Rural, Remote, *Raiya*:

Social Differentiation on the Pastoralist Periphery in Turkana, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

In places formerly characterised by the economic and political predominance of mobile pastoralists, the rise of urban centres can dramatically alter the social landscape, with both positive and negative consequences for herders. While many studies describe the processes (e.g. sedentarisation and commercialisation) affecting pastoralism as a livelihood system, there are fewer accounts of the divisions that emerge when these effects are unequally experienced by different people within that system. Through an ethnography of development-induced social differentiation in Turkana, Kenya, this study examines the ways that herders perceive, make sense of, and respond to their changing circumstances.

Many herders in contemporary Turkana refer to themselves as *raiya*, a word derived from the Swahili term for 'civilian' or 'subject' but reworked through historical encounters between rural Turkana-speaking communities and various agents of "development", including missionaries, international agencies, and the state. This term takes on different connotations for differently-positioned speakers: Formally educated urbanites describe the *raiya* as rural people who "lack" education, development, and global awareness, while rural herders use the term with pride to describe their toughness, pastoral knowledge, and adherence to customary practices (*ng'italio*). To explore the meaning of *raiya* – as both an exonym applied by urban dwellers and an endonym adopted by the rural periphery – and its implications for social stratification, I conducted 18 months of fieldwork between 2015 and 2016 along a rural-to-urban transect.

Using the concept of the *cultural archive* (James 1988), I discuss how herders draw on notions from an idealised nomadic past to distinguish themselves as *raiya*. This is manifested in explicit descriptions of "tradition" (*etal*), but also in everyday performances of style, skilled livelihood practices, and attunement to the remote landscapes in the borderlands

where they live. However, while the notion of *raiya* makes explicit reference to conventional binaries – distinguishing rural/traditional/non-literate herders from their urban/modern/educated counterparts – I argue that the flexibility of its more implicit meanings has made it useful in negotiating relationships *across* these dichotomies. This is especially important as herders manage kinship obligations and political relations with educated elites. The future prospects for herders in Turkana are not a matter of their persistence as pastoralists or their adherence to conservative tradition, but the particular ways that they re-articulate kinship and political relations with elites, who are increasingly untethered from the pastoralist moral economy as urban opportunities reduce their reliance on the family herd.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mobile pastoralists around the world are contending with unprecedented social and economic transformations. In East Africa alone, herders are grappling with rapid population growth, unpredictable shifts in climatic patterns, the enclosure and fracturing of commons resources, economic and political marginalisation by commercially-motivated (and often agriculturally-oriented) governments, and the weakening of local solidarities amidst nationalist and cosmopolitan sentiments. In light of these trends, researchers and development practitioners have debated whether pastoralism should be protected, phased out, or in some other way engaged by development actors (Fratkin 1997; Moritz 2008). Much research has explored possibilities for the third option, which would entail both support for pastoralist livelihoods and promotion of economic diversification (Catley et al. 2013), as well as legal protection of pastoralists' rights to land and resources (Bassi 2017).

In parallel to this debate about the strategies by which development *should* be implemented for pastoralists, ethnographic descriptions differ in their depiction of the ways that pastoralists *are* encountering development. Despite long-standing consensus that pastoralism is in transition (Fratkin 2001; Galvin 2009; Singh et al. 2015), the vocabulary of change varies from the optimistic terms of 'adaptation' (Bollig 2016; Lind 2003; Little 1997; Salzman & Sadala 1980; Stites & Huisman 2010) to more pessimistic claims that pastoralism is in 'decline' (Blackwell 2010; Markakis 1993; Pantuliano 2010).

However, this is not simply a disagreement between observers with different conclusions about the future of pastoralism; it is also a problem of definitions: What are the parameters within which pastoralism changes but remains pastoralism (i.e. adaptation), as opposed to changing into something new (i.e. transition)? One solution is to define a technical threshold

for pastoralism, which can be defined according to the proportion of *inter alia* resources procured from livestock, wealth invested in the herd, or calories derived from animal products. Such thresholds may be suitable for researchers interested in corresponding technical outcomes, such as herd productivity, economic sufficiency, or the ability of those livelihoods to provide adequate nutritional resources. However, such technical definitions do not account for the ways that people conceive of their own livelihoods, the challenges they face, and the ways they respond to changing circumstances. And because empirical thresholds are often based on average measures across a particular livelihood system, they do not attend to the heterogeneity of social and economic positions within that system.

Drawing on two years of fieldwork in Turkana County of north-western Kenya, this dissertation is an attempt to understand how pastoralists themselves are making sense of the changes that they are encountering in the 21st Century. In particular, I investigate the process of development-induced social differentiation, wherein the emergence of an urban population – as well as professional class within it – has reshaped the social landscape within which pastoralism is practised. I focus especially on the perspectives of herders living in the western borderlands near the Kenya-Uganda boundary, who from this seemingly remote position must manage their relationship to urban centres, elites, and the state. I attend to both what herders themselves say about their contemporary predicament, as well as implicit references to their marginality conveyed in everyday performances, skills and encounters.

This study is a contribution to the ethnographic record from Turkana. Many anthropologists have conducted studies in Turkana focusing on herd management (Gulliver 1955; McCabe 2004), livestock husbandry (Ohta 1987), religion (van der Jagt 1990), ritual and cosmology (Barrett 1998a), and human ecology (Little & Leslie 1999), as reviewed in more detail at the end of the next chapter. More recently, there has been some attention to emerging lines of

difference within Turkana, mostly associated with the rise of urban centres and the penetration of wider market economies (Betti 2010; McCabe 1994; Müller-Dempf 2014). My study contributes to this small but growing literature by describing the ways that herders experience, articulate, and respond to emerging lines of social differentiation, as well as the consequences for both familial and political relations across this divide. Some people turn to new forms of enterprise, and others adjust their herding regimes to accommodate new conditions. And while some establish themselves within one or the other of these economic "spheres", others attempt to bridge old and new forms. Many find themselves stuck in the interstices.

This study is also a contribution to pastoralism studies more broadly, as an account of pastoralists grappling with the effects of development, urbanization, and – perhaps most significantly – the growing influence of political and professional elites. Researchers have long argued that the swelling ranks of absentee herders (Little 1985; Unusa 2012), sedentary populations (Fratkin & Roth 2005; Galaty & Bonte 1991; Zaal 1999), and political/professional elites (Eriksen & Lind 2009; Hogg 1986) are influencing the systems of land tenure, mobility, and resource distribution among pastoralists. In my own study, I attempt to provide the perspectives of Turkana herders on this issue, as well as more immediate concerns about the increasing sense of a division between the urban centre and the pastoralist periphery.

Finally, this thesis is a contribution to the study of marginalised communities, which includes not only pastoralists but hunters, foragers, and other groups with tenuous claims to territory and resources (Campbell 2004). What brings these communities together is not only their fraught political relations to the dominant segments of society – which most often manifests as the government, commercial actors, or conservation agencies – but their residence in

marginal or out of the way places (Tsing 1993). My study discusses how this position of marginality can provide the basis for a sense of community – of belonging on the margins – which resonates with research in the fields of Peasant Studies, Traveller Studies, and Subaltern Studies.

In the remainder of this introductory chapter, I will provide a critique of systems-thinking in pastoralism research, in which I see certain shortcomings to which a more phenomenological approach may provide some melioration. I discuss the early fieldwork observations that led me to this approach, as well as its theoretical foundations. I then conclude with a brief introduction to the setting of my study and an outline of the dissertation chapters.

"Pastoralism" and the Limitations of Systems-Thinking

I begin here with a brief discussion of two drawbacks of the systems-thinking that has prevailed in most research on pastoralism. These shortcomings do not annul the many insights gleaned from the systems concept, which is fundamental to the very epistemology of scientific empiricism. General systems theory has roots in Europe's Scientific Revolution, when "the vision of the world as a teleological cosmos was replaced by the description of events in causal, mathematical laws" (von Bertalanffy 1972: 408). During this paradigm shift, philosophers sought an understanding of phenomena based on laws that did not rely on the divine designs of a higher power or deity, but which would instead be available to scientific analysis and observation.

Similarly, systems-thinking about pastoralism allowed researchers to interrogate Hardin's (1968) 'tragedy of the commons' thesis through empirical study of the ways that pastoralists organise labour and procure goods (i.e. their *systems of production*), manage access to land and other resources (i.e. *governance systems*), and accumulate and distribute wealth (i.e. *economic systems*), as well as pastoralists' place within complex regimes of ecological

relations (i.e. their *ecosystems*). Systems-thinking allows researchers to explore how pastoralism "functions", how it can be disrupted or "shocked" by acute events such as droughts or epidemics, and how it is influenced by interactions with the broader global system in the longer term (e.g. Mccabe 1990). Systems-thinking also underlies many of the most provocative concepts applied to pastoralist research, including *sustainability*, *adaptation,* and – most recently – *resilience*.

I write these critiques with an awareness of the many efforts that human ecologists and environmental anthropologists have made to respond to critiques of systems-thinking. Taking the *ecosystems* concept as an example, scientists working under the "new ecological thinking" have addressed problems with the old "balance of nature" paradigm by emphasising the dynamic persistence of systems rather than their stability, accommodating uncertainty and complexity as inherent qualities of systems, and addressing historical change and political issues rather than just bio-physical factors (Scoones 1999: 484). The old ecological thinking is embodied in early rangeland ecology, in which there was a general consensus that without top-down controls on herd size, livestock populations would outstrip the carrying capacity of the environment, leading to degradation and desertification. The "new ecological thinking" challenged this neo-Malthusian paradigm, reconceptualising drylands as disequilibrium ecosystems for which the biotic relationship between livestock populations and graze availability was decoupled by the high variability of abiotic climatic factors (Behnke et al. 1993; Ellis & Swift 1988). This and other ecological insights increasingly acknowledged the ecological suitability of pastoralism to areas characterised by high climatic variability, and consequently began to take local knowledge more seriously (Scoones 1995).

Nonetheless, there are shortcomings to systems-thinking, and these are the weaknesses to which my own approach – outlined in the next section – could provide some remedy. One problem is ontological and the other teleological. Starting with the first problem, systems are often attributed an ontic status. This is evident in the many analogies that compare systems to organisms, which use analogy to depict the homeostatic effects of negative feedback mechanisms. Similarly, anatomical analogies are used to convey the principle of *emergence*, in which higher-level properties in complex systems are not reducible to the lower-level properties of the constituent elements of the system, like a body that is not reducible to its constituent organ systems. However, such analogies come with an empiricist warning:

> [The] order or organization of a whole or system, transcending its parts when these are considered in isolation, is nothing metaphysical, not an anthropomorphic superstition or a philosophical speculation; it is a fact of observation encountered whenever we look at a living organism, a social group, or even an atom. (von Bertalanffy 1972: 408)

Despite this warning against mistaking systems – intended as conceptual tools with which to think about relations – as *real* entities in the world, systems are often reified. For example, the *ecosystem* has at times been treated not simply as a framework for thinking about ecological relations, but as an entity in an ecological ontology (McCabe 2004: 25). In this view, ecosystems are being damaged or even suffering, and it is the job of conservation to protect ecosystems.

Similarly, the term resilience frames pastoralism as a flexible but enduring system, constituted by relations among people, animals, and other agents, and which can withstand shocks such as droughts or epidemics (McCay 1978: 400). The concept is credited with "shift[ing] policies from those that aspire to control change in systems assumed to be stable, to managing the capacity of social–ecological systems to cope with, adapt to, and shape change" (Folke 2006: 254). Resilience can variously describe how individuals, communities,

social systems, and environments deal with disruption, as well as the readiness of responses to disaster (Norris et al. 2008). However, the idea of "systems resilience" can ascribe agency to the level of the system itself, giving it an almost animate nature as it "tolerates" disturbances or "resists" entropy. Pastoralism is treated not just an as a means of production or a way of life, but as a quasi-sentient assemblage that is "coping", "adapting", and "responding" to shocks.

Inherent to this ontic approach to systems is the reification of the conceptual boundary between the conditions *internal* to the system and the *external* circumstances to which it must adapt, perpetuating a dichotomy that anthropologists writing on global-local dynamics have long worked to dispel (Piot 1999; Tsing 1994). Commercialisation is described as a foreign influence, in which "livestock or livestock products acquire a market value external to the pastoral system" (Sikana & Kerven 1991: 13), and in which "the 'rationalities' of pastoral systems and the outside economic world differ" (Zaal 1999: 98). Some outside influences are beneficial, such as the various programmes promoted by development agencies under the banner of "livelihood diversification" (e.g. Watson & Binsbergen 2008). But agriculture and commercial trading are often described as "encroaching" upon pastoralism, and new ecological or political circumstances constitute a "threat" (Galvin 2009:194). Researchers sometimes disagree on the boundaries of the system: Olav (2000: 254) describes cattle raiding as an external threat to Turkana pastoralists while Lines (2009) considers it intrinsic to their culture. But regardless of where the line is drawn, the resulting binaries of internal-external and local-global are problematic dichotomies.

The second problem with systems-thinking is that it tends toward technical, ends-oriented explanations of social practices, which are often different from local exegesis. For example, child fostering can be understood as a means of balancing herd productivity with labour

requirements (Sikana & Kerven 1991), but those who practise fostering are likely to cite social obligation as the rationale. Many researchers rely “predetermined measures of adaptation” (McCabe 2004: 25), such as nutritional sufficiency, resource management, or environmental sustainability. These measures are often based on external development and humanitarian objectives that overlook the explanations of livelihood practitioners themselves, as well as the tacit moral basis of many social practices. Moreover, systems-level processes identified by ecologists as ‘adaptive’ may be experienced differently by people operating in that system. For Soqotran herders, the pastoral ethic of frugality that the UN supports through conservation programmes “is experienced [by herders] as an inexorable, if not burdensome, adaptation imperative to the environment's whims and the demands of the ever widening monetized exchange circuit” (Elie 2014: 4). What does and does not constitute *adaptation* is a matter of perspective, but the systems approach often takes certain measures for granted.

The teleological tendencies of systems-thinking are most evident in the concept of *livelihood adaptation*, which draws upon evolutionary biology to describe how livelihood systems can respond to new circumstances (Head 2010: 235). This perspective has been useful as a challenge to the development industry’s predilection for heavy-handed intervention, demonstrating how pastoral people may adjust to new circumstances themselves. Just as biological evolution requires existing genetic diversity among the species involved, individual-level livelihood adaptation requires a range of existing or “built-in” techniques, practices, and knowledge upon which groups can draw to deal with external selective pressures. This idea is implicit in Salzman and Sadala’s (1980: 4-6) description of adaptation via *multi-formity*, wherein a society maintains latent or subordinate alternatives to the dominant livelihood practices, which can be utilised when challenges arise or situations change. Others describe more experimental approaches to adaptation, such as Dyson-Hudson’s conceptualisation of "open behaviour programmes” (Little & Leslie 1999: 70).

However, the forms of knowledge and practice that analysts identify as 'adaptive mechanisms' are not always seen so strategically by the people who maintain them, which may be as a matter of group ideology, personal values, or altogether different motivations.

Across both of these critiques of systems-thinking, a common concern is the emphasis on the system itself rather than the diverse actors – human or otherwise – who make up the system. Systems-level depictions of change focus on processes (sedentarisation, commercialisation, etc.), rather than the experiences of pastoralists. 'Pastoralism' takes on its own agency and teleology, as opposed to the diverse actions and intentions of the people who practise it. In the next section, I describe an alternative perspective that attends to the situated perspectives of individual actors, as well as terms describing social difference that are particular to Turkana.

"Raiya": A Phenomenology of Difference in Turkana

When I started my fieldwork in Turkana, I conceived of stratification according to conventional livelihood categories (e.g. pastoralists vs non-pastoralists). However, as I explained my intention to conduct research among "pastoralists" (*ng'ikeyokok*), my urban interlocutors would respond percipiently: "So you want to learn about the *raiya*?" I was initially perplexed by this term *raiya*, the meaning of which was difficult to grasp. It was mentioned in passing in several ethnographies from the region, which defined it as shorthand for "countryside" or "the opposite of town" (Müller-Dempf 2014: 4) as well as a social category referring to "the people of the countryside, herders," who have not attended school (Betti 2010: vii).

However, as I inquired about the term during my own fieldwork, I found that many of the most important connotative meanings of *raiya* are more contingent on the positionality of the speaker. From the perspective of people in town, many of whom saw themselves as

cosmopolitans who had emerged from more parochial ways of thinking, the *raiya* were the "real Turkana," who live customary lifestyles in the deep rurals outside the county's growing towns and settlements. They referred especially to the western reaches of Loima, at the borderlands between Kenya and Uganda and – from the point of view of Lodwar residents – untouched by "development" (*maendeleo*, Swahili). According to urban contacts, this was where people lived "traditionaly," (in Swahili, *wa kimila* or *wa desturi*), and it was among this group that I was supposed to study as an anthropologist. But as I began working in rural communities in Loima, I learned other connotations of toughness, trustworthiness, a deep knowledge of animals, and ecologically-situatedness.

Unlike the objectivist livelihood categories with which I began, the term *raiya* was more malleable, shifting its meaning according to the speaker and the context in which it was invoked. Understanding such contextually-contingent terms requires a more phenomenological approach to social differentiation. Whereas systems-thinking entails the synthesis of findings into an objectivist account of overarching processes, a phenomenlogical account maintains the diversity of positions and perspectives among pastoralists navigating a changing social landscape. The result is an ethnographic portrayal that is fragmented, but which preserves the plurality of situated perspectives. It is a view from within the social landscape, rather than looking down on the social field from above.

The malleability of the term *raiya* seems to derive from its ambiguity as a borrowed term. It derives from the Swahili word *raia*, which is commonly translated as "citizen".[1] Further back, the term came to Swahili from the Arabic language and was used in Zanzibar to refer to the subjects under the authority of the Sultan, broadly encompassing "the lowest common

[1] Phonetically, the terms *raiya* and *raia* are almost indistinguishable, but I use the different spellings to indicate the word as used by *Ng'aturkana* speakers and *Kiswahili* speakers, respectively.

denominator of civic status" (Hunter 2013: 260). The British government in East Africa later adopted this concept in its abstract form as *Uraia* to refer to colonial "subjecthood", which they attempted to infuse with a connotation of civic duty. After independence, Swahili was adopted as the national language of Tanzania, and *uraia* took on the connotation of a more empowered citizenry, in line with the post-colonial government's national ambitions.[2]

It is uncertain how the term *raia* originally entered the Turkana lexicon, but it seems to have taken a different path than in much of the rest of eastern Africa. Elsewhere in Kenya, the British colonial administrators used the term to distinguish the general population from those who served as official administrative agents, including tax collectors, chiefs, and members of colonial military and police units (Hunter 2013: 266). In Turkana, the term may have been popularized among the non-Swahili-speaking majority through colloquial usage by locally recruited chiefs. Alternatively, the term may have been introduced via the Kenya Police Reserves (KPR), an auxiliary force founded in 1948 and composed of armed civilians tasked with providing security in the rural localities where they live (Mkutu & Wandera 2013: 11). Mkutu writes that many members of the KPR complain about the lack of police support in the remote peripheries by joking that KPR stands for *kufa pamoja na raia*, meaning "die together with the citizens", whom they are tasked with protecting (Mkutu 2014: 502). While all Turkana men – and increasingly, armed women (Macharia 2010) – have a role in protecting their communities and livestock, the need for KPR members to distinguish themselves as a state-sanctioned force may have introduced *raia* as a local social category. Regardless, the

[2] However, the term *mwananchi* ("child of the land") was introduced to describe citizenship based on political engagement and a dedication to "building the nation" (*kujenga taifa*), whereas *raia* continued to denote a more neutral, passive form of citizenship (Scotton 1965:530-531). Discourse analysis by Hunter (2013:276) suggests that the term *raia* maintained a notion of inferiority or subordination, the lower ranks of the political community.

term was spoken often enough to receive morphemic modification with Turkana nominal affixes: *raia* as a singular noun becomes *eraiyait* (pl. *ng'iraiya*).

My argument is that *raiya* – as a borrowed term that can be used flexibly – is being worked and re-worked to make sense of and navigate relatively new forms of social difference in Turkana. I use the term "navigate" in the sense that "agents guide their lives through troublesome social and political circumstances… [and] navigate networks and events as they move within fluctuating social structures" (Vigh 2006: 13). Social navigation requires an engagement across the social divides between self and other. The historical imaginary in Turkana is framed around the distinction between "the Turkana people" (Ng'iturkana) and "outsiders" (*ng'imoe*), as has been the case in narratives about their marginalisation amidst national politics and international capitalist penetration (e.g. McCabe, 1994). But *raiya* refers instead to new forms of difference and division *within* Turkana, which English-speakers might refer to as *tradition* and *modernity*. Turkana was never a homogenous society, but as argued in the next chapter, previous forms of heterogeneity and inequality were less stable, characterised by easier permeability. Furthermore, the older lexicon of ethnic, wealth-based, and territorial differences does not easily accommodate the idea of differentiation through modernization, therefore requiring a new vocabulary.

When I refer to *modernity* and its derivative words (e.g. modern, modernization), I invoke the idea of a cosmopolitan way of being. I am not referring to an actual way of being or a time period, but "an ethos, akin to something cultural, albeit a cultural formation making rather unique claims to acultural universality" (Silverstein 2017). Similarly, *tradition* refers not to an historical era but rather to an imagined past (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983), which is invoked in the creation of a contemporary community. In her work among Uduk communities in Sudan, Wendy James describes how tradition changes yet maintains a sense of continuity

by drawing upon enduring, fundamental notions. These *notions* are the vague but influential ideas that persist across generations, often encoded in idioms or embodied as implicit sensibilities:

> There are levels at which we may discern stubborn and substantive concepts, often to do with the way in which human beings experience the world and often cast in characteristics imagery drawn from a hunters' tradition. These notions do not necessarily form, in themselves, a system or an articulated theory, but, like an archive, may constitute a lasting base of past reference and future validation. (James 1988: 6)

Much like rural Turkana, Uduk communities had long endured life on the periphery of intrusive regimes, from pre-colonial Islamic kingdoms to the British administration and eventually to various regimes of the Sudanese state. As subsequent powers have risen and fallen, flexing their administrative muscles from distant centres and ushering in fleeting eras of dominance for their associated religions, the ebony diviners have provided a source of ritual continuity and moral guidance for their followers. They did so by drawing upon the familiar, deep-rooted notions of a hunting tradition as an archive of moral knowledge.

Applying James's concepts to Turkana, I consider how contemporary herders draw on archival notions from an idealised (and perhaps even imagined) pastoralist antiquity to make sense of their place on the fringes of development. In later chapters, I argue that supposedly "traditional" family and political structures are best understood not as indivisible systems, but as amalgamation of notions about kinship and authority. This perspective accounts for the inconsistencies and contradictions that occasionally emerge in supposedly "traditional" systems, as well as the ways families and authority structures can be reassembled in new contexts, such as the emerging social differentiation between *raiya* – sometimes defined as *ng'itunga ni kalipatan* ("people on the outside") – and those who live *nang'olanyang* ("with the government").

However, as the term *raiya* came up again and again, I began to realise that there was more to it than the explicit definitions. Much of the meaning was implicit in practice and everyday performance, requiring attention to the ways people dressed, spoke, and carried themselves. Those who understood that I was trying to comprehend *raiya* life often encouraged me to mimic the styles, comportment, and attitudes of the herders with whom I was spending my time. When I would fail to carry out a convincing imitation, they would laugh about my incompetency. But as I developed a better grasp of the context, they would remark with approval (and some amusement) that "this guy is becoming *raiya*" (*Eraiyait ng'olo iteni*). These comments revealed to more tacit aspects of *raiya,* not simply as a livelihood category (e.g. pastoralists vs urbanites) or labels (e.g. traditionalists vs modernists), but as a manifestations of particular sensibilities, competencies, and corporeal forms of belonging.

This focus on the body – on how we feel about places, are shaped by them, and perform to fit into them – usefully directs us to the world of experience beyond explicit description. Ingold's approach to knowledge as enskilment highlights that much of what people know is not readily available to anthropologists' attempts at verbal elicitation, but is rather embodied as skill, familiarity and practical know-how (2000: 25). Moreover, the idea that social position and class can be embodied is well established in anthropology. Most prominent here is Bourdieu's concept of *habitus,* the "systems of durable, transposable dispositions… which generate and organize practices… without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends" (Bourdieu 1990: 53). This concept usefully captures how the body can serve as a conduit of social differentiation. The *habitus* is potent as a marker of difference and distinction precisely because it is "below the level of consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will" (Bourdieu [1979] 1984: 466). There is an automatism to the way that people adhere to the schemas associated with their social stratum, as a silent affirmation of the taken-for-granted or "natural" order (*doxa*).

However, anthropologists working in Africa have cautioned that *habitus* and the broader practice theory of which it is a part is steeped in a "self-evident economism", which foregrounds the competition of individual interest in ways that may not be appropriate in all "cultural terrains" (Piot 1999: 16). Ferguson (1999), writing on the movement of men between rural and urban places for mining jobs in the Zambian Copperbelt, describes how they must adopt a particular mode of speaking, walking and dressing in order to fit in. As much as recent urban migrants needed to adjust to the "cosmopolitan" styles of town, those returning to their ancestral farms also faced the challenge of re-learning a "localist style" that their rural family members have been cultivating over years. Many found that they were unable to access their family resources, in part because they could not achieve the stylistic competence required to obtain local legitimacy and acceptance. However, Ferguson explicitly rejects the *habitus* as an unsuitable concept for this context:

> Cultural style need not map neatly onto an underlying cultural orientation… Style in such a structurally 'loose' setting is very badly apprehended as a simple product of a passive socialization… it is clearly at least in part an activity, a motivated process of self-making. (Ferguson 1999: 100, 104)

Moreover, in my own reading of Merleau-Ponty ([1945] 1962) and anthropologists who have used his work, phenomenology already goes beyond the examination of subjective experience to discuss the embodiment of class, gender, and other features of social structure (Csordas 1990). In phenomenology in general, structure and place are inherent in the lived experience of *being-in-the-world*:

> Social institutions and cultural practices permeate our sensing bodies… Such 'impersonal' determinants are, in fact, constitutive elements of 'personal' experience, but as background, forming the horizons of ordinary perception that are not part of the conscious domain. (Ram & Houston 2015: 10)

Past experiences shape our perceptive capacities, such that we become attuned to the environments in which we are immersed. Bilinda Straight uses the term *precissing* –

originally proposed by the logician Charles Peirce – to mean "the process by which we reduce the potentially infinite [that] we are in contact with… to the cognizably finite" (Straight 2007: 15). This is a cutting down of the limitless world available to perception, as we become more competent in picking out particular affordances. This attention to the effects of place seems well-suited to Turkana, where the remoteness of rural pasturelands elicits a sense of vulnerability among urban visitors. It is also highly pertinent to social navigation, insofar as one's point of view provides "the historically and culturally constituted mode by which they orient themselves and which informs their perception" (Vigh 2006: 31). By applying this phenomenological lens to my fieldwork in Turkana, I articulate the ways that herders' sense of place and perception of landscape informs the ways that they navigate the growing social divide between expanding urbanity and the *raiya* periphery. As I will discuss in the next section, these insights derive not only from my observations of others, but from my own attention to the perceptual fields and intersubjective spaces that I shared with others.

The Field: Across the Rural-Urban Divide

This section provides an overview of the contexts in which I carried out my research, including methodological considerations. Throughout my 18 months of fieldwork, I focused on two places that exhibit dual extremes in Turkana. For the first five months of fieldwork starting in January 2015, I set up my base in the town of Lodwar, where I began familiarising myself with the *Ng'aturkana* language and from which I launched a number of extended fieldtrips to various rural areas. During this time, I lived with a Lodwar-based family and some of their relatives in nearby villages such as Lolemagete, about an hour from Lodwar by motorbike. Then, beginning in June 2015, I spent eight months with a rural homestead in Urum, near the remote borderlands between Kenya and Uganda. Although many of my hosts and other interlocuters conveyed that they were happy to be identified in my writing, names have been changed to respect their privacy.



