

The background of the cover is a stylized illustration. It depicts a Turkana man standing in profile, facing right. He has a large, braided hairstyle and is wearing a dark, sleeveless tunic with a sash and a beaded necklace. He holds a long wooden staff in his right hand. To his left, a goat stands on a rock. In the foreground, two more goats are visible. The landscape is filled with thorny, spiky plants. The overall style is reminiscent of traditional African art.

The Children of Eve
*Change and Socialization Among
Sedentarized Turkana Children and
Youth*



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"Muacha mila ni mtumwa"
He who abandons his traditions
remains a slave.

To my grandparents, for their love.
You are my roots.

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Turkana Words and Terms Used in the Thesis

<i>Abor</i>	outpost
<i>Aboot (eboot)</i>	poverty
<i>Aitee nakidala</i>	milking cow
<i>Akaal</i>	female camel
<i>Akuj</i>	Turkana God, divine force
<i>Akicha</i>	light
<i>Anam</i>	Lake Turkana
<i>Alagama</i>	wedding neck-ring
<i>Akapolon na ekipe</i>	queen of evil
<i>Akiriket</i>	semi-circle for sacrificing and meat feast
<i>Apese</i>	unmarried girl
<i>Apol</i>	moiety
<i>Aronis</i>	badness
<i>Arotokinet</i>	movement
<i>Asapan</i>	rite of passage for boys
<i>Ata</i>	grandmother, granny
<i>Atabo</i>	resting tent
<i>Aurien ekipe</i>	places, houses of the evil spirits
<i>Awi</i>	homestead, paternal house
<i>Awi a emoit</i>	home of the enemies, town
<i>Awi a ngibaren</i>	home of the animals, countryside
<i>Ito</i>	mother
<i>Edonga</i>	traditional dances
<i>Edukan</i>	shop
<i>Ekataman</i>	rain maker
<i>Ekitole a ngikiliok</i>	'tree of men', elders' assembly
<i>Ekipe</i>	evil spirit
<i>Ekitela</i>	tribe, geographical area
<i>Ekol</i>	night hut, maternal house
<i>Emanik</i>	bull
<i>Emachar</i>	agnatic clan
<i>Emuron</i>	healer, shaman
<i>Erot</i>	path
<i>Ikoku</i>	child
<i>Lubitang</i>	ignorance
<i>Ngimuia</i>	Christian religious groups or associations
<i>Ngitalia</i>	laws, taboos, customs
<i>Ngakiro angirwa kalu</i>	modernity, things of today
<i>Raya</i>	people of the countryside, herders

Other words

<i>Askaris</i>	guard, watchman
<i>Jinis</i>	evil spirits
<i>Lesos</i>	wraparound skirt
<i>Lusuat</i>	devil
<i>Mama</i>	Madame, mother
<i>Mandeleo</i>	development

<i>Manyatta</i>	hut, house
<i>Matatu</i>	minibus
<i>Mzungo</i>	white person, European
<i>Pikipiki</i>	motorcycle
<i>Sarlak</i>	type of proteinic powdered milk
<i>Shamba</i>	garden

Preface- The Journey Through My Readings and Expectations

When I came to Turkana, I was absolutely overwhelmed by everything: the weather, the landscape, the dwellings, the swarming ‘strange’ activities that took place around me. I could not ignore the strong reaction of my own senses to that new world. It was my first time in Sub-Saharan Africa, in my first anthropological fieldwork. Everyday-life manifested itself, took shape, in a manner, form, color, sound, touch and smell, so different to what I was used to back in Europe. The streets in Lodwar were dirty in a different way, crowded with unguarded animals and barefooted half-naked children. In the corners and by the sides of the roads, under spiky acacia trees, circles of women were weaving baskets, chatting and napping in the hottest hours. The air had a warmer and opaque consistency and the dust raised by the swirls of wind smelled like bonfire and animal dung. Certainly, I had expected a totally different place to the world I was coming from, but I could not foresee how strange and to what intensity it would have hit my senses. I did not want to fall into the ‘traveler’s fallacy’. We had read in class enough about the first anthropological ‘encounters’: the surprise to be faced with the difference, the descriptions of the details, the classifications and portraits of the encountered cultures.

I wanted to see, meet and talk to Turkana people, to observe and possibly partake in their ordinary lives. That was the principal aim of my journey. My project proposal stated that I would have “investigated the effects of foreign interventions on social relations, especially reflected in children and parents”. It was the reason I had travelled alone, with butterflies in my belly most of the time, so far, to such a foreign land, where nobody knew or expected me, where there were no tourists, and where, by default, most people do not want to go. Obviously, all the articles, and books I read had invariably produced some visual expectations in me. It was especially true for the ‘traditional’ Turkana, of whom mostly I had seen pictures in photography books and travel diaries on the net. They were dressed with skins, wearing beads, always accompanied by sheep and goats; the classical ‘portrait’ of a ‘typical’ Turkana. The people I encountered in all the places I visited in Turkana were, of course, very different. On a busy morning, on the market road in Lodwar, you could meet school children in uniform chewing on sugarcane, dusty policemen, Christian nuns, Muslim women covered from head to toes in black cloths, strong old women in pneumatic sandals carrying firewood on their heads, youngsters in jeans and sunglasses waiting and sitting on their *pikipiki*,¹ girls with plaited purple hair talking on a cell phone, men in ‘skirts’ and feathers on their hats spurring

¹ Motorcycle in Kiswahili

goats to sell with long pointed sticks. The diversity was amazing to the eyes, and it was not only visible; you could hear and smell it. Sitting in a church in Kalokol during mass with eyes closed, you could recognize a Turkana from the countryside by the shining smell of ghee on his/her skin and a fisherman from the sweet odor of fried fish that stained his clothes.

The differences extended to the youth too, and often were even more remarkable. You could observe heterogeneous groups of Turkana children: young girls with beads around their neck and traditional shaving patterns on their head playing *kati*² with others in torn purple uniforms from a Catholic primary school. I could sit together with young unmarried women with traditional tattoos on their cheeks and shoulders braiding the hair of a coetaneous girl in jean skirt, while she was text-messaging her Kikuyu boyfriend in Nairobi. You could hear young herders, perched on their bikes, chatting away with age-mates in sneakers about the girls who walked by them. The youth would greet you in three different languages³ and use distinctive gestures. Some would exchange the traditional handshake with you,⁴ others would want to hug you, and would ask your email address or phone number. Many would be scared to touch you at all. Some children would run their fingers on your skin to see whether or not you were a ghost, and would run away crying, others would arrogantly pester you screaming – give me my money!- or just asking –how a u?-. I kept thinking “mixed culture”, “culture complexity”, “modernity”, and “globalization”, like if these words would have helped me disentangling my work to come. What *really* helped me were the warmth, openness and sincerity with which I was welcomed by my Turkana and non-Turkana informants, interviewees and friends.

² A typical girl game consisting in filling quickly a bucket of sand trying in the meanwhile not to be hit by a ball

³ Turkana, English or Kiswahili

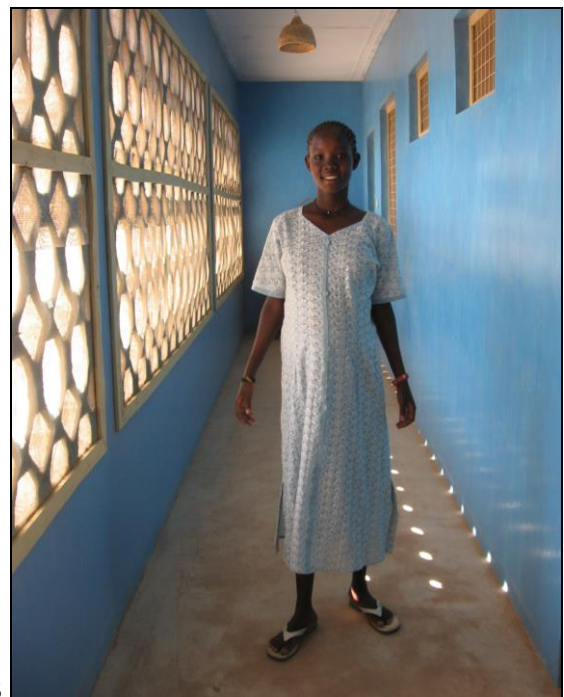
⁴ Turkana traditional handshake is a two-three-time hand shake.



Fig.1 Group of children from Kaikor playing *akilere*⁵ (left). Chicken BBQ in Kaikor! (right)



A



B

Fig.2 A) Three young boys in Loarengak. The one of the right wears a Kalashnikov. B) Young pregnant girl in Lodwar Diocese guesthouse.

⁵ Turkana game: in a small hole stay 6 stones. Taking turns the players remove the stones with one hand one by one, and then put them back again into the hole as fast as possible.



A) Jonny, a sponsored child from Lodwar.



B) Two young girls helping in the *shamba*, garden, in Kaikor



A) Girls in uniform from the Nakwamekwi Combonian Primary School



B) Children of Namukuse after mass.



Fig.5 Young Turkana girl from the countryside during a wedding feast

“Those days,
when the missionaries came,
people were not much civilized”.

*Bionn gach tonsu' lag.*⁶
Every beginning is weak.

Chapter 1: *These Our Crooked Children*

Luis Ekal is an elder who lives in a shanty compound in Roads, Lodwar. From the threshold of his gate, my assistant Edward and I asked him politely if he would mind answering some questions about the Turkana taboos and customs.⁷ He said he could spare some time, but tomorrow he would be busy as that was the day for food relief distribution. He was happy to receive us under his *atabo*:⁸ a young girl was summoned to provide us with two water containers to sit on.

“In Epot pot,⁹ the year of rains and floods, I performed asapan.¹⁰ That was a long time ago. The rains were plentiful and so the water for the grass, and the animals were fat and that was the year of the many marriages and rites of passage. The bridges were lost in puddles. Today for a young or an old boy is difficult to experience the joy of asapan, and for women is hard to get married traditionally. There are no more feasts in the community, and the children starve because they don't have milk and blood to eat. There is not butter to feed the babies with, and even the ochre wells have now dried up. Do you see any of us dressed with skin or adorned with a headdress? I am an elder, and among us elders we talk endlessly about this problem of the rains. We cannot find a solution, but we do have an explanation. God is angry, she¹¹ is angry with us and with these our crooked children. God is annoyed with the modern behavior of children especially that of the girls. Before, the community could rely on the girls for wealth. God sent an epot pot then. This place was green with so many cows, goats, camels and sheep. Then came the Napolot drought, which affected most of the animals. People began to starve and die. Only the people from Loima Mountains managed to survive, the grass was still there. The government came with planes and dropped maize from those planes

⁶ Old Irish proverb

⁷ In Turkana the word culture, *ngitalia*, means laws and taboos. My assistants and translators used to introduce me saying I wanted to learn about the Turkana laws.

⁸ Open construction of sticks and palm leaves. It is used for resting place during the hottest hours of the day.

⁹ Epot pot corresponds to 1961. The word means ‘lost key’ and it is described by the local as ‘when God lost the key to lock the rains’ (Ebei 2006:76).

¹⁰ Asapan is the traditional rite of passage for boys to enter adulthood.

¹¹ Although Akuj, God or divine force in Turkana, consists of both feminine and masculine traits, the word has a feminine prefix, and represents feminine principles (Broch-Due 1990a:320).

right here in Lodwar, but the bags of maize broke and the maize spread everywhere on the ground. The grass was supposed to grow back, but the maize suffocated and suppressed the grass before it grew. And this made the ground barren to these days. Now at that time many people were driven here and also to Katilu. After modernity, and school, we cannot longer provide for our families. The world is spoiled today, and the spoiling comes from without,¹² not within. The girls once were driven and raised as animals;¹³ you could see the wealth in them. All the animals around you would come from the girls. Now because of school you loose control of them and you do not even know who made them pregnant. God is just annoyed with us. And the days the missionaries came people were not much civilized. Children had to rely on them and on the white people to obtain guidance and control as their families were busy struggling for survival. Children began to go to school; nobody could play with their lives. And thus they lost the essence of being with their parents. Before the parents could choose a rich man for their daughter, now the daughter decides for herself. A man's mind is now rotating around his concubines, he does not think about his parents anymore. There is no longer punishment for the "itwan karonon".¹⁴ But the solution is to teach children of the culture. Culture is very important, it will not disappear! How can you abandon your culture? Teach the children." (Lodwar 1)

This thesis is a brief ethnographic account which investigates change among sedentarized Turkana people, drawing from ideas and observations of previous work (Broch-Due 1990a, 1991, Storås 1996). It focuses in particular on the socialization of the younger generations of sedentarized Turkana. It considers previously detected changes in thoughts, practices and imaginations through different ethnographic data and fresh observations. It deals with the long-term transformations related to past colonial, developmental and religious interventions in some areas of Turkana as reflected in the younger generations.

Setting

*A dry, weary land,
Without water.
(Ps.63:1).¹⁵*

Turkan, as the land is called by the Turkana people, coincides with the District of Turkana in the North-Eastern part of Kenya. The region is known to be “the cradle of humankind.” Kenyan archaeologist Richard Leakey, following the legacy of his family (cf. Luis and Louise Leakey) unearthed several human fossils of which the oldest, the *Turkana Boy* (or

¹² Here Luis means not having material resources, especially livestock.

¹³ It is a privilege to be cherished, cuddled, taken care of like an animal (Broch-Due 1990a, 1990b)

¹⁴ Bad person

¹⁵ David

Nariokotome boy, *Homo erectus*) dates to 1.5 million years. Recently, the educated Turkana refer to their land as the “lost Eden” in relation to the archaeological discoveries. Because of it I decided to entitle the thesis, *The Children of Eve*.

The region is a vast land, cut through by the Rift Valley. It extends 62.500 km² between the Lake Turkana in the East and the mountains of the Pokot area in the West. This portion of the Rift Valley rises gradually from 400 m at the Turkana Lake to greater than 1500 m above sea level. The region has a varied landscape. In the North, mountain ranges mark the borders with Sudan and Ethiopia, while hills and plains run in the South. Valleys are engraved by semi-seasonal rivers and by only two major perennial rivers (Turkwell and Kerio). The vast Turkana Lake is delineating the eastern border of Turkana. In the lake there are several islands, not permanently settled, but which are visited periodically by groups of Turkana fishermen and very sporadically by tourists. Hills and low volcanic mountains are found throughout the region. By international geographic standards, Turkana is classified as semi-arid land; there are no forests or grassy meadows, just sporadic thorny trees and shrubs. Grass grows only after the rainy seasons (short and long rains). Periodical droughts bring devastation in the region, but, since always, through local and community knowledge the people have learned to manage and cope with them (Ebei 2006). Sand storms sweep the lake shores continuously, and the people even joke that there are more rains of sand than water in Turkana. For non-Turkana the heat in the region is unbearable throughout the year, but conditions are mitigated on the mountain ranges and on the North shores of the lake. This land has a charm which is hard to explain to someone who has never visited the place. For its people, this is home. Turkana know their land and its possibilities. They are the only people in hundreds of years who have managed to inhabit this land, and they have based a rich culture on it.

The Turkana, *ngiturkana*, which means “the people”, are a group belonging to the larger Nilotic ethnic group, mostly known in ethnography through the Maasai, Samburu, Dinka and Nuer groups. Oral tradition asserts that the *Ngichuro* “hill people” and the *Ngimonia* “tree people”, the two moieties, *apol*, which make the Turkana, came from two different waves of immigration. The ancestors of Ngichuro are said to have come to Kenya several centuries ago from the Karamojong of Uganda, and those of the Ngimonia from the Jie (Storås 1996:29).

Traditionally the Turkana are nomadic pastoralists who herd cattle, goats, sheep, camels and donkeys. All these animals, except for donkeys which are used as beasts of burden, provide the staple food of the people in the form of milk and blood. The hides of the animals

are traditionally used to make the skins the Turkana wear or use within the house to sit, or sleep on, or to cover the roofs of their huts. Wild and domestic animals are not only providing resources like food and dress, but also they are the means through which Turkana build relationships, alliances, wealth and status. Turkana can practice polygamy through large animal herds. Bridewealth is in fact made by many heads of livestock, which sometimes can reach 200 in number (Broch-Due 1990a:29,508-514)! A price in livestock (usually sheep and goats) is also paid to the family of the bride, by the father for every child his wife generates. Finally, animals are branded according to the *emachar*, agnatic clan, to which they belong.

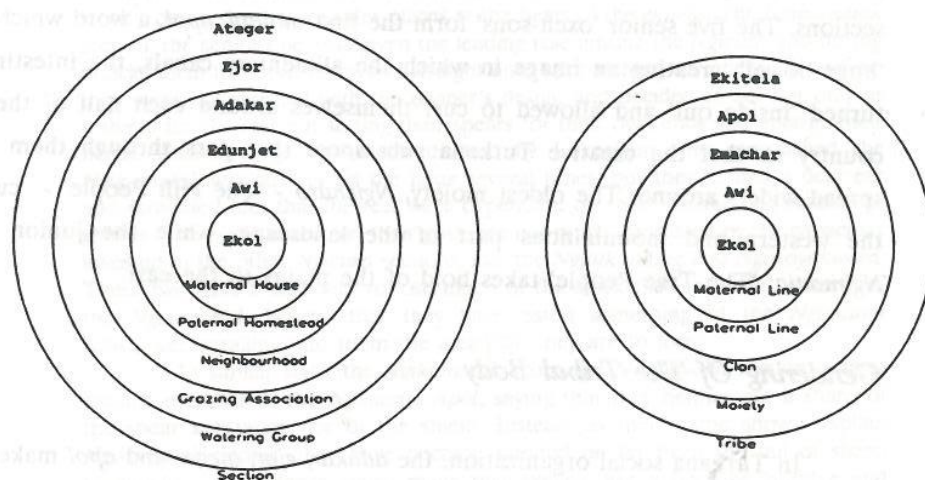
Even though the Turkana are an acephalous society, they may have leaders, drawn from diviners and war-leaders (ibid.32). Turkana respect gerontocracy, without being structured by it like, for example, the Merille.¹⁶ In fact, it is not age alone that constitutes the status of the individual. A man must have undergone a rite of passage called *asapan*, which means “making mature”, finished paying the brideprice, and killed a bull for his wedding in order to be recognized a full-grown man. While a woman is expected to bring her family a complete and substantial bridewealth through her brideprice, wedding, and the birth of her children. Turkana establish the seniority of a person counting time from the full completion of *asapan* or the wedding and the birth of a child. Therefore, it is the earliest initiated man, or the earliest married mother who enjoys the most privileges in the community. Since traditionally Turkana men marry very late in life with much younger wives, husband and wife will reach the peak of seniority and status at different times. Nonetheless, it is through personal accomplishments and skills in building alliances, gathering a large livestock, marrying many wives, and producing numerous offspring that one makes his/her own success in society (ibid.).

The newly initiated Turkana warriors are organized in two main generational sets: the “stones”, *ngimoru*, and the “leopards”, *ngirisa*. A wife will bear the sign of her husband’s set through the color of her wedding neck-ring, the *alagama*. The Turkana practice exogamy and the individual is recognized through bilateral kinship. Blood ties, livestock wealth and customs are traced from both maternal and paternal lineages. A formally married woman, as will her children, would adopt the name clan, *emachar*, of her husband, and she will be informed of the *ngitalia*, the customs and taboos of her husband’s clan by her mother-in-law. However, she would still be able to keep her customs and original “body text” like dress, hair and objects decoration style (ibid.30). The wife would be so the creative part in the production

¹⁶ Merille is the name given by the Turkana to the Dassanech, another ethnic group of nomadic pastoralists living in Ethiopia and Sudan, and neighboring the Turkana.

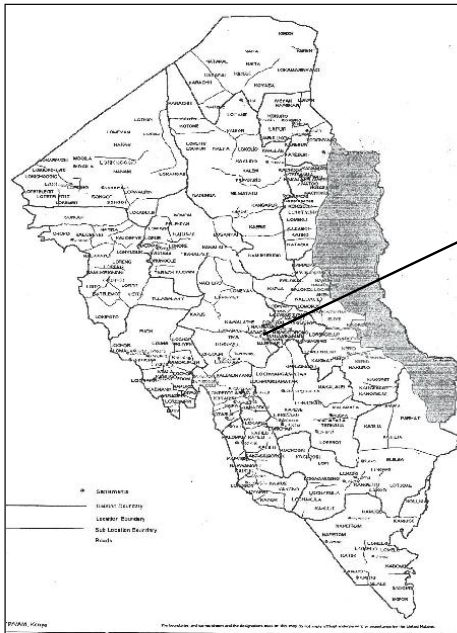
of customs from both lineages to pass on to her children. Without entering the large debate surrounding the concept of “house-society” (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995), I will just claim that the idea of Levi-Strauss that house is a revealing form of social organization is applicable also to the Turkana society. The Turkana patrilineation takes its form and practices in the *awi*, or agnatic homestead, while the matrilineation in the *ekol*, or night hut, the enatic house. Sons and daughters inherit livestock through the *ekol* of the mother, and most of the brideprice is invested and redistributed within the *ekol*.

The Turkana are divided in two moieties. Within the moieties there are several *emachar*. People usually refer to the *ekitela*, or geographical territory with its people to indicate where they grew up (Storås 1996:33). *Ekitela* can refer to Turkana as a whole with its inhabitants, or to a smaller territory. The figure below taken from Broch-Due (1990a:340) shows the representation of the conceptual plan of tribe and kinship level.



In this thesis, I will not focus on a specific moiety, clan or territorial section. My analyses will pertain to groups of younger Turkana from the areas where I have done my fieldwork. These are Lodwar and Nakwamekwi, Kalokol, Loarengak and Kaikor (Maps below). Especially in Lodwar, which is the main town of Turkana District, and in the towns of Nakwamekwi and Kalokol the population is very mixed do to past and present immigrations of people from the rest of Turkana.

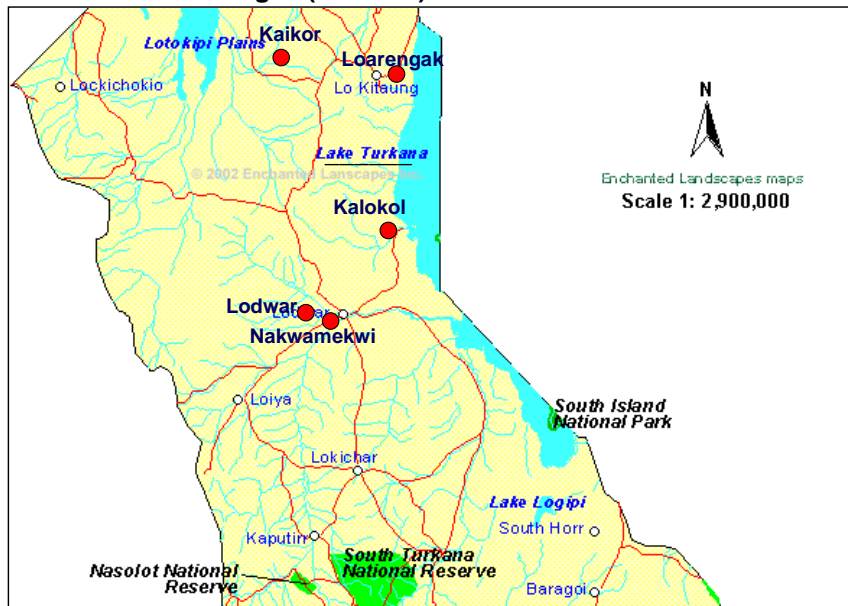
Map of Turkana District



Map of Kenya



Towns and villages (red dots) where I conducted fieldwork



Thesis Statement

In this thesis, I am looking at socialization of sedentarized Turkana children by the family, the Kenyan program of formal education, the evangelization performed by religious organizations, and the influence of the media, and other ‘objects of modernity’.¹⁷ I will call these the agents or forces of socialization. I will investigate such forces in opposition: the processes of change and the responses embedded in the thoughts and practices with which Turkana youth keep the

¹⁷ For example: cell phones, radios, mechanized means of transport, modern hair and clothes styles.

fluidity of their culture alive. The non-traditional non-Turkana forces of socialization are (still) undermining the fluid structure that is at the very nature of Turkana people (Broch-Due 1990a, 2000a). This fluidity is represented and embedded in the nomadic way of life, and it is reflected in the way the Turkana understand the world, produce nature and identities (Broch-Due 2000a), and pass it on to younger generations. I will ask the question: as reflected in the Turkana youth, are the dimensions of space, time and the body impacted by the new forces of socialization? If so, to what degree? How are the children and the youth of sedentarized Turkana manifesting such influences in their thoughts and practices? What are the short and long-term effects that these sorts of influences have on the traditional nomadic pastoralist Turkana culture? Finally, what are the ‘critical moments’ and dilemmas among parents and children?

In order to address the abovementioned questions, I will investigate what has changed and what has not changed as manifested in uses of space, narratives, and body decorations among the younger generations. I will show then how the perceptions of space, time and body among the most sedentarized Turkana youth and children are nonetheless mobile and diverge from the discourses of development, nationalization and evangelization, which are only apparently dominant. Despite (or because) of such imported changes, sedentarized Turkana still make movement, fertility, natural cycles, and the physiological body the grounds for their lives and culture. The values deriving from these dimensions are embedded deeply in their thoughts and practices even if elusive in appearance. This is a rather creative new articulation of old key values. I argue that the Turkana family and community are still the strongest agent of socialization and of the production of *habitus*. Despite appearances, fertility and procreation, respect for the elders, and the harmonic communitarian good are the ultimate goals.

Socialization and Agents of Socialization

Generational change is a phenomenon which pertains to all cultures. There is nothing new about the youth being different than the elders in thoughts, beliefs and practices. However it is always revealing to investigate what these changes are, how they have taken place, and what the agents of change are. Among the youth, this type of investigation can reveal broader mechanisms of change, possible agendas for the changes, as well as the responses to it. Where are differences in thoughts and practices manifesting? Are these differences really fundamental -representing a drastic change in the culture- or just apparent and superficial?

