

SAMBURU YOUTH NAVIGATING VIOLENT TERRAINS

RECONFIGURING SAMBURU MASCULINITY IN NORTHERN
KENYA

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Abstract

This thesis is part of the major research project *The effects of violence and impoverishment on psychosocial health among pastoralist communities in Northern Kenya* funded by The Research Council of Norway. Based on a multisided fieldwork in Northern Kenya, this thesis examines how young Samburu men reconfigure their masculinity. These young men are navigating lives against a historical backdrop marked by political marginalization, conflict and poverty. Yet, Samburu men are active participants in the production of their own social context and the place they hold within it. It is my argument that Samburu men are creative agents. However, I show that the actions they take, and the choices they make, do not necessarily lead to happiness or success. They are creative cultural actors in that they use their potential to manipulate and change complex cultural orders, inspired by local and global contexts.

The thesis is divided into six different chapters. Following the introduction and methodological considerations, the second chapter is concerned with the continual reproduction of colonial history. I present the history relevant for my field, especially attentive to colonial interventions in the pastoralist mode of production. Pastoralism in Kenya has been under pressure since the early days of colonialism, and policies involving Samburu were especially targeting young men. Approximately every 15th year Samburu open a new age-set, and a generation of young men are initiated as *Imurran*. The *Imurran* were considered by the colonial administration as unruly and unpredictable. They feared the collective nature of such institutionalized age-sets (*moranhoo*), and made several attempts to wipe out the entire institution.

The age-set institution still exists, and is entangled with past colonial and present post-colonial policies. To this day the rites of passage during *moranhoo* are absolutely essential in forming Samburu masculinity. In the third chapter, *Ritual performance and the creation of masculinities*, I demonstrate how rituals are shaping the current generation of Samburu men. In the course of several *Imugit* rituals they transition into adulthood. Rites of passage among the Samburu involve obtaining new propitious abilities, values and rights, but equally important is the cut (*adjun*) from the old. For the Samburu *Imurran* the implications of the cut are enormous. Cut is his dependence on his mother and other intimate relations, and from now on, and typically until he is married, he is on his own but has potential for support from his age-mates and the overall community. The moral freedom he enjoyed as a child is cut and

replaced with a series of rules and cultural expectations. In the chapter I further argue how the rites of passage are not only about adulthood, but also about masculinity, and about becoming a man and a pastoralist

In the fourth chapter, *Violence and masculinity*, I present a multidimensional view of violence. I show how violence and masculinity in Northern Kenya are interconnected. Violence might be performed to deal with various life challenges such as poverty. In this sense, violence can be used as a “tool” to actively and creatively combat threats to personal dignity and autonomy. In this light violence can be seen as formative, given that the act itself changes the way the perpetrator sees himself and others: It changes the way he sees the world and how ‘the world’ sees him. In the performance of violence young men dynamically interact with the global and the local, the past and the present. Young men who take an active part in violent activities are navigating within a complex field of multiple interests, values and ideas.

The chapter *Aesthetics, sexuality and morality* is devoted to young Samburu men who direct their attention to aesthetics rather than violence. In the chapter I demonstrate how masculinity is formed and enacted in performance and aesthetics during *moranhood*. This performance and masculinity has been reified and commercialized for the tourist industry. The so-called ‘Mombasa moran’ is the most striking product of this reification and exemplifies a novel mode of male behaviour that reconfigures the whole notion of masculinity among young Samburu men. The ‘Mombasa moran’ creatively take advantage of a niche in the ethno-erotic tourist industry and use the romantic idealisation of the Samburu body and aesthetics for their own gain. In this chapter I furthermore detail Samburu sexuality and the moral criticism we can find within its discourse. This criticism is addressed to the changing priorities and aspirations among young men. These priorities are often related to education, new business ideas, tourism and other non-pastoral opportunities.

In chapter 6, *The transforming power of youths: Angry elders, young leaders* I continue to focus on the relationship between masculinity and intimate relations, notions of sociality, and ‘morality’. Pastoralism as a mode of subsistence has been devalued and marginalised by both colonial and post-colonial governments. Samburu youths tend to place the demise of pastoralism in opposition to ideas of prosperity associated with modernity and images of a Western lifestyle. Through the chapter I demonstrate how young men are integral in the formation of relevant changes in society. With few opportunities to build stable life careers,

some are able to adapt while others become disenfranchised and emasculated. Masculinity is relational in that it is defined and enacted in interactions between men and women, and in different groups of men. Consequently, generational conflict is an important theme in this chapter. For young men, proper leadership is no longer automatically attributed to the seniority of elders. By exploring Samburu narratives I argue that intergenerational conflicts can have dire effects on intimate relations. The issue of trust and mistrust is a key facet in this exploration.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodological Considerations

My main aim in this thesis is to explain how young Samburu men reconfigure their masculinity. This topic will be outlined against the background of a social existence marked by conflict and poverty; coupled with the massive social corollary of processes related to modernity. From this aim I have formed a base argument that will permeate and join together the different chapters I present. It is my argument that the young men I have interviewed and observed during my fieldwork are creative cultural actors. They are navigating against a background marked by political marginalization, conflict and poverty, yet they are active participants in the formation of this context and the place they hold within it. I refer to my informants as creative, but not in a normative sense. The actions they take, and the choices they make, do not necessarily lead to happiness or success. They are creative cultural actors when they use their potential to manipulate and change a complex cultural order, inspired by a local and global context. This main argument interconnects with my view on masculinity.

Some preliminary insights into masculinity and youth in theory

Dorothy Hodgson is an historical anthropologist, and she has written extensively about the ethnic group Maasai, their colonial history and post-colonial realities. According to Hodgson (2000a), gender roles and relations must be understood as dynamic and historical, and are produced through the actions and ideas of men and women, in interaction with local and trans-local processes and structures. In this definition, Hodgson brings out a range of considerations I agree with. The way I see it, masculinities are not fixed characterisations, but dynamically produced and reshaped through interaction in a context that is (often simultaneously) local and global. Through his interest in the anthropology of knowledge, Todd Sanders has written about rituals, religion and cosmology in Tanzania. Sanders (1999) argues that gender is formed from the cultural production of male (masculinity) and female (femininity), and the relationship between them. I agree with Sanders that gender must also be seen as part of a cultural production. The way I see it, rites of passage are especially significant in this process among Samburu. In Chapter 3 I will show how knowledge on pastoralism and rules on “good morals” are learned through a complex ritual process.

I would argue that my own perspective on masculinity is fairly well placed within a combination of Sanders' and Hodgson's view on gender. However, neither Hodgson nor Sanders base their theory solely on one of the main models that has dominated the field of masculinity for the last 40 years.

Sex-role theory dominated the rather marginal field of masculinity studies until the 1980s. Sex-role theory (see S.M Whitehead 2002) suggests that men are culturally predetermined to act according to the expectations associated with the role they play. It is not a particularly useful theory for me in presenting the argument of a creative cultural actor. Sex-role theory has its roots in Talcot Parsons' functionalism, which does not really account for individual autonomy and creative faculties at all. However, expectations are important, young men are faced with a range of expectations in the formative period of adolescence. The choices they make are seldom forced, but rather inspired by such expectations. The young men I interviewed could be inspired by the elders of the community, their immediate peers, teachers, books in school, Kenyan TV, government officials, Kenyan politicians and celebrities as well as images and ideas from the global popular culture. I agree with theorists such as Connell (2005), who argue that the meaning and purpose of gender-roles and the effect they make in a social context are not fixed in advance of a social interaction, but rather formed in the actual interaction.

Robert W. Connell offered an early critique of sex-role theory, arguing that it did not account for power and change (Carrigan, Connel and Lee 1985). Connell asks us to see diversity in masculinities and femininities, and wants the researcher to look at what people actually do, rather than what is expected and imagined (Connell 1996). He argues that masculinity must be understood as relational and that power is essential in understanding gender relations. It is from this realization that Connell develops the influential theoretical concept of *hegemonic masculinity*. "The concept of 'hegemony', deriving from Antonio Gramzchi's analyses of class relations, refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in a social life" (Connell 2005: 77). Hegemonic masculinity refers to a cultural ideal that is constantly promoted by civil society. This cultural ideal embodies the best way to be a man, and all other men is positioned in relation to it. The ideal furthermore works to legitimize male hegemony over women (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). According to Reeser (2010: 21) ideologies are "created and propagated through various social forms, especially through images, myths, discourses and practise". I find the concept of hegemonic masculinity useful to explain some of the processes I refer to in this thesis. I will argue that

the bigman has been an important masculinity ideal in Kenya, exhibiting various patterns in different historical periods. I could see how this ideal affected the aspirations and actions of the young men I came to know in Northern Kenya. The theory of hegemonic masculinity also offers some insight in understanding the drive to succeed and the anxiety of falling short. Rather than seeking one hegemonic ideal, I found that the various men I interviewed were inspired by a range of masculinity ideals, depending on variables such as age, ethnicity, the specific situation and context at any given time. The theory can definitely be an important analytical tool, but at some level the concept of hegemonic masculinity fails to grasp the messiness of the field context. In an article, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) address some of the critique against the concept. One of the most important critiques concerns the unclear geography of the concept. They propose that the existing hegemonic masculinities can be analysed at different levels, i.e. local, regional and global levels. I find this difficult in the context of Northern Kenya, because the lines separating these levels are unclear. The way I see it, many of the settings I travelled in were local, regional and global all at the same time. Who falls under the same umbrella, sharing the same ideal? All Kenyans? No matter their history and relationship with the state?

There is not one specific theory of masculinity that can account for the actions and choices of all men across all cultures. Masculinities are shifting and fluid, and as soon as we think we might have found the common denominator, contradictions wait around the corner. Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994) suggest that researchers should focus on the enactment of masculinities in the specific context they study, and I agree with this recommendation. It is my interest to show the variance of masculinities available to young Samburu men and how these are produced and used in social interaction. Gender is not the only base theme in this thesis; age also stands out as important. Gjelstad (2009:1) argues that “the formative years of adolescence are intimately located at the intersection of some essential reproduction dynamics characteristic of our historical age”. He suggests that the study of ‘youth’ can contribute to debates on integrative and disintegrative forces of contemporary complex cultures.

In the public discourse and academic literature on violence and conflict, youth is often represented either as ‘a risk’ or ‘at risk’ (Vigh, 2006:33). Because of their young age they are either described as extra vulnerable as victims, or they are represented as perpetrators because they are especially difficult to control. But youths are their own generators of individual and collective futures (Christiansen, Utas and Vigh, 2006). Many young Samburu men feel angry, disenfranchised and disconnected due to a limited range of opportunities. Even though

desperation, apathy and anger might be reasons behind the choice to engage in various forms of violence, it is also almost always a creative decision, based on the options they have in the given socio-political context. Lovell (2006:228) argues that the youth category is often associated with processes of exclusion, marginalisation, violence and social modes of behaviour perceived as threatening to the (adult) social order'. This 'drama' is essential to my discussion, figuring in the negotiations between youths and elders, as they strive to shape the present and the future in their everyday lives.

In addition to the already discussed theoretical framework on masculinity and youth, I find performative theory especially useful in explaining certain dimensions of my field context. The word "performance" is not used in a strictly theatrical or artistic sense, in opposition to reality, but about creative acts that spark processes of transformation. It is my argument that Samburu masculinity is formed and enacted through performance, especially in rituals. This argument requires some contextual details and information about the young Samburu men I write about.

Performance, aesthetics and masculinity

A new age-set opens approximately every fifteen years, when a new generation of *lmurran* is initiated and they are instructed by the new generation of *lpiroi* elders. The *lpiroi* elders are men from the age-set two generations before the new age-set. They have the ritual responsibility for the new initiates, and this is a position of power and privilege. The initiates must go through several rites of passage in order to learn more about *nkanyit* (respect) and to gain in social status. Solidarity among peers is exceptionally important for the young men at the life stage of *moranhoo*d. They go around in groups, whether it is to perform rituals, patrol for enemies, herd cattle or go for cattle raids. Solidarity among age-mates does not cease once one age-set ends and a new one opens; it is a lifelong commitment. But it is during *moranhoo*d that this solidarity is visibly portrayed in performance and aesthetics. Samburu *lmurran* wear shoufa of various colours and decorate themselves with beaded adornments. There are many different styles, drawing on local as well as global inspiration, but I will attempt to describe a typical style. Their hair is decorated with red ochre and various head adornments such as feathers, hairbands, beaded hairbands or ornamental hairpins. They typically wear a looped bead adornment framing the face and two strings of beads crossing the chest. Otherwise they will usually wear many different forms of beaded necklace and

several bangles on arms and legs. Song and body movement in mundane encounters as well as rituals is also part of the aesthetic registry. The performance and aesthetics of *moranhoo*d play an important role in the formation of masculinity, and given that *lmurran* usually go around in groups, the force of the aesthetic is enhanced.

Van Gennep (1960) established that rituals are frequently structured in these three separate stages: separation, liminality and incorporation. This is a pattern I also recognised in my study of Samburu rituals. In the separation stage the initiates are pulled out of the social reality they are used to; in the liminal stage the old is erased to make room for the new. In this pivotal stage the initiates learn new meaningful codes of existence that change their social reality and transform their social status. In the last stage the initiates, now transformed and educated, are re-incorporated into society. Victor Turner (1974) expands our understanding of the liminal phase as a relevant concept outside of the ritual process. In his view, liminality can occur in any condition outside everyday normality, for example for people on a pilgrimage or refugees on the move. Turner (1974) introduces the term *communitas* as a condition especially relevant in “liminality”. *Communitas* is a strong form of togetherness that normally appears when society is in an anti-structural form. In this state people are equal, collectively sharing a common fate and the same experience. The concept of *communitas* is helpful in understanding the collective nature of *moranhoo*d. *Communitas* is formed and enacted in ritual performance, visibly and aesthetically portrayed in the form of decoration, dance and song.

In an effort to understand rituals and the collective aesthetics of *moranhoo*d, Kapferer and Hobart's (2005) notions of performance are particularly insightful. Kapferer and Hobart (2005) suggest that much aesthetic value exists in its fullness in performance. They lean on Kant's notion of the sublime when they argue for the inseparability of the objective (logical and apparently disembodied) and the subjective (embodied) in aesthetic processes. Aesthetics among Samburu *lmurran* is an embodied practice as well as an objective reality, constituting what others expect of *lmurran* in relation to their social status. More profoundly, however, aesthetics communicates their individuality and creativity (see Kapferer and Hobart 2005). The idea of mimesis or the mimetic faculty (see Taussig 1993) can lend further insights into embodied performance. Mimesis is the faculty to copy in such a way that the 'original' is completely incorporated by the copier. Cox (2003: 107) argues that “the mimetic faculty is simultaneously the representation of aesthetic qualities and a representation, a creation that is embodied experience”. He draws on the relational dimension of the mimetic faculty, enabling

performers to produce a simultaneous correspondence with each other. Mimetic acts in this regard are ‘acts of complementarity’ producing a harmonious connection between people (Cox 2003: 108).

Samburu aesthetic has since the advent of cultural tourism in the 1980s become a globally marketable commodity. Samburu *Imurran* are invited by tour operators to be the representative icons of a generic ‘cultural tradition’. They perform in so-called cultural villages and are hired by the lodges to sing and dance in their traditional attire. While such a redesigned ‘cultural display’ of warriorhood is typically performed locally for the eyes of tourists, young Samburu men have also been migrating seasonally to coastal tourist resorts since the 1980s. In these places they enter into sexual liaisons with white female tourists who are usually much older and seek the companionship and intimacy of a ‘beautiful’ young man. This pattern of behaviour has, over time, segmented into a distinct gateway for economic gain, open not exclusively for Samburu and Maasai, but for anybody who can present themselves within the particular bodily and aesthetic paradigm of the ‘Maasai warrior’(see Meiu, 2009). This brings us to a similar but slightly different notion of gender performativity.

Judith Butler (1999: 44) aims to subvert and displace the “naturalized and reified notions of gender that support masculine hegemony and heterosexist power”. In Butlers (1999) view it is impossible to see gender in a pre-discursive perspective. Even the biological base, the binary model of male and female, is socially constructed and created by discursive powers. What is seen as feminine and masculine are always culturally constructed. In her perspective gender is always something we do, a performance, rather than something that exists in itself. The actor is still creative in his performance, but only within the limitations set by discursive powers. *Mombasa moran* make a striking example of gender performativity in the Samburu context. They are creative cultural actors, manipulating a complex cultural order, challenging and changing prescribed notions of masculinity and thus creating *gender trouble*.

Violence also has a performative dimension. History, culture, social inequalities and other ideas and imaginations in the local and global context are enacted in the violent performances within the multi-layered conflict scenarios in Northern Kenya. All of my informants, young and old, are faced with the reality of a rapidly declining pastoral economy. Conflict with neighboring ethnic groups has been more or less persistent since Kenyan independence in 1963, and violence has become increasingly routine (Broch-Due, 2005). Taken together with governmental marginalization and an unfair distribution of land, violence is one of the

intractable causes of chronic poverty, which again produces more violence. In the performance of violence young men interact dynamically with the global and the local, the past and the present. The abundance of weapons pouring in from past and present conflicts in neighboring countries does not only gain a material expression in cattle raids, but also a conceptual and cultural expression. Cattle raids are strategically planned, not only based on advice from seasoned cattle raiders, but inspired by the training observed at the British army camp near Archers Post. Large-scale cattle raids in Northern Kenya involve actors at different levels, some of them influential people with commercial and/or political interests. The conflict scenario in Northern Kenya is a complex field of multiple interests, values and ideas. The young men who participate actively in violence are active participants in the formation of this context and the place they hold within it. I found Neil Whitehead's (2002; 2004) notion of the poetics of violence a particularly useful analytical tool for understanding violence in Northern Kenya.

The definitions of violence presented in much anthropological works are according to Whitehead (2004: 57) reductive and misleading because they "fail to address a wide variety of violence that has no immediate material correlates such as sorcery or verbal aggression, because they use only physical injury as the linking element between examples of violence". Whitehead introduces the term poetics of violence to call for a better understanding of violence which should appreciate it as a cultural expression and performance in all its complexity. He uses an example from his own ethnography to underpin his point, referring to a practice called *kanaima*, where the victims are passive in face of danger, knowing about the perpetrators, but not attempting to stop the deed. He argues that the poesis involved in the idea of *kanaima* is how knowledge related to the idea is entangled in a wide variety of indigenous discourses, like sexuality, gender, modernity and tradition. *Kanaima* is a kind of dark shamanism among a wide variety of Amerindian groups, a form of assault sorcery involving the lingering death of its victims (Whitehead 2002). The poetics of violence connotes not the cultural expression from a set cultural order, but the expression and performance from a creative cultural actor who can manipulate and change the order, often absorbing ideas from a global rather than local context. The reasons behind the violence in Northern Kenya are complex and multifaceted, and so are the motives of and justification from the violence performers. In my interviews, I observed some young men worried about the cultural taboo of murder with a spear, while simultaneously attempting to reduce the seriousness of their act by referring to the fact that they used rifles. A young man could tell

me his act of violence was motivated by the stories from seasoned cattle raiders of older generations, while he also referred to the observation of army training as a source of inspiration. Some *Imurran* would emphasise the martial reputation they could earn from the violent act, while at the same time voicing concern over future economic prospects as a prime motivator. The violence is continuously changing, and my informants emulate very different scripts compared with the violence performed by previous generations. In pre-colonial times, women and children were seldom killed, but either spared or kidnapped and absorbed into a new tribe. There is a brutalisation of violence, cultural taboos are subdued, and women and children are killed. The change is not linear and consistent, as the young men lean on different signs and discourses to reveal the meaning and poesies of violence.

A brief introduction to the chapters

In *Chapter 2, The Continual Reproduction of Colonial History*, I explore the history of Northern Kenya with specific emphasis on the ethnic group Samburu. I begin by exploring pastoralism in pre-colonial times, focusing primarily on Samburu and the locations they inhabited. The history of the Northern Frontier District is especially relevant. The Samburu age-set institution played a crucial part in the relationship between coloniser and colonised. The colonial fear of the age-set traditions had a significant impact on policies implemented towards Samburu. The colonial government considered the *Imurran* unpredictable and violent, and these characteristics, combined with the collective nature of *moranhood*, intimidated the British administration. I will argue that the various actions and policies levied against the age-set institution have made a lasting impact on Samburu masculinity. Towards the end of the chapter I argue that the colonial views on pastoralist masculinity and pastoralism as a lifestyle has been continuously reproduced in post-colonial times, generating a similar type of marginalisation.

In *Chapter 3, Ritual performance and the creation of masculinities*, I will argue that the rites of passage during *moranhood* are absolutely essential in the Samburu formation of masculinity. Approximately every fifteen years, a new age-set opens and a new generation of *Imurran* are initiated. During this period of time they go through a serious of rites of passage (*Imugit*), aimed to forge important bonds and form them into Samburu men. Through spectacular collective performances Samburu *Imurran* are transformed. I will describe some of these rituals in details, focusing on the ones I have observed and participated in. In this

chapter I will argue that the performance and aesthetics of *moranhood* play an important role in the formation of masculinity, not only in rituals, but also in casual encounters in everyday life.

My main aim in *Chapter 4, Violence and Masculinity* is to discover how the changing nature of violence is deeply connected to reconfigurations of masculinities. The chapter starts with a macro-perspective on the ‘warscape’ of Northern Kenya, focusing particularly on the two conflicts I have followed in the course of my fieldwork. The Samburu-Pokot conflict originated in 2004, and the Samburu-Borana-Turkana conflict has continued, shifting, ephemeral and enduring, for decades. These two situations make up the background for the discussions throughout the chapter. I will continue with a discussion on how violence has changed in Northern Kenya, using the idea of a ‘poetic of violence’ (Neil Whitehead 2004) to investigate the relationship with external forces and the actions of individual agents. Inspired by authors such as Vigh (2006) and Broch-Due (2005), I will focus on the social transformation of actors involved in and affected by violent conflict. I argue that the creative and formative dimension of violence is closely linked with enactment of masculinities. I will argue that the stigma of poverty can have emasculating implications, producing anxiety that push some to perform cattle raids. Cattle raids are not only caused by desperation or cold calculation, they can have integrative effects on small groups. I will argue that strong bonds, whether through blood, friendship or relations formalized in rituals, can act as an emotional pacifier that makes violence easier to handle. The chapter applies a multidimensional view of violence, and it will offer the reader a greater understanding of how violence and masculinity are interconnected within the context of Northern Kenya.

In *Chapter 5, Aesthetics, Sexuality and Morality*, I will argue that performance and aesthetics among Samburu *Imurran* have been commercialised for the tourist industry. The reification of masculinity is a salient theme in this chapter. I will argue that the so-called ‘*Mombasa moran*’ is the most striking product of this reification and exemplifies a novel mode of male behaviour that reconfigures the whole notion of masculinity among young Samburu men. These reconfigurations touch on the ideal accumulation and consumption of wealth and appropriate “moral” behaviour. In this chapter I will also illustrate changes in Samburu sexuality and I will present the moral criticism we find in its discourse. This moral criticism addresses the changing priorities and aspirations among young men.

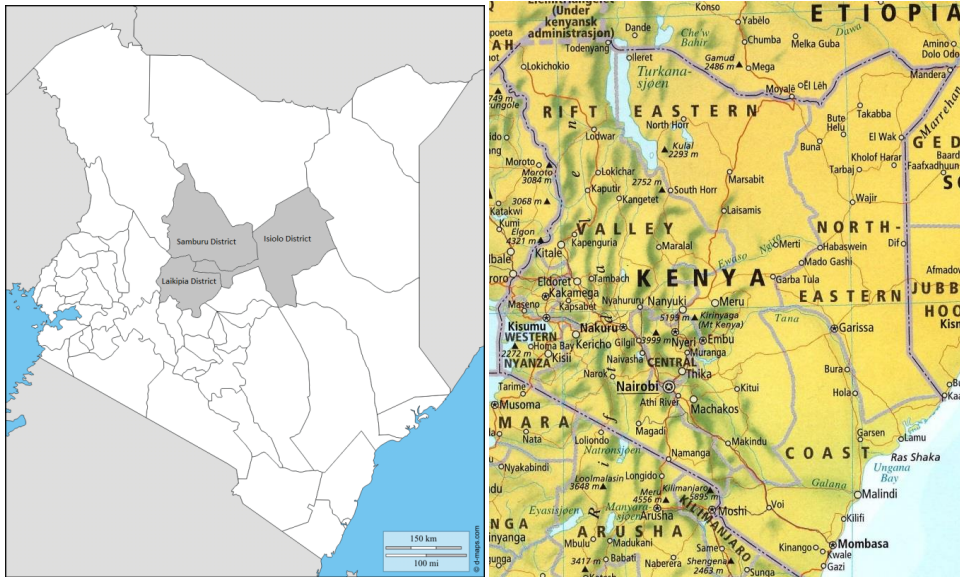
Chapter 6, *The Transforming Power of Youths: Angry Elders, Young Leaders* is linked to the previous chapter by focusing on the relationship between masculinity and intimate relations, notions of sociality, and ‘morality’. Pastoralism as a mode of subsistence has been under stress ever since colonial times, devalued and marginalised by both colonial and post-colonial governments. Samburu youths tend to juxtapose the demise of pastoralism with ideas of prosperity associated with modernity and images of a western lifestyle. But opportunities to build stable life careers on the new dreams and ambitions are few. I want to explore how young men as creative cultural actors take part in the formation of relevant changes in society. While some are able to adapt, others are disenfranchised and emasculated. Masculinity is relational; it is defined and enacted in interactions between men and women, and in different groups of men. Consequently, generational conflict is an important theme in this chapter. For young men, proper leadership is no longer necessarily attributed to the seniority of elders. I will explore the impact intergenerational conflict can have on intimate relations. The issue of trust and mistrust is a key facet in this exploration. I will argue that trust is maintained through what is understood as “moral” acts, and it is broken by what is conceived as “immoral” acts. Elders tend to blame the consequences of a social existence marked by conflict and poverty, on the immoral behaviour among young men.

Methodological considerations

As George Stocking (1992 in Gupta and Ferguson 1997) pointed out, the classical Malinowskian perception of fieldwork functions as an archetype in anthropological practice. Even though archetypal images are often invoked in ironic ways, they offers a “compelling glimpse of things as they should be, at their purest and most essential” according to Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997: 11). The same authors see a range of potential pitfalls if anthropology insists on perpetuating this dated image as *the* archetypal fieldwork. One such problem, they argue, can be gleaned in the distinction between ‘field’ and ‘home’ putting into play what they call a ‘hierarchy of purity’ between field sites: the more ‘not home’ a field is, the more ‘pure’ it is supposed to be.

I have often heard my colleagues say that unlike them, I have been conducting a ‘traditional’ kind of fieldwork. This way of looking at my fieldwork is true to a certain degree; I am after all a white man who travelled to a faraway place into a rural area where I stayed for more than

a year. But, leaving posturing romanticism to one side, I would rather argue that my fieldwork, which can be considered ‘traditional’ in certain respects, is nevertheless thoroughly ‘multi-sited’ (Marcus 1995). My field site was not confined to a small rural village, and my research objectives required me to move between villages, small towns and bigger towns and even took me to the capital, Nairobi. In doing a comparative study of different pastoral ethnic groups (Borana, Samburu and Turkana) the notion of mobility is indeed paramount. The focus in this thesis will be on Samburu, but my research among Turkana and Borana will be used to give some of my arguments a more comparative angle. My research among Samburu was also multi-sited. I shifted between various field locations, spending about seven months in Laikipia and Samburu highland areas, mainly in a place occupied by displaced Samburu near Maralal, the most populated town in Samburu District¹. I will refer to this location as Kitók. I spent about one year in lowland areas around the town of Isiolo, where the conflict between Samburu, Borana and Turkana is at its most heated. A small town called Sidai became an especially important field site. The village lies inside one of the wildlife sanctuaries, and the Samburu and Turkana inhabitants depend on tourism for their livelihood. The land is politically contested, and people have suffered forced evictions and various forms of police abuse. The steadily growing urban centre Archers Post also became an important field site. While I always had a base in Isiolo, I did most of my fieldwork in more remote areas like Sidai. I will return to the method of multi-sited fieldwork below. In locations such as Maralal and Isiolo I would sleep in rented flats, friends’ houses or hotels. In locations away from such facilities I mostly slept in my tent neatly placed inside one of my informant’s home enclosure.



Map 1. Mapⁱⁱ over Kenya. The prime fieldwork locations are marked in grey

Map 2. Map over Kenya, detailedⁱⁱⁱ

General details on field locations

Laikipia District has a population of 322,187 and is a multi-ethnic district with pastoralism, ranching, agriculture and increasingly tourism as primary economic activities. Samburu District with a population of 143,547 is also a multi-ethnic district, but the majority is Samburu, and pastoralism is the predominant subsistence category. During my fieldwork in 2007, I spent four months in Samburu District and three months in Laikipia. I followed a case of displacement and I gathered experiences and perspectives from a range of people. Given that I investigated a violent conflict and a complex contest over land, it was important for me to gather perspectives from a range of different angles, including those of politicians and other non-pastoralists. I drove my motorbike along roads consisting of sand, potholes and stones to get to my destinations. At the end of my master-degree fieldwork I had covered most of Samburu and Laikipia and some of Baringo and Turkana districts. I followed up my research in these locations when I arrived in Kenya for the second time in 2010. This time I drove a car instead of a motorbike. In the spring of 2011 my research objectives made me travel further south towards Isiolo and Archers Post.

Driving north from Meru or Nanyuki, Isiolo town stands out distinctively. A police barrier opens the town, and we soon see small shops lining the sides of the road. The Jamia mosque

stands out as a landmark together with the twin bell towers of the Catholic Church and the tallest building, called the Transit Hotel. Despite the majority population being Muslim Borana, Garba and Somali, Isiolo is discernibly multi-religious and cosmopolitan. It is a central marketplace for a range of ethnic groups who inhabit various locations surrounding the town, and occasionally the animosities between these ethnic groups are brought into town. Isiolo is also a gathering place for people travelling north towards Moyale and south towards Nairobi.

Given its close proximity to several popular national parks, Isiolo is set to become a tourist centre, with an international airport, casinos and upmarket hotels. This is part of a grand governmental development scheme called Vision 30. Ecotourism and cultural tourism are the driving forces behind a changing landscape in Isiolo District today; a landscape reconstructed in the name of environmental conservation and a financially motivated prospect of tourism. The ambitious Vision 30 plan fuels the fire of various land conflicts that have already lasted several decades. Paradoxically, this insecurity has a negative impact on tourism, and it might lead to hesitation among investors who consider taking part in the economic development of the area. Archers Post, another important field location, is only a 20 minute drive from Isiolo.

On his way to a Boma in Marsabit, Geoffrey Archer, the first District Commissioner of Northern Frontier District stopped at this location to establish a police post. Archers Post became the first British foothold in Samburu territory, and acted as one of six different “tribal areas” in Northern Kenya (Waweru 2006). Despite its close proximity to Isiolo (30 km), Archers Post is within Samburu District. This relatively small town is in rapid development. Archers Post has always been an important centre, especially for Samburu and Turkana pastoralists. But certain extraordinary events in recent years put the town more clearly on the map, most essentially the new tarmac road from Isiolo to Moyale. The tarmac road increases the potential of Archers Post, given the already established benefits of its location, as it serves as an entrance point to the tourist spots of Samburu national park and Shaba National Reserve. It is also the last place to refuel, restock and relax before a long road north to Marsabit and Moyale, or northeast towards Maralal and Baragoi. The town also borders large training grounds owned by the Kenyan and British armies.

Land in Archers Post has multiplied in value as a result of the recent developments. Pastoralists are alienated in the land game, native land rights are ignored, and plots are put up for sale to the highest bidder, usually at a price far beyond what ordinary residents can afford.

A local politician argued in an interview that selling land to rich business people was a necessary step in the development of the area. Archers Post is still an important gathering ground for pastoralist economic exchange and social congregation. Increasingly it is a centre offering various modern stimulants such as alcohol, mirra (kath), and certain varieties of food.

From my base in Isiolo I travelled to various locations close by. I have chosen to keep the general details about Kitók, Sidai and similar locations at a minimum for the sake of anonymity. Sidai was one of several politically contested locations near or inside a wildlife sanctuary, and I stayed there for about six months in total. I would sleep in my tent, a small cabin and sometimes in the homes of my informants for maximum two weeks at a time, before travelling back to Isiolo for a few days. From my Isiolo base, I travelled to locations that I knew had suffered cattle raids in order to obtain the victims' perspective, and I went to places where I knew cattle raiders were living, to interview the perpetrators.

Language and dependency on my research assistant

Since Borana, Samburu and Turkana speak different languages, my work was greatly aided by, and at times dependent on, research assistants. As my focus was on Samburu I made an effort to learn the Maa language. Even though I never managed to become fluent in Maa, it proved very helpful to have even a rudimentary knowledge of the language spoken by my informants. I spent a considerable amount of time studying the roots of key words, trying to find meaningful connections. Knowing the language is an important part of understanding a culture and its history. I did not have the opportunity to learn the local languages spoken by Borana and Turkana, but I always tried to look out for 'emic' terms and concepts with extended meanings. Being dependent on research assistants and translators has its clear disadvantages, but it also provides several advantages. Details and important insights will undoubtedly be lost in translation, and conversations will not unfold as freely as if I were speaking with my informants directly. Narratives and life histories are best told without interruption, and it is difficult for assistants to recount everything a person has said if he or she has talked for some time. Because of this, I tape-recorded most of my long interviews, and I had my assistants transcribe them in as direct a manner as possible. There was also some advantages, however. My assistants opened many doors for me. Through their network of relations I came into contact with people more easily. I did not confine myself to the relations of my assistants, but they were a great advantage when starting up in a new area. Another very important advantage I discovered with some of my research assistants, is that they can be key informants in their own right. Research assistants also provide a sense of security (real

and maybe also imagined), which is, all things considered, important when doing fieldwork in an area haunted by an unpredictable political conflict.

I used participant observation and informal interviews as main methods during my fieldwork. I also collected narratives and life stories, and I followed diagnostic events (see Falk-More 1987). My overall fieldwork strategy was attentive to the insights of Timothy Jenkins (1994), who argued that we should not rely *exclusively* on oral accounts because knowledge is largely non-verbal. I could for example generate a lot of data from the daily lives of young Samburu men (*Imurran*) by staying with them, sometimes participating with them in for example meat eating camps, and sometimes just observing them in passing. Such an approach to fieldwork is based on Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) assertion that any successful practice normally excludes knowledge of its own logic. If there is no outsider asking questions, the actors do not need to give an account of what is going on (Jenkins 1994). I noticed, especially in ritual performances, that the amount of information and knowledge I could derive from interviews was limited. As I got to know people I was invited to observe, and eventually participate in rituals. From this participation I gained an understanding of Samburu identity I doubt I could have obtained any other way. Furthermore, I obtained important social relations that gave me access to information that otherwise would have been unattainable. In some rituals I was merely an observer, and in others I participated. I was the best man in a wedding and "godfather of the right foot" in initiation ritual. Both statuses involve lifelong moral and economic obligations.

According H. Russel Bernard (2002:324), participant observation involves "immersing yourself in a culture and learning to remove yourself every day from that immersion so you can intellectualise what you have seen and heard, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly". Participant observation thus involves both a close relationship with your informants and an objective distance necessary for producing convincing analyses. But can we ever be truly objective? The ideal of objectivity has been criticised, and many anthropologists have an ambivalent relationship to this ideal. Whatever we are trying to grasp and understand, it is always mediated by the anthropologist's position, and the power relation between the anthropologist and informants (see Cerwonka 2007). Social scientists adhering to ideals of 'positivism' and a 'value free' science have been particularly critical to ethnographic methods, arguing that the researcher is not sufficiently removed from the object of inquiry. Allaine Cerwonka (2007) points out, however, that what is seen as methodological weakness by some is seen as a strength by others: "Far from being a deficiency, the sustained contact

and negotiation between ethnographer and the phenomena she researches is really ethnography's creative centre and offers endless opportunities” (Cerwonka 2007:31). The rationale of the interpretive approach is that the specific positionality of the researcher, historical or cultural, becomes that which configures the understanding and knowledge from the research site. My position as a young white man was not something I could hide even if I wanted to. I could learn a lot about views and perspectives by observing how I was approached, and it gave me insight into how I should approach my informants. I also think personality traits are a central part of a researcher’s position and bias. In dealings with informants it was important for me to present myself as open and sympathetic, especially when collecting narratives on traumatic experiences. I doubt that it would have been possible for me to have conducted these interviews in a calculated or instrumentalist manner; interviews are deeply relational, and empathy and understanding are attitudes that must come naturally, at least to a certain degree. In other instances I found my skin colour, personality, culture and history to be disadvantages, but even drawbacks can have upsides. I remember for example meeting a young educated man, who had studied social science at university level. He immediately challenged me for being white and coming to Kenya to ‘take without giving anything back’. Instead of it leading to any kind of negative confrontation, this particular incident led to a long and fruitful discussion about colonial times and post-colonial politics for a whole evening.

A multi-sited fieldwork

If this is an ethnography focusing on cultural formations within the world system, then this ethnography is also about that system. This is the claim George E. Marcus (1995: 98) advanced when he argued that for “ethnographers interested in contemporary local changes in culture and society, single-sited research can no longer be easily located in a world system perspective”. My informants actively engaged with phenomena which are, as it were, both local and global at the same time. Most of my informants were young men faced with the reality of a declining pastoralist economy, ongoing conflict with neighbouring groups and few, if any, opportunities for employment. Many of these young men had ideas, dreams and imaginations connected to the potential prosperity related to modernities and images from global media. The choices made by my informants are intrinsically connected to processes, events or choices made elsewhere. If the choice in question was whether to go on a cattle raid, we are forced to consider for example the abundance of weapons streaming into Kenya from

past, or still on-going, wars and conflicts in neighbouring countries.