Photo 1. My Host Family in Urum. Clockwise from left: Lorukadimoe (rear) walks to his homestead with a visiting in-law; Akwalikwal, the sixth and youngest wife in the family; Lorukadimoe's praise-ox 'Lopusikamar' leads the herd back to the corral after grazing. (Credit CR, 2018)

A key figure in my study was Lorukadimoe, a well-known elder in the borderlands near Urum who my host, guide, and chaperone during over 12 months of fieldwork from June 2015 to July 2016. When I was introduced to him through the family connections of an urban associate, Lorukadimoe was living with his two younger wives Akal and Amoru at a wet season camp along the Nakwapua River, where they watered their cattle, camels and goats. His other three wives Alam, Acuc and Namtul were living further upstream in Nakwapua Village, where they were tending to sorghum and corn planted just before the onset of the rains. Lorukadimoe's children are more widely distributed: his eldest sons tend cattle on the satellite camps to the west, and many of his eldest daughters have been married to herders across Loima sub-County. One of his sons has graduated secondary school and now runs a small trade shop out of his home in the nearest town. The other children live with one of their mothers (all co-wives take on mutual maternal responsibilities for their husband's children)

or older siblings.

Most of Lorukadimoe's family and a portion of his herd remain in the relative safety of the hills around Nakwapua and Urum. The rest of his animals are maintained by his eldest sons further west on the lush highland plains of Loteere in Uganda, where graze is plentiful but where raiding is a greater threat. While his primary form of wealth is livestock, Lorukadimoe also relies on relatives spread across various urban centres: his daughter-in-law is a businesswoman in the nearby village of Urum, one of his sons trades *miraa* (khat) further south in Lokiriama town, and his brother-in-law is a prominent location chief in the sub-County seat of Lorugum.

Lorukadimoe was a respected elder with duties as a community arbiter, and he was often busy dealing with the affairs of those who saw him as an arbitrator. As such, he did not always have time for lengthy discussions with me. But he understood that I wanted to learn more about *raiya* life, and when there was an opportunity to observe something that might be insightful, he would facilitate my attendance. Several people in the family who were less busy found more time for lengthy discussions, and one of his sons took on a role as my teacher.

I was also invited to several public meetings in the village of Nakwapua, where Lorukadimoe was registered as the chairman of the sub-location chief's council of elders. Lorukadimoe considered himself to be a leader not only because he was wealthy, but because he had a deep understanding of the principles (*ng'italio*) of Turkana custom. Nonetheless, he navigated changing circumstances with grace. The women who had been appointed as chief of Nakwapua – one of the only female chiefs in Turkana – was often interrupted while speaking by men who disputed her right to speak in public forum. Lorukadimoe would silence those who spoke out, creating space for the chief to carry out her duties.

I was initially treated as a guest on the homestead, but over time I was integrated into the daily routines of life on the pastoral homestead. As requested, I shared food and supplies from town as compensation for my stay. But I made an effort to eat the same meals, wear the same clothes, and mimic the dispositions and lifestyles of my hosts. Over time, as I felt more a part of the family and adopted a role – somewhat ludic – as a fictive son, Lorukadimoe would send me to help his wives on the sorghum farms, to collect water with his daughters, or to tend the animals with his sons. He also invited me to accompany him to weddings, bridewealth negotiations, and other events, such as sacrificial rites to assist relatives afflicted with disease.

In all of these events, I maintained my status as an outsider, retreating at times into the status of a guest, never fully restricted to the activities of a particular gender or age category, and receiving only laughs when I failed to adhere to the role that I was intended to play. But as those around me accommodated my attempts to play particular roles, providing feedback and criticism of my appearance and technique, I gained insight into aspects of being *raiya* that are usually not commented upon. This apprenticeship – generously afforded to me by Lorukadimoe's family as well as a much broader community of generous critiques – provides the primary material upon which this dissertation has been written. It is worth noting that, as a man, my apprenticeship lent particular insight on the experiences of *raiya* men, as reflected in my ethnographic focus on the performance of masculinity and the livelihood skills acquired by boys. This should not imply that *raiya* is a masculine way of being, and where possible I discuss *raiya* womanhood as well, as most clearly evident in the relationship between women and their milch animals.

Throughout this apprenticeship, another way that I maintained my status as an outsider was by traveling back to town roughly once per month to transcribe notes, re-stock food supplies,

and check in with friends. While these monthly trips created some separation from my rural hosts, journeying is a common part of life for many *raiya* people, who travel to make purchases, to visit family, to attend events, or to sell livestock. Furthermore, the many journeys in either direction emphasised to me the dramatic differences in my experience of place across town and country. Lodwar, where many speak English, where food is available anytime at the small *hotelis* in town, and where one can easily retreat to the solitude of a private room contrasted sharply with the borderland cattle camps, which seemed strikingly unaccommodating at first. During my first visits to Urum I was at times impatient to return to the comforts of town, and to extract myself from the inescapable togetherness on the homestead, especially while my nascent language skills made communication an exhausting undertaking. Over time, however, I became more linguistically confident and more comfortable in this environment. Although I was always in many ways an outsider, the development of certain competencies – in speaking, conducting myself, and helping out with tasks on the cattle camp – gave me some sense of "fitting in", and highlighted the importance of familiarity for social belonging. Moreover, moving between town and country put me into a constant dialogue with differently positioned people, with whom I would reflect upon (and often argue about) the meaning of *raiya* across this transect. The ideas in this thesis were most keenly developed in context of such conversations and debates, which threw into relief differences between the perspectives of urban onlookers – who see *raiya* as a state of parochialism from which they have emerged – and those of *raiya* people themselves.

Chapters Overview

The chapters of this dissertation do not provide a comprehensive account of Turkana social organisation, their livelihoods, or any of the conventional topics of anthropological inquiry among pastoralist societies. Rather, the ethnographic fragments presented in each chapter provide a different angle on the development encounter in Turkana, in which herders are

experiencing and responding to their relegation to the margins of a place where pastoralism was once the dominant way of life. I begin with an orientation to the literature in which I steep my study and the setting where I carried out fieldwork. Chapter 2 broadly introduces the primary ethnographic sources on Turkana and reviews some common trends that are influencing herders across East Africa. I situate my own study within several debates about the impact of these trends on herding communities, especially pertaining to social stratification and the rise of an urban elite. However, whereas many existing studies rely on a more objectivist understanding of the ways that these trends influence pastoralism as an economic and social system, I take a more phenomenological approach that illustrates herders' experience of life at the margins.

Chapter 3 begins with an historical overview of the Turkana region. The initial two sections provide orientations to the spatial and temporal logics of Turkana. I explain the two approaches to geography, one defined by borders and the other depicting a more fluid mosaic of ethnic communities (*ng'itela*) and their overlapping 'lands' (*ng'akopian*). I then describe the ways that time is marked by the recollection of memorable events as well as the initiation of young men into age-sets. The historical sections focus on two forms of insider-outsider belonging that have been evident throughout Turkana history. The first defines Turkana in opposition to outsiders or "enemies" (*ng'imoe*), the latter category encompassing cattle rustlers, colonial militias, missionary and development agencies, and "upcountry" Kenyans from the agricultural highlands. More recently, a second sense of division has developed *within* Turkana, between *raiya* and the growing educated class that depends on the cash economy rather than the pastoral sector. This introduces not only a new form of livelihood, but a different balance of power.

The rest of the dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part provides an ethnographic account of *raiya*, as it is exhibited in daily performance, acquired throughout one's upbringing, and instilled in an attunement to remote landscapes. Chapter 4 begins with one tacit manifestation of social difference: the development of place-based sensibilities specific to particular landscapes. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's concept of *physiognomy*, I discuss how people become attuned to the spatial qualities of the places where they live. The result is a distinctive sense of being in or out of place in different environments – such as the urban grid of Lodwar or the remote expanses of the western borderlands, which can serve as a basis of belonging or exclusion from the *raiya* community.

Chapter 5 describes *raiya* style, as exhibited by young men's ox-dances, their modes of dress and adornment, and the ways that they cultivate a self-image as herders, warriors, and hardened survivors. *Raiya* performance draws on the ideas of tradition, but far from adhering conservatively to timeworn customs, it involves a creative re-imagining of pastoral life as it is carried out on the fringes of an urbanising world.

Chapter 6 describes the enskilment of pastoralist children through their *raiya* upbringing, through which they acquire the knowledge and sensibilities required to tend the herd. While the term "education" often refers to formal schooling, *raiya* children undergo their own sensory education as they become competent in the tasks required on the pastoral homestead and attuned to the animals in their herds. This is a form of childhood development from which school-bound siblings miss out, such that they sometimes feel alienated from their rural homes. In this way, formal schooling contributes to the sense of social difference that is conveyed in the notion of *raiya*.

The final two chapters describe the ways that kinship and politics are being renegotiated across these lines of social difference. Chapter 7 is a discussion of the ways that *raiya*

families are dealing with the urban-rural divide and maintaining relationships with educated elites. I describe some of the most widely recognised principles of kinship in Turkana. To conceptualise kinship, I draw on Wendy James's (1988) concept of the *cultural archive* as an unwritten reservoir of conceptually vague but socially resonating notions, including potent imagery and widely recognised idioms. In this way, I argue that the family should be understood not as a traditional structure, but as a coming-together or instantiation of various *notions* of kinship. By re-articulating these flexible notions in new configurations, Turkana families can incorporate urban kin and professional elites who are less economically dependent of the family herd.

Chapter 8 discusses the ways that authority has been influenced by the rise of an urban elite who have positioned themselves as the agents of the development, empowered by state and international resources and drawing authority from technocratic expertise of the development process. I describe how elders invoke notions of "tradition" (*etal*) in an effort to keep this new group of urban elites in check, as demonstrated through their performance at ritual chanting events, as well as their support for particular prophets as public representatives. Finally, the concluding chapter summarises my argument about the emergence of *raiya* as a response to new forms of stratification and change in Turkana, as well as the repercussions of this observation for contemporary developments around land, government funding, and the emerging oil industry.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Anthropologists cannot rely on systematic search protocols and exclusion criteria to define the bounds of the "relevant" literature. Rather, the literature emerges as something of a landscape in the vast – and initially daunting – domain of published research. The endless horizon of unread materials can be overwhelming. Some readings stand out in this *biblio-scape* due to the anthropologists' disciplinary training, topical interest, and institutional relations. Other literature appears on the scene serendipitously, discovered in a haphazard survey of the library shelves. But as the anthropologist develops a better sense of their project, affordances emerge from the masses; the core works to which the anthropologist returns become landmarks.

Providing a review of this biblio-scape is an act of cartography. The map that emerges excludes most of the detail, but it should be adequate for the purposes of the reader's journey, indicating the author's position in relation to previous research, accepted arguments, and ongoing debates. This chapter traces a path through the anthropological literature relevant to my question: how are *raiya* herders creating lives in the rapidly changing scene of contemporary Turkana, where they were once the dominant demographic but are now a marginalized majority? This is also an attempt to introduce the debates and areas of academic inquiry to which this dissertation is intended to make a contribution: including the ways that urbanisation, the expansion of the state, and the rise of a formally educated elite are affecting herders; the processes by which tradition becomes implicated in change; and the tactics by which marginalized people grapple with their own marginality to make meaningful lives on the fringes of dominant economic centres.

To begin this map-making process, the first section discusses the pervasive but problematic concept of *pastoralism*. I explain how the term has emerged historically and changed over

time, as shown by a comparison of its use in the contemporary field of pastoralism studies versus the older classic ethnographies of livestock-keeping societies across east Africa. While problematic as a concept for classifying livelihoods, the term *pastoralism* remains influential as a *theme* for research. It brings together a broad array of studies that – despite their various conceptual framings – populated the biblio-scape of my study even before I had embarked on fieldwork in Turkana. Moreover, this theme imparts a broad research agenda focusing on widely observed trends, including the issue of social stratification that is central to this dissertation.

In the second section, I consider the literature on the equality and the emergence of class among pastoralists. I juxtapose two objectivist framings of social differentiation in Turkana: one portrays the marginalisation of herders as a pauper class, and the other provides a more optimistic portrayal of a 'hybrid pastoralism' forged by increased linkages between urban markets and rural livestock production. Then, the third section reviews the literature on the ways that 'tradition' is used to mediate between pastoralists and their urban counterparts. This section attends to the perspectives of people affected by marginalisation and who are experiencing marginality, rather than the marginalization of a livelihood system. These works provide some insight into the ways that people like the *raiya* of Turkana creatively re-invent themselves on the fringes of the centres of power.

To conclude, I introduce some of the key works in the ethnographic record from Turkana, which provided an initial orientation to my field site even before I had arrived. While not all of these studies mention *raiya*, they informed my attempts to comprehend this idea. I draw upon these publications throughout the following chapters, but here I provide an overview of the anthropologists who authored them and the contexts in which they conducted their work.

Definitions: Pastoralism, Pastoral Societies, and Pastoralists

There is something intuitive about the word 'pastoralism', and it is often used in the literature as if no definition is necessary. But this term is conceptually vague and has been applied differently over time and across disciplines. The classificatory definition of *pastoralism* has origins in the evolutionist paradigm in anthropology, although the term 'pastoralism' only gained currency with the rise of the development industry in the Global South. Interventions required practical knowledge upon which to base policies and programmes, so pastoralism was treated as a livelihood category distinguished from agriculture, fishing, and other productive systems, thereby marking certain people and places for designated interventions. Preferring clear-cut boundaries, governments and development agencies have proposed quantitative criteria to systematically distinguish pastoralists from others.

However, practitioners and development interventions aside, there is general agreement that classificatory and typological approaches are too reductive to be fruitful in academic inquiry. The most common classificatory criteria based on *means of production* designates pastoralists as those who derive at least 50 percent of their resources from livestock (Krätli & Swift 2014: 3). In practice, data is generally insufficient to make accurate classifications under this definition, which requires measurement of the degree of dependence both on resources directly procured from livestock and on pastoralism as a means of producing materials that can be traded or sold to acquire non-livestock-based resources such as grains or manufactured goods (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980: 19). Such data collection is hindered by various factors, including the high cost of collecting data across so dispersed and mobile a population; the difficulty of eliciting nuanced quantitative information about caloric intake, herd productivity, and income; the high seasonal variability of these variables; and the complex polygynous living and resource-sharing arrangements that complicate decisions about the appropriate unit of analysis.

Moreover, pastoralism cannot be defined as a single *mode of production*, in the Marxist sense, insofar as ownership rules and labour organization vary so greatly across and within herding communities (Bonte 1981; Galaty & Johnson 1990: 1). Even within Northeast Africa, most herders move between different modes of production as their conditions change. When graze is plentiful and herds are growing, the elders are able to maintain a relatively peaceful mode of family-oriented production. However, in times of environmental pressure and slower herd growth, youth may turn to their own predatory mode of raiding their neighbours. And at other times, when people must rely on agriculture or certain forms of trade, women may exert their own mode of production (Spencer 1998: 45).

Aside from production, there are many other variables that are definitional to pastoralism, some of which are listed in Table 1. One of the most commonly cited characteristics is seasonal mobility, in which herders move from place to place to utilise resources, the distribution of which are both heterogeneous and inconstant. However, many pastoralists practise mobile herding due to ecological necessity, and the occasional turn to sedentary lifestyles is not inimical to their cosmologies, religions, or worldviews (Baxter 1975: 209-210).[1] Moreover, researchers' emphasis on seasonal movements has tended to accentuate environmental drivers of mobility to the detriment of social and political factors like regional insecurity and relations with governments (Dyson-Hudson 1972: 23-24).

[1] For example, Luo people near Lake Victoria turned to fishing and agriculture long ago, and despite the salience of their pastoral heritage in self-representations, most no longer rely heavily on herding.

Table 1. Characteristics Commonly Used to Define Pastoral Production

Characteristic	*Explanation*
Flexibility	"…modern pastoralism, like the herding that preceded it, is still characterized by flexibility" (Kardulias 2015: xvi). "Pastoralism is above all a flexible subsistence strategy, involving opportunistic food production and foraging" (Gray et al. 2002: 99)
Scarcity	"…where human populations live on the products of their domestic animals in arid environments or areas of scarce resources" (Fratkin 1997: 235).
Mobility	"…choose as their basic strategy for providing year-round food for their herds the movement of livestock to pasturage rather than bringing of fodder to herds" (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980: 18).
Unmanipulated Resource Base	"…the raising of livestock on 'natural' pasture unimproved by human intervention" (Salzman 2004: 1).
Commons Resources	"… more marginal lands… tend to be characterised by collective rights to pasture or water" (Galaty 1999: 21).

The variety of factors pertinent to pastoralism, as well as the diversity of production practices, self-representations, and organisational forms exhibited among stock-keeping societies, are too great to be captured usefully in a typology (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980: 18). Anthropologists have been especially wary of classificatory definitions, for "creating a rubric which groups societies as diverse as those of the Nuer and the Lapps, or even the Tuareg and the Tutsi, [seems] as naïve as collecting butterflies and classifying them by their colours" (Baxter 1975: 208). Many of the classic ethnographies from East Africa focused on societies that would today be described as pastoralists, but analysis relied on a rich description of social life rather classification according to livelihood criteria. In Table 2, I have compiled a list of ethnographies that deal with livestock-keeping people in eastern and north-eastern Africa, and which were influential to my own project.

Figure 1 depicts their geographical relation to one another and to Turkana. The use of ethnic names in this map does not imply an *ethno-scape* of territorially-bounded societies but is rather intended to depict a *biblio-scape* of the ethnographic work.



Figure 1. Ethnographic Biblio-scape of Turkana and Surrounds.
All of the names in this image are in some way imagined, whether by ethnographers or by those who identify with the name themselves. Associated publications are listed in Table 2.

Across this biblio-scape, anthropologists have defined their scope of study and units of analysis in various ways that – while sometimes problematic for other reasons – did not rely on livelihood categories like *pastoralism*. Colonial-era ethnographers tended to focus on ethnically defined societies (Baxter 1954; Buxton 1958; Evans-Pritchard 1940; Jacobs 1966; Peristiany 1954), which remains one of the fundamental critiques of early anthropology in Africa. More contemporary ethnographers have attempted to address this issue by attending to local histories. Hutchinson (1996) incorporates Evans-Pritchard's work into a diachronic perspective on Nuer society that describes the influence of decades of civil war, the gradual introduction of a cash economy, and increasingly unequal access to cattle among Nuer

Table 2. Important Ethnographies in the Biblio-scape of Pastoral Northeast Africa

Group	Classic Ethnographic Literature
Ariaal	Fratkin 1991
Bodi	Abbink 1999
Boran	Baxter 1954
Dassanech	Almagor 1978
Dinka	Lienhardt 1961; Deng 1980
Dodoso*	Thomas 1966
Hamar	Lydall & Strecker 1979
Jie*	Gulliver 1955; Lamphear 1976
Jiye*	-
Karimojong*	Dyson-Hudson 1966; Knighton 2005
Luo	Parkin 1978; Geissler & Prince 2010
Maasai	Jacobs 1966; Berntsen 1979; Galaty 1982; Hodgson 1999
Mandari	Buxton 1958, 1973
Mursi	Turton 1973, 1979; Eczet 2012; Fayers-Kerr 2014
Nuer	Evans-Pritchard 1940, 1951, 1956; Johnson 1994; Hutchinson 1996
Nyangatom*	Tornay 1981
Pokot	Peristiany 1954; Schneider 1957; Bianco 1996
Rendille	Spencer 1973; Schlee 2000
Samburu	Spencer 1965, 1973, 1998
Somali	Lewis 1961; Schlee 1985, 2000
Tepes	Weatherby 2012
Toposa*	Muller-Dempf 2009

Asterisks indicate groups belonging to the itunga language group, formerly referred to as Teso-Turkana or the Karimojong Cluster (Gulliver 1952). The Dassanech, Tepes, Pokot, and Samburu languages differ significantly, but all three are spoken by people who neighbour Turkana and have undergone mutual exchange of words, customs and institutions, as well as people. Most publications focus on a single ethnically-defined group, although Schlee and Spencer have undertaken multi-ethnic ethnographies studying the historical and contemporary interactions amongst people in what is today known as Marsabit County, Kenya. Not all literature is strictly anthropological: Thomas's work on Dodos is a collection of stories and Lamphear's work on Jie is ethnohistory.

communities. However, her work also interrogates homogenous depictions of a Nuer "tribe" through a dissection of regional differences in livelihood, wealth, infrastructure, and relations with external authorities. Where language use and ethnic affiliation correspond, especially in highly diverse areas like South Sudan and the Omo Valley of Ethiopia, ethnographers have continued to focus their research on social groups defined at the level of tribe and ethnicity, although there is greater attention to the role of historical interactions in shaping the process

of group formation (Almagor 1978; Johnson 1994; Lydall & Strecker 1979; Schwabe & Kuojok 1981; Turton 1979). Turton's attention to oral histories on the Mursi migration into the land between the Mago and Mara Rivers highlighted the progressive founding of territorial sections as units of expansion. Whereas the segmentary principle would treat these territorial sections as structural equivalents, Turton showed that they had formed at different times throughout a gradual process of northward expansion into territory occupied by enemy groups (Turton 1979).

Further to the south and east, research among groups with shared and mutually intelligible languages opened up the possibility for more regional studies that transcend ethnic labels. In what is now north-eastern Kenya, cross-ethnic studies of Somali, Rendille and Gabbra societies emphasised organization according to clan and federations rather than tribe (Lewis 1961; Schlee 1985, 2000). To the south, the expansive presence and historical dominance of Maa-speaking people directed attention to differences across Maasai territorial groups (Jacobs 1966), interactions with and influences on neighbouring pastoral societies (Fratkin 1991; Lamphear 1993; Spencer 1973), and incorporation of marginal social groups like foragers, small-scale cultivators, and client-groups into larger Maa-speaking pastoral regimes (Berntsen 1976; Galaty 1982; Little 1992). While not everyone in this region practised pastoralism, they all belonged to a 'pastoral economy' insofar as livestock were the dominant means of accumulating wealth. Prior to colonialism in Kenya, Kalenjin and Bantu-speaking agriculturalists generally refrained from ownership of cattle, in part due to fear of Maasai raids. However, they engaged in peaceful trade with Maasai herders, providing farm produce in exchange for small stock, milk, and hides (Berntsen 1976: 6). Moreover, Dorobo people living at the margins of Maasai territory provided other goods and carried out tasks that Maasai deemed polluting (Galaty 1979).

Some anthropologists have described broader regional trends related to shared livelihood characteristics. Herskovits's (1926) seminal article on the East African "cattle complex" attempted to trace the diffusion of particular cultural traits such as a heightened regard for cattle across a diverse range of societies from east to southern Africa. Spencer's (1998: 2-3) 'pastoral continuum' encompasses a less expansive region, roughly is bounded by Islamic-influenced long-distance camel herding to the north and east, and by the tsetse belt to the west and south. But both of these regions were described in order to point out striking regional similarities and interactions, not to impose a system of classificatory criteria. In fact, while many of the classic ethnographic works use the term 'pastoral', but the nominalization of this adjective as 'pastoralism' appears nowhere in either Herskovits's (1926) or Evans-Pritchard's (1940) writing. Evans-Pritchard considered Nuer interest in cattle as a key factor influencing political organization and social structure, but he did not use the term pastoralism as a formal classification for livelihood activities.

While I do not frame my own research as a study of pastoralism, *per se,* the term *pastoral* remains a useful adjective. It provides a means of describing a heightened regard for and relationship to livestock, in which the care for domesticated animals is a focal concern around which economic, social, and moral aspects of life are oriented. Classificatory definitions of *pastoralism* as a means of production treat livestock, crops and other resource bases as quantitative equivalents. But in its adjectival form, *pastoral* indicates a qualitatively unique relationship to stock. That is, as pastoral people become wealthier in stock, they tend to rely less on agriculture, elevating livestock – and often cattle in particular – to a position of value that is not fully commensurate with other forms of wealth (Spencer 1998: 2). Rather than

determining whether or not people are pastoralists, they can be described as pastoral *to some degree*.[2]

Furthermore, the term *pastoralism* remains academically useful in that it establishes a thematic basis for researchers to investigate shared research concerns. The interdisciplinary field of pastoralism studies explores important trends affecting pastoral people, that is, people who rely upon and organise their lives around the care of domestic herds of livestock.[3] In the next section, I will consider two of these trends – sedentarisation and commercialisation – and discuss their consequences for a third process: stratification. I also review the ways that stratification in Turkana is often described by researchers, as either marginalisation and pauperisation of herders or integration of herders into a hybrid economy.

Transition, Differentiation and Stratification

Most of the literature on livelihood transitions experienced by herders describes large-scale processes of change that occur at the level of the pastoralist system. One such process is *sedentarisation*, the general reduction in seasonal or otherwise patterned mobility. Because mobility is such an important feature of many herd management regimes, especially in East Africa, sedentarisation is often treated as one of the most dramatic changes that pastoralists can undergo. People may settle for a variety of reasons, which are often explained metaphorically as "push" and "pull" forces. Push forces include changing land tenure systems that make mobile livelihoods more difficult to sustain, whereas pull forces include new

[2] Spencer's (1998) notion of the 'pastoral continuum' is important here, asserting that all livestock-keeping people rely on a variety of resources, often including cultivation.

[3] Key peer-reviewed journals include *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* (SpringerOpen) and *Nomadic Peoples* (White Horse Press).

economic opportunities, and the comforts of an urban lifestyle (Fratkin & Roth 2005: 1-2). Many governments have adopted sedentarisation as a matter of policy, enforcing laws aimed at "settling" nomadic populations (Schmidt & Pearson 2016), although disruption of pastoral livelihoods is sometimes a secondary effect of conservation projects (Turton 1995) or large-scale land acquisitions for agriculture (Abbink 2011). Alternatively, development programmes with a "soft touch", which work to support pastoralists while incorporating them into broader economic systems of production and exchange, tend to promote trends that have already emerged organically – including urbanisation, commodification of livestock, and increasing reliance on state resources – rather than introducing them altogether. Education has often served at times as an ulterior strategy of sedentarisation, inculcating modernist values and sedentarist sentiments that encourage children to disengage from their parents' livelihoods (Krätli 2001a).

Recognising the legal dimension of sedentarisation, land is often the critical resource that, once enclosed within a private property regime, prevents pastoralists from implementing more open forms of land tenure and impedes their mobility (Behnke 2018; Lane 1998). Increasingly effective states are more capable of enforcing land tenure systems that enforce private property rights and permit the enclosure of commons resources. Among Afar herders in Ethiopia, land privatization and the Federal Government's sedentarisation policies are contributing to the reduction of mobility, overgrazing, and the breakdown of customary organisational structures (Schmidt & Pearson 2016). East African pastoralists have faced land privatization including the establishment of group ranches for Maasai (Galaty 1992). Where pastoralist land tenure systems persist despite state intervention, they are often altered in the encounter. For the Tuareg, an older land tenure regime based on flexible "bundles of rights" for specific resources like water and graze have been transformed through the colonial and

postcolonial period into more rigid forms of territorial inclusion and exclusion (Lecocq 2003: 61).

In drylands formerly dominated by mobile herders, the growth of sedentary settlements presents one of the most dramatic and visually striking transformations of the physical landscape. Broch-Due (1999a) has discussed the moral implications of the changing Turkana landscape, with attention to the rise of fishing and agricultural villages as ambiguous places of both refuge and entrapment. In the larger urban centres like Lodwar, Kalokol, and Lokicar, the life trajectories and aspirations of the younger generation are being influenced by new urban opportunities (Betti 2010; Gottero 2015), including those recently introduced by the nascent oil industry (Enns & Bersaglio 2016).[4] Even where jobs are not available, rural herders have become ever more dependent on humanitarian aid (Hogg 1986; Reidy 2012), often moving closer to distribution points and reducing seasonal movements.

Sedentarisation has often been detrimental to morbidity rates, insofar as higher population density usually promotes the spread of disease. However, urban dwellers in Turkana also have greater access to healthcare services (Barkey et al. 2001; Brainard 1986). Furthermore, urban women often experience more benefits and economic opportunities, including roles in wage labour and business that are unavailable to women living in more remote areas. Women living in town generally spend less time collecting water, firewood and other resources, although they may spend more time on childcare and cooking, domestic tasks that can be shared in rural polygynous household (Fratkin & Smith 2005).

[4] This is not necessarily a new development, and Broch-due and Sanders (1999) describe the rise of a client class in Turkana as the colonial government recruited impoverished herders as labour to build roads and eradicate locusts.