Socialization is the process of inheriting and learning customs, ideologies, beliefs, and norms in a given culture and society. This field of study was first explored in the domain of sociology, when anthropology was not even an independent discipline. It was through the Boas school, and especially with the work of Margaret Mead, that anthropology started studying change as reflected in younger generations. Ever since the systematic collections of culture traits, human samples and practices, which begun in the 1800s, culture was perceived to be static. Cultural traits and practices were not believed to change in time, and the ethnographer's duty was to observe and describe them in an effort of preservation, as in a "cabinet of curiosities" (Hylland Eriksen and Nielsen 2001:15). It was his/her duty to 'reduce' cultures to their relics (Wagner 1981:28-29). Differences among various age groups were of course recognized, but more as physiologically-determined rather than socially.

Franz Boas was interested in seeing if age changes in behavior and personality were universal. He asked his student Margaret Mead to investigate the coming of age of the Samoa adolescents, and the results were that such claims could not be generalized for all cultures, but that adolescent behavior was determined by specific social upbringing (Mead 1928). Mead, who recognized that culture is dynamic, continued with the study of younger groups' enculturation and generational gaps until her death. After Mead, the anthropology of socialization started receiving a growing attention and interest, which culminated in the early 1960s. It began attracting and integrating studies from several disciplines, most importantly from linguistic, pedagogy, sociology and psychology. I will not touch upon the psychological, pedagogical, and linguistic aspects and implications in my ethnography on socialization. I will indeed use socialization solely from a sociological and anthropological perspective.

In Africa, the ethnographic study of child rearing and anthropology of education were closely connected and shaped by colonial agendas. What do we know and how could we know more about Africa, were the recurrent questions. In 1926 in England, the International Institute of African Languages and Culture was founded. The Institute aimed to achieve a scientific understanding of Africa and of the native people and their social upbringing (Eddy 1985:89, Apter 1999). Malinowski played a fundamental role in the institute, providing a new methodological approach to the study of native youth. "Nearly all the studies on childhood development in Africa societies are a direct result of Malinowski's working relationships with the Institute and his training of anthropologists, missionaries, educators, and others in ethnographic field method"(Eddy 1985:90). In studying social upbringing, which is deeply embedded in practice, the ethnographer must conduct a fieldwork through "participant observation."

The studies of socialization in East Africa broadened in the 1960s and the 1970s; the most famous works are by Margaret Read (1956, 1959), Fox et al. (1967) and Mary Ainsworth (1967). In the 1990s the attention turned more to the effects of socialization on the perceptions of the younger generations. At this time, anthropological studies were greatly influenced by the new fields of studies of modernity and globalization. In relation to children and youth, the attention was directed to the investigation of social issues as child labor (cf. Nieuwenhuys 1996) and cultural ecology (cf. Katz 1991). The media were also studied in connection to its influence to the social upbringing of children (cf. Appadurai 1986, 1996), and to the youth popular culture. The latter field mostly interested and interests the research conducted in the Center of Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University.

The phenomenon of cohabitation and interrelation of youth groups of the same culture, characterized by different social production and borrowing from different cultural capitals, has coined the term “cultural complexity” (Hannerz (1992) in Gjelstad 2009:1-2). Changing scenarios of socialization and cultural production have become of great significance for the anthropologists. For instance, cultural crises and changes among displaced culture groups and immigrants are explained in relation to the socialization of the youth in a context of diasporas. The concept of “imagined communities” that shapes national consciousness is seen reflected in the behavior, thoughts, and practices of particularly the children and the youth of displaced communities (Anderson [1983] 2006).

Children and young adults are seldom expected to have their own opinions and perceptions, especially ones that differ from those of their community, society, and family. When a child does not conform to expectations or common norms, her/his behavior is usually classified as fantastic, or childish, and as such not taken seriously. However some anthropological literature has shown that children have a rational and abstract capability of thought and that they live quite complex lives (Treacher 2006, Riesman 1992). Amal Treacher in “Children’s imaginings and narratives: inhabiting complexity” argues that the narratives of children are not just the product of infantile fantasy, but reflect upon complex social dynamics in which the child “wants to make sense” of things in their own way (2006). Narratives produced by children are always “contextualized”; they refer to social relations and “are constructed within and through the social” (ibid.98). I will get back to Treacher’s ideas of children’s narratives in Chapter 4 on the perceptions of time.

The anthropologist Paul Riesman is on a quest to find out “for himself” what personality is, and if the western assumption “that there is a causal connection between parental practices of child rearing and the formation of personality in...children” stands valid

also for other cultures (1992:10). In his detailed work about the Fulani and the RiimaayBe of Burkina Faso, Riesman discusses how, despite the very similar social upbringings of young Fulani and RiimaayBe children, these two groups develop extremely different personalities in adulthood. Riesman's ethnography is an example of "reflexive" anthropology. In talking, observing and interacting with Fulani and RiimaayBe parents and children, Riesman rethinks his own prejudices as a parent about parenthood and socialization. Moreover, it is through the anthropologist's interest in younger generations that dynamics of social diversification among the two groups are revealed. The way children are brought up has little to do with the living practices, behaviors, beliefs, and choices done later in life. These reflect a much deeper *habitus* that draws from historical, cultural, and religious divergences.

"Many parts of the world (and especially the developing world) are undergoing a socialization crisis", Philip Mayer stated in his introduction to the book "Socialization the Approach from Social Anthropology" of 1970. As expressed in the testimony of the elder Luis at the opening of this chapter, many Turkana parents of the town areas feel they are experiencing a socialization crisis. They feel they have lost control over their children as they themselves no longer represent the only agents of socialization. In the following chapters I will discuss how the agents of socialization among the sedentarized Turkana have changed and are still changing, and today's children are socialized differently from their parents and grandparents. Particularly in towns there is a co-existence of many different agents of socialization and space, time and body dimensions. Members of the younger generations may have the need to *re-socialize* at certain periods of their lives, or even during the same day, in order to adapt or to make sense of certain circumstances. This situation may appear as a dilemma, but it is lived quite harmoniously nevertheless. While the children and the youth may seem to have drastically changed from their ancestors to fit into new social parameters and value systems, they are just adjusting their strategies of behavior.

Habitus and Theory of Practice

Socialization practices could be conceptualized as "social fields of practice" according to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. In these fields important negotiations of values take place and reproduction of social structures may occur. Bourdieu uses the term *habitus* to describe the way people share social space, and perceptions of social practicing; it produces practices and deeply embedded predispositions. Habitus is following the unspoken norms and rules of a society and social class into which one is born and raised (Bourdieu 1977). The macrocosm

represented by the larger structures and discourses, which regulate people's lives, is reproduced in the microcosm of concrete practices by the agents. Habitus includes both symbolic and cultural capital, and "people evoke symbols in their practice" (Broch-Due 1990a). Thus, there is a certain degree of social and historical determinism in the creation of a habitus, and moreover, according to Bourdieu, even personal factors like predisposition, taste and choice are shaped "un-freely". Unconsciously, the agent does not chose, s/he just "reproduces".

For Bourdieu social agents are 'virtuosos' who are not dominated by some abstract social principles but who know the script so well that they can elaborate and improvise upon the schemes which it provides and in the light of the relations with others. (King 2000:4).

I agree with Anthony King (2000) that the concept of habitus remains somehow a deterministic concept,¹⁸ and that Bourdieu developed and used it mostly in relation to 'class'. Nevertheless, I believe it to be a good generalizing tool, one which informs an analysis of socialization practices. 'Reading' only superficially into the younger generations' practices, one can be lured into believing that their habitus is different than that of their parents, grandparents and ancestors given the different social system and fields of practice (formal schooling, Christianity, modernity) they have been raised in. For Bourdieu, people's practices tend to reproduce layers of dominance, hierarchies of classes and values. If the new fields of practice were *really* dominant, then the young generations would reproduce that habitus. I will show how this is not the case, even though many¹⁹ would like to believe the opposite, and do keep claiming it.

Through the use of space, time and the body, dimensions that are changing in appearance, sedentarized Turkana youth reproduce daily practices that are representative and metaphors of specific undead and unchanged cultural values. At the same time, my ethnographic material will show syncretism of practice which, while it loosely fits the ideas of predisposition, can be explained through Bourdieu's theory of practice, for its "broad and theoretical framework" (Ortner 2006:17).

¹⁸ While Bourdieu wanted to bridge the gap between the structuralists and the subjectivists, the objectivity and the subjectivity, the community and the individual, his concept of habitus was criticized for being still too deterministic and structural King, A. (2000)

¹⁹ NGOs, religious and governmental groups in their propagandas.

The practices produced by the habitus, as the strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations, are only apparently determined by the future. (Bourdieu 1977:72)

I will show how Turkana youth and children carry in themselves many diverging cultural and symbolic capitals transmitted to them through socialization practices. They select, use and draw from these cultural capitals fluidly and easily to fit into different situations. Nevertheless:

...[they tend] to reproduce the objective structures of which they are the product, they are determined by the past conditions which have produced the principle of their production. (ibid.)

Habitus cannot be investigated without studying and analyzing practices. The research on ‘practice theory’ was developed in the 1970s principally by Bourdieu, Sahlins and Giddens. Prior to this, the study of culture was forced into one of two opposite methods of inquiry: the descriptive and objective way, or the symbolic subjective one. In the *Outline of a Theory of Practice* Bourdieu states clearly that practice is embedded in social relations with others who intimately understand, accept or condemn people’s actions (1977). I will follow along this line to explain behaviors, thoughts and practices of young sedentarized Turkana when interacting with the others, and as representations of ‘archaic’ social relations. The dialectical reproduction of the cultural and symbolic capitals through agents is really what is bridging the two theoretical standpoints (Ortner 2006:2).

These works [Bourdieu, Sahlins, and Giddens] were...enormously important in at least beginning to lay out the mechanisms by which the seeming contradiction that ‘history makes people, but people make history’ is not only not a contradiction, but is perhaps the profoundest truth of social life. (ibid.)

What profoundly structures the new generations’ practices? How do they construct their agency in making choices, acting, being inventive and creative? I argue that besides ‘reproducing’ the cultural and symbolic capitals and often choosing the habitus which reflects ‘archaic social relations’, children and youth are becoming empowered by the forces in opposition that inform their upbringing. Sedentarized Turkana younger generations can orchestrate so skillfully in and out of different cultural and symbolic systems. These practices are not associable to “coping mechanisms” or “resistance practices”. Practical theory, when used to investigate power relations and oppositions between the local and the global, the empire and the province, is not relevant to my venues of investigation. Firstly, I believe the

dimensions of 'local' and 'global' are very specific in Turkana, and do not fit the dimensions of globalization and globalized rural. Secondly, a study of power relations presupposes a dynamic of 'real' control, which in Turkana is only apparent.

Marshal Sahlins recounts the economic dynamics between the Melanesia people and the westerners. In the same way Europeans have specific goals in mind (profit and exploitation) when commercializing with the 'south', so too do the islanders. Their requests and negotiations of goods are very specific. For example 'prestige goods' bought from the foreigners, such as fishing gear, carpentry and culinary utensils, were believed by the westerners to be used as necessities or utilitarian goods. Instead, they were used by the Melanesians as "subsidizing activities that the westerners categorize as 'ceremonial'." (2005:29) I agree with Sahlins when he writes:

Perhaps is romantic to speak of 'resistance', as this would imply a self-conscious political opposition. But whether or not it comes to this, the indigenous mode of response to imperialism is always culturally subversive, insofar as the people must need to interpret the experience, and they can do so only according to their own principles of existence. (ibid.28)

Whilst an analysis of 'coping mechanisms' is not appropriate to my case, the practices of the younger generations can nonetheless be indicators of a weak foreign power system. Sherry Ortner is able to combine the theory of practice with agency. In her book *Anthropology and Social Theory: culture, power and the acting subject*, Ortner draws extensively from Bourdieu, Sahlins, and Giddens whilst broadening their standpoint to help her examination of "direct resistance" and the way domination is always "riven with ambiguities, contradictions and lacunae" (2006:7).

Crisis is the necessary condition for the questioning of *doxa* but it is not in itself a sufficient condition for the production of a critical discourse. (Bourdieu 1977:169)

A "catastrophic", in the sense of irreversible, change has happened in some areas of Turkana and is impacting especially upon the town areas. The existing *doxa* and habitus are being threatened by an invading *heterodoxa*. Heterodoxa being, according to Bourdieu, a different way of articulating the old cultural and symbolic capital (ibid. 159-171).

My young informants will show that their personal choices of symbolic capitals, expressed in thought and practice, are syncretic. Apparently and superficially they fit into the

dimensions of space, time and the body which have been changed by new power relations and agents of socialization. However, while wearing the introduced imaginations, values and norms, the Turkana children and youth deeply manifest strong ties to the original agents of socialization, namely the traditional Turkana family and community; what I have been referring to as the ‘ancestral social relations’.

‘Scapes’, Landscapes, and Contextual Approach

I would like to express generational changes, and fields of socialization with the term *scape*. We can understand the concept of *scape*, if we take, for example, landscape which is built into. Landscape, in the arts, especially in painting, is the way the artist would express his sensual, mnemonic, and personal experienced view of a scene, representing it through visual means. *Scape* has been used by anthropologists in many different areas of investigation, to convey multi-significance and describe both cultural and individual variations of thought and practice. In his analysis of the local connection to the global, Arjun Appadurai uses the term *scapes* in relation to the diversity brought by global flow. He refers to five interconnected and intersecting dimensions of *scape*: *ethnoscapes* (people), *technoscapes* (information), *finanscapes* (capital), *mediascapes* (images or representations), and *ideoscapes* (ideologies) (1990:6-7). These *scapes* are “imagined worlds” that are interconnected and “constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups around the world” (ibid.7). *Scapes* are specific positioning, situated perceptions, and “perspectical landscapes” (ibid.). “‘*Scape*’ helps to situate the significance of the social positioning of spectators within it” (Broch-Due 2000), it also “allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of...landscapes” (Basso 1996:33).

Scapes are the different ways in which, for instance, thoughts and practices can be expressed in relation to space, time and the body, three vital dimensions in any culture. I find the concept very relevant for any ethnography and especially for mine. In this thesis I deal with perceptions and imaginations among the younger sedentarized Turkana generations, which appear very diverse if seen from different angles. For example, the way the youth of the towns prefer to dress in jeans and modern clothes could be seen as an assimilation into the ‘global taste’, while it is a way of showing off resources by being in possession of ‘prestige objects’. We will see in Chapter 5 that for girls the preference in dress remains the long skirt and *lesos*, a traditional African wraparound skirt, as well as for the animal skin and beads

ornaments, even though they are ‘bombarded’ by the media with images of fashion and beauty coming from down-country Kenya and the western world.

The different imaginations of the sedentarized Turkana child and youth can be referred as scapes. For instance, we will see that whilst the NGOs and to the missionary a schoolchild represents modernity, development, and humanism, to her/his family s/he represents a way to acquire wealth measured in heads of livestock later in life (see Chapter 4). Moreover, a venue created by developmental interventions in the past, plays on the narratives and perceptions of those who have lived the time of development, differently than to their children who have come after. While the elders talk and refer with nostalgia to a landscape of development, the children and youth experience it as amusement locus (see Chapter 2).

A structural/semiotic approach is paramount for a study on scapes (Moore 1986). However, “an emphasis on the internal logic of symbols systems brackets off the possibility of understanding how such systems are used and situated in defined historical contexts” (ibid. 2). The context, as well as the symbol, is an essential factor. Following what Henrietta H. Moore has accomplished in her re-interpretation of domestic space among the Marakwet, I will aim to link production and reproduction of meanings and values, which interchange each other and are reflected in syncretic behavior and different use of symbolic capitals among the younger generations. How the children and the youth act, choose, think and perceive will help to reveal and to determine which socio-historical conditions trigger and govern the generational changes and the changes in socialization.

Missions to the Turkana

The socialization process, which I wish to narrate, will be set in an accurate socio-historical context. I take a constructive approach, where I will describe briefly some of the most important structural processes that have aimed to influence space, time, and the body in Turkana. These are colonialism, development (modernity), and (mostly) Christian religion. To investigate in depth socialization practices and responses to it, it is necessary to look into all the “flows of practice” across time, space and the variety of educational contexts (Nespor 1997, Levinson 1999:595). I will list the educational contexts more accurately in Chapter 4. Now I will give a historical context of interventions on which to set the ethnographic investigation.

The re-shaping of Turkana space, time and body started a century ago with the interventions of British colonialists. Turkana people still remember and talk about the year of

the scattering, or *Aperitit*, in 1918 when, after a long war, the British took possession of Turkana territories (Good 1988, Broch-Due 1989, 1990a). Early changes took the form of colonial power and expressed itself through the killing of people and confiscation of animals. The process of transformation in Turkanaland by British colonization consisted also in the introduction of harsh taxes. Nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists were forced out of their regular paths, they were moved around, and occasionally and arbitrarily repatriated, as in the case of the Turkana of Isiolo (Good 1988, Broch-Due 2000b). These procedures have altered a well-established equilibrium, triggering droughts, famines, and first displacement of people. Droughts and the consequent famines resulted in the opening of feeding camps and called for the help of religious and non-religious missions as early as in the 1920s. The independence of Kenya (1963) followed by the dream of development in the country induced the closure of the feeding camps and forced agrarian, infrastructural, and fishing development upon the Turkana.

In the early 1970s, the Norwegian Developmental Agency (NORAD) entered Turkana. Its interventions began with the construction of the Fish Road. As a result of NORAD's vast supply of funds, as well as the full support of the Kenyan government, NORAD quickly implemented many initiatives, ranging from fisheries, to establishing women's *mandeleo*²⁰ - in this case women's associations. The Norwegians sponsored education at all levels, pressed for reforestation, built infrastructures like schools, hospitals, nurseries, and even a fish freezing factory (Broch-Due 1989). After the Norwegian cooperation was interrupted and the Norwegians were expelled overnight from Kenya by President Moi for political reasons, development in Turkana fell into stasis. The Italian Aid Fund (FAI) began an aquaculture in Kalokol in 1985 to re-populate the Lake Turkana with fry and juveniles, because of earlier overfishing that had greatly diminished the fish population of the Lake. When the 7-years project ended, the ponds alimented by solar panels were abandoned, and quickly destroyed and looted. Lastly, in the mid-nineties the Japanese through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) began a fishery project, teaching new fishing techniques and providing fishing equipment. Their cooperation lasted only one year. After the Japanese, development in Turkana has come to a full halt.

Currently, the practice of fishing exists almost only on a subsistence level. Several non-Turkana groups (namely Luya and Luo) hold the monopoly over the non-intensive commercialization of Turkana fish, which is brought and sold to Kisumu's markets.

²⁰ Development in Kiswahili

Occasionally, the religious missions and some NGOs²¹ will help the fishermen by marketing fish and by subsidizing fishing gear. There are a few women *mandeleo* in the region, but they are aimed at empowering women, rather than to boosting any specific development. All these development plans have failed: they have neither brought real development nor self-subsistence to the region. Contrarily, as a counter effect, the people now continue to gather in towns, fragmentized into micro-communities, benefitting from small feeding camps called schools, clinics, churches, and relief. Displaced and impoverished sedentarized Turkana have for decades been stuck in what Vigdis Broch-Due terms "poverty traps": situations of almost full dependency to foreign charity for survival as a consequence of lack of livestock, the basic and fundamental source of life for the Turkana people (1989, 1999). From the colonial times to the developmental era, Turkana is more recently being shaped by religious interventions. One of these is the Catholic mission that developed and spread in the areas where I conducted my fieldwork.

The first Catholic missionaries in Turkana arrived in the early 1960s. In the 1950s, there was already a permanent African Inland Church (AIC) mission station in South Turkana, but the district was practically closed by the British administration to further infiltrations. At the time, the territory of Turkana was assigned, promised and divided up among the various Christian congregations: mostly Anglicans, Protestants, and Catholics. The St. Patrick Irish mission started with the building of a hospital and mission in Lodwar in 1961 only after a long diplomatic fight with the British administration (Good 1988). In the first year, two priests, Father Murray and Father Brennan, would 'just' provide *food for the paupers*. The first mission in Lodwar was in fact no more than a feeding camp, as were all the small Christian institutions in Turkana at the time. A small school was shortly after established, and in 1962 there were already one hospital and one school at Kakuma as well as nunneries at Lorugumu and Kaputir. As a consequence of the harsh and hot environment, the mission of Lodwar was moved to Lorugumu, which was more connected to the *greener areas* of the Kitale region through the Kara-Pokot Road. The mission was under the prefecture of Eldoret, and only in 1968 it became independent and Bishop Mahon assumed its leadership. Very quickly, in a process that is continuing at present day, the Catholic mission spread out over the territory through the physical presence of tabernacles, priests, monks and nuns houses, dispensaries, hospitals, nurseries and schools.

²¹ For example: World Vision, CCFP (Christian Children Found Projects), and the Luxembourgish Foundation Bridderlech Deelen

Today, Christian Catholic institutions amount to 80% of the groups in charge of development and administration in Turkana district. The remaining 20% is composed of by other Christian and non-Christian religious groups, governmental, and some NGOs (Oxfam GB, Merlin, the Red Cross). When working in Turkanaland, both in the towns and the countryside, it is impossible to bypass the Catholic institutions. They provide the only public lodging, cafeterias, and ‘conference’ centers. They administer the gas and the mechanics stations; they own private motor vehicles and aircrafts. They manage dispensaries, hospitals, and clinics; provide medicines, train nurses and doctors. They drill wells and boreholes, organize youth and children groups, and build schools and nurseries. They run a typography, a publishing house, a newspaper. They fund the only radio station in Turkana, and manage the few internet cafés in Lodwar.

Definitions: Place, People, and Language

In my thesis I will present case studies and observations from Kalokol, Loarengak, Lodwar, Nakwamekwi and Kaikor areas (Map 3). Throughout the study of education and socialization in anthropology there has been a great divide between age-classes: infants, children, young adults and adolescents. My target group is wide: I am interested in children and youth. I define childhood as the age sphere that precedes adolescence and youth what comes next, up to marriage. Since for Turkana culture the achievement of marriage consists of having paid (or received) the bride price as well as having born a child, I have defined a youth ‘married’ if at least one of these conditions is met.

Throughout my thesis, I will be using Turkana words and expressions when possible. I have checked the words’ spelling with Brother Mario Vermi’s *Turkana Dictionary* (2006). The local language is meaningfully stronger, and can reveal many more spheres of understanding than its translation. I also wanted to report more ‘narratives’ as possible. I agree in fact with Hayden White that:

Narrative is a metacode, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted. (1980:6)

I will certainly interpret and contextualize the narratives in this thesis, but a few will be left to stimulate the reader to a personal understanding, and feeling.

Notes on Methodology and Fieldwork

During my fieldwork, I had to accept that the data, verbal and non-verbal, I collected and interpreted would have been somehow constructed and situated. The “ethnographic present” (Sanjek 1991) is a product of a present and a past situatedness, both of the informant and the ethnographer. I considered it necessary to reveal the theoretical, political and ideological standpoints and research goals of my thesis here in the first chapter, before beginning with the ethnographic interpretation. A proper ethnography must show a “candid” methodology (ibid. 1990). To use candor is to be open and honest about the background, and the goals of the research, as well as data collecting strategies and systems of refinement, and interpretation.

I was in Turkana for about 6 months, between July and December 2009. This was my first anthropological fieldwork as well as my first visit to Sub-Saharan Africa. I was scared and excited. I wanted to be aware of everything and because of this I paid close attention to my personal reactions and in particular to the sensual reactions. Through fieldwork one perceives, feels, and becomes bodily involved, more an insider rather than outsider (Jenkins 1994). To completely divide thought from practice is impossible. Knowledge comes from both dimensions. However, I wanted to be as ‘objective’ as possible, keep theory in mind, and stay focused on my project. It was not my goal to collect oral histories, conduct journalistic work, or build documentaries. It was not my goal to ‘preserve’ Turkana culture and reduce it to its relics (Wagner 1981:28-29). My aim as an ethnographer was to be in an “interpretive quest” (Keesing 1987:164), to produce a “non-descriptive representation” (Spencer 1989:150) valid, original and keeping the high standard of a master thesis. Finally, I wanted my ethnographic fieldwork to serve to the purpose of revealing stories and informing about culture, remaining moral and ethical in nature.

With much reflection in the post-fieldwork, I can say I have accomplished all these projects. I can describe in detail the acre-sweet smell of roasted goat, the unctuous warm touch of skin smeared with ghee, and the internally vibrating pounding of drums through the night, as I can reflect on the reaction to such foreign sensations as an epiphany of my own cultural habitus. I managed to be respectful and not judge, whilst being open and welcoming to the judgments and inquiries of others. In doing so I almost never had problems being accepted within the community. People have always willingly shared with me. In the evenings I wrote and ‘theorized’ the concreteness I had experienced during the daytime. Lastly, I asked questions and looked for the answers to my inquiries about social upbringing in context of change. Of course I was curious, and could not control and chose my data, so I have attained

additional material which does not strictly pertain to my initial queries. I feel that, even though generally my fieldwork improved with time and practice, these first six months in Turkana were not enough, and if I were to carry out my fieldwork now, I would do it differently.

From experience based on different situations, I decided whether to do *in loco* visits or random encounters, semi-formal or formal and informal interviews, observation or participant observation. To speak to people in their work/home/school/grazing field was important to place their stories in a familiar context. I conducted semi-formal interviews, which involved my asking questions to the interviewee, leaving much freedom to digress and tell stories, while I took brief notes. I was aware that spoken accounts requested of the informants by the ethnographer could be misleading.

I tried to conduct participant observation as much as possible. In fact, the “vernacular” data – data not communicated by language- (Parkin in Sanjek 1991:618) can be closer to the ‘actuality’ of what happens. Indeed, unchained from the imprisonment of language, it can oppose “stereotype...draw[ing] upon a powerful series of opposition terms...rural/urban, pre-scientific/scientific, backward/modern etc...” (Jenkins1994:448). These are some of the dichotomous constructions of our language. However, I was aware that the ‘vernacular’ is more prone to be interpreted by the ethnographer. While I can concretely list the ways I have collected verbal data, it is much harder to define how I have done observation/participation.