As societies are getting more complex, the decontextualisation necessary for generalisation is increasingly difficult (Appudurai 1986). Movements, paths and landscapes not easily confined to specific geographical places have been a central part of pastoralist life for a very long time. The necessity of viewing pastoralism with a multi-sited approach is not entirely new. Sally Falk Moore (1986) suggests that by following diagnostic events which stretch over time, we can see parts of a process going on at many levels and of different scale. In the foreground I could see for example the young men's choices to go on cattle raids, their contesting opinions on land rights, the aesthetics they displayed, the rituals they performed or the women they married. The background includes demographic transformations, post-colonial continuance of colonial policies on pastoralism, warscapes (see Hutchingson 2000), the flow of arms, an expanding tourism industry and development programs. I did not have to move around to be part of these field sites. Whether it was post-colonial policies or warscapes, those field sites were already there and everywhere in Northern Kenya. The objects of study are always mobile and situated in multiple places at same time.

Multi-sited fieldwork is "always conducted with a keen awareness of being within the landscape", Marcus (1995:112) argues, also pointing out how a change in "landscape" between different "sites" demands the identity of the anthropologist to undergo a series of negotiations and renegotiations. I can relate to this in a direct sense, because my fieldwork was partly a comparative venture navigating three different ethnic groups. I had to relate to different groups who had contesting views and prejudiced opinions of each other. I faced particular ethical dilemmas because of this. For example, how much could or should I talk to one specific group about my research among the other groups? I had an obligation to be open and honest about my research, but at the same time I had an obligation to protect the integrity and security of my informants. Marcus (1995) argues that anthropologists doing multi-sited fieldwork renegotiate their identity to each site but often holds on to the persona of 'the activist'. Even though I had to present myself as detached and objective, choosing no side, I had also to fashion honest and meaningful relationships with my informants by showing understanding and support. In this sense I was an activist to the point where I was someone keenly interested and listening to their problems, issues and the injustice they experienced in their everyday lives, no matter who I spoke to.

I quickly learned that we, as ethnographers, are never fully prepared for what can happen in

the field. I agree with Cervonka's (2007) argument that ethnography relies on improvisation; it cannot simply be reduced to a set of standardized techniques. Rather I find it to be the case, as she stresses, that "ethnography demands a certain sensibility, as well as improvised strategies and ethical judgments made within a shifting landscape in which the ethnographer has limited control" (Cervonka 2007:20). Because of the conflict and insecurity, I often had to re-adjust my plans and travel to other places than initially planned. This often led me onto paths and into explorations that were not planned. During my fieldwork among Borana, for example, my plan was to travel into a more remote location to interview young men who engaged in cattle raids. Because of the insecurity in these areas, however, I stayed for a longer time in Isiolo, where I eventually befriended a male ritual cult leader (*abayen*). The exploration of the *Ayana* cult was not part of my initial plans before entering the field, but I consider it now to be a central part of my research. Through them I also established a valuable network, which I could use when I eventually continued my travels into the more rural areas. I always tried to be alert to interesting and unplanned occurrences, and I would argue that this made my fieldwork more multi-sited.

Historical research and post-colonial realities

In order to understand the political issues, social landscape and cultural identity of pastoralists in Northern Kenya today, a post-colonial perspective is absolutely essential. Several scholars have written about colonial history in Kenya and noted its significant impact on the pastoral identity and pastoralism as a mode of subsistence (e.g. Anderson 2002, Waller 1976). Many of the same scholars have also argued that pastoralists and pastoralism today can only be understood in light of the colonial impact and the post-colonial continuation of colonial rules, regulations, views and 'misunderstandings' (e.g. Bollig 1990; 2006, Broch-Due 2005, Waller 1999). Several scholars have also noted that the 'male' and 'female' power relations among pastoralists today must be understood in light of the colonial history (e.g. Hodgson 2000a, Broch-Due 2000a). These questions will be explored and further elaborated in Chapter 2.

Apart from relying on secondary literature, I used two methods in my own historical research. One of my methods was to spend time in the National Archives in Nairobi going through colonial and early post-colonial administrative documents. Part of this archive has recently been made available online, and in this thesis I primarily refer to the web resources. My other method was to do informal interviews with elders, collecting narratives and life stories.

Historical research has its own set of challenges. We must consider what Jonathan Friedman (1992: 194) has pointed out, that history and the discourse of history is positional, the “objective truth” depends “upon where one is located in social reality, within society, and within global process”. Land rights are an important issue in and around Isiolo District, and many of my interviews were on this topic. I noticed that people from the contesting groups had their own justifications (often rooted in historical events) for land rights. These views were often in total opposition and contradiction to each other. In such a case it is difficult to find the “objective truth”. My experience is, however, that people’s justification for land rights and other historically contested issues was interesting, no matter whether it was “true” or not. Their perspective on history taught me a lot about their perspectives on the present and the future.

My goal in searching through archives was twofold. I endeavoured to look for representation of pastoralists, but I was also looking for some written “proof” attesting the oral accounts I had heard. Many anthropologists view the archive as supplementary to other field methods, and suggest that it is more like a library than a field site (Des Chene 1997). I find it more useful to see the archive as a kind of field site, or maybe something in between a field site and a library. I do not argue this because the archive is located in Kenya. It could just as well have been the archive in Cambridge, England. My goals in the archives, or when reading newspaper and travel literature, were similar to my goals in interviewing pastoralists, to pick up voices from the past or present, and gain knowledge from and on their perspective.

A central argument in several post-colonial perspectives is that colonial views and images of pastoralists are reproduced in post-colonial politics, aid work, public discourse and travel literature. Searching through archives, then, is also searching through other field sites; at other times it is unravelling the various processes that lead to the situation we have today. In the archives I could find written statements confirming for example that the image of the archetypical warrior was often an integral part of the colonial view of pastoralism as a “problem” (see Waller 1999). Researching the current political discourse today, or interviewing people who are not pastoralists, I can see that these views are still there. A more contradictory image of the pastoralists appeared in the works of pre-colonial travellers and early twentieth century writers like Joy Adamson and Karen Blixen. Here a romantic image of “the native” emerged, where the nomad is viewed as a melancholic outcast from a distant form of humanity’s evolution (Broch-Due, 2000a). The pastoralist is viewed as a “noble savage” (McGrane 1989), untouched by the “polluting” forces of modernization and

capitalism. By reading books about Africa from the turn of the century, or even travel literature published today, I find the pastoralist presented as a “noble savage”. Corinne Hofmann’s (2005) book, *The White Masai* is a famous example. The image of the “noble savage” is not, however, only reproduced in literature. Tourist operators in Kenya today try to attract travellers through advertisements promising ancient land inhabited by wildlife and people untouched by civilisation and modernity. History is important in helping us see if not the origin of phenomena, then the processes behind them. We also learn whether a phenomenon is constant or shifting, long-term or brief. Des Chene (1997) acknowledges, however, the limitations of archive research, but she equally disagrees with the idea that face-to-face fieldwork is somehow a direct route to a more complete and true knowledge of the past than research in the archives. “A document cannot change itself as it encounters different readers, however astute its rhetoric. One cannot say the same of those with whom ethnographers speak” (Des Chene 1997:78). I found that a combination of the two methods was important, as they in some ways complement each other.

‘Following the story’ or ‘following the narratives and life histories’ are some of the key concepts Marcus (1995) refers to when describing the multi-sited fieldwork. I found that life histories can be a way to contrast the more general answers I received when asking elders about colonial times in Kenya. Samburu elders usually contrast what they see as the more stable colonial times with political unrest and instability in post-colonial times. But when they focused only on their own story, important insights often appeared. Usually, if I asked a Samburu man about clans and sub-clans, they would present the general and idealized picture of, for example, which clans can intermarry. When collecting life histories, however, I learned that these idealized perspectives have little hold in reality, which proved to be far more complex. I also ‘followed’ some of the stories I was told, for example by visiting areas or people referred to. I did not do so in order to check the validity of a story, but to gain a better understanding of it, and through the story find connections I otherwise would never have found.

Researching conflict - relying on rumours and avoiding “ethnographic seduction”

Harry Englund (2005:69) argues that when doing fieldwork on conflict, there is no one narrative that can give a privileged standpoint when studying a social process: “narratives must be compared and juxtaposed, persons, including the ethnographer, must be seen as

situated actors in a complex process”. Even after collecting multiple narratives from all the relevant parties in the two conflicts I followed, I still found it difficult to separate facts from sentiments.

Anna Simons (1997) explains how large portions of the information she collected during her fieldwork in a violent Somalia were based on rumours: “People could be incredibly clever in reading meaning into seemingly unconnected events or occurrences” (Simons 1997: 55). Even though she knew it to be rumours, she had trouble ignoring the information completely. I noted similar tendencies in my own research where information on violent events and the political forces behind those events was often based on rumours. Similarly to what Simons (1997) reports, it seems likely that rumours were also strategically employed by politicians to stir up conflict or other reactions for their own gain. It is difficult to juggle rumours and half-truths when trying to connect loose threads in order to understand a conflict. However, I found this kind of information valuable even though it was difficult to verify it completely. I learned something about the messiness of violence, something that is often covered up in the history books. Simons (1997) suggests that if there is a discipline capable of providing an antidote to the generalisations of social history, anthropology might be well suited to present narratives of confusion, emotions, observed reality and social chaos. The exchange of stories based on rumours told me much about emotional reactions to conflict, the anxiety, anger and helplessness people experience. The sharing of stories based on rumours, was also part of a “new” normality wherein conflict and violence came to be a part of everyday life (Das and Kleinman 2001). We could juxtapose Simons’ hope for anthropologists to detail the complexity, ambiguity and chaos of conflict with Matthew Engelke’s (2009) concern for evidence in anthropological work. Considering the messiness of conflict, it seems an even greater challenge for the anthropologists studying violence to convert their data into objects of evidence.

Antonius Robben (1997) notes another methodological challenge that can be particularly relevant in studying a conflict. He, somewhat controversially, coins the term “ethnographic seduction” in a discussion of his experiences during his own research in Argentina in the aftermath of the political turmoil there. He describes for example how he was “seduced” by the chivalrous, polite and intellectual officers who often led him astray from his research aims. He mentions several other forms of seduction, like how some informants could disarm him by showing their vulnerability. Some narratives moved him so much that he lost his analytical angle and inquisitive eye. Others reinforced their testimony by introducing them

with statements such as “Let me tell you a secret” or “I have never told this to anyone, but I will tell it to you” (Robben 1997:94). I can relate to Robben’s notion of ethnographic seduction on many levels. Doing research between contesting ethnic groups, informants would often try to convince me that their side was in the right by for example describing the horrific acts carried out by young men from one of the other ethnic groups. I will return to the issue of collecting narratives from victims, but I often found it even more difficult to hear the perpetrators’ stories. I had to try to adapt to new circumstances continuously, from the touching story of a mother who lost her child one day, to the horrific acts of a cattle raider the next day. I did not always manage to remain analytical during those interviews; I admit that sometimes I was “seduced” by the effects of violent narratives, and at other times I was thrown off guard.

Researching trauma - the value of storytelling

It was important for me to learn about peoples’ experience of violence and trauma. As part of that effort I made provisions for people tell me their stories without interrupting them. Young men (and some elder men) told me stories about the violence they had carried out during cattle raids or revenge attacks, and women and men of all ages told me stories about the violence they had experienced against themselves and their families. There are several ethical issues associated with this kind of research. As a researcher I am responsible for avoiding that my informants are exposed to injury or strain (Kalleberg and Balto 2006: 12). I should also show respect for the privacy of my respondents and let them control whether sensitive information about themselves should be available to others (Kalleberg og Balto 2006: 17). An important question is whether I was making people talk, or letting them talk, about memories and experiences that were painful for them?

Several authors within the fields of anthropology and social psychology criticise the increased usage of Western psychology to diagnose and treat psychiatric disorders in non-Western cultures (e.g. Barret and Jenkins 2003). We must consider, I think, Fassim and Rechtman’s (2009) argument, that concepts like trauma are socially constructed, and the way we understand these concepts, changes. Our understanding does not necessarily reflect the empirical reality. I agree with Das and Kleinman (2001) that pain and suffering must be viewed as part of a particular culture, as an expression of a local world. And I follow Stoner (1986), who says that illness can only be understood within its social, cultural and political

context.

Turkana, who had suffered raids or the loss of relatives, would often say that a typical reaction in such situations is *eramatau*, meaning that the heart beats fast. Samburu have also described similar sensations and reactions. Among Turkana, *eramatau* is often connected to the term *akiyalolong*, which describes a person dealing with difficulties. Related to *akiyalolong* is the Turkana word *akinowore*, which describes the actions or posture of a person with *akiyalolong*. *Akinowore* means sitting in special position, holding one's head in one's hands. *Eramatau* can lead to further sickness, such as *etodo yie ltau* among Samburu and *edeke etau* among Turkana. It literally means "heart goes down". Those affected will get very weak, not able to move much, and emotionally they are empty and wordless. In my interviews I listened to many narratives from people who had suffered cattle raid, disease, police brutality or drought. A Turkana man named Ikadukan told the story of a Borana raid against his family:

When I lived in Daba, we were attacked, and my father's brother was killed. Borana came and surrounded our home. I decided to run, and I got shot in my arm and back. I managed to run away and hide. My father's brother went out and was speared right through his body, he died immediately. I kept thinking of my children, what will happen to them now, what will happen to my children now, if all my livestock is taken? My body was feeling like *eramatau* when it was happening, but afterwards I was exhausted and I kept on flashing back (*ngitamen*) picturing my cows. Hundreds of livestock were taken.

These 'flashbacks' Lkadukan talked about are often followed by 'sicknesses' like 'the heart going down'. It also seems that flashbacks are particularly related to the loss of livestock or loved ones. In the course of my research I collected a range of stories like Lkadukan's, both from those who had been raided and those going on raids themselves. Reactions like *eramatau* and *ngitamen* were not unusual for the young men who had perpetrated the violence. All of the groups, Samburu, Turkana and Borana, had similar ideas about flashbacks. The traumatic event is somehow stuck without any expiration date, always lurking in the background to come back and produce further emotional response.

Jackson (2002) suggests that it is not necessarily an ethical problem to make people talk about painful experiences, as long as we let them finish. That is an important point, which I always tried to uphold during these kinds of interviews. Jackson (2002:185) challenges authors,

arguing that science has replaced the value of storytelling. He says that it is not the legitimacy of science that we demand in times of crises and tragedy, “but ... a sense of agency, voice and belonging”. Jackson (2002) argues that telling stories is a way for people to distance themselves from the traumatic event they have experienced. “A degree of agency is recovered, a version of the truth is contrived, a balance is re-established between our need to determine the world to the same extent that it is felt to determine us” (Jackson 2002: 186).

From field to text

Clifford (1986:7) has criticised anthropologies for hiding or silencing the fact that ethnographic truths are partial and incomplete in the texts they write. I briefly discussed the issue of the researcher’s positionality as such an issue. But as Cerwonka (2007) pointed out, such bias could also be used to the advantage of the researcher. Throughout this dissertation I will show some of the methodological challenges I encountered during my fieldwork. Multi-sited fieldwork has its own set of challenges given the complexity in scale and scope. Historical research is difficult to present as evidence, because of the limitations of texts in the archives, and the potential bias in informants’ potentially selective memory. Doing research on violence offer its own particular set of methodological challenges, as I have shown. Issues of conflict and upheaval are particularly difficult to transform appropriately from field to text. Daniel Valentine (1996:208) aptly describes this problem: “Even had I rendered faithfully without any editing, the words- both coherent and incoherent... I would not have seized the event. Everything can be narrated, but what is narrated is no longer what happened”.

Chapter 2: The Continual Reproduction of Colonial History

“During the first half of the present century they have built a country where formerly only barbarism, and nothing but barbarism, had ever existed.”

Lipscomb (1955), Kenyan settler

Europeans have imagined and presented the non-European “other” in various ways throughout history, producing a discursive advantage used for various affects. The concept of “the other” has its roots in Hegel’s phenomenology. Brian McGrane (1989) examines how European eyes throughout history have perceived “the other” as the ultimate alterity “we” use to define “us” (see Larsen 1996). During the Renaissance “the other” was seen in contrast to the holy and divine. During the Age of Enlightenment “the other” was seen as part of nature, an object in contrast to the European subject able to construct nature. In the early 20th century, through the theory of evolution, “the other” enabled the Europeans to look back at a previous stage which they had once been at themselves. McGrane (1989: 113) sums up: “with regard for the strange and alien Other, difference is now for the first time seen as cultural difference, as cultural diversity”. Following Connell’s (2005) argument that gender is always relational, we can easily describe a similar trajectory with a gender perspective. For British administrators and Kenyan settlers, the African represented a subordinate masculinity, an ultimate alterity they could measure themselves up against (see Ouzgane and Morrell 2005).

Representation will be an important angle in this chapter, in contrast to the rest of my thesis, where I will focus more on how masculinity is enacted by my informants. It is my argument that Samburu men are affected by the images constructed in colonial times, because these images are reproduced in the post-colonial era. Pastoralists are still viewed as “primitive” by the Kenyan government, and up to this day Samburu are presented as the “noble savage” by global tourist operators and in national marketing campaigns. But this chapter is also important because history sets the stage in various ways. Connell (2005: 81) argues that “gender as a social pattern requires us to see it as a product of history, and also a producer of history”.

Pastoralism as a mode of production has been under heavy pressure since the beginning of

colonialism in Kenya. The post-colonial continuance of this pressure forms the sociopolitical field the Samburu are navigating in search for opportunities and prosperity. Pastoralism was considered a problem by the colonial government, and it is still seen as a problem in the post-colonial political discourse, much for the same reasons. The non-sedentary lifestyle was viewed as a problem by the colonial government because of the challenges it posed to the traditional state requirements of taxation, conscription, and control (Broch-Due 2000b). Politically influential European settlers considered pastoralism a problem because they were interested in land that was used by pastoralist communities seasonally. The British rule also found pastoralism as a mode of production problematic, because the lifestyle was seen as largely self-subsistent and therefore difficult to integrate in a market economy. To deal with the pastoralist “problem”, the British colonial power forced them out of their range-land and into controlled and isolated ‘tribal reserves’. The Northern Frontier District, historically renowned for its isolation and political marginalisation, is an important region in Samburu history, and the ordeals they suffered are still remembered in collective history. By restricting the movement of nomadic ethnic groups, the colonial government could give the best range-land to European settlers. And by forcing the pastoralist ethnic groups into controlled regions, the government could execute measures to control and organise people they saw as “unpredictable” and “disorganised”. In pre-colonial times, ethnicity among pastoralists was fluid and adaptable, but the colonial power strived to classify fixed ‘cultural identities’ and to match these with the appropriate ‘cultural territory’. The Samburu age-set institution played an especially important part in these efforts. The colonial government considered the *Imurran* unpredictable and violent, and these characteristics, combined with the collective nature of *moranhood*, intimidated the British administration. I will argue that the various actions and policies levied against the age-set institution have made a lasting impact on Samburu masculinity. This chapter will attempt to present the history with a gendered perspective. However, gender is not a specific system or practice that can be viewed separately from social structures such as class, politics or kinship. In the colonial history of Kenya, gender is particularly intersected with colonial ideas on ‘race’ and ethnicity.

Towards the end of the chapter I will argue that the colonial views on pastoralist masculinity and pastoralism as a lifestyle have been continuously reproduced in post-colonial times. The relationship between masculinity and historical events are important, not because masculinities are produced by history, but because present-day masculinities are constantly enacted in a dynamic relationship with history.

Pastoralism in pre-colonial times

I sat in an overcrowded *matatu* travelling north from Nairobi on my first visit to Kenya in 2007. I had to make a stop in a town called Nyahururu, famous for its Thomson Falls. Joseph Thomson, one of the best-known explorers of East Africa, was the first European to see this scenic waterfall in the Ewaso Ngiro River. A source of life for human beings and animals alike, it followed me, high and low, dry and wet, through most of my travels in Northern Kenya. The *matatu* trip continued north, down the slopes from the highland areas towards the semi-arid lowland. In a small town called Rumuruti midway on the Nyahuru-Maralal highway, the tarmac ended. This town marks the start of the former Northern Frontier District.

Let me stop there for a moment, in the heart of the Laikipia plateau. Joseph Thomson came through this place during his expedition in 1883. His objective was to find a route from the east coast to the northern shores of Lake Victoria, and his reports promise a rich and fertile land practically without inhabitants (see Hughes 2006; Anderson 2002). Joseph Thomson was probably unaware that he had arrived in Laikipia just after an extreme situation named *emutai*, a Maa word meaning great disaster, caused by the *Iloikop* wars, followed by drought and rinderpest. The *Iloikop* wars involved several pastoralist ethnic groups, primarily Maa-speaking groups in the Rift Valley who conflicted over seasonal pasture and water points. The conflict was largely a result of the expanding supremacy of Laikipiak Maasai, forcing surrounding pastoral communities to join forces in retribution (Anderson 2002; Waller 1976). Joseph Thomson found only open fields of fertile grass, a landscape ripe for ranching business, and large-scale farming on some of the higher grounds. He probably did not know of the recent ordeals that had created *emutai*, and he also seems to have overlooked the seasonal use of land which is central to the pastoralist mode of life (Hughes 2006).

In pre-colonial times there was a delicate balance between the amounts of grazing needed for successful pastoralism and the number of men and animals available to exploit it effectively (Waller 1985). While too little available pasture led to congestion and ultimately to situations such as the *Iloikop* wars, too much pasture made the pastoral groups who had possession, vulnerable to encroachment. The Laikipiak Maasai was a powerful group of Maasai who in the mid-nineteenth century started to claim larger areas of pasture. After a while it all culminated in the *Iloikop* wars, where factions of Purko Maasai, Samburu, Pokot and other groups came together to defeat Laikipiak Maasai. In the aftermath of the *Iloikop* wars Laikipia was left open for encroachment, but the land was still dominated by Maasai sections

until the outbreak of *emutai*. Waller (1976) argues that because of the severity of the situation, violent raids during this time were acts of desperation rather than strategically motivated. Anderson (2002) writes that land in Laikipia became available, and many different pastoral groups slowly started to migrate towards the area, Kallenjin-speaking Pokot and Tugen, and Maa-speaking Samburu among others. It is ironic then, and maybe tragic, that Joseph Thomson happened to stumble upon Laikipia just when he did. Yet we do not really know whether it would have had made any difference if he had taken a different route or travelled through the area at a different time. The Laikipia plateau gained a new interest group with the white settlers who started to arrive in the early 20th century.

I had many trips to Laikipia during my time in Kenya, and I recall the first time I met a Laikipiak Maasai. I was surprised to meet him, given that I had read about their group's 'utter annihilation' in several books of history. However, surrounding communities absorbed pastoral groups who suffered defeat. Anderson writes, "movement between herding and cultivation was essential in ensuring the long term security of pastoralism" (2002:25). When people fell out of pastoralism due to loss of livestock through raids, drought or diseases, a good way to rebuild a new herd of livestock was through other modes of living. Just as non-pastoral livelihoods could act as temporary work for pastoralists, transition into pastoralism from other livelihoods was not uncommon, either (Galaty 1993a; Sobania 1993). Thus, pre-colonial ethnic identity and subsistence category in the Rift Valley and Northern Kenya in general, were not fixed, but something mutable, which people shifted between according to needs and opportunities (see: Anderson 2002; Broch-Due 2000a; Broch-Due 2000b; Bernstein 1980). Anderson (2002:27) argues, "No group could afford to be isolationists, and the more adaptable a group was, the more successful it was likely to be". Sometimes ethnic groups disintegrated and were absorbed by other groups, like for example the Laikipiak Maasai; at other times new ethnic groups could emerge from factions and remnants of other groups. Pokot, for example, was probably formed as a distinctive ethnic unit as late as the end of the 18th century (Bollig and Österle 2007). Pastoralists of various ethnicities all shared a common stock-based value system which depended on mutual understanding and cooperation.

My Samburu assistant insisted that the man I met was not Laikipiak Maasai, but in fact a Dorobo. However, it is not unlikely that lineages among Dorobo date back to the assimilation of Laikipiak Maasai (Blackburn 1982). In the Maa language the term 'Dorobo' means "those without cattle", while among Samburu it is used ambiguously. It sometimes refers to a social group described as the Samburus' ninth clan, characterized by their bee-keeping, while at

other times it is an all-embracing category of everyone considered poor. Scholars of East African pastoralism like Anderson (2002), Galaty (1993a) and Waller (1999), suggest that the boundary between pastoral and non-pastoral subsistence categories was fluid in pre-colonial times. But Waller (1999) also argues that pastoralists tended to define themselves in contradictory and superior terms against the non-pastoral “other”. Scholars such as Waller (1999), Anderson (2002), and Broch-Due (1999a; 2000a) have noted contemporary continuities in these trends, concluding that while pastoralist identities are fluid and dependent on context and situation, the non-pastoral others are understood against an idealised (pastoralist) self. Thus, while Samburu pastoralists in the past have depended on temporary assimilation into Dorobo communities when their animals died due to raids, drought or diseases, the Dorobo still remain “other” in terms of category (see Cronk 2002). The Laikipiak Maasai I met complained that Pokot mistook them for Samburu and raided their animals in revenge attacks. In contrast, I met Dorobo around in Samburu District, and they usually overemphasized their Samburu identity, negating the stigma of their otherness. Writing about the fluid pastoral identity, Galaty (1993b: 187) argues that “as the line shifts, the notion underlying identity may shift as well: language now overweighting practice, affinity transcending culture, or kinship overweighting shared residence”.

The establishment of the British East Africa Protectorate

On my first road trip we continued north on a road consisting of red sand and white rocks. Most of the road northwards was flanked on both sides by cattle ranches and wildlife sanctuaries owned by settlers and overseas investors. As we arrived in Kitók, I could see several Samburu structures with some kind of plastic on the roof. Later I learned that they were all displaced families, and this location would become one of my prime field sites. We had passed the most dangerous areas at this point; there was a high risk of highway robberies on the road between Rumuruti and Maralal. Finally we arrived in Maralal, the heart of Samburu District. In the course of my fieldwork I also travelled to other central locations within what came to be known as the Northern Frontier in colonial times, such as Isiolo and Archers Post.

Both Samburu and Isiolo districts had very different colonial histories from Laikipia. I met both Samburu and Borana elders who cherished the memory of British rule. Partly because history is remembered in the present, Samburu and Borana view colonial time in opposition to

a more negative post-colonial era. But British colonialism was also remembered in opposition to the past. According to Simpson (1994), the calamities some groups experienced prior to imperial control gave them a positive attitude towards the British colonial power. Some of these groups, like Samburu and Borana, had, it seems, ended up on the losing side in the conflicts, while circumstances had given groups like Turkana, Darood Somalis and Dasenech strength and expansion (see Simpson 1994). Thus, the Turkana had little to gain and much to lose at the hands of British imperialism. Resistance or cooperation usually decided whether an ethnic group was labelled “good natives” or “bad natives” in the colonial construction (Broch-Due 2000b). While Turkana was seen as “problematic” throughout the colonial period, the British view on Samburu fluctuated between “good” and “bad”.

The arrival of the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) in 1888 marks the start of the British colonial venture in Kenya. Anderson (2002) explains that the chartered company, which had been established to open up trade between the coast and Buganda, built several forts for provision and protection of a new trading route which came to be known as Sclaters Road. When IBEAC failed financially, Britain established the East African Protectorate to take over in 1895. Administration was taken over by the Foreign Office. In 1902, administration was again transferred to the Colonial Office, and the Uganda territory was incorporated into the protectorate. By the outbreak of WW1 the East African frontier was largely closed for further settlement. The troubled early years had given way to a “more stable, productive era, with a white population less drunk on the hopes of quick fortunes, building instead a diversified economy and domesticated society” (Kennedy 1987: 46).

Anderson (2002) argues that colonial policy was principally formed for the benefit of the Europeans, partly because the administration saw the settlers as the key to economic progress in the colony, and partly because the European settler community mobilised and lobbied together, aided by the use of a discourse the administration was familiar with. However, as I will show later in this chapter, the administration and segments of the settler community did not always see eye to eye. There was little consistency in the colonial land policies over the more than 60 years of European rule, but the policies were always characterised by a persistent disregard for the needs and wishes of the native population. Kennedy (1987: 4) argues that the success of “white settlement was measurable by its ability to command local resources and subjugate indigenous peoples to the needs of the white economy”.

Lotte Hughes is a historian of Africa, specialising on Kenya and Maasai relations with the

British. Hughes (2006) explains that according to the Crown Land Ordinance of 1915, all areas considered suitable for progressive European development were available for settlers, whether the areas were inhabited or not. Consequently most of the highland was taken. The highland is believed to be most suitable for farming. It is called highland simply because this land is in the higher areas, usually more than 1500 m above the sea. Those inhabitants who were not removed and settled in the undersized reserves, struggled to survive on congested semi-arid land or worked on the settlers' farms and ranches. Of course, settlers persistently argued that the land they occupied had either been vacant or highly misused before they came. A Kenyan settler, J.F Lipscomb (1955: 17-18), has the following take on land in Kenya:

Above the 8000-ft. level lie, firstly, the high plateaus, the high downs, and the forests, and finally the moors and the mountains. At these altitudes the climate was too cold and too wet to attract the tribes, and it was these empty highland areas, and the empty lower areas of lesser fertility, that the European settlers occupied when they came to Kenya, and which they still occupy to-day.

Mr. Lipscomb denies the allegation that Europeans alienated any land that was occupied by indigenous communities, but there is much evidence to the contrary. If we take Laikipia as an example, starting with a 1904 treaty which was followed by another in 1911, Maasai land had been reduced by 60 percent when the British evicted them from Laikipia and surrounding areas in the Rift Valley region. The Maasai were made to settle in a reserve in southern parts of Kenya, the present-day Kajiado and Narok districts. Anderson (2002) writes that by 1906 almost 50 farms of alienated land in Laikipia were allocated to settlers, each farm of about 5000 square acres. The 1904 treaty was debated in 2004 because the Maasai signed for a 99 year lease, rather than selling the land for good. Hughes (2006) explains that this was the normal procedure in Kenya at the time. The Maasai have not been successful with their claims. One of the government's main arguments is that the lease at some point had been extended to 999 years, though they have yet to document this. Even though the Maasai might be the ethnic group with the strongest grounds for claiming land in Laikipia, they are unlikely to be the only ethnic group that lived in Laikipia in pre-colonial times. Waweru (2006) finds it peculiar that historians have neglected Samburu in the discussion surrounding land alienation in Laikipia. He claims "Samburu not only grazed their stock on the plateau but also claimed a considerable portion of it" (Waweru 2006: 72).

Anderson (2002) argues that for settlers, pastoral land in the Rift Valley rivalled agricultural

land in the Kikuyu country in popularity. Many continued buying up large areas without being able to utilise even half of it, and sometimes the owners had no intention to run the farm at all, only to buy it in order to sell for a higher price later. This 'absenteeism' motivated more pastoral groups to migrate into Laikipia. Due to a high degree of absent white landowners, particularly during the First World War, other ethnic groups kept migrating towards the available land in Laikipia. Nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists like Tugen, Pokot and Samburu had already been living in Laikipia for a long time when the British chose to deal with the African "encroachment" in the 1920s, when the First World War was over and the administration was reconstituted. By 1920, Samburu could no longer graze their cattle south of the Uaso Nyiro river, and they were forcibly removed by KAR if found in Laikipia District (Waweru 2006). Together with the contest over the Leroghi plateau, the loss of grazing land in Laikipia came to define the relationship between Samburu and settlers.

Masculinity ideals among settlers and administrators

Lipscomb (1955: 20) claims in his memoir that the Europeans who came to East Africa "during the first half of the present century have built a country where formerly only barbarism, and nothing but barbarism, had ever existed." Who were these settlers, colonial administrators and officers who ruled Kenya from early 1900 to 1963? Kennedy (1987:31) argues that adventurous men were predominant, "... peripatetic men who thrived on the dangers and opportunities of the frontier" (Kennedy 1987: 31). The area that was made the Northern Frontier District was a one of the last African frontiers in the late 19th century, and a tempting ground for explorers. Rich aristocrats were not the only ones who came, however. Some of the settlers in the early colonial period were displaced soldiers turned poor farmers. They came from South Africa hoping to own and use a small parcel of land to support their families. According to Tosh (2005) imperialism was central in forming the ideals of Victorian masculinity from the second half of the 19th century. The decision to emigrate from Britain represented certain masculine traits like courage and independence, and settlement overseas represented an alternative way to achieve the material and social prerequisites for an ideal masculine status (Tosh 2005).

After the initial years, the Colonial Office wanted to restrict access to the Kenyan colony to people with means and resources. The Rift Valley was opened for settlement in 1905, and everyone applying for land there had to prove possession of at least £1000 (later £5000)

(Kennedy 1987), a significant amount at that historical juncture. Notwithstanding absenteeism and other evidence of speculation in land plots, the Colonial Office increasingly favoured large landowners over small farmers (Kennedy 1987; Anderson 2002; Bernstein 1980). The capital requirement created a new class of settlers, some of whom were interested in bagging game rather than cultivating land (Kennedy 1987:44).

Later, after WW1, the soldier settlement scheme attracted retired soldiers, mostly officers. Kenya attracted these men for various reasons. First of all we must consider the social transformations in Britain at the time (Kennedy 1987). Certain upper-class segments in Britain wanted to escape the joint forces of industrialism, urbanisation, democracy and a more egalitarian society that were transmuting social relationships and cultural values. “For ex-officers, for retired civil and colonial servants, for public school boys, for the sons of country squires and parsons, and for others of similar ilk, Britain seemed more and more unwelcoming” (Kennedy 1987: 71). Unpolluted by modernity, Kenya offered not only open plains and fertile land, but also a social space where they could continue living an aristocratic lifestyle helped by cheap labour and docile servants. The settlers who came from lesser means might have been seeking a different masculine ideal. Tosh (2005) argues that many emigrants were aiming for the ideal of the independent workingman, well-paid and respected as a consistent breadwinner for his family. Given that gender is relational, the best way to truly understand settler masculinities is to consider their relationship with the native population in Kenya.

Climatic concerns were a key impetus within the settler culture in Kenya. Settlers believed that actinic radiation in a tropical climate could paralyse and destroy nerve cells in a European person’s body (Kennedy 1987; Campbell 2007). The merciless sun was believed by many to be the reason behind the racist idea that darker-skinned “races” were inferior and lower on the evolutionary scale. Kennedy (1987) argues that most settlers tried to draw strict physical and symbolic boundaries between themselves and the native population. Fear and racial anxiety were important causes for such boundary making. Feeling like aliens in a foreign country, outnumbered by natives, the settlers created vivid images like “the black peril”. The “black peril” refers to the supposedly imminent danger of black men raping white women. “This spectre went to the heart of the settler’s sense of vulnerability by threatening the most sacred symbol of their supremacy, the virtue of white women and thus the reproductive destiny of the race” (Kennedy 1987: 128). The fear of “the black peril”, violence and rebellion, created a sense of solidarity among the settlers. This solidarity helped reinforce the physical and

symbolic divide between settlers and native ethnic groups. Another important vehicle for creating this divide was the pseudoscience of eugenics. Kenya was a cockpit for eugenic research for several different reasons (Campbell 2007). The settler population was interested in using ideas related to eugenics in an effort to legitimise their position, and to affirm the innate difference between coloniser and colonised. Libscomb (1955: 193) shares his ideas on eugenics: “Having made my living for more than twenty years by the practical application of the science of genetics in livestock, the prospect of any fusion between such fundamentally different stocks as Africans and Europeans fills me with horror”.

Considering collective fears like the black peril, Kennedy (1987) notes that it is quite surprising they did not hire female servants instead of male. In fact, most if not all Kenyan servants were male. A general term used by settlers for their servants was “boy”. This suggests an effort to deny them their masculinity, refusing to relate to them as grown men. A Samburu boy does not have any real expectations, power or responsibility, but this all changes when he is initiated and becomes a man. Samburu use an etymologically related nickname today to describe those men who act as servants for others, doing chores that at best can benefit women and children. Believed to be an extension of the Maasai, the Samburu were as much idealised as they were seen as problematic for development. The Maasai, Samburu and some other pastoralist groups were and are still considered to be ‘reluctant to change’. They were seen as warriors in touch with nature, independent and not easily subdued. These characteristics were often admired by adventurous frontier men associated with Victorian masculinity. But in contrast, the pastoralist lifestyle did not fit well with colonial views on good economy and how to utilise a landscape. Thus, pastoralist groups like the Samburu and Maasai were both denounced and embellished in the imperialist imagination.