Sedentarisation, in turn, often facilitates *commercialisation*, insofar as aggregation of people and access to financial infrastructure such as banks facilitates the growth of markets and the introduction of cash as an alternative to in-kind trade. The cash economy has often developed gradually, and cash may remain excluded from certain traditional spheres of exchange, most often pertaining to cattle. Whereas small stock are easily commodified and sold for cash, cattle are often reserved for bridewealth exchanges and ritual purposes. Cash and cattle are not directly interconvertible (Hutchinson 1996: 65), although cattle may be sold to alter the herd's sex ratio or as a last resort during droughts (Dahl & Hjort 1976: 29, 164). However, cattle may eventually be commodified as norms change and cattle markets grow.[5]

While these trends both describe an overall transformation or transition, they often occur unevenly across a group. Some people settle while others continue practising mobile pastoralism. Some migrate toward towns to take advantage of urban economies while others remain in the borderlands. Some have greater access to the cash economy than others, especially where disparities in formal education serves as a barrier to employment. In Turkana, Brainard (1986: 526) estimates that as many as 20 percent of the population was settled in famine camps following a massive drought in 1959-1960, after which many were settled in agricultural communities. Conducting research for the Southern Turkana Ecosystem Project (STEP), Barkey *et al.* describe Turkana people as "a nomadic population making the transition to a sedentary life," estimating that 15 to 30 percent of the population had settled at the time of their study (2001: 393). More recently, Watson & Binsbergen (2008: 1) suggest

[5] Livestock markets are also encouraging to cattle rustlers, for whom the prestige of a successful raid is now augmented by the incentive of financial profit. A new class of "traiders" has arisen to facilitate the swift sale of stolen stock into distant markets, prohibiting governments from tracking down raiding parties by finding and identifying the stolen animals (Eaton 2010).

that only about 70 percent of the population now relies on nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism. These estimates are not based on systematic surveys, and moreover, labelling any particular household as sedentary versus nomadic is complicated because households are not stable units in Turkana, with small groups migrating in search of grass with cattle, leaving the elderly, children and others behind in settlements with browsing livestock. Nonetheless, what these numbers suggest is a relatively stable stratification of the population between urban-settled and rural-mobile households, with limited movement of settled households back to a mobile modes of living (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999).

While the focus of this study is development-induced social differentiation, an important preliminary question is: was stratification typical of pastoralists populations prior to the development encounter, or is it a new trend? This has been a long-standing point of contention, as reflected in debates about pastoralism and equality. Early ethnographies described an egalitarian tendency among many East African pastoralists demonstrated through a lack of structural hierarchies, castes and classes, or formal positions of authority (e.g. Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Lewis, 1961; Jacobs, 1966). This view was challenged by later anthropologists who attributed the "myth" of pastoral egalitarianism to an older generation's interpretive biases (Asad 1979; Mckinnon 2000).

If equality was never a characteristic of pastoralist societies, how is development-induced social stratification different from previous forms of wealth inequality? On the one hand, some argue that wealth inequality among herders was different from wealth inequality in a cash-based system because disparities across herders were not entrenched through class differentiation (Salzman 1999). Whereas inequality within a pastoral society is measured along "a continuous distribution of prestige" – which allows for some level of social mobility – the introduction of a non-pastoral elite makes inequality discontinuous, introducing "the

hurdles of class difference" to hinder the previous social mobility along the continuum (Spencer 1998: 231). Wealth disparities between pastoralists could be dramatic, but "such differences were highly unstable, for misfortune struck haphazardly at the herds of both rich and poor, and opportunities of economic diversification were minimal" (Hogg 1986: 321). The inability to monopolise the means of production, as well as the instability of pastoral wealth disparities, resulted in greater social mobility, preventing the entrenchment of disparities in enduring class structures (Schneider 1979: 10). However, the premise that pastoral wealth entails greater social mobility has been brought into question by surveys revealing that disparities in livestock wealth are often inherited across generations (Borgerhoff Mulder et al. 2010).

This leaves us with two portrayals of development-induced social differentiation in Turkana. On the one hand, some suggest that urbanisation and livelihood diversification are contributing to "the apparent growing pauperisation of large sections of the pastoral populations of Africa" (Hogg 1986: 330). Some changes affect pastoralists broadly. In many places, stratification began long ago with the coming together of a sedentary, cash-oriented, urban class that parted with conventional herding due to destitution and loss of animals (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999: 38), recruitment as administrative officers such as chiefs and tax collectors (Dahl 1979: 198-200), or accumulation of sufficient wealth to employ others to graze their herds (Baxter 1975: 210). The out-migration of poor pastoralists to urban areas left wealthier stock-owners without surplus labour, which previously would have been provided in return for material support (Sikana & Kerven 1991: 25).

As urban dwellers accumulated wealth, they often retain rights to livestock managed by kin. Formerly autonomous herders become hired hands watching over the livestock of wealthy relatives or non-kin employers. Increasing reliance on employed herders has raised problems

of resource management, as “absentee” herd owners become less directly involved in resource management (Little 1985; Unusa 2012). The result is a less sustainable form of husbandry that is more akin to ranching. Without stocking and livestock support programmes, herders are often forced to transition to alternative livelihoods or engage in “aid-waiting”, which made many dependent on emergency food relief (Reidy 2012: 527).

Integration into cash-based commercial economies has often had especially negative consequences for those with tenuous claims to herd ownership. This cuts across both gender and wealth level. For pastoralist women, integration into the cash economy can reduce their control over economic resources (Ensminger 1987, 1984). The increasing interconvertibility of livestock and money has generally diminished the sphere of women’s power. In the absence of livestock markets, the various resources derived from animals have been allocated to different people, with women often claiming, at minimum, hides, milk, and other dairy products. But when animals are raised for meat and can be completely liquidated through sales into the homogenous form of cash, men can consolidate all of the wealth derived from the herd (Waller 1999: 35).

Market integration can also have a disproportionate negative impact on poor herders. For example, to the south of Turkana, Il Chamus herders in Baringo County began turning to agriculture starting in the early 1960s, driven largely by rising prices for commodities, decreased purchasing power among herders, and quarantines that prevented livestock sales. Wealthy herders were able to afford the labour required for irrigated agriculture, while poor herders were forced to undertake a less productive form of dryland cultivation. As a result, while poor herders struggled to achieve subsistence, wealthier herders were able to produce surplus grain for sale, which they could use to acquire more irrigable land. This form of accumulation has created more enduring disparities in wealth (Little 1985).

Among pastoralists, the prevailing moral economy often affords the poor some basic level of social protection in a moral economy that mandates a minim distribution. economy often affords the poor with morally enforced forms of social protection that are eroded in urban areas, where people may not adhere to pastoral values and moral norms. When an animal is slaughtered, its body must be used before the meat expires, and poorer people can often claim the leftovers uneaten by the owner's household. In this way, a highly unequal system of private ownership prevails while animals are alive, but upon converting them into food, wealthy herders are often morally compelled to feed their poorer neighbours (Waller 1999). Moreover, whereas poor herders have often fallen back on temporary relations of dependency upon wealthier stock owners, including child fostering and transient household mergers, the relations of dependency fostered by commercialised labour arrangements are often more permanent. Destitute people are less likely regrow their herds when they sustain themselves through labour arrangements based on cash payments rather than in in-kind animal contributions and usage rights. McCabe summarises these arguments succinctly:

> As pastoral peoples are drawn into larger political and economic systems their viability as subsistence livestock herders is threatened. In order to survive, many groups are forced to abandon their nomadic life altogether. (McCabe 1994: 197)

But on the other hand, Müller-Dempf (2014) challenges this narrative of the pauperisation of pastoralists in Turkana. He argues that modernization and development have led to the hybridization of pastoralism, allowing herders to benefit from urban opportunities. Whereas others emphasise the rift between the pastoral and urban sectors of the local economy he argues that:

> This rift does not seem to exist anymore, if it ever has existed… An economic system has emerged in Turkana, which is based on all sectors of a hybrid economy: pastoralism, on the one hand, and non-pastoral activities, on the other: agriculture, fishing, and jobs in government, with NGOs, and in the private sector. (2014: 2)

This view suggests that stratification is accompanied by economic interdependency as *raiya* herders become integrated into broader systems of economic cooperation. This does not imply homogenization, and Müller-Dempf describes eight livelihood-based "identities" in Turkana – pastoralist, hybrid pastoralist, peri-urban hybrid pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, fishermen, urbanite, survivor – many of which exist in cooperative arrangements with other parts of the larger economic system.

Müller-Dempf's account differs from those above in that heterogeneity in livelihood activity does not necessarily reduce social mobility. Instead, people come together in a new "hybridized" economy, within which herders exploit resources and opportunities from town, including occasional wage labour. This conclusion coheres with the historical conclusion that pastoralism probably never existed in a "pure" form in which homesteads survived on their herds alone (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980). Long before Europeans instituted their colonial and post-Independence efforts at development, people in Turkana and among their neighbours have planted large riverside sorghum gardens during the rainy season, harvested wild fruits and tubers, traded to acquire grains from highland agriculturalists, and practised fishing along the shores of the lake. Livelihood heterogeneity is a long-standing norm.

Which of these accounts is more accurate? One way to approach this issue is to examine the experience of stratification and the point of view of people affected by it. This reframes the question to ask: is social differentiation in Turkana experienced among *raiya* communities as marginalisation from or incorporation into a new economic reality? In keeping with the phenomenological approach that I outlined in the previous chapter, the next section reviews several ways that anthropologists have discussed the relationship between herders and the growing populations of non-pastoralist urbanites. I focus especially on approaches that

highlight how pastoralists actively shape this relationship through the mediating principle of tradition.

Putting Stratification in Perspective

The literature on global-local relations in Africa provides various ways of thinking about the division and relationship between growing urban areas and the pastoral periphery. Piot (1999) describes how remote Kabre mountain communities in northern Togo draw creatively across both traditional and modern practices. Before leaving on journeys to the city, Kabre youth make sacrifices to their ancestors and shave their hair according to the latest global fashions, exhibiting a "promiscuous mixing" and contributing to "an uncontainably hybrid cultural landscape" (1999: 173). But others describe a more guarded boundary between the local community and that which is variously described as foreign, cosmopolitan, or global (Ferguson 1999). For Spencer, "the structuring of economic activities into broadly separate spheres is no less than the moral structure of society itself" (1998: 44), and movement between spheres may be resisted by those for whom stratification is advantageous.

The 'moral threshold' is a concept that depicts how traditional values mediate the engagement between the "traditional pastoralist sector" and the alternatives offered by capitalist penetration (see Figure 2). For example, herders may be urged during a drought to engage in the urban market economy, despite their obligations to the others sharing responsibilities as managers of the herd. Some will remain with the herd and will never cross the moral threshold. Others might be pushed to enter the urban economy, through which they

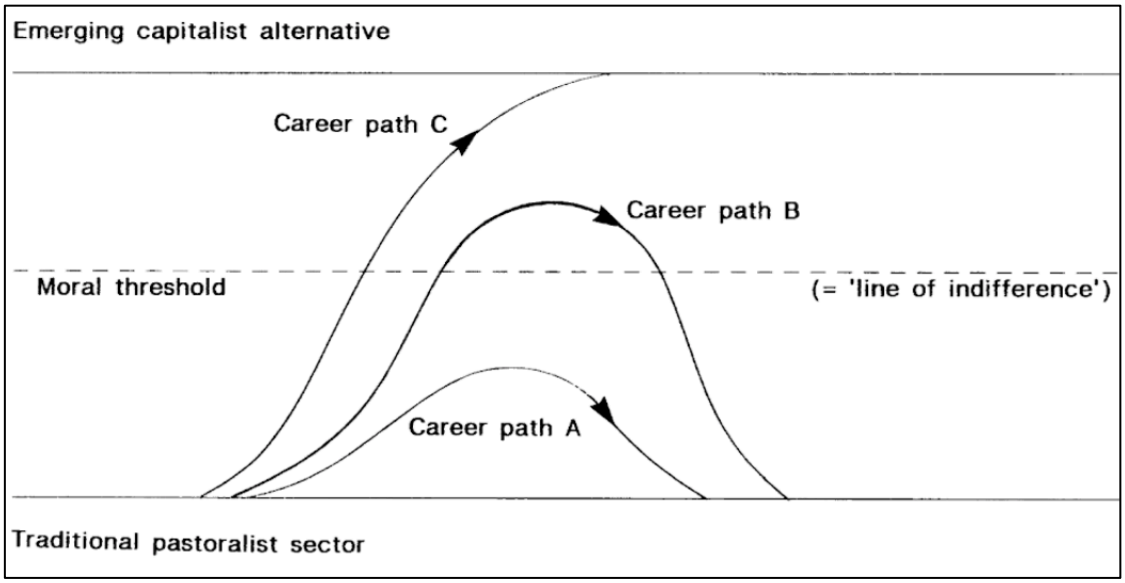


Figure 2. The Gravity Model of the Moral Threshold.
(Taken from Spencer 1998, page 235)

will face a moral dilemma: whether or not to return. What determines people's "career trajectories" in this model is not economic calculations alone, but the "pull of tradition", which Spencer likens to a gravitational force.

Samburu elders warn their sons that if they do not obey them, they will be struck by the curse (*ideket*) of their elders' (Spencer 1965: 186). Luo traditionalists in south-western Kenya directly implicate the breaking of customs (*chike*) with infliction by disease and misfortune (*chira*) (Parkin 1978), and in southern Tonga AIDS is described as a kind of *kahungo*, an affliction resulting from disrespect and transgression of customary rules (Mogensen 1995). But the power of tradition is not always reliant on the threat of punishment. Among Jelgobe agro-pastoralists in Niger, for example, the demonstration of self-mastery demands a particular demeanour and behavioural discipline. A man must never acknowledge that he is cold, hungry, angry or sad, for these would invoke shame. Furthermore, he must be "refined, subtle, responsible, cultivated, endowed with a sense of shame, and master of his needs and his emotions", a desirable complex of qualities associated with freedom from physical

constraints and collectively known as *pulaaku*, to which any Jelgobe man should aspire (Riesman 1977: 127). *Pulaaku* roughly means proper Fulani-ness, and while it serves as a moral framework among Fulani herders themselves, it is also the moral lens through which they approach non-pastoral Fulani agriculturalists, people belonging to other ethnicities, and foreigners.

Importantly, the moral threshold can shift as the definition of 'traditional society' changes, which Spencer attributes to the "entrepreneurs" who cross the threshold against tradition. These innovators change the boundaries as they cross them, and Tradition is forced to compromise:

> Elders may regard themselves as the guardians of 'traditional' values associated with pastoralism. However, by encouraging their sons and sons-in-law to bring back cash for their own use, they are shifting the initiative towards a younger generation that has access to the money market… In effect, through the constant compromise with change, the whole diagram shifts upwards. (1998: 238)

Rather than the enthusiastic adoption of the global – as suggested by Piot's description of "promiscuous mixing" – Spencer is describing a more passive process in which the pastoralists have no choice but to accommodate global influences.[6] However, this account of the moral threshold assumes that the "custodians of tradition" are unwitting recipients of externally imposed changes. This would seem inappropriate for Turkana, where *raiya* herders describe themselves as "people of the periphery" (*ng'itunga a nakalipatan*) in relation to the "world of outsiders" (*akwap a ng'imoe*).

Similarly, social labels applied by Maasai herders reflect a keen awareness of social stratification, as well as a response to it. Hodgson (1999) describes how Maasai youth

[6] Some anthropologists have taken this as a call to duty, as suggested by Renfrew's objective to document the process of sedentarisation in Turkana "before all the traditions among settling Turkana have been lost" (1990: 2).

increasingly distinguish between a pastoralist masculinity demonstrated through dance and dress and an *ormeek* masculinity associated with educated men living modern lifestyles. However, these labels do not simply reflect social differentiation; they respond to it. Maasai pastoralists speak of *ormeek* masculinity in derogatory terms, making it a way to "mark, mock, and ostracize any Maasai man who imitated Swahilis, who adopted the practices or fashions of modernity, who sought to be anything other than a real Maasai man" (Hodgson 1999: 135). This way of dealing with social stratification is not new; it reflects a long-standing juxtaposition of the pastoralist ideal against the antipraxis of those who do not adhere to it (Galaty 1979). Although hunters (il-Torrobo), blacksmiths (il-Kunono) and diviners (il-Oibonok) often live together with pastoral people and engage in mutually beneficial exchanges, pastoralists often caste these people as aberrant and polluting. Such ideas of pollution are a response to the tensions inherent in residing with others upon which pastoralists depend, but with whom they do not intend to assimilate, arising "when a negatively regarded category threatens a positively regarded [category]; when blacksmiths, for instance, threaten to marry pastoralists" (Galaty 1979: 814). Similarly, the term *ormeek* was previously used to refer to men in subordinate social positions at a time when pastoralists were the dominant social group, but the opportunities offered by education and development have allowed urban men to develop an elite class apart from the pastoralists. The continued ostracization of *ormeek* masculinities maintains a sense of distinction among herders (Hodgson 1999).

Similarly, Wolputte and Verswijver draw on Fardon's (1995) idea of 'counterworks' to describe a form of opposition or resistance among the African herding communities whom they visited that is "embedded in everyday practices, especially in those that – at first sight – bear no 'political content' at all" (Van Wolputte & Verswijver 2004: 11). Carla Huysman describes the "creative praxis" in contemporary Turkana material culture, which she observed

while shooting a film in the early 2000s. She suggests that cultural change does simply happen to tradition, but that "cultural values and conduct are continuously being negotiated by Turkana in constantly changing conditions" (Huysmans 2004: 117). While Spencer writes that the moral threshold is altered by those who cross it, Huysman's statement suggests that tradition can also be innovated by those who remain in the pastoral periphery but depend upon the moral threshold.

Landmarks in Turkana's Ethnographic Record

I conclude this chapter with an overview of some of the most important pieces of anthropology focusing on Turkana. These works were undertaken at different times, with different research concerns and theoretical lenses. But what they share is that the researchers undertook prolonged fieldwork (years and even decades) and draw upon deep ethnographic engagements in their work. More recently, there has been a spike in academic interest in Turkana.[7] This is somewhat attributable to a spate of high profile developments that include expanding refugee operations in Kakuma (International Finance Corporation 2018; Vemuru et al. 2016), the construction of a megadam and largescale commercial irrigation schemes upstream of Lake Turkana (Allibhai 2015; Fong 2015), the reform of land tenure under Kenya's 2010 Constitution (Gottero 2015), and a nascent oil industry in the south of Turkana (Enns & Bersaglio 2015; Runci 2015). These recent studies are relevant to my concern with the changing social landscape. However, these researchers are generally less familiar with the Turkana and its ethnographic record than the anthropologists reviewed below.

The first major ethnographic work in Turkana was Philip Gulliver's *Preliminary Survey of the Turkana* (1951). The use of a common language across multiple Ateker-speaking peoples

[7] In 2015, the University of Oxford had three doctoral students conducting research in Turkana, each arriving independently: Greta Semplici from International Development, Samuel Derbyshire from Archaeology, and myself from Anthropology.

in this area allowed Gulliver (1952, 1955) to provide a comparative perspective on social organization, property rights and herd management across these groups, especially the Ng'ikarimojong and Ng'ijie. Gulliver's work, like Evans-Pritchard's, was conducted under the auspices of the British colonial government, which may be one explanation for the evasiveness that Gulliver noted among many of his informants. Nonetheless, his early work provides an impressively detailed account and remains an important resource among anthropologists working in Turkana today.

Several decades later, Itaru Ohta picked up on many of the themes initially discussed by Gulliver, providing some of the most detailed descriptive work on livestock management practices (Ohta 1987) and bridewealth negotiation (Ohta 2007). Although much of his work discussed customary social organisation and livelihood practices, he has also studied more contemporary relations between Turkana and refugees living in the Kakuma camps (Ohta 2005). This has been a topic of much interest over the past two decades (e.g. Aukot 2003; Grindheim 2013; Tureti 2003; Vemuru et al. 2016), although Ohta is unique in that he was present in Kakuma before the arrival of the UN Refugee Agency in 1992.

Another anthropologist who has contributed to the ethnography of Turkana social organisation is Anthony Barrett, who drew on multiple decades of work as a missionary in Turkana to compile descriptions of traditional rituals and organizational systems, including funerary rites (Barrett 1987a) and the branding system (Barrett 1998b), as well as a wide-ranging ethnography on Turkana cosmology that covers initiation, animal sacrifice, and the role of prophets (Barrett 1998a). While his work is rich in detail, it paints a picture of Turkana tradition that downplays political and regional contexts, contemporary changes, and the ambiguities of everyday practice.

A great deal of research has been conducted in Turkana through a more ecological lens. In the late 1960s, a team was commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to undertake a multi-year survey of Southern Turkana, providing data on domestic and wild mammalian populations (Watson 1969), geological formations and soils (Morgan 1971; Rhemtulla 1970), sorghum cultivation (Morgan 1974), and ethno-botanical classifications (Morgan 1981). The studies were primarily concerned with surveying the land, plants, and animals rather than herding practices. However, following from this study, a group of researchers assembled in the late 1970s under anthropologists Neville Dyson-Hudson and Michael Little to initiate the Southern Turkana Ecosystem Project (STEP), one of the most comprehensive multidisciplinary studies of a pastoralist population. Researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds across ecology, biology, and sociocultural studies collaborated to collect data on the *Ng'isonyoka* territorial section under a common biobehavioural framework (Little & Leslie 1999).

A key focus of this research was the biological and health consequences of different lifestyle and mobility patterns through comparative studies of pastoralists living on the plains and settled agricultural communities living along the Turkwel River, where the Catholic Mission had established a large parish and encouraged cultivation. Studies investigated differential mortality rates for children (Brainard 1986), health complaints among adults (Barkey et al. 2001), and nutritional status (Galvin & Little 1999). These studies discussed emerging trends such as sedentarisation and its effects, including improved access to health services but also the accumulation of human waste and contamination of water sources (Campbell et al. 1999).

Anthropologist Terrence McCabe (2004) brings together the ecological perspective of STEP with his expertise on the social organisation of animal husbandry to describe how adaptive responses to resource scarcity, periodic drought, and inter-ethnic raiding arise from the highly

idiosyncratic livestock management decisions made by individual herders. He approaches mobility and raiding in Turkana through individual herders' strategic decision-making, following four household heads through multiple years to understand how they manage seasonal movement, grazing patterns, organisation of household labour, and coordination with other herders. Whereas studies that start at the level of the system tend to overlook the idiosyncrasies of individual herders' decisions, McCabe demonstrates how a general but non-monolithic social scheme emerges from commonalities and interactions at the level of individuals. However, his behavioural framework remains ends-oriented, focused on adaptive strategies, whereas my contention is that some decisions are made based on incomplete information, in response to prescriptive moral obligations, or as an exploratory exercise in sense-making.

An important development in the anthropological literature on Turkana was the turn to a more historical perspective. John Lamphear drew on oral histories in Jie (1976) and Turkana (1992), focusing in the latter on Turkana responses to British pacification efforts. His work departed from Gulliver's structural-functionalism, discussing the relatively recent generation of Turkana ethnicity through out-migrations of Jie herders into the Taarash Valley (1988) as well as alterations of the generation-set and age-set systems to meet the military needs of a growing population seeking to expand southward and eastward (1993).

Writing with a similarly critical perspective on historical encounters, Odegi-Awuondo (1990) wrote on herders' ability to cope with drought amidst expanding state and market influences and in light of ongoing disruptions due to the lingering influences of past colonial policies. His work focuses especially on the impact of the 1979-1980 drought, which substantially increased the non-pastoral populations as families left their children in school due to free feeding programmes and many families migrated into Ethiopia, Uganda, and

upcountry Kenya. More recent work by Mustapha Mirzeler (2014) has explored Turkana history through storytelling, and Samuel Derbyshire (Derbyshire 2017) wrote his doctoral dissertation in Oxford's Institute of Archaeology on Turkana social histories of the more recent past, as evoked through material culture.

Finally, the work of Vigdis Broch-Due is a synthesis of many of the approaches discussed above. On the one hand, her ethnographic work the social and economic life of Turkana pastoralists builds on the work of Gulliver, Ohta, and Barrett. However, she puts this material into the context of the encounters with governments and aid agencies described by Lamphear, Odegi-Awuondo, and others, providing a critical – and at times pessimistic – account of the moral response to development in Turkana (Broch-Due 1990). She undertook research during the time when the Norwegian Development Agency (NORAD) was implementing projects across the county, many of which failed when NORAD pulled out of Kenya due to a breakdown of relations with the administration of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi. Her work usefully directed my attention to the ways that notions of morality are conveyed through corporeal metonymy (1993, 2000), in a manner similar to Uduk moral knowledge (James 1988).

Broch-Due has also been influential in challenging one of the most pervasive biases in the literature from African pastoral societies: the prevalence of men, both in terms of the main characters in ethnographic description as well the ethnographers themselves. This bias has tended to re-produce stereotypes of the patriarchal pastoralist by emphasising the agnatic principle of male descent over affinal relations (Hodgson 2001). Deities such as the Nilotic sky divinity (*Akuj*) of the *Itunga*-speaking people, which includes the Turkana, Karamojong, Jie and other groups around the Turkana basin, have been interpreted as male deities, despite evidence from both linguistic analysis and oral accounts that suggest greater gender

ambiguity (Broch-Due 1999b). Increasing participation by women in the pastoralist research has not only challenged these andro-centric interpretations, but has tended to be more inclusive of the perspectives of women among the people whose lives are studied (Hutchinson 1996:29).

Two other anthropologists are also worth noting. Their contributions to the ethnographic record in Turkana are less well-known, but they have presented work that are pertinent here because they discuss *raiya.* One is Marina Betti (2010) – a student of Broch-Due – who conducted fieldwork for her masters degree in Turkana. Her research describes social change in Turkana from the perspective of sedentary communities in urban areas near Lake Turkana, focusing on children's socialisation either in school or on the pastoral homestead. Like the present work, Betti's thesis addresses the growing rift between urban and *raiya* communities, which is articulated by concerns that today's youth are being "spoiled" by their removal from the moral socialisation of a pastoral childhood. In some ways, my own study could be framed as a complement to Betti's work. Where she describes *raiya* as an ideal of traditional life against which urban people compare their contemporary circumstances, I describe it as an imaginative mode of performance, perception, and self-definition through which rural herders represent their relationship to expanding urban areas.

Second, Harald Müller Dempf of the Max Planck Institute has conducted research among the Toposa since the 1980s, describing the ways that they "engineer" their initiation rites to accommodate contradictions in the ideal system of age organisation (Müller-Dempf 2009). His more recent work in Turkana, including film-making and fieldwork from 2013-14, addresses the relations between rural herders and urban markets, in which he optimistically suggests the emergence of a hybrid economy that incorporates people from the *raiya* countryside.

In the next chapter, I set the stage for my own ethnographic work in Turkana. I describe the geographical and historical context in which the tensions of development have shifted from the encounter between "the Turkana people" (*Ng'iturkana*) and outsiders to the relations between rural herders (*ng'iraiya*) and the growing population of urban, educated Turkana people.

CHAPTER 3: A HISTORY OF TWO GEOGRAPHIES

This chapter describes the setting of my study, which could be summarised broadly as contemporary Turkana. But this designation is ambiguous for two reasons. First and most obviously, it is too broad. My study deals with a particular part of Turkana, which the government refers to as Loima sub-County, and which those familiar with the territorial divisions of Turkana refer to as Nakamatak, the place of the Ng'ikamatak territorial section. More specifically, my study deals with two families and the communities of which they are part, one living in the town of Lodwar to the east of Loima, and the other living in the remote borderlands of western Loima. The trends described in this study cannot claim to represent other parts of Turkana, such as the southeast with its burgeoning oil industry or the disputed borders of the Ilemi Triangle in the north. Nor can my study speak for periods earlier than 2015, when my fieldwork began.

The designation 'contemporary Turkana' is also ambiguous because Turkana can refer to two kinds of geographies. On the one hand, Turkana County is the administrative territory encompassed by boundaries and delineated by a bureaucratic agency. On the other hand, *Aturkan* is the place inhabited by the Turkana people, defined less by abstract boundaries than the physical presence of *others*, who lay claim to their own lands beyond *Aturkan*. This chapter begins with an introduction to these spatial logics. This chapter begins with an overview of space and time in Turkana. The first section describes the two forms of geography that are evident in spatial representations of Turkana, one based on the patchwork of groups that constitute the regional ethno-scape and the other based on the more state-centric and border-based political geography of countries, counties, and smaller administrative and electoral constituencies. The second section discusses non-calendrical approaches to time in Turkana, which focus on memorable events as well as the naming of men's initiation groups. While these first two sections offer a general orientation to space and

time in Turkana generally, they also introduce some of the key forms of social organization, which have been central topics in the ethnographic record since Gulliver's (1951) work. Specifically, the territorial sections (*ng'atekerin*) provide spatial differentiate while the practice of the initiation rite (*asapan*) undergirds a system of age-organisation that marks the passing of time. Together, these principles provide a spatio-temporal logic that is crucial for ethnographers interested in developing a less state-centric historical narrative. After introducing them here, I will return to them in the ensuing chapters to examine how they feature in contemporary reconfigurations of kinship and authority.