When dealing with the children I realized I could curb possible shyness and fear if I restrained a little from joining their activities. However, often I was invited to play with them. Finally, I also collected data in unfamiliar settings (even away from Turkanaland), made questionnaires, for example to school children, and participated in to all sorts of activities, like cooking, school teaching, singing, and dancing. During my permanence in Kenya, I treated everyone as a possible informant, as I read and observed everything as a source of information.

*“Erae ngide epalonu, eyaunito ngitela
lugele gelai wapei lukote ngimoe,
ngikakuangak ka ngiturkana.”*

Children are relationships; they bring
tribes together, enemies together,
Europeans and Turkana together.

*“Akuj ngesi kidiama, nege ka
niangikanyar”* God is above, is here,
is the sky.

Chapter 2: *The Road and the Path*

Space, Place and Landscape

We cannot examine the perceptions of space without narrowing down the dimension of space, or at least defining it into its subparts. Space is considered an absolute, the universal and somehow the ideal; it has fixed descriptive parameters and measurements and is used in the “politics and economics machine”. It is a useful device in detecting power relations, as well as historical, and socio-economic systems that exist in the background. However, Gupta and Ferguson (1997) argue that the concept of space holds little concrete value and has hidden agendas for example, the anti-politics machine (Ferguson 1990), and therefore is incomplete for a thorough analysis of a community.

It is instead *place* that best represents the community and the individuals that inhabit it. What is referred abstractly to as space like a town, a road, a house, or a school, is actually lived as place. Within a given space there are infinite variations of place, representing the infinite uses, understandings and sensual perceptions of it. Then concepts of multivocality and multilocality (Rodman 1992, Foucault 1970) are interpreted in the specific, but at the same time changing and heterogeneous dimension of place.

Places, like voice, are local and multiple. For each inhabitant, a place has a unique reality, one in which meaning is shared with other people and places.
(Rodman 1992:643)

According to archaeologist Christopher Tilley, place can be fixed into differences and singularities (1994:34), and thus the concept of landscape can provide a more general and

holistic understanding of physical space, as it implies a concrete cultural process (Ingold 1993). It is the set of symbols and cultural values imbedded in the physical surroundings of a people (Hirsh 1995). Whilst in the foreground we find the immediately concrete *place*, and in the background the more immaterial/abstract *space*, the concept of landscape connects these two extremities.

“What is being defined as landscape...is the relationship seen to exist between these two poles of experience in any cultural process” (ibid.5).

Landscape is for the most, understood as a *visual* concept. In this way it differs from the concreteness of place, which is perceived by all the senses including time and cultural practice -habitus. Place, by its definition, cannot be generalized or idealized. It is continuously changing and differently perceived.

For my analysis, I will draw from all these three concepts as it is through their confrontation and opposition that we can better understand children and youth's practices and all the layers of perceptions within a “complex culture.” Thus, I will narrate the constructions of space by foreign interventions as it sets the ethnography into a historical, political and economic context. Throughout this thesis, I will give “thick descriptions” (Geertz 1973) of place, since this is the best way of representing it and allowing the reader grasp the symbolic embedding of place (Moore 1986). Lastly, I will draw from the concept of landscape for its flexibility in summarizing experiences of space and place in cultural processes, being a generalizing tool. Landscape will be also used in Chapter 3 and 4 in relation to the house space and the practices of memory.

Changes on the space

According to Bourdieu, socialization in the modern world works in three ways: producing a general *space* which is both measurable and predictable, reducing the physical space amongst people so that they can experience economic and cultural capital in similar ways, and finally reducing the movement of the people in order to exercise more direct control over them (1996). Despite the embedded rules and values, the symbolic importance of space is not changed spontaneously with the physical transformation of vital space. Moreover, the habitus does not change simply because space changes even when the changes of space create new practices.

Michel Foucault had argued that last century, the century of modernity, has been the “epoch of space” (1986). The researches, theories, innovations and systems that have ruled our time of progress have been mostly concerned with creating new space and taking control over it. They have achieved this through the building of structures, infrastructures and through transportation. Such tasks and interests are the bible for development, and surely still the agenda of most of the developmental interventions in the developing world aiming to change space and the perceptions of space into a more western and modern understanding. Accordingly, a person or a group will be progressively defined and confined by the space s/he occupies, and the activities s/he performs within it (Broch-Due 2000b). Thus, daily life, school, work, and entertainment are intended to regulate activities and uses of space. What is not taken into consideration by such enterprises is that the people, who are directed to share these same cultural and economic resources through teaching and practice, continue to carve their own places within such space, through thoughts and practices. Moreover, place, when stripped from its superficial appearances, can reveal values and norms felt deeply, which connect to a vaster and more complex landscape of cultural process. Thus, even into an ‘immobilized’ space, the sedentarized Turkana have perceptions, dreams and values which are soaked in fluid mobility, and create or reinforce ‘archaic social relations’. It is “the multiple lived relationships that people maintain with places, for it is solely by virtue of these relationships that space acquires meaning” (Basso 1996).

Place has changed most in the town areas. The foreign interventions in Turkana, particularly in the last 20-25 years has led to many changes- new development in the form of roads, buildings and health facilities, re-organization and regulation of space, as well as the displacement and separation of people, whilst at the same time congregating different groups of people. Some of the introduced values –principally nationalistic, individualistic, modern and Christian- have influenced the perceptions and uses of space, especially among the youth, creating visible (whilst still only superficial) generational differences. The interventions on space have shaped and engendered the values embedded in space and movement. Boys have been advantaged by some of the changes to space, for example the introduction of entertainment loci and popular means of transport, girls on the contrary, have suffered a reduction in the space that they can utilize. Girls cannot move freely like before with greater consequences to their living quality and status (see Chapter 3). However, despite all the transformations of spaces and its uses, even among the most sedentarized Turkana young generations, a fluid understanding of space which privileges *movement*, is still very powerful.

The present chapter will be divided in two sections: one on movement, and one on geographical landscapes. Firstly, I will show that the perceptions and imaginations of the younger generations still retain the concept of movement as the highest value in making relationships, in thinking about nature and divine powers, and in keeping a fluid community alive. In the section on geography I will show how environment is not only a natural category, but it is a construct of the human being. The younger sedentarized Turkana are divided into different geographic landscapes and referred by me to as the ‘children of the road’, ‘the path’ and ‘the shore’. It is the environment and the place they occupy, as well as the activities in which they involve themselves, that produce such divisions. I am going to show how the newly constructed geographical landscape is conveying a sense of *dangerous space* to Turkana youth. It is emphasized by school curricula. It reflects the propaganda of ethnic conflict, the reduced security around the border and frontier areas, and the increase of crime in the town areas. As a response, the young sedentarized Turkana I have interviewed appear to understand the danger of the landscape they inhabit within the discourses of violence and protection rotating around their imaginations and security practices. However, they explain it in much more complicated terms, than that of ethnic conflict.

Movement- *Arotokinet*

Movement is a concept that still greatly interests sedentarized Turkana youth. Due to their past as a nomadic tribe, Turkana know all about movement within their own spatiality. The word for movement in Turkana language also signifies departure. Movement is what provides the people and their livestock with water and grass. The movement of animals among people builds vital alliances, and the cycle of rains, grass, milk and blood ensures procreation, survival and eternity (Broch-Due 1990a, 1991). Particularly circular movement (see Chapter 4 and 5) is life for the Turkana and it allows the perpetuation of their culture.

So it is not surprising that children in Turkana culture are conceived as fluid beings, movable wealth and a source of both attraction and rejection for families, communities and clans (ibid. 1991). Regardless what kind of future has been planned for them –that they continue to follow the animal herds in the pastures, or remain in school and get a paid employment later- *children are movement*. There is no space constraint for children in Turkana culture. There are of course rules and taboos. However, these rules have most to do with security and control of sexual behavior. For example it is not advisable to move outside the compound at night because of dangerous animals, enemies and evil spirits, and boys and

girls must not swim together. Children move freely in Turkana, and the confinement introduced by the school system is a novelty.

Travelling the road

The youth that ‘travels the road’ in Turkana live mostly around the bigger towns. They are used to travelling by foot along the road to get to boarding school, only occasionally managing to catch a ride on a vehicle. My assistant in Kalokol (Fig. 6) told me that he used to go to school outside Kataboi. He has commuted 25 kilometers by foot on the dirt road every Friday and Sunday since he was six years of age. Ivan explained that 25 km under the sun for a Turkana (and half Karamojong) is not a problem and that he liked going by foot, so long as he could drink a carton of milk to replenish himself afterwards. While I was living in Turkana, I mostly walked to my informants’ homes in order to save money. In Lodwar I commuted often from the area of Napetet to Nakwamekwi, a 5 km journey each way. It was strange for the people to see a *mzungo* walking (they usually all take a taxi or own a vehicle), so I was an object of curiosity and amusement for them. After a while, when the people got used to my presence, and somehow knew me, they used to tell me proudly: “Asekon,²² you walk like a Turkana, you are one of us!”

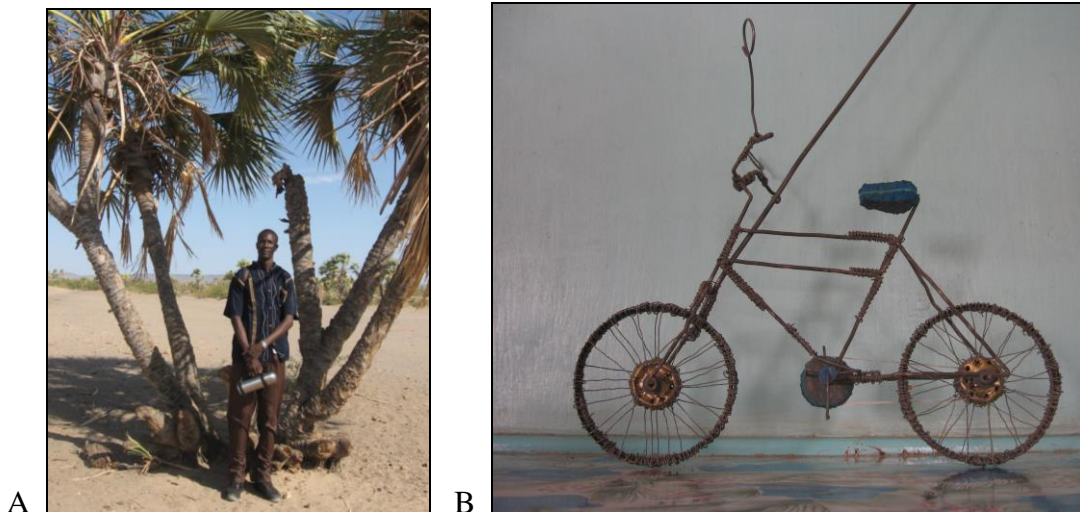


Fig. 6 (A,B). Ivan after a 7 km walk to Lake Turkana shores. Common hand-made Turkana toy.

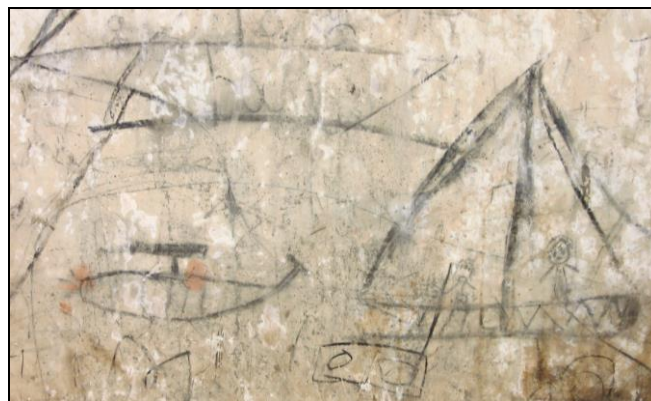
The construction and stabilization of the roads have re-dimensioned the use and knowledge of paths for those who travel by foot, with several social consequences. In the last decade, the growing male youth around Lodwar area has begun investing in small cars or a

²² Asekon is the Turkana name that has been given to me.

pikipiki, a motorcycle.²³ Such means of transportation produce sporadic income because there are not that many who can afford taxi rides. Moreover this is not at all a good way of making a living as the cost of gasoline in Turkana is exorbitant! Nevertheless, young men want to own and being able to drive a vehicle. It is a matter of status and power. Male children dream of getting a bike and this is the most requested gift from their families and sponsors (Fig. 6 B above). When I asked the children what was the first think they would want to buy once grown up, they would answer me a vehicle. Their material desires were impressed in some of the drawings I found in Loarengak (Fig. 7 A,B,C).



A



B

²³ It was told to me that in Lodwar there are almost 100 taxis, and the same number of *pikipiki*!!!



Fig. 7 A, B, C Drawings of children of boats, helicopters, small aircrafts, mini-buses, camions, and cars. Notice the radio in drawing B.

Male youth carrying water often rent or own a bike. They would not carry water on the heads and go by foot –that is a woman’s job. They use the paved, semi-paved or batted roads, avoiding the paths to the water wells and to the towns, which are often shorter. So they could be *seen* by other age-mates on their means of transport. The youth attending school travel by mechanical means and to distant places more often than those Turkana children who don’t go to school, because in the district schools are sparsely distributed. Even when frequenting a day school not so far from their homestead, the pupils may participate to sport or musical events organized by their institutions and therefore travel periodically to different places. While I was in Loarengak a football ‘championship’ was taking place almost every day for an entire week. Outside the convent where I was staying I could hear and watch the games. The children who played had a sort of uniform, and some of them wore tennis shoes. My informants and assistant were not available during match times. These events were lived with great enthusiasm by the entire population of Loarengak. All of the youth seemed to participate playing and watching. Even the adults would interrupt their normal activities and stop to observe while passing by. The elders would take a break from their discussions, and would come out from under the rich shadow of their *abor*.²⁴ You could see old *mama*²⁵ immobilized still with baskets on their head, herders surrounded by their animals, fishermen with their catch and rifle hanging from their shoulders.

²⁴ *Ekitoe a ngikiliok* is the elders’ tree, usually the biggest umbrella-like acacia tree in the village where the initiated and married men sit and discuss problems, try to solve litigations, or just relax and play games.

²⁵ *Mama* is the title in Kiswahili given to mothers and wives.

Sponsorship tied to education comes often with travel prizes for well-deserving students and these get to visit their own benefactors outside Turkana and even abroad! For such reasons, the educated children claim themselves to be freer than children who herd or fish because they have apparently a road to future accomplishment (through education) and are not forced into labor by their parents. These are all metaphors which are provided to them in school.

The example of Carol and Epae is striking. Carol is a middle-aged Spanish widow who during the last five years has joined missionary organizations around the world as volunteer for a few months a year. This fall, Carol spent three months period in Kaikor helping the Marianita sisters of Ecuador. After a few weeks in Kaikor, Carol became acquainted with Epae, a child of 7 who was spending time at the convent eating and playing with the nuns. Given the emaciation of Epae (now renamed Anthony), and the fact that he was out on the road late at night, the Marianitas were convinced he was a street child and needed assistance. They proposed to Carol that she sponsor the child who had never been to school.

Carol started buying clothes and food for the child who was now spending his entire day (excluding nights) at the convent. On the next trip to Lodwar, Carol and sister Lucia brought a petition to brother Hansel, who is the director of Nadirkonyen School for street children of Nakwamekwi. They proposed to take Epae away from Kaikor, where he was mistreated by the other adults and children and to enroll him in the Nadirkonyen School. The child would have received an education and Carol would have paid for the school fees. Upon acceptance to the school in November Epae was taken to Lodwar, his grandmother having signed the necessary papers. Currently he is being taken care by the staff of the school and he will soon start Primary 1. For Carol education is the most precious gift a child can receive. She hopes that Epae will get the right tools to deal with the modern life through education and she dreams of taking him to Spain as a reward trip when he is older and if his grades are good. I went to visit the grandmother of Epae, who knew about the arrangement of sending her grandchild to a school in Lodwar.

“I am happy Epae is leaving me to go to the school in Lodwar. I have no problem with it, as long as he will come back during holidays. We have been living in Adakar Angituliatom, in the reserves up to a year ago, when the enemies came, killed my husband who was a warrior and many others. I took Epae and my other children to Kaikor. Epae grew up in the mountains, and he will be the first to go to school. Maybe I will send that other granddaughter of mine, because we are left with only a few animals. When the mzungo wanted me to sign a paper to send Epae away, I was scared. The community did not

want, but I had no problems. My grandson is going to help me and you in the future, I have explained to them, this is in God's plans! I have spoken to Epae about Lodwar and the town. I told him not to go alone in the road and wander. –you must stay and play with the other children. There are many lorries and cars in Lodwar, there are streets with pavement there, be careful, stay home.- My grandson answered me :-I am going to remember ata,²⁶ don't worry. I am going to remember you, and I will buy you many things: tobacco, sugar, clothes. Many things I will provide.” (Kaikor 1).

The ability to travel long distances or at non-human speed is an up-grader of class and status for the sedentarized Turkana youth. To be carried by a track or lorry is an act of vanity. People do not need to be carried and often ask for rides more as a sport than out of necessity. Jonny has gained points in the community because he had the luck to travel on a small aircraft from Lodwar to Nairobi to visit his Italian sponsor. In fact, those Turkana who have been down-country²⁷ are considered cleverer and *better* in the eyes of the community just for the fact that they have gone so far into the unknown. At the same time, this respect is given only if a person comes back. If not, the relatives will blame and think lowly of him/her. They will call them waste to the family and to the community and they will quickly forget them.

Travelling the path

Paths to the springs and wells:

Karibur, Lochwa-arengan (spring of red water), *Nakinu, Nawoiarengan* (red leaves acacia trees), *Lokamatei* (place of the long grass), *Nangorkitoe* (place of the dry wood), *Kakudoeris, Loteger* (place of Kwarshiokor), *Kanukapokoi*

Paths to the mountains:

Kaekaal (place of the camels), *Natoo, Moru Eris* (mountain of the leopards), *Lokwanamoru* (place of the sharp stones)

Paths to the grazing fields:

Epuke (exit place), *Kengor, Longole*

This is a list of *erot*, path, given to me by Linneus (see later p.34)

There is a large and growing divide between the children who understand the intricate web of paths of their landscape and those who don't. Knowledge of paths throughout the landscape does not belong anymore to every child in Turkana. Early in life, parents realize the capability of a child to memorize a path to the grazing fields, the wells, the riverbeds or the woods. Children who cannot find the path need assistance, and are usually classified as weak, and

²⁶ Grandma in Turkana

²⁷ Down-country are called the Kenyans living outside Turkana, especially the Luo, Luya and Kikuyu.

thus sent to school. The children of the rural areas or countryside are usually referred as *raya* by the children of the urban areas, which has now also become a synonym of villain, native and uneducated (*eraiait*, exposed to great *lubitang*²⁸). On the other hand, the *raya*, from early age, believe that school is a waste of time for them and the community. They enjoy animals, traditions and nature. They feel themselves free and strong. They are proud to represent the traditional values in their daily practices, dress, body decorations, and even when they tell you what they like and dislike. They can go on foot faster and for longer time than the children in school or who live by the lake, and they can dance the best. In fact, they show off during traditional *edonga* (dances).

The *raya* talk about the urban area *etown*, the town, as *awi a emoit*, which literally means the house of the foreigners and the enemies, and is in opposition to the *awi a ngibaren*, the home of the animals, the rural areas. Their main skill is to remember the path. *Erot* is not only the path that takes you to the water-wells, to the mountains and to the grazing fields, it is also the brand²⁹, the drawings in each and every animal that makes it unique and special. *Raya* youth remember the animals, by the path and the patterns of colors of their hides. It is not the child's fault if s/he does not remember *erot*. The Turkana adults have a wonderful explanation as to why it is so hard nowadays to teach the paths to the younger generations. The *emuron*³⁰ of Kaikor has once told me: "The hot sun has eroded the paths! And it makes the children hot headed!" Moreover, too much education spoils the child's mind and there is no more room for remembering the things of tradition. I will come back to how the weather and school 'spoil' the child in Chapter 4 and 5.

Crossing the shore

"My name is Esibitar, I am 18 years old and I am from Kiwanja Ndege village. I was born in Natole and I belong to the Ngipucho clan. My father is a fisherman and my mother stays at home. I vowed to work in early age leaving school since I wanted to help my family. They will be soon too old to fish. My father taught me to fish and so I left school to join his raft. We fish at Beaches, a place near Natirae. After getting the fish I can dry it or sell it when it's still fresh to the refrigerated containers dealers. On a full day of work, I can scoop out 100,000³¹ Ksh, if I can sell the catch to the refrigerated tracks. A fisherman is a rich person because such daily income earning is impossible for the rest of people, he should just get taught how to save money and not to squander it on alcohol!! I have a story to tell. During 2008 a boat was capsized by the waves

²⁸ Turkana word for really strong ignorance

²⁹ Livestock is branded by the Turkana to indicate the *emachar*

³⁰ Emuron is the Turkana healer and diviner.

³¹ 100,000 Kenyan shillings could be the yearly income of a Turkana.

and the fishermen had to survive in the waters for three days. At the 4th day, Losuat³² appeared to them and talked to them. He asked them when they had the accident, and they told him. Losuat gave one of them 10,000 Ksh and the cigarette he was smoking. This man was then confronted by the others who quickly realized they were no longer floating in the waters, but enjoying themselves in town. They suspected witchcraft. One of the fishermen took the money and threw them back to Losuat. Losuat got annoyed and fought the man slashing him with his long nails at the back of his neck and chin. The man who was given the cigarette died immediately, and disappeared. In seconds, the men found their paradise turning into hell, and themselves in the middle of the lake helpless.” (Kalokol 1).

Male children and youth who live around the Lake Turkana feel superior to the other children because they can get access to easy money and become monetarily independent at a very early age. Daniel, a 19 year old from Kalokol center, told me once that to become a fisherman is “throwing an education in the water.” In fact, the lake children have access to schools but very often drop out. School is not bringing them the same quick satisfaction like a paid job as a fisherman. In addition, it is often the pressure of family needs that pushes them to cross the shore and abandon school. Alcoholism is one of the greatest social problems among fishermen and the youth, and it is quite common that the money that comes from fishing ends up spent on beer and local brews. Even though the children of the lake shores are seen as uneducated and wild, they are nevertheless feared and respected because of their audacity and strength in being able to swim and cross the shore into the waters. The story of Esibitar is about *Losuat*. He is the king of the bewitched places of the waters, *aurien ekipe*. Such stories are alive in the children and youth’s imaginations. Every child who lives on the lake shores that I have spoken to, has such a story to tell. There are areas where it is dangerous to go, and where young people are abducted and kept for weeks and even killed! The waters of Lake Turkana are a dangerous place.

Even though girls can swim, they are not allowed to fish, or to go out on a boat in the most insidious waters. They do not get the respect that comes to be able to enter *dangerous* spaces. Girls of the lake do not have access to money from fishing, and as a result are dependent on their families and male relatives. Living on the shore is reducing their spatial mobility and resources. Contrarily, in traditional Turkana pastoralist society, men and women have equal access to the wealth deriving from the livestock. Often, through the marriage of their daughters, and the birth of grandchildren, women can accumulate more wealth than their husbands (Broch-Due 1990a).

³² Losuat is the devil as it is called in Lake Turkana areas.

Geographical Landscapes

Topos and Map

In anthropology, the concept of *topos* refers to a place collectively remembered and felt as belonging to a community (Grasseni 2004). Furthermore, it is passed on to new generations often through the help of place names that evoke myths, and memories, past events and social relations (Basso 1988). In contrast, a map is an abstract schematic view of many *topoi* which have to be familiar in order to make sense to the reader and user of the map. Turkana paths are very difficult to understand for those outside the culture. Not only they are interweaving the landscape and directing the people to the resources, they are also interconnected. In addition, they are a metonym of the physiological body (Broch-Due 1990a, 2000). I will talk more about this aspect in Chapter 5.

Often, if not always, foreign and indigenous geographies and representations of landscape clash (Broch-Due 2000b). “Different mental images would construct...different landscapes” (Grasseni 2004:703). Colonialism, developmental groups and religious missions have constructed a landscape of Turkana that fitted and fits *their* needs and expectations. The Turkana landscape is often described as extreme, harsh, fragile and challenging in newspaper articles, developmental and missionary reports. This land appears hopeless and hostile, its earth dusty and sterile, and its vegetation almost non-existing. Maps of Turkana have been made with western parameters to become readable and understandable for western eyes. They are tools of political ecology (Escobar 2008) because they draw special attention on economic possibilities. On an early Turkana map drawn at the beginning of the exploration by the British, we would notice a lot empty areas. To westerners Turkana does not represent a vast range of possibilities and really, it emerges as a lost cause. Institutions working in the area often appeal to such harsh environment to attract donations and support from the *greener* areas of the world (Turkana Central and North DDP 2008-2012). To complete the picture, the traditional nomadic pastoralist activities of the Turkana people have always been considered by the westerners destructive for their landscape and as something to be discouraged (Broch-Due 1989:273-294).

The Turkana have a fluid understanding of their landscape. What appears to foreign eyes as barren and desolate, to Turkana is a map of possibilities for their lifestyle as nomadic pastoralists (Broch-Due 2000b, Ebei 2006). For them, their land is a personal or communitarian continuous reminder of history, memory and emotions which are invisible

(Grasseni 2004). The story that follows demonstrates that landscape knowledge, or knowledge of *erot*, cannot be forgotten and must be passed on to the new generations, even though the person in question *apparently* builds his values from a non-nomadic and non-pastoralist system, which rejects the importance of *erot*.

“I did not like to wake up before sunrise to take the animals to the grazing fields. I was a small child then and I would go hungry during an entire day in the clearings without food. The hot sun used to give me headaches. I hated such activities and often I would run away from the animals or would not come back home at night so that in the morning someone else would have been called out instead of me. I would also often pretend to forget the paths to the grazing spots not to be sent out again. It worked. Finally my family decided to send me to school, and because I was a clever boy and a Christian devotee, I got sponsored by the St Paul mission all the way through high school. Now I am a catechist, work for the Church, and I am an important man in Lokitunyala. I am a rich man because I invest in and own much livestock, as well as I have money to buy food and other things. I do surely know all the paths.” (Loarengak 1)

Turkana geographical knowledge expressed in knowledge of *erot* is extremely valuable because it is a “real and symbolic capital in terms of human relationships, herds, and procreation” (Broch-Due 2000b:62). Linneus knows this quite well (refer to list of *erot* on page 30), and cannot refrain himself from teaching the paths to his children, even though they go to school and will probably not become herders. Learning about the paths is a necessary momentum for their socialization.

