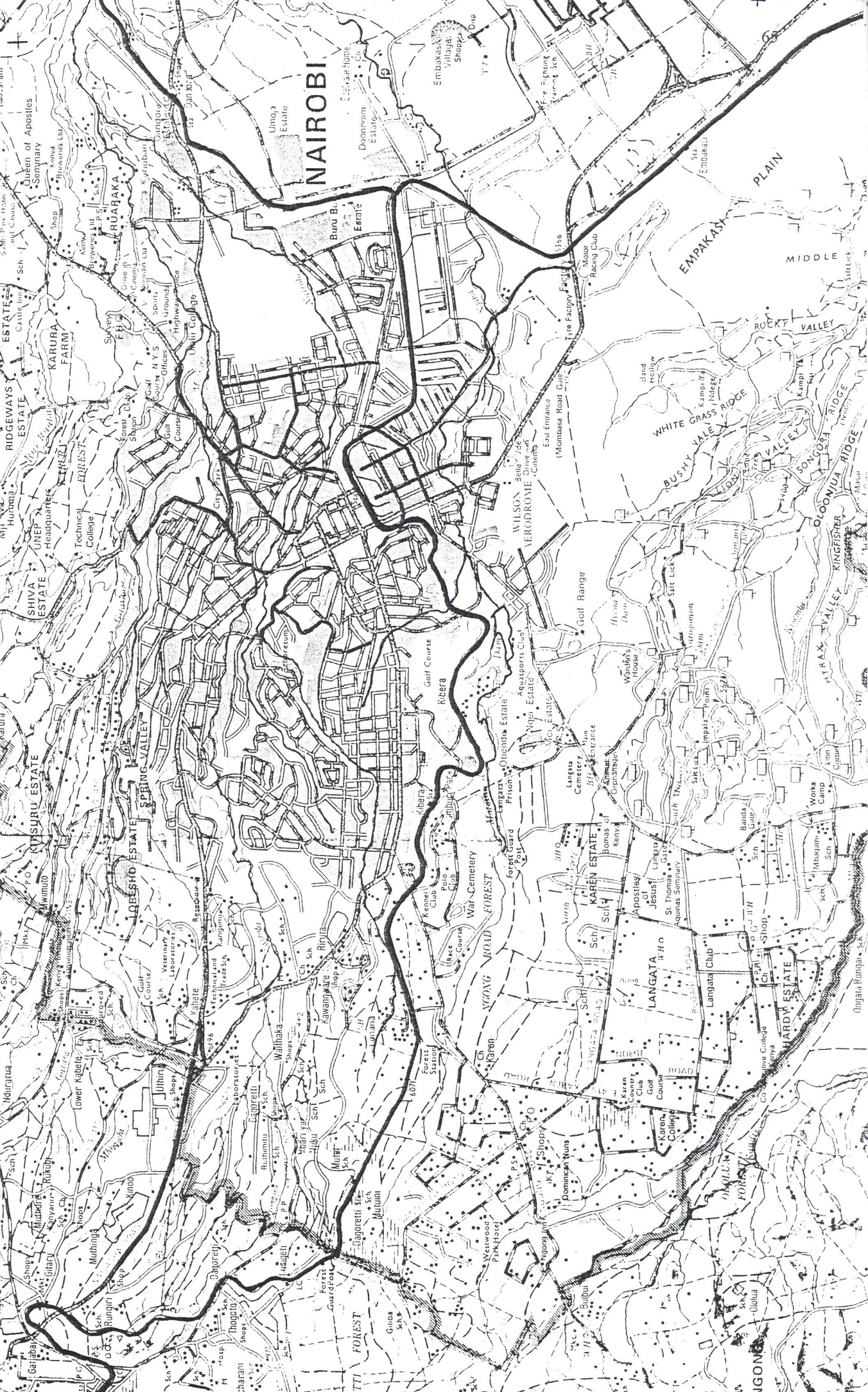
## APPENDIX D



(Source: Pavitt, Nigel. *Samburu*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991.p4.)