While the border-based and ethnic geographies of Turkana can be distinguished by different logics, they are nonetheless historically intertwined. The second and third sections discuss two senses of opposition and alterity through which people have defined belonging and community in Turkana. The first section focuses on historical encounters with outsiders and enemies that have provided a basis of ethnic unity in Turkana, which has persisted from their early expansion out of the Tarac Valley in the mid-Eighteenth Century, through the violent incursions of the colonial government, and into its contemporary political dealings with the broader Kenyan nation of which it is a part. The Turkana people (*Ng'iturkana*) have long defined themselves through these oppositional and often confrontational encounters with outsiders (*ng'imoe*), on the basis of difference from outsiders and increasingly marginalisation by outsiders.

However, more recent forms of social stratification within Turkana require new ways of articulating difference and division. The third section then moves on to discuss new forms of difference *within* Turkana, engendered by the relatively recent expansion of urban centres in an otherwise remote landscape. The keyword for this section is *ng'ikwaaworu*, a term meaning "those who wear white clothes" that was used to describe the emerging urban

populations, whose strange lifestyles and modes of dress designated them as outsiders despite their shared Turkana ethnicity.

Finally, in the third section, I conclude with a brief discussion of the ways that this history manifests in contemporary Turkana, with multiple scales of marginality. On the one hand, there is the national-level marginalisation of the Turkana people, but within this is the marginalisation of rural herders amidst the rise of an urban Turkana elite. This sets the stage the two chapters that follow, which describe how the term *raiya* allows people to articulate these relatively recent and largely unprecedented forms of spatial division and social stratification.

Dual Geographies

Turkana can be envisioned according to two overlapping political geographies. One is defined through boundaries and divides space into countries and their respective administrative constituencies. The other depicts a more fluid mosaic of shifting and often overlapping territories occupied by different ethnic groups. In this section, I introduce both of these geographies, after which the remainder of the chapter discusses their historical co-evolution.

To reach Turkana from the national capital Nairobi, one must travel over 500 kilometres, a journey that crosses the Great Rift Valley, traverses the agricultural highlands of Eldoret and Kitale, and then plunges into the Pokot Hills. After zigging and zagging down the switch-backs of the Marich Pass, the winding route unravels into a linear strip of dusty dirt track, revealing desert-like plains that fade into the horizon. Upon reaching the familiar openness of these flatlands, I often feel that I have arrived in Turkana. However, this area still belongs to West Pokot County, and one must continue another 32 kilometres north to Kainuk before reaching soil that definitively belongs to Turkana County.

The 2010 Constitution designates Turkana and West Pokot as two of Kenya's 47 counties, each of which encompasses a number of electoral constituencies. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission is responsible for determining the borders between these constituencies, which are used during elections when each county elects a single representative to the Senate, and each constituency elects a Member to the National Assembly. There are six constituencies in Turkana County, of which Loima is the newest.[1]

From Kainuk, the arid flatlands stretch northward for another 400 kilometres, unbroken but for the dry gullies of seasonal rivers and a few solitary mountains and short ranges. Located in Kenya's distant north-western corner, most of Turkana County falls within a geological basin west of the eponymously named Lake Turkana (formerly Lake Rudolf).[2] This basin is known for its heat and aridity, with daily temperatures reaching 35 to 38 degrees centigrade throughout the year, and an average annual rainfall of only 250 mm (King et al. 2016). These climatic conditions set substantial constraints on livelihoods, making mobile livestock husbandry – in which the meagre dryland graze and browse can be converted into milk, blood, and meat for human consumption – the most promising strategy for primary production. Hunting, foraging, seasonal sorghum cultivation, and fishing in Lake Turkana have long provided supplementary food resources, but large-scale agriculture is highly restricted to a few areas with water availability, such as the shores of the Turkwel River. As

[1] For election of MPs to the National Assembly, Turkana County is divided into 6 constituencies, but the County Government divides Turkana into 7 sub-counties to provide services, treating Kibish as separate from Turkana North. At a more fine-grained level, the election of members to the County Assembly is based on division of sub-Counties into wards, each of which gets a seat. But some agencies, like the Teachers' Service Commission, divides the sub-counties into zones.

[2] The name Lake Turkana has recently been criticized for suggesting that it belongs to the people of Turkana County, whereas about half of the lake falls within the borders of Marsabit County. The lake is a resource to people of varous ethnicities, including Samburu, Rendille, Dassanetch, Gabbra, Boran, and El Molo people.

one climbs the hills and escarpments that surround the basin to the north, west, and south, the aridity generally gives way to greater precipitation, forest cover, and savannah grassland. This elevation profile also sets a general pattern to mobility, with most herders moving between wet-season territories within the basin – which flourishes briefly with the rains – and then migrating outward to exploit higher elevation dry-season pastures, often crossing international borders to do so.

Alternatively, one can take a less state-centric perspective by looking at the regional ethnic geography, in which Turkana people define themselves as one of many "cultural groups" (*ng'itela*), which are differentiated by their "languages" (*ng'atela*) and the practice of distinctive "customary rules" (*ng'italio*). A number of the ethnic groups along the western borderlands of Turkana speak languages that are mutually intelligible. This group includes Ng'ikarimojong, Ng'ijie, Ng'idodos, Ng'itoposa, Ng'ijiye, and Ng'inyangatom (also called Ng'idongiro by Turkana). Their language family has been variously classified as Central Paranilotic (Tucker 1956), the Karimojong Cluster (Gulliver 1952), the Ateker Cluster (Webster 1973), and the Teso-Turkana group (Dimmendaal 2010).[3] The Turkana people refer to their territory as *Aturkan*, while neighbouring peoples all have their own "lands" (*ng'akopian*, sing. *akwap*). While the inhabitants of *Aturkan* define themselves as "one people" (*ng'itunga epei*) in opposition to other *ng'itela*, they divide themselves into units called *ng'atekerin* (sing. *ateker*). These units have been referred to in the literature as clans and sub-tribes, but I follow the terminological conventions of other ethnographies from the region (Evans-Pritchard 1940b: 5; Spencer 2003: 3; Turton 1979: 126) in calling them

[3] Lamphear finds the label Karimojong Cluster too ethnocentric, as it suggests that the Ng'akarimojong language is a predecessor to the rest of the cluster. The same could be argued for the label Teso-Turkana. An alternative ethno-linguistic classification distinguishes Agricultural Paranilotes such as the Teso and Lengo from the more cattle-oriented peoples who trace ancestry to forebearers who lived together in the Koten-Magos region (Lamphear 1976: 74,84).

territorial sections. Some of the major *ng'atekerin* are listed in Table 3 below. They are also mapped, along with neighbouring ethnic groups, in Figure 3.

Each territorial section in Turkana belongs to one of two groups: the Ng'icuro and the Ng'imonia.[4] These two groups are distinguished by the ways that men prepare and consume the *apol* at the "feasting circle" (*akiriket*). The *apol* (pl. *ng'apolia*) is a cut of meat from an animal's rear flank. It is complicated to define anatomically, encompassing the *engalura*

Table 3. Turkana Territorial Sections Encountered on Fieldwork, 2015-2017

Section Name (*Ng'aturkana*)	**Meaning / Etymology (*English*)**
Ng'icuro	People of the canyons (*ng'acuro*)
Ng'ilukumong	Those of the ox (*emong*) with downward-pointing horns (*loluk*)
Ng'ikamatak	Two Explanations: 1) Those who speak in idioms (*ng'akamatak*) 2) Those Who Drink (*akimat*)
Ng'ioyokwara	Those of the long (*eoi*) spear (*akwara*)
Ng'ikebootok	Those without animals, with a poverty of livestock (*aboot*)
Ng'ibelae	Those of the curved stick (*abela*, usually carried by women)
Ng'imonia	Those of the forest (*amoni*)
Ng'iyepakuno	Those who chop (*akiyep*) the *ng'ikuno* trees
Ng'ikwaatela	Those of the white (*kwaa*) rocky plain (*ekitela*)
Ng'isiger	Appropriation of the name of some former inhabitants of Turkana
Ng'isonyoka	Those of the fatty section of a sheep's tail (*asonyok*)
*Ng'iboiceeros	Those who stayed (*akiboi*) as the land dried (*iceere*)
**Ng'isir	The decorated people

This list includes only the territorial sections about which people spoke with certainty during fieldwork in 2015. More extensive lists are provided in (Gulliver 1951: 57) and (Barrett 1998b: 64).

[4] There is a notable anomaly in the literature on the classification of the various *ng'atekerin* into the Ng'imonia and Ng'icuro groups. The Ng'isir are generally described as a group of smaller territorial sections – including the Ngiboiceeros, Ng'iseto, Ng'isonyoka, Ng'imazuk, Ng'atunyo, Ng'anyangatauk, Ngikuniye, Ng'ikajik, and Ng'imamong – within the Ng'imonia (Gulliver 1951; McCabe 2004). The Ng'ikamatak, with whom I spent most of my time while on fieldwork, belong to the Ng'icuro. This corresponds with Emley's (1927) colonial era observations in southern Turkana. However, Barrett (1998a: 63) claims that the name Ng'imonia can be used interchangeably with Ng'ikamatak, and that Ng'icuro is similarly interchangeable with Ng'isir. In my own conversations, Ng'ikamatak and Ng'imonia cut the *apol* differently, but there was some uncertainty on this issue. Most people do not have systematic knowledge of all *ng'atekerin* across Turkana, instead concerning themselves with those sub-sections adjacent to their own or to whose lands they have travelled.

(kidney), the *akab* (pancreas), and less anatomically distinct mass of oblique muscle and connective tissue known as the *akwalikwal*, all procured as an interconnected piece prior to roasting. The Ng'icuro and Ng'imonia each have their own way of preparing the *apol*. If



Figure 3. Boundary-based and Ethnic Geographies of Turkana in 2016.
Borders are approximate, as many territorial boundaries are disputed between states (e.g. Ilemi Triangle) and counties (e.g. the Turkana-Baringo border).

asked "*ng'apolia ng'aae*?" ("how many *ng'apolia*?"), the respondent replies with the number of pieces into which the *apol* is cut when roasted, which reveals whether they are Ng'icuro or Ng'imonia, and thereby gives clues about their *ateker*.

Historical analyses suggest that the Ng'icuro and Ng'imonia represent two waves of eastward migration into the land that is now *Aturkan*, the former arriving earlier from more agriculturally-oriented societies and the latter following from the more cattle-oriented peoples of the Koten-Magos complex (Barrett 1998b: 63; Knighton 2005: 63; Lamphear 1976: 92-92). They may have lived together for some period, sharing graze and water resources, until they come to see themselves as one people.[5] They took their name from the word for "caves" (*ng'aturkwana*), in which some of them may have lived when they were residing in the mountains near the Tarac River (Lamphear 1988: 28-30). Then, as they began their expansion into the surrounding plains, they began dividing into the various territorial sections. This process may have occurred through multi-generational processes of migration and fission, much as Turton (1979) describes among the Mursi. Below, I describe how the *asapan* ceremony that initiates young men into adulthood may have played a role in the formation of these territorial divisions as well.

As a theoretical concept, *territory* often implies a bounded space, but the territorial sections in Turkana are not defined by borders as such; the areas inhabited by the various sections often overlap significantly. Rather than borders, people of different territorial sections often distinguished one another by appearance, such as the styles of the skin skirts (*ng'abwes*) worn by women, the colours and positions of clay caps (*emodot*) worn by men, and a number of other distinctive "customs" (*ng'italio*). There was no overarching system demarcating the

[5] The term *ateker* probably derives from the word for a watering vessel (*ateger*), referring to shared use of water resources.

rights and restrictions of Turkana people *outside* their own section. It seems that regimes of enforcement arise according to contingency: McCabe (2004: 54) found that while the Ng'isonyoka in the South – where grass is more limited – regulate the grazing of other territorial sections within their own area, the sections of the north tend to practise a more open policy of commons grazing.

These two geographies – both of which have been integrated into the map in Figure 3 – follow distinct logics, one based on rigid borders and one based on more ambiguous notions of kinship and ethnic belonging. But for all intents and purposes, Turkana County and *Aturkan* are now the same place, and they have evolved in a mutually constitutive fashion since at least the late colonial period. Complex ethno-scapes are often recalcitrant to state legibility (Green 2012), and *Aturkan* was initially unamenable to borders. For example, while colonial administrators designated Turkana District as an ethnic homeland, Turkana people were present in large numbers as far away as Isiolo, over 300 kilometres to the southeast. In an attempt to make reality match their maps, the colonial government forced many to repatriate to their designated ethnic territories, with limited success (Broch-Due 2000b). But today, contemporary and historical borders often figure into people's strategies to make territorial claims. As the counties of Baringo and Turkana have disputed the location of the border between them, advocates for either side have cited colonial era documents as evidence of historical boundaries. Whether defined by the sharp lines of borders or the blurry mosaic of ethnic groups, these two forms of geography are intimately intertwined in their shared history.

However, before commencing with an overview of this history, it is worthwhile to review the system of age organisation that has long provided a temporal logic for ordering generations and recalling the past. The next section discusses the institution of *asapan*, the existing

ethnographic record on age organisation in Turkana, and the significant changes that this system has undergone over the past two centuries.

Age, Generation, and the Passage of Time

Regarding Nuer concepts of time, Evans-Pritchard (1940) influentially wrote of two temporal rhythms. One is the cycle of daily life on the homestead that is structured by the needs of the livestock, which he coined the "cattle clock" (*ibid*: 101). At a higher scale is the non-cyclical course of *structural time*, in which history is marked by "the selection of points of reference of significance to local groups which give these groups a common and distinctive history" as well as "the distance between specific sets in the age-set system" (*ibid*: 105-106). Similarly, in Turkana, time is marked by both the naming of years according to memorable events and the naming of age groups.

Starting with the former, event calendars often differ from place to place. In the borderlands of Urum, where I carried out my research, *ekaru lo a akim* is "the year of the fire" (circa 1998) when the town of Lokiriama was caught in a blaze, *ekaru lo a eteragege* is "the year of meningitis" (circa 2005) when there was an outbreak of the deadly disease, and *ekaru lo a lulo* refers to 2010, when many people migrated in a large group (*lulo* is derived from the verb *akilulokin*, meaning "to move in tandem"). The naming of years are often quite creative: *ekaru lo a nasuuwa* (circa 2006) was named as an onomatopoeic reference to the sound made by boiling maize powder, which was distributed as food relief during the drought. Other years are named humorously: when a drought affected the highlands west of Turkana in 2014, a small group from the neighbouring Ng'ijie people were discovered in the forest feeding on woodland critters, and the year was named *ekaru lo a ng'icec*, "the year of the hedgehog".

Time is also marked via the initiation of men into age-sets, each of which has their own unique name. Age organisation has been a mainstay in most of the classic ethnographies of

pastoral societies from East and Northeast Africa, including Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940), Samburu (Spencer 1965), Maasai (Berntsen 1979a), and Mursi (Turton 1973). Although these systems vary in their details, age organisation in eastern Africa generally concerns both status and belonging: a ceremonial rite is undertaken to graduate young men or "boys" into social adulthood (an advancement to a new *age grade*), while also integrating them into a corporate group of peers (the *age group*, *age-set*, or *age class*, depending on the terminology used). These initiation events and the names of the associated age-sets are an important way of marking time and recalling the past (Baxter & Almagor 1978; Bernardi 1952).

In Turkana, young men are initiated into formal adulthood through the *asapan* ritual, through which they receive a name. The most extensive listing of historical *asapan* names is provided by Barrett (1987: 19-20, see Table 4, Column 1). Barrett portrays these groups as a single series, organised chronologically according to the year when the first members of that group are estimated to have graduated. However, this depiction does not account for the historical changes that the *asapan* system has undergone over the past hundred years or so, which entails a more complicated model. For this reason, Table 4 juxtaposes Barrett's lists with those of two other sources, which I explain below.

Until the end of the 19th Century, young men in Turkana were initiated into generation-sets, a system that may have been inherited from their western neighbours (Lamphear 1989). In this system, which is still practised among Ng'ikarimojong and Ng'ijie, men are brought together for initiation based not on similarity of age, but common descent from the same generation of "fathers". This system gained notoriety in the anthropological literature for its apparent unsustainability, in that a single generation-set eventually comes to encompass a broad range of ages, and the age ranges of the different generation-sets increasingly overlap (Spencer 1978). For example, if a man has his first son before the age of 17 and his last son at the age

of 60 (which is especially common in the context of polygyny), the succeeding generation within his own family will include men with an age range of over 40 years. Many of his sons would have their own children before their younger brothers are born. With increasing age

Table 4. Collated Listing of Previously Recorded Initiation Sets in Turkana

(Barrett 1998a)	(Gulliver 1951)			(Müller-Dempf 2017)	
Initiation Sets	*Alt.*	*Initiation Sets (A)*	*Initiation Sets (B)*	*Gen*	*Other Name*
Ng'ipaalajam[A] (1700)	-			-mor	Ng'ipalajam[A]
Ng'isugur[B] (1725) Ng'ikechumak (1730)	-			-risae	Ng'inya[B]
Ng'ipei[C] (1750)	-			-mor	Ng'ipyei[C]
Ng'imerikora (1755) Ng'itingamong (1760) Ng'ilingakwa (1765) Ng'ikorio[D] (1770) Ng'itapeno[E] (1776) Ng'itiira (1800) Ng'ikorijam (1820) Ng'ingoretom (1830) Ng'ipeikaal (1836)	-				
Ng'imases[F] (1850)	*-mor*		Ng'imetheth[F]		
Ng'iputiro[G] (1878) Ng'inyangakipor[H] (1880) Ng'imericodae[I] (1881) Ng'imireriae[J] (1882)	*-risae*	Ng'iputiro[G] Ng'ikwakork	Ng'iputiro[G] Ng'ikwalitom[J] Ng'itapino[E] Ng'imericarda[I] Ng'imerithie[J] Ng'inyagipor[H]	-risae	Ng'iputiro[G]
Ng'ibilakwara[K] (1883) Ng'imoruluapolok (1885) Ng'icodomeesekin[L] (1887) Ng'inyangadung[M] (1888) Ng'igerewoi[N] (1890)	*-mor*	Ng'ichodomethekin[L] Ng'ilibaro Ng'ikorio[D] Ng'inyangardung[M] Ng'ibelekwara[K]	Ng'igerowe[N] Ng'icodomethekin[L] Ngikapilikwara Nginyangardung[M] Ng'ibelekwara[K] Ng'iriokumu		
Ng'igoria[O] (1896) Ng'ingolemongin (1900) Ng'ikwaalem (1905) Ng'ingolesugur[P] (1906) Ng'iporokinei[Q] (1915) Ng'imerikopir (1920)	*-risae*	Ng'iolesoguru[P] Ng'kabwangak Ng'kwalitom[J] Ng'kwange Ng'iporokinei[Q]	Ng'iwaria[O] Ng'ilingakori		
Ng'iamampolia[M] (1927) Ng'ingoletur (1928) Ng'imerimesek (1930)	*-mor*	Ng'ikapelimethekin Ng'itathenyok Ng'ibelekali	Ng'isale[O]	-mor	Ng'imampolea[M] *aka* Ng'isali[O]
Ng'ikwakora[N] (1940)	*-risae*	Ng'iropie	Ng'ikwakora[N]		
Ng'ikapelkora (1946) Ng'imerikopir (1954) Ng'isiru (1958) Ng'imaruko (1965) Ng'isemae (1968)	-			**Equivalence of Ng'imor/Ng'irisae**	

All lists are ordered in the descending seniority indicated by the authors, although for older sets, verification would have been difficult. Authors' original spelling and orthographies are preserved. Superscripts indicate correspondences either in sound or meaning. The initiation years associated with Barrett's age-sets are rough estimates. The two columns of Gulliver's age-sets are for different territorial sections: the Ng'ilukumong (A) and the Ng'imasuk (B), both of whom divide their age-sets into the Stones (Ng'i-**mor**) and Leopards (Ng'i-**risae**). Whereas Gulliver refers to these as 'alternations', Müller-Dempf describes them as 'generations', a point to which I return below.

overlap, some men find themselves uninitiated while much younger men enjoy status as their formal seniors (for a related example, see Chapter 8).

Eventually, the old generation-set system in Turkana gave way to an age-set system, in which men were initiated based on similarity of age. There are two theories about the causes of this change. Müller-Dempf (1989) proposes that the overlap between formal generations increased dramatically due to a severe drought, which resulted in a dearth of livestock for bridewealth, followed by a proliferation of incomplete marriages and illegitimate children. Following the drought, as the "sons of legitimate marriages" (*ngide lu eusitae*) were coming of age, their fathers' generation-set was still populated by the "illegitimate sons" (*ngide a akero*) who were their peers by birth but formally their seniors.[6] The legitimate sons (of the Ng'imor generation-set) demanded that power be shared, and so the senior generation (the Ng'irisae) invited them to sit together at the feasting circle (*akiriket*). From this time onward, generation-sets shared authority, such that the seniority was defined less by generation than by birth order.

An alternative theory, proposed by Lamphear, is that in the mid-19th Century, Turkana people found themselves in perennial conflicts over land and grazing resources with neighbouring groups. Whereas the generation-set system would often initiate men of widely varying ages, including many who were too old to fight, an age-based system could more effectively bring together the youth as a ritually associated group of warriors, "whose close-knit organization and *esprit de corps* underpinned Turkana military activity" (Lamphear 1992: 20).

[6] The son of an unmarried woman recognises his maternal father as his *pater*, which often puts him formally in the same generation as his birth father (*genitor*).

Although Lamphear's theory differs in some important details from Müller-Dempf's, they are in many ways compatible. It is feasible that the old generation-set system may have come under the pressure of both an aging group of men dissatisfied with their protracted status as the junior set, as well as an emergent need for more effective military organisation. This probably occurred around the time of the Ng'iputiro age-group, which Barrett (1987b: 19-20) estimates in the 1870s. The Ng'iputiro may have been the first group of Leopards to invite the Stones to join them in the feasting circle (Müller-Dempf 2017: 18).[7]

Regardless of the ultimate causes of the shift, by the time the first anthropologists arrived in Turkana, the groups into which men were initiated resembled the age-set systems of Samburu and Maasai more than the generation-set systems of Ng'ikarimojong and Ng'ijie. Conducting fieldwork in the late colonial period, Gulliver (1958: 900) observed a relatively tight age range (about 14 to 20 years old) within which most young men in Turkana were initiated. Furthermore, he reported that within one age group, "fathers of initiates are not all members of the same age group" (*ibid*: 910), whereas membership to a generation-set would have been based on common descent from a single senior age-group.

However, there were holdovers from the old generation-set system. For one, the Stones and Leopards, the two groups to whose dispute Müller-Dempf attributed the fall of the generation-set system, are now recognised as the two parts of a dual alternation system. The sons of Stones become Leopards, the sons of Leopards become Stones, and the numbers of each at any one time are about equal numbers across all ages. As such, they are no longer

[7] Müller-Dempf (1991: 562) writes that the Ng'ipyei were the fathers of the Ng'iputiro. But if Barrett's estimates of initiation years are roughly accurate, then these two generation-sets were separated by over a century (*circa* 1750-1880*)*, and there should have been other generation-sets during the interim. Many have probably been forgotten, with only the most memorable maintaining a place in oral history.

distinguished hierarchically as a junior and senior generation, but are instead coeval alternations.[8] During his early fieldwork, Gulliver wrote that in each initiation season – which occurred every few years when the rain was plentiful and food was sufficient for the associated festivities – "two new age-sets are created, one in each alternation" (1958: 904).[9] Furthermore, seniority among members of the same age group was determined not by their birth order, but by the relative seniority their respective fathers (*ibid*: 910). However, seniority *across* sets was determined by age rather than generation.

After the generation-sets became alternations, neither the Stones nor the Leopards were recognised as "senior" at any one time. Nonetheless, the clustering of age groups as either Stones or Leopards suggests that for some time after, initiation by generation persisted. In this system, young men could not be initiated until all the men from the previous generation had been initiated. According to Table 4, this may have lasted until the time of the Ng'ikwakora in the early 20th Century. Then, by the time Gulliver arrived in the 1930s, the Stones and Leopards were not only sharing meat in the circle but were each conducting initiation rites as coevals within the same season.

It is worth noting that age organisation in Turkana is particularly difficult for outsiders to document by the conventional methods of ethnography. Gulliver remarked that many aspects of age organisation in Turkana remained unmarked by ritual and formality, which made it difficult to describe ethnographically:

> I must emphasize that, of all the difficulties in obtaining information in Turkanaland, this has perhaps been the hardest of all… In retrospect, the difficulties, I think, resulted

[8] Some refer to the Stones and Leopards, in their contemporary form, as moieties (Barrett 1998a: 72; Müller-Dempf 2017: 19).

[9] This is one aspect of age organisation that is not noted by Barrett (1998), suggesting that some of the groups in his list could have been listed in parallel rather than in sequence.

> from my European standpoint. I was looking for some formal technique by which new sets came into being and by which the various initiation centres were co-ordinated. I sought a specific process, recognisable leaders and occasions – and non were to be found; it was obvious too that the Turkana were always puzzled by my difficulties in understanding what happened. (1951: 132-133)

The lack of more ritualistic practices to open and close age-sets, to select names, and to transfer senior status to the next group – which feature prominently in the ethnographic material among Ng'ikarimojong (Knighton 2006) and Ng'ijie (Lamphear 1989) – may reflect the fluid ways that age organisation has morphed and evolved in recent Turkana history.[10]

Moreover, Gulliver noted that the initiation names varied from place to place in Turkana, despite a widely cited ideal for uniformity. A more uniform age system may have been more feasible in the past, when the Turkana people were living within a smaller territory in and around the Tarac Valley. Until about 1830, seniors in Turkana coordinated ritual events in a single congregation (Lamphear 1992: 17), and there would have been greater coordination of the transition between generation-sets. However, as their territory expanded, adherence to Turkana-wide names became impossible, and elders instead coordinated at the level of individual territorial sections (ibid: 19). The ideal for Turkana wide age-sets remains, but in practice, the names of age-sets tend to differ from place to place. As shown in Table 4 above, Gulliver recorded separate lists for two different territorial sections, across which some names correspond while others do not. In my own work in 2015-2016, I recorded different initiation-sets for the Ng'ikamatak and Ng'ilukumong territorial sections (see Table 5). Gulliver suggest that initiation groups conducted in a single season initially take on different

[10] Even in the 1930's, Evans-Pritchard noted that Nuer age-sets had "become somewhat complicated by the absence of well-defined closed and open initiation periods" (1940: 252). It is possible that idealized coherence has never been the norm in practice.

Table 5. Living Initiation Groups in Two Territorial Sections, 2015-2016

Ng'ikamatak	Ng'ilukumong
Ng'imaruko	Ng'itikatom
Ng'isemae	Ng'imugiatom
Ng'inyangalemwo	Ng'ing'orain
Ng'ikwapatom	Ng'igumanyang
Ng'ioiyeriko	Ng'isakatom
Ng'irengatom	Ng'ikipi
Ng'ieriyapae	Ng'ing'oletom

These were the territorial sections among whom I spent the most time, with most of my fieldwork among Ng'ikamatak and relatively less among Ng'ilukumong. Group names were collected across various conversations, with many conflicting accounts of the order of the sets. The structure of initiations also varies between the two sections: Whereas Ng'ikamatak have started initiating the Stones and the Leopards together, the Ng'ilukumokng still initiate some into separate groups; I did not learn the generational alternation of the groups in this list.

names, but later, in hindsight, they are consolidated under a common name as an age-set (see also Bernardi 1952).

In Turkana, those who undergo the *asapan* rite together take a common name as an "initiation set" (*ng'asapana*). The name is often determined based on some striking feature of their cohort, or something memorable – even comical – that a member of their group has done. Some of the names in Table 4 refer to particular historical events: the name Ng'isale is derived from the Turkana pronunciation of Swahili, referring to the first age group in which many men were learning the Swahili language. The name Ng'iropia refers to that group's adoption of money (*ng'aropiae*) to supplement exchange by barter. Taking some examples from the Ng'ikamatak age-sets that I listed in Table 5, the Ng'ioyeriko are named for the long chain-link earrings that become a fashion statement for this group, and the Ng'irengatom are named after the red rifles that became prevalent during their initiation period.