Samburu masculinity and the colonial fear of the age-set institution

We have established that pastoralist ethnic identity in pre-colonial times by necessity was flexible and mutable. Despite this survival strategy, pastoralism as a lifestyle was idealised in comparison to other modes of living, and the ideal man was always rich in livestock. A successful pastoralist typically had more than one wife, many children and a large network of economic relations of reciprocity. With wives and children he gained a stronger workforce and a larger space to accumulate his livestock. He would usually depend on poor men who were willing and able to herd his surplus animals, an arrangement that also gave poor men a

chance to build their own herds. These arrangements made it possible for rich pastoralists to manage and reproduce livestock in various locations simultaneously (Rainy 1989; Waller 1999). Spreading livestock into various geographical locations could also be done through marriage with more than one wife and by establishing various forms of exchange relations. Risk management strategies like these were formed to protect pastoralists from unexpected events such as droughts, cattle disease or cattle raids (see: Bollig 2006). Based on this logic it stands to reason that poverty could always be abated with skilful husbandry of animals and industrious economic thinking by the individual pastoralists. Similar to other pastoral societies like the Maasai (Talle 1999) and Turkana (Broch-Due 1999a), it is not his lack of material possessions or even food that makes a Samburu man be seen as poor, but his lack of transactional goods. As shown in my brief description of how Dorobo is viewed as an alternative category to the idealised Samburu, poverty was, and still is today, a great personal stigma. I will therefore argue that the ideal Samburu man in pre-colonial and colonial times was flexible, adaptable and industrious, with many wives and a large social network. These qualities should ideally culminate in visible wealth like livestock. From this we can gather that a dominant dimension of power and masculinity was performed through the acquisition and demonstration of visible wealth.

A Samburu man's accumulation of wealth started in his youth when he was initiated into a new age-set, partly from stock inherited from his father, and partly from cattle raiding. In Chapter 3 I will argue that the age-set system and the rituals associated with it form and instruct the foundational principles of socialisation and morality in contemporary Samburu society. The age-set institution is not ahistorical, but is continually formed and reshaped by the actions and interests of its member. At this juncture I will focus on its relevance during colonial times, and therefore I find it more accurate to rely on Paul Spencer's ethnography (2004[1965]; 1973; 1998), based on fieldwork from the 1950s, rather than my own fieldwork. Paul Spencer was a professor of anthropology and a legendary researcher on the Maa-speaking pastoralists Samburu and Maasai. A new age-set opened every 10-15 years, and a new generation of youths were initiated. The young men initiated into an age-set was termed *lmurran*, a social status with its own unique social norms and expectations. Spencer differentiated between age-grades and age-sets. Each man would pass through three principal age-grades in his life, boyhood, *moranhood* and elderhood, but they would only be part of one age-set. When a new age-set opened, *lpiroi* elders, men belonging to an age-set two generations older than the new one, instructed them. This shows that age-set also offered a

ritual dimension to power and masculinity. *Lpiroi*, or firestick elders, was a position of power and privilege (see: Spencer 2004). Ideally the *lmurran* were initiated in *lororas*, makeshift villages constructed for ritual purposes. Temporary houses were put in a clockwise order of segmental seniority. Here they performed every ritual together, developing friendship, economic relations and important formal ritual ties. Solidarity among the peers was visible as they stayed together in large groups, wearing similar cloths and decorations. They were always in groups, whether dancing, patrolling, herding or going on cattle raids. Solidarity among age-mates did not go away once the age-set ended and a new one opened; it was a lifelong commitment. The *lmurran* were not allowed to marry before the age-set closed, in effect giving elders monopoly on marriageable girls. Given the limitations posed by the ritualised age-set institutions and the time it took to accumulate livestock through skilful husbandry, wealth within this system was a privilege typically belonging to elders. Spencer argues that the Samburu age-system encouraged solidarity between peers rather than lineages, and that it maintained a hierarchy of seniority, allowing elders to control their juniors (Spencer 1973; 1998). The age-set institution was therefore absolutely essential in the economic dimension of power. But we also see that there was a ritual dimension to power and masculinity connected to the age-set system.

From a reading of colonial records (see: KNA1935: 564^{iv}), settler memoirs (Huxley 2000 [1985]: ch10) and anthropology (see: Anderson 2002; Waller 1999), the age-set institution played a crucial part in the relationship between coloniser and colonised. One of the reasons for this is connected to the idea that for many groups, the age-set in pre-colonial times was a way to produce military units to gain political power and conduct predatory expansion (see: Kurimoto and Simonse 1998). The colonial fear of the age-set traditions also had a significant impact on policies implemented towards Samburu (Spencer 2004). The colonial government considered the *lmurran* unpredictable and violent, and these characteristics, combined with the collective nature of *moranhoo*d, intimidated the British administration. Whether reports were based on hearsay or evidence, social problems were almost always blamed on *lmurran*. For this reason the colonial administration made several efforts to eradicate the age-set institution and wipe out rituals that were essential in young men's formative years. Some of the so-called punitive expeditions are collectively remembered today, and I would argue that actions and policies levied against the age-set institution have made a lasting impact on Samburu masculinity.

Northern Frontier District

The colonial history of the north unfolds in sharp contrast to the rest of Kenya (Anderson 2002, Simpson 1994). Due to various ecological and demographic factors, the British developed an administrative and legal structure for the Northern Frontier District that was quite unique to the colony. NFD was a closed district; ethnic groups were bounded within demarcated locations. Access into NFD and travel between its various administrative sections was highly restricted. The administration of the Northern Frontier District was officially established in 1910 with headquarters in Moyale. The district was initially controlled through military posts, but a civil administration was partly established in 1925. The British colony kept moving the administrative headquarters, and the areas constituting NFD changed several times from its beginning until independence. Consequently ethnic groups were affected in different ways in various historical intervals (Simpson 1994, Broch-Due 2000a).

NFD was essentially seen as a territory promising little remuneration. The administration considered the area a drain on the colonial budget, and efforts were made to restrict expenditure. A recognisable consistency in most of the political decisions was the marginalisation of frontier economy (Simpson 1994). The British presence in the north was principally there to protect the borders with Ethiopia and Somali domains to the North East (Waweru 2006). ‘Divide and rule’ and punitive excursions using *askaris* (African soldiers) were typical strategies used to control the region. The vast area was run by a limited number of administrators, “empowered with extraordinary executive and judicial prerogatives and given first-class magisterial status” (Simpson 1994: 239). Some of these laws were resurrected in a post-colonial ‘state of emergency’, during the so-called Shifta war. The outlying District Ordinance from 1902 restricted traders’ entry into NFD and movement between districts. Quarantine regulations halted cattle export from the early 1920s (see Waweru 2006; Simpson 1994). The cattle quarantine was justified by the veterinary officials’ warnings about cattle diseases spreading south from NFD. Conveniently, the quarantine benefitted the white ranchers a lot, protecting them from African competition. The Collective Punishment Ordinance (1909) was another decree aimed at pastoralists in particular. The ordinance was made with intention to curb stock theft, an objective further amplified by the Stock and Produce Theft Ordinance (1913) which stated that the fine should be no less than ten times the value of the stock or produce stolen (see Waweru 2006). The Collective Punishment Ordinance was also a strategic measure in line with the imperative of indirect rule. Given that elders were the principal stockowners, they were the ones who had to bear the

brunt of collective punishments in the form of fines. The colonial government came to understand most Kenyan societies as patriarchal and ruled by a gerontocracy, so they tried to help enforce the elders' authority in order to handle the "unruly" youths. The colonial assumption that pastoralists were dominated by patriarchy and gerontocracy is only a qualified truth. Anthropologists writing in the paradigm of structural functionalism supported the image of patriarchy (Evans-Pritchard 1937; Spencer 2004 [1965]), but more recent theoretical voices have challenged this belief. Dorothy Hodgson is vice president of the African Studies Association, an anthropologist and expert on Maasai. She traces the emergence of 'patriarchy' among Maasai to processes associated with colonial state formation (e.g. Hodgson 2000b). Hodgson mentions the creation of the hierarchical and gendered domains of 'domestic' and 'public/political', particularly through giving men local authority within the colonial state-system of indirect rule. Hodgson (2000b) also blames the change in gender hierarchy on the consolidation of male control over cattle through the commoditization of livestock, monetization of Maasai economy and how men were 'target groups' in livestock development interventions. Vigdis Broch-Due is scientific director of the Center for Advanced Studies at the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. She has done extensive research among pastoralists in Northern Kenya, principally Turkana, focusing on themes ranging from gender and cosmology to poverty politics and the unruly effects of colonialism. Broch-Due (2000b) challenges representations of the Turkana kinship system as patrilineal and patrifocal, and the meaning of these terms in relation to property rights. She demonstrates that there is no empirical evidence of exclusively patrilineal descent in regard to property or anything else that passes down vertically from father to sons. Instead she argues that there is "a cyclical growth process in which female and male forms of descent interact" (Broch-Due 2000c: 182).

The decision to design specific laws for pastoralists must be attributed to the colonial perspective on social values and the political structure of pastoralist societies. The colonial government assumed that "normal" law would have little pre-emptive effect. It was believed that crimes such as cattle theft and various forms of violence were accepted by the larger community (see for example: KNA 1935: 265). Policies implemented for pastoralists were based on simplified models of cultural mapping that seldom bothered with individuality and diversity (e.g. Broch-Due 2000a). Broch-Due (2000a: 37) explains that the colonial ethnographer and policy enforcer "searched for the universal in the local, the general in the particular, the whole in the part". Any state must be able to comprehend its inhabitants, so

that they can be organized to satisfy traditional state requirements of taxation, conscription and control (Broch-Due 2000b). For the Kenyan colonial government this was not an easy task, considering Kenya's vast diversity in ethnicity, culture and livelihood. Instead of governing the complexity with flexible and adaptable policies, the complexity itself was cut down to something more comprehensible. A typical simplification device in such a project is the 'template'. Templates are created when something new and unfamiliar is to be portrayed, and in the colonial striving for some "order" and "stability", cultural variation was often ignored in order to create more general models that could explain diversity more economically. The colonial land policies were especially important in organising its citizens for control and conscription. We have seen that the colonial government moved ethnic groups around to create "space" for white settlement. Broch-Due (2000b:60) explains that "place making, but also putting everybody and everything in place, became the defining features of the colonial regime in both words and deeds". Rather than constructing a large-scale form of a nation, the colonial government produced a multitude of small-scale versions, namely 'tribal territories'. Each territory was, as Broch-Due (2000b: 60) described it, "imagined as a nation in miniature and each solidified in reality through a string of bureaucratic decrees, acts and interventions". The territorial mapping closed borders which were previously open, and created a new distance between inhabitants belonging to the different districts. In this project, some ethnic groups were more amenable than others. Until the contest over the Leroghi plateau, the colonial administration did not meet much resistance from Samburu.

Samburu had been heavily affected by *emutai*, the disasters that wrought havoc on pastoralist communities at the turn of the century. The colonial government assumed they were a numerically weak and a poor "tribe" vulnerable to stronger neighbours (see Waweru 2006). In their weakened state, it seems Samburu did not pose any serious challenges to the colonial administration, and the early administrative efforts were mainly confined to moving the group inside their new borders north of Uaso Nyiro River. This made it easy for the colonial administration to push Samburu clans out of the northern ranges of Laikipia during the first two decades of occupation. By the 1920s, however, Samburu had grown in population and their livestock had multiplied, and it was at this time they started to move from the category of "good natives" towards being conceptualized as "bad natives". Partly as a result of European ambition to conquer the best land, and partly because of the annoyance suffered by settlers occupying north Laikipia, the Leroghi plateau in Samburu district was targeted. The Leroghi plateau was the only highland area occupied by Samburu, blessed with a mild climate

and a fertile ground. “Big men” such as Lord Delamere and Berkely Cole led the contest by claiming for example that Samburu were originally goat herders, not cattle herders, that their form of pastoralism was uneconomic, and that they had no legal right to the Leroghi plateau. Furthermore, settlers used the dominant discourse on pastoralism at the time, arguing that Samburu were of little use to the government since they did not pay tax, trade or cultivate, and that they were better confined to a small reserve. The widely held notion that the Samburu did not pay any taxes has been proven wrong, but the settlers used it as powerful discursive leverage vis-à-vis the colonial powers in their efforts to prove their case (See Fumagalli 1978; Duder and Simpson 1997; Simpson 1994; Waweru 2006). A commission was sent to investigate whether the settler demands should be heard or not. The so-called Maxwell Commission concluded that the land should be reserved for settlers. However, several political realities thwarted the move. Most importantly, African interests had recently been advanced with the Devonshire Declaration, and British field representatives strongly advised against a land alienation they believed would utterly destroy the Samburu economy. Field officers tended to sympathise with the people they governed (Duder and Simpson 1997). To the settlers’ great dismay, the Carter Commission decided against opening Leroghi plateau for European settlement.

The settler power was behind several flimsy allegations and political decisions that followed in Samburu District. In a last desperate attempt by the settlers, they produced, according to Simpson (1994), a false murder case based on a rumour that a young member of the Powys family had in fact been killed by Samburu *Imurran* and not by a lion as had first been assumed based on evidence on the scene. Eliot Fratkin (2015) has a different take on the alleged Powys murder, presenting oral narratives that suggest some likelihood that Powys was murdered by a group of Samburu *Imurran* on the order of the local loibon (diviner) Leaduma (often referred to Ole Odume in colonial records). The murder case and a range of other dubious settler efforts finally led, in 1934, to the district becoming part of the Rift Valley Province, an administration more amenable to the settlers’ interests (Simpson 1994). The relationship between settlers and government was, however, challenged for years to come as a result of losing the Leroghi plateau to Samburu. As Simpson (1994) points out, the case also gives an example of how contradictory interests represented the colonial state; the British administration was not simply a political instrument for the whims and wishes of the white settlers.

The contest over the Leroghi plateau in its most pivotal years between 1928 and 1936 showed

Samburu at their most defiant. The British administration met resistance the way they usually did, with power and domination. In addition to punitive expeditions and a strict enforcement of colonial law, they organized a massive social engineering project with the final goal to demolish the age-set institution. This had massive implications for interaction between men and women and age-set generations.

Military rule and the early efforts to restructure the age-set institution

In the course of my fieldwork I visited several villages that had been targeted in government operations. Some people had been forcibly evicted from locations they had lived in for decades, others were victims of massive disarmament operations.

I could hear the helicopter approaching, people went out of their houses to look. We soon learned it was coming to our village, and shots were fired even before it had landed. At this point people started running, everybody was afraid, screaming. The soldiers jumped out of the helicopter as it had landed, and they were just shooting everywhere. One old mama was killed; they were just spreading those bullets indiscriminately. They started beating men, *Imurran* and old men, stripping them naked and beating them badly. They wanted to know where they had hid their weapons.

Nempiri (name meaning: from grace), a young married woman, told me this story in one of the five villages targeted by a disarmament operation which took place between February 2009 and January 2010. My conversation with Nempiri made me remember another conversation I had with an old Samburu man in 2008. Lmelus was a very old man, initiated into the Lmekuri age-set, and had been a young boy during the first punitive expeditions by the colonial government. I had been used to elders almost romanticising colonial times, contrasting them with what they considered a more negative post-colonial rule. Lmelus, however, had little love for the British administration:

When this white man died [Powys], the government turned bad. Instead of finding the culprits they gave a collective fine to everybody. They were chasing down *Imurran* everywhere, beating them, and shaming them by cutting their hair and confiscating their bangles. Spears and any other form of weapon were confiscated, and at a certain point of time almost no *Imurran* in the district carried spears.

While Lmelus's narrative relates to events occurring in the mid-1930s, punitive expeditions were not uncommon in the earlier years of administration (see Waweru 2006). Between 1921 and 1925 NFD was under military rule and administered from new headquarters at Barsaloi. The age-set institution and *Imurran* were immediately seen as a problem, due to what was called "spear bleeding". In the National Assembly (1935: 564^v) the acting Native Commissioner described the custom in the following way:

Like all primitive Nilotic-Hamitic tribes their young warriors are initiated during early manhood and spear bleeding in order to win the admiration of the young girls, and often on direct feminine instigation, has been prevalent from the earliest times and is a traditional custom.

In their work "The poor are not us" Anderson and Broch-Due (1999) argue that pre-colonial raids had very limited economic gains compared to the more certain and peaceful mathematics of natural growth. Formal raiding acknowledged the emergence of a new age-set, and the raids were shaped by numerous sets of taboos and restrictions. The raids were planned openly, and the raided animals were usually distributed among the members of the clan or age-set. Pre-colonial raids also occurred as a consequence of territorial struggles or as a calculated strategy to force competing groups out of pastoralism and into other modes of subsistence. The administration wanted to put a stop to unsanctioned and uncontrolled warfare, and made several measures to that end. In 1913 formal raids were banned by law. The enforcement of this law in Samburu District intensified during the years of military rule, fortified by the regionally specific ordinances. The numerous measures included "public executions, heavy fines, constant police patrols to maintain the sanctity of colonial boundaries and a massive public display of colonial means of violence" (Waweru 2006: 141). When the military rule handed over its reins to the official administration in 1925, the challenge previously deemed the "morán menace" was under control.

So-called spear bleeding was not the only negative feature the British attributed to *Imurran* and the age-set institution. The young Samburu men were not easily recruited to any kind of manual labour. In fact, the only institution that managed to employ young Samburu men in great numbers was the Kenya African Rifles (KAR). Prior to the 1920s, Samburu men had been easily recruited to military auxiliaries against Turkana and other groups targeted for punitive actions by the British. Punitive expeditions against Samburu were also, ironically, effective in recruiting *Imurran* to work as soldiers for KAR. Since the punitive expeditions

had effectively pacified the *lmurran*, enlistment into KAR was arguably the only opportunity to rebuild their martial reputation and establish important aspects of masculinity (see: Waweru 2006).

Subduing the *lmurran* made a great impact on interaction between the generations. According to Spencer (2004; 1973) intergenerational conflict is built into the very structure of relations between the age grades. Samburu practice polygamy and are only allowed to marry after their *moranhood*, when a new age-set is opened. The *lpiroi*, who decide when a new age-set should open, want to delay it as long as possible, as it will destabilize their monopoly on girls to marry (Spencer, 2004). According to Spencer (2004), the role of “warriors”, whether to protect from cattle raids or to go on cattle raids themselves, helped divert the animosity to the outside. Even though Spencer’s structural functionalist perspective neglects individual agency and diversity in how young men experienced the changes made by the colonial administration, he makes some important observations. Ending the opportunity to go on cattle raids was not the only impact the colonial government made on intergenerational interaction. Imperial rule gave elders the means to extend their authority, and that was something they took advantage of. The extended authority gave them the rights to collect taxes, enforce livestock decisions and codify customary law. While the “moran problem” had been dealt with by the military rule, issues resurfaced in connection to the contest over the Leroghi plateau and the death of Theodore Powys. This prompted more forceful and effective measures to destroy the age-set institution completely (colonial reports – annual 1936: 48)^{vi}.

The murder of Theodore Powys and dealing with the “moran menace”.

In the wake of a spree of murders, including the death of Theodore Powys, a collective fine of £900 was issued against Samburu. There had been 27 murders over seven years (1928 – 1934), principally of workers at settler farms, and importantly the alleged murder of Theodore Powys (KNA 1935). When issuing the collective fine, Governor Joseph Byrne stated: “I should like to emphasize that there is no suggestion that the Samburu tribe as a whole is out of control. My information is that it is the moran who are responsible for these incidents which have occurred” (KNA 1934: 84)^{vii}. *Lmurran* was again painted as the culprits and the problem to be dealt with. It was first presumed that a lion had killed Powys, as evidence on the scene apparently indicated this. Later, however, a witness came forward and stated that he had seen a group of *lmurran* bragging about the deed and mentioning the murder in “the song of

vultures”. He stated that the *Imurran* took the head and testicles from the deceased under orders from loibon Leaduma. The loibon was allegedly also central in the cover-up of the murder, though he denied any such involvement in the court proceedings. The trial ended with the accused being acquitted of all charges, and the witness was punished (after confession) for perjury. In her book *Out in the midday sun*, the famous writer and Kenyan settler Elspeth Huxley (2000) describes the trial as an affront to the settler community. In fact, a group of settler-friendly legislators led by Lord Francis Scott made tremendous efforts to bring the case back to court (KNA 1935). They argued that they had gathered new evidence, and they hotly criticised the officer responsible for the district (Cornell) at the time of the murder. Cornell was one of several administrators who argued against the Leroghi plateau being opened up for European settlement. The settlers argued that he was influenced by this position. In fact, they thought that he, together with his local native staff, had actively tampered with the investigation of the case.

There is not much doubt that the motive behind these allegations was a wish to revive the move to open the Leroghi plateau for settlement (Simpson 1994). The Chief Native Commissioner dismissed Lord Francis Scott’s call for a reopening of the case (KNA 1935: 265). He denied that the case had anything to do with the Leroghi plateau, and in his view, the murders did not represent a statistical anomaly. Furthermore, as the following statement makes clear, he did not believe any investigation would be fruitful:

In these circumstances, the discovery of the perpetrators of crimes which were winked at by the old men, who did the same in their youth, and applauded by the young women because in their eyes the reputation of the young men was enhanced as warriors, was a matter of the extremist difficulty. It was to meet a situation of this kind that the collective punishment ordinance was largely designed. (KNA 1935: 265)

The collective punishment ordinance was enforced when it was assumed that *Imurran* was guilty of the various murders, despite the absence of any court convictions. Samburu did not, however, seem interested in paying the levy, and this prompted administrative action.

In the early 1930s the administration initiated a number of measures “designed to reassert its authority among the Samburu as well as win back the confidence of Laikipia and Nanuyki settlers” (Waweru 2006: 166). The district was again reconstituted and placed under the direct control of the Provincial Commissioner of the Rift Valley in 1934 (Waweru 2006).

Administration was allocated to G.R.B Brown, also nicknamed “Hammer of the Samburu” and famed for his oppressive and violent tactics (Simpson 1998). It was under his rule that the second and more effective stage in the social engineering project to demolish and reform the Samburu age-set institution, took form. A levy force was issued with the mission to disarm the Samburu and confiscate stock in a number that covered the collective fine and the cost of the force (Waweru 2006). The force was immensely effective and is still collectively remembered today, exemplified by the narrative from Lmelus above. In addition to forcibly confiscating livestock in a crude manner, seizing spears and other weapons, Waweru presents oral testimonies of *lmurran* being hounded out and shamed in a number of ways. The levy force confiscated ornaments from all Samburu *manyattas* (homestead) they came across, on the assumption that they would end up as gifts from the *lmurran* to girls. Waweru also finds oral testimonies of severe sexual violations committed by the soldiers. Additionally, the administration applied pressure on the Lkileku (initiated 1921) *lmurran* to immediately get married and “become elders”. Measures were taken to ensure that the next age generation reduced its duration from 10-15 years to an average of 2-3 years (see Simpson 1998).

Phillip Beverly, a Kenyan settler, offers a European point of view on some of the events occurring in these pivotal years. Beverly was a safari organiser and member of the Kenyan police reserve. He received a colonial police medal for his efforts in a raid against armed Mau Mau fighters (Kenya Gazette 1953^{viii}), an incident that left him severely injured. But several years prior to this, he had an encounter with the DC of Rumuruti, H.B Sharpe, also called Sharpie (see Huxley 2000), a man he describes in the following way:

He was one of the last of the generation of District Commissioners who administered their districts by the sheer force of their personalities and, when it came to dealing with the affairs of primitive people, a firm determination never to allow legalities interfere with plain common-sense. (Beverly 2014: ch. Thirty-three)

Sharpe had his mind set to deal with the situation in his firm and determined way, and he travelled up to the Leroghi plateau, accompanied by Beverly. “To the moran their spear-blooding was all good clean fun, and the next best thing to killing lions, but to Sharpe it was an affront to the authority of the Government as well as to his own personal prestige” (Beverly 2014: ch.thirty-three). As they came across a group of *lmurran* gathered below an acacia tree, Beverly describes them as follows: “Tall, slim, arrogant young men who were as lithe as leopards and as vain as peacocks, they were dandies, every one of them” (Beverly

2014: ch.thirty-three). In Beverly's words, Sharpe has a group of askaris surround the group of *Imurran*, before he gives them a lengthy flood of verbal abuse. Sharpe describes their behaviour as hyenas, and says "So, until you stop behaving like hyenas and doing the things that only hyenas do, you might as well go round looking like them and see what your girls think of you then" (Beverly 2014: ch.thirty-three). According to Beverly, Sharpe then follows up by forcibly cutting off their pigtailed, shaving their hair, and removing all their decorations. "By the time the shearing was finished all traces of insolence had gone and tears of pure mortification rolled down their faces as they looked at each other and wept" (Beverly 2014: ch.thirty-three). Cutting his pigtail and shaving hair is something a *Imurrani* does once his age-set has ended and he rises to the status of a junior elder. Beverley quotes Sharpe saying: "What they really need is to have some of their awful conceit knocked out of them, and I think the quickest way for that to happen will be when people start laughing at them" (Beverly 2014: ch.thirty-three).

The British punitive force had tremendous effects. The collective punishment hit elders hard, making them amenable to the colonial wishes for disarmament. When the new age-set opened in 1936, newly initiated *Imurran* entered "warriorhood" without spears for the first time in remembered history (Waweru 2006). The *Imekuri* was not allowed to go for *lalle* (meat camps), exchange beads with girls, or engage in any other activity associated with conventional customs. While the government enforcement did not successfully destroy the age-set institution, its force and dominance made ripples into the very fabric of the Samburu social world. With the use of ridicule, shaming, violence and divide-and-rule tactics, the British tried to remove young men from their source of self-worth and identity formation. I recall again the narrative of disarmament told by Nempiri, and wonder whether history repeats itself. Similar to the colonial punitive expeditions, it seems the soldiers in the 2009 operations also aimed to maim and disgrace, not only to confiscate weapons. This is only one of many examples I have to suggest that the colonial view of the *Imurran* did not disappear with independence in Kenya.

The image of the archetypical warrior was often an integral part of the colonial view of pastoralism as a "problem" (Waller 1999). During the years from the 1940s until independence the colonial discourse still saw the Samburu men as problematic, but in a different way. In 1928 the district was merged with Garba Tula, creating Isiolo District, but in 1934, it was again separated and joined to the Rift Valley Province (Simpson 1994). This final separation from NFD also marked the introduction of a different policy for the district.

In 1935 the Provincial Commissioner announced that there would be grazing control at the Leroghi Plateau in Samburu District, limiting the amount of cattle to 40,000. The Leroghi forest was demarcated and completely closed off for cattle grazing. The final goal for the administration was the permanent settlement of the Samburu with a permanent grazing rotation (Fumagalli 1978). By using the “squeeze policy” the administration could control larger areas of the district by pushing the excess stock into uncontrolled areas, ultimately crowding these regions.

Developments in the NFD

NFD was the backwater of colonial capitalism, remote, closed and separated from the rest of Kenya (Waweru 2006). The already mentioned stock quarantine exemplifies the role of the British in the marginalization of pastoral economy. Largely due to land alienation, the quarantine that was established to avoid disease in settler cattle, ended up causing disease in Samburu cattle. The colonial government made some efforts to create business capital in Samburu pre-WW2. According to Waweru (2006) the ghee industry could have been a success, but was hampered by the Leroghi plateau question. Hides and skins failed due to price fluctuation and competition. Most of the early initiatives were doomed from the onset, due to preconceived ideas about Samburu and their way of life. In general pastoralism was seen as a “shield against progress” throughout the colonial age, because colonial policy-makers believed the pastoralists’ livestock wealth made them “idle” and consequently uninterested in selling their labour and livestock (Waller 1999). The “idle” pastoralist in colonial discourse was associated with images of “the lazy native”, “spoiled” by his “selfish” pastoral subsistence. For pastoralists and any other indigenous subsistence groups, however, stock wealth was associated with skills, industriousness and careful husbandry rather than idleness. Waller (1999: 21) explains that pastoralists and colonialists alike “*understood stock wealth in moral as well as economic terms*”. This ideology and discourse of development have been continuously reproduced in post-colonial Kenya.

Overstocking was seen as the most important reason behind reports of soil erosion in Samburu district. The colonial government largely blamed it on native “ignorance”, with natives accumulating livestock to gain prestige rather than resources (KNA 1934). While “progressive” development initiatives were scattered and varied in form and potency up until the 1930s, they intensified in the years following the Carter Land Commission. This

commission was initially meant to challenge white supremacy and support native land rights, but its agenda took a paradoxical turn with the fall of the Labour government in Britain, a government that had been largely pro-African and negative to settler interests. The commission's focus changed from reasserting African rights to defining European claims. The appointment of Sir Morris Carter as chairman demonstrated the intent and ultimately the consequences of the commission.

Though Southern Rhodesia's Land Apportionment Act of 1930 was not of Morris Carters making, the findings of his land Commission had made it possible. Having bolstered white settlement in Rhodesia by legitimating land segregation, Carter was unlikely to do otherwise in Kenya. (Anderson 2002:128)

The Land Commission concluded that two main reasons for the economic problems in Kenya were the pastoralists' reluctance to sell livestock and their overstocking of the dry areas. Considering the close political contact between the Kenyan administration and the South African apartheid government (Anderson 2002) together with the influence of Carter, Kenya was forming a political vision of segregation, separating not only the native population from white politicians and landowners, but also placing "tribes" inside fixed borders. The territorial boundaries gradually constructed since the start of the century were officially proscribed and acknowledged by the Commission (Broch-Due 2000b).

Following the recommendations from the Carter Land Commission, several measures were initiated to reduce soil erosion. Echoing the standard colonial discourse, they opted for replacing the many "uneconomic beasts" with fewer and better stock (TKLCR 1934: section 828). The strict grazing restrictions on the Leroghi plateau came after recommendations from the report. Only 40 000 stock was allowed within the plateau. Surplus livestock, and specifically all goats, were to be moved to lowland locations. The Leroghi grazing rules had a tremendous impact in Samburu District. Each stockowner was given a permit for a fixed number of livestock allowed to graze on the plateau. Many families lost large amounts of stock in this process. To some extent Samburu was split in two, with the marginalised poor in the lowland and the wealthy privileged ones in and near the Leroghi plateau. This situation was still the same during my time of fieldwork between 2007 and 2012.

In the colonial archive we find administrators complaining about their inability to expound their message of development due to native incompetence and lack of rational thinking. The Africans, in this discourse, lacked the mental ability to comprehend the European "logic", and

they were therefore in need of guidance (See: Shadle 2012: 68). This ‘guidance’ often involved ‘the rod’, or other forms of corporal punishment. “Marking Africans as infantile excused corporal punishment, while corporal punishment helped infantilize Africans” (Shadle 2012: 69). Lipscomb is one of many settlers who had little faith in the abilities of the native population. He argues that “there is so much of which the African is capable, and which he can and does do happily and willingly with European support; there is so little that he can do efficiently and consistently without that support” (Lipscomb 1955: 78). The presumed danger of leaving Kenyans unsupervised is something Lord Delamere addressed already in 1926, during a National Assembly about the cost of building in Kenya. “In other countries you find workmen of a lower grade of intelligence are supervised very carefully” (KNA 1926: 800^{ix}). While some administrators considered supervision and control a necessary practice for order and progress in the country, many also felt a moral responsibility to train and educate the native population. Paternal and benign, these administrators wanted to lead them to ‘a better life’ through various forms of development. We can relate this to what Berman calls paternalistic authoritarianism, “an ideology of domination ‘aristocratic’ in its cultural roots and mythology, with an emphasis on honour, duty, and noblesse oblige, yet thoroughly bureaucratic in its application and capitalist in its structural determination” (Berman 1990: 104). The development discourse and policy implementation in Kenya from the 1940s onward continued to reproduce an image of African men as “children” in need of guidance. “The native” could not be blamed for his “inadequacy” in economic practice, rational thinking and moral living. Some of the National Assembly debates I have referred to, showed the strong arguments between administrators who imagined Samburu in different ways, as “wild”, “innocent” or “noble”. The image of the “noble savage” is particularly related to the present day tourism and wildlife conservation industry.

Wildlife conservation

Wildlife conservation in Samburu District was commenced as early as 1902, when the government created the Northern Game Reserve. Waweru argues (2006: 80) that the impact of game on African crop and animal husbandry was largely ignored, “unlike in the White Highlands, where conservation of wildlife was viewed as incompatible with settler farming/ranching”. Generally the African mode of living was seen as destructive to wildlife and the environment. It is unlikely that wildlife had ever been a big problem for Samburu and other pastoralist groups, given their long coexistence in the same landscape. The British land

policies worked to upset the ecosystem's delicate balance. This was reinforced by the colonial administration's tendency to control people rather than wildlife (See Waweru 2006). In Samburu district, killing wildlife was strictly forbidden. The amount of livestock was highly restricted, while wildlife could roam free until the occasional European hunter killed it.

The laws and regulations on hunting were mainly implemented to suppress the colonized in the competition for game. British hunting was seen as a privilege for the upper classes, and hunting symbolized the hunters' aristocratic status (Steinhart 2006). Kenya became a new frontier for the nobility who had lost this privilege in their home country. Through memoirs and literature by prominent individuals and writers, notably Hemingway, game hunting was romanticized and popularized (Steinhart 2006). Cheaper air travel helped commercialize the business in the 1940s and '50s. However, public sentiment and the decline in the elephant population made Arap Moi (the second Kenyan president) opt for a ban on hunting in 1989^x. The romantization of Africa began in the 19th century with letters and memoirs written by explorers and other travellers, but wildlife and the African savannah were not the only objects of idealization. Thinking of nomads as "noble savages" was not uncommon in the early 19th century. The famous author and Nobel laureate Karen Blixen described the Maasai as a beautiful and proud people radiating a spirit of fierceness and mystique. In her books they are presented as the human epitome of freedom, and if ever imprisoned, they would simply die.

The young Masai Morani live upon milk and blood; it is perhaps this diet that gives them their wonderful smoothness and silkiness of skin. Their faces, with the high cheek-bones and boldly swung jaw-bones, are sleek, without a line or groove in them, swollen; the dim unseeing eyes lie therein like two dark stones tightly fitted into a mosaic; altogether the young Morani have a likeness to mosaics. The muscles of their necks swell in a particular sinister fashion, like the neck of the angry cobra, the male leopard or the fighting bull, and the thickness is so plainly an indication of virility that it stands for a declaration of war to all the world with the exception of the woman. (Dinesen 2002: 203)

The passage is beautifully written, and like all other historical records, it must be considered in relation to its own context and time, and Blixen was not alone in her admiration of Maasai. The Maasai became the key example of a reinvented image of the "noble savage" in post-colonial national marketing campaigns. Wildlife parks set up for the benefit of tourism today are often constructed around a romantic image of the African nature as filled with spirituality

and power. Within this image, the pastoralists are viewed as “noble savages” (McGrane 1989) untouched by “polluting” forces like modernisation and capitalism.

Independent Kenya

Colonial power gradually dwindled in the late 1950s and came to an end with Kenyan independence in 1963. While the colonial governance disappeared, the colonial ideas of development did not. Scholars like Anderson (2002; 2005) and Hodgson (1999) argue that the African elite in power embraced the colonial narratives of modernisation and development. Throughout the colonial period in Kenya, the British administration tried to change the pastoral behaviour in favour of agriculture or urbanisation, and looking back on the history of seven decades of development initiatives, David M. Anderson (1999) has not found any fundamental move away from this reforming agenda. As post-colonial governance continued with these ideas, pastoralism represented everything they were trying to leave behind (Hodgson 1999).

Even though the segregating processes enforced by the British were not officially adopted in post-colonial politics, the legacy of this policy has been prominent up to current times. President Kenyatta was a Kikuyu and, like his colonial predecessors, he focused on ensuring land rights for his own people, excluding most other claimants in the process (Schlee and Shongolo 2012). Moi challenged what he called Kenyatta’s “elite-producing” politics and focused on ensuring land rights for minority groups rather than majority groups such as the Kikuyu, the biggest ethnic group in Kenya numbering approximately 20 million. But Moi also focused primarily on his own people, the Tugen and other Kallenjin-speaking groups. Kenyatta and Moi did not only favour their own in allocating “idle” land, but also in giving out government jobs and the most prominent administrative positions. Thus, politics of exclusion has continued in post-colonial times, much because of divisions created by the British.

Like the British, the independent government arranged bureaucracy and power around a hierarchy of wealth and ethnicity (Meiu 2015). Wealthy white landowners and particularly influential administrators were replaced by the Kenyans who now had access to the political, social and economic resources of the state. Meiu (2015: 480) argues, “ ‘big men’ and eternal ‘boys’ represented key figures in the vocabulary of power of the new regime”. In the course of my fieldwork I met some ‘big men’ and many aspiring to become ‘big men’. During the

elections of 2008, I was present at a few political rallies and so-called harambes. *Harambe* literally means “all pull together” in Swahili. At one of these events, an aspiring MP had mobilized a local community to attend his speech. He was a big man, both in physical size and social demeanour, and his voice was deep and loud. Once his speech was over, he sat down on a chair and watched a well-planned cultural show by the local community. Afterwards, there was a line of people waiting to talk to him, and each individual explained their problems before he got an assistant to hand out an amount of money.

The aspiring MP did not hand out cash to simply “buy votes”, rather I think he was building and manifesting his social status. It is unlikely that he was the only aspiring MP visiting this particular community to hand out cash. The distribution of cash was part of the act, together with his expensive suit, proud demeanour, deep voice and big belly. Consumption is a pivotal characteristic of the ‘big man’ whether it concerns food, sex or money. But a vast network is even more important. One of the Samburu big men that I came to befriend in my more recent fieldwork, always made sure to display his network of important relations, and what he could gain from these contacts, whether to offer me a service, which I usually politely declined, or for some other reason.

George Meiu is a young anthropologist doing ethnographic research among Samburu, and his innovative research focuses on masculinity and the ethno-sexual tourist industry in Kenya. Meiu (2015) argues that the post-colonial big men also tried to appropriate the cross-cultural value of elderhood into their status: “Big-manhoo indexed the spatial dimensions of power (largeness, wealth, and connections) and elderhood its temporal dimensions (old age, acquired wisdom, and ritual expertise)” (Meiu 2015:481). The ideal of the big man was constructed in contrast to the alternate category “boy”, a label I came across in my fieldwork in Samburu District. Europeans in the colonial era referred to African workers as boys. “House-boys” working as domestic servants and garden-boys working as gardeners are mentioned frequently in the colonial archive (see for example: KNA 1940: 258^{xi}). The Samburu label poor men who work for small wages as *lboy*, which is a highly derogatory term. Being a “boy” included, in contrast to big-manhoo, the spatial (small, poor and lonely) and temporal (young, ignorant, ritually unclean) dimensions of subordination rather than power. When grown men are typecast as “boys” they suffer a form of infantilisation, a denial of their masculinity.