Home Locations of the Sample Group Interviewed in the Focus Groups  
 The Number Represents the Total Number of Watchmen from that Location

## APPENDIX E



# NAIROBI

EMPAKASI PLAIN

WHITE GRASS RIDGE

BUSHY VALE RIDGE

ROCKY VALLEY

MIDDLE

SONGORA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE

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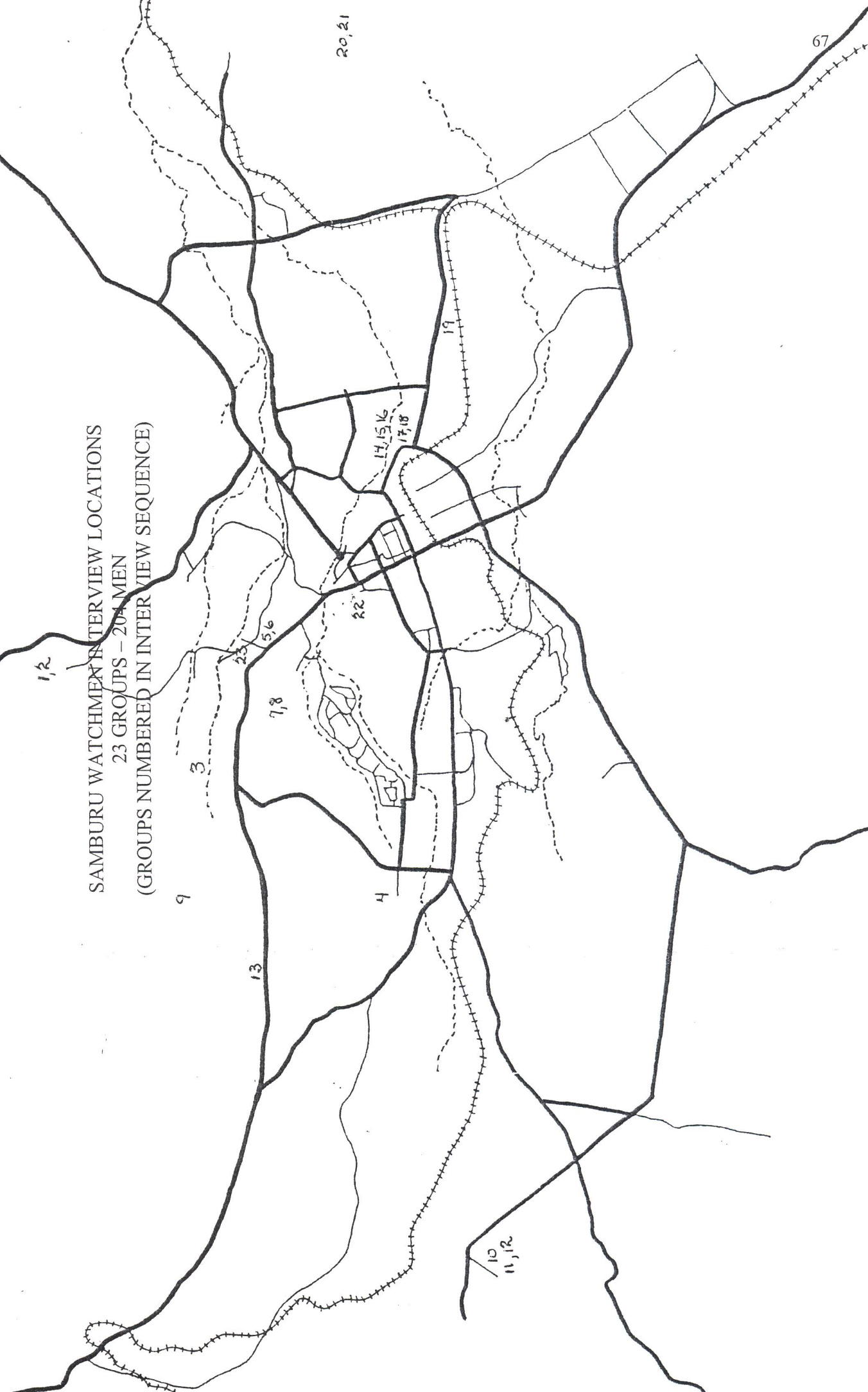
LANGATA RIDGE