We have seen how perceptions of geographical landscapes, as reflected in *topoi* and maps, diverge extremely from each other. At the same time, even within the same culture, perceptions of the environment can change greatly. Turkana young generations of Loarengak and Lobolo have a more complete sense of the landscape than those of Kalokol. Those who live in Loarengak, in fact, do not rely on the resources from the lake for their living. Contrarily, this is what the people of Longech or Namukuse do. I have observed functioning mixed economies in Loarengak and Lobolo which I have not seen anywhere else. The people of these two villages rely on a mixed economy of livestock and fishing without privileging one over the other in terms of resources. The younger generations understand mixed economies very well. In Lobolo, children learn to fish, clean the catch and at the same time tend the herd. Mary, a girl of 17 who I have spent time with, is busy daily with a vast range of activities: from fetching water from the springs along the lake shores, to cleaning and smoking the fish her brothers catch, to taking care of the goats and sheep her family own. She

knows the paths to Kalokol (15 km North), and to Eliye Springs (14 km South), where she periodically goes to buy food and clothes and to collect firewood and palm leaves for weaving baskets. She is able to swim. She also knows how to reach the mountains towards Lodwar and beyond. Lobolo is an example of Turkana traditional mixed economy, which has been unaltered by past foreign interventions.



Fig. 8 The mixed economy of Lobolo is visible. The young shepherds take the herd to the springs on the shore where fishing rafts are left during the day.

Center and periphery

The history of spatial marginalization of Turkana land started with the British colonization (Good 1988, Broch-Due 2000b). Turkana in the second quarter of the 20th century was considered a “closed area”, and could be entered only through very special passes (Good 1988). An entrance barrier between Kenya and Turkana was still visible at Loya in the southwest up until 1976, 13 years after Kenyan independence (ibid.14). Turkana people have been perceived and placed in thoughts and practices at the periphery of the Kenyan nation and in the background of things. While I was in Nairobi applying for my research permit the people in the offices, the taxi drivers, and the shop venders were shocked to discover that I would be spending months alone in Turkana. –Why do you go there? You must be crazy! You should go to Malindi, Mombasa or Masai Mara instead!!- they were visibly surprised by my choice and concerned about my safety.

The perception of Turkana emarginated from the center is a powerful construct that keeps surviving today. As soon as you land in Turkana, people would come to you wanting to strike a conversation. One of the most frequent questions you would be asked is about your impressions of *their* climate. If you answer that it is hot and dry, you would inevitably receive this reply more or less:-Our land is dry, it is harsh and hot. It never rains. We are poor and hungry.-

The propaganda of barren and harsh landscape used by international and national interventions has integrated very well in the imaginations of Turkana people. Particularly among the youth living in the town areas and in contact with the missionaries and the developmental agencies, there is a tendency to try to raise money by writing applications. The *developmental* or initiatives applications always begin with pitiful geographical landscape descriptions. To emphasize the harshness of the climate and land (which we cannot control) is to shift the blame for the impoverishment and for the ongoing patterns of migrations of marginalized Turkana people toward the urban areas away from the foreign interventions. After having stayed for a few weeks in Lodwar, I received an email by a stranger who pledged for money on the bases of Turkana being a harsh and dry land.

Being a Turkana means being placed at the periphery of things of both the nation and the world, on the other hand, modernity, *ngakiro angirwa kalu*, the things of today, have now nevertheless entered Turkana particularly in Lodwar and Nakwamekwi. The youth of Lodwar are more familiar with seeing aircrafts landing, riding on a vehicle, and using a cell phone than those of Kaikor or Kalokol. Ironically, as a result, the children of the destitute and most sedentarized Turkana families in Lodwar or Nakwamekwi feel more “central” than those who live outside the urban areas and are more economically advantaged. This sense of being more central does not correspond with being physically closer or better connected to down-country areas. In fact, the State of Kenya is perceived by the Turkana as extremely distant and alien.

Together with the ideas of center and periphery, borders and frontiers are becoming well-understood concepts by the younger generations. They have been taught that frontiers mean conflict. This is especially true for those who reside in Kaikor and Loarengak areas. Indeed they recognize the outskirts of their villages as possible dangerous areas where the enemies (Merille, Toposa, and *Ngidongiro*- Ethiopians) can attack the people, kidnap children and women, burn the huts, and raid the animals. Moreover, in Loarengak they recognize the invisible borders in the lake waters, and in Kaikor they know when a path taking them on to the Lokwanamoru range become insuperable.

A recent trend, one which I observed while in Turkana, is to explain nomadic pastoralism as the main source of conflict in some Turkana areas. The reason being: Turkana are nomadic pastoralist who herd their livestock in the border and frontier areas, and in doing so attract the unwanted attention of other tribe’s warriors who will steal their animals. Being a nomadic pastoralist is dangerous because it takes you to *dangerous* places.³³

³³ “Pastoralists in Turkana Central district are both nomadic and sedentary...Access to pasture during the dry season is a key source of conflict between the pastoralists and the neighboring districts communities and Uganda.

Dangerous space

School is closed in December and young boys hang out on the beach of Loarengak. They come every day to fish with the hook, swim and play. Sometimes they help the fishermen with mending and pulling nets for a little money. The fish they catch is for consumption: they roast it on the spot or take it home to their families. At the beach I meet several boys (Fig. 9 A). With Kabale, Epae, and Michael I have a conversation. They tell me that their favorite games are football and fighting, and that the best fighters in the world are the Chinese because they practice kung fu (Fig. 9 B). They all agree that fishing is a dangerous activity because people die in the waters, whether by the hands of the enemies in Ilaret, by the *ekipe* in Northern Island, or by hippos and crocodiles. For this reason they do not want to be fishermen even though they all can fish, fix nets and build sails. Kabale, a 12 year-old, wants to be a soldier because he wants to learn to shoot with a gun. Epae, a 15 year-old, wants to be a policeman, and Michael an *askaris*, a guard. They tell me that Merille are bad people who go around with guns. Once Kabale heard shooting in the village; at those times people used to go to bed early. He once trapped a small crocodile with a bird bait. He killed it with a stick, took it home for food, and since he has been called *lokinyanga* or “the man who has killed the crocodile”.

The district's Uganda boarder and hostile neighboring districts in Kenya makes it one of the most affected by insecurity incidences. In the district, conflicts are caused by many intertwined and intricate factors. Wealth (livestock), ethnocentrism, and proliferation of illicit arms are the main causes of cattle raids in the district. These conflicts lead to a destruction of social amenities already put in place... Insecurity has been a major drawback to economic development in the district. Most of the cases of insecurity reported in the district are related to cattle rustling. Livestock has been stolen, lives lost, schools and houses destroyed. This has increased illiteracy, instilling pressure on health facilities and has discouraged investors and tourists from visiting the district. It has also led to poor land tenure systems because majority of the population live in small villages and also along the rocky escarpments especially along the Kerio and Turkwel rivers leading to less productivity thereby increasing poverty levels.” (Turkana Central Developmental Plan 2008-2012)

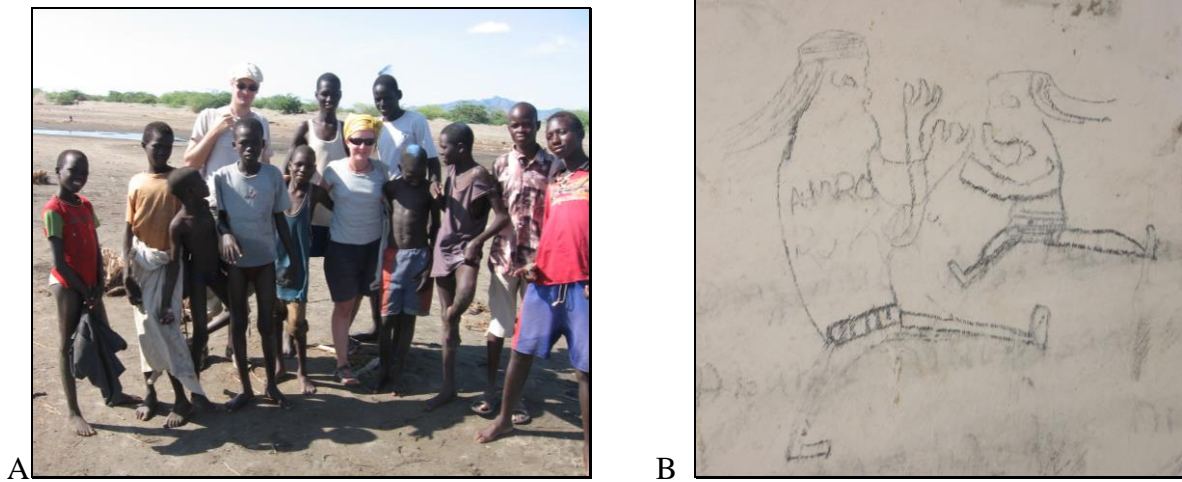


Fig. 9 A) Children group at the beach in Loarengak. B) Kung Fu fighters. Drawing found in abandoned NORAD building in Loarengak.

These testimonies represent the imaginations and perceptions of dangerous places by young boys in Loarengak. The feeling and experience of ‘danger’ range from the economics of daily life (fishing on Ilaret) and living activities (sleeping at night), to special events (killing the baby crocodile). They represent memories, future aspirations, and imaginations of foreign people and lands. It is fundamental part of their habitus, but this is not a new thing! Dangerous space is a known dimension for Turkana (Broch-Due 1990a) not only because of the possibility of running into enemies and wild beasts, but also because of the evil spirits that inhabit such places. Besides being a source of life, the mountains, the waters of the lake and the places far away from the villages and camps, *aurien*, are populated by evil spirits, *ekipe*, as well as enraged and vindictive ancestors. People go to these places to find lost livestock, perform sacrifices, or just to hunt, collect wild fruits, fish or take the animal herds to graze. These are the vertical and horizontal places in the Turkana cosmology, in between which the humans, animals and plants live (Broch-Due 1990a:274).

Symbology and beliefs are still attached to these places. The religious organizations in towns and villages are trying to disillusion Turkana people and especially younger generations about the existence of such spirits. Moreover, they want to concentrate the youth’s attention and fear on a unique *ekipe*, Satan. However, the children are still fully aware of all sorts of fluid *ekipe*, and know the dangers they incur when going away from the *erot*.

Donald is a devote Protestant. Right now he is not married to his partner Luisa (a protestant as well), but he is saving to celebrate a respectful church wedding. He claims he has abandoned the culture, and that he follows the rules of his church. However, he still has many stories about *aurien* and *ekipe*.

“I was a little boy when I had a dream one night. My grandmother came to me and ordered me to leave swiftly the ekol and follow her voice outside. I came out in the night and followed her voice. My mother woke up at sunrise and, not finding me with her, got worried and sent people to look for me. They found me hours later. I was lying naked on the top of Lodwar Mountain, in good health but with a bruise on my cheek. My relatives killed a sheep for the ancestors and to protect me against ekipe. I do not remember anything up to this day how I got to that mountain. I would not trust children to be alone at night, but what can you do, spirits come in dreams and there is no door that keeps them away (Nakwamekwi 1).

Luisa wants to share a story about her family as well, and she tells me her father died by the hands of a powerful *emuron*³⁴ who wanted to take revenge for a litigation over certain land. Since Luisa’s father had won the right to the land through the help of local administration, and through the support of the community, the *emuron* Botoka casted a spell on the land of Luisa’s father that became inhabited by *ekipe*, who eventually killed him.

Conclusion

In talking about center and periphery we must keep in mind that:

The new global cultural economy has to be seen as complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models (Appadurai 1990:6).

In this chapter I wanted to illustrate some uses and imaginations of space and movement by the younger sedentarized Turkana generations. I wanted to focus on the changes imported by the creation of new spaces, and the values imbedded in them. These topics will be expanded upon the following chapter as well. I have talked about the divides between the road and the path and how these are made into two different practices by the agents of socialization at work: namely the traditional family, the school, the church, and the developmental agencies. By concentrating the attention on the road, and diminishing the importance of the path, modern agents of socialization want to augment the differences among children, especially between those who go to school and those who mind the livestock. It is nevertheless not the road that interests the youth, but indeed the movement that takes place there. This shows that the values of fluidity and movement imbedded in a habitus informed by cultural capital belonging to pastoral nomadism have not changed. I have discussed about the characteristic of ‘danger’, which is embedding the spaces lived by the

³⁴ Witchdoctor, diviner in Turkana

Turkana youth. While the propaganda of danger is stuck in depictions of ethnic conflicts, the youth manifest a much wider and metaphorically rich understanding of 'danger.'

In conclusion, if superficially the 'new space' is transforming younger generations so that they may like, use and desire modern means of transport, or may talk about their land in terms of backward, poor, and at the periphery of things, more deep manifestations of perceptions of space indicate that the 'old' traditional values and practices are once again predominant. These were: the interest in movement, the conscience of danger, and the concern and belief in haunted places.

Chapter 3: *What is Mine and What is Ours*

House and Fertility

For Turkana, the house is linked to fertility and symbolizes procreation (Broch-Due 1990a, 1991). It symbolizes the connection to eternity through the succession of ancestors and descendents. It takes form and life in the new born: not only in the infants of humans, but also of animals (Broch-Due 1991). The space within and outside the living compound is rich with symbols and meanings. Henrietta L. Moore suggests and demonstrates that a house can be *read as a text*, and as the organization and shape of the domestic locus change, so too changes the text and it is read and interpreted differently (1986). Vigdis Broch-Due demonstrates that for Turkana the house is an extension and metonym of the body, and that the body is a template for thought and practice within the culture (1990a). Furthermore, what is expressed through the structure and decoration of the huts, the arrangement of the compounds, entry doors, as well as the disposition of the objects and the furniture, reflects a practice of paramount importance and well-organized symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1979:133-153).

The nucleus represented by the maternal house, the *ekol*, bears evidence in its label that it is but an outer extension of the umbilical cord fasten to the womb; embodied in the paternal homestead, *awi*, which is semantically and symbolically the encompassing belly. (Broch-Due 1990a:250)

As I will show later in Chapter 5, the Turkana pay extreme attention to the decoration of their body. This care extends also to the animal body, and to the house, objects and dress. The Turkana spend the majority of leisure time in esthetic practices of decorating the body (Broch-Due 1990a, 1991), as well as in building, decorating, rearranging, and cleaning the living compounds. Pierre Bourdieu states that the house is “the principle locus for the objectification of generative schemes” (1977:89, 1979). It is in fact in the domestic space where values of wealth, procreation, fertility and natural and life-cycle are reproduced in Turkana society. The values embedded in the domestic field of practice come to build the symbolic and cultural capital that shapes the habitus. However, I am agreeing with Vigdis Broch-Due and Henrietta Moore that the symbols embodied in the space of the house are not fixed and timeless as Bourdieu had argued in his investigations of the Kabyle house (1979). It is not the changing space that should be read metaphorically, but instead the actions and interpretations of the actors who make it meaningful (Broch-Due 1990a:xv). For the Endo

people, the gendered meanings which the domestic space conveys, are not fixed, but dependent on the context, and are expressed in different practices. In fact, the compound space is continuously changing because connected to the external movement of the changing seasons, and generations, and as well as to the external influences such as westernization. Nevertheless, the uses of ash, dung, and chaff and their disposal (which are spatially distinct) still retain metaphorical meanings of femaleness and maleness (Moore 1986). As in the case of the Marakwet, Vigdis Broch-Due (1990a,1991) has shown in multiple occasions how the Turkana culture can be read metaphorically, and adopts a textual quality on several fronts, such as the house structures, and the body (human and animal).

In this chapter, I will continue the discussion about the perceptions of space focusing mostly on the living places: the house and the entertainment areas. The material conditions and the symbolic capital, which have been imported to Turkana by foreign interventions and the new agents of socialization, are reflected in uses and perceptions of domestic and living space. It has produced new practices of decoration and construction of houses. On the other side, it has created a tendency of fragmenting and viewing living space as *European* personal space.

However, I will show that these practices surrounding living spaces are still dominated by a strong Turkana habitus. The “generating principle” is still “enable[ing] agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations” (Bourdieu 1977:72). The generating principle, which for Bourdieu is one of the main principles that inform a culture capital, is in this context the value of fertility attached to the living spaces. This can be further translated into a habitus aimed to the social relations that link individuals to the group, intended for the good of the community. The syncretic practice that is generated as a response to foreign influences is indeed a powerful statement of short and long term practices, in which sedentarized Turkana younger generations still think about the communitarian good.

Landscapes of Development

As a second reflection, I will show how perceptions of development that have characterized living places for the old generations, now have a different meaning for the younger generations. Again, I will focus mainly on the changes within the boarding school and the entertainment areas. Following the youth’s habitus, the original values of progress and development embedded in the construction of buildings, and roads have changed. These places have begun to be perceived as areas of amusement and entertainment. Such a sudden

change in people's perceptions in just a couple of generations will again demonstrate that the past happenings connected to development have changed people's values connected to living and cultural practices only *momentarily* and *superficially*. It will also demonstrate that the 'trauma of commodification' that came with development in the 1970s and 1980s, has been too quick and ineffective. People were given not even a 'taste' of the development that the government and the foreign agencies had promised. To the contrary, the illusion of development had materialized only in making them poorer (Broch-Due 1989, 1990a, 2000a). These disillusionments are now manifested into the imaginations of the youth of haunted spaces and bewitched practices. Here the supernatural *evil* imaginations are always connected to external donations or foreign interventions.

Lastly, I will explore the product of the spatial divisions in creating concrete differentiations mostly between girls and boys. Along with the evangelization program in the region, cultural landscapes are being gendered and a new halo of *proper* is encircling certain new spaces. This is probably the biggest impact on the youth that the changes in socialization have caused.

Living Landscapes

In this section, I will discuss the practices in relation to major living places,³⁵ namely the house, the school and the entertainment areas. In Turkana towns the creation of new living places (e.g. churches, *ngimuia*,³⁶ schools, afterschool programs, and recreational centers), aimed at personal development, have triggered a growing desire to have *personal* space. However, they have not succeeded in pushing the youth to perform individual actions for an individual gain. Once again, the appearances borrowed by modernity, development, and humanistic Christian values is just a superficial mask for the still strongly lived 'archaic' values of old social relations.

The new home

The body, the objects and the domestic animals receive much attention through decoration practices among the Turkana. Even though to untrained western eyes it may not appear so, house's decoration is not traditionally neglected by Turkana. The house is a shelter for people and animals, and is a comfortable and useful space. Its value is represented by the number of people and livestock that can be accommodated and fed within it. Much care is

³⁵ By living places I mean where individuals spend the majority of their time.

³⁶ Religious groups or associations, especially of Catholic denomination

taken to batter the soil inside and outside the huts, to prepare the traditional food containers, the skins and hides, and to weave the sleeping mats. However, increasingly Turkana houses are acquiring internal decorations which they did not have before. Furniture is found in the house in form of bedding, tables, chairs, couches and cupboards. Embellishments like curtains, embroidering, tablecloths, carpets, posters and ornaments are being acquired as well as electronic equipments like radios, TVs and alarm clocks. The new objects of the house are becoming increasingly important and a parameter for esteeming someone's modern wealth and achievement in development (see Fig. 10).



Fig. 10 Interiors and decorations of mud wall house in Lodwar, and its inhabitants.

In the article *The Fertility of House and Herds*, Vigdis Broch-Due shows how the perpetuation of Turkana lineages is the product of complex interactions, complements and contestations of male and female elements through an analysis of ‘house idioms’. These complementary yet opposing forces are built into the architecture of the house (1991:291). Place and person are not linked essentially and exclusively like in western models, but they are rather “a fluid, expandable and flexible construction” (Broch-Due 2000a). The Turkana house is intimately connected to the body and the various stages of procreation, growth and death (Broch-Due 1990a, 2001). When the new agents of socialization introduce new domestic values and appearances, these are reflected in the physical transformation of the house and of the body.

The western culture tends to think of houses as stationary, but for nomadic people houses are movable. For a large part of the year, the nomadic Turkana travel with their herds and live in grazing camps, *abor*, where they have found grass and water, even outside Turkana, searching for pastures in Uganda or Sudan in times of severe droughts (Broch-Due 1990a:30). As a result, the Turkana house is traditionally a fluid entity. It can be packed,

transported, and relocated or abandoned and easily replaced. However, the symbology it conveys with its layout and decoration is fixed.

House is a special spatial dimension because the sedentarized Turkana of the towns are experiencing day by day a physical transformation of their own traditional house structures, which are being replaced with more ‘modern’ and less movable buildings. When I was in Turkana I could not refrain from asking my informants about their conceptions of the house, which is also of great importance in my own culture.³⁷ So, the question has been: what is the *new home* for the younger Turkana generations? What does it represent?

The project of stabilization and sedentarization of the Turkana people is altering the conception of the house from a changeable entity into a more fixed idea of that space. The house of the sedentarized Turkana has become a more settled object with the introduction of semi-permanent structures like tin and mud walls, corrugate iron roofs, barbwire fences and iron doors (Fig. 11 A, B). While the inside decorations remain objects of interest, the same time, care, and rituals are not spent in the construction of a house. The buildings are often not repaired but left to collapse. *Home* is getting more spacious, the roofing is higher, and it contains more ‘personal’ space than the traditional household (Broch-Due 1990). Amongst the wealthier, there is a new preference for bigger houses which are divided into two or more separate rooms as opposed to the traditional *ekol*. The process of modernizing the house copies the way non-Turkana build their own dwellings. Even the Maasai word for house, *manyatta*, is becoming more common than the original Turkana word for a living compound or agnatic homestead, *awi*, or to indicate the maternal house, the *ekol*. Anything which resembles to the lifestyle of a European, *mzungu*, in Kiswahili- is preferable. The modern Turkana people adopt the modern styles of building and decorating houses which they have observed in foreign people’s homes or on TV. The preference for more ‘sophisticated’ architecture is also a sign of rank, raising prestige and monetary wealth (which starts to replace livestock wealth) among the Turkana. The ‘new house’ is therefore a metonym for new social group (Fig. 11 A, B).

³⁷ I am Italian, and *casa* (home) is a paramount pillar in our culture.



Fig. 11 Chief Paul of Loarengak in his spacious *Aw*. Notice the corrugated tin building and the entry door (with a lock) in the background.

Traditional Turkana *awi* and *ekol* are made of movable and immovable components (the objects, and the people, the structure and the land on which it lays), and changeable and unchangeable components (the owners and occupants, the building and the land). All these things and people are in continuous and fluid movement. Social statuses and generations follow one another, sanctioned by the Turkana practice of exogamy. Within the homestead objects are made and exchanged, youngling and children are born, animals and people die, structures are built and collapsed (Broch-Due 1990, 1991). While house parts and structures are not hierarchically ranked among the Turkana, the space within the house is dense with meanings: physical, social and symbolic. This space symbolizes hierarchy based on gerontocracy, cognatic and agnatic ties, and alliances. Turkana house is a living mix of maternal and paternal dimensions (ibid.). Such symbology extends also to the domestic activities performed in connection to daily practices or events. For instance:

“When a child is born, the placenta is buried in the soil, usually under the tree called engomo, so that mother and child are protected against the evil eye, and any bad intention. If there is not engomo tree, any other tree would do. After this, a traditional fire is lit up from two wooden sticks. These are the lokeru and the lokile, the wife and the husband. Lokeru lays down, and lokile enters in a small hole in lokeru, and the person in charge so can make the fire. Everyone can perform this work, but the fire cannot be lent to anyone.” (Kalokol 2)

The various placements and divisions (inner and outer, back and front, eastern and western) within the house space signify the various categories of people (ibid.1991:308-313).

West is *too* and it corresponds to the place where badness, *aronis*, is found. It is also associated with wilderness which for the Turkana is the hunting places, the mountains and the lake, the places that do not have livestock, the *aurien ekipe* (see Chapter 2) (ibid.). In this part of the compound live the concubines, those who are not married formally.

In the Turkana compounds in the town areas, the people are no longer concerned with the evil west or the good east. Children and youth do not even remember if there exists such a symbology embedded in the space they live in. It is rare nowadays that we see the reproduction of such division of spaces in the household of a sedentarized Turkana. Within the town areas no corpse is thrown into the bushes anymore, as traditionally this is the praxis, for instance, for children and unmarried adults. Anybody is buried inside the house compound, or in the few (but growing) cemeteries. As a newly introduced Christian practice, anyone who dies requires a proper burial ceremony and cannot be simply disposed of. This is considered a sin within Christian religion.

A house in western imagination and practice is a personal space, the nest of the family. It implies the creation of insurmountable borders and a privacy expressed in private property, intimacy, and domesticity. In contrast, Turkana people keep their doors open to neighbors, friends, and wanderers. Everyone can come in without asking permission, and *guests come from God*. Only recently, have locks to gates and huts doors been introduced in Turkana. My assistant and I once almost slept outside his wife's compound when, after a long hike from Loarengak to Lokitunyala, we found the door gate locked. Apparently, Linneus' wife had gone to visit her sister in the same village and left the compound empty and locked up. I was surprised by such a use of security means in such a small village like Lokitunyala, but it was explained to me that it was a precaution against theft by drunken people.

On the other side, the 'urban' layout of Loarengak is a very interesting example of mixed ideas of space and security. Loarengak is divided in two main sections: the north part called Kambimiti and the south called Rokuruk. A seasonal river marks the division between the two areas. In Kambimiti there are schools, the Catholic and the AIC missions, the convent and the churches, the dispensary, the youth center, the football field, as well as the police station, and the ex NORAD and CCFP (Christian Children Found Projects) buildings. The area, despite having more developmental and modern infrastructures, is less populated than Rokuruk. The compounds and the backyards of the buildings in Kambimiti are strongly protected by gates and barbwire. However, in contrast I noticed very little division between compounds division in Rokuruk. The *awi* seem to merge into one another, plots overlap, borders are indistinguishable and households are mixed. Romuruk is densely packed, with

narrow alleys and noisy like a beehive. You can talk from your *ekol* to your neighbor in her *ekol* by only whispering. I asked about this particular town planning and it was explained to me that people in Rokuruk like to stay together to defend themselves better against raids, and that they have a strong sense of community belonging.