The masculinity ideal of the state was widely circulated all over Kenya, “via political rallies,

print media and labour migrants, thus setting the tone for new ways of embodying age and status in villages and towns” (Meiu 2015: 480). The ideal of ‘the big man’ in contrast to ‘the boy’ made an impact in Northern Kenya, and is still an important factor in the formation of gendered identity among young men. In Chapter 5 I will follow the apt argumentation by Meiu which shows how the big man ideal leads to a subversion of temporalities.

Post-colonial images of the pastoralist lifestyle

The British perspective on pastoralists and their mode of life has persisted in post-colonial governance, and development narratives have not changed from the reforming agenda in colonial times (Anderson 2002). In a National Assembly in 1963, with the Kenyan government just 6 weeks old, the minister for agriculture and animal husbandry challenges the parliamentary secretary to the treasury (Kibake) to say how development aid can be utilised effectively:

If the Samburu, the Masai, the Turkana, continue to believe that having 1000 head of cattle which give you no milk at all, one of which dies every day – that is completely useless – we can have no development.....unless the people become less nomadic and settle and unless we have enclosure of the land, then we cannot develop it. (KNA 1963: 1444^{xiii})

Kibake, who later became Kenya’s third president, reproduced the colonial discourse of development. This is still the dominant discourse in most of the development projects I encountered in Kenya, and importantly, it is a discourse used in the contest over land and other resources.

Arturo Escobar (1995) argues that development became a discourse when the range of possibilities was limited to exclusively follow the Western knowledge system. Alternative discourses (Bauman 1996), meaning the knowledge possessed by the people who live in the area which one aims to develop, are totally ignored. Scholars such as Hodgson (2000a), Anderson (2002) and Broch-Due (2000a; 2000b) argue that development in Kenya and Africa at large is characterised by development strategies based on simplistic, seemingly logical and easily comparable narratives about the problems and how to fix them. The development narratives existing in Kenya today have their roots deep in the colonial experience with rural development. In Anderson’s (2002: 13) apt words, a development narrative is “a ‘story’ that

describes the causes of a development problem, its consequences and the likely outcome if the problem is not effectively dealt with". The 'problem' becomes the defining feature, and "so long as the problem can be categorized the response is predetermined" (Anderson 2002: 13). Land degeneration through overgrazing is defined as a "pastoralist problem", due to what is typically labelled "irrational logics" in primitive traditions. The solution is, within this development narrative, to change the pastoralist's way of life to become developed and civilised.

In the Kenyan government's ambitious "Vision 2030" (Republic of Kenya, 2011) plan for Northern Kenya, the discourse supports rather than invalidates pastoralism. In fact, the goals of "Vision 2030" (Republic of Kenya, 2011) are based on what seems to be an objective reading of existing research and do not at all, in my view, reproduce the colonial discourse on pastoralism as an economy and way of life. The Samburu county development plan (2013) claims to have goals based on "Vision 2030", but the policy implementation seems to be more based on the already existing development narratives. Overstocking is deemed the prime reason for soil erosion, and development goals seem to favour the potential for agriculture and tourism. The development plan also addresses the challenge of education and considers *moranism* to be a "retrogressive cultural practice", drawing young men away from formal education and into violence. One of the goals in the plan is to introduce alternative rites of passage, and with this an age-old colonial goal is reproduced in the local development design. It seems the *lmurran* is still iconified as the "archetypal warrior" in the Kenyan political imagination.

Improvements in the livestock sector focus on immunisation and disease control, improved markets for the sale of meat and livestock, education in resource management and having fewer but better animals. The development implemented by the major NGOs is in line with this development narrative. NGOs such as World Vision^{xiii} and USAid^{xiv} aim to educate Samburu in an improved natural resource management to abate soil erosion and general environmental decay. All of these initiatives seem to be based on the underlying assumption that "the problem" must be attributed to pastoralist ignorance. While many of these projects might be necessary under the current circumstances, I would argue that "the problem" should not be attributed to ignorance, but rather to the reduction of land.

In Samburu District, much of the common pastoralist rangeland has been privatised (see Lesorogol 2008), and there are allegations that the British Army camp in Archers Post keeps

expanding^{xv}. Furthermore, the process of land alienation has been amplified since the early 1980s, as the semi-arid ‘landscape’ gained a new economic potential with tourism. In Laikipia District foreign settlers, local investors and ranchers have bought large tracks of land (Mkutu 2001). So-called idle land is especially relevant when considering the formation and expansion of wildlife conservancies.

In this chapter I have discussed how the colonial government erroneously viewed pastoralism as destructive for the environment. Post-colonial conservation measures seem to reproduce these images of the pastoralist. The colonial government was primarily concerned about soil erosion, and the growth of the tourist industry has added a focus on the pastoralist and his relationship with wildlife. Pastoralism is typically portrayed as destructive by the government and other non-pastoralist communities such as farmers and ranchers. This is primarily on the grounds that livestock is believed to compete with wildlife for grass, and secondly it stems from the view that the pastoralist disrupts ‘natural’ life by bringing in conflict and other negative interaction, disturbing the vulnerable balance of nature. Broch-Due (2000a) argues that the preferred solution to what conservation management and European environmentalists label “the human problem”, is to evict people and livestock from a landscape they have lived on for generations. The ‘destructive pastoralist’ is not the only image reproduced from colonial times. Tourist operators in Kenya today try to attract travellers through intoxicating promises such as “ancient land inhabited by wildlife and peoples of a time long ago, undisturbed and living by the rhythm of nature”^{xvi}. Thus, the romantic image of the pastoralist still exists today. Pastoralists actively take advantage of this image, but the stereotype also has negative implications for them.

Broch-Due (2000a) argues that the conservation projects constructed around the alternative ethics of pastoralists as “natural” resource managers often lead to antagonism. In Isiolo I observed sentiments from my informants, that inclusion and exclusion into new conservation projects were based on ethnic stereotypes, Samburu being typically seen as naturally close to nature and living in harmony with wildlife. My interviews with Borana and Samburu confirm that this form of typecasting can be an important cause of hostility between the groups. Abdi, A Borana man I came to know in Isiolo, shared his sentiments when I asked him what he thought about the underlying causes of the conflict.

Lewa Down are making Samburu and Turkana powerful. Conservancies are given to them, never to Borana. They are given guns and bullets to protect wildlife. But let me

tell you this, they are rangers at daytime, and once the night comes, they are warriors who raid our cattle. Let me tell you this, Erik, it is the conservancies that create the violence.

We can find similar processes behind the conflict between Samburu and Pokot in Samburu District and Laikipia District. In the early 2000s Samburu County Council proposed a transformation of the Pokot-occupied landscape Amayia, a semi-arid valley divided by a river, east from the escarpment of the Leroghi plateau. The area was used by both ethnic groups until the conflict in 2005. They lived together with few skirmishes, much credited to the century-old peace covenant between the groups. In the 1970s Samburu managed to register a group ranch for Samburu only, but the Pokot settlement was undisputed until Samburu politicians decided to establish a Community Based Conservation (CBC) project in 2004. Given that the area was also a famous tourist spot at the escarpment, it was suggested that introducing wildlife to the area could bring significant economic benefits through tourism. Ltungai Conservancy was established, supported by an NGO called Northern Rangeland Trust (NRT), but the ambitious plans for introduction of wildlife remain dormant due to the devastating conflict. While working on my master degree in 2007, I found this political proposal to be the most important event in provoking the first large-scale cattle raids between the two groups (Sortland 2009).

In this chapter I have attempted to present my informants' historical background in a gender perspective. The chapter acts as a necessary backdrop for the following chapters, not because Samburu masculinity is directly produced by history, but because present-day masculinities are constantly enacted in a dynamic relationship with history. The importance of history will be seen in all of the chapters that follow. We have seen in this chapter that colonial policies involving Samburu were aimed especially at young men. Through economic sanctions and various forms of corporal punishment the colonial government made attempts to completely wipe out the age-set institution. However, the age-set institution lives on, taking various forms depending on the context and situation. The initiation into a new age-set and the *lmugit* rituals that follow are immensely important for the cultural construction of Samburu masculinity. In this next chapter I will illustrate the creation of Samburu masculinity through the ritual transformation from boyhood to adulthood.

Chapter 3: Ritual Performance and the Creation of Masculinities

“There are no tears in Lekakeny’s eyes, just a distant expression as if he is not thinking or feeling anything. Lekakeny has made the first step towards *moranhoo*.”

From my fieldnotes, March, 2007

A ritual is a processual, dynamic and productive activity which not only follows the changes in society; it also becomes a significant part of history in the making (Blystad 1999; Comaroff & Comaroff 1993). The Samburu perform several rituals, and the purpose and content differ according to people and place. Some rituals are only performed by certain clans and sometimes by particular families. Rain dances are not common among the Samburu, but some families are believed to hold certain powers to perform these kinds of rituals for the whole community, probably because the families are in some way associated with the Rendille (Spencer, 1973), an ethnic group that perform rain dances more often.

While staying in Samburu and Isiolo District I observed several rituals, and in some of them I was an active participant. From these experiences I learned that for the Samburu, ritual performances are extremely important communal and individual experiences that not only mark, but also define, their social identity and status in the wider community. On these occasions acts take on symbolic meanings and are carefully and elaborately put together to protect, confirm and ensure the successful transformations of both individuals and groups of people. The rituals also ensure a successful education in pastoral knowledge and moral values in Samburu society.

A new age-set is opened approximately every fifteen years, when a new generation of *Imurran* is initiated, and they are instructed by the new generation of *lpiroi* elders. As I briefly explained in the previous chapter, the *lpiroi* elders are men from the age-set two generations before the new age-set. They have the ritual responsibility over the new initiates, and this is a position of power and privilege. The opening of a new age-set is followed by a number of *lmugit* rituals for the *Imurran*. Even though these rituals are centered on the *Imurran*, other family members are intimately involved. The initiation of a boy through several *lmugit* rituals brings him on a journey towards ‘completeness’, he is transformed in so many ways, existentially, socially, physically and aesthetically.

In this chapter I will attempt to describe important dimensions of the ritual transformation

young Samburu men go through. After a short general description of the most important *lmugit* rituals associated with the initiation of an age-set, I will give detailed descriptions of the rituals surrounding the circumcision ceremony. These descriptions are based on participant observation, beginning with my observation in a *lorora* village. I will continue with an illustration of the rituals performed by a Samburu named Lekakeny. I had the role of godfather in his initiation from boyhood to manhood. When writing about rituals I need to determine which details to include. I have to understand how to analyse the meaning behind the acts. I have to understand what the rites attempt to communicate, and how the signals are received by the initiates. But the biggest challenge is to describe the force of it all, the spectacular dimensions of these events.

The initiation of the age-set Lkisham

A Samburu *lmurran* should go through several *lmugit* ceremonies during his *moranhood*, in order to learn more about *nkanyit* (respect) and to gain in social status. The first ceremony is the throwing of the birds (*lmugit lenkweeni*), which is an essential ritual for becoming an *lmurrani*. It occurs when the circumcision wound is healed and the *lebartany* is ready to take the step into *moranhood*. The second *lmugit* is the roasting of the sticks (*lmugit lowatanda*), which should be done at least a month afterwards, but which is often done simultaneously with the throwing of birds. The third ceremony is the *lmugit* of the name (*lmugit lenkarna*), performed around five years after the first *lmugit*. This marks the promotion from junior *lmurrani* to senior *lmurrani*. The last significant *lmugit* is called the *lmugit* of the bull, after which the *lmurrani* should be allowed to marry, but only after the ritual leader (*launon*) has married first. In practice these ceremonies are not always performed by everyone, and they are often shortened in time or at least done earlier or later than the traditional norm. This is the case in the more urban areas in Samburu District, but increasingly also in rural areas. Even though the *lmugit* ceremonies are centred around the *lmurrani*, these transformations are very important for other family members as well, especially for the mother of the *lebartany* or *lmurrani*.

All the *lmugit* ceremonies should ideally be performed in a *lorora*, a makeshift village, temporary set up to shelter the initiates with their families. Most of the rituals I observed and participated in were not performed in *lororas*. During the age-set of Lmooli which opened in 1990, the number of *lorora* villages was significantly higher than when the age-set of

Lkisham was opened in 2005. There are many reasons for this, and some are connected to the dwindling opportunities to pursue subsistence pastoralism. Expanding social networks and strengthening one's reputation by doing the ritual in a *lorora* is advantageous for a pastoralist, but less so for someone harvesting grain on a farm or doing wage labour in a town. When I had the chance to observe a ceremony of such economic and social significance to the participants, I saw it not only as a perfect opportunity to learn about the Samburu people, but I also considered it an once-in-a-lifetime chance to see this ritual.

Becoming firestick elders

Sitting on the top of the hill, I can see down to the makeshift village. It is quiet now, after the initiates left some 20 minutes ago. They walked out together in a long line, dressed in the black leather that marks them as *lebartany*. The *lorora* has been prepared for months, containing 40 *nkaji* (houses) located in a clockwise order of segmental seniority. In the middle there is a circle around a large acacia tree, the *naapo*. This is where decision-making takes place. In the *naapo* every elder is attributed equal voice, and thus it seems the segmental hierarchy has little practical significance. The silence is breached, and in the distance one can hear a deep-voiced song: the *lebartany* group is approaching. They have been gathering *Seteti* sticks and the black gum called *nangore* from the Celay tree. I have observed these acts in another *nangore* ritual. After the *nangore* is collected, some of the fire-stick elders (*lpiroi*) light a fire for the *lebartany*, and as the fire flares up, so does the status of the elders as *lpiroi* for the new age-set. The *lebartany* melt the black gum in this fire, before it is attached to the end of the white stick. The colours black and white are important symbolic markers in almost every ritual, signifying the two-clan moieties, highland and lowland, feminine and masculine. The fire that flares up is also closely linked with the future fire made when the current *lebartanies* get married. Through this connection the new bride is incorporated into her husband's age-set. It is one of many examples of how Samburu rituals communicate the relationship between male and female. In the marriage ceremony, an *lpiroi* of the husband's age-set assists in kindling a fire from a wooden base (*ntoome* – a feminine noun). The ritual symbolically joins together the male and the female by mimicking procreative acts, and consequently the wife achieves her "fire" (*nkima*). The strength of a woman's "fire", which signifies her procreative abilities, is linked to the moral condition of her husband's age-set and her own natal family. It is believed that a woman who "has fire" extends this life-giving potential to the entire home "including the health of her husband, children, and livestock"

(Straight 2007:75). The *lebartany* are approaching the gate now, and they walk together through the gate (*ltim*), while singing the *lebartana*. Three married women pour milk on them as they come in, and as they arrive at the centre of the *lorora*, an *lpiroi* lifts his *sobua* several times while chanting “*nkai*” (The Samburu divinity), and as he chants, more *lpiroi* join him, blessing the initiates.

It is very important that these rituals are performed by the *lebartanies* as a group, signifying the strong communal structure in the *lorora*. Turner (1969) describes the role and status of initiates in a liminal period as often being completely equal, and this applies to the Samburu too. In the liminal phase of a ritual process the initiates find themselves between structures, they are neither this nor that. It is in this state of anti-structure that *communitas* arises, creating a sense of togetherness and unity among the initiates (Turner 1974). They are together in lacking any worldly possession, and there is no effective hierarchy between them. The importance of togetherness extends throughout *moranhoo*, lasting approximately 15 years, until the next age-set opens.

The second significant ritual within the *lorora* occurred the morning after, when the boys went in a group to a lake. I will give a detailed description of this ritual and the initiation ritual later in this chapter. Some *lebartanies* are circumcised when they return from the lake, while most wait until the following morning. I noticed several such small differences in time, space and ritual symbols. While some of these differences must be attributed to descent from ethnic groups other than the Samburu, other differences, I was told, are connected to a negative incident in the past. It is essential to avoid a reproduction of the negative past. Most of the *lebartanies* were circumcised the morning after, just before full sunrise. The performance should take place on the threshold between day and night or, as an older Samburu told me, “just when you can see a light on the palm of your hand while holding it towards heaven”. Already circumcised *lmurran* from other *lororas* in the neighbourhood had been singing all night, often teasing and taunting the boys, but also trying to meet the expectations by singing for example, “I did it once and I could do it at least seven more times”. Before any circumcision was performed, animals were brought closer to each individual *nkaji*. According to tradition the circumciser should come from one of three specific families in three different clans. Dorobo families are also typically circumcisers, but these days circumcision is often performed by doctors or other medical personnel. At this *lorora*, the circumciser had two helpers, one to find new knives, and one to pour disinfectant

on the new wound. During the circumcision many guests arrived, and big groups gathered to observe the cut, in order to make sure that the *lebartany* did not flinch or cry.

Even though the circumcision ritual and all the rituals connected to it are the main events in a *lorora*, this communal gathering has several other significant purposes beyond that. First of all it is considered a great way to build trust and respect for future economic relations. A *lorora* is also a display of the Samburu communality, sharing and cooperating with respect to aesthetic, political and social aspects. Maybe most significantly, it is considered a security measure in times when families are ritually and economically vulnerable. Most of the rituals I observed and participated in, happened outside of a *lorora*, a practice that has been much more common in the age-set of *likisham*. These rituals are also communal and usually performed in groups even though they happen outside of the *lorora*. For one initiate named *lekakeny* (name meaning: born in the morning), I took a participant role, as his “godfather of the right foot”. Below I will attempt to describe part of his journey from boyhood to manhood.

The journey to the lake

It has been a long day since I joined *Lekakeny* on his journey to *Kisima* dam in the early morning. At the dam we completed the first rituals of the day while he collected objects all blessed by the sacred *Kisima* water. Wearing the black painted *lebartany* cow leather around his upper body, he picked up strings of green grass growing in the moist lake soil. He had brought a calabash containing milk, and walked towards a very significant cove where a small stream came out. He poured out the milk, but brought it quickly back into the calabash, now as milk mixed with water. Afterwards he picked up four small white stones which were believed to come from the stream, and he put them inside the calabash.



Photo 1:

At Kisima lake, where the milk was mixed with water.

For Samburu this is an act that symbolises procreation – the mixing of white milk (sperm) with black water (amniotic fluid) in a cove of a similar shape to the female reproductive tract. Water is associated with rain and consequently with the fertility of land. Milk is a life-giving and propitious substance produced from cows, animals which are the source of wealth, survival and everything of social importance in the pastoral life. Broch-Due (1999b:165) explains that among the Turkana, prosperity hinges on processes of fertility, “for this is a society that depends for its survival over time on the successful coupling of livestock, labour and grazing land”. I found that Samburu rituals represented similar values and beliefs. The black (*Narok*) water and rain is also strongly associated with the Samburu divinity *Nkai*, and is therefore a religious or spiritual blessing in itself, a kind of sacrament in Turner’s (1969) sense of the word. Turner (1969) explains that a symbol is often multivocal, possessing several significances simultaneously. The various associations made from the substances are intimately connected; thus the act touches on the fertility of both the human, natural and cosmological worlds (Sanders 1999). The symbiosis of female and male is essential in this ritual, as it is in many other Samburu rituals. This is interesting given that rituals essentially are about becoming a pastoralist and a man. In social contexts where men gathered, I noted that the discourse tended to emphasise male superiority over women. But such disparagement is not at all integrated in the *lmugit* rituals. The rituals tended to emphasise gender symmetry and positive values attributed to that which is conceived as feminine as well as masculine.

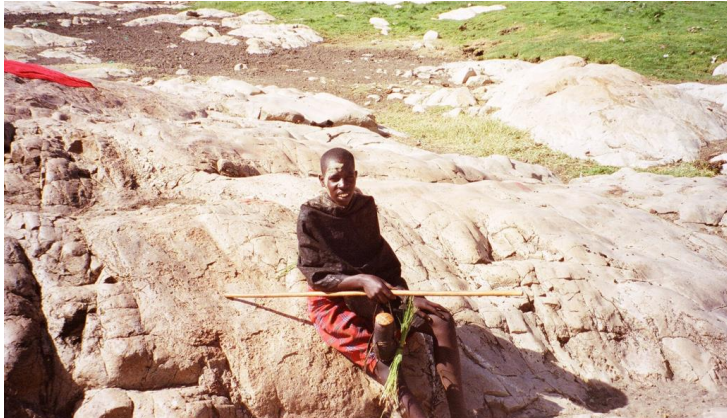


Photo 2: A Lebartany at the lake.

Before we went back from the lake, my assistant drew four lines of mud on Lekakeny's right leg, arm and forehead. According to a *loibon* I spoke to, the number four signifies the perfect completion, a man in balance and harmony with his four-legged animals. The number is important for a boy about to become a pastoralist with his own herd. The mixing of black (*narok*) and white (*naibor*) is essential in this ritual, combining the white milk and stones with the black water. This colour combination is present in all the rituals leading up to the transition into *moranhoo*. Unlike several other cultures that typically use the colours black and white as positive and negative opposites, the Samburu use them together and see the conjunctions as good (Rainy, 1989). Black (*narok*) is the colour of the highland and mountains while white (*naibor*) is associated with the lowland sand, and together they symbolise the whole of the pastoral environment. A Samburu proverb tells of two warriors arguing whether the lowland or the highland is the better. This proverb is often referred to when someone acts stupidly, because neither highland nor lowland is better than the other – a successful pastoralist is equally dependent on both environmental zones. These environmental zones are more valuable together than separately. The Samburu divide their eight clans equally into two moieties, the black cattle moiety and the white cattle moiety. The Dorobo are considered a part of the black cattle moiety. A new age-set is always opened by the most numerous and ritually senior Samburu clan in the area of Mount Ngiro. Lmasula, which belongs to the black cattle moiety, opens the age-set at the Samburus' most holy mountain. Its name literally means "the dark". The opening of a new age-set always starts with the killing of a white bull. The bull is associated with the lowland and the white cattle moiety. These colours are also associated with the feminine and the masculine through association, the masculine moon is

considered black, while the feminine sun is considered white. The colours are associated with the young and old, with day and night, and both colours are associated with life and death simultaneously and together. It is very clear then that this joining of black and white in so many different ways is a celebration of the pastoralist idea of union and reciprocity between pastoralists, between male and female, old and young.

The cut (*adjun*)

Significant preparations are carried out before, during and after Lekakeny's journey to the lake. The sharp objects of the house are blessed by elders as they lie on the highly meaningful cow leather which he will sit on while the circumcision is performed. The leather is rich with meaning and must be taken from a full-coloured bull killed for ceremonial purposes. For Lekakeny's mother it will have a very significant meaning for the rest of her life. During this blessing one senior elder and one *lpiroi* bless the leather with grass and milk, and at the end the senior elder blesses the roof at the entrance to the hut. When Lekakeny returns from his trip to the lake, his mother shaves his head and puts his hair on a ceremonial stool where it is mixed with a small portion of the milk/water he has collected. All families have these stools, and they have had to be blessed with fresh water and tobacco before they can be used in rituals. Lekakeny's hair will be thrown into a corner next to his ceremonial bed. When Lekakeny's wound has healed, it is important to burn the bed with all of its content. It is also very important to burn what is left from the ritual, especially if it is in any way associated with the initiate's bodily substances. Rites of passage among the Samburu involve obtaining new propitious abilities, values and rights, but equally important is the cut (*adjun*) of the old. Straight (2007) explains that the Samburu cut can be a vitally creative act, making boys men and girls women. But it is also important to cut in order to separate categories which are intimately tied together, such as cutting death (*lkiye*) from life (*nkishui*) or the dead from the living. Everything is not burned, though. While the cut (*adjun*) is essential to Lekakeny, traces of him as a child are left behind for his mother.

Lekakeny's transformation into *moranhoo*d is in some ways a transformation for his mother as well, one she visibly displays in her bead decorations. The first step in becoming a woman is the circumcision, which usually occurs the day before her marriage. Marriage itself makes the second and most significant step into womanhood; after that her status rises according to the age of her sons. Straight (2007) explains that her social status rises from girl (*ntito*) to

married woman (*ntomonok*) to mother of *lmurran* sons and married daughters and finally to mother of sons who are all *lmurran* or older. Just as the *lmurran* proudly display their social status by collars and adornments, so women wear almost every bangle and necklace as a marker of significant occurrences in their social history. While ornaments do mark significant occurrences in a person's social history, it would be wrong to say they mark social status, because as a woman or an *lmurrani* progress in society, they also have to give away beads. An old Samburu woman usually has very few beads left.



Photo 3: Shows a newly married woman and a woman with *lmurran* sons.

The *mporo* necklace is a bead ornament signifying that a woman is married. A newly married woman will get her first *mporo* necklace from her mother, and it will have at least two strings (*nkirnat*) (Straight 2002). According to tradition, *mporo* necklaces should always be used during certain rituals, and it is especially important that the mother of a *lebartany* wears it on his day of initiation. The *gaivin* is a silver necklace which the bridegroom gives her at their wedding. In the picture above, the woman shows a collection of four necklaces tied together with black and white beads called *Sikisho*, which will be given to her son once he becomes a *lmurran*. The blue (or green) *njipi* is given to her *lebartany* son to use for collecting the birds he hunts during the healing period after his initiation. While much of the bead ornaments are decorative fashion objects meant for beauty, several beads are inalienable objects (Straight 2002). Similar to Mauss' (1995 [1922]) idea of objects containing *mana*, so these beads contain an essence of the giver. The essence is contained in the beads, but it is also transferred to the receiver (Straight 2002; 2007).

Kinship relations are manifested through the exchange of symbolic substances like *lorien* meaning luck, and *latukuny* (see Straight 2007). *Latukuny* literally means dirt, but it signifies a substance that is always propitious when exchanged within intimate relations. *Latukuny* and *lorien* contain the essence of the bearer which can be linked to various abilities, for example the person's generative fortune or fertility. The substance is at once deeply embodied and shared between intimate relations in a lineage. The exchanges take place in everyday life and are a significant aspect in various rites of passage. When a girl marries, for instance, her mother crafts and hands her daughter the *mporo* necklace, in the process giving her daughter aspects of her propitious qualities (Straight, 2002). Also, we can observe that a son may be given a walking stick (*sobua*) by his father, ensuring that the father's luck (*lorien*) in livestock matters is transferred. These binding properties express the tokens of benevolence inherited or given in intimate relations. In the picture below, which shows the *lebartany* drinking *saroi* after circumcision, he wears the *njipi*. When it is given to him it becomes a kind of protection, because as a *lebartany* he is in a vulnerable, liminal stage. The *njipi* links the mother and her son together like she was linked with him through the umbilical cord when he was a child in her womb.

Initiation

Lekakeny is standing by the entrance to his mother's *Nkaji*. He has a calm expression and knows the importance of maintaining a composed demeanour despite the significance of the day. I am pretty sure that behind his brave expression there is a feeling of excitement, coloured by both anxiety and optimistic thrill. By controlling his emotions, Lekakeny shows that he is ready to take the step into adulthood. Suddenly the whole peaceful scene bursts into motion. The elders who were sitting in a calm discussion, jump up and come towards Lekakeny, and his *Imurrani* age mates run towards him from all angles. They grab him and throw him on the ground, rip his *lebartany* cape and push him forcefully around. It is certainly a 'violent' display. Lekakeny is led quickly and forcefully into the surrounding field to gather all the cattle owned by his family; it is important that they are all gathered in the cattle enclosure before he is circumcised. The cattle is chased rather than collected. Lekakeny is subsequently pushed under his mother's baby cradle which she is wearing on her back, as she is milking a cow. This action signifies his mother's nurturing throughout his childhood. The initiation that follows is the first *adjun* (cut), which symbolically demonstrates his separation from the care of his mother and his entrance into independent life. While this is done, the two

of them are standing inside the cattle enclosure. This is a physical place on the threshold between the male and female spaces of domination. Afterwards Lekakeny is pushed outside the *Ltim* (gate) and down onto the blessed leather. His cape is taken off, thus he is naked. Turner (1969) explains that nakedness is a cross-cultural symbol in rites of passage: people are born naked and die naked, in a symbolic sense. I grab hold of his right foot while holding the camera with my free hand. The second godfather holds his back firmly while the Kisima water mixed with milk is poured over his head. The circumciser makes the circumcision fast and accurately. There are no tears in Lekakeny's eyes, just a distant expression as if he is not thinking or feeling anything. Lekakeny has made the first step towards *moranhoo*.

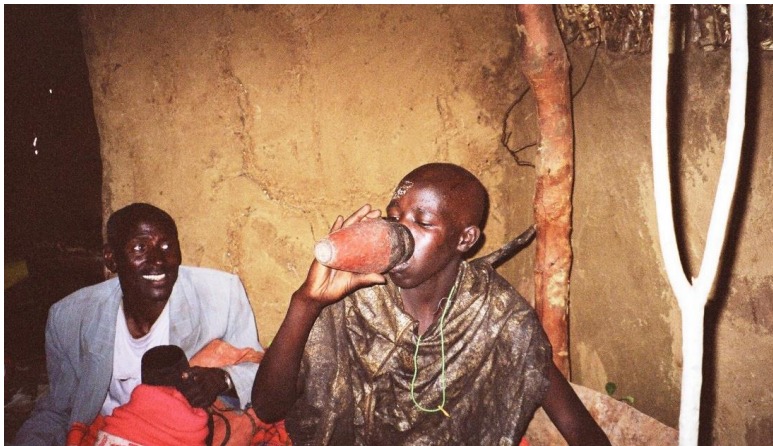


Photo 4: Lebartany drinking saroi after circumcision

The audience took a more active role when the cut was made, changing from bystanders and supportive friends to 'violent strangers' who forced Lekakeny to perform, rather than encouraging or directing him. Kapferer (1991:10) stresses "that ritual performance is itself constitutive of that which it intends, expresses or communicates". The way Kapferer sees it, ritual performance is then a structure of practice, not merely the performance of the "text" or meaning it is meant to display. The meaning of the act can be the act, as Moore (1999) writes. Considering this I see the 'violent' performance and the lack of control among the *Imurran* and *lpiroi* men, and the passive performance by Lekakeny, as meaningful in themselves. His adrenaline was probably pumped up by all the pushing and screaming, which might have given Lekakeny a higher tolerance for pain. Just the realisation of what was about to happen should work as a significant stress factor. The experimental anthropologist Dimitris Xygalata

(2008) argues that the stress attributed to high-arousal rituals such as an initiation can make the body increase its release of endorphins. This will have a positive effect on emotions, motivation and physical wellbeing.

After the initiation, Lekakeny had to stay *lebartany* for approximately a month. The timing of the final transition depends on several factors. First of all his wound needs to be fully healed. It also depends on the moon cycle; preferably the final transition should be made on the fourth day of the new moon, but this varies from family to family.



Photo 5: *Imurrani* after throwing the birds

Cutting childhood, becoming men

The rituals during the *Imurrani* period make up the process of becoming an adult man, and in this process it is important to cut (adjun) the childhood away. I have already mentioned the pivotal cut during the circumcision. The final cut, which means independence from the mother, is performed in the *Imugit* that is called “roasting of the stick” (*Imugit lowatanda*). It is the second ceremony after the circumcision wound has healed, transforming the initiate into a junior *Imurran*. This *Imugit* establishes the relation of *Nkieyeu*, the most important formalized friendship bond *Imurrani* establish. The ritual partner (*Nkieyeu*) will help the initiate slaughter a ram and bring out a bone (called *nkieyeu*). The initiate will break the bone

with his *rungu* (a wooden throwing club), and bring half of the broken bone to his mother, telling her that he is now returning what she has given him, and that he wants nothing more from her. The symbolic separation of the initiate from his mother might lead us to consider Neo-Freudian theories on the development of gender identity. In his famous cross-cultural study on masculinity, David Gilmore (1990) found that in many societies, the most essential action a boy must do to transform into a man, is to break the bond to his mother. This ethnography, which Gilmore gives a Neo-Freudian twist, is interesting in comparison with Samburu rites of passage. Gilmore further argues that men will always construct their gender identity in opposition to the female, whom they, in their male discourse, see as more natural and constant. However, as I have mentioned, many of the ritual acts I observed tended to emphasize the strength of feminine qualities.

From the point when the initiate has brought the “last meat” to his mother, he is governed by *lminong*, a set of rules and restrictions concerning eating behaviour. *Lminong* is governed by three basic principles. Firstly, *lmurrani* must not eat while seen by women, and secondly they can only eat in company of other *lmurrani*. Third and lastly, receiving food from other community members involves a responsibility to protect the community as a whole. Holtzman (2006) argues that the violation of eating prohibitions (*lminong*) is the only thing that can contradict their claim to *moranhood*, because it is the only cultural value absolutely unique to the *lmurrani*. I agree with Holtzman’s views on the moral implications of breaking *lminong*. Together with breaking the rules of *Nkanyit*, it encapsulates the latest developments in the contemporary relationship between youths and elders. Holtzman (2006) contends that what makes a youth into a full *lmurran* is his general acceptance of the *lminong*, specifically the dissolution of his mother’s role as food provider. Full elderhood, Holtzman explains, is attained through the re-creation of the mother role but in the person of the *lmurrani*’s new wife in a ritual also called *lminong*. Herdt (1981) gives a comparative example among the Sambia of the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. There, at a certain age, boys move from the women’s social domain to a men’s house where they ritually and socially absorb “maleness”. Once they marry they can return to the women’s house, because they are now appropriately socialized men and fathers. Of course, Samburu practice a very different absorption of “maleness”. Herdt’s classic, “The guardian of the flutes”, did, as we might point out, make world headlines with its description of ritualized homosexuality. In the ritual transition period between boyhood and elderhood, young Samburu men are educated in the

necessary qualities for being prosperous and moral pastoralists and men, and as mentioned they absorb both feminine and masculine qualities in this process.

Each of the different *lmugit* ceremonies communicates ‘moral values’ and pastoralist knowledge. Even though these events are only brief moments within a span of approximately 15 years, they are essential, and they guide *lmurran* behaviour in between the rituals. However, being *lmurran* is not only demonstrated through the following of *lminong* and completing *lmugit* ceremonies; it is expressed in various types of performance.

Emotions, aesthetics and performance

The performance and aesthetics of *moranhood* plays an important role in the formation of masculinity. Even in casual encounters, for example when they are butchering a ram or entering a house, *performance* is important. *Lmurran* have adopted their own unique body techniques (see Mauss 1973) in the form of movement, voice and aesthetic presentation. Kapferer and Hobart (2005: 10) suggest that much aesthetic value exists in its fullness in performance, arguing, “It is through performance that the compositional dynamic of aesthetic forms is set in play”. Further they argue that rituals are a class of performance, “it is a symbolic formation that is self-consciously performative” (Kapferer and Hobart 2005: 10). Aesthetics among Samburu *lmurran* can be ‘used’ to baffle opponents in cattle raids; it can heighten embodied feelings of togetherness in ritual performances through dance and song. In *lmugit* ceremonies, a range of aesthetic genres, intangible ones like music, dance, drama, and tangible ones like ornaments and cloths, are put into complex interrelations, together revealing the force of the aesthetics. The idea of mimesis, or the mimetic faculty (see Taussig 1993; Cox 2003) can lend further insight into the forging of embodied social bonds. Cox (2003) applies the idea of the human mimetic faculty when explaining several dimensions related to the zen arts in Japanese culture. Cox (2003: 107) argues that “the mimetic faculty is simultaneously the representation of aesthetic qualities and a representation, a creation that is embodied experience” (Cox 2003: 107). He draws on the relational dimension of the mimetic faculty, making performers able to produce a simultaneous correspondence with each other. Mimetic acts in this regard are ‘acts of complementarity’ producing a harmonious connection between people (Cox 2003: 108). Aesthetics among Samburu *lmurran* is an embodied practice as well as an objective reality, constituting what others expect of *lmurran* in relation to their social status. More profoundly, however, aesthetics communicates their individuality

and creativity (see Kapferer and Hobart 2005). Fellow *Imurran* have high expectations of each other when it comes to visible features and embodied behaviour. Developments during the last decades, such as the tourist and sex industry, have pushed these expectations in new directions. In the picture below a group of *Imurran* are dancing at a wedding. The sense of *communitas* they share is visible displayed in colours, decorations and the way they dance in a synchronised manner.



Photo 6: Group of Imurran dancing in a wedding.

Even though *Imurran* forge collective bonds while doing more mundane tasks together, the ritual events stand out as especially important. Emile Durkheim (2001 [1912]) described a phenomenon he termed collective effervescence, a concept quite similar to Victor Turner's notion of *communitas*. Both concepts refer to the exceptional feeling of excitement, the sense of purpose and togetherness produced from the performance of highly meaningful acts collectively. The rituals are spectacular, a grand public celebration of the transformation the initiates and their intimate kin are undergoing. When I interviewed older men about the rite of passage they had undergone, their recollections entailed positive feelings such as pride and joy.

The initiation ritual for Samburu women is different in many ways. Marriage is the first rite of passage in a woman's life, moving from girl (*ntito*) to married woman (*ntomonok*). The initiation of her sons will mark her next rise in social status. Samburu women are usually

initiated (“circumcised”/clitoridectomized – *emurati*) in the course of their marriage ritual. It happens behind closed doors, and it is seldom talked about in public (see Straigth 2007). The procedure is more physically damaging than male circumcision and there is a high risk of negative health effects. It is exceptionally painful for the girls, and the trauma usually happens one day prior to leaving their natal family for good. The newly married wife has to move to her husband’s home since the Samburu kin system is both patrilineal and patrilocal. Many girls are married while very young, sometimes no older than 12 and 13 years of age. In recollecting their most important transformation, the memories might well entail sorrow and stress rather than positive connotations. As a man I do not have easy access to the narratives Samburu women share on this experience. I did however observe several weddings, and the bride often expressed sadness on the trip away from her natal family.