Informal "groups" (*ng'ajoren*) of youth might even propose their own names long before initiation, as similarly-aged peers (*ng'ikesa*) develop a corporate identity during dance celebrations or through the organisation of raiding parties. The Ng'ioyeriko age-set among

the Ng'ikamatak sometimes go by the nick-name Ng'idinkae in reference to an infamous raid that they carried out and then blamed on South Sudan's Dinka ethnic group during the ensuring police investigation.[11] Turton (1978: 104) – drawing on Gulliver (1968: 159) – usefully distinguishes between *age groups* as smaller troops of age-mates who actually participate in activities together and *age-sets* as society-wide categories of men sharing a formal name. Only in hindsight would the most prominent age group names be recalled as age-sets or generation sets.

As noted above, there are no formal processes for consolidating names across multiple initiation seasons or territories. At each *asapan* event, potential names are floated by those in attendance; some events end without any final agreement about a single name. Many *asapan* rituals are carried out in a single initiation season, and if multiple names emerge in the same area, some are ultimately discarded in the pursuit of a more uniform designation for the age-set (Gulliver 1958: 907). With no formal process of consolidation, the final name of an age group is likely to be the one that "sticks" over time. For this reason, the young Ng'ieriyapae age group are often quick to retort when their elders refer to them as Ng'ikicolong'amoru ("those who use stones stools"). There are certain implements *raiya* men should always have on hand, including the shepherding staff (*aburo*) for herding, a wrist-knife (*abarait*) for protection, and a small handheld stool (*ekicolong*) that is used as a headrest at night or a seat in the day. The reference to "sitting on stones" is an admonishment by elders that the younger generation no longer knows how to carve their own stools (*ng'ikicolongo*), an allusion to their more general lack of adherence to custom.

[11] Barrett also recognises the various contexts in which names arise: "Within one of these groups [territorial sections] we have men divided into *asapanu* (initiation set), *anaket* (age set) and *ajore* (warriors)" (1987:19-20).

Having introduced the territorial and temporal principles of Turkana social organisation, the next section reviews the historical relations between Turkana and neighbouring ethnic groups, as well as the more recent encounters with colonial forces, Christian missionaries, and development agencies.

Ng'imoe: Enemies and Outsiders Among a Pastoral People

Turkana people have long defined themselves not only by what they share as a group, but in opposition to outsiders and enemies collectively referred to as *ng'imoe*.[12] Unlike the Dassanach to the north and the Pokot to the south, Turkana men are not circumcised during their initiation rituals. In relation to their more agriculturally-oriented neighbours to the west – such as Ng'ikaramojong and Ng'ijie – many people in Turkana see themselves as more livestock oriented. On one occasion, I asked a herder how people hunted small game. When I suggested that they might use the bow and arrow (*akau ka ng'amalia*), he scoffed: "It must have been a Karamojong, because Turkana people don't do such things. Turkana people carry the *aburo* (shepherding staff), not the weapons of a hunter".

Beyond distinguishing themselves as culturally different from their neighbours, Turkana people often describe themselves as beset or marginalised by them. Their history casts them as a threatened population, resisting potential threats on all sides. As Peter Ejore, the first MP from Turkana West, told the National Assembly in 1970:

> There have been so many clashes, tribal clashes and stock raiding, between the Turkana, the Pokot, Samburu, Karamajong [sic] from Uganda, Todos [*sic*] from Uganda and the Merille from Ethiopia… This tribe is being hated by all these tribes; we

[12] Some (e.g. (Herrera 2013):58) suggest that the Turkana language does not distinguish between outsiders and enemies, which they take as a cultural exaltation of violence. But the Turkana vocabulary encompasses many words for outsiders, from the strange but tolerated foreigner (*ebukut*), to the warmly welcomed guest (*epeyonun*), to the ambivalently received passerby on their own business (*ekesakaran*). When an outsider is referred to as *emoit,* it is not for lack of other terms; it conveys a sense of potential antagonism and a warning to proceed with interactions with care.

> are very few there and we are surrounded by all these people. (Hansard, 17th February 1970, p. 305, 2nd Parliament, 1st Session)

Like much of Kenya's arid north, Turkana has a reputation for insecurity, which has long manifested primarily through livestock raids carried out by youth from adjacent ethnic groups. The eastern lacustrine region is relatively tranquil because the lake serves as a buffer from potential raiders. In the arid south, Turkana borders the counties of West Pokot, Baringo, and Samburu, across which Turkana herders have both suffered and perpetuated large-scale attacks, especially with Pokot herdsmen (known as *Ng'iupe* in the Ng'aturkana language).[13] Samburu people have also suffered from largescale raids by Turkana, although disarmament has left them less capable of retaliation. The northern reaches of Turkana retain a frontier-like status, with Kibish Sub-County falling largely within the disputed territories of the Ilemi Triangle. Here the primary conflict is with Daasanach (known as *Merile* in Ng'aturkana), who live both across the northern land border in Ethiopia and on the other side of the Lake in Marsabit County of Kenya. To the west, the long border shared with Uganda and South Sudan is more clearly demarcated than in the north, and while violence persists between Turkana and Ng'itoposa in the north, relations with Ng'idodos, Ng'ijie, and Ng'ikarimojong further south have been more amicable following the signing of the Lokiriama Peace Accords in 1979.

Many of the conflicts between Turkana and their neighbours were likely more intermittent and less intense in the past than they are today. Periods of war were interspersed with periods

[13] Amidst the many lines of conflict in this region, that between Turkana and Pokot is notoriously violent, affecting communities from the Karamoja District in Uganda down to Kapedo in the southern tip of Turkana County. In the early months of my fieldwork in 2015, a large Turkana militia killed dozens of Pokot in the southern village of Nadome, instigating further retaliatory attacks that claimed the lives of over 90 people on both sides (Ndanyi & Mwere 2015). While scarce grazeland resources and theft of livestock have been long-standing motivations for attacks, the conflict today is exacerbated by counties attempting to claim territory that may have oil and geothermal potential (Ndanyi 2014; Oruko 2018).

of peace, facilitated by the mobile nature of settlement patterns. People exchanged goods, grazed their animals together, and even inter-married (Sobania 2011). When people did fight, the use of spears was regulated by ritual proscriptions and homicide sanctions, whereas the modern firearm –a more devastating weapon, in general – occupied an ambiguous status in relation to these proscriptions (Hutchinson 1996: 106; Mirzeler & Young 2000: 409). Today, many of these moderating rules are no longer observed. During interviews conducted by Spanish missionaries, Turkana respondents lamented that:

> In the old days Turkana and Dassenech youth were selective when attacking their enemies. They would respect the lives of children, women, and the elderly. Women and children would be abducted and the elderly would be respected. Nowadays with the availability of firearms, they shoot everyone and anyone. (Herrera 2013: 81)

I encountered similar explanations along the western border where I conducted most of my work. Around Moroto, Turkana from the Ng'ikamatak territorial section sometimes live together with Ng'ikarimojong from the Ng'imaseniko section during the dry season, even sharing water sources with Ng'ijie. Occasional tensions are usually resolvable after mediation or temporary separation.

Nonetheless, those who identify themselves as Turkana have generally maintained a sceptical political stance toward outsiders. On a day to day basis, Turkana people pursue mutually beneficial exchanges and even friendships with ethnic others. But there is an understanding that the tide can turn quickly, such that outsiders are commonly referred to as "enemies" (*ng'imoe*) even in the absence of war. This is similar to the relationship that Turkana people eventually formed with a new group of outsiders in the early Twentieth Century: the British.

Even before British colonialists arrived, a famous *emuron* (a "prophet" or "seer") named Lokorijem had foreseen that something "strange and white" would enter their land. He predicted that the people of Aturkan would succumb to this force, but he also undertook a

"hot sacrifice" (*ariwo*) to ensure the eventual demise of this enemy. Later generations of prophets were an important part of the Turkana resistance, and while much of Turkana eventually came under British rule, many felt Lokorijem's prophecy was realised when British authorities handed over power to the Kenyan government at Independence (Barrett 1998b: 136-138).

The British colonialists did not maintain an administration in Turkana in the early years of colonialism. The region was nominally part of the Uganda Protectorate until 1905, when everything south of the Turkwel River was transferred to the East Africa Protectorate (or, after 1920, the Colony of Kenya). Colonialists had two concerns about this part of their frontier. For one, they were worried about the southward expansion of the Abyssinians under Menelik II, a process in which some Turkana were collaborating in exchange for weapons. Moreover, the Turkana were seen as an expansionist people, who might put pressure on the Kalenjin peoples on their southern border. If they forced these groups southward, they might become a nuisance for the European settlers living in the White Highlands (Collins 2006).

In 1906, a deputation from southern Turkana arrived at the office of the District Commissioner in Baringo requesting protection from against the Abyssinians, which was accepted so long as the Turkana agreed to pay tax (Emley 1927: 157). This deputation was likely of little influence across the larger Turkana population, but it initiated the first attempts by the British to establish an administration in the region. Southern Turkana was gradually brought under control, but the north remained belligerent. In response, the British organised the "Turkana Patrol" of 1918, a massive military operation that resulted in the deaths of an estimated 350 Turkana and the capture of 3,000 of their cattle. While these events were devastating for generations of Turkana, they failed to "pacify" those in the north (Collins 2006). War-leaders and their prophets maintained their resistance from the mountains well

into the 1930s, and the British continued to carry out punitive expeditions on a smaller scale. Most of their efforts were to prevent cattle rustling between Turkana and contiguous pastoral peoples.[14]

But after the Abyssinian threat fell to the wayside with the ascendance of Haile Selassie, the British largely lost interest in Turkana. The climatic conditions led successive administrations to deem the area harsh and inhospitable, with almost no agricultural potential and little to offer to the colonial economy. As a former District Commissioner described for northern Kenya more broadly:

> There is only one way to treat the Northern Territories, the home of nomadic camel, cattle and sheep owning people, and that is to give them what protection one can under the British Flag and, otherwise, to leave them to their own customs, as far as possible, and under their own chiefs. Anything else is certainly uneconomic. (Sir Geoffrey Archer, 1920, quoted in Hogg 1986: 319)

If such a policy had been adopted from the beginning of colonial rule, Turkana may have developed a reputation for autonomy rather than marginalisation. But the early British military interventions had a dramatic impact on their livelihoods and institutions, as well as people's perception of government. As Collins concludes for the 1918 Patrol, "it was a disastrous and definitive experience that forged all future relationships with the government of Kenya" (Collins 2006: 40). Indeed, the term *nang'olanyang*, which refers to yellow markings on the head and was probably a reference to British officers' uniforms, remained the designator for "government" across both the colonial and postcolonial regimes. After Independence, President Jomo Kenyatta's administration continued to implement many of the colonial strategies for dealing with the North, limiting the development of infrastructure and

[14] For a more detailed history of Turkana resistance to colonial rule, Lamphear's (1992) *The Scattering Time* is the most extensive account. Furthermore, Barrett (1998a) records the stories of prophets who were influential both before and during the colonial era, including those involved in the resistance.

social services, and curtailing their access to the rights of citizenship (Kenya Human Rights Commission 2010). Although the end of colonial rule was attributed to the success of Lokorijem's curse against the White invaders, relations with the post-Independence government were still framed in the terms of Turkana and "outsiders" (*ngimoe*).

Ng'ikwaaworu: Urbanisation and Rise of a Turkana Elite

The narrative of marginalisation remains salient in Turkana, but the image of a neglected dryland frontier does not convey some of the important changes that interventions by successive governments wrought on the physical and social landscape. This section describes the rise of urban centres and markets, and the creation of an elite class that could draw wealth from this new cash economy. Standing out for their adoption of European styles of dress, as well as disciplined hygiene for their garb, they were deemed *ng'ikwaaworu*, or "those of white clothes." I consider both the ways that urbanisation gave rise to an urban population, as well as the ways that this population – including a growing elite class within it – contributed to the establishment and growth of urban centres.

Early Urbanisation in Turkana

Prior to colonialism, there were essentially no permanent urban settlements in Turkana, with the exception of shifting fishing villages on the shores of the lake and a few small trading centres like Kaputir, established by Swahili merchants in the south (Broch-Due 1990: 8). The vast majority of people relied on mobile livelihoods. Housing structures were built to last just until the next movement, and people lived in aggregated camps (*ng'adakarin*) only temporarily, for small-scale cultivation during the long rains or for defence while herding

near enemy territory. For the rest of the year, households migrated independently, a form of nomadism that might be defined more accurately as flexible transhumance.[15]

However, colonial interventions under British rule had a dramatic effect on the Turkana landscape. Following the punitive raids of the 1910s, the administration later attempted to foster a less antagonistic relationship with locals, which may have had some success, if one District Commissioner observation that "the visit of an administrative officer is a signal for song and dance" is accurate (Ryland 1936: 58-59). The later decades brought more constructive interventions, such as the establishment of a fishing scheme for impoverished herders at Ferguson's Gulf on the lake, experimental flood irrigation projects along the Turkwel River, and food relief for those affected by famine. They also built administrative centres, roads, and livestock markets that gradually grew into sizeable towns such as Lodwar and Kakuma. Colonial investments were meagre compared to the Kenyan highlands, as they saw no potential for agricultural development in Turkana. Moreover, Turkana was maintained as a "closed district" for the entirety of the colonial period, with no attempt to integrate it into the colonial economy. But even the modest projects undertaken for the administration required labour, creating a job market for those willing to take up the work. As early as the 1920s, impoverished herders were recruited into teams for construction, road work, and locust elimination (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999). Others took positions in the military and administration, as soldiers, chiefs, and tax collectors.

[15] While many experts still refer to Turkana herders as "nomads" (e.g. Campbell et al. 2005; Krätli 2001a; Little & Leslie 1999b; Watkins 2010), Neville and Rada Dyson-Hudson (1980) warn that attempts to classify societies according to typologies of mobility are often fruitless academic endeavors. Turkana herders may be considered 'transhumant' insofar as most migrations are between a general dry season grazing territory and a wet season home-place (*ere*). The label 'semi-nomadic' has been used to acknowledge that many herders follow this general pattern each year, with individual households deviating according to contingencies.

Initially, this nascent urban economy was based largely on barter, and "headmen" or chiefs working for the administration were "the bulk of the few people who receive regular or sizeable cash incomes" (Gulliver 1951: 160). But cash gradually became an increasingly important basis of exchange. For one, the Turkana term for "money" is *ng'arupiae*, which derives from the East African *rupee* that was used until 1920, when the East African Currency Board introduced the *florin*. Rupees remained in circulation for some time after, but the term *ng'arupiae* suggests that people were familiar with this currency in Turkana, probably as early as the 1920s. Moreover, the presence of cash is suggested by the arrival of new economic players in Turkana, both from within and from abroad:

> By 1933 hardy traders like Abubaka and others with their donkey safaris were penetrating into the desert followed by Kaka and Shah Mohamed with lorry transport to link Turkana with the rest of Kenya and with the outside world. Prostitutes are reported to have arrived in Lodwar in 1943. Turkana was beginning to meet the Twentieth Century. (Good 2007: 13)

Most of the early urban population were derived from the poorest sections of the population. Wealthy herders with sufficient livestock tended to avoid such roles, and most of the early inhabitants of the emerging settlements were drawn from the poorest parts of society. Of the eighty or so Turkana men working as "tribal police during his fieldwork in the late 1940s, Gulliver observed that:

> Neither wealthy families nor the more prosperous areas [were] willing to furnish young men for such a job, and it appears that too many of them come from the poorest areas, and poorer families… many indeed are illegitimate sons who have not been able to fit very easily into normal tribal life. (Gulliver 1951: 160-161).

In many ways, the cash economy served as another safety net for those left herdless by drought and raiding, but it offered a different trajectory of recovery than previous "fall-back livelihoods". Prior to colonial rule, destitute herders could either seek support from wealthier herders, or they could join small agrarian and fishing communities living at the fringes of

Turkana territory. It was possible for many to return to a pastoral way of life after acquiring enough capital, either through these auxiliary livelihoods, or if they received livestock as bridewealth through the marriage of female relatives. In some ways, working for the colonial government was another fall-back:

> Most Turkana, but especially poorer Turkana, were accustomed to shifting between different modes of livelihood: hunting and gathering, fishing and farming. For this reason, carrying out wage labour proved relatively unproblematic as it presented itself as an alternative subsistence strategy, which could be added to a storehouse of other such strategies and called upon when necessary. (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999: 41-2)

However, colonial labour opportunities – as well as alternative livelihood schemes rolled out by post-Independence development agencies – differed from the old livelihood fall-back options because they cut off the pathways of social connectivity by which the poor had historically re-established their herds. Colonial projects left the poor disconnected and dependent on aid, severed from pastoralist kin (Broch-Due 1999; Broch-Due & Sanders 1999: 48). But some may have seen this as less of a trap than a way out, an opportunity to pursue a more autonomous life without relying on wealthier kin for support. Regardless, with the exception of chiefs and headmen, few wager workers invested their earnings back into herds (Gulliver 1951: 161). Instead, they used their access to employment to support themselves in a new urban economy, separate from the material and moral economy in which everyone had long been intertwined.

I met some of the descendants of these early urbanites in Kakuma. When I was asking which territorial sections live in the area, I spoke to a number of people who described themselves as Ng'imampolia, meaning "those without an *apol*". I had never heard of an *ateker* by this name, and it is not listed in either of Gulliver's and Barrett's lists of territorial sections, even within the Ng'isir sub-grouping. When Ng'imampolia men sit at *akiriket*, they do not have a method of cutting the *apol* of the slain animal, as they do not associate themselves with either

the Ng'icuro or the Ng'imonia, the two divisions of the territorial sections in Turkana. When I pressed people on this, some explained that their ancestors had come north while working for the British, who established an outpost and livestock market in this area. Many had come as migrant workers from other territorial sections, but as they built new lives in the centre, they forgot the traditions associated with their former sections. Normally migrants could merge with another territorial section after moving, but this group did not integrate into any of the *ng'atekerin* present in Kakuma. Their place was simply the town.

After independence, Catholic and Pentecostal missionaries were allowed to operate in Turkana, and they established churches and schools in these urban areas, often serving as a proxy government in lieu of a strong presence by the Kenyan state. They extended their parishes into more peripheral areas, often built around famine camps and alternative livelihood schemes set up for herders impoverished by drought. Hogg estimates that "after the 1979-80 drought, in which over 90 percent of cattle, 80 percent of small stock and 40 per cent of camels died in North Turkana… there were some 80,000 Turkana in relief camps, about half the district population" (Hogg 1986: 322). Lorugum, currently the centre of administration for Loima sub-County, was set up around a famine camp run by the Catholic mission, and the towns of Kakorong'ole, Katilu, and Nakwamoru were founded as missionary-run agricultural schemes along the Turkwel River. The missions were later joined by international humanitarian and development organisations such as the Red Cross, Oxfam, and Norad, who distributed food and supplemented the work of the Church in providing water facilities, health services, veterinary outreach services. Urban areas continued to grow, especially in the northwest where the massive refugee camps were set up to house people displaced from conflict in South Sudan and Somalia. The towns of Kakuma and Lokicogio fed upon the resources and jobs brought by this humanitarian industry.

Professional employment opportunities for Turkana residents are not limited to their home county, and qualified men and women have long taken jobs elsewhere in Kenya. What is changing now is that improved transport allows people to maintain their residence in Turkana while working abroad. In the past, most migrant workers were forced to submit themselves to a gruelling overland trip through southern Turkana, up the Pokot hills, and to Kitale via a poorly unmaintained and insecure highway, a trip that was time-consuming, exhausting, and at time dangerous. To avoid the journey, many either returned home only periodically or relocated altogether. However, the airline Fly540 introduced a daily low-budget flight to Lodwar in 2009, followed by SafariLink Aviation in 2014 and Skyward Express in 2015. Nowadays, for those who can afford the roundtrip plane ticket of 17,000 Kenyan Shillings (approximately 125 GBP in 2017), Nairobi is only two hours away.

An Urban Elite

Colonial labour, military service, and professional employment all provided access to a cash economy that provided the urban population with some independence from their pastoral kin, creating the conditions for economic and social differentiation. Rather than joining the homesteads of wealthier relatives, they were able to support themselves on wages and salaries from the British, the Church, the state, and eventually an international aid industry. But the cash economy did not remain separate from the pastoral economy. Müller-Dempf describes a "hybrid economy" in Turkana, in which "the pastoral and non-pastoral sectors become more and more linked, and people in both sectors are increasingly cooperating" (2014: 14). Urban markets became part of the pastoral landscape, and food purchased from livestock sales became an increasingly part of the typical livelihood strategy. Women have also pursued new avenues to earn an income, including the collection and sale of wild resources such as the aloe vera plant, which traders purchase by the jug and sell onward up the supply chain, which terminates with manufacturers of soaps, lotions, and medicines.

However, unlike Müller-Dempf, I do not see the growth of a "hybrid economy" translating easily into the emergence of "hybrid pastoralists", who can easily access the non-pastoral sector. Rather, the cash economy has increasingly been sequestered by the urban population, who alone have the requisite educational background and language skills to access most employment opportunities. This process had its start in the colonial period:

> Although the position of headman is entirely at the appointment of the Administration and not hereditary, yet it is beginning to create a new class of wealthy men and families… No headman that I have met is anything but outstandingly wealthy today, whereas not all of them are in such a fortunate position previously. (Gulliver 1951: 160)

Many invested their money back into livestock, and some even used their positions to augment their herds at the expense of others, fabricating governmental orders about new tax levies and gathering animals for themselves (ibid: 159). One consequence of wealthy urbanites purchasing animals is that they would often employ others to care for them. This arrangement, known as absentee herding, which can have destructive consequences for pastures resources as herd owner are more likely to maintain the mobility needed to use graze sustainably (Hogg 1986; Little 1985; Unusa 2012). However, the issue with which I am concerned is the unidirectional penetration of these urbanites into the pastoral economy, while herders were increasingly restricted from entering the wage economy.

Education was an important factor in this regard. With the rise of towns came formal education, which was initially provided by missionaries and later implemented with state support. In Lorugum, the Irish Kiltegan Fathers received approval to establish the first Primary School in 1963, before Kenya's Independence (Good 2007: 31). Whereas colonial chiefships were initially open to anyone, the dawn of formal education provided a basis for minimum job qualifications. Increasingly, uneducated herders were excluded from positions that were given to their educated counterparts. Graduates developed a monopoly on many of

the most lucrative jobs available, with employers that included the church, international NGOs, and the government.

With the growth of the cash economy, this disparity has been exacerbated. Although I did not carry out any quantitative surveys myself, I've found some evidence of the scale of wealth inequality in existing data sets. Save the Children commissioned a household economic survey in 2012 and then again in 2016, in which questionnaires were administered to people in five rural livelihood zones plus Lodwar (reported in King *et al.* 2016).[16] Some of the results conformed to expectation. Cash incomes in Lodwar were higher than in the rural areas, where people produced food for subsistence. Urban incomes were derived primarily from formal and casual employment as well as personal businesses, while rural incomes relied on sales from livestock production and (where possible) riverine farming, petty trade, and humanitarian assistance.

However, the differences in wealth were substantial. All livelihood zones were divided into four economic strata, and whereas the wealthiest strata of urban households were earning over 1,750,000 KSH per year in 2016, wealthy border pastoralists were making less than 25,000 KSH in cash income. Their wealth in stock was substantial, averaging about 3.5 million KSh.[17] But wealth in stock wold be more akin to savings than income, and annual growth in herds does not appear to have been significant. For wealthy pastoralists in the

[16] My comparisons between urban and pastoral wealth profiles draws primarily on data reported in the following tables: 'Sources of Cash Income in Reference Year' (page 12), '2015-16 Household Annual Cash Incomes as a Percent of 2011-12 Household Annual Cash Income' (page 28), and 'Wealth Breakdown' (pages 48 and 86). Among the five rural livelihood zones, I focus on the Border Pastoralism zone.

[17] The "better off" pastoralists living in the Turkana borderlands owned an average of 35 camels, 53 cattle, and 250 goats, and the market value for these animals is about 35,000 KSh, 25,000 KSh, and 4,000 KSh, respectively, then the average pastoral household would have 3,550,000 KSH.

borderlands, for example, herd growth was negative from 2012 to 2016. Moreover, whereas wealthy households in Lodwar were made up of about 9 people, the average wealthy homestead in the pastoral borderlands was providing for 23 people. Among the wealthiest Lodwar residents, average annual incomes increased by over 800,000 KSh (almost 6,000 GBP in 2017), which at the going market rate of 30,000 KSh per camel is equivalent to about 27 camels. In what could have been a dual elite between the pastoral and urban economies, the urban sector in Lodwar is clearly superior in wealth.

The New Urbanisation on the Periphery

Much of the story around urbanisation in Turkana has focused on the large towns developed by outsiders. The Turkana County Integrated Development Plan for 2013-2017 (p60) notes three primary urban centres in Turkana: Lodwar, Kakuma, and Lokicogio. Of these, Lodwar was founded in 1920 as the centre of British administration under Captain Baron von Otter (Good 2007: 12), Kakuma was founded a an early Catholic Mission in 1964 (*ibid*: 41), and Lokicogio developed in the 1990s as a base for humanitarian agencies serving the growing camps of refugees from Sudan, Somalia, and elsewhere.[18] In terms of planning, the County Government sets out a human settlement policy that aims:

> To encourage the expansion of several large towns in addition to Lodwar in order to promote regional growth thereby providing more alternatives for the absorption of the migrant population and the problems arising from excessive concentration in these towns land settlement plan. (Turkana County Government 2013: 58)

But this focus on towns ignores the trend of smaller villages and centres that have emerged throughout the rural countryside in Turkana, many very recently. As explained above, the

[18] To this list could be added the towns that serve as the administrative centres of the sub-counties – including Lokicar in Turkana South, Lokori in the Turkana East, Lorugum in Loima, and Lokitaung in Turkana North – as well as smaller towns like Kainuk on the highway to Kitale, Kalokol near the lake, and the various towns along the Turkwel River.

gradual growth of towns throughout the colonial and early Independence eras created the conditions for the emergence of an urban population in Turkana. But as the urban population gave rise to its own elite, it is now these elites who are driving new forms of urbanisation in the rural periphery.

Urum, the nearest permanent village during most of my time living on Lorukadimoe's homestead in the borderlands, is a prime example of this form of settlement. A village of fewer than 100 inhabitants, it is located only 15 kilometres from the escarpment that divides Uganda and Kenya but over 45 kilometres northwest of the nearest town Lokiriama. There is little evidence of development intervention in this area. In this regard, it is unlike the villages further east near the shores of Lake Turkana, where the colonial administration long ago set up fishing schemes for destitute herders in Todonyang and Ferguson's Gulf, and which now bear the ruins of decades of humanitarian and development interventions. In the southern half of Loima, the Catholic Church set up agricultural projects along the Turkwel River. Meanwhile, the pastures further afield were served with only limited veterinary outreach services, especially along the borders where insecurity prevented international agencies from maintaining long-term presence.

The drive to Urum can be treacherous, first crossing a series of deep gullies carved into the rock by the violent run-off of seasonal rains. The latter half of the journey is more benign, except following the rains, when the dirt turns to thick mud and renders the road impassable for days. Nonetheless, Urum draws traders from as far as Mbale in Uganda, who struggle to force their canters across the waterways, loaded with sacks of maize, cabbages and other produce for sale. The national government has built a dispensary, a primary school, and an early childhood development centre, whose high concrete walls stand out starkly from the stick structures in which most people live, and which they must rebuild every few years.

Urum is a new village, only just established in 2009. Before that, there was no permanent settlements in the area, although people sometimes camped nearby to plant sorghum along the river or formed temporary defence clusters (*arumrum*) for security. While relations with Ng'ikarimojong were generally peaceful, there were frequent raids from Ng'itepes, Ng'iupe, and sometimes Ng'ijie. The area was administered as a sub-location of Lokiriama Location, and the assistant chief of the area operated out of the town of Lokiriama.[19] However, in 2006, the assistant chief approached the Ministry of Agriculture to argue that Urum should be established as its own location, separate from Lokiriama. His reasoning was that the area had a large population but was underserved by livestock extension programmes and social services due to its distance.