Whilst I agree that the apparent look and disposition of the houses has changed, I do believe the values embedded within this space continue to align with the old. Personal space seems to have acquired more importance within the structure of Turkana houses as a result of the missionary's and governmental humanist project aimed at emphasizing the individuals. However, in reality, personal space and the status gained by having a 'modern' place/house is an investment for future procreation and family and community enhancement. This is very clear in the story of Josephine (see later) who is adopting "fashionable interior design" in her *ekol* in order to appeal to rich (that is, with a lot of livestock) Turkana men. As she has an intimate "sense of the game" (Bourdieu 1977); the game here being the recruitment of a suitable groom.

Personal space

The change of the 'design' of the house is a phenomenon which also has been observed by Rodman in her study among the Longana people of Vanuatu in Melanesia. While the long process of conversion to Christianity aimed to change the look of the *valei*, the women's house, into a western style home, the values that this traditionally convey have not changed (1985). In fact, *valei*, in contraposition to *na gamal*, the men's house, continues to be "the container of cultural knowledge" and the "testimonial to accumulate personal wealth" (1985:277). When interviewed, sedentarized Turkana children described their future house using modern terminology. Female schoolchildren would often talk about a house, *their* house, where they will raise *their* children. Here the personal dimension embedded in the use of the singular possessive adjective is revealing. Girls would not speak about a collective house, or a house which belongs to the family, but about a personal house. This is not implying that they would disapprove of having other members of the family sharing their house, but it would stress the fact that the house is theirs, and of nobody else. Even some of the 'traditional' female-herder youth prefer to build their own separate *akai*, much larger than those of their grandmothers or mothers.

"I chose to be "traditional" and stay home instead of going to school. In my family we are 8 girls and only 2 go to school. I am the oldest one. I believe traditional weddings are better because they provide wealth to the family. Although I have had already many pursuers, I have turned them down all. But I

want to marry, and have as many children as God will send me. I wear the beads that I make, as well as the belts, skins, bags and containers I decorate. I know how to build houses since time now. Recently I have finished building my own ekol, which is the prettiest and the tallest in the whole of Kaikor. This manyatta is all for myself, I do not share it with any fixed inhabitants, but my smaller sister sleeps with me from times to times. I have renovated my hut inspired by the very popular Mexican soap opera Storm over Paradise which I love and watch every day."³⁸ (Kaikor 2)

The above testimony is from Josephine Aboot, a 19 years old youth of Kaikor. She is tall and majestic, a real beauty (Fig. 12); her parents adore her and invest a lot in her. In the age of marriage, Josephine is investing in her beauty and her *ekol*. Both projects require a great deal of money, which is provided to her by her family and relatives.³⁹ They help the girl 'advertising' her availability. Josephine is from a quite wealthy family in Kaikor. Her father, an ex warrior, owns much livestock and her mother runs a sort of bar with a TV, a very popular place among the people of Kaikor. However, at the time of her birth, Josephine's family was poor, in fact she was named *aboot* which means poverty in Turkana language. Josephine's hut is indeed the highest hut in the village of Kaikor. The vast room can accommodate about ten people to sleep, and it is decorated with embroidered curtains, pillows, wooden chests for storing clothes and a mirror. Josephine spends her days cleaning and decorating her house, making meals (when there is food), as well as weaving mats. She orders and buys beads from Lodwar, which she sews in necklaces, on belts and *lesos*, an African wraparound skirt. She tells me that she has not started making the traditional containers a married Turkana woman must have, and that she will begin only when she has decided upon her husband. If he is a herder she will construct them, whereas if he is educated and modern she will have only plastic and metal containers. I will discuss Josephine and her bodily investments more in Chapter 4.

³⁸ The love story narrated in the soap opera takes place in the very large and luxurious *hacienda el Paraiso* (the El Paraiso farm estate).

³⁹ Every Turkana bead necklace is made of about 8-12 different color sets of beads. Each set is made of 5-8 strings attached together. It costs 700-900 Ksh for each set, plus a 1000-1500 Ksh for special sets of beads. A complete necklace will cost then between 4500 to 8800 Ksh!!!

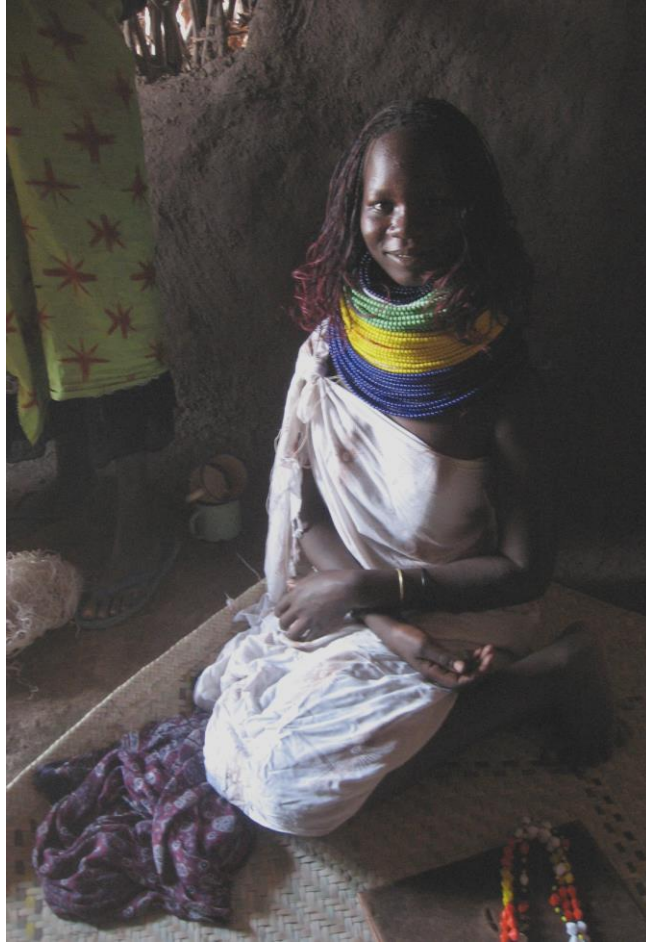


Fig. 12 The beautiful Josephine in her *ekol* surrounded by her beads.

Children who have been to boarding schools develop the idea of personal space earlier and more often than youth who have not. Among the educated youth, there has emerged a tendency of desiring private bedding or even a private room within the house. The forced proximity of bodies is seen as disturbing and even repulsing. I have heard many youth complaining that there was not enough space (sleeping places) in their huts, and that they often had to move into the yard at night to sleep. Kate of Kaikor wanted to move her bed into one of the empty rooms of the St. Paul mission's guesthouse. She explained that she needed her privacy and could not longer handle the breath of her siblings and cousins on her neck or the elbows stuck on her side while sleeping.⁴⁰

After only two months returning from high school to Kaikor, Kate got pregnant. She never told me, but, being her next door neighbor, I think the father of her child was visiting her at night in the mission's compound. Kate was a "child with promises". She had been sponsored by San Paul's mission throughout school because of her brightness and she was the

⁴⁰ (Kaikor 3)

only one entrusted in Kaikor to work with the radio and internet connection. At the time of our cooperation (Kate was my assistant in Kaikor), Kate wanted to go to university to become a social worker, travel to Spain, or even become a nun in the Saint Paul's congregation! When she found out she was pregnant she "came with stay"⁴¹ with the father of her child. After a short while he showed he did not intend to marry her lawfully by paying the brideprice. He did not even go to meet her family. Kate had to move back to her mother's *ekol*, with her new born baby. She had not lost the small job she had with the Saint Paul, but her chances to attend university had disappeared for the time being and maybe for ever. Nonetheless Kate is happy. When she told me she was pregnant, "married" she was completely blissful, but she added "it is not good for a girl to sleep alone."

The New Mountain by Anam⁴²

The first thing a traveler notices when the town of Kalokol starts to appear after a long and slow drive on the full-of-holes desert "Fish Road"⁴³ from Lodwar, is the charcoal piles standing at the sides of the road. From behind some shadowy bush some women would come out to sell you their charcoal. A woman sitting next to me in the *matatu*⁴⁴ tells me "many years ago tracks used to carry those charcoal piles to Lodwar." I wonder if they were the Norwegians. The woman does not know. The very first building of Kalokol to appear along the road is a secondary school. I cannot refrain from asking myself how children can survive the heat inside these incandescent tin boxes. Kalokol, in contrast to Lodwar, has only a few short palm trees with very little foliage which do not provide much shade. Further along the Fish Road more buildings appear: a semi-abandoned guest house, a water tank, some churches and dispensaries. Along the market we would find ourselves in the middle of the town. The town center is in fact just the end of the asphalted Fish Road (where the shores of the Lake used to be more than 20 years ago) with several shanty shops, a couple of restaurants and a few fish storages. Kalokol appears very desolate. The fishing boom of the 1980s is ghostly, and only the names of the town sections remind you of past fishing development: Fisheries, Tanks, Machines, Mandeleo,⁴⁵ Impresa.⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Bwa eboikinos* is the expression used for formally unmarried couples who live together.

⁴² Lake Turkana is called *Anam* by the Turkna who lives on its western shores.

⁴³ The Fish Road was built by NORAD in the 80s.

⁴⁴ Minibus in Kenya

⁴⁵ Development in Kiswahili

⁴⁶ Enterprise in Italian

From Kalokol, I traveled to Longech, a fisherman village on the opposite side of Ferguson Gulf. Once again, to reach Longech one must pass by many relics of development. A bleached sign for the FAI, Italian International Aid Found, stands at the opening of the now old half-accessible dusty road. This road is the only one leading through the sand dunes which have been formed in the course of the last years with the constant retreatment of the lake shore. To reach the present days shore we must follow trails, or a larger path widened by the traffic of lorries and refrigerated tracks. Before coming to the shore of the Ferguson Gulf, we come to a small lively village called Natirae which earned its name from the trees brought and planted by NORAD in the past, during one of the many reforestation plans. These trees, which were supposed to retard the desertification of the land, are now suffocating and infesting the autochthonous acacia and palm trees. The leaves of *natirae*, the Turkana name for *Prosopis juliflora* are poisoned and scorned even by the goats, and even the wood does not make a good fuel. In the village Natirae the sweet smell of fish smoked by the burned palm fruits is enveloping us in the vehicle, the small market and the surrounding huts.

The shore of Ferguson Gulf is very muddy, smelly and the shallow waters infested by boiling algae and rotten fish, plucked and eaten by all kinds of winged creatures: insects, pelicans, seagulls, and herons. The stagnating yellowish water is slippery and the mud hides thorny bushes. They used to fish mighty Nile Perch here, they told me. I can picture them. I have seen pictures from the reports of NORAD and of my advisor Vigdis Broch-Due who worked for them (1989). To cross the shore to Longech you must take a local wooden boat. This is the side of the Gulf that the Turkana people use. On the other side of Ferguson Gulf, in Impresa, the very few tourists are conducted and lured into taking a very expensive motor boat ride to get to Longech. The motor boat is the last surviving, and belongs to the only European living in Kalokol, Adriaan, a Dutch man. Adriaan is renting the now abandoned Turkana Fishing Cooperative Society building in Kalokol center. The TFCS used to be the most complex organization that even existed in the whole of Turkana. It provided various services and functions in connection to the development of the fisheries. In the 1980s it included 5000 members, and 7 branches (Broch-Due 1989:2).

The wooden boat carries you to the busy shore where people of all ages fish, clean and carry the catch and repair boats and nets. Adult men are those who stand further into the waters, then come young boys and old women whilst young girls timidly remain on the shore. The heat is unbearable but nobody is swimming to cool down. There has been a cholera outbreak in the last weeks and many people have died. Most people stay away from the water now, because they have been told the water is contaminated. Nevertheless boys and girls take

turns bathing in the water, I am told. It is not proper to swim together, and severe punishment would follow the breaking of this taboo. You can see the “Fishing Lodge” towering over Longech. This used to be an expensive and lovely lodge with bar, restaurant and even a swimming pool for Europeans, and rich down-country people, mostly involved in the fishing development. Now dilapidated since the death of its last owner, an African Indian four years ago, the building has stood abandoned.

When a “new aristocracy” is in the process of expanding its power, it can achieve this by promoting itself as an institution, an ideology, or architecture (Waterson 1995:66, Hodder 1982, Lyons 1996).

Power is the capacity of individuals to act through their over material and social resources...[and]...the control of space is critical in the generation of power. (Giddens in Lyons 1996:346)

Architecture is the quintessential materialization of power and order (Broch-Due 1990:502). With the third generation of interventions in Turkana⁴⁷ the project of edification is continuing. The construction of schools, dispensaries, churches and religious seats is now the new theme.⁴⁸ The proliferation of religious buildings especially churches, but also mosques,⁴⁹ has had an impact on the conception of architecture of the Turkana people. For instance a church is usually built in its most ‘primitive’ stage as a straws and branches shed. This is done through the help and work of mostly women, the traditional Turkana builders. As soon as the importance of the church augments, the money from the offerings start flowing in and the converts multiply, the straw shed is replaced first with a wooden and tin structure and finally with a cement building, this time built by men. The expensive new cement churches are often hotter inside and get dirtier easier than their straw ancestors. They require more money to be maintained, and they must be locked up because they attract more thieves. Nevertheless, they are preferable because they are higher, stronger and belong to the religious ‘hegemonic’ class. Children and youth are socializing within this new structural environment, but while there is a wide-spread idea that personal space and stable structures are succeeding in ‘rooting’ the younger generation and teaching a humanistic sense of individuality, the uses, narratives, and imaginations that I have collected show different ideas.

⁴⁷ After the imperialistic and the developmental, the religious interventions are now the most prominent in the area.

⁴⁸ This is the direct descendent of projects of construction for fish processing farms, boat garages, hospitals and dispensaries, which followed the edification of police barracks and chiefs stand posts during colonial time.

⁴⁹ There are five mosques in Lodwar, one in Kalokol and one in Kaikor. All are sponsored by Saudi Arabia Muslim branch in Mombasa.

The haunted house and the bewitched ball

Many of the children and youth I have interviewed had amazing stories about some of the structures built by foreign interventions. All of them were stories connected to witchcraft or haunting by evil spirit. In Lodwar, there is a Dutch woman, who is called by the people as Mama Mzungo Willelmina. She is a religious lay woman who came to work for some NGO project in Turkana long time ago and never left. She has a beautiful villa on the shore of the Turkwell River, right in Norad, the area where the Norwegians had built their homes and offices in the 1980s. The wealthier people still live and many NGOs have their offices in that area. Mama Mzungo Willelmina has worked much in Turkana, especially in relation to education. She has sponsored the education of numerous children and financed the building of infrastructures like school dormitories, classrooms, and latrines especially in Lodwar, Kalokol and Lokichar.

The girls' dormitory that she had built in Kalokol has a story. Situated between the main road and the section of the town called Napetet, the cement building with corrugated iron roof stands alone, abandoned and no longer connected to the Primary School. Its doors are shut and people do not go too near it. The children say that the place is haunted and that you can see the face of the Dutch woman appearing at the windows.

Mama Mzungo Willelmina is believed to be a witch and she is also called amongst the children as *akapolon na ekipe*, which in Turkana means "the queen of evil". She is said to appear at night at the edges of the beds of the boys and girls in the school in Lokichar that she had built. A child neighbor of Willelmina swore the woman had given him a bewitched ball that at night started talking. He and his friend are no longer willing to accept gifts from her. Miss Willelmina's friend, Father Enzo, a Combonian priest from Nakwamekwi was not aware of these rumors about her. His explanation of them was: "When someone does good without asking anything in return, people become suspicious. These people have been tricked so many times before!!" (Nakwameki 2)

Architecture practice is symbolically saturated and directed toward "supernatural forces" (Comaroff 1991). Anthropologist Jean Comaroff has long investigated the implications of the local groups (especially in South Africa) of the Church -organized religion- being part of the world of witchcraft (ibid.). The suspicion, fear, and counter-witchcraft expressed, often in violence, towards groups who benefit directly (and materially) from religious and governmental organizations are phenomena which are still spreading in rural South Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). Even though I am not dealing with forms

of violence in my examples, I believe that I can build upon Comaroffs' observations and claim that the long history of colonial violence, international betrayal, abandonment and failure has created in the Turkana imaginations a world of supernatural powers, almost always evil, connected to the foreigners. The practice is "a means to reduce internal social tension" (Lyons 1998:345). At catechism, the younger are taught that a good Christian helps thy neighbor and that all people are the same in from of the eyes of God. A good Christian man or woman shares with the poor, cures the sick, leads the blind. Disillusioned by empty promises, growing poverty and material inequality, the children and youth of the towns are trying to explain 'supernaturally' the failure of the good intentions of the foreign helpers: "They must be evil".

The amusement park of development



Fig. 13 Children in Longech (Kalokol) having fun on a relic of development

An example of multilocality as the way polysemic meanings are imbedded in place and perceived by different users can be shown in the amusement park of development. When development has failed and just relics are left behind, the younger generations who grow up among them, accept them for what they are, empty ruins. The idea that such architecture was *making development* has radically changed. Development is no longer perceived among youth as it was among their parents. While in the past their parents had made a living through it, youth use the 'archaeology of development' as an amusement park, a playground. These ruins are most often remains of buildings, and the spaces they occupy are connected with and influence the entertainment activities of children and youth. They are used as areas where to play, meet mates, and spend leisure time.

The area of Lake Turkana, especially in the towns of Kalokol and Loarengak, is where most archaeology of development can be found. It is connected to the past fishing boom, the Turkana Fishing Development Project and NORAD's involvement. Along the beaches of Kalokol, Impreza, Longech and Ferguson Gulf it is possible to observe the carcasses of several fiber-glass boats stranded among the other functional traditional wooden boats, rafts, and canoes. They are abandoned to the birds to nest and the children to play. This is in fact a favorite place for children to amuse themselves (Fig. 13). Children climb up and down, fish, and create adventures on those boats.

The “white elephant” or “new mountain”, as the people call it, is the abandoned Norwegian freezing factory in Kalokol, built with an incredible amount of money to be shut down after only a few days (Broch-Due 1989). The building towers over the entire town and is visible from kilometers away. Today it is used as a storage place and believed to be haunted by *jinis*⁵⁰ at night. The guardian, *askaris*, for a small fee takes tourists around the factory and tells about NORAD, the golden age of Kalokol, as well as few ghost stories. The youth of Kalokol use the factory as meeting place, basketball field, and dating spot. My assistant Ivan told me that since the roof of the *new mountain* is the highest point in the whole of Turkana, the view from there is lovely and it is a nice place to take friends and dates. Also in Loarengak, embedded in ruins, there is another amusement space that has replaced development. The buildings constructed by NORAD, the offices, staff houses, boat garages and relief storages are now for the most part abandoned (it costs more to restore a construction in cement than to build a straw and mud hut) and used as ‘artistic relief’ by the youth. The recurrent themes were: boats and aircrafts, wheeled vehicles, Rambo, Jackie Chan, girls with skirts or jeans in high heels (Fig. 14 A,B).



Fig. 14 A) NORAD abandoned building in Loarengak. B) Graffiti on the walls within.

⁵⁰ Evil spirits in Kiswahili

Engendering the Space

The introduction of new loci has created a dimension of space which is imbedded in gendered values. Traditionally Turkana do have gendered spaces and a set of rules which regulates the uses of space by boys and girls. For instance, children over 6-7 years are not allowed to swim or bathe together, or to enter the parents' *ekol* when they are having intercourse. The Turkana explain this ban as the children may get ideas watching adults having sex and realizing they have different bodies may put observation in practice. It is believed that if a boy sees his mother or sister's vulva, she will become infertile. Even though Turkana people understand that among teens of opposite sexes, there is the risk that *they can steal sex in the bushes* (Broch-Due 1990a, 1990b, Storås 1996), thus ruining existing marriage plans, they nevertheless implement few methods of control over youth's sexuality. Whilst, an unmarried girl in her fertile years would not be allowed to take the animals to graze alone if they knew of newly initiated warriors in the area. Youth, boys and girls alike, are free to move around the countryside, and participate at the night dances as they wish.

In the town areas in Turkana, as well as in Kalokol and Loarengak it is popular for the youth to frequent new entertainment places called discotheques and bars. These are private houses where the owner uses a stereo and amplifiers to play modern music –mostly pop and hip pop- for the youth to dance. The music is played at very high volume for hours after sunset. During the day such places are used as bars. They are frequented by male clientele only and given the prohibitive price of drinks for Turkana living standard mostly by down-country people and Europeans. Turkana girls would go there only in the company of their brothers, male friends, and possibly boyfriends or husbands.

Beer and local brew is served and, depending on the quality of the music and the place, a small amount of money may be asked at the entry. Some of the discothèques are turned into cinemas during the day. Action films and football matches are shown. The relatives complain that as a result of the discotheques their children are stealing money to spend on alcohol, come back home drunk, get into fights, and do not work the following morning. However, Turkana youth is very fond of dancing, football and action movies and enjoy these places. In the Turkana tradition being a good dancer is strongly connected to being a good warrior, as well as a powerful sexual partner. Dancing skills attract suitable partners, and dances are connected to life passages, natural cycles, and rituals (Broch-Due 1990:490-492). In the discotheques one can show his ability to dance and move to the rhythm of music, often copying the dance choreography seen on TV. However, whilst the traditional dancing grounds

and dances, the most common being the *edonga*, are open to everyone male and female without stigma, discotheques and cinemas are not considered appropriate spaces for women to be seen. Girls who frequent such places are generally considered prostitutes.

Vivian is a 16 year old girl from Nawkamekwi. She goes to the Combonian Girls Primary School and she is in class 4. She is the oldest and the tallest of all the girls in her school, the others respect her and consider her their boss. Vivian does not spend the nights in school but instead goes back home as her family live in the neighborhood. The girls have often stories about her, which they tell one another during pauses from the study. They say she is a discotheque fan and that people have seen her there dancing on a number of occasions. They make fun of her behind her back but do not have the courage to tell the headmaster that she has been in the discotheque. He would surely punish her, as it is not allowed for girls in school to go to such places where people drink and take drugs, and the *ekipe* snatches you away if you are not careful. Indeed the space lived by the young girls within the Combonian Primary School has a typical planning layout aimed to protect and control the pupils (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15 Comboni Girls Primary School areal photography. The gate is right outside the staff house, and the *shamba*.

Another space which has become off-limit for girls is the road. Girls on the road, especially after sunset, are selling their bodies to the lorry drivers and the drunken people. To be called a *road girl* is one of the worst insults, some girls have told me. However, there is much prostitution among young girls in the town areas and it is true that such girls leave their *awi* after sunset dressed in tight pants and go sell their bodies on the roads. During the night, groups of social workers from Nadirkonyen school for the street children in Nakwamekwi go around the streets of Lodwar (and of Kalokol) ‘in a mission’ to find street children. Teen girls

who prostitute themselves are not ‘rescued’, but if recognized, they may be targeted for some educational programs to stop prostitution and take them out of the street.

Proper spaces- the road and the path

“I was saved. I was a street child, abandoned with my mother and siblings by my father when I was very young. The father left us for another woman. We were poor and used to sleep in the streets, near the basketry market in Lodwar. It was nice to sleep outside, it was fresh at night, and we would not be alone; many other people would sleep together in that place. During the day I would go around the town to beg for food and find firewood, sell some small items etc. Beside the hunger, life in the street was not so bad, until one day I was found by Brother Hans who enrolled me in Nadiorkonyen School to learn. At that point, my mother wanted to “sell me” to a relative in the reserve to become a raya. During vacation from school, in fact, they took me to the reserve and left me there. They never came to pick me up again. I hated working in the countryside, and I missed school. One day I run away. I put on my uniform, so a vehicle that stopped recognized me for a school pupil and took me back to Nadiorkonyen. I have been there since. Now I work as a secretary here.”
(Nakwamekwi 3)

The stigma associated with being a street child, even though *it was not so bad*, and to have been forced into farm labor by relatives is a creation of the (new) idea of what is the proper way of living. In contrast to western tradition, living on the road is a necessity for Turkana nomadic pastoralists, and it is not infrequent that nights are spent out in the open-air and not under a roof. Especially for women, being a costermonger, a wonderer and street worker has always been problematic for western and particularly Victorian culture (Gallagher 1986, Broch-Due 2000). A woman should be protected in the domesticity of her house as a woman in the open is dangerous and uncontrollable. Ronda, the girl telling the story above, was saved twice: from the shame of becoming a woman in the streets, and from conducting a life of poverty and ignorance in the *open* ‘reserves’.⁵¹

Sport performances and its space are also gendered. Proper girls and especially adolescents, do not run and play football, a game particularly loved by Turkana youth. Football and basketball are sports performed in schools, often sponsored and gladly organized by religious institutions. Whilst the boys who play sports are encouraged, praised and may have a better chance to be sponsored for studies, girls are expected to adopt the passive role of spectators to sports. In fact, when the football training becomes intense and the competitions require the team to travel to other villages, girls are not allowed to participate.

⁵¹ It is revealing to observe how the Turkana use the English colonialist term ‘reserve’ for countryside. The correct translation from the Turkana expression, *awi a ngibaren*, should be the “house of the animals.”

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have continued discussing the changes imported by the creation of new spaces and the values imbedded in them. It is true that new values of personal and proper about space are exercising a tighter grip on children's perception of space creating a growing divide between those who do not have money and those who do, both male and women. Nonetheless, the value of fertility which structures beliefs and practices in traditional Turkana culture, still informs the symbology of the house as "the principal locus for the objectification of the generative schemes" (Bourdieu 1977:89). Moreover, past developmental plans which have changed the physical space, have not succeed in creating a long-lasting sense of change and development. In fact, the space and the structures that only a few decades ago meant change and modernization to the people are now forgotten, used as entertainment loci or considered haunted.