The practice of clitoridectomy is rooted in gender inequality, but it is usually mothers and grandmothers who push for their daughters to undergo the procedure. In conversations my older female informants referred to their initiation as a source of honour and purity. In Sidai, Samburu women would often use their circumcision as a discursive leverage to insult uncircumcised Turkana women if they had a quarrel of some kind. During a fertility ritual (*borrosi*) I also observed that only circumcised women were allowed to attend. Still, I would argue that the most important factor forging solidarity in this *borrosi* ritual was their common status as married mothers. There is little doubt that solidarity is produced on a number of occasions for women as well as men. The *communitas* shared among *Imurran* during *moranhoo*d, is however, given the level of ritual organisation and the long timeline, unique in Samburu society.

The ‘belonging’ and ‘togetherness’ among fellow *Imurran* can be gleaned from activities other than rites of passages, like for example violent performance through the practice of raiding. Stories were told of a massacre during my fieldwork, *Imurran* had gone for a cattle raid, all dressed alike in a strong yellow colour. The intention was to baffle the opponents, to show them the unity of the group, their force as one. As a military move this was a bad choice, as the raiders became easy targets for the pastoralists protecting their livestock. The cattle raiders I interviewed told me they would usually perform the cattle raid under cover of darkness, dressed in black and stripped of any item that would shine, such as metal bangles. For many of them, however, joining cattle raids is to an extent also about being part of a group with a common goal, sharing an extreme experience and gaining something through group cooperation.

It is not my argument that the communal nature of *moranhood* produces conflict. But as I will show in the next chapter, group cohesion can help shape the violent act, its meaning and the experience for the performers of violence. Violence is also, just like rites of passage, an important factor in the construction of gendered identity among young men. The reasons for the ongoing and recurring conflicts in Northern Kenya are multifaceted and highly complex. We must consider political and economic forces at different levels of society. “Cattle raiding”, a term I am guilty of using myself, fails to reflect the violence that is involved and implies a normalisation of conflict. Cattle raids are responsible for a significant increase in violent deaths in Northern Kenya, and the raiders often seem more concerned with killing people than stealing cattle.

Chapter 4. Violence and Masculinities

“When you kill a man with a spear you have to look into his eyes, and with this closeness you might risk his curse being transferred to you. Killing a man with bullets is different, it is far away, and you cannot see his eyes as he is dying. Sometimes you can hardly hear his screams.”

Samburu *Imurrani*, near Archers Post

In July 2008, I attended a funeral at the Maralal cemetery; I was looking at two large caskets and two small ones. That day marked the end of my master degree fieldwork in 2008. The two small caskets were made of wood, not decorated in any way. I had developed a kind of numbness to it all which seems cynical and calculated when looking back, but it was a necessity I have depended on during all of my fieldwork, in order to maintain a certain sense of focus. I tried to order my thoughts: a nuclear family, father, mother and two children had been killed. Pokot pastoralists on a cattle raid had sprayed bullets towards the house indiscriminately. I had heard so many stories from widows and widowers, mothers who lost their child and orphans who lost their parents. But for the first time I was at a funeral, and I was looking intently at those two small caskets. I had once interviewed the deceased father, but remembered him only vaguely. I felt sad that I couldn't remember him clearly. Were his children there when we talked? I couldn't recall them being there. They must have been so small. When the ceremony was over, I noticed a group of people greeting each other, politicians and other 'important' members of the community, most of them male. At that moment I realised that it was all here, an aspect of everything I had been able to grasp from this conflict, the complete seriousness and the absolute absurdity. But even at that moment, I was not able to make sense of the violence.

I followed up on my work on the Pokot/Samburu conflict when I returned for fieldwork in 2010. The conflict “had cooled down”, a common expression in my informant's terminology for violence. However, most of the underlying issues are still unresolved, and these issues make up a jack-in-the-box that is ready to pop open during important socio-political events that involve a range of people, including powerful individuals. The political implication is equally evident in the long-lasting and ongoing violence happening further south in and

around Isiolo District. At the moment of my most recent fieldwork in 2012 the conflict primarily involved Samburu and Turkana in conflict with Borana and to some lesser degree Somali. But the ethnicity of the conflict has not been consistent. Alliances come and go. Disputes are quelled and then renewed, all the time in close connection to the economic and political landscape of the area.

In this chapter I will look at both these conflicts, with a particular emphasis on my informants' experience. The association between masculinity and violence will be paramount in the discussion. With few exceptions, it is exclusively men who use violence in cattle raids and other forms of violent confrontations between disputing groups. It is not unheard of for women to participate in raids, but as has come clearly to the fore in my own fieldwork, inflicting violence in Northern Kenyan conflict situations is predominantly a male activity. This does not mean, however, that women are necessarily passive victims. Some large-scale cattle raids are the product of community mobilisation, involving adult men and women of all ages. Some of the young men I interviewed also mentioned that young unmarried girls could tease, entice and encourage them to go on cattle raids. Youths will be a focal point in this chapter, as the new generation of young men is the focus of this PhD. Youths are, however, not the only category inflicting violence. Depending on the place and situation, junior elders can even be the majority of participants at times.

The value of a Samburu man, his prestige, and the reputation of his lineage have for a long time been associated with the number of livestock he owns and the size of his family in the form of wives and children. In this chapter I will argue that this masculine ideal still persists, and I will show how it affects personal lives and social conditions when violence occurs. I will also argue that there are new contesting ideals, making the intergenerational relationship tenuous than it has ever been. Many youths seek new models of a 'good life', emulating different forms of subsistence and other economic activities than their parents. Elders blame the increase in violence and its disastrous implications on "immorality" that according to them pervades the entire new age-set. Young men's new goals are not only a result of processes related to modernisation and capitalism, but also of the indisputable fact that pastoralism as a lifestyle has become extremely difficult. However, many young men end up losing out at both ends; their opportunities do not correspond to their hopes and aspirations. Youths end up being unemployed, simultaneously lacking any form of the socioeconomic network they could have depended on with a pastoralist lifestyle. Cattle raiding is not only a violent activity, it is also an economic activity, even though the risk seems much higher than

the potential gain. Violence in contemporary Northern Kenya must be viewed in light of these intergenerational changes, involving all manners of social processes, political, economic, local and global. However, violence is not always deviant behaviour: some young men commit violence to comply with the wishes of the larger community, sometimes even against their personal inhibitions.

The chapter will start with a macro-perspective on the ‘warscape’ of Northern Kenya, centring particularly on the two conflicts I have followed in the course of my fieldwork. The Samburu–Pokot conflict originated in 2004, and the Samburu–Borana–Turkana conflict has continued, shifting, ephemeral and enduring for decades. I will proceed with an exploration of how violence has changed in Northern Kenya, using the idea of a ‘poetic of violence’ to investigate the relationship with external forces and the actions of individual agents. Following this, I will discuss the generational schism, and how elders blame violence and its implications on ‘moral degradation’. I will continue with a discussion on how the stigma of poverty can have emasculating implications, pushing some to perform cattle raids. Cattle raids are not only caused by desperation or cold calculation, they can also have integrative effects on small social groups. Strong bonds, whether through blood, friendship or relations formalised in rituals, can act as an emotional pacifier that makes violence easier to handle. Sharing extreme experiences in a violent cattle raid is quite unique, and might it not also be something that young men seek just for the strong comradeship and sense of belonging? I will continue the chapter with a short exploration of how emotional registers and personality characteristics are related to violence. And I will end with a short discussion of how sexual ideas can be related to violence.

Whether in Kenya (KNBS 2014, 59) or Norway (SSB, 2016) and most other countries in the world, statistics show that men commit more violent acts than women, at least in the form of actions criminalized by the juridical system. It also seems to be universal that youth, or young men, commit a large proportion of all violence. Given that this is the case also in Northern Kenya, it is appropriate to ask what lies behind this seemingly universal fact; why are men more violent than women?

A typical argument among the most prominent masculinity theorists is that violence comes from powerlessness, for example due to discrimination and marginalisation. The powerlessness can also come from failure to perform in various ways. Those who consider themselves powerless use violence as a tool to regain lost status, to accomplish a new and

better social standing (Kolnar 2003). James Messerschmidt (1993:83) is maybe most famous for this argument, regarding violence as one of many “masculine-validating resources”, which can be used if other gender-validations are not available (See also Kimmel 1996). I would argue that much of the violence carried out by young men in Northern Kenya could be attributed to feelings of powerlessness, as I hope to prove and exemplify in this chapter. But, let us hold on to the original question, why are men more violent? Why is violence a masculine-validation resource? Is there something constant, something fixed that guides these actions? The sociologist Norbert Elias might shed some light on this question.

While first being considered marginal, Norbert Elias gradually became one of the most influential sociologists of his time. Elias (1982) argues that a particular kind of organization has made it possible for “us” (he refers particularly to the West) to live together relatively peacefully in very large social groups. “We” have at our disposal groups of specialists “authorized to use physical violence, if necessary, to prevent all other citizens from using violence” (Elias 1982: 135). These specialists are for example military forces, police and other law enforcement agencies. This ‘monopolisation of violence’ is a socio-technical intervention, a process he explains in detail in his book, *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* (2000 [1939]). He argues that human beings in developed state-societies have learned to repress the need to act on impulse. Since aggression is an important aspect of what is being repressed, people are more reserved in their interaction with each other. This process is coupled with a social process where society is becoming increasingly complex, each person having to relate to more people in a larger space. Thus, the more complex society becomes, the more important it is to repress the potentially aggressive impulses.

That there is some form of instinctive emotional energy (aggression, sadness, joy, compassion) which can be triggered by external stimuli and controlled by forces such as social norms, institutions, social processes and possibly economic and political models, is a popular premise among masculinity theorists (Ekenstam 2001, Kolnar 2003). I also think this is a useful approach, because it, despite its psychobiological premises, gives weight to economic, political and cultural factors when explaining violence. Biology alone does not explain why men are the more violent gender, and it does not at all explain violence within a particular socio-political and cultural context, such as Northern Kenya. I agree with Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004:3) “we are social creatures. Cultures, social structures, ideas, and ideologies shape all dimensions of violence, both its expressions and its repressions”. But what is violence? This is an even deeper conundrum than why men are more violent than

women.

David Riches' (1986) definition of violence has been widely used by anthropologists and other researchers on violence. The triangular model suggests that violence is an act of physical hurt which the performer views as legitimate and (some) witnesses view as illegitimate. He (1986:25) argues that "if an act of violence has no instrumental aim, it would not be performed". Riches' model, further developed by Steward and Strathern (2002), is as celebrated as it is criticized. Several other social scientists agree that violence always has a function for somebody (Keen 1997, Riches 1986), while many others find this definition of violence faulty, or they simply do not agree with Riches' universal premise (see Whitehead 2004). One important critique concerns the fact that violence can be expressive rather than instrumental. Killing women and children in cattle raids seems to be more expressive than instrumental, associated with strong emotions rather than rational calculation. Mutilation of bodies, human and animal, might have some instrumental aims, for example to instil fear in the enemy, but the expressive nature of such acts seems clearer. Or, as pointed out by Taylor (2001) in his exploration of the genocide in Rwanda, this form of mutilation can have a deep symbolical dimension, and the effect is both expressive and instrumental. In Northern Kenya, violence is both expressive and instrumental, often at the same time. Violence is driven by both internal and external forces, individual and social, local and global. These forces work together, mutually dependent on each other, to create the conflict scenarios in Northern Kenya. I find Neil L. Whitehead (2002; 2004) and his concept "poetics of violence" a great analytical tool for bringing together the global and the local, the past and the present, the large-scale and the small-scale, while simultaneously centering on the individual agency of a cultural actor. It is Whitehead's illustration of violence I find best suited to my own material.

A variety of emotions and different aspects of masculinity are at play when a young man is performing violent acts, whether pride, anger, fear, lust, frenzy, coldness or calculation. Which emotions are played out depends on his hopes and dreams, his illusions and disillusion, his history and his life experience. However, what matters is not only the personality of the performer of violence, the circumstances and context surrounding his actions are essential factors to consider. According to Collins (2008) we can only comprehend violence by finding the situations that construct the potential for it. I will begin this chapter with a brief description of the two pastoralist conflicts I have followed most closely in the course of my fieldwork. I will combine this exploration with a birds-eye view of the underlying causes that dominate the warscape of Northern Kenya.

Violence and politics in the warscape of Northern Kenya

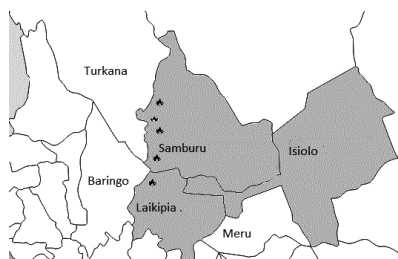
In March 2008, I was walking by the slope of Malaso, only a few kilometres past a famous tourist spot with a magnificent view over the Great Rift Valley. My assistant pointed the way, he knew some guys I should talk to, he said. Behind a dilapidated concrete house a group of young men were sitting, all of them carrying AG-3 rifles and with ammunition strapped around their upper body. Some of the young men only looked at us for a few seconds before their gaze returned to the slopes down below, but others came to greet us. Some of the young men were missing classes in school in order to use their time scouting for Pokot, others had abandoned duties associated with farming or pastoralism. Their guns had been given to them by the Samburu County Council, and they had also been given a few radios to communicate with other young men standing guard along the long escarpment of Leroghi plateau. They were guarding the borders of their district from ‘enemies’ in a neighbouring district, much like a country guards its borders with enemy nations. We recall how the colonial government produced “tribal territories” instead of one large-scale nation, each territory imagined as a nation in miniature (Broch-Due 2000b). It seems these ideas have continued in post-colonial politics. Only some months after my encounter with the home guards I travelled down the slopes they had been gazing at. I talked with a politician in a small town, a district officer, and he had no qualms admitting that his job was to protect the citizens of his division, an opinion I observed in my interviews with other politicians as well. Chancellors and MPs were motivated to protect potential voters in their respective wards and constituencies.

In multi-ethnic districts such as Laikipia and Isiolo it is often the residents of the district who are in conflict with each other. In Laikipia this led to scores of Samburu being driven out of the district by government forces. The social anthropologist John Galaty has written extensively on pastoralism and land issues, and in his article “Double-voiced violence in Kenya” he argues that ‘presence on the ground’ is a necessary condition in the struggle for land and power in Kenya (Galaty 2005). He describes several situations in the 1992 election where opposing candidates violently sabotaged each other. In many districts within the Rift Valley Province, Maasai groups supporting the KANU government effectively stopped the opposition from reaching campaign areas. Electoral candidates were chased and raided to prevent them from reaching party headquarters where they intended to submit nomination papers. The opposition could not operate freely, and as a result they were unable to register candidates. Voters who were expected to vote for the opposition, were prevented from voting. And even if their votes were registered, it was not certain that their votes would be properly

counted. Although these kinds of strategies are less visible today, similar electoral fraud was widely reported by external observers in the 2007 elections.

The Samburu vote in factions, and it was widely known that Samburu in Laikipia would vote against the MP G.G Kariuki and against the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) headed by president Kibake. As opposed to the Samburu, the Pokot living in Laikipia were supporters of the NARC government. In my view it is no coincidence that this conflict started on the eve of the national referendum regarding a new constitution and just prior to the national election. The 2005 constitutional draft could have made it easier for the government to take control over territories which were not used by their owners. Prior to this conflict Pokot and Samburu pastoralists occupied most of these territories. It may have been in the interest of several politicians to make sure these pastoralists would be less of a 'problem' after the election. Since the Samburu would vote against the government, it could also be of political interest to run them out of the district in order to prevent them from voting. Shortly after the beginning of the conflict, scores of Samburu was forced out of Laikipia and into Samburu district by GSU and other police forces.

Keen (1997) has argued compellingly about the importance of understanding violence in light of political and economic processes. Violence, he argues, always benefits certain groups, though it might be absolutely destructive and senseless to other groups (1997). This kind of divergence is something I recognise in my exploration of the Pokot-Samburu conflict. Cattle raids are often performed by Samburu and Pokot who come from locations far away from areas that are vulnerable to retaliation attacks. This creates a situation where those in the middle are always the prime targets, whether they have been contributing to the violence or not.



Map 3: The map shows the most vulnerable locations in the Pokot/Samburu conflict. Cattle raiders often come from areas far away from these locations.

The conflict scenario in and around Isiolo is also highly politicised, and, much like in the

Samburu-Pokot conflict, a land dispute is the most salient reason for aggression. What makes the Samburu-Pokot conflict different is the breach of a rather peaceful and cooperative relationship. Areas which had been peaceful for decades, such as the contested locations on the Lerroghi plateau, were suddenly turned into conflict zones. Many residents here lived a more sedentary lifestyle, mixing farming and pastoralism. They were wealthy, but lacked extended economic relations to fall back on. In areas near Isiolo, conflict has been quite consistent for a long time, and violence is part of everyday life (see Das and Kleinman 2001). Most of my informants experienced the Samburu/Pokot conflict as more of a rupture, a departure from normality. Broch-Due (2005) makes a valid point about the relevance of intimacy in war in the book “Violence and Belonging”. The social distance between combatants, perpetrators and victims, and the relationship between the aggressors play a role in how violence is experienced and performed.

The conflict scenario in Isiolo is messy, almost incomprehensible. Alliances seem to come and go, and the various conflicts have been bending to the political, economic and demographic conditions of the area for decades. The violence in this area cannot be explained as one large conflict. There are three main causes behind the violence: 1. disputes over grazing locations, 2. certain groups feeling politically marginalised and 3. retaliation attacks. The area seems to breed violence, and there are complex historical and political processes behind this. The land issues are complex. Each contested location has its own value for the disputing groups, with opposing historical narratives and unique political and economic interests. The conflict scenario also involves actors reaching from far beyond Isiolo and the surrounding districts. As has been noted in newspapers ^{xvii xviii xix}, there have been several incidents where heavily armed ‘guerrilla’ from the Oromo Liberation Front has joined in Borana raids against Turkana and Samburu. This happens despite the fact that Waso Borana living in Isiolo district have marginal impact on (and concerns for) the complex political context of Ethiopia. Similarly, in the conflict between Samburu and Pokot, I have seen that pastoralists from the Karamonjong section as far away as Uganda have gone on raids against Samburu. Thus, we can see that conflict in Northern Kenya is not confined to the specific localities where the cattle raids occur. Furthermore, I argue that we need to think beyond geographical distance when considering the spatial complexity in the north Kenyan conflict zones. We have to consider interactions between actors at different scales and levels.

With the concept of ‘warscape’, Nordstrom (1997) makes an effort to decontextualize violence from specific experiences and specific places, urging us to rather look at connections

within a larger social, political and geographical context: “As these many groups act and interact, local and transnational concerns are enmeshed in the cultural construction of conflict that is continuously reconfigured across time and space” (Nordstrom 1997: 37). The active creation of physical and social boundaries in colonial times has continued in post-colonial times, and the unfair distribution of land originating in early colonial times has continued to be unjust since independence. These disputes can involve actors in a global context, whether NGOs or commercial interests from Europe, America or Asia. This exemplifies another essential factor making up the warscape in Northern Kenya: the commercialisation of cattle raids. None of my young informants involved in cattle raids admitted that they had been part of a commercially organised raid, but most of them acknowledged that this was happening quite often. I was told numerous times how tracks had been followed after a cattle raid, only to disappear amidst the marks of large trucks. This is a novel development also observed in other East African warsapes (see Hutchinson 2005), and it marks a new motivator for violent actions, significant for new aspects of masculinities among young pastoralist men. The concept of warscape also suggests that we must consider processes and events in an historical perspective. The importance of history is something I picked up in my informants’ perspectives.

Pokot and Samburu had been living fairly peacefully as neighbours in an otherwise volatile context, and the skirmishes that had taken place prior to 2005 were usually brief. Central in the narratives of my Samburu informants was the peace agreement, a ‘blood oath’ performed centuries ago. The oath involved a blessing, in that the groups would thrive as long as they lived peacefully together, with a curse on the group that would break the oath. I met an old man named Lngantur during my first period of fieldwork in 2007; he had escaped Laikipia the same night his brother was killed while defending his cattle from a Pokot raid. Both Lngantur and his brother had been prominent community members at a central location in Laikipia. I met Lngantur again during a second field visit in 2010; the conflict had cooled down significantly since I last saw him.

Even the stones and trees felt that war, the stones had no one to sit on them and the trees missed the water. When the last atrocity was committed, you could see that the drought ended, the rain started at that very moment. Pokots felt it more than us, they were the ones who cut the oath, and you can see they are destitute, they beg for peace, and we want peace, because this conflict is wrong. They were our friends and neighbours.

The narratives on violence which I collected during my fieldwork often centered on blame: Who started the conflict? Who broke the oath and should therefore suffer the consequences? Lngantur believed that nature itself was affected by the broken oath. He also argued that lineages of Samburu and Pokots who did not engage in the conflict were not affected. When killing a Pokot, my Samburu informants chose not to put on the *surutia*, a copper bracelet that socially and religiously marks the wearer as a killer. They also did not sing the *lkorosota* when arriving from a cattle raid or performing purification rituals, *amut nkaina*, fearing that it would bring out the curse of the broken oath. My Pokot informants had quite different narratives; most of them did not put any emphasis on the peace oath at all. Broch-Due (2005: 29) writes that narration is “a process of remembrance and, by the same token, a process of forgetting”. Through words and deeds, Samburu create the ‘necessary illusions’ (Jackson 2002), making it easier to handle violence from and against previous neighbours, friends and in some cases affine kin. But the peace oath also shows how personal remembrance of history is an essential part of the warscape in Northern Kenya.

With the concept of warscape Nordstrom encourages researchers to look at individuals, power dynamics and various processes outside the immediate war-zone context. But such an all-encompassing type of focus should not overshadow contextualising the specific (see Englund 2005; Bertelsen 2010). Writing about various ethnographic works on the Mozambique war, Englund (2005: 63) argues that “each local study, (...) seems to re-frame existing knowledge about the war in ways that defy attempts at a coherent overall picture” (Englund 2005: 63). I recognise the value of understanding conflict in Northern Kenya through the concept of warscape, but I also think it is important to acknowledge a complex diversity in how violence is experienced socially, culturally and individually. Furthermore, the concept of warscape does not really help us to understand how knowledge, ideas and images are transferred, appropriated or shared between the different actors. What is actually happening in this process? The poetics of violence is an idea better suited to explain these complex trajectories.

Whitehead (2004) introduces the term ‘poetics of violence’ to call attention to a better understanding of violence which should appreciate it as a cultural expression in all its complexity. Importantly, and this is perhaps his essential point, “the poetics of violence that inform and shape violent expression cannot be represented as simply a local cultural product” (2004:75). The poetics of violence connotes not the cultural expression from a set cultural order, but the expression from a creative cultural actor who can manipulate and change the order, often absorbing ideas from a global context. Whitehead’s concept resonates with

Michael Taussig's (1993) ideas about the human mimetic faculty. Taussig (1993: 21) draws on Frazer's concept of 'the magic of contact' and 'the magic of similarity (or imitation)' in his exploration of the human mimetic faculty. On the one hand, mimesis is an expression that involves copying or imitation, and on the other hand, mimesis involves palpable and sensuous contact 'between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived'. I find Whitehead's (2004) and Taussig's (1993) ideas useful in order to understand not only how violence has changed in Northern Kenya, but also how young men's ideas, thoughts, goals and actions are inspired and constructed. Broch-Due (2005) makes a very similar exploration, showing us the multifaceted layers of violence and how it interconnects with history, politics, religion and identity. Broch-Due (2005) makes us consider the creative and transformative aspect of violence in people's quest for identity and belonging. Whitehead and Broch-Due encourage us to consider both the colonial history and the neo-colonial presence of Europe and the United States when considering local conflicts in non-western countries.

The poetics of violence – from pre-colonial raiding to post-colonial warfare

Pre-colonial raids often occurred as a consequence of territorial struggles or as a calculated strategy to force competing groups out of pastoralism and into other modes of subsistence. In addition, Anderson and Broch-Due (1999) argue that formal cattle raids in pre-colonial times marked the emergence of a new age-set, and the raids were shaped by numerous sets of taboos and restrictions. The killing of people was avoided, and the prime motivation was always to gain livestock. However, these raids brought very limited economic gain in comparison with the more certain and peaceful mathematics of natural growth (Broch-Due and Anderson 1999). Cattle raids and other forms of violence in Kenya have changed substantially since pre-colonial times. To consider some of these changes, I find it useful to start with one of the narratives I collected from a young *Imurran* who had gone on several cattle raids.

Lenkoitei's story about a cattle raid

We went to attack Somali one time in a place called Síri. The raid was organized in Mítíl but provisions were bought here in this town. The raid also included Turkana from Nebo and Wueji forming a second group of attackers. The first and second group met at Nakurupat and prepared for three days. The place was a good hiding place with dense

tree canopies. An informant came with information, a Turkana who lived with Somali in the area. We passed Daaba and moved to a place called Oorosta and Kachuru where there is a big road that separates the Samburu side from the Meru and Somalis. This was the last camping point, and at this place a third group joined us. By then we were 400 people. Regroupings were made, those with spears who carried foodstuff were spread out among the attackers so that if someone carrying a gun got killed or injured, they could pick up the gun and continue fighting. Those carrying spears also had the role of driving the livestock away while those with guns engaged in the fight. Our spy was in the forefront, leading the attack, since he knew which wealthy families to target.

When we arrived in Ol Kiloriti we split into two groups, those who made the attack in the small town centre of Púnúka and those who went to villages where the livestock was kept. The group in the town had the role of blocking the major road leading to Isiolo. They also surrounded the security posts there, and some of them searched for food in kiosks. This group killed 20 people, children and women included. The second group hit the villages, and they managed to steal thousands of sheep, goats and camels. At this place up to 30 people were killed.

As for organizing the attacks, we had been observing how the British military carried out their training exercises, and we adopted techniques from them. The attack was made very early in the morning and lasted until noon. None of the cattle raiders had died at this point. When the attack was over, and livestock was driven 10 km away, the owners organized themselves and started to follow us. They also notified security forces in Isiolo. The amount of livestock was immense, and this slowed us down. We were caught at the point where we had our last meeting. The GSU, AP and some of the owners of the livestock started shooting, they killed two Samburu and overpowered us, and we only managed to run away with a few animals. Those who only carried spears got away with some livestock, while those with guns were held by the GSU and the others.

Squire et al (2008) present an apt argument that can shed light on this story. Narratives of violence and suffering, they say, are always incomplete, and neither personal experience nor subjectivity can fully make its way into oral accounts. Lenkoitei's (name meaning: born on the way) narrative is not particularly personal, but it is rich in detail, unlike most of the narratives I managed to collect from young men on the subject of cattle raids or other forms

of violence. It should be noted that none of the place names in the narrative presented above is the same locations Lenkoitei referred to in his conversation with me.

The elaborate organisation and cold calculation in this cattle raid are presented almost like an army evaluation report on a well-planned, but somewhat unsuccessful “operation”. The fact that women and children were killed is mentioned in a matter of fact manner, without any notable emphasis. The emotional detachment might give further indication of what we could call a kind of ‘militarisation’ of cattle raiding. Is it not quite peculiar that one of the most violent areas in Kenya surrounds the huge training ground used by the British Army? I believe it is absolutely relevant for how and why men view, pursue and perform violent acts today.

Aside from the presence of the British Army, there are other sources of inspiration for the militarisation of cattle raids in Northern Kenya. Global wars, civil wars in neighbouring countries, global and national media and popular culture, the aid industry and various processes related to the idea of modernity, are some of the sources stimulating creative appropriation. The abundance of weapons is maybe the most important aspect in the transformation of violence in Northern Kenya. There is a thriving illegal gun-trading market, where merchants travelling from neighbouring countries like Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia find eager consumers among the pastoralists in Northern Kenya. Both Samburu and Borana informants have claimed that guns and bullets can in certain circumstances be bought from GSU outposts. Several armoury thefts have also been reported, whether from abandoned armouries after the civil war in Uganda, Kenya Wildlife Service or from the British army camp.

Lenkoitei was one of my key informants, and I had several conversations with him, equally honest, and often more emotional than his narrative about the cattle raid. He told me that several of his friends had experienced extreme personal traumas such as flashbacks as a result of cattle raids. Images, sounds and embodied sensations come rushing back in a flash of memory, making the heartbeat rise, the whole body stiffen and then shake. Days can pass before the sway of the flashback has calmed down or been restrained through a healing ritual. I will further illustrate these kinds of emotional reactions later in this chapter. In the context of my argument here, I want to show that the militarisation of cattle raiding does not mean that my “violent” informants are only cold and calculative. The cattle raids are not completely modern either, as they usually involve some kind of ritual preparation and termination. Bollig

and Österle (2007) argue that violence between pastoral groups in Northern Kenya is both deeply embedded in local traditions and comprehensively modern at the same time.

A Samburu who has killed a person during a cattle raid or a revenge raid, should wear a copper bracelet called *surutia*. The purification ritual associated with putting on the *surutia* is called *amut nkaina*. When someone has put on nine *surutia*, he can no longer kill a person without suffering consequences. Anyone wearing one or more *surutia* cannot be fully included in rituals; he can for example not be anyone's best man in at a wedding or a godfather in a circumcision ritual. *Amut nkaina* is often performed when cattle raiders return singing the *lkosorota*. If the part called *mirat* is sung, people know that there is a killer approaching. People will gather the killer's animals and put them away from other livestock and people, a goat will be sacrificed and the killer will have the goat's *mayok* (grass from the goats stomach) smeared all over his body. This is usually followed by a certain amount of social seclusion from the rest of the society. People will always be wary of a killer, as they fear that the *ldeket* (curse) or *loip* (shade) transferred from the victim to the killer might transfer to them. Borana and Turkana have similar ideas, Turkana believe that many illnesses come from the shadows of the dead (*etorube*). They distinguish between *etorube angmoe* (the ghost of the enemy) and *etorube angaber aputherut* (shadow of the widow). Unless necessary rituals are performed, consequences can be dire, not only for the killer, but also the rest of the community.

Modern weaponry is not only a material incorporation, but also a conceptual and cultural appropriation. In her apt illustration of the Nuer, Hutchinson (2000) describes how the war-torn pastoralists are re-examining their socially binding forces of "blood", "food" and "cattle" when faced with new forces like "money", "guns" and "paper". All these categories are full of meaning within a lifeworld concerned with circulation of objects and substances, which both strengthens and reduces symbolic boundaries among the Nuer. Hutchinson (2000) argues that for a Nuer to kill a person with a spear is to take full responsibility for the act. As the spear is associated with "the bone", the killer has launched a part of himself into the enemy, and numerous taboos and responsibilities follow the act. She juxtaposes the meaning of the spear with the advent of guns, a weapon considered much less personal. Hutchinson's observations resonate with the testimonies and narratives I collected among Samburu, Borana, Turkana and Pokot. In Archers Post I interviewed a young Samburu *Imurran* who had gone for several cattle raids. "When you kill a man with a spear you have to look into his eyes, and with this closeness you might risk his curse being transferred to you. Killing a man with bullets is

different, it is far away, and you cannot see his eyes as he is dying”. He further explained that the chance of ‘pollution’ was diminished if he did not know if he had actually killed someone.

Violence born from “moral degradation”

The man known as Bullet looked haggard, but there was a sense of strength about him. I looked at his hand, which shook slightly. It had been ruined by a bullet some years ago and disabled him from mundane tasks and business endeavours he had hoped to be part of. He was shot in Laikipia, when he joined his neighbour in an effort to bring back livestock that had been violently raided by Pokot pastoralists. Only days after the cattle raid, he was pushed to migrate, losing much of his own livestock in the process. Bullet was of the *Lkiroro* age-set and *lpiroi* for the current generation, and that day we talked about a recent incident of road banditry.

Respect (*nkanyit*) went with Lmooli generation, but youths nowadays – they don’t care about the advice of elders. The wildest ones do whatever they feel like, hitting cars, killing people when it is not necessary.

Only the night before our interview a matatu had been hit and robbed. Usually these events go without deaths or major injuries, but not always. For Bullet, these young men who grouped together to attack and even kill innocent people in an effort to get money, were the very worst of what he saw as moral degradation in the generation of Lkishami.

There used to be rhinos and elephants in this area. Where are they now? They are gone, because of money. Respect (*nkanyit*), restrictions, taboos evaporate, and only the goal of money remains.

Bullet argued that youths went on cattle raids against the advice of elders, only motivated by their own greed, to obtain capital. His thoughts corresponded well with other interviews I made with elders, men and women. Some of the young cattle raiders I interviewed described their cattle raiding almost as if it was any other job, with an income.

I always found a curious correlation between the dangers of the roads and the state of tension in the surrounding locations. When tensions ran high between Pokot and Samburu it usually meant a high risk of highway banditry on the road between Rumuruti and Maralal. There is little doubt that some of the road banditry had a high degree of organisation and that it was a form of business. Lomayiana (name meaning: blessed) told me,

You know, tourists used to come here, until we (*Imurran*) started robbing them and stealing their valuables.

(*Laughter*) Shaking with laughter, Lomayiana had a grin as he considered what to say next. I met Lomayiana for the first time in Archers Post; he was wearing a shoufa, a t-shirt and a small portion of the conventional *Imurran* decorations. He instantly understood my questions, gave them much thought, and then he talked; and he talked a lot. Lucky for me, because every answer he gave was profound and honest. That day we were sitting in Lomayiana's home, and for the moment he was looking towards the road leading south. We had talked about a recent incident of road theft on the road north from Archers Post towards Wamba and Maralal. We talked about cattle raids and how large-scale and utterly destructive and violent they had become. We talked about poverty and desperation. I asked him what he thought of these changes. Is it true what the elders say, that everything was better before?

Every year has its bad and its good. Before the tarmac road came it used to be dark, now it is light (electricity). *Lmurrans* used to be chased and taken to military jobs by force, nowadays it is hard to get a job. Those who went to white collar jobs, they got salaries and brought home a lot of money, and they shared with us. So the *Imurrans* started to value money, and they went out to look for money, but there were no jobs. Robberies became the easiest way to get it. Personally I have two friends in jail, and one who is still operating. *Lmurrans* used to have cattle, then they lost them due to drought or raids, so they also lost morale, and they go to rob people. Hunger makes one lose *nkanyit* (respect), the stomach brings friendship. In the second half of the Lmooli age-set, the *Imurrans* started losing *nkanyit*, they started stealing their father's animals. Maybe one *Imurran* decides to sell them in town, and he hears about this drug called mirra, and he brings it to *lale* and shares with his friend. His friend likes mirra and starts going to town himself, you know social norms get eroded this way. Norms like sharing with your neighbour disappears, and another *Imurran* wakes up and he finds himself without any livestock and nothing to do. What other opportunities does he have, apart from robbing people, poaching wildlife or organising himself with fellow desperate *Imurran* to go on cattle raids? We still follow some rules and norms of moranism, we sometimes go for *lale* and *loikar*, but our priorities are different, our hopes for the future have changed.

Violent and illegal behaviour such as cattle raids, road thefts or other forms of thievery is a dangerous alternative. Many of the young men participating in these activities also view them

as morally ambiguous, and importantly, these activities are very often rebuked by elders and other members of the community. The economic potential is easily comprehended, and not associated with the long-term hardship and uncertainty that seems to permeate alternative methods for generating income, for example farming, pastoralism or a private or government job. Furthermore, joining a cattle raid promises not only wealth, it also affirms a kind of purpose. Thus, violence is not always deviant behaviour, and this is important. Some young men commit violence to comply with the wishes of their community, sometimes against their personal inhibitions.

The stigma of poverty: Emasculation and violence

Coming down the sleek hill slopes, two calabashes in hand, he was walking in a resolute manner. I had seen him before, wearing a white t-shirt with blue stripes and a cotton-shoufa of red and blue. He seemed tired and somehow lethargic. This time I decided to approach him, just for a chat. He stopped politely, greeting us, looking at me with curiosity. Instead of presenting the whole interview, I will quote some of his most salient statements:

- I sell milk to people every morning and get paid for running those errands, going down... up...down...up.
- I can not see a good future for me. I have six children to feed. Livestock has perished and there is always a drought nowadays, I am left with almost nothing to do, apart from chores like this. It pushes me to steal and go on cattle raids; eventually we will be killed off. So yes, I have problems of the heart (....)
- Each time the sun raises we run and look for something small that can make us survive the day. Something that can give food to our children, just for one more day.

Lourianti was a man who had given up any thought of a pastoralist lifestyle. He followed the path of education and hoped for a future more akin to wage labour. He encountered broken dreams and disillusion. Lourianti's desperation was not only focused on his own survival, but also on finding his place in the world, sharing a common ground with others in his situation. In many respects, Lourianti's decision to go on a cattle raid was an act of desperation, but it was also a creative decision (see: Kolnar 2003; Broch-Due 2005), an effort to rebuild and transform his status as poor.