But to establish Urum as a location, the area would need its own centre, a permanently settled place from which the new location chief could operate. The assistant chief began holding *barazas (*Swahili, *public meetings*) with locals, instructing them to establish such a centre near one of the places where they planted their sorghum gardens. He focused on three influential women, who were the most enthusiastic about his idea. At the time, there was no road, and when the government distributed food aid, women were required to lead their donkeys the entire way to Lokiriama. Together with others, these women began constructing permanent houses in the area. Unlike the small night-huts (*ekai*) composed of wooden poles and covered with hides, and which women could erect quickly at each new cattle camp (*awi*), the women in Urum built larger and more permanent dome-shaped houses copied from the

[19] Under the old system of boundaries, districts such as Turkana were divided into divisions, which were further divided into locations and then sub-locations. Each location had a chief, and each sub-location had its own assistant chief, appointed by the Office of the President. This system was replaced by the counties under the new 2010 Constitution, but the positions of chiefs and assistant chiefs have been preserved.

Ng'ikarimojong, who as agro-pastoralists have long maintained permanent wet season villages.

In 2009, Urum was established as a location, the former assistant chief became chief, and he was given several assistant chiefs to manage the sub-locations. One initial challenge was to increase access to the area. Locals were mobilised to clear a road to Lokiriama, and appeals were made for the District Steering Committee to pay for grading. Initially, this request was not granted, but in 2010 four people were murdered while walking back from Lokiriama with their food relief, allegedly by Ng'itepes raiders. The story made its way to the World Food Programme, who sent a team to follow up. The team determined that the trek to collect food aid was too dangerous, and a tractor was commissioned to grade the road later that year. Once construction materials could more easily reach Urum, the national government began constructing the primary school, dispensary, and early childhood development centre.

Another challenge, and one with which the advocates of Urum's economic development are still grappling, is the promotion of greater cash flow. Initially, this required a fairly top-down approach. One of the new assistant chiefs would bring cash to Urum and use it to purchase livestock. There were also some artisanal miners digging in the nearby sites of Ecokcok and Abwelarigengan, and they would come to Urum to sell their gold. The chiefs were also some of the first people to open shops in Urum, giving people a place to use the cash that they had just received from the sale of animals or gold. Over time, as more cash was available, other traders arrived to set up small shops, usually run out of the same dome-shaped housing structures in which people were living. Some of the local women also started SACCOS schemes and received grants from NGOs to start their own shops.[20]

[20] In the Urum Community Development Group, members would each contribute around 10,000 KSH of their own funds, after which the NGO Practical Action distributed a 150,000 KSH seed grant to the

Already, there are plans for more centres nearby, in places that have already been set up as distribution points for food aid, and which are now – like Urum before them – applying for graded access roads.[21] But this enthusiasm over establishing centres does not necessarily translate into the growth of those centres. The current assistant chief observes that the residential part of Urum is about the same size now as in 2009. Women may stay there during the harvest season to work their sorghum gardens, but most return to their homesteads later in the year, when the food from the farms is finished. The presence of the village and its infrastructure has not initiated a trend toward sedentarisation, and people in the area continue to move seasonally with their animals. Urum is used as a resource, a place to buy goods, to collect food aid, to seek health services, or simply to visit during the day to speak with friends and gather news.

The centres also provide opportunities for those who advocated and implemented their establishment. The chiefs with whom I spoke often discussed the difficulties that they faced in establishing and promoting such remote centres, a form of public service to those under their administration. But they are also the first to establish shops and engage in the nascent economies that they are carving out. Those leading the establishment of new centres are also creating a new niche for an elite, which they are then standing ready to fill.

collective. Similar schemes were implemented by Veterinaries sans Frontieres (VSF), the Catholic Diocese, and eventually ministries in the County Government. But they were only possible once locals were in possession of some cash savings, and the chiefs were also heavily involved in assisting with organising the groups and processing their applications.

[21] These new centres include Moru Linga, Nacarakan, Lokorikippi, and Lopokoru, which until recently were merely sites for wet season pasture.

Shifting Margins

In the account of Urum's development provided above, chiefs are at the helm of the projects that culminate in new urban centres. Also involved are the politicians who must approve road grading, as well as the entrepreneurs who invest in new shops. This section describes how this new economic elite is influencing the marginalisation narrative described in the first section. On the one hand, the sense that Turkana has been neglected in the nation's broader economic development persists in the appropriation of new categories and labels that recognise the marginality of pastoralists across Kenya's northern drylands. However, social differentiation in urban areas has created rifts within Turkana, both through the animosity fostered by the politics of elite patronage as well as the divergence between rural-pastoral and urban-professional values.

People traveling south from Turkana into the highlands of Kenya often joke that they are "going to Kenya", a sarcastic suggestion that the journey involves crossing an international border. This phrase has been rendered in Swahili as the "*naenda Kenya*" narrative, conveying the sense among Turkana residents of exclusion from national development, politics, and identity (Sanghi et al. 2016: 7). Some remark that Turkana is more like an extension of Sudan than a county of Kenya.

Turkana's marginalisation is also central in the public debates about international interventions taking place in Turkana. A decade after Turkana become host to a massive population of refugees in Kakuma, Ekuru Aukot wrote an article titled "It is Better to be Refugee than a Turkana in Kakuma." The article discusses the sense among local Turkana residents that refugees receive disproportionate aid, despite the fact that many local Turkana are similarly impoverished, and that many could even consider themselves "displaced" due to insecurity in the border areas. However, the point is not to have the refugees removed, but to

highlight how the refugee camps "exposed the gravity of [Turkana's] political marginalization" (Aukot 2003: 79). Similarly, with a nascent petroleum industry in the south, people in Turkana have expressed "a predominant local fear that the oil discovery would worsen their social and economic marginalization" (Johannes et al. 2015: 161). County leaders such as Turkana Governor Joseph Nanok and Turkana South MP James Lomenon have been vocal proponents of this view in their attempts to increase the share of oil royalties designated to Turkana.

With the rise of an educated demographic, there are now people to represent Turkana and fight against their marginalisation on the national scene. But the urban elite have also created the conditions for the patronage politics familiar to many other parts of Kenya. During the one-party rule of former Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, Peter Ejore ascended the political ladder to serve as MP of Turkana West and eventually the Assistant Minister for Cooperative Development. While he was a vocal advocate for Turkana in the National Assembly (see quote above), he and his political allies were also accused by members of the Church of obstructing development efforts and disrupting civic education sessions, all in an attempt to maintain party dominance in Turkana. In one priest's words, "they were hand-picked to teach the nomads to sing the KANU song" (Good 2007: 253).

Such partisan politics have become increasingly intertwined with Turkana's ethno-scape. Around election time, I have heard many people refer to the territorial sections not as *ng'atekerin* but *ng'itela*, the latter of which is often shorthand for "tribe". The borders of constituencies within Turkana often cut across territorial sections, but these groups have become increasingly aligned to particular politicians during elections. For example, Loima sub-County long lagged behind the other sub-Counties of Turkana and has been ranked lower than any other sub-County across Kenya in terms of education indicators (Society for

International Development 2013: 27). Many people attribute this to former MP Ekwe Ethuro, who served from 1998 to 2013.

During his time in office, what is today Loima sub-County was part of a larger constituency known as Turkana Central division, which stretched the entire way across Turkana from the border with Uganda in the west to Lake Turkana in the east (see Figure 4). This constituency encompassed multiple territorial segments, along which allegiances were divided. In the 1997 elections, Ethuro's primary opponent Icor Imana was from the Ng'ikamatak to the west, whereas Ethuro traced his own history to Kalokol and gained favour among the Ng'iboiceeros people living near the lake. The Ng'imonia in the middle were split, but many went with Ethuro due to affinities to the Ng'iboiceeros. When Ethuro won, he generally favoured the lakeside communities, but little investment was made in Loima.[22] Now, following the splitting of Turkana Central sub-District into two sub-counties under the new constitution (see inset in Figure 4), the Ng'ikamatak and Ng'imonia find themselves occupying the same district, and elections are often split between the two territorial sections. The focus of territorial groups has increasingly turned from flexible negotiations of access to graze and water resources to issues of land (*ng'alup*) and state resources, both of which are secured by getting a person from one's own section into office.

Furthermore, as the solidarity around national marginalisation has been complicated by elite patronage within Turkana, there has also been a sense of diverging values between those with a formal education and those pursuing pastoral livelihoods in the rural areas. While the latter

[22] Some with whom I spoke rejected this explanation for Loima's poor development indicators. An alternative theory is that the road to Kenya once ran through Loima, across the border into Uganda, and then back into Kenya at Bungoma to the south. The construction of the more direct route to Kitale redirected both traffic and trade from Loima to Turkana South. Bringing some hope to Loima residents, the Loima highway has recently been renovated, engendering a boost in trade between Lodwar and Moroto, a growing market centre in northeastern Uganda.



Figure 4. Central Turkana Constituency.
Under the pre-devolution district system, Turkana Central division (see inset) stretched across Turkana District from west to east. After the switch to counties in 2013, this area was split into the new Loima (green) and Turkana Central (blue) constituencies. Wards are labeled in small text, and the general locations of territorial sections are in italics. Letea Ward (yellow) was formerly part of Turkana West division. Under the new demarcation, it was initially proposed as part of Loima, which led to some meetings and debates between the Ng'ikamatak and Ng'ioyokwara sections, but as of the 2017 elections it has remained within the Turkana West constituency.

deal with the precarity of living amidst "insecurity" (*awaase*), their urban counterparts are studying courses with titles such as "Peace and Conflict Studies" in school, in civil sector sensitisation meetings, and in pursuit of jobs in the peace sector. This perspective continues to frame Turkana as a marginalised area, but increasingly deflects the blame from the neglect of the national government to the war-like tendencies of pastoralists in the borderlands, whose "backward" attitudes perpetrate violence through raiding.

Those who are wary to blame rural communities for the violence look to the past. Many blame the perennial violence in the region on the division of the *Ateker* cluster by the British institution of borders among the four countries in the region. Some even suggest that these

groups should secede from their respective national governments and unite to form their own country.[23] While acknowledging that this is an unlikely course, the idea of a strong but divided 'Ateker Nation' is an important part of their narrative of marginalisation. Meanwhile, as urbanites discuss their cultural affinity to other ethnic groups across international borders, the *raiya* in the border regions continue to see most of the neighbouring groups as "enemies" (*ng'imoe*). While their hopes for an *Ateker* nation reflect an antipathy toward the Kenyan state that is familiar to most people in Turkana, it also opposes the sense of ethnic solidarity upheld by many people in the borderlands, who directly encounter the realities of cross-border conflict. For herders in the border areas, peace is also a desirable state of affairs. But they do not lament the insecurity because it has prevented development; rather, they assess their losses in terms of cattle.

Put another way, peace is not an end in itself for the *raiya*. Many herders grow up with the understanding that some level of danger is acceptable so long as there are prospects to grow the herd and pursue prosperity (*abaris*). Evans-Pritchard wrote that the Nuer see cattle as both a source of life, but also the greatest cause of death, insofar as they are the prize that attracts attacks by enemies. Concerning Nuer, for whom Evans-Pritchard describes a deep love for cattle, he also writes, "Nuer say that it is cattle that destroy people, for 'more people have died for the sake of a cow than for any other cause'" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 49). The title of McCabe's ethnography from southern Turkana, *Cattle Bring Us to Our Enemies*, conveys a similar sentiment. In all of these cases, the basis of what we would call one's livelihood – though this Anglo-centric term is already biased – can be a source of both life

[23] Lamphear (1976) suggests against classifying this group linguistically as an 'Ateker cluster'. As noted above, he proposes Koten-Magos to designate an historical clustering of people in this area, which may have been when linguistic and cultural affinities developed. However, the idea of the 'Ateker cluster' has become common language in Lodwar, and so I use that terminology here.

and death.[24] This is one reason that pastoralism is deemed non-modern and "backward", since any livelihood from the perspective of commercial agriculture should only be about promoting life.

As these values diverge, what is happening to the sense of ethnic unity among Turkana people? After conducting interviews in 1990, the Southern Turkana Ecosystem Project concluded that "there is little intercourse between the settled and the nomadic sectors of the Turkana, and that the two sectors may diverge further in the future" (McCabe 1994: 210). With such divergent senses of values, this is perhaps unsurprising. However, my fieldwork in Urum revealed a different dynamic, not between "settled and nomadic sectors," but between an educated elite and a pastoral majority.

I asked chiefs, NGO workers, and ministry employees familiar with the area about its prospects for growth, as well as its impact on pastoralists. Many felt that pastoralism will eventually be phased out, or as one man put it, "with these centres, you see business people coming in, and pastoralists going out". Many of the small groups started in Urum have two objectives: to provide income for people, and to "open the minds of the people" to the possibilities of business as an alternative to pastoralism, with its associated problems of food insecurity and raiding. Lodwar is seen as a model for the growth of these small centres, in which people turn from pastoral to commercial activities, and, in the future, "people will not be thinking of animals, but of money."

[24] This is not unique to pastoralism. On the Swahili coast, "When for instance a new fishing boat is launched, the spirits will be blessed and should reciprocate by providing abundant catches of fish, but the boat launch will also entail the loss of a human life at some time to the spirits through drowning at sea, characteristically as the result of a storm, a death referred to as an offering or sacrifice (Parkin 2000: 158-60). Wind, season, sea, and spirit are, then, seen as acting together as a force for tragedy as well as subsistence and prosperity" (Parkin 2007: S39).

Rural communities are aware that their once pervasive way of life is now on the periphery of a new economic and political scene. However, as I will argue in the chapters ahead, herders in Turkana are not shifting away from their pastoral values, nor do they see herding as a conservative way of life that is being helplessly eroded by the encroachment of a corrosive modernity. Rather, herders are creatively re-working their values, sensibilities, and self-representations to make a meaningful way of life as *raiya*, at the edge of and responsive to the world of urban elites. The next chapter begins with a phenomenological description of this periphery, how it is experienced by those who live in it, and how that sense of place can serve as a basis of belonging.

Part I: A Phenomenology of Social Change

CHAPTER 4: RAIYA AS PLACE

> Each express perception occurring in my journey through Paris—the cafés, people's faces, the poplars along the quays, the bends of the Seine—stands out against the city's whole being, and merely confirms that there is a certain style or a certain significance which Paris possesses... There is present a latent significance, diffused throughout the landscape or the city, which we find in something specific and self-evident which we feel no need to define.
>
> - Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962: 327-8)

> To know the Cameroons well is to feel that you are outliving your contemporaries. The Cameroons does not become less 'remote': you become more and more remote yourself.
>
> - Edwin Ardener (1987: 523)

From the urban perspective, evidence of development ends on the fringes of Turkana's towns and settlements. Residents of the Nakwamekwi neighbourhood on the southwestern side of Lodwar, where the roofs of two-story houses peer over the storefronts that line the main street, recall that just two decades ago the area was occupied by the scattered homesteads of herders and their goats. The recent emergence of "modern" structures is associated with the gradual expansion of development, as a force emanating from the more bustling economic centre of town. Beyond Nakwamekwi, the surrounding drylands are characterized not so much by their visible elements – sand and stone – as by what they lack: shops, farms, water, infrastructure. These arid plains are characterised as a vast expanse of desert, an empty space still awaiting development. Beyond the fringes of Turkana's towns and settlements, scarcity is not simply an abstract condition measured in the availability of material resources, but a perceptual property almost tangible in the vast emptiness.

Yet this focus on material absence should not imply insignificance. The plains and mountains are full of stories, providing the backdrop for an idealized vision of the traditional Turkana past. The countryside *outside* town is often described as the deep *insides* (*tooma*) of customary life, a refuge for customary life amidst the modernizing forces that emanate from

urban centres. It is perhaps for this reason that the term "reserve", by which the colonialists referred to ethnically-designated territories administrated through indirect rule, has maintained its meaningfulness in contemporary Turkana. When anthropologists arrive in Turkana full of questions, it is into "the Reserve" that they are directed, where they will find the "real Turkana" who know and live by the traditions (*ng'italio*) that urban dwellers have forgotten. On one hand, anthropologists may criticize this view as either urban exceptionalism, distinguishing town-dwellers with "modern" aspirations from "backward" traditionalists, or rural essentialism, excising pastoral communities from the history of development and urbanisation and ignoring the ways that their local world is connected to broader global processes. But on the other hand, this advice reflects a dissatisfaction with the kinds of understanding that can be achieved by chatting about "Turkana culture" in a pub in Lodwar, abstracted from the places where it is lived. Discussions and second-hand accounts *about a place* cannot substitute direct experience *of* and *in that place*.

For that reason, the material in this chapter relies not on an objectivist description of Turkana geography, but rather on a phenomenological analysis of my own perceptual journey in the places where I spent my fieldwork, including the remote borderlands of Urum, the town of Lodwar, and the arid lowlands that run between them. The aim of the chapter is to describe how the perception of place – and more specifically, the sense of being in-place or out-of-place – figures into the meaning of *raiya*.

By considering my own experience of acclimatising to life in "the Reserve", I am not retreating into introspection but rather reflecting upon the mingling of my perspectives with others'. As a methodology, phenomenology focuses on subjective experience, but it does not silo people within their own subjectivities, nor does it reduce research methodology to

whimsical musings or memoir (Morris 2012: 19-20). In Merleau-Ponty's words, subjective experiences "slip into each other" in an inter-subjective space:

> We must learn to find the communication between one consciousness and another in one and the same world. In reality, the other is not shut up inside my perspective of the world, because this perspective itself has no definite limits, because it slips spontaneously into the other's, and because both are brought together in the one single world in which we all participate as anonymous subjects of perception. ([1945] 1962: 411)

Although the world is perceived from the perspective of individual bodies, the development of place-based sensibilities is a socially influenced and socially significant process. Similarly, reflecting on the ways that I gradually became accustomed to the setting of my fieldwork lends insight into a "common sense" of the place that illuminates – albeit never perfectly – its intersubjective character for inhabitants.

In the first section, I begin with a discussion of the ways that the Turkana landscape has shaped the lexicon of the Ng'aturkana language, especially as it communicates issues of place. I do so through analysis of a particular word – *ere* – which is part of the lexicon in both Turkana and among their agro-pastoral neighbours the Karimojong, but which has taken on a different meaning in either place. I argue that the meaning of this word has shifted in the remote context of Turkana, which has repercussions for issues of land rights that I do not discuss here, but also for notions of belonging that I discuss in the sections ahead.

In the second section I describe the qualities of urban and remote places in Turkana, attempting to describe their spatial significances, or what Merleau-Ponty calls *physiognomies*. By comparing the physiognomies of urban and rural landscapes, I highlight some of the forms of difference and distinction that are inherent in the notion of *raiya* as a place. These differences are experienced by those who move between town and country, although phenomenology provides a unique way of articulating what is often left implicit.

In the final section, I draw on Tim Ingold's concept of *attunement* to describe how people's develop a sense of belonging in particular places. I argue that attunement to different physiognomies affects the ways that people experience and interact with remote landscapes, either comfortably and confidently as do *raiya* people, or with unease and even anxiety as do outsiders. In this way, place influences people's sensibilities and the ways that *raiya* people might feel "in place" in their remote plains, while visitors feel "out of place."

Making Sense of Place

Land is not privately owned in Turkana, which is the premise upon which the national government designated all land in Turkana County as 'community land', owned not by any individual but held in trust by the government for use by all. On the one hand, this is an important protection of commons resources. But on the other hand, it ignores the ways that people do express attachment to and possessiveness over certain places. The term *ere*, for example, describes a person's home-place, from which they trace their derivation and to which they are attached.

However, *ere* is a complicated word, the meaning of which has changed over time, as the language community of the Ateker-speakers – among whom the Turkana people are included – migrated into different environments. An understanding of the term *ere* requires consideration of the ways that it has changed meaning overtime, or what Koselleck (2002) calls a conceptual history. This differs from etymology or philosophy in that semantic changes are associated with a more rigorously defined system of periodisation, which more rigorously defines the temporal aspects of our use of concepts. In the case of Koselleck's work, the period between 1750 and 1850 was identified as an historical epoch introducing new temporal sensibilities, in which "the old experience of time was denaturalized" (p. 5). In my own work in Turkana, I look not to a changing sense of time but to a changing sense of

place. One period during which this would have occurred was the early Eighteenth Century, when the ancestors of today's Turkana people descended from the western highlands that are now Uganda into the Tarac river valley of contemporary Turkana County.

The agropastoral Ng'ikaramojong and Ng'ijie people now living in the highlands use the term *ere* differently than the people of Turkana, which I suggest reflects the historical migration of Ng'aturkana speakers into a new landscape. Ng'ikaramojong households are often constructed as relatively permanent settlements, organized spatially according to kin relations. Knighton describes the *ekal* or yard as the smallest unit belonging to one married woman. When the eldest son of a woman marries, the *ekal* becomes an *ewae* or family unit, within which his mother may continue to live while each of his wives forms her own yard within. Finally, as each son builds his own family unit, they together form an *ere* or homestead organized around their common father, who is also the owner (*elope*) of the collectively tended cattle herd. The *ere* is transformed and expanded but never abandoned; "continual rebuilding goes on as people die and others, usually wives, come in to live" (Knighton 2005: 27).

At the start of each dry season, young Karimojong men must be released from the settled areas to migrate with the cattle in search of fresh grass. The *akiwodokin* ceremonially sanctions the young herdsmen's departure, affirming their subordination to their elders and their responsibility to those who remain behind. After a feast to please their elders, a blessing, and a symbolic beating to signify their subordination, the young men depart to set up their *ng'awiyoi* (singular *awi*) or cattle camps to the west. As suggested by its name, the *akiwodokin* ceremony is intended to stop (*akiwo*) the young men from running away (*adokin*) with the cattle, never to return to the *ere*, as occurred when the Turkana, the Jie, the Toposa and other groups split from the Karimojong (Knighton 2005: 193-4).

It is in part for this reason that the main homestead in Turkana is not an *ere*, but an *awi*. The story of the first Turkana pioneers describes how a group of young men from Karimojong and Jie created their cattle camps near the Tarash Valley but decided not to return to the *ere* with their cattle, instead descending permanently into what is now Turkana County. By calling the homestead an *awi*, the Turkana language acknowledges the historical act of disobedience by which the tribal group was founded. Similarly, whereas in Karimojong a married man is the head (*ekapolon*) of his family unit but his father remains the owner (*elope*) of the herd, a single man takes on both roles.

This example of semantic shift demonstrates how the Ng'aturkana language has shifted in the particular ecological conditions afforded by the Turkana landscape. The rains are sufficiently reliable in Karimojong to allow people to remain permanently in wet season settlements while young men take the animals on two annual migrations: one to the east and another to the west. There is therefore a clear distinction between the permanent *ere* and the shifting *awi*. However, conditions in the more arid lowlands of the Turkana basin require more frequent and less predictable patterns of migration, such that permanent aggregation is impossible for people relying on livestock for their livelihoods. As Gulliver described from his fieldwork during the late colonial era, "The plains, especially the central semi-desert and south-eastern rock desert, are very sparsely populated even in the better wet seasons. Settlements of no more than a hundred people spread over an area of 10 or 20 square miles are separated from the next by seldom less than seven or eight miles, and up to twenty" (1951: 13). "Settlement" in this sense is not a permanent village, but rather indicates a temporary arrangement of cohabitation that may break up when the season changes and people migrate. Most homesteads remain in a year-round state of migration, and even if they come together for cultivation on the occasion of a good wet season, the particular assortments of people in these aggregations do not necessarily follow a kin-based structure, instead

varying from year to year. Therefore, the main homestead in Turkana is in some ways similar to the temporary cattle camps of Karimojong, and both take the term *awi*.

Left without its original referent, however, the term *ere* has undergone some semantic drift in Turkana. People now use it to refer to the place "where they come from", the home to which they will always be able to return. In a sense, this is similar to an *ere*, insofar as migrating herdsmen in Karimojong would see the *ere* as the place to which they return in the wet season, and to which they belong and have allegiance. I have also heard the *ere* described as the place where families "slough off" their old women, as they travel into the lusher but more insecure border regions, where grass is available for cattle but raiding is more common. In this sense, the *ere* is often located deeper in the Turkana basin, as opposed to the higher elevation areas to the north, west, and south. The elderly people left behind mark the place to which herders can return when rains bring grass to the safer interior areas, although the increasing unreliability of rains makes this a rare event. The specificity of an *ere* can vary depending on the context; some refer to a specific stream or watering area as their *ere*, while others indicate an entire territorial section.

However, the small centres that punctuate the roads and dot the countryside – many of which have been built relatively recently to accommodate humanitarian food distribution – have also taken on the term *ere*, referring not to a patriarchal homestead but a permanent settlement. Many young people now spend part of the year, especially the wet season, living in these centres, where they can re-unite with family and visit friends. Many centres are located near small farming plots where women attempt to grow a small crop of corn or sorghum in the wet season. Even when harvests fail, which is common in Turkana, young people enjoy the leisure time together, entertaining themselves with large night-time dances and local brews. Although there is little kin-based structure to these villages, young men and

women try to stay with their mother or one of her co-wives when they visit. If this is the place where the old women have been "sloughed off", then it is also the home to which they can return. However, whereas an *ere* was often the place to which a person belongs, the term has been increasingly deployed to indicate a place that belongs to a person, especially as contentions rise over private property and land rights. To discuss these concerns, people often refer to their *ere* not as a vague and unbounded place (*akwap*) but in the more possessive sense of their soil (*ng'alup*).

The conceptual history of the term *ere* demonstrates how a place and its distinctive features can influence the ways that people make sense of and articulate space. However, not all aspects of experience are articulated in language, and comprehending the implicit meaning of a place – or what Merleau-Ponty calls its *significance* – requires a different approach. The next section takes a more phenomenological perspective to describe the sense of place that people experience in different milieus, such as the urban environment of town or the rural landscape of the Turkana countryside.

Physiognomy: the Experiential Sense of Place

This section discusses the different ways that people orient themselves depending on the places that they inhabit, focusing especially on urban areas and their remote peripheries. Peripheries are most often used as conceptual constructs in spatial analysis, indicating an objectified relation between dominant centres and the peripheries that they attempt to tame, into which they extend political influence, or from which they extract resources.[1] However,

[1] The idea of centres and peripheries seemed commonsensical under diffusionist theories of cultural change that predominated in early anthropology, and they remained salient as the concept of globalization gained academic currency in the 1980s and 1990s. Ulf Hannerz (1991) proposed that four processes of cultural flow proceed between centres and peripheries: via markets, the state, everyday practices, and social movements. While he discussed various scenerios for the ways that the

the *remoteness* that I am attempting to convey is experiential, inherent in the perception of a place rather than an objectified conception of its geographical distance from a centre.

In this vein, I am following Ardener's assertion that "although there are always 'real' centres and 'real' peripheries which move relative to each other, there is an added feature" (Ardener 1987): 523). He introduces the term *remoteness* to designate a particular kind of rural periphery, one that is "compounded of 'imaginary' as well as 'real' places… by definition not properly linked to the dominant zone" (1987: 40, 50). If peripheries are extensions of centres – specifically located and definitely known – then remote places are something different and something more, augmented by a lack of definite knowledge that leaves gaps for speculation. In this view, which brings Ardener to apply "some phenomenology" (1987: 40), *remoteness* is a perceptible quality of experience.[2]

In this section, I attempt "some phenomenology", drawing on the Merleu-Ponty's concept of the phenomenal field to discuss how urban and rural landscapes differ not only in the presence or arrangement of individual objects, but in the ways that inhabitants relate to these places as an integrated lived-in world (*Welt*). Against the empiricist idea that our bodies detect physical stimuli from an external world and then endow those stimuli with meaning in our minds, Merleau-Ponty argues that "vision is already inhabited by a meaning (*sens*)", such

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periphery would respond to these flows – including homogenization, corruption, and hybridization – the flow of content was decidedly unidirectional from the centre.