<p>“The nomadic way of life affects access to essential services by children. These include disruption of education and access to health. Further, cases of school drop outs in schools are frequent with drop out rate rising to 46% in primary school.” (Turkana Central DDP p.15).</p> <p>“Animals are wiped out by the drought, but not education.”</p>	<p>“Ngide earibu ekalam” Children are spoiled by the pen.</p> <p>“Arai ngide esukul ibore pas anadakar angiturkana” School children are a waste to the community.</p>
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Chapter 4: *Things of Today*

In this chapter, I will be dealing more in depth with the concept of socialization and the changes on time perceptions, which have been caused after the introduction of formal education and the media. Particularly from the 1980s, the establishment of education given in foreign languages (Kiswahili and English) has affected the children and youth’s perception of time. This is reflected in their narratives of the past, present, and their imaginations of the future. “Different mental images would construct different ‘timescapes’” (Grasseni 2004:703).

In his ethnography of the Balinese (1993), Frederick Barth addressed the cultural change in the youth brought by national (standard) education. He argued that schooling:

radically influences the reproduction of culture, not only by imparting new bodies of knowledge, but also by affecting people’s fundamental orientations to knowledge (from secret and dogmatic to more pragmatic), authority (from family seniority to bureaucratic), and life-cycles (from education late in life to education in preparation for life) (Barth 1993:21).

“Power is crucial in the uneven distribution of all disciplinary knowledge” (Rodman 1992:648). Traditional forms of knowledge, in a way have been devalued by the governmental projects of socialization of children, which are embedded in power relations and transmit a hierarchy of values through formal teaching. As education shapes the pupils’ understanding and influences practices, schools can be seen as “sites for the production of knowledge and symbolic value” (Levinson 1999:595). The “new orientations to knowledge” are detectable in the new educated generations (ibid.). In fact, the young Turkana of the towns tend to admit to having abandoned traditional beliefs, like in the role of the *emuron* or in the power of the traditional charms. The Turkana youth also seem to show more disrespect

towards their family and the elders. Finally, school is now considered the new means of acquiring wealth and status.

Forms of media, such as the radio, have influenced the youth's values and understanding of the world, thus providing them with "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983), and producing expectations of these (Harvey 2005). In fact, it has been ascertained that the media have a great power in shaping the perceptions of time, besides constructing nationalism and identities through images of self and the others (Anderson 1983, 1994, Harvey 2005). Indeed, printed press, telephone, radio, and now the internet is thought to compress space and time by bringing together people from different times and spaces near, in their imaginations. Political scientist Benedict Anderson has emphasized two factors relevant to the production of modern narrative and popular culture: the replacement of the (medieval) religious system by the nationalist system, and "printed capitalism" in vulgar (1983). Thus, time has been objectified and commodified by the State through the use of media that stretch it and represent lives simultaneously, creating an 'imagined dimension of meanwhile.'

Amongst the different generations of Turkana people, the images imported from abroad creates interlocking sites of cultural production (Gjelstad 2009), particularly among different generations.

It has been commonplace to theorize childhood and children as sites of social construction...the social and cultural spheres constitute children and childhood. The social field both includes and forms profoundly theoretical and personal understanding, responses to and representations of children and childhood. Children's innocence is thus a cultural myth that has no substance. Children have more agency, understanding and knowledge of their social and personal worlds than is usually assumed. (Treacher 2006:99-100).

In this chapter, Turkana time will be expressed in the ability of articulating narratives, and of imagining communities. I will discuss the changes over the perceptions of time brought by formal education in non-Turkana languages, sponsorship, and use of media. I will show that, in spite of the strong influence from these forces of socialization upon the behavior and imaginations of children and youth, their perception of time remains closely connected to the natural cycles. Furthermore, I intend to show how the children and youth appropriate the cultural capital presented by the media when articulating traditional practices, and how the contexts of narratives still reflect community stories. Finally, the dilemma that bothers parents, families, and communities regarding the corruption and bad behavior of their children can be explained with the rupture of a (past) functioning life cycle. Indeed, the hopes for a better future lie in the re-establishment of the original cycle.

Changes on the Time

Education

The introduction of formal education in Africa started in 1923 when the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa was established in London by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1925 a grant was given by Carnegie Foundation to the Kenyan Education Department for the development of Jeanes⁵² schools in order to train supervisors for village schools (Eddy 1985:89). *Teach the backward negroes in the US* was the motto of philanthropic organizations, which was consequently extended to African countries. *If we want to rule them well, we need to teach them well!*

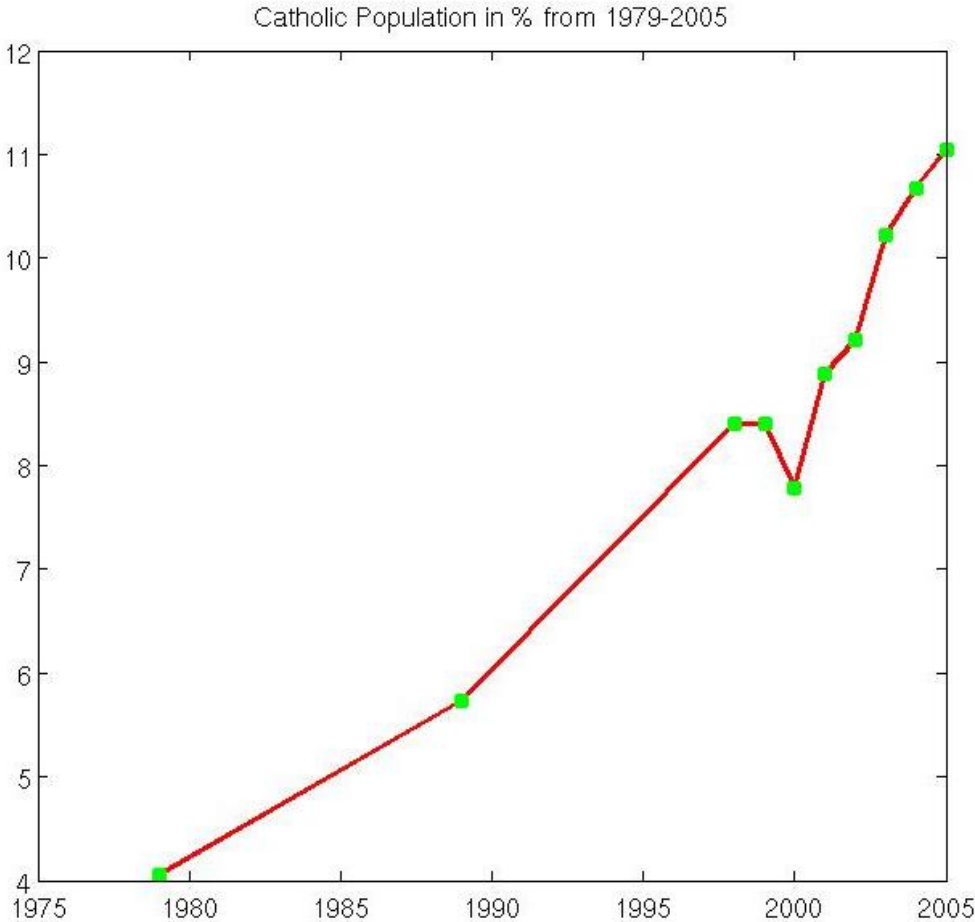
Formal education in Turkana was introduced much later than in the rest of Kenya, since the British administration showed very little interest in ‘educating’ the Turkana people. The very few first official schools were opened in Central Turkana at the time of independence (1963/1964). Schools were usually situated in the vicinity of feeding centers, dispensaries or missions, and as the *paupers* increasingly moved away from a lifestyle of nomadic pastoralism into the towns, the school population also increased. The first secondary school for boys was opened by the Catholic mission in Lodwar in 1968. Even though the Catholic Diocese was instrumental in introducing formal education, it was only at the end of the 1980s with the aid of NORAD that schooling was made available on a more district-wide scale. After the involvement of NORAD, nurseries, primary and secondary schools spread very quickly in the territory.

Mandatory school was ruled in Kenya in 1992, but as fees were demanded by IMF, so school attendance decreased in the 1990s (Vigdis Broch-Due’s personal communication). Due to a decree for free primary education promoted and passed by President Moi’s campaign and the wide spread involvement of religious interventions and NGOs and their system of sponsorship, the school attendance has been on the rise again since 2003. Today, in fact, the 80% of the schools in Turkana are run by or in collaboration with religious organizations. Informed by national and international education propaganda promoting education, serious stigma and heavy punishment (when enforced) is attached to those who cannot afford to send their children to school. The shame tied to the impossibility of sending your own children to school is not only connected to poverty, but also to a sense of failed accomplishment as a provider. There are nonetheless ‘modern’ values associated with education which emphasize

⁵² From Jeanes Foundation founded in the United States by a Quaker woman, Anna T. Jeanes.

this sense of failure. School is in fact seen as a way of exiting the vicious circle of impoverishment. Phrases like: *education is what makes you free, education is the best gift to a child, education is not wiped away by the drought* are continuously confronting the families as they are repeated by the government, the NGOs and the missionary groups in order to convey the importance and the fundamental role of education in the life of their children.

Education has been envisioned as a *top priority* by missionaries and developers since the beginning of their intervention and work in Turkana. After NORAD left Turkana, the responsibility “to educate” the youth has fallen in the hands of the missionaries. The chart below illustrates the massive increase in conversions that has occurred after the interruption of the Norwegian collaboration, and the advent of Christian missions in Turkana. The growth in the town population towards the end of the 1990s is a consequence of the enlargement of the migration of destitute Turkana people and the establishment of health clinics and dispensaries by the religious groups (Graph 1).



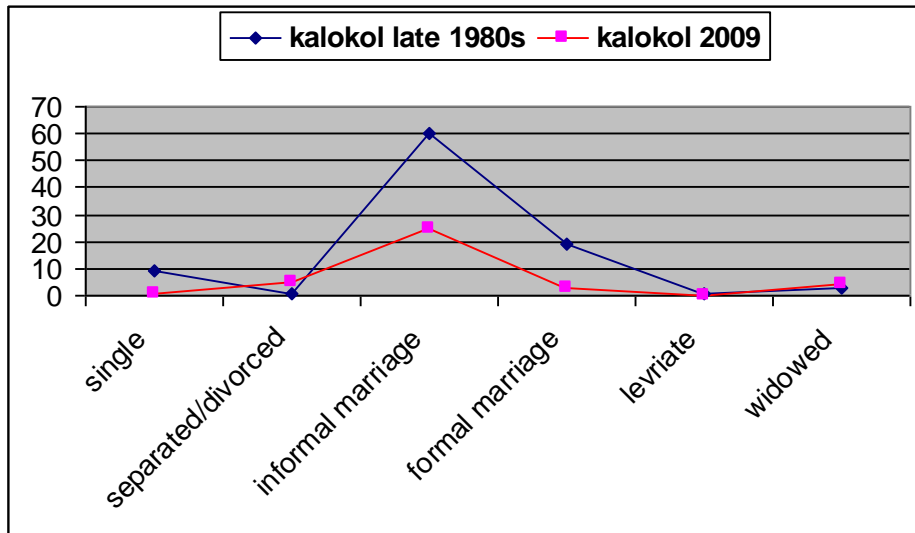
Graph 1 Catholic converts showed as percent of population as a function of time (year). The values are extrapolated from Good 1988 (2007)

As the formation of a good citizen –and voter- cannot come without secular education, so does conversion. What the clergy call “primary evangelization” cannot be fully achieved without literacy. Both go hands in hands. Evangelization is practiced through oral but also written means as reading aloud from Holy Scriptures is believed to be the best way of learning it. The metaphors, metonyms and rich symbology with which the entire Bible is constructed can be learned and absorbed not only by the translation of a catechist or a priest, but also by a trained mind (Haggis 2000).

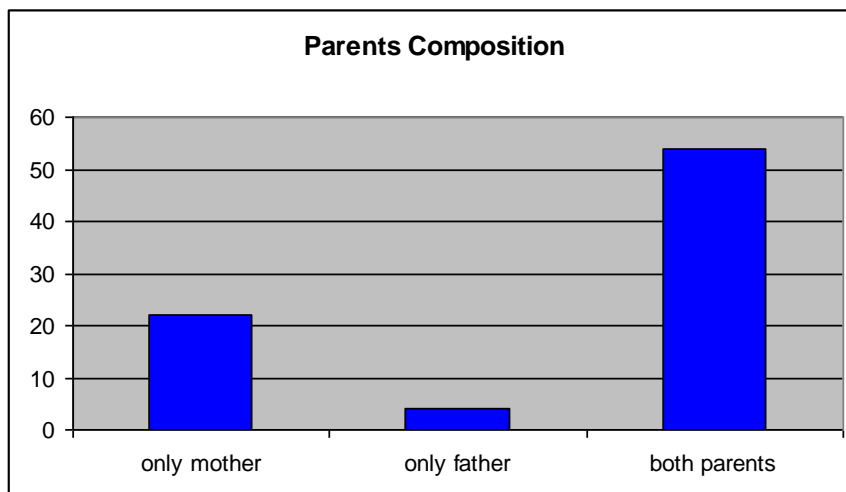
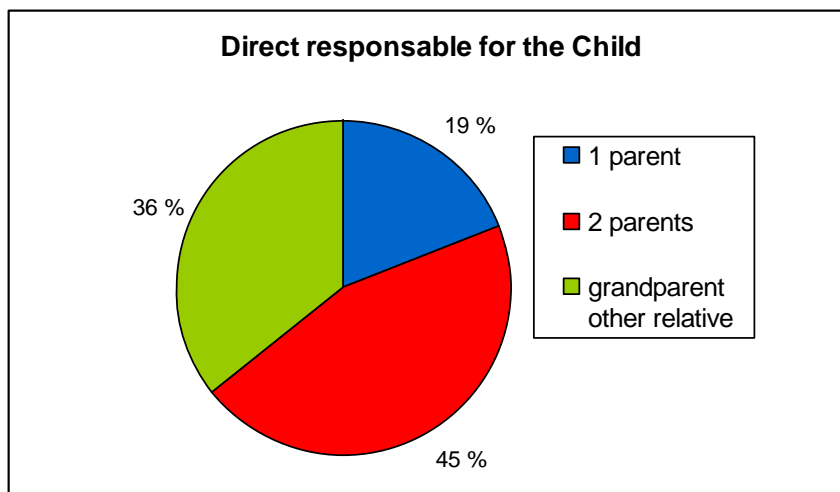
The schools in Turkana are mostly boarding schools preferred for practical and social reasons. Children who attend boarding school live away from their families for up to three months at the time (see Chapter 2). In this way, there is less chance that pupils be kept at home and used for labor. Boarding schools exercise more direct control over the socialization and the evangelization of children. Daily prayers are recited and every Sunday the children must attend mass.

In an interpretation of historical sources from the “Mission of Sisterhood” in Travancore, India, Jane Haggis demonstrated how the project of secular education of convert girls privileged boarding schools as “girls were removed from what was perceived as damaging heathen Indian environment” (2000:113). The religious and governmental institutions in Turkana, believe that public education for girls is a way to delay them getting married. Ironically, a great majority of the young unmarried or divorced mothers I encountered and interviewed in Turkana, had been in school during their youth, and many had dropped out because of pregnancy. “School makes the girls into prostitutes” I have heard so many times from Turkana elders and parents. This duality that they are happy to see their daughters educated and at the same time are worried that school will corrupt and spoil them, poses a constant dilemma to the parents.

The fact is that in Lodwar, Nakwamekwi, Kalokol and Loarengak, there is a growing number of female-headed households. This trend has previously been observed by Vigdis Broch-Due (1989:120, 1990a), and it is corroborated by my data. A similar pattern as presented by Broch-Due from her findings in the late 1980s is repeating in my data from 2009 (Graph 2). Of the 80 household surveyed, I found no nuclear families, 22 units consisting in the absence of the father and 4 units where both parents were present. In the 53% of the cases the children were not subjected to the discipline and upbringing rules of the two parents. Moreover, in the 36% of the cases the children were dependant of their grandparents and other relatives (Graphs 3 and 4).



Graph 2 Data extrapolated from Broch-Due 1989. The data pattern in red is mine.



Graph 3 and 4 Custody and parents composition per child.

The children would often recognize the effective authority of the maternal uncle, and would refer to him as *father* in accordance with the Turkana tradition. However, when asked, children would in most cases often point to their maternal grandmother as the head and most

respected member of their household. Authority in Turkana is strictly related to economic power even if it is not a direct function of income. A grandmother who has married successfully and generated numerous children, who in turn have married and brought grandchildren to the household, will enjoy one of the most privileged statuses in Turkana society. A grandmother, who takes care of the children of her unmarried daughters and thus has not managed to obtain the fruits of her life's investments, will still enjoy high status. The worse offence a child could do is to lack respect to such *Mama* or *Ata* (granny). "*Nowadays even a small child abuses an old Mama.*"

Sponsorship

Sponsorship seems to be a key way of survival in Turkana. Children are taught by parents and teachers to find a sponsor and to shout to every *mzungo* they see: "I no sponsor, I nee". In the towns sponsorship is usually administered by the religious institutions. The Diocese of Lodwar advertizes children of poor and destitute families, and mobilizes the western world for donations through sponsorship. The sponsoring institutions are usually of Catholic denomination. In Kalokol, for instance, the Italian group *Solidale*⁵³ is sponsoring children's education through the help and intercession of Kenyan and Ugandan missionaries. Along the Lake Turkana, Saint Paul mission of Madrid is organizing sponsorship and connections between Spanish donors and recipient children. World Vision (a Protestant NGO) is also engaged in sponsorship throughout Turkana. The majority of the children that manages to go to secondary school, has been sponsored through one of these religious institutions.

Westerners expect sponsorship to be done on an individual level, but on the contrary, Turkana people believe that whoever sponsors a child, also sponsors the entire family. Hence, if a child is sponsored by a westerner it is expected that an endless stem of money and gifts will start flowing into the child's family.

Why is education so important for western donors? Why do they invest in education for the younger generations? I believe that this is because education is something familiar, easily controlled and an ideal for many westerners. The vast apparatus of exams, subjects, lecture timing and grades is easily understandable and recognizable to everyone. Furthermore, it is a general belief that through education you can achieve anything; you can climb the ladder of success, even without the material means, and the right social context. Education is "the best gift to give to a child", the people I have interviewed often told me.

⁵³ Italia Solidale Onlus is an Italian volunteer and missionary organization for the development of life in the Third World founded by a priest, father Angelo Benolli

Tim, a 12 year-old, is sponsored by a retired Australian couple. He goes to Australia every two years, and his parents accompany him to Nairobi's airport. Once returned, they invite friends and neighbors to see the pictures of their child in the 'land of the whites'. His sponsor family comes every other year to Lodwar to visit him, and the family of Tim is enjoying the privileges of such visits. They now live in the richest area of Lodwar, Johannesburg, and they have a big compound with latrines, they own a radio, a TV and solar alimented lamps. Tim has a bike and all the other children envy him a lot because of it. (Lodwar 2)

Jonny attends the AIC⁵⁴ primary school. He is in class 6th. A couple of years ago, with some friends, Jonny followed a young mzungo who was jogging along the road. Later that day he joined him and his other white friends for a breakfast of coca cola and cookies. In that occasion Jonny showed an educated behavior: he sat nicely at the table and threw the garbage in the bin, while his friends did not. Jimmy scolded them for that. The white people (who he later discovered were Italian) liked him so much that they offered to sponsor his studies. He brought them along and introduced them to his grandmother and the rest of the family. Since Jonny got sponsored, he has ameliorated greatly in school. At the beginning, he had to repeat a class, but eventually he got better quickly and now he is a 'C student'. Periodically, Pietro and Fabio send him money which is administered by a trusted Turkana man. Jimmy knows when the money comes and always checks and asks the right amount. He does not want to be cheated. Last year, Fabio and Pietro invited him to their apartment in Westland, Nairobi. That was the first time Jonny was out of Central Turkana. After the emotions of the first days, where he went shopping, swimming in the pool, to the cinema and to the top of the Conference Center Tower, Jonny fell sick with malaria. He started crying and knew it was malaria because that it's how it always manifests. His sponsors had to put him on a bus and send him back to Lodwar. (Lodwar 3)

Language

Contrary to many other foreign groups, the missionaries have made a great effort in order to learn the local language as their aim of primary evangelization, is rooted in language. It has been in fact through the work of Father Tony Barrett, and nonetheless through the extended research by a group of Dutch professional linguists that the Turkana language was studied and translated into English. Father Barrett, in particular, has published several books on Turkana symbology, iconography and language. Non-Turkana priests take complete courses in the language so they can quickly begin to preach using Turkana instead of English or Kiswahili. They are nevertheless always guided by catechists, usually men, who translate mass and catechism to the Turkana language (Fig. 16). Practically all Christian religious teaching is

⁵⁴ AIC African Inland Church

done in the Turkana's own language, and a great number of the religious books have been translated and printed to their language.



Fig. 16 Catechist and Comboni Father Gabriele during a catechism in Lokatul (rural part of Nakwamekwi)

On the other side, school curricula are not taught in Turkana language. Kiswahili is the teaching language in primary school and the pupils are forbidden to talk Turkana language even outside lecture hours. Harsh punishment is inflicted unto those caught speaking Turkana. This means that pupils in boarding school are not allowed to speak their own language for months at the time.

English in particular is considered the language of opportunities, development and sponsorship.

“Fabio and Pietro liked me because I was well-behaved. I showed them I knew I was supposed to clean after eating. I sat straight at the table when we were eating pizza. My English was not good then. I had to speak to them through John who translated. Fabio and Pietro told me I would have gotten a bike if I had improved my English in school. I wanted the bike very much. So, I studied night and day and I was not so good at the beginning, I had to repeat a class. But later my English improved, and now I would speak only English with my friends and even to my Tata who did not understand me. We would laugh and make jokes. When I went to Nairobi, I impressed Fabio and Pietro. Now I will speak only English with the mzungo.” (Lodwar 3)

On the other hand, parents use Turkana language with their children, even if they know English or Kiswahili. “There is no better language than Turkana to talk to animals and children, and to sing for and about them” a father has told me once, “let’s have the church, the school and the down-country people talk in English and Kiswahili with the children!” Nonetheless, parents who speak only Turkana often feel they have lost control over their children. In fact, the children can communicate, in particular through text messaging, without their parents knowing it. “Children meet and secretly date through text messaging, and there is nothing we can do” (Lodwar 4).

Media

Only in the last few years any form of media has become available in the towns of the Turkana region. Before, Turkana was cut out from the imagines of the non-Turkana world. Presently, phone coverage is available in Lodwar and Nakwamekwi. One-day old newspapers are daily delivered to Lodwar by plane. Internet is more wide spread than telephone throughout the territory, but it’s of course available only to a few. Discotheques have replaced *edonga*, the traditional dances, and TV and videos, available in every Turkana town, have substituted storytelling. Clifford Geertz insisted that youth culture was “the most vital element in contemporary Indonesian society” (1960:307-308) and that it was especially through the consumption of the media by the younger generations, that changes were brought into the culture.

In January 2009 a radio station called *Akicha* was established in Lodwar. Its name means light in the Turkana language.



Fig.17 Radio Akicha slogan “*Akitchaun Ngitunga*” means “bringing light to the people”.

Everyone who owns a radio keeps it tuned to Akicha’s station which is also the only one working properly in Turkana. Masses and prayers are transmitted over the radio, music is played all day and news about the province and the state is read periodically. The music is

drawn from popular hit parades in Kenya, or from local Catholic choir groups. The radio broadcasts are very popular; in fact Turkana people love music and singing. Those who live in the towns can have easy access to choir groups organized by the Diocese of Lodwar, which is also the founder and sponsor of Radio Akicha. The songs are, with little exception, all church songs in Kiswahili, English and Turkana. The groups consist of men and women of all ages, but mostly those young and unmarried. They practice at least a couple of times a week and participate in many competitions throughout the year.

When I was in Kalokol, a choir group consisting of about 30 people would meet every day in the late afternoon under the narrow shades of the catechist's portico to rehearse for hours at a time in preparation for a much anticipated contest. Many of the young girls and boys would get stressed and even sick in the heats of anticipation. The choir of Nakwamekwi also practiced every day. They had won at the previous competition, so expectations were very high. As they eventually lost this time, it was a very sad time for everyone.

Within the cement walls of a church, dressed in clothes and not in skin, the youth of Lodwar, Nakwamekwi, Kaikor, Loarengak, and Kalokol can sing about a Christian God in Kiswahili and English, while dancing Bantu choreography. At the end of the Mass, the old traditional *mama*, who could not partake in the singing in Kiswahili and English, would dance and bounce, singing in Turkana, shaking jingles and clicking their tongue. Every occasion is considered a good one to dance and sing for all generations of the Turkana people.

“Children sing, mothers sing, grandmothers and warriors sing in Turkana. The Raya children are better at singing than those in the towns; they remember the songs and they play jokes and dance skillfully at those. The youth of the towns who do not master Turkana, has forgotten the songs of edonga. But they are better at choir singing. They sing in church and practice; are members of choirs and win prices! So you see God has not taken singing away from us!”
(Nakwamekwi 4).

Time Cycles in Turkana

The study of time in philosophy, social science and anthropology has a long and complicated history. A summary of the theorizations of time goes beyond the scope of this thesis. In my analysis, I argue that time is relatively perceived by the individuals and communities and it is structured around their ecosystem, environment, history, beliefs and social relations. Philosopher George Herbert Mead was the first to apply Einstein's theory of relativity to the perceptions of time by a culture (1952). Mead argued that there was not

overarching universal time that ruled every society, and that time should be not referred as to absolute (ibid.).

[Mead] denies reality status to the abstract time of clocks and calendars and regards it as nothing more than a ‘manner of speaking’ (Adam 1990:38).

Sociologist Barbara Adam, who has theorized time further in the analyses of modern society, agrees with Mead and refers to our conceptualization and ordering of our existence through western ‘scientific’ time framework as only ‘a manner of speaking’ (ibid.41.). In her book, *Timescapes of Modernity: the Environment and Invisible Hazards* (1998), Adam uses the concept of *timescapes* to indicate our references to time, time habits and perceptions of natural hazards as orchestrated by science, technology and economics (as well as cyber) which are the ‘generating principles’ of our modern times. The point is that different socially and historically constructed descriptions of environmental phenomena are situated in unique temporalities, they follow a specific tempo. Furthermore, timescapes make ‘habits of mind’ and practices.