Mary Douglas (1982) has pointed out that poverty can easily be a matter of personal dignity rather than destitution. The disempowerment of men through processes of modernity has been researched elsewhere in Africa (Silberschmith 1999; 2005). Unemployment and a general lack of economic control are usually the most important contributors to men's loss of dignity. Pastoralist societies view poverty in very similar ways, concerning what it means to be poor. Whether Maasai (Talle 1999), Turkana (Broch-Due 1999a), or Samburu (Straight 2007), it is not the lack of material possessions or even food that causes a pastoralist to be viewed as poor, but his lack of transactional goods. Broch-Due (1999b) argues that livestock among Turkana is viewed as a morally superior type of wealth due to its visibility. Through his visible livestock the herder can display his wealth and consequently his social status. Turkana believe that poverty need only be temporary if the herder has taken the right moves to avoid it. As a consequence, chronic long-term poverty is viewed as poor animal husbandry (Broch-Due 1999a). In fact, some Turkana (and Samburu) believe that losing animals to drought or disease is a punishment, it might mean that you acquired the livestock in an immoral way or that you have been too self-satisfied, lazy and/or inattentive. A popular expression among Samburu is *Meya nkeeya tanaa nkolong nesile* (disease or drought can not take away that animal you owe somebody).

Even though some of my informants still view poverty as a temporary problem on the way back up to prosperity, several processes make this way of handling poverty more difficult. One of my key informants in Goto, a Borana woman named Fatima told me;

Once you have nothing, you are nothing. When I had cows, I could easily borrow some milk from my neighbour if my cows were out grazing. I had a lot of friends, some would come to me, and I could go to them for help. But now, when I am poor, I have no friends.

More and more pastoralists are chronically poor as a result of drought, disease and cattle raids. This leads many to eventually abandon pastoralism as a mode of life, thus also abandoning (to some degree) the dependency and responsibility they have towards traditional exchange relations. Egalitarian pastoralist strategies to help families in need are largely being abandoned in all the three groups. My Borana informants listed up several traditional forms of communal contributions that had more or less disappeared. For example, *Qullamo*, the first help a family receives after they have lost livestock due to cattle raids. *Hirb* literally means footprints, and refers to the first gift that can help a family survive for a certain amount of time. *Sabbo goona* is the name of the two main clan segments among Borana, and the term is

used to describe a massive mobilisation to help specific families in need. My Turkana informants told me that *akibut* is seldom performed these days, a contribution where neighbours, friends and relatives come together in an effort to help poor people (*ekebotonit*). Among Samburu contributing in *Lbosore* will usually enhance a person's social status, and if someone refrains from contributing without sufficient reason, they might be considered *Saroi*, an emic category signifying people with no care for others than themselves. The receiver is also linked to the givers through a relation of gratitude, and the givers might rightfully ask him for favours or gifts later in life. Several of my Samburu informants complained that people did not seem to care whether they were called *Saroi* anymore.

Among Turkana the chronic poor are categorised with highly degrading and stigmatising labels, and I have found comparable evidence among Samburu and Borana. Samburu categorise the poor with derogatory labels such as *rindik*, *lboi*, *misigin* and *lkinyig*. These categories are typically associated with sedentary modes of living or simply the lack of a pastoralist livelihood. If, for example, men mostly work for low wages, they are considered *misigin* (poor) or *ltungana dorobo* (short people). The term *lboi* is a remnant from colonial times and refers to a man working under someone else's strict authority for a meagre amount of money. My informants disagreed on the meaning of the category *rindik*, but it usually referred to people doing simple services, like building cattle enclosures or fetching water in exchange for some money. The category of *lkinyig* is given to men who help women do their chores, and among male pastoralists nothing is more socially demeaning than that. The *lkinyig* is not a man, not even a ridiculous and pathetic man. In a relational sense the *lkinyig* is neither man nor women, but genderless. One can only imagine the stress, the tremendous throbbing of negative emotions that comes from the very idea of having to stoop to these kinds of tasks.

Some of the more hardened Samburu and Borana cattle raiders I interviewed disputed that desperation and starvation were driving motives for participation in a cattle raid. In their opinion only those who could contribute with resources, like for example guns, ammunition and food, were allowed to join the well-organised raids. But why do these 'hardened cattle raiders' choose to do violent acts? Is it because they are bored? Is it because they have no other opportunities? Or is it to combat the risk of becoming poor, jobless and unsuccessful in some manner? That risk is highly shameful and degrading, and definitely something all of the young men I spoke to, wanted to avoid.

Let us get back to the creative aspect of Lourianti's decision to go on a cattle raid. The story of the 'poor turning violent' brings out the argument of violence produced from powerlessness, or maybe helplessness. Violence in this sense might be used as a "tool" to "creatively" combat negative implications on personal dignity (Kolnar 2003). Broch-Due (2005) makes a salient and related argument, that violence can be essential in each individual's quest for identity and belonging. The violent act or experience is transformative, by for example changing his social status, or intimately linking him with those he experiences the violence with. The economic benefit of cattle raids is not the most important aspect in this transformation. Rather, it is the multifaceted layers attributed to the violent experience, the extremity of it all, ultimately forcing perpetrators and victims to face the most essential of challenges: life or death. Violence, in the context of my fieldwork, was often creative (Kolnar 2003), it was transformative (Broch-Due 2005) and ultimately it was poetic (Whitehead 2004). Broch-Due (2005) quite brilliantly connects the transformative aspects of violence to the very common presence of ritualised violence in rites of passage. This brings us to another, very important dimension of violence we need to explore. Is there a connection between rites of passage and acts of violence? How does the communal nature of *moranhood* affect the meaning and experience of violent performance?

Bonded brothers

Victor Turner's (1974) concept 'communitas' denotes intense feelings of social togetherness and belonging, often in connection with the ritual process. In communitas, people stand together "outside" society, and this strengthens society. Turner (1969) describes the role and status of initiates in a liminal period as often being completely equal, and this applies to the Samburu, too. In Chapter 3 we could see that during *moranhood* and when the boys have status as *lebartanies*, there is a strong sense of communitas (Turner 1974) among them. *Lebartanies* will all throw the birds at the same time, and move on into *moranhood* together. While *lebartanies* are hunting birds, relations are strengthened between them. If a *lebartany* goes home to another *lebartany* to drink saroi, they will call each other *sari*. After a day or perhaps more, all those initiated will go in groups to hunt birds with the bow and arrow they made in the *nangore* ritual. If one gives another a bird (*lkweeni*) he has shot, they then call each other *kweeni*. If one gives another his arrows, they call each other *birian*. The truly important friendship relations are built during the rituals that complete the transformation from *lebartany* to *Imurran*. The *nkieyeu* relation is established through "the roasting of the

sticks” (*Imugit lowatanda*). The *lebartany* will share a portion of a ram with two other men, and thereby they establish a relationship that involves not only mutual respect, but also an economic benefit in future rituals or difficult times. These are all formalized ties, but being *lmurran* is always about being together with agemates, sharing everything with each other and partaking in the common experience that is *moranhoo*.

The ‘belonging’ and ‘togetherness’ emerging through rituals can also be gleaned in the practice of raiding. Joining cattle raids is to an extent also about being part of a group with a common goal, sharing an extreme experience and gaining something through group cooperation. I think Collins (2008) provides an interesting insight in pointing out that group dynamics can help people overcome what he considers a universal fear that holds people back from violent acts. We could compare with recent theory on terrorism. The cognitive anthropologist Scott Atran (2010) posits that what drives terrorists is not primarily religion, but rather the esteem they obtain in the eyes of bonded brothers. In Atran’s view, Jihad is an egalitarian and equal opportunity employer (see also Pinker 2011). To the dismay of anti-religion writers like Richard Dawkins (2006) and Sam Harris (2004), Atran argues that while religion can strengthen group cohesion, it is seldom the root cause behind terrorist violence. It is not, by any means, my argument that the communal nature of *moranhoo*, or Turkana and Borana youth coalitions, produce conflict. Rather, I think that most of the ongoing and recurring conflicts in Northern Kenya are produced by political and economic forces at various levels of society. What I think Atran’s perspective contributes to the discussion, is that group dynamics help shape the violent act, its meaning and the experience the performers gain from committing the act.

Somewhere in the south of Samburu District, I spent half a day with a group of *lmurran* that had performed several cattle raids. They had only recently come home from *loikar* (meat camp). *Loikar* stems from the word *car*, which means to boost, and also the action you do boosting up your body before running, for example. It is a typical activity for *lmurran*, and something they are traditionally expected to do. At this place they ate meat obtained from a small-scale cattle raid, performed in the dead of night without any casualties. The most talkative *lmurrani*, named Lkitois, told me that they would often use the time at *loikar* to talk about bravery in cattle raids and sexual conquests in their home areas. They told me they always went together for cattle raids. Sometimes they organised the raids themselves and at other times, in large-scale raids, they followed instructions from others. In large-scale cattle raids they were seldom split up, as tasks were usually allocated according to clan and they all

belonged to the Imasula clan. After the cattle raids they would protect each others' interests by hiding and sometimes dispersing the livestock they had raided. They told me that they often performed cattle raids against the wishes of the elders in the community. The *Imurrani* called Lkitois told me that elders and local politicians would rally together and advocate for peace. "It has little impact on us. The elders finished raiding in their youth, and nowadays they can only see the problems, not the benefits". But they would only join cattle raids they could justify with their own logic of "morality". For example, Lkitois told me he considered every cattle raid against Borana as a revenge raid: "The Borana have stolen livestock from us, they have killed women and children. We are just taking back what was ours". The instrumental benefits they did achieve in the form of livestock were sometimes collectively consumed, but usually allocated fairly to each individual. But their motive for doing cattle raids is not simply explained by the potential economic benefit for each individual. For Lkitois and his friends, their violent performances were collective activities, strengthening group cohesion and establishing bonds of friendship. They had performed every rite of passage together, they went together to dance in rituals, they went together for *loikar* and they performed cattle raids together. This group is not representative of every violence performer I interviewed. This chapter has already showed a variety of perspectives and motives for violence. Their perspective does show, however, that group dynamics can be a very relevant dimension in the experience and meaning my informants obtain from committing violent acts.

Aspects of masculinity and emotional registry

Samburu consider youths to be more hot-blooded, impulsive, and prone to aggression. Such characteristics are accepted, if not encouraged. The *Imurran* are after all 'in learning', and not fully 'complete'. Elders are supposed to keep their cool, be calculating and reflective prior to action. They have gone through *lminong* (eating prohibitions) and they have completed all the important rituals (*lmugits*), thus they are expected to have learned *nkanyit* (respect) and other forms of moral behaviour. This is somewhat similar to Susan Heald's (1999) findings on the Gisu, if not equally explicit. Gisu believe violence is thriving within each man, pushing for release, and the positive form of masculinity is to be able to control these emotions (Heald 1999). Men need to use their violent energy in the most "morally" appropriate manner, for example through showing strength and emotional self-control when being circumcised in the initiation ritual. This is also something that is essential for *Imurran* in their initiation ritual. In fact, if they are unable to refrain from expressing the pain they feel, it might have disastrous

implications for the *Imurran* and his lineage. *Imurran* can show emotions, and they often do, as they are after all “hot-blooded”, but they need to be careful which forms of emotions they show. *Lakirkir* (shaking) and *nkouna* (fainting) is encouraged and often seen as an ovation to the person or group they express the emotion towards. This is a trancelike state, and it can occur in various circumstances with a range of different meanings. The emotional registry in a Samburu is closely connected to his personality traits.

According to many of my Samburu informants, emotions lie in the stomach, and thus personality traits are connected to the stomach as well. A person with a *lorok ocheke* (black stomach) is unfriendly and withdrawn. It seems to be a trait primarily associated with men, but women can also have black stomachs. Most informants claim that a person with *lorok oscheke* is not interested in building relation with anyone, and he has basically no sympathy for anyone but himself in any situation and context. On the other hand, a person with a *keibor ocheke* (white stomach) is an open person, someone who is always able to create new relations, and the person is well liked by everyone. A person with *keibor ocheke* will often become rich on account of his many relations. Turkana and Borana have similar personality characteristics, though they usually refer to the heart rather the stomach. A typical personality characteristic among Turkana is *nigole etau* (black and white heart), referring to a person who is good, but who can change and act in a bad manner.

I think that whatever personality, culture and personal history, there is always some form of status transition after he has committed his first murder. Among Samburu the new status is always ambiguous. Their status has changed, both for the better and for the worse. Several of my informants bragged about their deeds, telling me how they now were more revered among their agemates and adored by girls. But wearing a *surutia*, the bracelet a Samburu killer needs to wear, also involves exclusion, and it is often associated with personal emotional problems. Purification of violent acts can help relieve guilt, and remove the urge to dwell on an extreme act like committing a murder. A Samburu *Imurran* named Lerija told me that he had gone on one raid, and never again after that. The raid had been bloody but unsuccessful, they had killed many and several of his friends had been killed. He himself had committed his first murder on this raid.

I did not go to my manyatta straight away after the raid, and thus the cleansing ritual was delayed. Instead I went to grazing shelters for a full week. I went absolutely crazy

(marata), my agemate captured me and brought me home by force so that the shadow of the one I killed could be cleansed out.

Whether Samburu, Borana or Turkana, the young men all had similar ideas of the emotional reactions they might have if the necessary rituals were ignored. A Samburu *Imurrani* described the sensation to me: “You see illusions, images of the dead bodies of the ones you killed, and you start thinking you are the one who died”. However, some of my informants showed no reverence for cultural taboos and ritual expectations. An interview I made with a Borana man in Isiolo, called Omar, can exemplify this. He was in his forties, unmarried and without children:

T: Do you perform any form of ritual prior to, and/or after a cattle raid?

O: No, those things are superstitions. I have never performed such a ritual, and nothing bad has happened to me as a result of cattle raids.

T: Ok, but have you ever felt remorse, or any negative feelings for taking a life?

O: This is my job, when I kill someone, it does not affect me at all, and it doesn't matter to me. What I care about is to get as much livestock as possible.

For him, raiding and killing was a lifestyle. It was what he did, and he did not make any effort to analyse his actions or make them symbolise something. I had several conversations with Lenkoitei (my Samburu key informant) about the potential consequences of murder. He claimed that it is always difficult to kill people on the first cattle raids, but after a while you will develop the heart of a killer (*Itai 'le arishoi*):

G: As long as the cleansing ritual is performed and you are given the *surritia*, you will not be disturbed by the murder you commit, but you will develop a heart of a killer (*Itai 'le arishoi*).

T: Do you have the heart of a killer?

G: Yes, I have the heart of a killer, and in cattle raids my stomach is hard, but when I come home I am responsible for my smaller siblings, they soften up my stomach, and pacifies my heart.

Lenkoitei's statement shows how different patterns of masculinity can be enacted with different audiences, something Connell (2005) calls code switching. I observed Lenkoitei's behaviour in his mother's house, taking the role of his father who had passed away. Most of

the money he came by went to the household economy. I also observed how he was nurturing his younger siblings, giving them small chores and encouraging them. While we were sitting inside his mother's house, his brother, around 4 years of age, was sitting on his lap looking curiously at me. Lenkoitei's narrative of violent conduct shows a very different behaviour, where other aspects of masculinity are employed.

Are violence and murder necessarily related to negative emotions only? Or to the total lack of emotions we saw in Omar's statements? Theweleit's (1987; 1989) admirable work on the *Freikorpsen* challenges us to consider whether or not the performers of violence are doing exactly what they want to do. He wants us to look beyond an interpretation of violence as symbolic acts, or acts of desperation. For Theweleit's Freikorpsen soldiers, violence is a form of release, almost sexual in its nature. More recent publications have also argued for a perspective on violence as a form of desire-production, for example Bourke's (1999) work on American soldiers during the Vietnam War. Collins (2008), however, criticises authors like Bourke for not considering that there might be a large gap between what people say about their violent experience and how they actually act and think in the violent situation. Collins has a very different perspective on violence, he argues that violence is always a display of incompetence; and it is usually only truly successful when performed against a weaker opponent. Here I agree with Kolnar (2003), who argues that these soldiers, whether Freikorpsen or Vietnam veterans, offer only versions of masculinity, constructions which are not universal. Masculinity is not static, locked in time, but something dynamic that changes constantly.

Silberschmith (2005) argues that despite the focus on men's earning power in the construction of masculinity worldwide, most notions of masculinity are closely associated with virility, sexuality, potency and male "honour". I agree, but I would argue that men's earning power among Samburu, Turkana and Borana are intimately connected with male "honour", and whether they feel virile and potent. However, I will show below that violence can be related to some positive emotions connected to sexuality.

Violence and sexuality

I recall the silence that would fall when the sun went down and everybody was in their homes, eating supper. But the silence was soon interrupted, when songs from girls and *Imurran* filled

the night. And though the sound could be strangely peaceful, the words are not that easy to romanticise.

kadol lbarnot eisiriria nao norin epuo lesurua lang edoki mpeyo neidong ldap neilapu

Transl. I see young *lmurran* with straightened bodies and I say raids they go, our water well they drop into, bastards they hit masturbation and then come out.

The verse is sung by young girls ridiculing the young *lmurran* who do not act as “real” *lmurran*. Instead of being proud and strong, going on cattle raids, they stay behind, at home, swimming in water while they masturbate. It is not unusual to imagine Samburu *lmurran* as cocky and prurient men, attentive to their bodies with a confident demeanour. In some ways it is part of the archetypal image of the *lmurran*, but it is also an image I believe many *lmurran* seek to reproduce in their behaviour. I spoke with young men who were equally proud of the women they had conquered and the cattle they had raided.

Performance(s) of violence and sexuality is interconnected in many ways. Among Borana for example, nobody who has at some point in their life had sex with unmarried women, should go on a raid. Young bachelors solve this by having sex with widows and married women (while their husbands are away). But today it is not unusual for Borana youths to develop relationships prior to marriage, leading of course to a problem, since the idea of abstinence prior to raids is still strong. There is also a relation between sexual life and cattle raids among Samburu *lmurran*. Generally they should avoid having sex altogether prior to raids, as it might drain them of energy, but they should have sex when they arrive back home in order to reach a bodily balance.

The idea is to maintain a mental and bodily balance. To put it simply: sex and female companionship is on one side of the scales, and meat camps and other forms of *lmurran* companionship such as cattle raids, is on the other. There are several diseases related to having too much sex (not counting the normal STDs), like *saar* (literally means bush), *kejingo* (meaning “something has entered”) and *ltikana*. The symptoms of *kejingo* and *ltikana* are very similar; it involves a substantial loss of energy and a feeling that the body’s immune system is very weak. All of these diseases are grounded in an idea of imperfection in the ideal *lmurran* body, personality and emotional state. Interestingly, these diseases are also found in livestock. A *lmurran* named Timothy stated the following “If you have too much sex your body will weaken, you will lose your energy, and you will get too thin, all the body fat will

disappear, so you have to compensate with a *loikar*". Having sex with married women and a woman who is breastfeeding is seen as particularly energy-draining. A *Imurran* told me the following: "Having sex with a women who is breastfeeding is very energy-draining, you become like her child, weak and dependent on others. People will notice that your skin looks dry like a small child's and you get yellow in your eyes in the morning like small children". The *loikar* (meat camp) is the most satisfactory treatment for all these conditions. *Ltikana* is the most frequently mentioned condition, and the treatment is to slaughter four goats and smell the *sarr*, a term relating to the smell from the heavily roasted skin of an animal. The meat camp usually also involves heavy consumption of herbs, *Ingalayoi* that is particularly important as additional treatment.

Interestingly, on the other side of the scales there is a condition called *nchaera*. Some *Imurrans* will get it from staying too long in the meat camp, consuming too much meat and taking too many herbs. This condition is not only caused by the excessive meat and herb consumption, but also by staying too long in the bush, away from sexual activities and female companionship. A *Imurran* named Kevin told me: "A *Imurran* with *nchacra* can smell a women even if she left the area days back, and he will be disgusted, if you get that sickness you will just hate all women". The conditions sneak up slowly and consume the *Imurran*, making him extremely aggressive, violent and mad. The condition is healed after smelling the *sarr* from the meat and a forced massage of the spine performed by his fellow *Imurran*. But the final act of healing is to join the rest of society, particularly to have female companionship.

Of course there are different levels of importance assigned to these ideas among the many *Imurran* I talked to in different areas. But it is important to consider it in relation to forms of interaction between *Imurran*, and the dynamic between *Imurran* and the wider community. It has become quite common today for young men to stay near their homes, relying on tourist-related businesses. A *Imurrani* who goes for *loikar* and cattle raids might view such a *Imurrani* with a kind of contempt. In the next chapter I will follow up this development.

Chapter 5: Aesthetics, Sexuality and Morality

“Sex is nothing, it is not important, money is important. Money will give education for my children, food on my table and a good life. What is sex, compared to all that?”

Lepishoi, so called “Mombasa moran”, Maralal area

In chapter 3 I argued that the rites of passage during *moranhoo*d are essential in the Samburu formation of masculinity. I also argued that aspects of masculinities are formed and enacted in performance and aesthetics during the period of *moranhoo*d. This performance and aesthetics have been reified and commercialised for the tourist industry, and this is the most salient theme in this chapter: the reification of masculinity. The so-called ‘*Mombasa moran*’ is the most striking product of this reification and exemplifies a novel mode of male behaviour that reconfigures the whole notion of masculinity among young Samburu men. I will present interviews I have had with *Mombasa moran*, and discuss how the reconfigurations touch on the ideal accumulation and consumption of wealth among Samburu.

This chapter is also about Samburu sexuality and the appropriation of new forms of intimacy. *Mombasa moran* needs to adjust their practice of intimacy and adapt to the somewhat unfamiliar notion of sexual desire. I will also write more generally about Samburu sexuality, with some emphasis on its instrumental functions. In my interviews about sexuality, and from listening to songs about the theme, I found that there is an interesting moral criticism within its discourse. This moral criticism is addressed to the changing priorities and aspirations among young men. These priorities are often related to education, new business ideas, tourism and non-pastoral opportunities in general. These new concerns overtake the old ones, for example obeying the prohibitions of *lminong* (eating regulations), completing important rituals in the proper way and following the advice of elders.

Tourism, aesthetics and reification of culture

I had several experiences during my field work that could exemplify the reification of culture, but one incident made an impression. I was having a quiet conversation with a married mama

called Naramat (name meaning: taking care), talking about a fertility ritual called *ntorosi* that was taking place in the town just then. The town was going about its usual business; some unmarried girls were fetching water by the river, some older men sat below a large sida tree. Children ran around, some doing household chores, others just playing. *Lmurrani* were not around; as usual they were either at *loikar* (meat camps), in the bush or in one of the nearby lodges. Suddenly there was a great commotion; a girl was shouting from the river, kids ran towards the road. The elders moved out from the sida tree, and while I was distracted, Naramat had run into her house. She came out a different person. Around her neck was a bundle of wired beads (*saei*), going from her chest, over her shoulders to the chin. Her upper arms were covered with spiral brass wire (*surutia le ngaina*), with metal ornaments at her wrist (*senge engaina*). Unmarried girls were coming out of their houses equally decorated, all wearing the typical beaded head adornment (*sae e ngwe*). The elders who had been sitting near the sida only moments ago, now came out of their houses decorated as *lmurran*, which surprised me a bit, given that some of them were senior elders. Down the road two matatus were heading our way, filled with curious tourists. Lmancharo, one of my key informants, a young man of the Lmooli age-set who spoke basic English, greeted them with smiles and open arms. He usually referred to himself (jokingly) as the village ambassador, or its public face. I considered him, despite his young age, the most influential person in the town. Lmancharo now guided the tourists to the group with my Samburu informants, all of them suddenly fully decorated in traditional ornaments. I slowly moved back behind a house to view the spectacle, not wanting to upset the image of authenticity that I expected some of the tourists to harbour. The dancers lined up in two groups, one decorated as Samburu, singing Samburu songs, and the second group decorated as Turkana, singing Turkana songs. Many of the residents in Sidai are *lgira* (parents from both ethnic groups), so some could join either group.

The song and dance number was just an obligatory requirement, part of the package designed to attract tourist operators to their village. In fact they are paid only a meagre amount for the show, the whole group is paid somewhere between 500 and 1000 Kenyan shillings. This is despite the fact that the tourists pay between 20 and 60 dollars each for the experience, most of which goes to the driver. The real business is in the selling of traditional ornaments, necklaces and bracelets made from pearl and brass, wood carvings and other conventional Samburu and Turkana artefacts. I had been in Sidai for five days, and this was the first time tourists came. But it was something people had been waiting for, and it changed the whole

atmosphere of the place. Sidai, located as it was in close proximity to several mid-range tourist lodges, was for all intents and purposes a so-called “cultural village”. Influenced by the international tourist industry, post-colonial Kenya foresaw great financial opportunities in this business. Maasai *lmurran* became the key example of a reinvented image of the “noble savage” in national marketing campaigns, and by the 1980s most wildlife safaris included a visit to Maasai settlements. Interestingly though, tourists who come to view warriors of “the White Maasai” (popularised term for Samburu) perform a ritual dance, might well be looking at a married Turkana man or any other person interested in earning some money.

During my travels in the lowlands I visited several cultural villages, though I only stayed for long stretches of time in Sidai. I recall one incident when I was on my way to a tourist lodge near Archers Post to interview British Army soldiers. I decided to make a short stop in one of the many villages near the road to the lodge. As I was going through the enclosure, I saw that most of the women were wearing the typical Turkana hairstyle and decorative patterns. As I was arriving, they all ran into their houses. Of course I realized at once what was happening, though my efforts to stop the process were futile. After a while the women (no men were in the village just then) came out, transformed into Samburu. In fact, some of them were even wearing wigs to hide their ‘Turkana look’. In the course of only seconds the women in the village had re-arranged their ethnic identity for the benefit of a potentially generous tourist. I will not say they changed their ethnicity completely, because ethnic identity in Northern Kenya is not fixed, but rather mutable. I personally find the Turkana culture, the tangible and intangible, rich and fascinating. But Samburu, or Maasai as they are often called, have become the global image of Kenya’s cultural heritage, and thus the aesthetic they represent is more easily saleable and consumed.

In the course of my time in Northern Kenya I have witnessed many aspects of the reification of Samburu culture. Maybe the experience with the strongest effect was in Wamba, in a “cultural village” designed for a specific purpose. The village was put up temporarily for the visit of the wife of the president Kibake. Various traditionally built houses had been designed to show a specific cultural event. In one of the houses, a boy went through most of the *lmugit* rituals in one day. He woke up as a *lebartany* in the morning, was circumcised at lunchtime, *threw the birds* and stepped up as a full *lmurran* by afternoon. Kapferer (1988) explains the reification of a culture as the production of a culture as an object in itself. Reification thus happens when the abstract concept of culture is transformed into something concrete you can own and use (Olsen 2000). A highly significant rite of passage such as the initiation from

boyhood to manhood is made into a product sold in exchange for money. Here we arrive at a salient theme in this chapter, the reification of masculinity.

The purpose of *moranhood* is associated with becoming a pastoralist and becoming a man, and now many use the idealized aesthetics associated with this status, to earn money. This does not mean that other cultural values lose all their importance. Many of the young men I spoke with differentiated between the more reified culture for tourism and a more “real” *lmurran* lifestyle. But the reification of culture can change the meaning and purpose of expression, it can drive motivation for new lifestyles, new ways of generating income. It permeates and transforms the value system and moral economy. The most novel example of this comes from the Kenyan sex industry. Young Samburu men have been migrating seasonally to coastal tourist resorts since the 1980s. In these places, they enter into a sexual liaison with white female tourists who are usually much older and who seek companionship and intimacy with a ‘beautiful’ and ‘young’ man. This pattern of behaviour has, over time, segmented into a distinct gateway for economic gain, open not exclusively to Samburu and Maasai, but to anyone who can present themselves in the particular bodily and aesthetic paradigm of the ‘Maasai warrior’ (see Meiu, 2009). The level of ‘authenticity’ is not only measured through the ‘culturally correct’ colours, ornaments and hairstyle, but also bodily features, or one might even suggest ‘phenotype tokens’ understood as ‘racial’ features, like for example being tall, slim and muscular. Ethnicity, deep cultural knowledge and social categorization — like actually being in the life stage of *moranhood* — become secondary or entirely unimportant. These young men, who are called *Mombasa morans*, exemplify a novel mode of male behaviour that greatly reconfigures the notion of masculinity among young Samburu men. Like other young men involved in tourism, *Mombasa moran* take advantage of their idealised ‘aesthetics’ in the hope of monetary profit. They are striking examples of gender performativity in the Samburu context. They are creative cultural actors, manipulating a complex cultural order, challenging and changing prescribed notions of masculinity and thus creating *gender trouble* (see Butler 1999). *Mombasa moran* build social prestige through material wealth, visible in the form of small lodges, restaurants, shops and transport businesses.

Mombasa *Imurran* - Changing the moral economy

Lendyuo (name meaning: born in the hill) belongs to the Ikiroro age-set, the current *Ipiroi* elders. He came to visit a close friend of mine as we were drinking tea and chatting. I had heard about him and his unusual life story. Starting in the late 80s he had travelled the world, promoting Kenyan tourism and cultural life through song and dance. He had been to Australia, Japan and several European countries. He told me about the countries he had visited, what he found strange and what he liked, the unpleasant, but amazing experience of flying for the first time, and about the women he met in one of the western countries (name withheld).

L: She was among the spectators in (a capital in a western country). After the show she spoke to the organisers and insisted that I should not leave. She wanted me to come with her and stay at her house. She invited several of us, six Samburu warriors, two Samburu girls and me. She was in her 50s, but still unmarried. Already at that moment she insisted that I should be her husband. She was a sad woman, and I felt sorry for her, so we started a physical relationship.

T: What was that experience like?

L: It was difficult, because she expected different things, and I did not really enjoy it very much, as I had never imagined such a relationship. But it was a good relationship; unfortunately the government did not want me to stay there.

T: Was it similar to the relationships young men have in Mombasa at the present time?

L: Well, prior to my travels I worked in Bomas of Kenya, in Nairobi. We were selling beads, but some old ladies came to shop, not for beads, but for *Imurran*. They were buying *Imurran*, like they were a commodity. My relationship was not like that. The lady I met was kind and loving. – I went back for two months after staying in Kenya for a short while. Afterwards she was going to come to Kenya, so that we could get married. But before she could organise things and come to Kenya, she was in an accident and died....

I was staying in Bomas of Kenya at the time. They sent a letter, and the carrier searched for me for a long time. I was invited to attend the funeral. Members of the family had known about me and our plans to marry. So I bought a black suit and a tie, and I went to her country again for the last time, to attend the funeral. The family

was amazed that I came in a black suit; they had imagined me in very different clothes.

Established in Nairobi, 1971, The Bomas of Kenya exemplifies one of the first cultural reifications in Kenya. The cultural village is still active today, and it aims to promote and preserve Kenya's rich cultural heritage^{xx}. My conversation with Lendyuo continued, and I asked him to tell me more about these phenomena, *Mombasa morans* and Mzungu mamas:

The first ones who went to Mombasa were the senior *Ikuroro* – circumcised in 1976-78. They went first to Nairobi in great numbers, and then gradually moved down towards Mombasa for jobs. First it started as business to sell attire, beads and so on. These mzungo mamas came after a while, interested in more than just the beads. So stories started to develop, and they were brought back to Maralal. *Lmurrans* saw it as an opportunity and started migrating there. So they developed their tricks and strategies. They would go in groups and pretend they were not interested in any relationship. You know, if they push too much, they scare the mamas away. The mamas need to feel like it is love. Nowadays it is a bit different, *Mombasa morans* have their own style, unlike any other *lmurrans*. They use dreadlocks and Rastafarian hats, sunglasses and long shirts.

At the time of my fieldwork, August 2011, glasses with thick frames were popular. I met two young *lmurrans*, Lpansisi and Lpatina, with these types of glasses. They were wearing long white jerseys with NIKE printed on the front in big black letters. Below the shirt they had traditional red *schukas* around their waist, and on their feet were white, clean, new-looking sneakers. Their arms were covered in traditional pearl bracelets, with a watch on the left wrist. Lpansisi and Lpatina both had what seemed like a long gold chain around their necks (in all likelihood faux fashion jewelry). They had recently come home from Mombasa, tired and disappointed from their unsuccessful endeavours. In fact, most young men return from the coast with empty pockets. They were from a rural area far north in the district, and had been prompted to travel to Mombasa looking for a mzungu mama, after observing the economic success of a fellow age-mate. One of the youths explained:

We did not tell anyone we were going to Mombasa. It is still somewhat disgraceful, but if we can get a mzungu mama and money comes in, it is no longer shameful. We travelled with matatus all the way, then we worked for a friend of ours selling Samburu ornaments. We tried, but we did not manage to catch any mzungu mamas.

One of the young boys told me that he had been sick for a while and had been more or less forced to travel back to Maralal. They call it the ‘Mombasa sickness’, a fairly common phenomenon according to many of my informants. It occurs when the *Mombasa moran* has no success for a long time, and all hopes and expectations are lost. Through the descriptions of the disease, it seems to be almost synonymous with a common psychosomatic reaction called *eramatu* (fast beating heart). *Eramatu* usually leads to *etodo yie ltau* (heart goes down), making the person physically weak, not being able to move much, they suffer a kind of emotional apathy that makes them unable to express words. An *Imurran* described its pathology having suffered the reaction after he lost his father:

When my father died, I cried a lot for many days without eating, until the tears did not come out. So people went and brought a Turkana specialist, and he used a white cloth on me to “hit” my heart up, after he had seen that my eyes were white and concluded that I did suffer from the disease. First he sucked blood from the left side of my chest and then beat with the white cloth.

The ‘heart going down’ and the healing rituals associated with this condition is a Turkana tradition, appropriated by Samburu. Traditionally there should be a goat’s heart inside the cloth that is used. Today chicken hearts are sometimes used.

An example of a very successful Mombasa *Imurran* is Lepishoi (name meaning: born during milking process), a Samburu with great success in developing intimate bonds with *mzungu* mamas. At one point he was juggling three separate relationships with European women, while at the same time secretly getting married to a local Samburu girl. Marrying a Samburu in secret is not unusual; most of the young men who develop relationships with European women want to have children just like any other Samburu.

Lepishoi fathered three children in the course of my friendship with him. “Sex is nothing” he said, “it is not important, money is important. Money will give education for my children, food on my table and a good life. What is sex, compared to all that?” He managed to build a simple house, with concrete walls and an iron roof, and he established a small farm in addition to a small amount of livestock. It was not really an economic success compared with the innovation and productivity of other *Mombasa moran*. Many established small lodges, restaurants and other businesses, usually related in one way or another to tourism. Lepishoi struggled to maintain a balance in his various roles as lover, husband and father. Much of the money he was sent that was meant to sponsor various business ideas or humanitarian

initiatives, was in practice used for very different purposes, sometimes food and utensils that gave his family a more comfortable life. But often he used the money on alcohol and *mirra* (khat).

In my interviews with Mombasa *lmurran* and their close relatives, their actions and achievements were communicated as something constructive, benefitting the whole family. When interviewing other Samburu more negative sentiments were expressed, in this discourse they particularly referred to what they considered “negative” sexual behavior and the age-difference between the ‘momasa mama’ and her Samburu lover. However, it is not new that *lmurran* roam around, breaking customary rules on sexual morality. For example, it is not very unusual that *lmurran* have sex with married Samburu women while their husbands are away from the household for some reason. If we read Spencer’s (1965) monograph based on fieldwork performed in the 1950s, we can also argue that this is not new. It is definitely not encouraged, and it can induce anger in affected parties, but the Samburu culture is not an honour/shame culture. Exogamy is important, and relations, including that between man and wife, are built through exchange of livestock. It is seldom a life-threatening crisis if a married Samburu woman gets pregnant with another man. In a sanctioned marriage, the man who has paid the bride wealth will always be *pater* for the children, irrespective of who the genitor (biological father) is. The *pater* has all the cultural and economic expectations, obligations and benefits of fatherhood.

Meiu (2009) argues that the attack on sexual morality has to be attributed to the formation of new inequalities. This is a very valid point, and it is a much more likely explanation behind the moral critique I observed. The Mombasa *lmurran* are criticised for the way this wealth is accumulated. The ideal wealth accumulation among Samburu comes from building exchange relations throughout a lifetime. Pastoralists view reciprocal exchange with livestock as strategic husbandry and as measurement of economic security. Among Samburu, borrowing through exchanging animals can be done in various ways, but asking *Paran* is by far the most important. Asking for *Paran* signifies the making of a reciprocal exchange agreement through a request to borrow goats, sheep’s or cattle. Relatives, fellow clan members and others who have an important social relation to the person asking for *Paran*, are morally expected to accept a request unless they are absolutely unable to give. Borrowing through *Paran* makes it possible for the receiver to enhance the scope of livestock reproduction, potentially extending his herd far beyond the numbers he is required to return to the giver. The giver of *Paran* creates economic debts he might well make good use of in the event of a crisis. Even if a man

has lost most of his animals through for example livestock diseases or raids, he is morally obligated to give back at least some of the animals to the giver of Paran, if requested. These cycles of exchange continuous throughout a lifetime, and pastoralists rich in livestock are not considered coincidentally fortunate, its more equitable to say that their wealth visualise their industriousness and intelligent strategies (Waller 1999). The most successful Mombasa *Imurran* are able to accumulate material wealth much faster and without building any form of social relations.

I noted a change in sentiments from my fieldwork in 2007 and my last visit in 2012. Given that the wealth a *Mombasa moran* gathers will benefit friends and relatives, it has over time changed the moral economy to accept different patterns of social behavior and new forms of wealth accumulation. Furthermore, several *Mombasa moran* are effective in converting their material means into wealth that is more locally acknowledged.