[2] The concept of 'remoteness' has been configured as a conceptual tool by a number of anthropologists. Ruben Andersson (2016) focuses on the more intentional top-down construction of remoteness as a quality that is "blanketed" onto particular geographies through the security agendas of both state and nongovernmental actors, often creating "danger zones" in previously accessible places. For Martin Saxer, remoteness is more than just geographical distance or isolation but a particular kind of relationship with distant centres. In his work in the borderland hills of the Himalayas, he suggests that "pathways of exchange" form resilient lines of movement around which social activity periodically coalesces, counter-intuitively suggesting that remoteness must always be studied in relation to connectivity (Saxer 2016:105).

that we do not perceive it as the sum or individual sensory stimuli but as an integrated whole ([1945] 1962: 60). Meaning infuses the landscapes in which people live:

> When we come back to phenomena we find, as a basic layer of experience, a whole already pregnant with an irreducible meaning… former experience is present to [consciousness] in the form of a horizon which it can reopen… in an act of recollection, but which it can equally leave on the fringe of experience, and which then immediately provides the perceived with a present atmosphere and significance. (ibid: 25-6)

This *sens* or inherent meaning, which Merleau-Ponty variously refers to as 'significance' or 'physiognomy', may be thought of as the relation between parts of an image that give it a holistic Gestalt character, or as well as the relations to the body that offer affordances (Morris 2012: 40,64). Merleau-Ponty describes an "operational intentionality" that integrates the movements of the body and allows for the pre-reflective unity of the world as we experience it ([1945] 1962: xx). The body is always relating to the world, which in turn exerts its own intentionality on the body (Casey 1996: 22), bringing the body and its surroundings into a two-way relationship of influence that Basso (1996) terms *interanimation*. This attention to the agency of place seems well-suited to Turkana, where thorn bushes are admonished for stealing one's hat, and where demons hide in rockpiles near steep inclines, waiting to snag the legs of unassuming travellers.

By treating the panorama of our perception like a fabric, the concept of the *phenomenal field* conveys how any part of our perceptual field rests in tension with the rest. Just as pinching or twisting one part of the fabric will stretch and send wrinkles into the rest, an object may stand out and come to influence the total image of our perception. With this in mind, I begin with a discussion of the phenomenal field in urban places before turning to that of the rural Reserve. In urban landscapes, I focus on the ways that streets and roads take on such a valence, influencing people's orientation to space, while in the more remote Reserve, people look to the sun and the varying slopes of the land.

Urban Physiognomy: Settlements and Roads

Beginning with the administrative centres established by the colonial government and extending outward through the mission outposts developed by the Catholic Church, the past century has seen an expansion of urban areas both through the growth of large towns and the establishment of small centres in the outlying areas. While many of these settlements were developed at particular times for particular practical purposes, such as countering the expansion of the Abyssinian forces under Menelik II, establishing famine camps, or building schools, these processes generally reflect an effort by outsiders to render Turkana more legible. There is a discernible objective in Kenya's first spatial strategy, the Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), which prioritized the growth of several categories of centres, which varied in terms of the size of their resident population as well the broader catchment over whom they would administrate. These policies could be deemed "centre-centric" insofar as they envision rural development as a process of diffusion from service centres intended to support integration into the national economy. Calls for so-called "periphery-inward" development plans drew some attention earlier (e.g. Obudho 1984), but they did not gain much traction until the 1990s. Turkana County's current Integrated County Development Plan (Turkana County Government 2013) still references Kenya's 1978 Human Settlement Policy as the standard, call for "a coherent system of human settlement." The emphasis on developing small service centres betrays a sedentarist vision for rural development. Education provides a case in point: each year, the county aims to construct 2 ECD facilities in each ward. Meanwhile, the 2015 county budget removed funding for mobile schools. The reserve would be far more legible if a segment of each household in its population were rendered immobile in order to access the education system.

Wealthy herders have often avoided towns and accessible parts of the rural countryside, turning to remote and hard-to-get-to areas in order to evade forced labour conscription and

tax collectors (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999: 46). However, urban areas are also a potential resource, especially in recent years as herders have come to rely more on cash transfers provided by the National Drought Management Authority's Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP). Rather than avoiding towns, most herders today must organize their livelihoods to access both the cash-based opportunities afforded by town and the livestock-focused resources of the remote pasturelands. If there is any negative sentiment toward urban areas, it is not fear of the state but disappointment, especially in the small villages now scattered across the county. In many of these centres – most organised around a church, an understaffed school, or an inadequately stocked dispensary, there are as many as five inoperable water pumps for every one that is still working, the steel spouts rusted and the cement at their bases cracked. Similarly, in both the Bakweri mountain communities of Cameroon and the Hebrides in Scotland, Ardener writes that:

> The remains of failed innovations, and of dead economic periods, scatter the landscape… Remote areas cry out for development, but they are the continuous victims of visions of development…. [They] offer images of unbridled pessimism or utopian optimism, of change and decay, in their memorials. (1987: 46)

The small infrastructure projects that dot the landscape stands out against the organic monotony of shrubland plains. The visual salience of phone towers, water points, and cattle dip stations bring them quickly into local toponymy. The community living near a large solar-powered water pump outside Lorugum have taken the name of this contraption – *Asola* – as the name of their settlement, and people travel long distances to draw water during the dry season. Much as the construction of new infrastructure can provide a material basis for expectations of transformation and integration (Harvey & Knox 2012), the ruins of old projects stand as monuments to unfulfilled plans for progress and fleeting attention of agencies and elites. The settlements where these projects are implemented are not so much a threat to pastoralists, as a warning about the promises of development. In July 2016, while

passing through the town of Lowarengak along the north-eastern shores of Lake Turkana, I visited an old fish processing facility built by the Norwegians in the 1980s. Lowarengak has long been a destination for impoverished herders who have lost their livestock to drought and raiding. Entire neighbourhoods take their names from the former home places of current residents, many of whom arrived or were resettled in search of refuge and alternative livelihoods. The processing facility, run as a cooperative to prepare fish from the local fishermen for export, had employed many relocated women.

However, like all the rest of the Norwegian-funded projects, the facility was abandoned when Norway fell out with the administration of Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi over his rejection of multi-party democracy. Women who passed by during my visit recalled the identification cards that had been issued to them as members of the cooperative, and the money that they earned while salting and storing fish in the facility. However, with no international oversight or funding, the facility had quickly fallen into disrepair, transitioning from a source of opportunity to a symbol of the unpredictability of development projects. Fishermen and their families now dry and salt the fish on their own at the shores of the lake, shipping their produce further south to Kalokol for sale to Kenyan merchants, or directly to Congolese traders who bring trucks directly to their drying racks.

While many infrastructure projects have often remained incomplete or quickly crumbled, the building of roads has left a lasting effect on the Turkana landscape. Even when roads become rough or are wiped out during heavy rains, they make new forms of transportation and trade possible, opening up the new places for urban settlements through the delivery of food aid, medicines, or education. *Raiya* people use the word *alain* – derived from the English word "line" – to indicate the towns and villages to which they periodically travel, a reference to the ways that these settlements have been shaped around the roads that pass through them.

Everything in these towns is oriented in relation to the road: a shop is "on the other side of the road", and a friend's home is "further down the road". The boarding stages at which prospective travellers wait for vehicles, either to the central town of Lodwar or out to the border with Uganda, provide an urban variant of the cardinal directions, replacing east and west.

Moreover, linearity has become an urban organisational principle, and perhaps even a virtue. Of course, quadrilateral property lines constitute the plots that people purchase in town, and square perimeter fences don't so much prevent entry as provide a visual marker of the borders. Classrooms are organised so that their four walls run parallel to the four sides of the school compound, more a matter of aesthetics and order than practical function. An elite neighbourhood in Lodwar called Nawoitorong is named after the tall acacia trees (*Ng'iwo*) planted in a perfect line (*aturong*) along the side of the road.

Moreover, straightening is specifically associated with development. The early missionaries affiliated with the Irish Catholic Church are sometimes referred to as *lu etenerait akwap*, "those who straightened or elongated the land." This phrase conveys the way that their services reached all corners of Turkana, even those remote places previously excluded from service provision. But the reliance on an idiom of 'straightening' also suggests either that 1) progress is associated with the linearity now associated with towns and roads, it suggests that he reached all the corners of the land, brought resources even to distant places or 2) that that straightening is a pre-existing idiom for improvement. In support of the second hypothesis, the act of "straightening" is indeed familiar to the *raiya* idiomatic repertoire, as suggested by the heavy focus on straightening one's shepherding staff (*aburo*) as a rhetorical gesture during public speeches as well as a more broadly applied idiom for proper conduct. Relatedly, *raiya* homes in rural Turkana are sometimes built along linear landmarks such as

rivers and streams: an *arigan a ng'itorogoi* refers to a small group of herders who build their homes in a line along a river, sometimes as a matter of security (anyone approaching from across the river can be seen even at night, so long as starlight is sufficient).[3] But regardless of its derivation, straightening has increasingly become associated with the plans for progress promised and periodically delivered by the government and international funders.

Raiya Physiognomy: Sun, Rivers and Trees

If urban areas are characterised by the streets that endow them with lines, grids, and linearity, then the experience of space in the Reserve is more oriented toward the landscape features that are present. Whereas an urban structure will be oriented so as to face the road, with its sides facing neighbours and a door or shop window opening onto the road, the Turkana homestead is almost always oriented according to the sun. The central corral opens to the east, the same direction toward which people should orient their heads while sleeping. The men's sleeping area (*aperit*) is oriented just in front of the opening, at the most eastward side of the homestead, where they can detect all who enter or leave the corral. All of the women's houses are then arranged in a curve around the kraal, each consisting of a sleeping hut (*ekai*) that is rain-proofed with animal skins and other materials as well as a more spacious day hut (*ekol*) that provides shade. Generally, when I was on a homestead, I experienced a heightened sense of orientation to east and west due to arrangement of these structures.

While this helio-focal arrangement is obvious in the arrangement of structures on the homesteads, other aspects of spatial orientation are evident in the ways that herders give directions or describe location. First, there are the terms referring roughly to cardinal directions. East (*kide*) and west (*too*) are constant, marked by the rising and setting sun.

[3] Similarly, Luo communities in Nyanza, near Lake Victoria, speak of "opening the way" (*yawo yoo*) by making the home straight (*rieyo dala*) (Prince and Geissler 2010:122).

These directions are crucial to the arrangement of material structures around the home and in ritual. The homestead must always be arranged with the main livestock pen in the centre and the men's sleeping area to the east. When clay or the chyme of a sacrificial goat is applied to the body to protect people from disease, the recipients of the treatment walk counter clockwise around the sleeping area, raising their hands on the far side in prayer to *Akuj*, the monotheistic deity who simultaneously embodies both the Nilotic sky-god and the benevolent Christian god. One must face the east in prayer, the direction from which renewed life emanates. Similarly, the *akiriket* at which men feast is arranged so that those seated to eat meat around its outer edge are facing east. Sometimes the sponsor of the feast, who has provided the sacrificed animal, will receive blessings at the end of the meal. The speaker bestows the blessings in front of the group, eventually hurling his herding staff (*aburo*) over the heads of those seated, toward the west from which emanates any evil that might threaten the sponsor.

There are no invariable terms for north and south. Most dictionaries translate these directions as *kuju* and *kwap*, respectively. However, these words technically refer to the directionality of the watershed, meaning upstream and downstream, also respectively. I have not found them useful in indicating the north and south, especially in Loima where the rivers flow predominantly from the western highlands in Uganda toward Lake Turkana in the east. However, attempts to employ these words in daily conversations kept me attentive to my orientation to the nearest river, and thereby my general whereabouts. Where absolute north and south indicators are not available, people name a site located in that general direction. From Loima, people often referred to the towns of Kakuma in the north and Kitale to the south. However, people may also reference more proximal landscape features, including mountains (*moru*), rivers (*ang'olol*), or valleys (*agule*).

The second way of communicating spatial orientation relies on the distinction between an inner region (*tooma*) to an outer region (*nakalipatan*). These terms can be employed at different scales and with different referents. On the homestead, *nakalipatan* is the area beyond the safety of the thorned fence (*alaar*) that surrounds the living area and corrals. The outside is an unprotected place, associated with the danger of predators and thieves; children do not leave the safety of the interior (*king'a*) during the night. This spatial relation between safety and danger extends to a broader territorial scope as well. *Nakalipatan* describes the peripheral borderlands to which people migrate in search of dry season graze, but where they also come into contact with potentially dangerous enemies. *Tooma* refers to the areas deeper within the Turkana homeland, where people prefer to migrate during the wet season. Some also refer to the interior of Turkana as *nangolanyang* ("government"), the area within the effective administrative reach of the Kenyan government. This is an area toward which most *raiya* people hold conflicting sentiments. On the one hand, markets, urban relatives, and cash transfer programmes are all potential opportunities to acquire resources, but the streets of Lodwar are an unfamiliar – and sometimes unsafe – place for unaccustomed travellers from the peripheries, where one may be mocked for their dress and customary hierarchies of authority may not be upheld. It is for this reason that many *raiya* people see themselves as *ng'itunga a nakalipatan*, "people of the outside" who are most at home with their animals beyond the realm of town and government.

Both of these systems of spatial orientation are different from the cardinal directions of cartography in that they remain less abstracted from the landscape. For example, a simple drawing in the sand can be used to mark the location of a homestead in relation to surrounding rivers and streams. landmarks are used to build a shared representation of the landscape with their listeners. These are not cartographic maps but topological representations; the images do not rely on an abstract space that is measured according to a

scale and in which objects are placed. Rather, the markings in the sand refer to landmarks perceived from a position within the landscape, recalled by those who have perceived it in the past and depicting what others will perceive during a future journey. Such depictions do not "zoom out" to the unattainable heights of birds and sky, but refer to a perspective on the ground, walking across the terrain with the horizons on all sides. Instructions for reaching destinations far beyond the visible horizon rely on a series of journeys to destinations along the way, most often marked by mountains, river valleys, watering points, and in the contemporary context of growing urban centres, settlements.

The grounded perspective of the sand "maps" that I have witnessed share more in common with haruspex, the practice of divination through the material from of entrails, than cartography. Upon spearing an animal for sacrifice or feasting, young men remove the intestines and stomach prior to the first roasting, during which most of the rest of the animal is left intact. The intestines are spread on the ground, oriented so as to assimilate the surrounding landscape. The outer curve of the colon is usually oriented in association with the horizon of highest elevation; for the *Ng'ikamatak* in Loima this is usually the long north-to-south escarpment to the west, which leads up onto the raised plains of Loteere in Uganda. Other elements of the intestinal anatomy such as arteries, cysts and blood clots may indicate landforms such as rivers as well as potential future entities like visitors, wedding gatherings, diseases or raiders. Depending on the context and the size of the group present, men and women may sit for up to an hour debating the significance of these features, often focusing on irregularities such as cysts and blood clots. What makes the "bodyscape" of the intestines (Broch-Due 1990) different from a map, both of which are material representations of place, is that the blank paper of the map is often interpreted to indicate "space", the pre-cultural medium in which culturally recognized places are located. There is no such *tabula rasa* in the

form of the intestines; each feature is already a place, awaiting identification through the deliberative process of interpretation.

Belonging and Feeling "Out of Place"

This sense of being "at home" in a certain place is shaped in important ways by the orientation one has to his or her surroundings. The general differences in the urban and rural landscapes described above may influence the ways that people perceive space as they travel between the countryside and towns, but the same phenomenal fields may also offer different physiognomies depending on the places to which one is accustomed. To articulate this place-specific differentiation of perception, I draw upon Ingold's term *attunement*, which he also describes an "education of attention" (2000: 213).[4] This is not the sort of attention in which one steps back and looks at the world as an observer, but an easy responsiveness to its affordances. Through prolonged and active engagement in a place, "everyday use of the most familiar things around us… absorbed into the current of our activity, become in a sense transparent, wholly subordinate to the 'in-order-to' of the task at hand" (*ibid*: 168). The sense of familiarity – acquired over prolonged immersion in a place – makes us more competent and comfortable as inhabitants. I will then return to this point ahead, regarding both the ways that communities include or exclude newcomers, as well as the sense of being "in place" or "out of place" that people feel about their own belonging in particular places.

[4] On this point, Ingold differs somewhat from Merleau-Ponty, who defines attention as an empiricist construct that could be likened to a spotlight, clarifying and enriching that which is perceived. His argument is that this idea of an internal power of attention is tautological: "Since in attention I experience an elucidation *of* the object, the perceived object must already contain the intelligible structure which it reveals" ([1945] 1962:31). However, Merleau-Ponty does rearticulate of attention in phenomenological terms, not as "a general or formal activity", but as a "knowledge-bringing event" motivated not by an internal force but by the perceptual object itself ([1945] 1962:34-6). This latter definition resonates more with Ingold's notion of "an education of attention", which is inherent in the relation between perceiver and perceived rather than acquired in the mind.

Inhabitants demonstrate belonging through familiarity with and knowledge of a place. As Basso writes of Apache people's awareness of the stories scattered across their landscapes, "knowledge of places is therefore closely linked to knowledge of the self, to grasping one's position in the larger scheme of things, including one's own community, and to securing a confident sense of who one is as a person" (Basso 1996: 34). Like the Apache homelands, the toponymy of Turkana is full of stories from the past. Lodwar, which *raiya* people still refer to as Morukirion ("black mountain") was originally named for the large peak that rises on its eastern side, near the Kawalathe river. However, there is a story of a European traveller who visited the area prior to its establishment as an administrative centre by the British. Upon finding a group of women cooking the fruits of the *ebei* tree, he asked the name of the place. The women, who assumed he was asking about the food that they were preparing, indicated that the fruits were not ready, for they were still sour. The man heard the word *edwar* ("sour"), and departed, satisfied that he had learned the name of the place. People laughed at mistake, for they knew the real name of the place. Knowledge of the old, pre-colonial names of places is a way for *raiya* people to indicate familiarity with places that have been transformed, and in which they are no longer seen to belong. The inverse is also true, as demonstrated to me by secondary school graduates who would often tell me how they still know all of the watering holes, all of the mountains, and all of the good grazing areas in their home areas, demonstrating an unbroken connection to the Reserve.

Raiya herders are aware of the secret dangers that the landscape conceals: the spirits that live in the deep watering holes, the malignant forces that bring disease to humans and animals on the mountains. When traveling across certain streams or descending steep slopes, one must first place a stone onto the *asenun*, a large pile in which hides a spirit (*ekipe*) that, if not acknowledged, could trip you, snatch your foot or bring some other form of misfortune. When harsh winds arise and kick up dust in a whirlwind (similarly called an *ekipe* or

"spirit"), men may raise a pinkie finger, waving it at the whirlwind in an exhortation to stay away. During a thunder storm, people take shelter and listen carefully for the thunder claps; one should take heed so the sudden crash does not steal away their heart.

Problems are often caused by entities that must be expelled from Turkana and returned to the place where they belong. When a man sees a dust-storm off in the distance, he may extend his hand, index and pinkie fingers extended, exhorting the wind-spirit to "return to your own land" (*tolot nakwap nakon!*). Healing events also entail some manner of exorcism: an *akatwan* (healer) pulls the disease agent (*edeke*) out of a person's body using a gourd, a mat of plant fibre, or some other ritual implement. An *emuron* (seer) may prescribe an animal to be sacrificed, after which the entrails may be placed on the patient's head or wrapped around their body, drawing the *edeke* out. However, it is most often the elders who verbally command the disease agent to leave. Standing in front of the patient, they take a swig of water and then spray their blessings onto the sick person's head, chest or hands, meanwhile beseeching the disease agent to leave the body ("*toloto edeke anakwan!*"). Such entities are "matter out of place" (Douglas 1966) and their expulsion is an attempt to return to the proper order of things.

Similarly, people can also feel in and out of place. One can feel "in place" when the landscape is familiar. The mountains on the horizon when one walks home are "good mountains" (*ng'imor lukajokok ng'ulu*), for when they "rise up" (*etakanun*) from behind the horizon, they signal that you are finally arriving at the end of your journey. But one can also feel "in place" when they are able to grapple with the discomforts of the environs. Young *raiya* men proudly describe the hardship they endure living on the remote satellite camp (*abor*), where they watch over their cattle and survive on blood meals procured by puncturing

(*akigum*) the neck arteries of living animals. Life on the satellite camps is difficult, but *raiya* men are adjusted (*enaikinete*) to the hunger and thirst.

Certain personality characteristics widely associated with remote herding communities have been otherwise attributed to the ecological conditions or social circumstances of isolation within which many pastoralists live. Herders in Turkana, for example, have been described by such attributes as "rugged individualism" (Lamphear 1992: 13-4) and "individual freedom" (Gulliver 1955: 12). More generally, African pastoralists have been characterised as exhibiting a spirit of independence (Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980). An ecological rationale for this character is that no two herds are the same; all have different compositions of animals, as well as animals of different ages and breeds. And because herd constitutions change, any given herd's annual path may need to change from year to year, engendering a "principle of individual movement according to personal choice and opinion" (Gulliver 1955: 164) rather than collective movements as a cohesive social unit. Even kin can separate for the purposes of preserving their livestock, and the necessity of taking an appropriate course according to the conditions at hand is accompanied by a sense of freedom that one can choose their own path, different from those of their neighbours or relatives. As one homestead head (*ekapolon*) stated to Gulliver, "We can move anywhere, everywhere" (1955: 35), and indeed the homesteads that he observed moved an annual distance of 30 to 90 kilometres (*ibid*: 36-38). I would argue that this expresses not only independence from constraints on mobility, but a confidence that herders can find comfort wherever they go. Unlike those in town who build their permanent concrete houses, the *raiya* can make their home wherever they build their new cattle camp (*awi*).

If belonging is thought of as a sense of being "in place", then we lose that feeling when we are displaced, at which point our awareness of place shifts from pre-reflective to a more

objective awareness (Basso 1996). This sense of displacement – or "out-of-placement" – is tangible when outsiders accustomed to towns visit remote areas. Mosebo describes "a feeling of remoteness" for those who visit Karamoja, due to the duration of the travel, the ruggedness of the roads, and the pain experienced by those who endure the rattling overland journey into the area (2015: 16). Similarly, in Urum, mobile phone network ends about ten kilometres north of Lokiriama, and unfamiliar travellers to Urum make nervous jokes about scenarios of misfortune: an ambush by roadside bandits, a snake bite, or engine failure. There is an awareness of one's isolation from the social services of which they are rarely conscious but from which draw a sense security. On my first visit to Urum, I spent the first week feeling my head for fever more than I'd care to admit, hoping to catch any episode of malaria before it advanced too far for self-medication. Aside from the sense of isolation provoked by the visual vastness within Urum's horizons, there is also a difference in visitors' and inhabitants' sense of the temporal proximity of recent raiding activity. When I began fieldwork, the last major attack from Tepes raiders had been in 2011, but my travel companions spoke of these attacks like they were yesterday, as if the assailants might still be hiding in the bush. But for people who lived in Urum, and who have experienced years of mundane inhabitation without an attack, this threat seems remote.

Discussion: Remote Belonging

In this chapter, I have interrogated the definition of *raiya* as a place, or more specifically "the countryside, the opposite of town" (Müller-Dempf 2014: 4). Approaching the subject through a phenomenological lens, I have attempted to describe the 'sense of place' that people experience in particular environments, from remote expanses of rural Turkana to the urban areas against which *raiya* is defined. In this view, the urban-rural divide is a distinction between urban and rural spaces with different qualities, which are exaggerated by the stark differences between the simple linearity of small towns and the striking openness of the

Turkana landscape. This disparity shapes the social landscape as people develop particular spatial sensibilities and become more attuned to the places to which they are accustomed.

In anthropology, and especially the regional literature from Africa, place and belonging are most often linked through the land (Lentz 2013; Shipton 1994), through which it is associated with citizenship and kinship. In the Forced Migration literature, memories of home and imaginaries of homelands are often part of belonging among those who are displaced (Safran 1991). I am suggesting that more direct perception of a place can also affect people's sense of belonging, that is, whether they feel in or out of place. As people become attuned to landscapes through long-term immersion in them, the landscape becomes enfolded in their perceptual capacities. The ability to move through the landscape – wayfaring – is not simply a technical navigation skill, but also a skilled way of *being-in*. The idea that attunement to land can become a part of the self is captured in Ingold's reflection about indigeneity, in which "the very relationships within which persons are positioned and from which they derive their identity and belonging are recast as the outward expressions of inner, inherited properties or attributes that belong to them" (Ingold 2000: 151). But the inverse is also true, that a lack attunement to place can induce anxiety and discomfort, leaving people to feel like they don't belong. If this incompetency at *being-in* a place is obvious to others – as is the case for some secondary school students who return home to their *raiya* siblings – one may be excluded.

Having discussed the perception qualities of *raiya* as place – and a sense of place – I now turn to the performative aspects of *raiya*. This includes a discussion of a distinctive dance form as well as more everyday ways of performing *raiya*.

CHAPTER 5: *RAIYA* AS PERFORMANCE



Logiriarieng'an is one of Lorukadimoe's sons, a young man (*esorokit*) of about 23 years who lives on his fathers' homestead in the remote pasturelands of Urum. He is unequivocal that he is *eraiyait*, in his preferences, in his capacities, in the things to which he is accustomed, and in what he knows. He admits that he knows little about the things that children learn at school. But when it comes to livestock, to caring for animals, managing their daily grazing regimen, and defending the herd, he is an expert. Where people in town wear modern trousers and shoes (or as he puts it, the clothes of outsiders), he wears the Maasai cloth and tough rubber sandals made from cut up tires. I've never seen him wear trousers or shorts – he claims that they retain odour (*aboos*) – and he expressed no interest in learning to read or speak English. He also describes how people in town prefer to eat rice, pasta, bread, while he prefers milk, meat, and of course, blood, the crucial resource upon which young men rely

when they are living in remote cattle camps in the dry season. *Raiya* men like Logiriarieng'an have learned to acquire the things that they need for survival from the herd. The herd is also their pathway to a future life, the means by which men will find wives, build families, and start a herd of their own.

Logiriarieng'an's responses to my questions about identity are definitive, drawing boundaries between *raiya* and town almost to the point of self-caricature. He explains that the *raiya* reject the things of town because they don't know these things (*nyikiyeni*), they are not accustomed to them (*nyikinaikina*), and they do not fit them (*nyeyokinitae*). From my own observations on fieldwork, these boundaries are quite flexible. Indeed, urbanites often refuse to drink blood, suggesting that their stomachs can't handle it and, anyway, there is no need. But few pastoralists will turn down a meal of rice or pasta if it is offered. The rejection of the ways of outsiders (*ng'imoe*) is a matter of self-definition, a performative demonstration of one's *raiya*-ness.

This chapter discusses the practical instantiation of *raiya* in everyday performance. Exhibiting certain kinds of dress, speech, and gesture in town will sometimes evoke statements along the lines of "Eh, now that's a *raiya*!" Such displays, whether they are performed self-consciously or not, demonstrate to others that one is *eraiyait* ("a *raiya* person"). Their performance makes common reference to the images of an idealized past as a pastoral people. Like the "cultural archive" of hunting idioms that persist among communities like the Uduk who have historically relied on hunting livelihoods, these are vague but resilient notions, manifesting "below the level of explicit statements… persisting through a period of history and underwriting a certain coherence through times of superficial change" (James 1988: 4). As I describe in this chapter, the notion of *raiya* draws on the contents of this cultural repository. I focus on one of the most well-known performances of

pastoral identity – the ox-dance – as well as three figures that are evident in performance of *raiya*: the herder, the warrior, and the survivor.[5]

However, the cultural archive is not merely a resource upon which one draws at will; it is a script in which one develops competency over time and through habitual performance. For example, in Ferguson's study on the Zambian Copperbelt, he contrasts the "cosmopolitan styles" of urban mine workers and the "localist" styles of their rural relatives. His analysis highlights not only their distinctive differences but also "the accomplished, performative nature of such practices" (1999: 93-110). To obtain a sense of belonging to the *raiya* sphere, one must not simply reference these social schema, but enact them competently and comfortably, a capacity acquired only over time and through immersion among where others are performing similarly.

The first section of this chapter describes the ox-dance, one of the most pervasive performative manifestations of pastoral identity among men. The second section provides an overview of *archival personas* that inform *raiya* performance. These figures are not described as abstract figures, but are rather illustrated through examples of speech, dress, and style that I observed in the field. These figures also convey certain attributes valued – and in fact necessary to – rural life in Turkana, including the ability to walk long distances and an inurement against hunger. The final part of the chapter explains how these personas and ideals, albeit "traditional" in their perceived opposition to urban life, are enacted with

[5] I struggled with the appropriate word to describe these anthropomorphic images drawn from the cultural archive. Due to their use in Jungian psychology, both the terms *archetype* and *persona* carry a heavier conceptual load than I intend. Archetype is especially problematic, suggesting vague *a priori* images embedded in the unconscious and given specific form by cultural context. The anthropomorphic images that I describe are entirely culturally constituted, and rather than an unconscious they are manifested in performative acts. I chose the term *persona* as used in theatre, not as a Jungian mask used to hide a "true" inner self (an essentialism rejected by phenomenologists), but as the scripted role that performers attempt to present to their audience.

improvisation, providing a familiar script but also responding to contemporary contexts and events related to development in Turkana.