The westerners do not understand Turkana people’s timescapes. These are traditionally expressed and created by the co-existence of the animal, human and natural world. These worlds are metonyms of each other, and are manifested through actions and thoughts. Livestock is cherished like children, loved like mothers, wives and husbands. The relations among animals, even their compartments, reflect behaviors, “a replica of human society” (Broch-Due 1990b:43). The Turkana language has many expressions that indicate the bond between animals and humans. For instance, a good mother or woman is nicknamed a milking cow, *aitee nakidala*, a bad misbehaved mother a heifer camel, *akaal*, and a sexually powerful warrior a bull, *emanik* (ibid.45-50). In Chapter 5, I will show that these bonds between humans and animals still survive strongly amongst the sedentarized and educated youth.

The metonyms that inform of Turkana symbology are embedded in a circular movement (Broch-Due 1990a). Circularity goes together with the concept of *erot*, the path or line (see Chapter 2), and the semi-circle, *akiriket* (ibid.). *Erot* and *akiriket* represent the fundamentally structure of the circle; they are all configurations of a process towards encirclement (ibid.). These concepts are connected to the structure of nomadic pastoralism as practiced by Turkana. In fact, the spatial patterns associated with animal herding revolve around complete circular motions. Night and day trips to and from the grazing fields always start from the same place (the *awi*) and travel circularly in the opposite direction until the full

circle is completed. Daily patterns, seasonal patterns, and yearly migration routes are all organized in circular ways (ibid.369-374).

Even when living in towns, the people rarely think in terms of a standard calendar. The children and youth, even those who have gone to school, don't know their age in years, and neither they are concerned with their birthday. Even if Christians, they do not perceive the passing of time through the rarely celebrated Christian holidays. The Turkana timescapes not only refer to their traditional understanding of temporal cycles as reflected in their environment, but also in their community events. In fact, it is the changing seasons, the short and long rains, the color of the grass, the life cycles of the animals, the droughts and not the least the community events that follow one another in perennial cycles that make up the division of time (Fig. 18).

Month	Local Name	Meaning/description
January	<i>Lokwang</i>	White: the rangeland becomes bare or 'white' as grasses dry out and the dry season is at its peak.
February	<i>Lodunge</i>	To put off, as of fire: the dry season ends.
March	<i>Lomaruk</i>	Cloud formation: life comes back with formation of clouds.
April	<i>Titima</i>	Growth: of grasses and greening of trees.
May	<i>El'el</i>	Flowering process: crops and plants flower.
June	<i>Lochoto</i>	Mud/cow dung: the colors of grasses turn to dark green, more rains are expected and the range becomes muddy. Cow dung is removed from sheds. Kidding, lambing begins, and milk is sufficient.
July	<i>Losuban</i>	Rituals: ceremonies are performed. Grass begins to whiter.
August	<i>Lotiak</i>	To divide: separation from rains and entering into another dry season. Migration to dry season grazing starts.
September	<i>Lolongu</i>	Hunger: trees shed their leaves and hunger start to bite.
October	<i>Lopo</i>	Cook: wild food is gathered and big stock may be slaughtered for food. Short rains may begin in this month.
November	<i>Lorara</i>	Fall: wild berries and pods for acacia drop on the ground and livestock feed on them.
December	<i>Lomuk</i>	To cover: leaves of acacia become green again due to short erratic rains expected around this time.

Fig. 18 From Ebei 2006:65. This is an example of description of standard calendar among the Turkana pastoralists.

Narratives and memory

Bourdieu never really tried to write historical practice theory...to look at the ways in which real histories, as both durations and events, are shaped by practices within and against existing structures...A theory of practice is a theory of history. (Ortner 2006:9)

Present practices are the product of past histories. Time, days, hours in Turkana move slowly. Fast pace is neither understood nor appreciated here. It would not work as even the infrastructures, the means of transport and resources are governed by a slow pace. Destroyed roads delay means of transport and houses, schools and hospitals are decadent. Rain takes long time to come and the hot sun holds on perennially in the sky. The events and the smallest of details have then the time to glue and imprint themselves in peoples' mind. Stories are passed from generations to generations and family sagas are cherished and remembered, especially the very old ones, those told many generations before. The Turkana people feel that these stories are vital parts of their cultural background and their present being. They can also be source of name-giving.

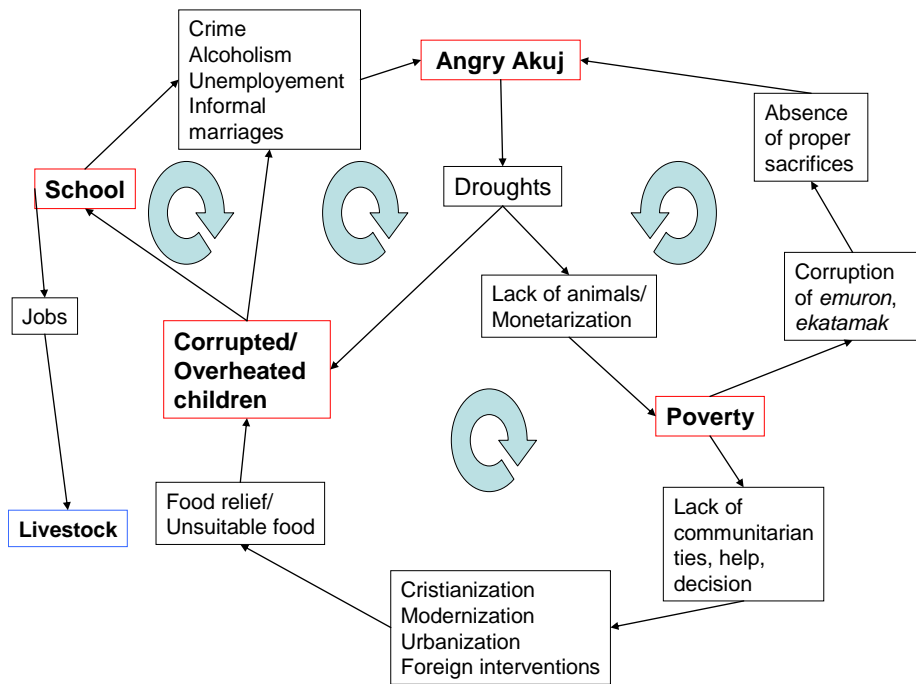
Sal Rolf is named after his father's best Norwegian friend Rolf. Sal Rolf knows the story of the encounter, friendship and collaboration of the two men, even though his father died long time ago, when Sal Rolf was very young, and the collaboration had ended yet long before that. The other family members knew the story and they could tell him about Rolf and the letters he would send to Sal's father. They even knew the name of his wife! *"What my mother and my father did, where they went, who they met, is significant part of my history, my being."* Sal Rolf said. Of course stories get spiced up with time, as they are passed from mouth to mouth they are exaggerated and changed. However, the essence remains the same and certainly some of the very important details too.

"My grandmother was kidnapped by the Merille. This happened when my mother was very young. I don't remember when and where exactly, but certainly my mother was in Lodwar then and she was sick. She was cured by a doctor named Watershed." (Lodwar 5)

In all the places of Turkana I have been, the people accepted me straight away. They were not shy to share their stories with me; they felt pride in having someone from Europe wanting to spend time listening to them without being just interested in their income, health or level of development. On the other side, I was the people's guest, and so they expected me to share my stories as well. So, we exchanged stories as gifts.

Experiences throughout life can shape people's perceptions of the world, the others, and self; these experiences become embodied memories that can be connected to a specific space, time or a specific body sensation. In Turkana society, past events and social relationships continue to live on the body (human and animal), traditionally through scarification and decorations, which narrate of the past in the present. There are also voice narratives through which stories and memories are communicated to one another. These are family and clan histories. Everybody has some. Like time cycles are circular, so stories have causes and effects that are interconnected. Sudden breaks into people's lives and habitus, *heterodoxa*, as Bourdieu calls them, can turn people's normal (functional) life into fallacious circles, and potentially trigger nostalgia. Such unexpected and violent ruptures can give greater importance to and make people hold on to what has suddenly become 'the past'. Thus, people gather the fragment of their pasts, and conserve it by telling stories. Very often my informants associated place with historical developmental events, and/or religious interventions, which have failed.

In Chapter 1, the elder Luis told a story of how the bags of maize brought by the planes to Lodwar, to feed the displaced and impoverished people, had broken and how the spilled grains of maize suffocated the budding grass so that it never grew back. This is a strong nostalgic metaphor of a past of plenty which has been profoundly altered by an alien intervention. It is also an example of the "use of the circle as a mental and material device" (Broch-Due 1990:374). Based on Luis's account (see Chapter 1) and the other accounts that I have collected and presented in this thesis, we can summarize below the circular explanation of the failure that many sedentarized Turkana people are living nowadays:



In this schema, the circularly connected focal points are the wrath of *Akuj*, poverty, and the corrupted children. School in such a dilemma can be both a way of pulling oneself outside the circle, or it can reinforce the vicious circle. The Turkana people acknowledge that money provides them with education and education can provide money that can be invested in livestock. The acquisition of livestock marks the final rupture of the “poverty trap”.

Past present and future

Viola is an 18 year old who goes to secondary school in Lokichar. According to Sister Eve, who administers her money, Viola is not very bright as she does not like to study and she has been caught a couple of times falsifying her school transcripts. Nevertheless, Viola wants to become a doctor and work in Turkana. An Irish middle aged lady, Grace, has been paying for her education since a few years. Viola lives with her grandmother, uncle and aunt, several cousins and siblings in Napetet, Lodwar. When asked about her parents, she tells that her mother was kidnapped, her father murdered and their house burned down by the Pokot. In reality, Viola’s parents died of HIV Aids. Viola lives and talks about her origins as an imagined space, an *etherotopia* (Foucault 1986). This is the place her parents are from and the place they have disappeared into. At the time I was in Turkana, Viola was working hard to receive her visa so she could travel to Northern Ireland to stay with Grace for a month. She had been running from office to office since July, paid fees and bribes and had taken long and dangerous bus rides to Nairobi and Kisumu in order to obtain the required documentation. Viola was thrilled, but also scared, to go to Ireland. “I think I will die from the cold”, she had

confessed to me. In the end, Viola was refused a visa and Grace had to leave without her. I would have been devastated; Viola was relieved.

The fatality with which Turkana people of all ages inhabiting the towns, live and think about their present is shocking to western perceptions. Life's planning focuses merely around daily practices and daily survival. However, this is a manifestation of impoverishment and a momentum crisis, rather than typical Turkana behavior. Turkana people are traditionally in fact skillful investors, who look toward and plan for theirs and their community's future. Their ability to build alliances, enter into matrimonial contracts, generate offspring and acquire livestock depends on the investments done in the past. Furthermore, it creates the basis for future achievements. The wealth of livestock, with its potential to growth, is being replaced in the towns due to the establishment of a monetary system (Broch-Due 1990a:503-531). Thus, the ideas regarding future investments have changed and because of the conception that: "money is made to be spent", people no longer save to the same extent, or invest in the future.

In Kalokol and to some degree in Loarengak, fishermen tend to squander their high daily incomes on beer and local brews, despite that the ongoing projects of empowerment through saving imposed on them continuously fail. Cindy, a young Dutch woman living in Lodwar and volunteering for the "Lydia Center"⁵⁵, is complaining that the youth working for her repeatedly demand their monthly salary in advance. Together with others in the Diocese of Lodwar, she has initiated a program of saving, which aims to reserve a small percentage of the young workers' salary and put it aside for their personal future investments. These investments could be used towards high school fees, the building of a *manyatta* etc. The program is neither understood nor liked by the young men and women. This attitude is represented in a statement made by Ruth, a 16 year old working at the "Lydia Center". She told me that: "We need the money now, not later, and money is made to be spent".

To the Turkana people, money does not represent 'visible' wealth and therefore does not take part in constructing a person's status and prestige. On the contrary, animals are not to be killed or sold. "We Turkana love our animals. Even when we are hungry and our children are starving, we look at our animals and we feel satisfied. Livestock is our *shamba*."

⁵⁵ The Lydia Center is a local crafts business in Lodwar sponsored by the Diocese.

Conclusion

“The major problems with the town life are hunger, early marriages, deaths, and drug addiction. People in the town do not have jobs. They get something small like a donation from the churches, or sometimes they are supported by the far-away children. Life in the rural areas is much easier and cheap. You can always have something, milk and blood you would have, and then you would kill a bull and feast and celebrate. Only jobs can save you in the towns. The town children are not respectful. They don’t do what they are asked, while the raya do it on the spot. So now we are just left with these questions to them ‘who has killed your conscience? Who has bewitched you? Why are you so pagan?’” (Lodwar 6)

In this chapter, I have shown that formal education, the use of non-Turkana languages, and the media have strongly impacted upon the younger generations of the Turkana people, creating tensions between them and their families and communities. I used the concepts of ‘timescapes’ and ‘imagined communities’ as a tool to help the reader comprehend the empirical data that I have presented throughout. These are relevant and revelatory in order to create a deeper understanding of how time perceptions have changed along with the introduction of formal education and the media. The first in teaching the children non-Turkana languages and national school curricula have influenced the way narratives and consciousness are structured impacting on social relations. The media, on the other hand, have stretched distances, creating new communities through imaginations.

The new forces of socialization are taking the children away from the community, making them into *ngide lu anangoleyang*, the children of the government. They are providing younger generations with means to loosen themselves from the control of their families on one hand. While on the other, poverty and hardship distract the parents from their duties toward their children. Without the guidance and the control of their families, the children of the towns lose track of good behavior and become crooked and dishonest. Parents and children try to understand what has gone wrong in their current situations and often explain these complex dynamics through circular thinking. Change is once again expressed through cosmology and knowledge that draws from the symbolic capital of Turkana nomadic pastoralism.

In the next chapter, I will show how also the body imaginations and perceptions come to inform the circularity of thought in which Turkana traditionally express and explain life and change.

“Developman: the enrichment of their own ideas of what mankind is all about.” (Sahlins 2005:24)

“It is a waste to feed all these girls, when they will not bring any wealth to the family. Girls and animals are banks.” (Kalokol 5)

Chapter 5: *The Lost Eden* Body as a Framework for Analysis

As the third dimension for my study of change among the younger Turkana generations I have chosen the body. This is not a casual choice. In the past, ethnographies had privileged the study of the ‘products of the mind’ and looked at the body as a passive and culturally sterile dimension; they had emphasized narratives, language and text as cultural reproductions (Howes 2003). In general, the body is an excellent theoretical tool as by using its framework one can well summarize and explain thought, practices, and representations (Broch-Due 1990a). Anthropologist Thomas Csordas has worked among the contemporary American Christian religious movements. He was interested in examining the role of the body in healing practices from demoniac possessions, and in ritual language practices (1990). Csordas uses successfully the body as a methodological and theoretical framework for the analysis of culture. In fact, the body is where the generating principles are internalized and from where thought and practice generate (Bourdieu 1977). The body conveys not only abstract ideas and beliefs, but also concrete sensual perceptions informed by cultural practices (Howes 2003). Finally, a study of the body as a ‘producer’ of cultural objects (including self) can help to break down dichotomies and dualisms that often structure the analysis of culture: mind-body, active-passive, agent-recipient (Csordas 1990).

Once again, “a theory of practice can be best grounded in the socially informed body” (Bourdieu 1977:7). In fact Bourdieu

situates embodiment in the anthropological discourse of practice...Bourdieu goes beyond this conception of habitus as a collection of practices, defining it as a system of perduring dispositions which is the unconscious, collectively inculcated principle for the generation and structuring of practices and representations. (Csordas 1990:7,11)

The habitus does not generate practices unsystematically or at random, instead there is

A ... principle generating and unifying all practices, the system of inseparably cognitive and evaluative structures which organizes the vision of the world in accordance with the objective structures of a determinate state of the social

world: this principle is nothing other than the socially informed body, with its tastes and distastes, its compulsions and repulsions, with, in a word, all its senses, that is to say, not only the traditional five senses-which never escape the structuring action of social determinisms but also the sense of necessity and the sense of duty, the sense of direction and the sense of reality, the sense of balance and the sense of beauty, common sense and the sense of the sacred, tactical sense and the sense of responsibility, business sense and the sense of propriety, the sense of humor and the sense of absurdity, moral sense and the sense of practicality, and so on. (Bourdieu 1977:24)

For the Turkana, what are the generating principles that dictate the values around the body? How are these passed on to younger generations? How are these manifesting in practice and representation? Finally, how have the new forces of socialization influenced the body of the youth? To what extents?

Vigdis Broch-Due has extensively worked in demonstrating that the body, for the Turkana, is a paramount dimension (1990a, 1991, 1993). In fact, the Turkana use the dimension of the body, both human and animal, to construct social relations, ontology and cosmology. Also for the Turkana the body is a sign or medium of communication (Duglas in Howes 2003): through bodily practices and representations the positive and negative values within the Turkana culture are conveyed. Even if not explicitly stated, the politics that have and continue to change the Turkana's space and time are principally aimed at the body. These foreign policies in Turkana have been immobilizing the body through sedentarization. They have been disconnecting human and animal bodies, as well as changing the appearance of the body. I will show these perspectives on the body and how these are related to children and youth perceptions, thought and practice and to socialization.

[Irving] Hallowell went only as far as the conventional anthropological concept that the self is constituted in the ontogenetic process of socialization, without taking full cognizance of the constant reconstitution of the self, including the possibilities not only for creative change in some societies, but for varying degrees of self-objectification cross-culturally (Csordas 1990:6).

I will show how "objectification" of cultural objects (ontology) is a continuous flux throughout life, and not only during early children socialization. "The body... is an existential ground of culture" (Ibid. 5). Anthropologist Carol Counihan has studied how control over the appearance of the body and specifically food intake is strictly related to hierarchy and individualism among college students in USA. Thus the success of the youth is related to their physical appearance—strong for men and thin for women- and the food practices that "make the body" are often connected to class and family histories (1992). I will demonstrate that, for

the Turkana, body decoration and dress play a vital role in structuring their agency and identity. Moreover, for the Turkana, as with the American students, food plays an important role in making the people who they are. Finally, the investigation of the articulation of the body variety is important in relation to “complex cultures”. It opens up for an investigation into the nature of social relations among different ‘bodies’, and especially on the background of socialization of generational change.

Often a study of the body is accompanied by an analysis of the *sensorium* (Howes 2003, Classen 1990, 1993). In my case, I will not enter in depth the realm of the senses as this is too involved and outside the scope of my thesis. In this chapter, I will look at the body as a conveyor of cultural representations. Through a careful study and observation of the choices an individual makes regarding his/her body, it is possible to contribute to an investigation of identity and community belonging.

Changes on the Body

Bodies gather mighty images around them. A stranger cannot fail to be struck by the stunning body style among the Turkana and their striking sense for emphasis and exaggeration of bodily form, posture and appearances. The visual effects created by the distinctive, diversified, and dramatic forms of body decorations communicate far beyond the sound of speech, conveying a wealth of information about each and every wearer and their position towards one another...Body appearance announces the person’s state of health and harm, registers pain and pleasure delivered and received, proclaims prosperity and poverty, speaks about status and achievement, and signifies his and her stage in the life-cycle. (Broch-Due 1990a:i).

The Turkana body with no doubt draws the attention of the foreigner. Body posture, dress and decorations are extremely important for all the Turkana: whether educated or not, settled or nomadic, woman or man, child or elder. The way in which they walk always upright regardless of age and health is surprising. The nonchalance with which they move conveys elegance, not shabbiness. Their glances and handshakes are charged with strength. To greet with body contact is important, one of the social norms a child learns very early in life. The Turkana are proud of their appearance and narcissist enough that even a small child dressed in rags would spend a long time admiring his/her image reflected in a mirror. Even with the modernization of cloths, Turkana remain very careful and particular about the way they dress and how they comb their hair and the accessories they carry.

Popular culture coming from down-country Kenya, and from the rest of the world conveys images to the town youth on which, by borrowing and creating, they construct their

bodily appearances. According to the opinion of my young town informants, it is fashionable to wear denim, both pants and skirts, as well as colorful t-shirts, instead of the traditional cloth skirts and *lesos*. It is preferable to wear tennis shoes and sneakers, instead of sandals despite the hot climate. Boys and girls associate sunglasses with foreigners, the *mzungo*, as well as TV celebrities, therefore it is considered very valuable to own sunglasses. Boys of the town remove earrings and traditional headdress whilst the girls prefer to have long plated hair and remove their bead necklaces. It is generally considered cool to own cell phones that can play music and take pictures.

Children and youth's appearance is also influenced by the schools and their existing codes of hygiene. All school children must shave their heads and dress in uniforms. They are forbidden to use ochre or butter to smear their skins. Their parents are scorned if the children show traditional scarifications. Nevertheless, the 'town and school attire' is not perpetual. Turkana of all ages, children, youth, and adults, continue to keep traditional clothes and accessories at home which they use during traditional events such as *edonga*, rites of passages and marriages. School children are used to wearing uniforms only during school days, and switching to 'normal' clothes while at home. In order to cope with regulations implemented by schools, some Turkana parents have begun finding variations to traditional methods.

"Our child was very sick. We took him to the emuron. He told us to kill a ram, and to smear the chyme mixed with ochre on the child's chest. He also gave us a pig bone charm to be hanged on the child's neck, so that the ekipe would keep away. But we had a problem. The child was a pupil in school, and could not wear the charm. He could not be smeared. We inquired with the emuron. As long as you keep smearing the child when he's at home, and protect the pig charm in your security box, nothing will happen to the child. We did as he said, and the child was cured." (Kaikor 4)

The body is also shaped by the daily living practices of the Turkana. Represented in the table below, is a summary of the descriptions from my informants of the different bodies (of men and women) of those who live by the Lake Turkana, in the countryside or in towns, as explained to me by my informants.

Fisherman	Herder/Warrior	Town person/School pupil
Stronger	Thinner but faster	Weaker
Prone to diseases	Get less sick	Prone to diseases
Thicker	More resistant walking	Lazier
Fatter	Can fast for longer time	Lazier
Bowed legs	Straight legs and neck	Dandy looking but straight
Poor diet	Better diet	Poor diet
Harder	Harder	Softer
Hotter	Cooler	Hotter

“There was a leader by the name of Loweisia in 1979 with a team of kaengomonyang that went to raid a Merille community. Their emuron told them if you want to succeed in the raid, you must endure hunger and not eat the wild fruits on the way. So they started the journey, and they slept two days on the way without food. On the third day of their journey they found a lot of fruits at a river called Kachoda. Because they could not endure hunger anymore, they ate the fruits and decided to go ahead with the plan of raiding. By bad luck they found the Merille awake and since they got spotted, they were killed in big number included their leader Loweisia and other people like Ekoloro, Ngimetoï etc...” (Loarengak 2)

Fasting shapes the strength of the body and of the mind, fundamental qualities for a successful warrior. The story above demonstrates how the practice of fasting is not easily endurable by Turkana anymore. This is in part due to the introduction of new types of food. I will discuss in greater details how the introduction of new types of food has influenced the behavior and look of sedentarized Turkana people and especially of the younger generations later in the chapter.

One of the main dilemmas pertaining to new bodily practices is related to procreation and once again to the value of fertility. Turkana’s “social life...focuses on the forces of fertility and growth” (Broch-Due 1991:289). The Turkana body belongs to the community; through each individual body the Turkana invest and build for the future of all. Nowadays children are becoming more individualistic using their body for the immediate pleasure instead of for the development and benefit of their families. After the sacrifices made by their families to send them to school, many children do not manage to find a job. As a result, boys are not able to gather a proper brideprice for the mothers of their children and thus lose any right to their offspring. Girls find poor boyfriends who cannot marry or take care of them, thus their families must once again offer material support (see Charts Chapter 4). This trend is the long-term result of the alterations of subsistence strategies by colonial and developmental interventions (Broch-Due 1989,1990a).

Turkana place and person are not linked essentially and exclusively as in western models, instead they are rather “a fluid, expandable and flexible construction” (Broch-Due 2000). We have seen in Chapter 3 how the Turkana house has changed. The house is intimately connected to the body and the various stages of procreation, growth, and death (Broch-Due 1990a, 1992, 2001). This is not surprising seen that “the notion that houses are people is one of the universals of architecture (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995). When the new agents of socialization introduce new domestic values and appearances, these are reflected in the physical transformations of both the house and the body. We have seen how the living compound has changed, and as a consequence some of the values that it imbeds. The growing number of single-female headed households has resulted in the tendency of the Turkana *awi* rarely coming to its full traditional development, but instead often remaining an *ekol*. Thus it is the female lineage which continues in the new generations (Broch-Due 1990:320). Inside the compound, the male (husband) constructions tend to disappear, as there is no longer a “real” husband!! The livestock tends to disappear from within the household, and thus the immediate important bodily connection between humans and animals. However, this should not be interpreted as a direct result of a move towards matrifiliation!



Fig. 19 A) Young girl in Nakwamekwi with freshly plated purple hair. B) Drawings in Loarengak of girls in jeans and high heels and girls with skirts.



Fig. 20 Young brides' decorations and tattoos during a traditional Turkana wedding.

Imagination of Other Bodies

It was extremely revealing and fascinating to see and hear about the embodiment of the other (the non-Turkana, the foreign) by the children and the youth. There has been much study in anthropology regarding the views of the foreign by the children through the analysis of stories, narratives, dreams and drawings. The last two have been mostly studied in connection to psychological development (Bilu 1989). Without delving into the enormous field of research pertaining to different drawings systems within different cultures, I will note that children from all cultures “quickly absorb the graphic images in their environment and incorporate them into their drawings” (Martlew and Connolly 1996). In the towns in Turkana the ‘image capital’ introduced by school curricula, Christianity, media, as well as foreigners, have provided the younger generations with skills and material to articulate the objectification of the other. In addition, sponsorship has created distance-relationships and emotional attachments, and consequently imaginations of the sponsors by the children and youth.