LANGATA RIDGE



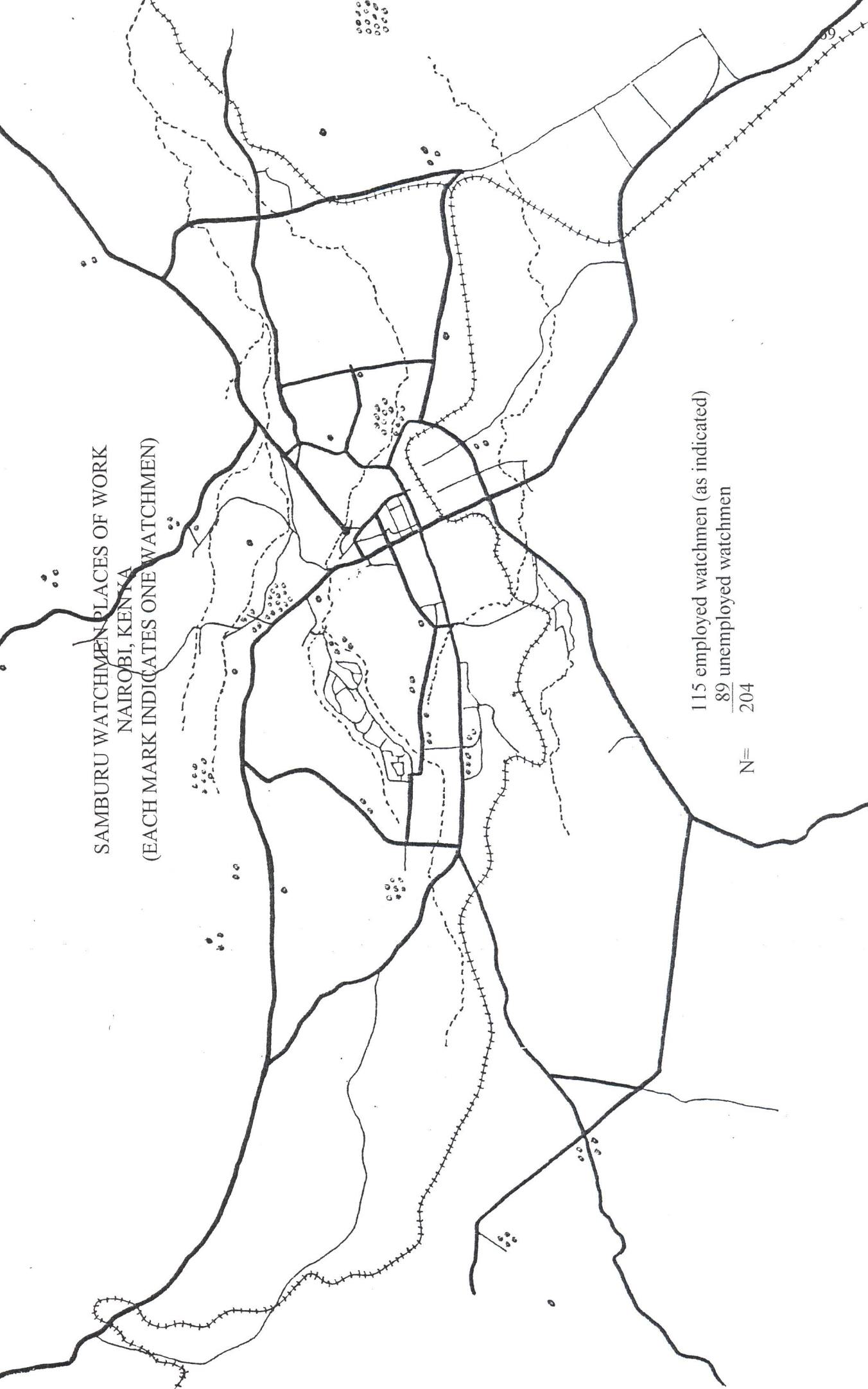
**APPENDIX F**

SAMBURU WATCHMEN INTERVIEW LOCATIONS  
23 GROUPS - 204 MEN  
(GROUPS NUMBERED IN INTERVIEW SEQUENCE)