Meiu (2015) argues in a more recent contribution, that Samburu men travelling to the coast use their wealth to subvert temporalities. Samburu men travelling to the coast have the potential to end up as “young big men” or “beach-boy elders”. These two labels denote characters at opposite ends of a normality standard, featuring the very wealthy and successful on one side, and the truly tragic on the other. But I believe the drive to become “young big men” and the fear of ending up as “beach-boy elders” are common to all young men travelling to the coast. At the end of Chapter 2, I discussed how the big-man ideal allows a man to embody both the temporal and spatial dimensions of power, irrespective of age. The so-called *Mombasa moran*’s accumulation of money is often vast and rapid. For him to embody the big-man ideal he needs to convert these resources into something that is acknowledged locally. All forms of visible wealth, for example, can help a man climb the ladder of authority (Meiu 2015).

Even though the attack on sexual morality largely can be attributed to accumulation of wealth, successful *Mombasa moran* have to adjust their practice of intimacy. At the end of Chapter 4 I illustrated how many of the young men I interviewed had a very instrumental view on sex. Sexual intercourse is performed in an effort to reach mental and bodily balance. Based on this way of thinking the best sex will climax early. The longer the sex act lasts, the more energy it drains, and thus the more vulnerable one will become to bodily imbalance. Notions such as lust, desire and foreplay did not seem to be particularly important for these men.

Corinne Hofman (2005), writer of the multimillion selling memoir *The White Maasai*, gives

us an illustrative example of how a young European woman views *Imurran* aesthetics, bodies and sexuality. The book is a love story about her meeting with Leketinga, a samburu *Imurran*, and their life together in Kenya through ups and downs. Seeing him for the first time in Mombasa on her vacation from Switzerland, she describes him as exotic and beautiful. He is dressed like an *Imurran* wearing a shoufa, bracelets and bangles. “The way he holds himself, the proud look and wiry muscular build betray his undoubted masculinity. I can’t take my eyes off him; sitting there in the last rays of the sinking sun, he looks like a god” (Hofman 2005: 2). Similar to Karen Blixens imagination of the Maasai, Lketinga is described in the image of the noble savage, beautiful, pure, even divine. The description of Leketinga becomes much more varied and realistic in the course of the book, and Corinne has her imaginations and expectations challenged several times. One of these occasions comes from the experience of their first sexual act:

When it gets dark and we can no longer hold off the moment of physical contact, I sit down on the narrow little cot and wait with pounding heart for the minute I have longed for. Lketinga sits down beside me and all I can see is the mother-of-pearl button on his forehead, the ivory rings in his ears, and whites of his eyes. All of a sudden everything happens at once. Lketinga presses me down onto the cot, and already I can feel his erection. Before I can even make up my mind whether or not my body is ready for this, I feel a pain, hear strange noises and it’s all over. I feel like bursting into tears of disappointment. This was not at all what I had expected. It’s only now that I realize that this is someone from a completely alien culture. (Hofmann 2005: 22)

In conversations with young men, I picked up several stories about the adjustment *Mombasa moran* had to make in order to meet European desire. I recall an incident with a good friend of mine, an educated Samburu. He was giving me a look that said he found it slightly disgusting and slightly funny at the same time. He had just told me that he knew about a Mombasa *Imurran* who had a mama who kept insisting that he “lick her”, “down there”, he said: “Another one I know, he met with a couple, I mean the mzungu mama was not alone, but her mzungu husband was watching as they went about their business. The husband was watching his wife being fucked”. Some of my informants suggested that the women entering into a sexual liason with the *Mombasa moran* were teaching and shaping them to meet their requirements.

In the last decade global images from the west have had a noticeable effect on sexuality, sex

techniques and sexual expectations among most young Samburu. Some of my *Imurran* informants told me that they had been looking at pictures of naked women when they were at *loikar* and *lalle*. The guys in Kitók often asked whether I could use my Nokia n95 to show some pictures or movies of a similar sort. Samburu have had relationships with people from various ethnicities, and this is an important instance of a changing sexuality. Cuddling, kissing and foreplay before sex is slowly becoming part of physical intimacy among youths in Samburu society. Diana, a Samburu schoolteacher, felt that sex was changing for the better: “Traditional guys go for sex straight, they do not bother about romance, or touching or kissing, they satisfy themselves sexually, leaving us women wanting”, she said. Some of my *Imurran* informants in Sidai, Archers and Kitók told me they had drawn inspiration from popular images of the west, through movies, rumours, stories and personal experience. Others still held a very instrumental view on sex.

Samburu sexuality

Sure, I remember the first time, we were a group of boys and we went to open (*abudusho*) girls at night. We had to do it quickly, in case the girls woke up. They would sometimes wake up and be accepting, some would pretend to sleep, other times they could go crazy pushing us away, screaming.

The young *Imurran* I met in Archers Post told me that *abudusho* (opening) is a “boys’ game”, fortunately less usual now than before. *Abudusho* or any other kind of rape would be disastrous if committed by any man who has started his cycles of *Imugits*. Boys (and girls) are largely forgiven. Children are educated in moral rules and pastoral techniques from a young age, guided by their parents, grandparents, older siblings, other relatives and school (for those who attend). Yet, his or her failures and mistakes cannot have a significant impact on them or their lineage, and when the childhood is cut (*adjun*) away in the circumcision ceremony (male and female), these sins are cleansed away. Boys are *aituk neitisiny* (purified) in circumcision, by removing *nchapirik*, a term simultaneously referring to a whitish part on the penis and also meaning dirt or unclean. Once this cut is made, past failures, moral disruptions and general childish acts are gone. Some of the young men I interviewed reported that their sexual debut was performed through *abudusho*. Most of them, however, had debuted with a consensual

agreement with a girl, often at a very young age. One of my informants told me his experience:

I was leading my parents' livestock for grazing, and I met a girl who was doing the same task for her parents. She asked if we could play a game, she would pretend to be sleeping and I would sneak up and have sex with her. So, we did, and that was my first time.

Practice of, and exploration of, sex was important for most of the *lmurran* I met. Of course there were individual differences, often in connection with religious beliefs, socio-economic status and education level. Let us focus, for the moment, on those who generally socialized together with other *lmurran*, rather than attending church, high school or university. Most *lmurran* will have at least one girlfriend, sometimes of the same clan as himself. In Kitók I spent some time with a group of *lmurran*, and we had some conversations about sexuality. I connected with them through Lekakeny, a *lmurran* I had been 'godfather of the right foot' for at my preliminary fieldwork in 2008. Lkisaruni was the most talkative guy in the group, however, and he tried to teach me the correct steps in beading a girl:

First of all I will bring her some beads (bracelets, necklaces etc.), and I will make her laugh, and we will dance. Then I will ask for her waist (Idua). If she agrees I can hold around her waist, but nothing else. Then, I will ask for her legs, *anjin inkajek*. My girlfriend will spread her legs for me, I can lie down on top of her, in-between her legs, but I can't have sex with her yet. I will continue to entice her, and the next step is that we have sex.

Lmurran's lavish gifts to potential girlfriends are an important part of the female aesthetic registry. Their girlfriends will in return make them beadworks from scratch with pearls and thread. *Lmurran* also give beadworks to each other, as a part of building friendship. When *lmurran* are going for dates with girlfriends after dark, they might sing certain verses from the *lkichiroto*, a collection of songs meant to state the *lmurran's* presence. The following verse is song when a *lmurran* is on his way to meet his girlfriend:

Ooyie kalout kenya kiningu nalatu kenya kudolu nkariak e ipashat amatu nkulupo e lasai aperu ana kenya nalotu sunta e nkaji e ngutungu

I will come while you hear me and I come while you see me water of streams I drink soil of ants I sleep until I come to bedroom of house of your mother.

When *Imurran* are in *loikar* (meat camps) they sing verses about the girlfriends they miss, and the erotic longings it involves.

*Ooyie kitama yio mongi o moni ninkitoki borterege ie kine, oreku munturi lakunya,
nerek nop sikiya*

We ate us bulls and bulls and again the white testicles of a goat bursts out sexual urge brain to pierce through earth *sikiya* (means the aroma of roasted meat).

This song refers to *Imurran* who have stayed in a meat camp and are coming home with a sexual urge. In the *loikar Imurran* feast on masculine emotive values like strength and aggression, produced from the indulgence of meat, *sikiya* and various herbs. They need to compensate with female companionship for a balanced physical and emotional body. These erotic meetings are recited as acts of conquest in the next *loikar*, and new verses in the *Ikichiroto* might be produced. For many of the *Imurran* I spoke with, their sex life was closely associated with honour and a positive self-image. In my conversations on this topic I usually asked whether they had any embarrassing sexual stories.

I met a girl that I know, in the bush (lalle). I had travelled for a long time and I was tired and hungry. But I did not miss the opportunity she offered. But I only managed one round. I tried the second round, but my penis shamed me while I was trying to penetrate her. So she asked me if I was tired, what was wrong with me, she asked. I said nothing was wrong with me. She asked if I was exhausted and I said no. I turned to the side, tried to shake the penis awake, but it didn't move. I told her to wait a minute and I went straight to the river near us, and drunk a lot of water. When I came back I made another attempt, it was successful. It could have been very shameful to accept defeat.

Most of the stories ended with 'honour restored', as in this story from an *Imurran* I met in Archers Post. Sexuality is part of the embodied constitution of being *Imurran*. If sex is performed inadequately, their honour might be at stake, rumours of their 'failed attempt' might start to circulate. It might make them sick if it is overdone, staying too long near female companions or having sex with too many married women, or, what is more damaging, breastfeeding women. It is about keeping balance and control of their embodied self. This is seen not only in sexual acts. How they present themselves to the larger community is generally important, avoiding being clumsy and stumbling over rocks, being aesthetically

presentable and showing a certain pride in their stance. Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical analyses can shed some light on this behaviour. Goffman posits that an actor will perform through appearance and manner, in a certain way, in order to control and guide the impression others make of him. The quality of his performance depends on how he is able to meet the expectations within a given social context and situation. While skilled impression management is essential to all forms of social interaction "front-stage", there is a corresponding region called the "back-stage", where the actor can be more relaxed and free from role-play and expectations (Goffman 1959: 112). It was not unusual for my *lmurran* friends to walk around with their shoufas lifted (revealing their genitals) when we had gone to the bush to roast a ram or a heifer. They would always be more relaxed, joking, laughing and making fun of each other.

Lmurran do not restrict their 'conquests' to unmarried girls. Lepishoi told me he had had relationships with several married women: "Yes, if I find one I want, I will talk to her in secrecy and then we will wait until the husband goes for a safari, and we will meet." These practices are in fact very common, and it is considered a social problem. Lepishoi told me about the relationship he was currently having with a married woman. "I like my relationship with her compared to the girlfriends. Because it is like romance. She is someone I can talk with, and she tells me of her own problems. She is lonely and she truly appreciates me, more than the girls do. She loves me", Lepishoi explained.

After an *lmurran* is married, it is not unusual to have mistresses, *sintani*. A *sintani* must be circumcised, they can be married, divorced or widows. This practice used to be official, but today it is normally done in secrecy. There used to be open and accepted ritualised sexual practices for women as well, the ritual *ntorosi* used to be performed for barren women. They would go around in different homesteads demanding sex from the men living there. Today, the ritual for barren women is called lamal, and it does not involve any sexual practice. I observed a current form of the *ntorosi* ritual while living Sidai. The women were still going around to the male heads of households, but demanding a goat or some kind of valuable compensation rather than sex, and the goal was to produce rain rather than babies.

It seems to me, however, that despite the social restrictions regarding adultery, Samburu women entertain a certain sense of sexual freedom in practice. The consequences of being caught are not usually disastrous. I recall an incident with one of my key informants near Maralal, an *lpiroi* aged maybe 50, and his wife in her early 20s. As I was approaching, the

man of the household was running after his wife with a long thin stick, trying to hit her, and she was shouting and screaming in fear. Her numerous affairs with *lmurran* and other men younger than her husband had caught up with her. Eventually things calmed down, and my assistant had some long calming talks with both of them. It ended with nothing more than a very clear agreement that it should never happen again. At least I never learned of any worse punishment, and I have kept in touch with the couple for several years. When a woman marries, one of the key moments for her comes just prior to her departure from “the white house”. A large group of married women gathers in a ring around her, giving her advice for her new life as a married woman. Fertility and prosperity in child rearing is essential values for newly married women, and the advice often centres on the virtue of mixed herds (see Holtzman 2009).

Women also sing songs with quite clear sexual connotations. The *kakisha* is a contest in melodic form between older girls and married women. I heard the *kakisha* song when women were out fetching water and firewood.

Young girls:

Siankiki e Lmooli lai karo sina likinya, lata nkeru mata l moruo ninderoki Itakria oneyiekie

Translation: Young married woman of Lmooli of mine, which problem eats you, and you have children and you have husband and you still admire ochre red

In this verse, unmarried girls complain that the married women, despite having a husband and children, still seek out *lmurran* for sexual pleasure. The older women might come with a reply ridiculing the girls or the *lmurran* of their age-set.

Married women:

kadol lbarnot eisiriria nao norin epuo lesurua lang edoki mpeyo neidong ldap neilapu

Translation: I see young *lmurrans* with straightened bodies and I say raids they go our water well they drop into bastards they hit masturbation and come out.

Instead of being proud and strong and going for cattle raids, like the *lmurran* of their generation, these new *lmurran* are, just like small boys, staying at home, masturbating and indulging in water. Many of the older men I spoke to, said that a number of Samburu

collective problems such as married women committing adultery, was related to these *lmurran* staying at home.

Nkwnyi ai ejilo mimpirpiro tenepo merapa sirenyi nkopiro ooyielo neremi ngoroyok

Translation: Bad enemy of mine, *mimpirpiro* (the way a wet chicken shakes), pick *sirenyi* feather that knows where to spear women.

This verse is sung by *lmurran* who have raided, and they want to avoid the booty from that raid shaking so that even a feather falls on a *sirenyi*. *Sirenyi* means among other things a very young bull that jumps cows all the time without impregnating them, and in the context of the song it refers to *lmurran* staying at home having sex with women. *Neremi*, meaning spearing, is a normal metaphor for having sex. Another verse that women often sing is also a complaint on the changing priorities among *lmurran*:

Echomo lmurran lkasin, netti lmurran lemopuo, Nairobi naishayie lmurran, naaku lkilepo kiranyie

Translation: They have gone *lmurran* jobs and there are *lmurran* who don't go Nairobi has finished *lmurran* so that calves are left at home for milk, we sing with

The verse is a complaint that all the good *lmurran* have left for jobs in Nairobi; those who stay behind are 'young' and 'weak' like calves left at home for milking. Holtzman (2009: 171) writes that *lmurran* who stay close to home are detested as "naperto nanya malesin" (pesky little calabash drinkers). I also encountered this kind of derogatory remarks directed towards *lmurran* who stay at home. I think it is important to remember that these views do not at all represent the whole of Samburu society. In fact, I would argue that as with the Mombasa *lmurran*, there is a change in the moral economy related to these *lmurran* also, something I will explore further in the next chapter.

The moral criticism of home-grown *lmurran* is not directly because they 'stay at home'. *lmurran* staying close to home rather than going for lalle and loikar can be part of community strategies. These *lmurran* are referred to as *Elkelepo*, and they stay behind to protect the area against cattle raids and wildlife. The moral criticism is more related to the changing priorities and aspirations among young men. These priorities are often related to education, new business ideas, tourism and non-pastoral opportunities in general. These new concerns

overtake the old ones, for example obeying the prohibitions of *lminong*. In Kitók I often interviewed my *lmurran* informants sitting in their mother's house, drinking chai. Though they usually avoided eating in her presence, I observed other *lmurran* ignoring this important line of separation as well.

Given that these *lmurran* spend more time near homesteads, they also spend more time with young girls, for example when they sing and dance in ritual. When they are forging male social bonds among themselves, it is usually not for a long stretch of time. Thus the isolation from the female sphere is short, making them more vulnerable to bodily imbalance, and the dangers of *saar*, *kejinggo* and *ltikana*. Most of the more homegrown *lmurran* I spoke with expressed a certain concern about this; others did not ascribe any value to the cultural idea. The lack of time spent in the 'male sphere' is an important part of the moral criticism from *lmurran* who actively seek the male-dominated space in *lalle* and *loikar*. In the next chapter I will explore this moral criticism in further detail. How do the elder Samburu react to the changing behaviour and priorities among young men? What drives young men to seek non-pastoral opportunities?

Chapter 6: Transforming Power of Youths: Angry Elders, Young Leaders

“They usually only address the elders, knowing they are cloudy in the head. It is a tactic they use which ultimately works against us”

Young Samburu man, Sidai

My informants, young and old, are faced with the reality of a rapidly declining pastoral economy. Conflict with neighboring ethnic groups has been more or less persistent since Kenyan independence in 1963, and violence has become increasingly routine. Taken together with governmental marginalization and an unfair distribution of land, violence is one of the intractable causes of chronic poverty; and poverty again produces more violence. Any ideas, dreams and images related to the potential ‘prosperity’ of ‘modernity’ must be viewed in the context of these disintegrating forces. It is within this context we should consider intergenerational conflict and the significance of trust and mistrust in intimate relations.

In this chapter I delve further into a discussion on the ideals that form my informants’ dreams and expectations. Since colonial times, the concepts of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ have been integral to the discourse of ‘development’ and thus the reformist endeavours from state, NGOs and missionaries. The dominant discourse of the Kenyan government agencies, schools and foreign institutions stipulates a clear disjunction between ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’. Many youths are influenced by the dominant discourse in government policies, the education system and global organisations, postulating pastoralism as a primitive and destructive lifestyle. As a consequence youths often juxtapose the demise of pastoralism with ideas of prosperity associated with modernity and images of a western lifestyle. But the opportunities to build stable life careers on the new dreams and ambitions are few. In many ways the absence of what is “promised” by globalisation has a more notable effect than the actual changes that do occur. While some Samburu manage to adapt in a complex social existence, others are disempowered and emasculated.

Masculinity is relational; it is defined and enacted in interactions between men and women, and in different groups of men. Consequently, generational conflict is an important theme of the chapter. This chapter will deal with the growing gap between the interests and goals of youths and the elders. For young men, proper leadership is no longer necessarily attributed to

the seniority of elders. There is a change in who and what serves as models and examples of a “good life”; that is, who—and what—should be emulated to reach new aspirations. I will explore the impact intergenerational conflict can have on intimate relations. The issue of trust and mistrust is a key facet in this exploration. Misfortune among Samburu is closely linked with moral breaches within the lineage. Even if it is a moral breach involving non-related people, the devastating effects usually expand to the nearest relations, sometimes for several generations. Trust is maintained through what is understood as “moral” acts, and it is broken by what is conceived as “immoral” acts. Elders blame the consequences of a social existence marked by conflict and poverty on the immoral behaviour among young men. *Nkanyit*, a Samburu term meaning ‘respect’ is used to describe the morality of a person. Consider for example that respect for elders, and particularly your parents, is the most essential aspect of *nkanyit*. Some of the narratives I will present near the end of this chapter are vivid descriptions of the power and consequences that a curse from an older relative has on a younger person in contemporary settings. In many ways the curse and the narratives created from the event have become a way for older generations to deplore the growing distance to their children. The narratives that fluctuate through gossip are understood as public examples and function as warnings. Simultaneously, these narratives establish for Samburu the ‘truth’ about families, their demise and/or restitution.

Mutable masculinities and the powerful young men

A regional politician of some esteem, wearing a decorated uniform, is standing in the shade of a large acacia tree. He looks out towards the crowd, men, women and children. I am comfortably seated near the back, hoping my presence creates little attention. The politician has an aura of authority, his chest held high before he speaks in Kiswahili.

You should all know this; to give passage to thieves will destroy many lives. Elders, I speak to you, your role is paramount. If there is no peace, there is no education and there is no development. Elders, you should be good role models for the young. There is great change in Kenya, and this change needs to touch Sidai as well. Every fifth year we choose our leaders, but cattle raids keep on happening, and children, mothers and elders are killed. Elders, if you let war go on, God will hold you responsible. For these small words, may God bless you.

Several speeches followed. Representatives from the government, the army, some NGOs and some religious groups had come to Sidai, mostly to address the negative trend of violence in the larger area, and partly to address the land issue specific to the location. I noticed that almost every speaker addressed the elders, and I found it, in this context, a misplaced tactic. After staying in Sidai for some time I had come to learn that power and influence was largely attributed to necessary skills and knowledge. The average age in Sidai is low, and most of the inhabitants depend on tourism in various ways. The area is highly contested politically, and is commercially dependent on nearby urban centres. Being multilingual and literate is a huge advantage when living in Sidai, and probably crucial for continued occupancy considering the political contest over the area. I have been to *lororas* and villages with a strong and powerful cluster of elders. They would meet in the *naapo* when issues were raised and make decisions which were respected by the larger community, including *lmurran*. Sidai had a *naapo*, but the meetings would usually include these young English-speaking men, including Jake, one of my key informants. His Samburu name was Lonyekie (name meaning: brown), but given his role in Sidai it feels most accurate to refer to his subject position, Jake.

Once the men of prominence had spoken, Jake stepped up in front of the crowd. He gave thanks to the visitors, speaking Kiswahili, and recited a few proverbs about Samburu hospitality and respect for the elders. It is not unusual that multilingual and educated young men and women act as the public face for Samburu villages on such occasions. But given Sidai and its dependence on tourism, the role of the public face gains, I would argue, some prominence.

I met up with Jake after the meeting, and he whispered with a smart smile: “They usually only address the elders, knowing they are cloudy in the head. It is a tactic they use which ultimately works against us”. Jake figured that the elders could be easily swayed to make a decision based only on the interests of the visiting leaders. In his opinion, the elders’ reservoir of experience and knowledge had little relevance in the face of political marginalisation. He saw it as his responsibility to make sure decisions were made based on all the facts. He had travelled to Nairobi and other cities to gather maps, historical records and law documents to help Sidai in the political land conflict they were involved in. After some years of advocacy he had gathered a significant social network stretching from regional politicians to international NGOs and researchers such as myself. I witnessed Jake making use of this network at two different occasions when rumors had surfaced that the regional County Council would attempt to enforce eviction of residents and destruction of permanent houses.

Jake was, together with a few other literate and educated young men, extremely important for Sidai, and this gave them power and influence.

Jake was seldom at odds with the elders or other members of the wider community. I followed Jake in various settings, and I never found him to be “out of place”. When he was in Isiolo or other urban areas, he made good use of his multilingual skills (English and Kiswahili), and he changed his clothes to jeans and a t-shirt. There was little evidence that he usually resided in a Samburu *nkang* (settlement). While in *Sidai*, he wore the *shoufa* with a t-shirt. He joined communal rituals, provided the same form of primary socialisation for his children as the rest of the community, and acted as was expected of a man of his age-set. Jake seemed to understand and was able to make use of the discourse used in both the rural and urban ‘world’.

Sidai is not a unique location; the place is just one of many that depend on tourism and proximity to commercial centres. Neither is Sidai exceptional as a politically contested location. I met many young men like Jake, and I consider them successful young men. With a mutable identity they are able to interact with and represent different forms of masculinity ideals. They can represent the ideal held by the state, with political power and economic entrepreneurship, though they largely lack the resources to be big-men. They can represent the ideal held by the local community, aiming to use their resources for the benefit of many, under guidance from elders. These various representations are performed through aesthetics (clothes and ornaments), behavior and language.

When tourist came to Sidai, Jake would work as a guide. I observed him at several occasions, he was an excellent guide, enthusiastic and detailed in his explanations. While Jake was a guide, other men, often much older than him, had other roles to play. Many would put on *lmurran* decorations and dance for the tourists, even though they were two and three generations past *moranhoo*. In fact, I seldom observed *lmurran* dancing for tourists and in interviews many told me that they considered it an embarrassing activity. These ideas seemed to resonate with the opinions of men in surrounding villages that did not depend on tourism. I recall interviewing an elder man at a nearby village. He had been fairly successful mixing pastoralism with business activities like selling livestock in nearby towns. “I feel sorry for those old men jumping around for tourists, just so they will not starve”. Of course, the residents in Sidai would produce a counter discourse, arguing that it is not shameful.

The stigma can be attributed to two things. First of all, the men who succumb to dancing publically proclaim that they lack visible wealth such as livestock. As we discussed in Chapter 4, the stigma of poverty is primarily attributed to the lack of visible wealth. Secondly the elder men are acting below their status as elders by dressing up like *Imurran*. I noticed that even though everyone in Sidai depended on tourism, they all strived to own livestock. Many had travelled to Sidai because they had lost their livestock in cattle raids, and was looking for a place to gain an income in other ways. However, the ultimate goal was to regain some animals that could reproduce and multiply. The men who had livestock or other alternative sources of income, like for example working as cooks at the nearby lodges, seldom came to dance for tourists.

In contrast to some of the elder men in Sidai, Jake had found a role that was respected, influential and important. He combined his role as a guide with business activities in Isiolo, and he was able to handle a considerable amount of livestock. With this livestock he was able to contribute in rituals to gain relations and status, and he created reciprocal relations with other pastoralists. Through his education and language skills he gained, as mentioned, relations on another level. Jake is a very good example of the creative cultural actor, who can change the cultural order he is part of. He was not confined by expectations and strict social norms and values; rather he was an active agent in a complex setting he was able to manipulate.

Alcohol consumption, a creative act or an act of desperation?

It was Tuesday, and the sun had been up for six hours. I could see Sancho walking with his *sobua* (walking stick) towards some men sitting under an acacia tree. I figured he was hoping for some chai. He looked towards the horizon, towards the road going through the wildlife park. I imagined he was looking for dust, or any other sign of tourists. Once he arrived at the acacia tree he uttered the formal greetings and joined the discussion. Sancho is an *lpiroi* of the *lmasula* clan, and I enjoyed a very interesting conversation with him on one of my first days after arriving in Sidai. He struck me as reflective and attentive. Sancho was poor, though not much below the standard in Sidai. He had no formal education, and though he knew Kiswahili and Turkana, he only really mastered the Samburu language. He came to Sidai some years ago, bringing one of his two wives, and their children. It was after he had lost most of his livestock in a cattle raid that he decided to come to Sidai. He was still relatively young, and he

had not been able to build up a strong network of exchange relations. In Sidai he made some money from the tourist dances and the occasional day job at one of the nearby lodges. His wife crafted and sold Samburu ornaments, and it was she who stood for most of the household revenue.

Suddenly I could hear a women shouting, there was movement in the town. At the horizon dust was gathering and getting closer. Tourists, I thought. I could see Sancho running, holding his shoufa, slipping into his house. He came out with some necklaces and bracelets and ran up to the gathering of men and women who were waiting for the tourists. Later that afternoon, I observed Sancho walking around, stumbling. He was completely drunk, and from then on I seldom met Sancho in a sober state. I realised, in fact, that he was only sober when he had absolutely no money. Sancho exemplifies one of the stigmatised men, lacking visible wealth and having to succumb to activities that are not respected by surrounding community. He had not been able to creatively adapt and utilise potential opportunities, like Jake did. But let us consider his choice to drink alcohol. Alcohol is often deemed as a negative consequence of a hurtful experience, but can it not also be a choice? A creative act?

I agree with Holtzman (2009) that alcohol consumption should not be demonised as solely negative. First of all, it generates income for women and thus it empowers women. Secondly, alcohol can be an integral part of positive socialisation, and thirdly, alcohol consumption is a status marker. Holtzman (2009: 198) makes a novel argument that drinking for elders “is a moral entitlement but also a frequently immoral act that contravenes the *nkanyit* (respect) which is basis for such entitlement”. Holtzman (2001; 2005) illustrates how local beer brewing began in Samburu district, paradoxically as a consequence of the Native Liquor Ordinance written to avoid the actual effects it produced. “Rather than limiting and controlling a dangerous drink, it actually served to promote alcohol as a social good” (Holtzman 2005: 86). Beer halls came to an abrupt end in 1978 when president Moi came to power. The halls in Samburu district were closed down, and beer brewing moved from towns to settlements. As local brewing was outlawed, it shifted to a more hidden domestic context where women brew a beer called *Busaa* and distil a liquor called *changa* “in order to gain the cash necessary for daily subsistence and other needs, a model that continues through to the present”(Holtzman, 2005: 88).

Widespread and chronic alcohol use is, then, a product of the concrete policies of colonialism and postcolonial policies promoting alcohol, and assuming its present form

as a direct result of edicts issued by the post-colonial state regarding the societal ills caused by excessive drink. (Holtzman, 2005: 88)

Holtzman (2005) also argues that the relationship between alcohol consumption and power goes beyond the historical associations with state power. Since the 1950s, alcohol consumption in Samburu district has been closely tied to both indigenous and state-centred agents of authority. With regard to the state, chiefs and administrative officials have often been linked to alcohol drinking, and consequently drinking is often viewed as a benefit for economically wealthy, politically powerful and often modernised individuals. It is one of the characteristics of the so-called big man category I described in Chapter 2. When economically privileged individuals gather at the end of the month to drink, it is not only because they have collected their pay, but also because they can display their economic status in this way and show that they are modern citizens intrinsically connected to the state power discourse. In recent years, however, alcohol is not exclusively used by individuals linked to more modern lifestyles, it is also linked to the advantages of growing old among the more traditional Samburu. Holtzman explains that “within indigenous Samburu Cultural categorisations, alcohol is intrinsically tied to power and privilege” (2005: 89). Prior to the beer halls, the only alcohol used was the ceremonial honey beer, consumed exclusively by married men in various rituals. This enhances alcohol’s association with authority, because elders are the ones who exercise local power. Is it not possible then that Sanchos choice to drink alcohol in fact was a creative act, an effort to present himself in a certain way to gain prestige? But can he really enhance his social status by acting drunk all the time?

The most notable faculty a married man should have is *nkanyit*, a word signifying the respect a man develops throughout his lifespan. In fact the lack of *nkanyit* is the main reason *Imurran* are not allowed to drink, as it is believed that they are in the course of developing this respect. When a man displays his *nkanyit* he is expected to keep his cool, stay calm and put the wellbeing of others above his own (Holtzman 2005; Straight 2007). Clearly the behaviour of *nkanyit* is in contrast to the behaviour of a drunken person. Holtzman (2005: 92) suggests that “Samburu cultural expectations of the effects of alcohol create an alternative subjectivity, which subverts normal patterns of deference and respect”, meaning that the associations of authority attributed to alcohol creates an ability to subvert *nkanyit*. Thus, drinking alcohol can be another way to subvert temporalities, as I discussed in Chapter 5 (see Meiu 2015). But it

can also be produced from apathy and distress, a strong feeling of powerlessness. I found this latter situation to be the case in Sidai and Kitók, and it was often related to the stigma of poverty. This stigma is an important factor in a Samburu man's self-image, and it affects the dynamic within the domestic sphere and larger social field. In Sidai Sancho was one of several other men who had lost most of their livestock and who depended solely on the domestic economy controlled by their wives. It can still be argued that drinking alcohol was a creative act by Sancho, but he would probably not have done it if he had been able to find a way to gain livestock and economic independence. But at least there is a positive consequence of alcohol consumption, the empowerment of women?

Women are responsible for all general activity within the family's *ηkan* (home) and should ideally reap the benefits from any economy connected to the domestic space (see Holtzman 2001). In Sidai, women often ended up becoming the sole breadwinners, as they ruled the only stable economies, brewing alcohol and selling artefacts to tourists. This imbalance sometimes led to family disputes and in some cases to domestic violence. Naimalmalu, an older *lgira* woman, complained that her husband kept stealing her income just to drink it up. "A good man", she told me, "should be able to provide for his family, but the men in this town, they are mostly just drunks. Their wives are the providers because they sell ornaments to tourists and *changa* to men". I met another woman in Sidai called Neeresia (name meaning: born during war). She managed to control her husband's alcohol addiction by giving him discount prices. Neeresia was the sole manager of the family economy, and brewing definitely gave her power and an independence she probably would not have had otherwise.

Some young men are disenfranchised and out of place as a result of a broken cattle economy and a declining labour market. I have already discussed how poverty among pastoralists can lead to a loss of personal dignity and social status. Sancho was a married man, and in the processes of building up the material and social means necessary for achieving respectability as an elder, he ended up disempowered and in certain respects emasculated. Like a number of other men I met, he could not live up to the cultural expectation to be a breadwinner and strategic economic planner.

Essentialising tradition – a creative act

Crawling up the long and steep hill, I could see a Samburu woman looking down at me from the top. She was traditionally dressed in red painted cowhide. My assistant and I climbed the

last steps, and she soon came to greet us, inviting us in for a cup of tea. Nenkila (name meaning: wearer of skin) was a laibon, a position usually attributed to men, but recently more often adopted by married women. However, women laibon act out the position in a different way. As we sat down, she looked at me for a long time before she spoke.

One may seek riches, wealth, good health, education or information. Everybody can get a problem and God rewards those who seek. If someone has food in his/her house, but cannot cook, then he or she will still be hungry. I can see you are looking for something, and God (*Nkai*) will reward you for travelling so far away from you parents.

Nenkila told me that she had said to her daughter some weeks ago: “Look! A muzungu is coming”. She had seen my arrival in a vision.

The first time I had a vision, a *mzungu* woman came and she had a conversation with me. It was not a verbal communication, but our hearts communicated. She was white, and she was a Rastafarian, and she spoke with her heart (*neirorie the ltan*). The second time it was a *mzungu* man (white man), a priest, and he came from the sky. He was wearing white robes, but it was impossible to see how his hands and eyes looked. He told me to convey his message to the women near my home, that we should all turn to tradition, and worship and praise God.

My meeting with Nenkila happened in 2011, but that was not my first meeting with laibon women. In 2008, I met Naamali (name meaning: of wealth) in Nyiro, a small town in the far north of the district. For the past nine years, Naamali had had visions of a person of shifting gender, age and physical appearance. The messengers in her vision conveyed the same message as the ones in Nenkila’s, that she must do specific acts associated with the continuation and protection of traditional Samburu life. Following the visions’ call for tradition, they were both mobilising the local women to go for fertility rituals such as *borosi*, *ntorosi* and *lamal*. All of the rituals are principally performed by women, and all are related to fertility and procreation in humans, animals and nature. The women are encouraged to decorate themselves as aesthetically near the idealised image of tradition as possible. Naamali and Nenkila were insistent that only “clean” women could join these rituals. By ‘clean’ they referred to women who were circumcised and who otherwise had followed Samburu moral values.

The conventional Samburu laibon is usually male and he gains his inborn power from his father. It is usually also his father that teaches him the art of divination. Traditionally laibon has been an integral part of planned cattle raids, and they have had community responsibilities to ensure the necessary condition for reproduction of humans and animals. The women laibon I met gained their power from visions, and they were able to mobilise the community in a different way, focusing especially on women.

There are stories of Samburu meeting *Nkai* dating back to pre-colonial times (see Straight 2007). Maybe these visions represent something similar to what Comaroff and Comaroff (1993) suggested, namely efforts to gain control over rapid and massive changes in society. In the light of Evans-Pritchard's (1937) description of witchcraft among the Azande, these visions might make up an instructive model to explain and cope with unlikely events in everyday life. In Naamali's visions *Nkai* always offered explanations as to why misfortune occurred, and guidelines for how to protect against them. The negative attributes of pride and selfishness were referred to in the visions as individualistic behaviour, whereas a social and sharing behaviour is appropriate.

In today's Samburu world of transmutation it must be difficult to know what the proper behaviour is and how to make the best choices. Sharing, giving and building mutually beneficial relationships are challenged by the impossibility of making a living from pastoralism. The favourable cooperation between rich and poor, which ultimately should benefit both, is challenged by an "every man for himself" way of life, where the poor do badly underpaid work for the rich. The proper behaviour of *nkanyit* is challenged by manners influenced by drunkenness, greed and desperation. One could argue that it is not strange at all that people facing these changes have visions of *Nkai* that encourage tradition. Ultimately the visions invoked creative acts, pushing the laibon and her followers male and female to change the course of events in their favor. Naamali then, is a creative cultural actor, just like the men I have presented so far in this thesis, and the value she wants to restore is connected to both femininity and masculinity. Some other informants, however, especially young men, invoked a completely contradictory ideal as a response to the same challenges, an ideal formed by the Kenyan state, inspired by the colonial discourse of development.

Removing the beads

In the course of my fieldwork I visited various institutions like schools and hospitals. One of the schools I visited in the southeast part of Samburu district, had organised a foreign-funded project entitled ‘Removing the Beads’. Their overall goal was not only to recruit and educate children and youths, but also to police a moral transformation: moving away from what they consider ‘negative traditional’ into what they think of as being ‘positive modern’. They gave me a pamphlet, showing pictures of Samburu girls and boys before (with beads) and after (without beads), celebrating the latter. Pastoralism as a lifestyle is, in this context, integral to the idea of ‘negative traditions’ (Anderson 2002; Broch-Due 2000b).

“My parents are primitive, they do not know anything. Hopefully I can educate myself and help them out of poverty and ignorance”, Peter told me. Peter was wearing jeans and a red t-shirt, he emphasised that he was only home for the school holidays. “I am planning to take some sort of vocational training once I complete secondary school”. Peter asked me: “Why are you here? In this place?” as if he saw me as misplaced. His Samburu name was Longidai, a name that means *born during happy times*, but he insisted that I call him Peter. I could sense that Peter felt a certain kind of bond with me, as though we were in a related situation, two “modern” people stuck in the wrong context. I tried to explain that I was doing research, but he could not understand what I was supposed to learn from ‘these people’. Peter had affection for his family, but also a kind of shame. He was embarrassed by where he came from and what, in his view, his ethnic group as a whole represented.

Peter reproduced a discourse where modernity and tradition are opposite poles, but for me, modernity is a condition of totality, just like globalisation. And I have never met a Samburu who was not in some form or other part of that totality, including Peter’s parents, who I also came to know through interviews and conversation. I met many other young men like Peter, and I met young women with similar views. Some of them had broken all ties with their parents; others simply endeavoured to help their parents with the “correct” knowledge, making the “sensible” modern decisions.