Discourses of evangelism build relationships of child sponsorship within World Vision [and other religious organizations], transmogrifying money in the form of monthly remittances –a generic and impersonal standard of value- into the embodied human relationships with alive, unpredictable, and spontaneous others. (Bornstein 2001:597)

Through verbal descriptions and drawings I have collected a reasonably good sample of how the children see and imagine Europeans (white), Americans, Asians, and God, and what practice they assign to each of them. The study could be extended to other groups of non-Turkana residing and working in Turkana, like for example the Somali, the Luo, the Ethiopians, but unfortunately I did not have the time to research these in depth.

Jonny is a 13 year-old who I met through my good friend Pietro, an Italian researcher working in Nairobi, who is also the sponsor of Jonny (see Chapters 2 and 4). As soon as I heard that Pietro was sponsoring the education of a child in Lodwar, I went to look for him. Jonny was one of my informants and friends for three months. He knew I was a student, and that I wanted to write a university work on Turkana *ngitalia*. He was with me often during my interviews and visits to people's houses. I even interviewed his grandmother, and he was then helping translating together with my assistant Edward. When I left Turkana, Jonny flew with me to Nairobi. We stayed for my last week in Kenya together in Pietro's apartment in Westlands. Pietro was working so I spent much time with Jonny. Whilst in Nairobi I was surprised to see how the behavior of Jonny had changed compared to when he was in Lodwar. Jonny had been to Nairobi before once and had a lot of fun. His sponsors had taken him to the cinema, to shop, to eat pizza (which he adores) and to the swimming pool. However, too much novelty had also been stressful to Jonny making him nostalgic. He said he had contracted malaria and had to be sent home.

On this occasion, two years later, Jonny was more comfortable. He walked through the insane traffic of Nairobi as he was born there and although he did not like it, he could navigate himself to all the shops and disentangle himself from the harassment of the vendors. In contrast to when he was in Turkana, in Nairobi Jonny was much confident, even arrogant. He wanted to do things his way, and was not accommodating. His entire family had given him exact indications of what they wished as a present. We were not able to find the exact jeans his brother had requested, which was a distress to Jonny. I was thinking "do not look a gift horse in the mouth", but for Jonny granting his family's desires to the full was a matter of honor and prestige.

Once he did a drawing of me. I was absolutely surprised by what he saw in me:

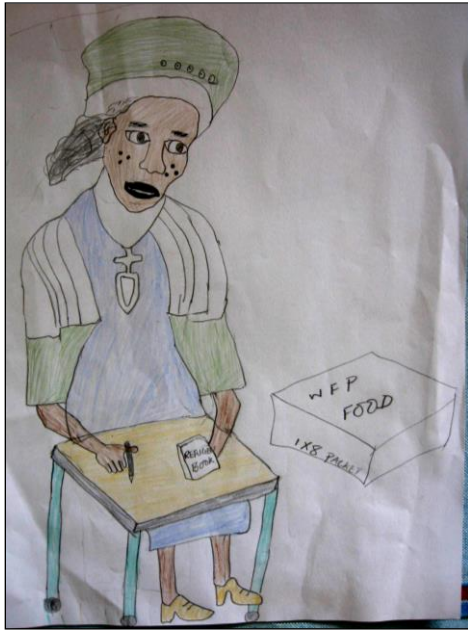


Fig. 21 A) Drawing of myself by Jonny.



B) Drawing of Pietro by Jonny

He knew I was married. Why did he draw me as a nun? He also knew I was a student, and that I had never distributed food, nor given money in Turkana. So, why was I now represented as a food relief distributor of the World Food Program? I think the way in which I was visiting people's houses with my notebook and my small presents (tobacco, sugar and tea) resembled the practice he had seen so many times done by other *mzungo*, missionaries, and NGOs workers. They would bring food to the houses and count people and animals; they would ask questions through the help of a translator. Even though the agenda and the nature of the questions were different, the practice was similar.

Jonny made also a drawing of Pietro. Pietro to the eyes of Jonny is a Turkana warrior. This made more immediate sense. Pietro is the *provider* for Jonny, is the male figure who is paying for his education, his food, his clothes, and for his family. Pietro gives valuable presents to Jonny. And the most appreciated and respected male figure by Turkana is traditionally a warrior. Jonny sees in Pietro the embodiment of the values of strength, providence, control, and beauty, thus representing him as a warrior.

The culture of the younger sedentarized Turkana boys is permeated by the symbols and mythical figures of the cinema in constructing the *ideal* appearance of a man. Striking figures that influence the youth in all the Turkana places I have visited are in fact Jackie Chen and Rambo (Fig. 21 B). Fighting with bare hands represents great physical strength and cunning, both of which are very important virtues for a Turkana man. Films about war and war technology are also highly appreciated by the male youth. But when asked, the boys identified more with Rambo than with Jackie Chen. Jackie Chen is "Chinese" and therefore

almost alien to the boys. He does not represent an ideal young male body, but instead reminds that his people, the Chinese, are extremely dangerous. This is in fact the commonly believed idea about Asians (not including Indians) among the Turkana youth.

As I have already discussed in Chapter 2, a group of Japanese were in Kalokol in the 1990s to teach new fishing techniques. The people remember the Japanese as silent and detached. “We could not trust them, and the young fishermen were put in awe by their strange doing. But it is always dangerous to be with a ‘Chinese’, you know.” (Kalokol 3) The people of Kalokol would always compare the Japanese with the Italians of FAI, who were much more liked by the population. Maybe this was just because they wanted to please me, or maybe because the Italian group (2 people) was in Turkana for a longer period than the Japanese and thus had more time to build stronger relationships and better impressions with the population. Nevertheless the descriptions and recalling about my compatriots were pleasant.

When I introduced myself as coming from Norway, and asked about NORAD, the older generations of Kalokol expressed hope that I would bring development again. They shared stories of past work possibilities, child sponsorships, and times of plenty connected to NORAD. However, the Norwegians have been blended into an almost non-human group, belonging to a far-away past of promises which had not come to fulfillment. Unfortunately, I have not collected enough stories to give a more detailed representation of the Norwegian people by the Turkana.

The Turkana youth think of the Americans as strong fighters, and indeed “the most dangerous race” is the white race (Fig. 21 A). They can build bombs and are very skillful in war craft, it was told to me once. On the other side, there is a widespread belief that the African Americans are rich and fat because they eat large amounts of meat everyday, being hip hop dancers!

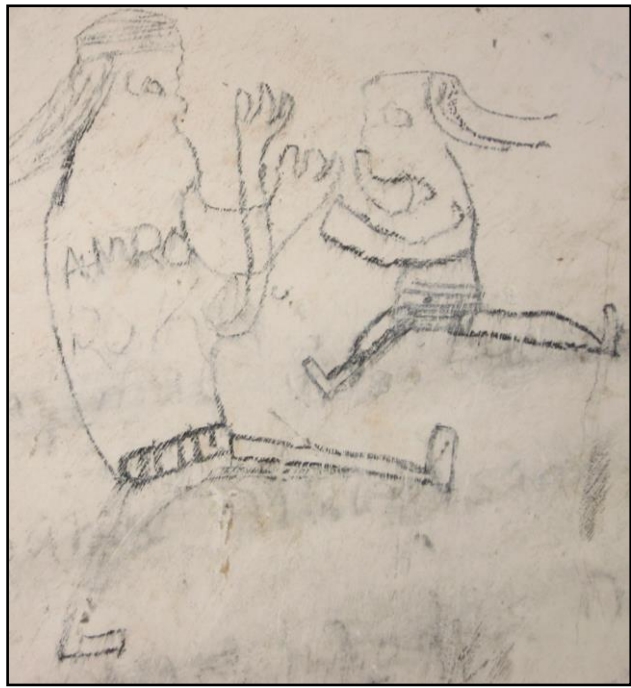


Fig. 21 A) American wrestler drawn by Jonny B) Rambo/Rocky against Jackie Chen

These representations as cultural bodies are not more abstract or fictitious than self-objectification. They are very much concrete creations. They represent the values embedded and embodied in the imaginations and perceptions of the others. Enemies are usually referred to those circumcised. Traditionally the Turkana do not practice circumcision, referring to it as “slaughtering of the body”, they call it with contempt. The Merille and the Pokot, enemies of the Turkana are instead circumcised. Recently, one of the campaigns focusing on cleanliness and hygiene has been promoting male circumcision within the towns of Turkana. The old generations are outraged by such practice. However, when the Turkana women give birth in the hospital, circumcision is often performed as a routine procedure without asking for permission.

Finally, the imagination of God, *Akuj* in Turkana language is changing due to the influences of institutionalized religion. Traditionally *Akuj* is neither female nor male, but it is instead a heterogeneous divine force, consisting of both feminine and masculine traits. However the word itself has a female prefix a-, and it is engulfed in female form, that is the circle which signify creation, growth, and transformation, being modeled on the pregnancy process (Broch-Due 1990a). In contrast, *Ekiye* has instead masculine prefix (e-) (Broch-Due 1990:320). The preachers, priests and missionaries use the word *Akuj* to represent the Christian God, who is a monogenetic god, represented and referred to as male. Prayers are

translated into Turkana and here is when suddenly *Akuj* is the Father, the Son and the (male) Holy Ghost.

The power of grammatical construction is enormous in engendering thought, imagination, and believes. De Saussure (1986) and Chomsky (1965,1986) have demonstrated how language should be taken as a form of social action, a cultural resource, and a set of sociocultural practices (Ahearn 2001:110). I can only imagine how traumatic the sudden “masculinization” of *Akuj* could be for the Turkana, as well as how potentially powerful can and will be in creating gendered power relations. Language is not neutral:

All words have the ‘taste’ of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context.” (Bakhtin 1981:293).

There was a great disparity between the ways generations imagine *Akuj*. Older generation would describe *Akuj* as a non-human force, permeating the air, the earth and the all the creatures. *Akuj* would be the life given by a mother in the act of giving birth, and the fertility force in the act of intercourse. So beautifully strong were such descriptions of *Akuj*, and so detached by any gender construction. In contrast, for the younger generations *Akuj* is a man. They describe him as gray or white in color, with long hair, and dressed in long white cloths. He lives in the sky among the white clouds in silence or in green pastures.

Edo Ergo Sum

“In Turkana culture, when it comes to consuming meat,⁵⁶ elderly men are given akou (head), akwat (foreleg), ngamaran ngauni (three ribs). Down the ladder follow young fathers and mature boys who are given atorob (belly). Ngamaliteny (intestines), and etau (heart) are given to the other youth and teens. Older mothers and young girls are given amuro (hind-leg) and achir (groin). Young girls approaching the age of getting married must be given the fat tail and the forelimb.” (Kalokol 4)

According to my informants, there is a strict connection between a child’s bodily and mental skills, their behavior and the food s/he eats. This is not surprising, given the world-wide proverb “you are what you eat”, but for the Turkana food is not only fuel and construction material for the temple of the body; the Turkana embed cosmology in food consumption. The food elements found traditionally in Turkana are connected to the cycle of life. Very briefly, the rain makes the grass grow and will feed the animals, the milk and blood,

⁵⁶ At special occasions like rite of passages, weddings, and other feasts. Traditionally meat is prepared and shared among the community in the *akiriket*, sacred semi-circle used also for sacrificing.

provided by the animals, will sustain the people. At death the people will make the substance of the earth. Moreover, for the Turkana food is knowledge, and cooking “is the most potent symbol for humanity in Turkana thought” (Broch-Due 1993:64).

The edible coming from grass and water are believed to enter the body on a ‘food path’, being transformed into breath, knowing, and speech in the wake of the alimentary process before parts of these attributes exit through the anus, *eosin*, a word which is allied to ‘wisdom’, *aosin*. (Broch-Due 1990a:340)

Even before conception, a child is “planned” by the sharing of the food among his generators. A wife will prepare and share the evening meal with her husband before she will have intercourse with him (Broch-Due 1993). It is believe in fact that the father and the mother must be made of the same substance in order to conceive a child. After birth, the naming ceremony involves the suckling of the milk from the mother’s breast. While she offers the breast to the child, she will speak the chosen names. When the child grabs the nipple and starts suckling, s/he will be given the name spoken in that moment. The name will be the choice of the child. The name-ceremony is performed in front of family, friends and the community who are welcome to suggest names. These names can describe the situation in which children were born. I met a child named Akaal, but her nickname was *akatorot* which means cold. She was in fact born in a cold day. The sedentarized Turkana of the towns all have two names: a Christian and a traditional. However, it is the traditional Turkana name which is assumed at the moment of the first suckling. It is the Turkana name that brings the identity and belonging to the Turkana community to the child. This name will be used in all the traditional ceremonies, and important events within the community. The elders will summon the individual by this name and the *emuron* will pray using this name.

“There are no more feasts in the community, and the children starve because they don’t have milk and blood to eat. There is not butter to feed the babies...”
(Elder Luis Lodwar 1)

The shortage of quality food is a great dilemma for the elders and the community. Not only there is little food in the towns and families go to sleep hungry, children are malnourished, and fathers get drunk out of shamed for not being able to provide for their families. Contrary to what the non-Turkana organizations want us to believe, the most serious problem is more about the quality of the food, rather than the quantity. The sedentarized Turkana who live in towns and along the lake were all agreeing that the food they receive

through food relief distribution makes them weak, lazy, and sick. Many people told me that it took them a long time for their stomachs to get used to digesting maize, and that the problem remains even though the new generations grow up eating maize and beans. The relief food is considered particularly suitable for children.

“Look at this baby, and look at the bottle of tea. What good is the tea for the baby? The children of the countryside drinking milk and blood are strong, they are never sick, these of the towns are always weak and contract malaria too often. It is a pity for the eyes to even look at them.” (Lodwar 7)

The Turkana parents of the town areas were often complaining that the children did not receive suitable food from the food relief programs or from the shops in town. Even the maize, beans and potatoes distributed to the pupils in the school kitchens are considered to contain little nutrients and to be full of pesticides. At the time I was in Lodwar and Nakwamekwi, *sarlak*, powdered milk, was being distributed by Merlin group to the undernourished children to boast their growth.⁵⁷ The mothers would tell me that *sarlak* gave their children diarrhea because it was full of chemicals. It is “poison that fills the bellies.” Children in towns and by the lake do not have the same access to fresh and fermented milk, blood, and traditional Turkana animal fat –ghee, as the *raya*. Along the lake, children feed on fish, which is considered good because fattening and rich in vitamins, but it also makes for an unbalanced diet. In addition, along the lake the danger of water diseases weakens the children’s bodies.

Animals and Youth

The identification between the child and his/her animal is still very present in Turkana. All the children I have interviewed claimed to have a “pet”, a special animal which was given to them in early age and whose name⁵⁸ they will continue to invoke for the rest of their lives. The possession and care of the animal has both symbolic and social value; “the relation of livestock to people is that of part-to-whole” (Broch-Due 1990b:41). “[D]omesticated animals work alongside [the body] to enhance the effects persons strive to make on one another” (Broch-Due 1990a:i).

⁵⁷ Oxfam GB come to Loarengak every two months since 1992, weight the children and distribute *unimix*, compacted meals of maize, milk, soy nuts and sugar.

⁵⁸ Usually the name of an animal refers to its hide’s patterns and colors.

Even though the majority of sedentarized children and youth seldom take care of livestock, the strict relationship between them and the animals continues to exist. Of this metonym between the animal and human body, Vigdis Broch-Due talks in her article *Cattle are Companions, Goats are Gifts: Animals and People in Turkana Thought*. Every Turkana child is given a small animal, a goat, a sheep or a calf, to be taken care. The animal may reside separately in the countryside, but the child of the town knows about its existence and goes visit when s/he can. As young animals have names, children are given nicknames that suit them. These nicknames are used to soothe the child and they are played in songs to rock the children to sleep. Once the animal dies, it is still remembered and its name invoked during bad and good times. Linneus' favorite animal was a white and black goat called Lomeri.

“I received Lomeri from my father⁵⁹ when I was still in Primary school. I had to take care of it during vacation times, and inquire often that nothing had happened to it. Lomeri and I slept often together in her kraal⁶⁰ when the nights were too hot to sleep inside. She was white and black and very beautiful. Her eyes were full of blood, and I would drink from it often when I was taking it to the pastures. Now Lomeri is dead since long time, but I still remember and think about her.” (Loarengak 3)

“My ‘bull’ is huge, walks with grace and I have adorned it with a bell around its neck so I may know its whereabouts. It’s also two years old and comes from a pedigree of good goats. I love it and sing about it, and the villagers know me by the name of my bull. I take it to graze in the area with the juiciest grass. We don’t feed our bulls by hand, only when they are sick. As young men, we start with goats and when, after you have done asapan you receive cows. I haven’t done asapan yet. My bull is still a goat and symbolically, we call it ‘my bull’. It is like praising a small thing like a goat so as your status in the society stands strong as a tower. But the favorite bull must be from one pedigree throughout, so as even if this one dies you have another one to choose from, and hence you maintain your name forever, Locheria Kirion Chuch. Girls are not allowed to have such bulls. What for? They are supposed to admire and adore us through our bulls; it’s one way of luring and winning girls! But they can have a favorite animal and give it a name!! They give feminine names, hence they adopt female animals because it centers around their chores, like milking for example. The pedigree of Locheria Kirion Chuch was a special gift from my dead father. The boys in town may not have a bull, but not because they can’t, it’s because they are addicted to hip hop, reggae and crank. It is important to have such animals because of prestige. It makes you stand out from the other boys, makes you a serious member of the young warriors. You should come and see it, it walks like a king, towers over the other goats and you will like it because it also has uncivilized raw rough edges like me.” (Lodwar 8)

⁵⁹ Mother’s brother.

⁶⁰ Animals’ pen.

Georgesmith, the primary doctor at Lodwar hospital is an unmarried 28 years old from Lokitaung. He has Locheria Kirion Chuch, a favorite bull, which is black overall with many yellow stripes. He often invokes the color of it (which corresponds to its name). His story shows a strong parallel between the ‘bull’ Locheria Kirion Chuch and Georgesmith himself. Georgesmith says the bull has his rough character, and that he’s big, strong, and towering, just like him.

Hotness and Change of Climate

A beautiful Turkana prayer for the rain, *agatakin akiru*, says:

<p><i>Maata, maata nabo</i> <i>Akuj nyai nytoyarae roba</i> <i>Nakinae ngakipi,</i> <i>Nakinai ngide,</i> <i>Ajako,</i> <i>Ngakiro nakarinok nikianyun.</i> <i>Ngibaren toya,</i> <i>Akiru toyei.</i></p>	<p><i>How are you, how are you again</i> <i>Please God give us life again</i> <i>Give us water,</i> <i>Give us children,</i> <i>Wealth,</i> <i>Let not bad words meet with us.</i> <i>Livestock shall live,</i> <i>Rain shall come.</i></p>
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As we have seen in the introduction, Turkana is still on the top list of those African areas that require external international interventions and support, especially concerning food access. Currently, news and reports from NGOs and other international agencies and institutions like the FAO, stress that the civil unrest as a result of the recent political elections, the raiding that plagues the rural areas, and the continuing droughts are leading the country towards even more desperate social and economic times.

According to the adults, we have seen how the children of today are crooked, unruly, and uncontrollable (refer to Chapter 4). They do not listen, are disobedient, lazy, steal money, and are a continuously source of worry for their families. They disrespect elders, and in a culture where “[s]eniority is the most significant political principle” (Broch-Due 1991:320) this is the worst offence.

The dilemma the parents are experiencing with the unruly (crooked) behavior of their children is explained in terms of weather change. The lack of rains in recent years has resulted in the younger generations are becoming too hot, and the heat is spoiling them both inside and out. The hot sun burns the strength from young boys and girls so that they decide against herding, and they get sleepy and lazy. Moreover, the heat makes them crazy and violent. The boys and the girls abuse their parents, and do not listen. They do things in secret or even under their nose using cunning devices (like speaking in English or Kiswahili, or text

messaging). Sexual intercourse at an early age is also due to the influence of the hot weather, as well as the improper food and the lack of parental control in schools. Hot young sexuality ruins marriage plans (Broch-Due 1991:312), and socially-productive ends (ibid. 1990b).

Traditionally dryness is associated with knowledge, whilst wetness and rain are associated with fertility. The cardinal point associated to these good values is the east, *kide*, and the direction “up”, where there is freshness, and the divinity of *Akuj* (Broch-Due 1990b:51). This coolness is also associated with domestication and ruling. On the west, *too*, the *ekipe*, evil forces, and wild forces are found. West is associated with hotness, and unruliness, and often with adolescents who traditionally do wear red ochre (Broch-Due 1990b:52).

Making a Good Marriage

The lack of proper marriages breaks down the controlled fertility and consequently the life cycle (Broch-Due 1990a). Marriage is an important field of practice also in the Turkana culture. A husband must serve the three “P”, Georgesmith once told me, namely protection, provision, and procreation. In the towns, and especially in these years of drought, families do not expect husbands to provide with animals, instead school fees, clothes, shoes and food replace animals. The problem with alcoholism is firmly connected to the impossibility of providing for one’s family. In Turkana domestic and subsistence practices are gendered. Non-Turkana would often complain that Turkana men are lazy, and that let their women work like mules. In fact, you would very rarely or possibly never see a man carrying firewood, or water, washing clothes or sweeping. Men do not cook if there is a woman in the house. The women I had interviewed all agreed that they would never allow a man to take up their tasks. “A woman must cook, and if she is not able, what kind of a woman is she? The husband has then the right to divorce her!”

“The husbands of my daughters in Kitale have not paid the brideprice yet. They have brought: one little money and the other 2 kg of sugar, but not a single animal. I am not considering this as a proper brideprice, but for now I accept it as a token.” (Nakwamekwi 5)

I did not encounter the tendency among the youth of dating and choosing a partner based on love *because* of modernity, that is now seen in many other places (see Gjelstad 2009). In fact, partnership of love it is not a novelty in Turkana. It is true that marriages are often contracts amongst families and that a suitable spouse is traditionally often chosen for the daughter, nevertheless there have been and continue to be cases of elopement and wedlock of love. Nowadays what has changed is not the preference for a partner chosen on the bases of

love, but that the advantage to the family is no longer considered a top priority for a marriage. Young generations start dating –which in Turkana means pretty much being married- without asking permission for it and because “a child is free to decide what s/he wants” the parents do not intervene most of the times. They may be themselves children of informal marriages, and they may have given up hope of “passing a good example to the children to follow”. Certainly, the parents would prefer a traditional wedding, and so too the children. It brings status to both the wife and the husband, as well as wealth to her family and relatives. The lineage of the husband benefits from gaining family members and enlarges their *awi* and *ekol*.

The perfect wife

“It is not good for a man to be alone, a man must find a wife.’ Petro Eseruon thought he wanted to marry. He saw Akalale. Her good behavior impressed him. She used to stay with her parents, and fetch water and firewood every day. She was beautiful, dressed in skin apron, with beads and tattoos on her cheeks, chest, stomach and back. She used to listen to him, and they shared everything: problems and ideas, food and scarcity. Akalale was impressed by the beauty of Petro. He wore leggings and earrings; he had headdresses of feathers and ochre. He used to make up songs and sing them at the edonga. He was skilled at bouncing and dancing. When she saw him dancing, she was impressed.”
(Kaikor 5)



Fig. 22 A) Young brides-to-be at traditional Turkana wedding. B) Married women, perfect wives.⁶¹

⁶¹ Notice woman number 1. She is married to a policeman. Women married to men who work in the modern sectors (are not herders) would adopt modern clothes and remove their beads.

The habitus that informs youth's choice in terms of suitable marriage partners aligns with the traditional Turkana values concerning marriage. All the male youth I have interviewed, except for those already in or planning to enter seminary school, wanted to eventually get married. Remarkably, the great majority of these young men expressed the desire to marry a *raya* girl, and not an educated one. Even though they would worship the beauty and sex appeal of TV actresses, dancers, models, and singers, and they openly admitted to liking girls with high heels, make up and plaited hair, their preference for a wife fell on the more traditional girls. According to the boys, not only do the *raya* girls look more beautiful and stronger than the educated girls, they are also supposed to know more about the culture, are more respectful, obedient, and not so ambitious in terms of money and objects. The educated girls, on the other side, would be more unreasonable as a wife, asking for perfumes, clothes and "all these costly things a girl wants these days."

"The youth nowadays is different because of the influence of money and modernity. The desire of objects and money makes especially the girls into prostitutes, and for this reason they get pregnant early. In this way the girls lose their value. Men know that raya girls are better behaved and will make better wives than educated wives because they are less demanding and more respectful. Learned girls are arrogant, not trustworthy, and ask for expensive items like fashion clothes and perfumes." (Loarengak 4)

Unfortunately for them, the educated Turkana girls do not have a good reputation within families and the community. Certainly their families are happy they have received an education as this is seen as an investment in their daughters' future. However, the growing numbers of girls dropping out of school because of pregnancy, and the strong connection between "come with stay" and educated girls is worrying the parents and the community. *Ngiputuro*, warthogs, is still the name given to the growing number of children resulting from informal marriages, or "come with stay" as the people call it, and warthogs are despised animals by the Turkana. Legend says that the time of the initiation of the *ngiputuro* (circa 1880) coincides with a time of diseases and drought, which wiped out half the animals and human population (Broch-Due 1990a:410). Once again, the example of *ngiputuro* shows "the tendency of personify, the knowledge of Turkana extract from the environment is suffused with gender and generational constructs (Broch-Due 1990b:40).

Conclusion

In this chapter I wanted to investigate the role and objectification of the body in revealing values and imaginations among the younger sedentarized Turkana generations. The influences by the forces of socialization (media, school and Christianity), the new fields of practices (wage jobs), and the new food and hot climate may have changed the appearance of the body, but they have not altered the values embedded in and conveyed by the body. The body is an investment for the community more than for the individual; it does not belong to persons, but is made up by the social relations of whom the person is part, a 'part-for-the-whole structure.' Secondly, beauty is recognized in connection to fertility and to the possibility of contracting traditional marriages, as practice is tightly connected to body. Thus a good husband is strong as a warrior, so to protect and provide for his family and procreate many children. A good wife is strong and enduring, beautiful, respected and respectful. Finally, the most serious problem the Turkana parents are facing has to do with the overheating of the younger generations due to the change of the climate. In the typical holistic thinking of the Turkana, there must be a cosmological explanation for the nowadays crooked behavior of children, and for why they have lost their Eden.

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