## APPENDIX G

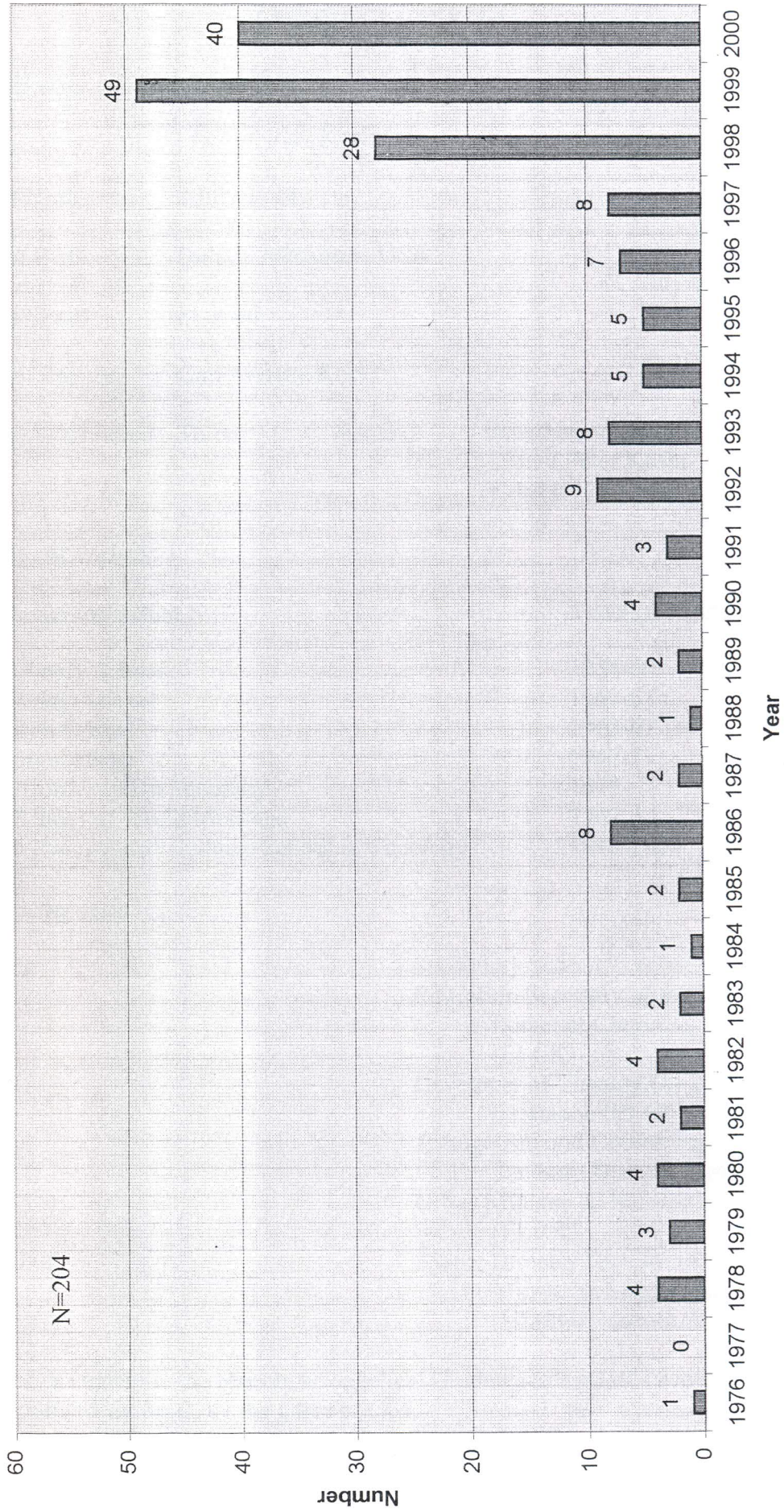
SAMBURU WATCHMEN PLACES OF WORK  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
(EACH MARK INDICATES ONE WATCHMEN)



115 employed watchmen (as indicated)  
89 unemployed watchmen  
N= 204

## APPENDIX H

**What Year Did You First Come to Nairobi?  
(Responses from 1976 through April 2000)**



## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Personal and Family History:

Name: Michael Paul Koski  
Date of Birth: 2 July 1949  
Place of Birth: Duluth, Minnesota USA  
Marital Status: Married  
Name of Spouse: Gail Annette Koski  
Number of Children Three Names: Jonathan Michael Koski  
Daniel Peter Koski  
Kristen Joy Koski

### Educational History:

<u>Educational Institution</u>	<u>Years Attended</u>
Esko Primary School	1954-60
Esko Middle School	1960-63
Esko High School	1963-67
Augsburg College	1967-71
Luther/Northwestern Seminary	1977
Fuller School of World Missions	1982, 86
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology	1998-2000

### Work Experience:

1971-73	Secondary School Teacher, MPLS., MN
1973-77	Education Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK)
1978-81	Developer of Theological Education by Extension (ELCK)
1982-86	Evangelism and Church Planting – Samburu District, Kenya (ELCK)
1987-95	Urban Ministry in Nairobi, Kenya (ELCK)
1996-2000	Assoc. Director/Director of Urban Ministries Support Group (UMSG), Nairobi, Kenya

Currently a student at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology awaiting graduation in July 2000, by the grace of God.