In Archers I met a young man named Lkontiren together with two of his age-mates. They were of the Lkishami age-set and shared a very small flat in town. A relative in Nairobi paid for the flat. Lkontiren lamented the fact that he had been forced out of primary education at a young age, and he tried to save enough money to re-enrol in school. “I just arrived back from two months in Meru, asking *paran* from an uncle, hoping he could spare some money for

school fees”. *Paran* signifies a request for reciprocal exchange, but Lkontiren’s venture had been unsuccessful. The little income he earned came from occasional construction work. But he was usually rebuffed in his efforts due to his lack of education and necessary certificates. Lkontiren’s days were usually uneventful, walking around in town, looking for friends who might help him with a meal. Lkontiren and his friends couldn’t see any hope in a pastoralist lifestyle: “I purchased some livestock once, but my family ‘ate’ it up fast. There is no future in pastoralism”. As I have already mentioned, the absence of what is “promised” from globalisation has a more notable effect than the actual changes that do occur. Various efforts are made to fill in this void, like for example migration to Mombasa in the hope of a sexual liaison with older European women.

The post-colonial political discourse offered new notions of seniority and gerontocratic authority. In the wake of post-colonial processes, Samburu men tried to embody a combination of the national ideal of powerful masculinity and local ideals of elderhood. I have discussed how young men involved in the ethno-erotic industry still today try to subvert the temporalities of aging (see also Meiu 2015). For the young men engaged in sex work, the goal is to transform their wealth into something that is acknowledged locally. But Peter seemed to distance himself from anything “local”, he told me that he had been circumcised in a clinic and laughed sarcastically when I asked whether he had performed any ceremonies. For Lkontiren, Peter and many of their peers, the ideal masculinity seemed almost exclusively to align with the discourse of the state. The traditional elders’ capital reservoir of experience and knowledge had lost relevance for them.

Young men and the relationships they have with close family are important for our understanding of changing aspects of masculinity. The gendered identity is formed through a socialization process where intimate relations are built and reinforced through rituals. I met many young men like Peter who distanced themselves from this socialization process as soon as they were able to.

Intimacy and trust among Samburu

A Samburu father came from afar to visit his son who was a high-ranking army officer. The purpose was to claim *paran* from a son he had not seen for a long time. In the

military camp the rule was that visitors had to be granted passage from the soldier on guard. His son was absent, and therefore the father had to wait for a long time. The son eventually arrived. But due to his rank as a senior officer, he told the junior officers: 'Do you think my father would be dressed in this way and be unable to speak Kiswahili or English? This is not my father, take him away!' Other Samburu present knew that the man was indeed the officer's father. Nevertheless, the officer denied his father out of pride, ashamed of his poverty. The old man left saying 'Let *Nkai* decide if I am your father!'. The father was given some money by other Samburu in the camp and left for his home in Wamba. On an official trip some time later, the officer's car crashed, He was thrown out and smashed his head on the ground with his brain splattered all over the place. He was the only fatality.

This story is one of many I heard during my fieldwork, and some others will be presented towards the end of this chapter. These stories often circulated through gossip in social gatherings, and they surfaced in my conversations with elders when we discussed intergenerational conflict. For the Samburu, occult powers are stronger and more dangerous within intimate relations, and in view of recent changes, these powers are becoming a way for elders to handle the growing conflict with younger generations. The narratives circulating through gossip are understood as public examples of a proper way of living. They function as warnings from the elders to the young of what will befall those who stray from the right pathways. But they also show the ambiguity of trust in intimate relations.

What is trust, however? According to Margit Ystanes, theoretical approaches to the concept of trust are often reductive and mostly based on Western intuitive understandings. She argues that "trust is a universal phenomenon, yet it is formed in different ways depending on the context" (Ystanes, 2011:6). This insight aligns with the Samburu context where such terms as hope (*siligi*) and belief (*nkurukoto*) are central for understanding the cultural construction of trust. For example, if a person wants to borrow an animal through *sile* (debt), the potential lender might ask: '*Keirukoi ale tungani*' or '*keisiligai ale tungani*?' meaning 'can this person be believed' and 'can this person be hoped for'. *Nkurokoto* (belief) is related to the term *keirukoi*, meaning 'someone with response', and this term is used to describe someone as reliable or trustworthy. Mistrust, however, is referred to with an opposing prefix to the same terms, *me* replacing *ke*. For example '*Meisligai ale tungani*' literally means 'this person cannot be hoped for'.

In the context of Samburu exchange, Hardin's (2006) notion of trust as an 'encapsulated interest' is relevant. Person A will trust person B because he thinks it is in the interest of person B to take the interest of person A seriously. This calculative and formal approach is similar to Gambetta (1988), who argues that trusting someone involves an implication of probability that the trustworthy person will do something beneficial. Correspondingly, calling someone untrustworthy implies a low probability of benefits from the person. *Paran* signifies a request for reciprocal exchange. It builds relations which give security for the future, and the exchange will ensure any assistance the receiver is capable of repaying. *Sile*, on the other hand, involves a moral expectation that the receiver will return livestock of a value equal to what he was given. But Hardin (2006) and Gambetta's (1988) notions of trust fall short of explaining other forms of exchange relations among Samburu. Consider for example the exchange relation with affinal clans; here we can observe what we might call a 'productive' mistrust. Courtesy, small gifts and livestock are exchanged in order to avoid dangerous confrontations and conflicts (see Spencer, 2004).

How trust and intimacy interact is not always evident; among Samburu it is far easier to understand mistrust. Let us consider Daniel and Knudsen's (1995) view on mistrust as aggregated to a state of awareness. In contrast, they see trust as an unconscious effect, rather resembling Bourdieu's idea of habitus or what Martin Heidegger tried to capture with his notion of 'being in the world' (1995:1). Furthermore, Daniel and Knudsen note: 'the capacity to trust must be underwritten by the capacity to tame chance, especially the chance of being hurt. This capacity is not an individual matter but a gift that a cultural society gives a person' (1995:2). Viewing trust in this way align well with my experience from Samburu. Trust in its negative form is central in this juncture; trusting that people will not do things, trusting that your elders will not curse you. Furthermore, the authors' notion of trust inspires us to consider the foundation of sociality, and therefore how the social security which is taken for granted, is created (see Ystanes 2011).

While affinal relations are sustained through 'productive' mistrust, I would argue that the descent-based kin group, and fictive kin established through rites of passage, are sustained through 'productive' trust. It is to their kin that someone can turn when they find themselves in crisis or trouble. It is these relations that guarantee a successful start to a pastoralist career, and these relations continue to act as an economic security. When older Samburu have passed through the 'age grade ladder', they can rely on their children to take care of them. Kinship relations are manifested through the exchange of symbolic substances like *lorien*, meaning

luck, and *latukuny* (see Straight 2007). *Latukuny* literally means dirt, but it signifies a substance that is always propitious when exchanged within intimate relations. *Latukuny* and *lorien* contain the essence of the bearer that can be attributed to various abilities, for example the person's generative fortune or fertility. The substance is at once deeply embodied and shared between intimate relations in a lineage. Such exchanges take place in everyday life and are a significant aspect in various rites of passage. When a girl marries, for instance, her mother makes and hands her daughter the *mporo* necklace, in the process giving the daughter aspects of her propitious qualities (Straight, 2002). Also, we can observe that a son may be given a walking stick (*sobua*) by his father, ensuring that the father's luck (*lorien*) in livestock matters is transferred. These binding properties express the tokens of benevolence inherited or given in intimate relations. But, as I return to below, the objects given also act as a reminder of the disastrous effect of abusing these core relations: It is because of these shared substances that curses from a man's parents are so potent and effective and therefore should be the very last resort. I do not regard cultural concepts such as *latukuny*, *lorien*, *Nkai* (divinity) and *nkanyit* as static, unchanging constructs, but rather as dynamic and historically situated ways of engaging with the world at large. Furthermore, these values and practices are not only informed by history, but they continue to shape its course in various ways. Although my focus will be on the present, I will draw on the historical dimension of these terms and practices.

My ethnographic material suggests that the notion of intimacy is far from the 'safe haven' of mutual trust and love as claimed by Anthony Giddens (1992). In contrast, Lauren Berlant sees intimacy as filled with ambiguity: '[...] intimacy only rarely makes sense of things [...] it destabilizes the very things that institutions of intimacy are created to stabilize; and people are constantly surprised by this' (Berlant 1998: 286). In my experience, Samburu intimacy differs substantially across families, making it difficult to generalize. Whilst relationships between parents and grown children appear mostly affectionate, they are also marked by distance, dominated by economic dependence, social rules and respect. In contrast, relationships between alternate generations, like grandchildren and grandparents, are usually more easy-going and relaxed. In accord with what prevails in some other African societies (Geschiere 2003), there seems to be a close link between intimacy and occult aggression among Samburu. We might ask whether this 'intimate evil' problematizes the notion of trust as something that is only realized when mistrust happens? The threat of a curse (*ldekēt*), a sin (*njoki*) or witchcraft (*nkurepeta*) must, at least to a certain degree, be formed consciously. All adult Samburu are aware of the potentially disastrous consequences of behaving immorally

towards those regarded as 'intimate'. However, moral acts, like trust, are largely taken for granted, while immoral acts, like mistrust, are made explicit.

In order to reflect further on this question, let us return to the narrative presented above. Perhaps anticipating some hesitation from his son, the father certainly did not expect such a harsh denial of their relationship. The father undertook the long and costly journey because he trusted his son to receive him with both respect and understanding. And had it been the son travelling to his father for assistance, he would similarly have expected proper treatment. Surely, the father did not come with the intention of cursing his son even if assistance was not forthcoming. What about the son? Did he consider the potential threat facing him as a consequence of his actions? Maybe he simply did not care and chose a course of action that he thought was logical in order to establish and protect his status as a 'modern' and 'developed' Samburu? Could we say that in some ways he had moved out of the social world his father lived in, a 'lifeworld' in which a son should nurture the intimate bond with his parents and other important relations? If this was the case, he might have viewed curses and other occult power as a form of superstition. We must take into account that this story was told by an elder while the listeners were two younger men, my research assistant and I. The story was prompted by my questions on whether the old man had experienced changes in the relationship between *lmurran* and the senior age-sets. What I wish to highlight is the message in the narrative. What was the old man trying to tell us with this story? The narrative is an example of how trust among Samburu is something that is maintained through what could be understood as 'moral' acts, while it can be broken through what is conceived as 'immoral' acts. "Proper morality" is learned in the Samburu socialization process, which is also important in the formation of the gendered identity.

Generational conflict and the foundational principles of socialisation

The foundational principles of socialization in the homestead are connected to the rules, regulations and expectations learned through Samburu rituals. Intimate relations should ideally be maintained according to the expectations of the larger community, or otherwise follow the rules appointed by *lpiroi*, "the ritual elders". In Chapter 3 I explained how a new age-set is opened approximately every 15th year, and a new generation of *lmurran* is then initiated. These rituals are not only about being raised to a new status, they are equally about becoming Samburu, and in this sense about becoming complete or whole. These rituals

should ideally take place in a *lorora*, a makeshift village constructed for the purpose of performing the *lmugin* together. A *lorora* ideally consists of one clan, and houses are constructed in a circle, put up in a clockwise order of segmental seniority.

The *lorora* is a good example of how the private sphere is interconnected with the public space. The foundational principles for social relations in the public space are connected to the general status of a man's lineage. This status is built up through the amount of visible wealth, such as the various forms of livestock, the number of wives and children as well as the completion of rituals and proper behaviour in public situations. Most importantly, however, status is intrinsically connected to building up a large network of economic relations of reciprocity.

During the age-set of *Lmooli* which opened in 1990, the number of *lorora* villages was significantly higher than it was in the opening of the age-set of Lkishami in 2005. There are many reasons for this, and some are connected to the dwindling opportunities to pursue subsistence pastoralism. Expanding social networks and strengthening one's reputation by doing rituals in a *lorora* is advantageous for a pastoralist, but less so for someone harvesting grain on a farm, doing wage labour in towns or engaging at some level in the tourist industry. Today rituals are often performed within each individual family, and some young men simply go to a medical clinic to get circumcised without performing any rituals.

Lmurrans should ideally form a collective set apart from the rest of society, for the purpose of protecting and helping the larger community in their local area. But young men often seek more individual opportunities, ignoring customary responsibilities and expectations. Elders frequently complain about young people's lack of *nkanyit* and other forms of inappropriate moral behaviour, and they warn of the implications which unacceptable conduct will have on individual *lmurrans*, the current age-set Lkishami and Samburu society in general.

As I have already mentioned, *nkanyit* is the respect a man develops throughout his lifetime, and *moranhood* is the most important stage of learning it; thus it is something which is ascribed through behaviour, but also achieved through completing important rituals. *Nkanyit* is part of a general moral guidance, which includes rules concerning both good husbandry of animals and appropriate conduct in social relationships and marriage. *Lmurrans* who are not completing rituals in a proper way are a reason for concern for the elders, because it results in a situation where important 'moral' rules are not learned. There is also concern about

Imurrans playing down responsibilities like taking livestock to *lale* (grazing areas) and protecting the community from enemy cattle raids, or the elders might be concerned about *Imurran* breaking taboos like eating in their mother's house or breaking social rules like having sex with married women.

Generational conflict between older and younger men is not new among Samburu. Labour migration and various forms of cooperation with the colonial government have created tensions between older and younger generations for a long time. Furthermore, according to Spencer (2004; 1973) intergenerational conflict is built into the very structure of the relations between the age grades. Samburu practice polygamy and men are only allowed to marry after their *moranhoo*, when a new age-set is opened. The *lpiroi*, who decide when a new age-set should open, want to delay it as long as possible, as it would destabilize their monopoly on girls to marry (Spencer, 2004). Jon Holtzman (2006; 2009) has written more recent contributions on intergenerational conflict among Samburu. He argues that when young men breach the *lminong* (eating regulations), it disrupts moral boundaries fundamental to patterns of *nkanyit* (respect). Holtzman makes a novel contribution in claiming that the power of elders was never as great as either the elders or the colonial government would have liked. Investing authority in elders was part of the colonial government strategy of indirect rule. This might also explain why the ethnographies from Paul Spencer ascribe a more unambiguous authority to elders compared with my own more recent findings. It might simply be because elders did have more power during the time of Spencer's early fieldworks.

The most central teachings of *nkanyit* and the Samburu moral universe touch on the relationship between age-sets within a lineage: To take care of, respect and obey the wishes and needs of your immediate elders. Breaking these rules can have dire consequences and open up for the potential use of occult powers. This brings us to the crux of the entire issue; it seems that the authority of elders has diminished because their capital reservoir of experience and knowledge has lost relevance for Samburu youths. It is a matter of who and what serves as models and examples of a 'good life' for young men; who – and what – should be emulated to reach new aspirations.

Who do young men trust for instructions and guidance to prosperity? In one sense we could argue that elders are replaced with teachers or other agents associated with government institutions. But I also think trusting each other, trusting your age-mates who hold similar ideas and seek similar opportunities, matters to the Samburu. Some of the choices young men

make might be made to please their seniors, to affirm their ideal roles in society, while at other times their choices might be taken to protest against this ideal. In any case, we cannot treat youths as a residual category whose actions are exclusively directed by adults (Lovell, 2006). Elders try to challenge what they see as erosion of seniority, most saliently through the curse or the treat of a curse through storytelling. Samburu elders believe that their guidance will preserve the well-being of the larger community. In this way, elders can justify acts normally considered immoral, like for example a curse uttered against their own kin.

Narratives on occult power – breaking trust

Among Samburu there are three main powers associated with misfortune in the life of an individual, his nuclear family unit or his lineage. These are *ldeket* (curse), *njoki* (sin) and *nkurepeta* ('witchcraft'). The curse (*ldeket*) is the most common cause of misfortune, and it usually occurs within the same lineage. Straight (2007:97) writes that anger or other negative emotions start in the stomach (*nkosheke*). If this anger is voiced it moves to the heart (*ltau*), where breath (*nkiyenet*) originates. 'From there' Straight writes, 'it can pass with *nkiyenet* and *nkamilak* ('saliva') into *ltoilo* ('voice'), to form the words of the *ldeket*' (Straight 2007:97). It is always up to *Nkai* whether a curse will take effect or not, and even though anyone has the capacity to curse someone else, I have yet to hear of a person successfully cursing anyone from an age-set senior to his own. The potency of a curse is also stronger if it is uttered by an older relative. As I discussed in the introduction, we can link this to personal 'substance' like for example *latukuny* shared by close relations. Also the strength of the anger that builds in the stomach (*nkosheke*) has substantial significance for the effect of the curse. Sometimes this anger creates an un-uttered curse which goes from the stomach of the originator to the person he or she is angry with.

Njoki can be directly translated as 'sin', or a 'sinful act', but the concept is more complex. *Njoki* can be a direct consequence of *ldeket*, but one can also contract it from doing what is considered to be unpropitious acts. The concept also refers to animal or human infants born with severe bodily defects. Children's diseases, especially physical handicaps, are often associated with a *njoki*. But a *njoki* can also be responsible for continuous and unexpected deaths in the family or extremely bad luck in livestock rearing. According to Straight (2007) a *njoki* will follow a family for nine age-sets (about four birth generations). The unpropitious acts that can cause a *njoki* to emerge are numerous (one such act is withholding food from a

hungry person). There are important aspects with *njoki*, I believe, that has come with Christianity. Straight (2007: 106) notes a parallel to Exodus 34:7 where God says he will visit “the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation”. She suggests that Samburu frequently cite passages or verses from the Bible in an effort to explain Samburu practice. But we might also suggest that *njoki* could have had a very different meaning prior to Christianity. As I have mentioned, these terms are not static cultural constructs, but dynamic and historically situated in how they relate to everyday life. Though few of my informants had ideas of such a specific number as nine age-sets, they all agreed that a *njoki* is often inherited from far back in the history of a lineage. Maybe we could link this to ordeals in the colonial administration? Being able to trace one’s genealogy became extremely important during colonial times, in order to justify rights to pasture. *Nkurepeta* is translated by my English-speaking informants as ‘witchcraft’. *Nkurepeta* usually involves an intentional act of evil motivated by self-centred feelings like jealousy, resentment or hate. *Nkurepeta* is most often performed by putting some kind of substance in the victim’s drink, placing an unpropitious object under someone’s pillow, or stealing a very important possession (sometimes a bodily substance) from the person.

Below I present some narratives collected in the highland areas near the town of Maralal and the lowland areas near Isiolo town, because they express some typical features of the more general processes outlined. I will focus on how the stories instruct the listener about potential threats and the dreadful consequences of what the narrator views as immoral behaviour. I believe these narratives can shed some light on how intergenerational conflict affects trust within intimate relations. Let us start with a salient story told by one of my key informants, an older Samburu man named Lwargisa living near Archers Post. It is a story about the *langata* relationship, a tie between segmentary lineages in Samburu society, described as “brotherhood by descent” by Spencer (2004).

Four *lmurran* went to steal an old man’s livestock to eat at *loikar* (meat eating camps). Out of these four, two had a *langata* relationship with the man. They left evidence behind, and everyone knew they were the ones who took the livestock. The owner confronted the *lmurran*, and told them to confess. When the *lmurran* denied, the old man cursed them, saying: ‘I will start with the two of you that I have *langata* with’. The first *lmurrani* was killed and eaten by a lion while walking in the bush, only his skull with some hair was left of him. The second climbed a tree while he had left his spear standing up under it. He fell and landed on the spear. He was severely wounded, but did

not die. A poisonous snake bit the third one. This went on until other elders in the community stopped it. They took the three *Imurran* still alive to the owner of the livestock; the *Imurran* confessed, and the owner decided to be merciful and bless (*mayian*) them.

“Lwargisa, Elder, Archers Post”

I think Lwargisa wanted to demonstrate that that these young men were given fair warning, they ignored it and as a consequence had to experience the devastating power of a curse before they realised their mistake. This narrative also shows that some curses can be reversed through a blessings (*mayian*) from the person who cast the curse. I also heard many stories about cursed individuals begging for forgiveness. *Mayian* is believed to be essential prior to any cattle raid, and it is procured from specialists like a *laisi* or older relatives. *Laisi* are specific lineages within certain clans who are born with great powers to curse and bless. As cattle raids are potential life-or-death situations, young men participating in them are extremely vulnerable. I was told numerous times by elders that they will curse an *Imurrani* who goes for cattle raids against their wishes. These stories are often short and concise, ending with the *Imurrani* dead at the hands of his enemies. The longer and more descriptive narratives I encountered were usually about breaking conventional rules which the young men should have followed; partly by virtue of being Samburu, but most essentially because they are *Imurran*. The next story I want to present was told by an older man named Loisau in Archers Post. Loisau lived outside town and had come to see if he could sell some of his livestock. He told me several stories throughout the day, and this narrative came up when I asked him how he viewed the behaviour of *Imurran* today compared to earlier age-sets.

Ntupukwa was a widow and she had only one son, Lporisa. One day when Ntupukwa was away, Lporisa brought some of his age-mates into her house. They broke into her box, took out sugar and tea leaves to make tea for themselves. As they were drinking, some of the *Imurran* opened the mother's *mbene* (personal bag) and took some of the ornaments. When the mother came home she found her house broken into, and she soon learned that her son was responsible. Ntupukwa became so angry that she cursed him, saying 'if he has slept in this stomach, he will no longer live, and wherever he goes, he will only go one way, and never return'. Shortly thereafter Lporisa participated in a raid. He was stabbed through his stomach with a spear and died. Ntupukwa was satisfied that her wish was fulfilled and she lived without any sons thereafter.

“Loisau, Elder, Archers Post”

No curse is considered more powerful than a mother’s curse. When mothers curse their children, they often refer to the fact that the child came from her body. What is salient in this story is how the men imposed on a gendered domain which they should have avoided at all costs. Eating their mothers’ food is breaking the prohibitions of *lminong* (food regulations), and breaking in and stealing from their mothers’ *mbene* makes the act even more ‘immoral’.

Let us consider some of the dramatic effects in these narratives. Many of the stories ended in very descriptive brutality, and this was also emphasized by the narrator’s tone of voice. The vocalizations seem to stress the grave failure of the cursed person, like a warning of what happens to the foolish. The very notion that a mother cursing her only son lived happily thereafter, has a dramatic effect. The stories offer no grief over those who were cursed and died. Given that ‘immoral deeds’ can affect not only the offender but also his extended family, we can also see that some honour is returned to the lineage as it is rid of a negative interaction. At the same time, we observe that the action of cursing implies an ambivalent mix of justice and danger. The effect on the public discourse, then, is partly as a public warning and partly as a redressing of some form of balance. But there is an interesting twist here, related to the differences I saw while on the one hand retrieving the narratives people told about others, and on the other hand retrieving narratives people told about themselves. Let us consider a story that I picked up through public gossip. The narrator was a young female Samburu in Sidai, and she told the story when my research assistant and I were sitting in her house drinking tea. She was speaking in a low voice as if she was telling us a secret.

The family of Lenaruni was rich and successful in livestock rearing. The oldest brother, Lkiles, had livestock, which ensured a successful transition for his two sons from moran-hood into married life. Both of his sons were bright, and they excelled in business. Eventually their endeavours brought them far from home. There came a day when their father got old and he was soon to die. He kept on asking for his sons to come before he died, but they never came. People ran to collect them, but they refused to come home, saying they were busy. By not coming they forced misfortune on themselves. What is worse; Lkiles cursed them both, most forcefully the oldest son James. The family has since suffered greatly, their children die or get very sick, they have no livestock left, nor any other money. The family has a *njoki* and it will follow them for generations.

“Lena, young married women, Sidai”

Later in my fieldwork I talked to a woman called Nasheunye . At the time I was doing interviews and collecting narratives from people who had experienced upheavals in their lives. Nasheunye told me that three of her children had died shortly after birth. The children who had survived infancy were all suffering from serious illnesses. Her family had to pay big medical bills and had serious economic problems as a consequence. Nasheunye visited three *loibons* in an effort to find an explanation for her misfortune. She claimed that one loibon did not know the reason behind her hardship, and two others blamed it on *nkurepeta* (witchcraft) from someone outside of their lineage. It took me some time to connect the dots, but eventually I realised that the narrative about the family of Lenaruni was about Nasheunye and her family. Gossip in the public space revealed another reason for her family’s misfortune, and according to this gossip, all of the *loibon* that Nasheunye sought out, gave her the same reason for her misfortune, a *njoki* materialised through her husband’s sin.

After giving these contrasting narratives some thought, I realised that when people spoke about their own misfortune, they seldom blamed it on grave mistakes committed by themselves or their intimate relations. In Nasheunye’s case it should be noted that it is considered unpropitious to speak about close relations who have passed away (see also Straight, 2007:118) and this could be a reason why she avoided talking about her deceased father in law. I would argue that it was also concealed because of the shame associated with what her husband and his brother had done. For the neighbours, Nasheunye ’s situation was a living example of the grave misfortune the family had brought upon themselves through sinful and foolish acts. We can see, then, that narratives of misfortune in public discourse also figure as a discursive practice in order to establish the ‘truth’ about families. The misfortune of the Lenaruni family can also be related to generational schisms. The sons had been smart and innovating, combining pastoralism with new ideas. The narrative suggests that they were too busy to respect social norms related to funeral rites and too busy to respect their father’s dying wish.

Intergenerational conflict is not new; it has been there in different ways, at different times, at least since the beginning of colonial administration (i.e. Spencer 2004; Holtzman 2006). It is my argument that intergenerational conflict gains a new importance due to the decline of

pastoralism, accelerated by the massive social correlatives related to a transforming landscape and coupled with processes of globalisation and modernity.

In this chapter I have briefly explored how the ideals of modernity and traditions make ripples into the mind-sets of my informants. I have argued that conventional social hierarchies in the public and private space are challenged by the younger generations; their opinions are often supported by the dominant discourse on salient subjects like tourism, development, education, family and health. Young people generate their own individual and collective future, and many aspire to educational or economic opportunities lying outside the elders' reservoir of experience and knowledge. In that process they often forego important responsibilities and ignore conventional rules, taboos and social restrictions associated with important cultural concepts. Cultural concepts such as *nkanyit* (respect), *lmugin* (rites of passage) and *lminong* (eating prohibition) make up the fabric of what is considered good 'moral'. Intimate social bonds are created through *lmugin* (rites of passage) and in everyday life through the transference of substances such as *latukuny* and *lorien*. These bonds are continuously reaffirmed through moral conduct appropriated from for example *nkanyit* and *lminong*, and this builds the basis for trust between close kin. Elders use occult powers to address the growing divide between them and the younger generations. The narratives that emerge in public discourse instruct Samburu by highlighting the implications of transgressing appropriate 'morality'. However, the stories I have quoted also show that the relationship between occult power and intimacy can be interpreted in different ways, and the Samburu moral landscape contains multiple ways of relating to these narratives.

Some concluding remarks

In this last chapter I have closed up an argument that recurs throughout my thesis. Young Samburu men are creative cultural actors in a transforming 'landscape'. They are navigating against a background marked by political marginalisation, conflict and poverty, yet they are active participants in the formation of this context and the place they hold within it.

The relationship between masculinity and historical events are important, not because masculinities are produced by history, but because present-day masculinities are constantly enacted in a dynamic relationship with history. In Chapter 2, *the Continual Reproduction of Colonial History*, I attempt to present the history relevant for my informants in a gender perspective. In the colonial history of Kenya, gender is particularly intertwined with colonial ideas on 'race' and ethnicity. Young Samburu men interact dynamically with the images constructed in colonial times, because these images are reproduced in the post-colonial era. Pastoralists are still viewed as "primitive" by the Kenyan government, and up to this day Samburu are presented as the "noble savage" by global tourist operators in marketing campaigns. This chapter is important because history sets the stage. The historical focus does not only explain the longer running process of transmutation, but it also shows how the poverty-producing policies from the colonial period are recreated in the post-colonial governance. The view of pastoralism has remained more or less static, in the sense that it is negative towards pastoralism as a mode of production. But the consequences of the poverty-producing policies change along with changes in Kenyan society. A particularly important point in this chapter is that colonial policies involving Samburu were aimed especially at young men. The colonial government considered the *Imurran* unpredictable, and they were intimidated by the collective nature of *moranhoo*d. Through economic sanctions and various forms of corporal punishment the colonial government made attempts to wipe out the age-set institution completely. However, the Samburu were not passive victims, easily bending to the force of the government. The age-set institution still exists today, taking various forms depending on the context and situation, more meaningful for some than others. The importance of history will be seen in all of the chapters that follow.

In Chapter 3, *Ritual performance and the creation of masculinities* I show how rituals are history in the making, shaping the current generation of men. Rites of passage during *moranhoo*d are absolutely essential in the Samburu formation of masculinity. In the course of

several *lmugit* rituals they are transformed into adulthood. Rites of passage among the Samburu involve obtaining new propitious abilities, values and rights, but equally important is the cut (*adjun*) from the old. For the Samburu *lmurran* the implications of the cut (*adjun*) are massive. Cut away is his dependence on his mother and other intimate relations, from now on and at least until he is married; he is on his own but has the potential assistance from his age-mates and the overall community. The moral freedom he has enjoyed as a child is cut away, replaced with a series of rules and cultural expectations. But the rites of passage are also about becoming something new, it is about becoming a man and a pastoralist. The initiates are educated in appropriate *nkanyit* (respect) and moral behaviour by their ritual leaders (*lpiroi*). In this chapter I also argue that the performance and aesthetics of *moranhoo*d plays an important role in the formation of masculinity, not only in rituals, but also in casual encounters in everyday life.

In Chapter 4, *Violence and Masculinity*, I present a multidimensional view of violence, in an attempt to show how violence and masculinity are interconnected within the context of Northern Kenya. In Northern Kenya, violence is both expressive and instrumental, often at the same time. Violence is driven by both internal and external forces, individual and social, local and global. These forces work together, mutually dependent on each other, to create the conflict scenarios in Northern Kenya. I found the idea of a ‘poetic of violence’ (Whitehead 2004) useful for investigating the relationship with external forces and the actions of individual agents. In this chapter I argue that violence has creative and formative dimensions. The choice to perform a cattle raid can be a creative decision. I do not mean creative in a normative sense of the word. The actions are likely to have negative implications for the actor himself and the group he is part of. Violence can be performed in an effort to deal with various challenges such as poverty. Violence in this sense might be used as a “tool” to creatively combat negative implications for personal dignity. The connection with masculinity is apparent in the creative dimension of violence, just as it is in the formative dimension. Violence can be formative, given that the act itself changes the way the perpetrator sees himself and others; it changes the way he sees the world and how ‘the world’ sees him. Violence breaks families apart, but it can also have integrative effects for young men, creating bonds that last for a lifetime. It is by no means my argument that the communal nature of *moranhoo*d produces conflict. Rather, I think that most of the ongoing and recurring conflicts in Northern Kenya are produced by political and economic forces at various levels of society. Group dynamics help shape the violent act, its meaning and the experience the performers

obtain from committing the act. In the performance of violence young men interact dynamically with the global and the local, the past and the present. Sophisticated weapons that find their way into Northern Kenya are not only a material incorporation in cattle raids, but also a conceptual and cultural appropriation, changing the form and meaning of violence. Cattle raids are strategically planned, not only based on advice from seasoned cattle raiders, but inspired by the training observed at the British army camp near Archers Post. Furthermore, the large-scale cattle raids involve actors at many different levels, some of them powerful people with commercial and/or political interests. Young men who take an active part in violent activities are navigating within this complex field of multiple interests, values and ideas. They are not pawns, but creative cultural actors. They are, I argue, active participants in the formation of this context and the place they hold within it.

In Chapter 5, *Aesthetics, Sexuality and Morality* I focus on young Samburu men who direct their attention to aesthetics rather than violence. In Chapter 3 I argued that the rites of passage during *moranhood* are absolutely essential in the Samburu formation of masculinity. Related to this I argue in this chapter that aspects of masculinity are formed and enacted in performance and aesthetics during the period of *moranhood*. This performance and aesthetics have been reified and commercialised for the tourist industry, and this is a salient theme in the chapter: the reification of masculinity. The so-called '*Mombasa moran*' is the most striking product of this reification and exemplifies a novel mode of male behaviour that reconfigures the whole notion of masculinity among young Samburu men. These reconfigurations touch on the ideal accumulation and consumption of wealth and appropriate "moral" behaviour. A '*Mombasa moran*' is a striking example of a creative cultural actor, manipulating and changing a complex cultural order, inspired from a local and a global context. They creatively take advantage of a niche in the ethno-erotic tourist industry and use the romantic idealisation of the Samburu body and aesthetics for their own gain. They build social prestige through material wealth, visible in the form of small lodges, restaurants, shops and transport businesses. With this prestige, their experience, views and values gain influence. In this chapter I also write about Samburu sexuality and the moral criticism we can find within its discourse. This moral criticism is addressed to the changing priorities and aspirations among young men. These priorities are often related to education, new business ideas, tourism and non-pastoral opportunities in general. These new concerns overtake the old ones, for example obeying the prohibitions of *lminong* (eating regulations), completing important rituals in the proper way and following the advice of elders.

Chapter 6, *The Transforming Power of Youths: Angry Elders, Young Leaders*, is linked to the previous chapter by focusing on the relationship between masculinity and intimate relations, notions of sociality, and ‘morality’. Pastoralism as a mode of subsistence has been under pressure ever since colonial times, devalued and marginalised by both colonial and post-colonial governments. Samburu youths tend to juxtapose the demise of pastoralism with ideas of prosperity associated with modernity and images of a Western lifestyle. But there are few opportunities to build stable life careers on the new dreams and ambitions. In this chapter I have explored how young men as creative cultural actors are part of the formation of relevant changes in society. While some are able to adapt, others are disenfranchised and emasculated. Masculinity is relational; it is defined and enacted in interactions between men and women, and in different groups of men. Consequently, generational conflict is an important theme in this chapter. For young men, proper leadership is no longer necessarily attributed to the seniority of elders. By exploring narratives I argue that intergenerational conflicts can have dire effects on intimate relations. The issue of trust and mistrust is a key facet in this exploration. I argue that trust is maintained through what is understood as “moral” acts, and it is broken by what is conceived as “immoral” acts.

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Endnotes

ⁱ The former districts became counties as envisioned by the 2010 constitution, established after the scheduled general election in 2013. In historical records and during the time of my fieldwork these locations were known as districts, therefore I will refer to the locations as districts in my thesis.

ⁱⁱ The Kenya in Africa map is copied from: <http://www.emapsworld.com/kenya.html>, (last visited 07.01.17, 10:00)

ⁱⁱⁱ The map is scanned from the atlas: *Geographica. Atlas og kunnskapsverk om Jorda, folk og land*. Spectrum forlag, 2004. Page 369.

^{iv} <https://books.google.no/books?id=jjP2egfCmp0C&pg=PA564&dq=spear-blooding+samburu&hl=no&sa=X&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAWoVChMI8YLjOW5xwIVBN0sCh1K4QjE#v=onepage&q=spear-blooding%20samburu&f=false> (last visited 10.01.2016)

^v <https://books.google.no/books?id=jjP2egfCmp0C&pg=PA564&dq=spear-blooding+samburu&hl=no&sa=X&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAWoVChMI8YLjOW5xwIVBN0sCh1K4QjE#v=onepage&q=spear-blooding%20samburu&f=false> (last visited 10.01.2016)

^{vi} <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112109952736;view=1up;seq=11> (last visited 10.01.2016)

^{vii} <https://books.google.no/books?id=X6g5ifpM-kQC&pg=PA84&dq=Samburu+killings&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDIQ6AEwA2oVChMI9tbp1qXsxlVpaZyCh3AwAC4#v=onepage&q=Samburu%20killings&f=false> (last visited 10.01.2016)

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^{ix} https://books.google.no/books?id=Q_gb-ZG5O_8C&pg=PA800&dq=intelligence&hl=no&sa=X&ved=0CCQ6AEwADgUahUKewj11ovGr8vHAhVCVywKHUuFD1E#v=onepage&q=intelligence&f=false (last visited 10.01.2016)

^x <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/07/19/world/kenya-in-gesture-burns-ivory-tusks.html> (last visited 10.01.2016)

^{xi} https://books.google.no/books?id=_lBm_HV-wDkC&pg=RA2-PA258&dq=house-boy&hl=no&sa=X&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAGoVChMIoobyz-nTxwIVR5NyCh0gmA0c#v=onepage&q=house-boy&f=false (last visited 10.01.2016)

^{xii} https://books.google.no/books?id=Sm5b61okZ6IC&pg=PA1444&dq=less+nomadic&hl=no&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj_8oS5paDKAhWLXCwKHR7SDCMQ6AEIHjAA#v=onepage&q=less%20nomadic&f=false (last visited 10.01.2016)

^{xiii} <http://fmnrhub.com.au/projects/kenya-samburu-pastoral-livelihoods-improvement-programme/#.VeYP5Ev9JQE> (last visited 10.01.2016)

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^{xv} <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/thecounties/article/2000161770/samburu-herders-vow-to-block-british-soldiers-out?pageNo=1> (last visited 21.12 2016)

^{xvi} http://wetu.com/iBrochure/en/Home/29860/Ol_Malo_House (last visited, 21.12.2016)

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^{xviii} <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/12/04/us-kenya-raid-idUSTRE6B31OK20101204> (last visited 21.12.2016)

^{xix} <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/23/us-kenya-attack-idUSBRE95M09K20130623> (last visited 21.12.2016)

^{xx} <http://www.bomasofkenya.co.ke/> (last visited 21.12.2016)