The Praise-Ox

> When boys reach manhood, they take the colour-names of oxen in addition to the personal names they have been previously known by, and are called by intimate friends and age-mates by the ox-names they have then taken at initiation… He will praise his ox in songs, delighting in inventing new ways of referring to its appearance, and in introducing into song imagery fitting to an ox of that colour. The ability to create new imagery based upon the traditional colour-names of cattle is considered a mark of intelligence in a man; and though some men are acknowledged to be more gifted than others in this respect, every Dinka can attempt a measure of poetic ingenuity and originality… The object is to praise him. A Dinka's self-esteem and standing in the community are intimately bound up with cattle in this way. (Lienhardt 1961: 12)

Despite being written over fifty years ago and hundreds of kilometres north of Turkana, Lienhardt's description is apposite here. Most young men have at least one praise-ox (*emong lo edwaritae*), decorated by cauterising elaborate designs into its hide, training its horns in different directions, or cutting patterns into its ears. As for herders elsewhere in northeast Africa (Coote 1992; Eczet 2011; Evans-Pritchard 1934; Turton 1981), the name of the praise-ox in Turkana can be derived from its colour, colour-patterning, horns, and decorations, or alternatively may be a poetic reference. Ohta (1987) describes the derivation of livestock names as a system, as does Galaty (1989) for Maasai. However, while there are norms and rules for naming animals, this scheme is open-ended (i.e. any animal may have a number of possible names depending on what features are emphasized) and creative. A black cow may be described not only as *Nakirion* (literally "black") but alternatively as *Nakware* ("night"). Perhaps most interestingly for my own study, I have seen an ox that was half red-brown and half white referred to as *Losigara* (referencing the colour pattern of a cigarette).

A man's dance-ox and its associated songs are a versatile means of communicating in Turkana, not only as an expression of a message, but as a forceful imposition of the self on

others. When offended, a man can call out his ox-name to the offender, thereby dispensing with niceties and demanding a response. A man might call out his ox-name in an expression of machismo during community celebrations, or when mustering courage in preparation for a raid. He can also call out this name when expressing disbelief, engaging in high stakes negotiations, or when courting a romantic interest. Town residents who learned that I was studying traditional pastoral life in Turkana would often tease me by pointing to a young woman and telling me to pursue her, striking a pose emulating the horns of my dance-ox and calling out its name.

The word *emong* refers both to the ox and the song that is composed about it. A man can present his song to the public either in informal gatherings around the evening fire and while eating, or in more elaborately choreographed group dance events. When the boys would practise their recently composed songs in the pasture, they would sometimes ask me to film them, giving them a chance to review their technique prior to entering a public performance. There is a great deal of scrutiny over one's physical appearance, in terms of clothing, the style in which the clothing was worn, and the impressiveness of the jump.

The dance events referred to as *edong'a* are organized when the moon is bright enough to illuminate the flat ground where the performers gathered, as well as the pathways along which people travelled to reach the event from outlying homesteads. Although small gatherings occurred in the dry season, the larger events took place at the end of the long-wet season around July or August, when the village – usually quiet with just a handful of households, mostly shopkeepers and the elderly – was full of residents harvesting sorghum and corn. I attended four of these events with Logiriarieng'an in the wet season of 2015, one of which I describe here:

Upon arrival, Logiriarieng'an led our small troop on an initial inspection around the

> perimeter. He walked slowly, scrutinizing the performers while silently announcing his arrival with an air of aloof superiority. However, rather than joining, he squatted on his stool just outside the circle. When I asked why he wasn't joining, he responded, "Eroko epontu ng'ice" (Others are still on the way). His brief abstention was a gesture to the other performers that he wasn't impressed; the best singers (himself included) had yet to join.
>
> But he did not sit long, and when he did finally rise, he did so with dramatic protraction, as if the entire assembly was turning to look. Removing his shirt, he carefully adjusted the cloth wrapped around his waist so that it sat high on his chest, leaving his legs unconstricted. He took his time, carefully folding over the upper sides of the cloth and twisting it so that the flap was in the back. He donned a t-shirt, carefully placed the colourful cap (borrowed from his father) on his head, and took a few high practice leaps. He then jumped into the circle beside two of his friends, forcing himself into a space but drawing them close with his arms for the next song. Upon entering the circle, he quickly established himself as a leader, forcefully clapping his hands to encourage others to join the rhythm set by the new soloist, urging them to renew their enthusiasm. He waited only two turns before leaping in the circle to perform his own ox-song. During the songs of his friends, he would leap out into centre to show support for his comrade's performance, but not without showing off his own strength and agility.
>
> As he would perform a song, his cries rose in pitch and volume until the falsetto lyrics were barely intelligible. His jumps became higher, and he would land with a deep audible grunt, rolling his neck to the rhythm of the dance. At the end of a good song, women would rush out and form a ring around the performer, bobbing back and forth as the young man left in quick forceful jumps (akilepakin) toward them, hopping sideways out of the way just in time. Sometimes, spontaneously, he would attempt to trip one of the girls, or other times, one of the girls would return the attack with a quick kick at the dancer's legs while he was in mid-jump. (Fieldnotes, Urum, July 2015)

This was the same dance-event previously been described by Gulliver (1951: 17-18) and Robbins & Robbins (1971: 233). The term *edong'a* can refer both to the action that people perform when they dance, which I discuss below, as well as the dance-event. When I would ask where young people were going at night (*elosete kesi aliwae?*), I was often told that they were going to *edong'a*, which usually took place in or just outside villages and settlements, where enough people were available to constitute a sizeable gathering.

As for me, having missed out on a Turkana childhood and the opportunity to learn the dance throughout my early development, I learned by mimicking my herding and travel companions, and responding to my audience's indications of approval or ridicule. Logiriarieng'an demonstrated the basic "leap" (*akipor*) for me one afternoon, captured in the

sequence of stills in Photo 2. During the leap, his legs remain closed together, bending at the knees. The arms are pumped slightly to assist the jump, but only subtly, not moving far from one's flank. The chest is puffed in a masculine torso posture, and the neck can give a slight roll to toss the head like an ox. The dancer should come back to the ground forcefully with a satisfying thud, kicking up dust like the movement of a herd of animals.



Photo 2. Logiriarieng'an Demonstrates Edong'a (Credit CR, 2016)

This elementary movement is sometimes referred to as *edong'a* even outside the event, and it is deployed as a communicative gesture in various daily social circumstances. People may jump to beg for beer (*akilipakin epurot*), or to show appreciation when beer has been given, and for young men, to court young women in whom they are interested (*amalar apese ngina*). Sometimes it's just nice to jump. After resting for some time against a tree, he stood up, stretched, and took a few leaps into the air. When I asked what he was doing, he shrugged and said "*adonga ayong akilolo akwaan*" ("I am dancing/jumping to shake out or loosen my body"). But as a performance for others, *edong'a* is taken very seriously. I spent endless hours filming Logiriarieng'an and his brothers jumping and calling out their animals in brief

solitary performances, after which they would review the video, scrutinizing the appearance of their carefully folded clothes and critiquing the form of their movements.

The performance of the ox-song is a means of expressing and cultivating a masculine self-image, and the night-time dances are an arena for its display to others. However, whereas these dances were once ubiquitous in Turkana, they are now associated in particular with *raiya*. Night-time gatherings on the dancing ground (*akero*) are a favoured pastime among pastoral families in the countryside, but the urban bars and nightclubs are places for popular music from the national and international music industries, not ox-songs. I therefore describe the self-image cultivated through the ox-song as a form of *raiya* masculinity. This self-image is furthermore informed by more generic images of manhood associated with the pastoral archive, which I describe in the next section.

Archival Personas of *Raiya*-hood

As described in the introductory chapter, *raiya* is a polyvalent term, the meaning of which varies depending on the contexts in which it is invoked. It is highly idiosyncratic and does not conform to a well-defined schema. Nonetheless, through various conversations about the term and much observation of personal behaviour that people identify as *raiya*, I have gained some insight into the ideological archive that underlies such performances. In this section, I attempt to convey what constitutes a *raiya* performance by describing three archival personas: the herder, the raider, the survivor, and the ox.

Because two of these figures – the herder and the raider – are distinctively masculine, the field of masculinity studies provides one potential avenue for depicting *raiya* performance. However, many of the African studies in this field are based on observation of rituals and practices explicitly intended to graduate boys into manhood or to cultivate explicitly male subjectivities (e.g. Heald 1989). To describe *raiya* performance as a form of masculinity risks

erasing women's involvement in performing and defining this performance. Indeed, the use of *raiya* as a label clearly encompasses women who live in rural areas, who carry out tasks at pastoral homesteads, or who wear beads and adhere to Turkana custom, and both women and men draw upon these *personas* in their everyday performances. This will become clearer in the latter part of this chapter, as well as in Chapter 6 when I discuss how *raiya* manifests through enskilment.

Nonetheless, the performative aspects of *raiya* – especially those embellishments of self-presentation that are undertaken with some awareness of one's audience – were most evident in my fieldwork when observing men. There are two potential reasons for this. For one, I gained many of my insights not only through observation but by attempting, in a somewhat playful way, to emulate the *raiya* performances of the people around me. Because I was largely emulating men, I gained more insight into *raiya* masculinity. A second and more speculative reason is that *raiya* men have higher stakes in distinguishing themselves positively from urban people. As discussed in Chapter 8, *raiya* women can pursue an urban lifestyle by marrying men from town, and some have expressed a preference for the lifestyles offered by "men with money" over "men with animals". *Raiya* men, who may not be able to access urban livelihood opportunities have expressed concern that the lives they offer to women are losing appeal.

Ng'ikeyokok: The Practical Aesthetics of Pastoralist Attire

> Vignette 1: Logiriarieng'an was sitting with me in the shade while the younger boys kept vigil over the grazing livestock. One of his younger brothers approached to inform him that they could not locate one of the goats. As the eldest boy, he now had a task to do, and while this may require considerable work, he seemed to relish the opportunity to demonstrate the importance of his position. He rose slowly, nonchalantly, almost as if he wasn't even listening to his younger brother. Lighting a cigarette rolled with scraps of old newspaper, he readjusted his cloth, wrapping it tightly around his waist. After buttoning his coat, he stood leaning against his staff, facing away from his brothers as he inquired about the last sighting of the animal to determine its most likely location. Then, without another word, he turned and marched off into the brush, his

arms swinging in long exaggerated arcs. (Fieldnotes, August 2015)

As noted earlier, *raiya* is more than a livelihood designation and cannot be boiled down to "herder" or "pastoralist". Nonetheless, many of the stylistic features of Turkana dress and adornment embody the image of the shepherd (*ekeyokon*), and the pastoral archive remains the fundamental base upon which *raiya* performance draws, including clothing and adornments that assimilate the aesthetic of other herding societies such as Maasai. This section focuses largely on the material articles that constitute the *raiya* wardrobe, including the equipment that herders carry on their person, and the ways that they are deployed in everyday performative acts.

The herding staff (*aburo*) is one of two objects carried by herders almost anywhere they go; the other object is the *ekicolong*, a wooden stool that doubles as a short seat as well as a head-rest at night.[6] The primary use of the staff is as a practical instrument to direct livestock while traveling or as they graze. As an extension of the herder's body, the staff allows the herder to project his influence over the herd beyond the physical reach of his arms. A herder may spur a stubborn animal into movement with a sharp rap to the hind quarters, although a sturdier staff is needed to contend with cantankerous donkeys and camels. But generally, the staff is used like a conductor's wand, raised above the head to direct the animals forward, or swept inward from the side to return animals to the herd.

The practical uses of the staff have elevated its representational value as a symbol of one's role as a herder.[7] In order to make a meal of small game, boys sometimes carry a bow and

[6] Historically, the headrest was important when men fashioned clay-coated coiffures decorated with dyes and feathers, which could not be rested on the ground while sleeping.

[7] Similarly, Lienhardt explained that Dinka herdsmen would spread the ashes of cattle dung on their bodies to prevent fly and mosquito bites, but the application of dung was also a public indicator that one is actively engaged in animal husbandry (Lienhardt 1961:5).

arrow while grazing their livestock. However, as a matter of principle, all boys should carry the staff. On one occasion, when I asked a herder if he knew how to shoot a bow, he held up his staff defiantly and said, "Those people on the other side, they carry the bow, but here in Turkana, a man carries an *aburo*!"

The women's version of the staff is part of a more structural symbolic system related to Turkana brands (*ng'imacarin*), which are the largest recognized kin-based unit and a means of indicating livestock ownership. Certain customs observed by women distinguish the brands ritually: women of some brands carry a straight rod called an *akeat* while women in other brands carry a curved *abela* (Barrett 1987: 9). Among the *abela*-carrying brands, women observe a taboo in which an *abela* cannot be touched by anyone from outside the family group. However, whereas the women's *abela* is a symbol of social organization, the men's *aburo* is used to display personal efficacy. When a man invokes God's protection at a meat feast, including blessings for the sponsors who contributed livestock for the meat, he may hurtle his *aburo* westward over the heads of the crowd, telling misfortune (*aronis*) to remain on that side. Similarly, men use the *aburo* to break the milking gourd as a crucial step in the *ariwo* ritual, blocking enemies who wish to carry out raids or other forms of violence from passing into Turkana territory. Turkana people do not engage in the organized stick-fighting competitions practised by other East African cattle-keeping people, such as the *donga* event described by Turton (1973) among the Mursi, but they do demonstrate their fighting prowess in playful, often spontaneous sparring matches with their shepherding staffs (*ng'aburoi*).[8] Beyond its uses as a weapon, the *aburo* can also be used to demonstrate level-headedness and composure, as when men address public gatherings: he casually uses the staff

[8] In more serious disputes, men may engage in a dual, stopping when one has drawn blood from the other with his wrist-knife (*abarait*).

to remove detritus from the ground, or carefully straightens it against his leg, looking down its length with one eye to identify the direction of curvature. In the days preceding a wedding where an elder is expected to speak, he may spend much time attending to his *aburo*, carefully carving away the sun-burned wood on the surface to expose the fresh, brightly coloured layers underneath.

The *aburo* mentioned above is made from a branch of the *edome* tree, although a softer, lighter staff can be procured from the *ekale* tree. The branch is selected and hewn from the tree, the bark is stripped, and it is left to dry for several days. As it dries, the natural curves of the stick can be straightened by bending it in the opposite direction. Once it has dried and hardened, the ends are broken to the appropriate size and the surface polished with a sharp stone or knife. A finished *aburo* should be both straight and strong, and once completed it requires maintenance. After eating meat, men spread the animal fat from their hands onto the wood to refresh it (*takiteteno*) and to prevent it from becoming brittle or cracked.



Photo 3. Interior of a Typical Rural Trade Shop in Turkana. (Credit CR, 2016)

While the *aburo* and other wooden items are hand-hewn by their users, other goods are imported. A quick survey of any rural shop will provide a catalogue of the most defining objects. Napeiyok is a pioneering businesswoman operating one of the shops in Urum, where she sells consumable goods like maize, beans, rice, cooking oil, and tobacco, as well as an assortment of non-food items. A quick survey of her merchandise provides an overview of the dress, adornments and other paraphernalia preferred by her *raiya* customers, both men and women. The clothes decking the walls of Lodwar's shops – trendy footwear, fashionable blouses and blazers, and trousers – are conspicuously absent in Napeiyok's shop. Instead, the dusty shelves are lined with rubber and plastic armbands, an assortment of hat styles, Chinese-manufactured polo and collared shirts, used police and military jackets, women's

Table 6. Typical Clothing and Accessories Associated with Raiya Dress and Style.

Turkana Term	English Term	Description
Apukot	Hat	Various styles, including military, wide brim, as well as brightly coloured brimless hats
Eriko	Beaded Earings	Dangling strings of tiny beads; said to resemble the decoratively cut ears of oxen
Akot	Coat	Often sold as second-hand police and military jackets in town
Egyel, Epira	Armband	Decorative bands made of plastic and rubber, respectively. The latter are oil gaskets and may be worn on the legs to protect against lower body diseases and snakes
Ecuka	Maasai Clothe	Colorfully patterned cotton blankets, conventionally used by pastoralists in the Maasai tribe, now produced widely in Kenya and worn by Turkana herders. Can be draped over the shoulders or wrapped around the waste as clothing, or used as a blanket at night.
Ekicolong	Headrest Stool	Wooden stool carried in hand, used as headrest at night.
Ng'atyrio	Tire Sandals	Made from used tires and purchased in town, these sandals break thorns that would penetrate the rubber soles of standard shoes
Aburo	Staff	Wooden used to herd animals, as well as for competitive play-fighting
Asuwat	Digging Staff	Ornate staff used to dig for water or edible roots, but also useful as a hanger for the carrier's coat and other accessories while resting
Abarait	Wrist-Knife	Circular blade worn around the hand, usually covered by a fitted skin, used for eating meat but also as a weapon

This list is based on fieldwork in Loima sub-County during 2015-16.

wedding beads (*ng'akoromwa*), and chequered cloths in numerous colours, many still wrapped in the manufacturer's plastic packaging.

The brightly patterned cotton clothes known as an *ecuka* (a Turkana modification of the Swahili word *shuka,* meaning "sheet" or "light blanket") is worn tightly wound around the waist (*tolid*) for trekking or draped over the shoulders (*torwae*) during the cool hours in the morning. Poorer herders make due with old bedsheets or simple cuts of fabric, but the true *ecuka* is the Maasai cloth, made of a thick cotton fabric, often dyed in striped or plaid patterns of vibrant colours. Internationally associated with the Maasai ethnic group that have become iconic of East African tourism, the clothes are often imported from place like China, although there are now local manufacturers in Kenya.[9] It is the most emblematic article of *raiya* clothing, such that even a town-boy occasionally tasked with watching his relative's livestock will tie an *ecuka* around his shoulder or over his trousers while out with the animals. Whereas Kenya's tourism industry has branded the red-chequered cloth as the garb of Maasai warriors, Turkana prefer a variety of colours, often coordinating with their other clothes, hats, and beads. But while decorative, the *ecuka* is a practical article of clothing: it covers the body as a blanket at night, and it can even be folded into a sort of pocketed apron for carrying fruits or collecting seed pods to feed to the goats. Some point out the impracticality of wearing bright red cloths while herding: why make yourself an easy target for enemy marksmen? This double purpose – symbolic yet practical – is reflected in many of

[9] *Raiya* paraphernalia, including clothing as well as tools and accessories, could be studied through a more object-oriented lens, as has been developed in both material anthropology and some fields of archaeology. This approach highlights the ways that the materiality of cultural objects, such as the production requirements and physical properties of cloth, shapes the ways that people put it to culturally specific stylistic and functional ends (Conkey 2006). However, because my focus is on the agency of the users of objects rather than the objects themselves, I have taken performativity as my theoretical lens.

the objects and accessories that adorn the bodies of *raiya* men, a sampling of which are described in Table 6.

Many of these objects – such as the Maasai cloths, armbands, and wedding beads – are manufactured abroad and imported specifically for pastoralist communities. Far to the south in Kitale, near the main highway junction where the highway to Turkana begins winding into the Cherangani Hills, Deep and his family operate a wholesale business out of Ushanga House. Started by his uncles when they moved to India from Kenya, the business is one of two sources of glass wedding beads for Turkana County residents. They source their beads from a handful of artisan production outfits like Preciosa Ornela in the rural village of Desna, Czech Republic, which continues to produce high-quality 'seed beads' using a complicated process mixing traditional and industrial techniques" (Lyman 2016). Cheap beads manufactured in Asia threaten to put the Czech artisans out of business, but *raiya* customers are discerning consumers. Women show special care when selecting beads, especially the green and blue varieties, which they explain lose their colour if purchased without attention to the source.

Ng'ikaruok: The Repute of Raiders and War Heroes

> Vignette 2: On one occasion while traveling to a village on the border with Uganda, in a place north of my normal area of research, my visit overlapped with that of a prominent *ekaruon* (plural *ng'ikaruok*), a war hero whose name and raiding exploits are renowned throughout Turkana and across the borders in enemy territory. For this journey to the border, I had secured a ride with a vehicle commissioned by the World Food Programme. The driver, a Turkana man who had been distributing food for fifteen years, was well acquainted with the route and calmly pointed out key landmarks as we travelled westward. But upon arriving at our destination he gasped in surprise, pointing out the passenger side window at a group of elderly men sitting in the shade outside a walled compound. All of the men were perched on their hand-held wooden stools except one, who was leaning back in an old plastic lawn chair. "Eh, that's Apa Mlele!" There was a murmur of excitement as the rest of the passengers turned around, trying to catch a glimpse of the famed figure before we passed. Upon arriving at the primary meeting place, I was informed that Apa Mlele would attend my focus group discussion. As we waited for him to arrive, those gathered asked if we knew Apa Mlele's name in my home country. When I explained, apologetically, that America was far, and that

> most people were not aware of him, there was surprise and general consensus that we should know his name. (Fieldnotes 15 July 2016)

An *ekaruon's* personal stories of raids, gun battles and epic chases to return stolen animals often circulate widely. These tales, often told with some hyperbole, serve a protective purpose for the local community, augmenting their reputations as fierce fighters and deadly marksmen, thereby discouraging enemy youth from attempting a raid in their territory. But such stories are also a point of personal pride for the *ekauron*. Any man who has killed an enemy takes a name associated with the encounter and alluding to the events that transpired: people know that *Lorukadimoe* met the enemies on the road ("road" = *arukadi*), and *Lobilamoe* broke the leg bones of an enemy with his bullets ("to break or snap" = *tobilar*). As explained in the description of a former warrior's illness in Chapter 9, killing an enemy is not without its negative consequences, and furthermore a reputation as an *ekaruon* entails considerable political responsibility, as government officials call on respected war veterans to give legitimacy to peace efforts.

Nonetheless, it is to such fame that many young *raiya* men aspire. In principle, fame is acquired principally through raiding (*akirem*), the forced acquisition of cattle by armed men traveling into enemy territory, usually under cover of darkness. But even among *raiya* men who have never engaged in raiding, the image of the warrior is readily discernible in their aesthetic. Most men wear second-hand police uniforms and military jackets from various countries: Chinese police uniforms, US army surplus, and old Kenyan Police Reserve uniforms. Rifles are hidden during trips to areas with a police presence, but otherwise they are carried and displayed proudly. Many guns are decorated with paint, beads, and colourful pieces of rubber and plastic.

Discussing the role of raiding in defining pastoral identity among Karamojong, Turkana and other Ateker-speaking people, Storaas (2009: 152-3) mentions prestige but moves quickly to

a discussion of the aims of raiding: acquiring cattle for marriage, securing new resources, or expanding territory. However, the respect shown to successful raiders deserves some attention. When Turkana men dance, they sing the poetry associated with their personal dance-oxen (*ng'imongin lu edwaritae*), but men are especially boastful of the oxen that they have stolen during raids (*ng'imongin lu eremitae*). Furthermore, groups of young men who raid together form age-sets, often taking names associated with their raiding exploits. Although age-sets from different parts of Turkana take unique names, the name of a particularly infamous age-set called *Ng'ing'oroko* from Southern Turkana has become short-hand for any group of young men gathered for the purposes of launching a raid.

The original *Ng'ing'oroko* were known for carrying out large scale raids against Kalenjin and Samburu people to the south and southeast, but they were also known for preying on Turkana households in the areas through which they passed on their way to or from their destinations. Upon arriving in a village, they would launch into a traditional dance; the presence of such large numbers of young armed men was more a point of intimidation than a cause for celebration. Some groups demanded contributions to feed their numbers as they travelled. Many elders complained that the *Ng'ing'oroko* were no longer beholden to their authority, leading to nicknames such as *Ng'imamki*: "those without ears", referring to their inability to hear their elders. When raiding was not possible, some of these groups also took to road banditry and local theft, holding up travellers on the road or stealing animals from other Turkana people for sale at local markets.

However, whereas the road bandit (*erukoit*) and the petty thief (*ekokolan*) are treated with disdain, the raider (*eng'orokot*) is both feared and respected, occupying a place of moral ambiguity. Under official law, raiding is illegal, punishable by heavy fines, and many local communities will punish youth who might bring unwanted interventions by the police or

military. Most people can recall a relative lost to this violence, and many old men can point to scars on their bodies or holes in their bones caused by the bullets of enemy raiders. But despite government interventions, raiding continues. Large raids on the scale of 300 or so men occur occasionally, especially in the south and the southeast against the Samburu, the Tugen and the Pokot. More frequently, young men sneak quietly across the border areas in small groups to seize a few unattended livestock, often without engaging the enemy or firing a shot. These men bring livestock back to their fathers; the ears of the captured animals are serrated (*etebutae*) or halved (*emunyaritae*), and many of them are taken as dance-oxen (*ng'imongin lu edwaritae*) to have songs composed about them.

Ng'ikabucunak: Survivors, Hardship and Inurement to Hunger

> Vignette 3: As we are preparing to depart for the distant bridewealth negotiation, some 30km to the west by foot, Lorukadimoe's wives bring milk-tea. Gradually, the men rise and set off for Urum village, where others will join the travel party. However, Nasikiria – Lorukadimoe's fourth wife – calls two of us to her house: me and Losuban, who is working as a sub-Chief for the national government. Because we are unused to such long trips, we are each served a large plastic pitcher (ejug) of fermented milk from the gourd, along with some boiled sorghum. I have received a great deal of special treatment during my stay, which I have received with dual feelings of appreciation and resentment, absorbing the perks of being a guest while feeling stuck in that outsider role. Nasikiria feeds us without a word, but as she sees my expression, she says that Loteere is far and there is no food, so we should fill our stomachs. "And the others?" I ask. "Won't they become hungry?" But Nasikiria laughs, responding, "Emam, apa kon enaikinitae akoro". Lorukadimoe has become used to hunger (Fieldnotes 13 July 2015).

Almost any initial interaction with an unacquainted *raiya* person comes quickly to the issue of hunger. After an elderly *raiya* woman would approach me in town, pointing to her stomach and tugging at the thin skin of her belly, my urban companions would sometimes apologise, lamenting how Turkana people have become dependent on handouts. In my experience, this may not be dependency so much as a savvy opportunism. There is a long history of wealthy Kenyans and other foreigners arriving in Turkana to distribute relief food, sponsor school fees or construct water pumps for local communities. Their motivations are

unclear, and many *raiya* can comment only on their apparent generosity (*epatana*). If they have brought something to give, best to present yourself readily as a recipient, lest the handouts be exhausted by others. For this reason, when asked about livestock, many *raiya* people will describe the decimation of their herds in the most recent drought, often noting that only a meagre five or ten thin animals remain. Such stories are more likely to gain the sympathy from the *ng'ijoketau* ("those with good hearts").

However, hunger (*akoro*) is a salient part of *raiya* experience, and something to which they must "be accustomed" (*anaikis*). During the dry season when food is scarce and the milk has dried up, people rely on blood meals taken from healthy livestock, small dryland fruits and tubers, wild game, and, where it is available, emergency relief food. People attempt to preserve their livestock, and they do not waste the meat of animals lost to misfortune. If a goat dies of a snake-bite, its blood is drained and the meat under the site of the bite discarded, but the rest is eaten. Similarly, animals that die of diseases that are not communicable to humans, including goat plague (*lomoo*) and pleuropneumonia *(lokwoi*), are generally roasted and fed to the family. In fact, this is one point on which some Turkana people criticize Somalis, who will not eat dead livestock that has not been slaughtered according to *halal* procedures; this is seen as a waste of good food. Meat may even be salvaged from the carcasses of wild game that has been killed and left by predators, so long as the meat had not gone off.

However, while efforts can be taken to reduce hunger, it remains a necessary part of the daily experience of most herders. To be a survivor is not only to be resourceful, but to be tough and at times stoic, capable of persisting amidst scarcity. In the remote cattle camps, far from the nearest settlement, one does not have recourse to a vast inventory of tools and resources. Plants and other foraged materials– the conventional topics of ethno-scientific study – can

provide only limited workarounds, and survival often requires making do "just like that" (*kong'ina*), as one finds him or herself and with the paltry handful of goods on hand.

Raiya people are inured to scarcity from a young age. Children and youth take their meals – usually consisting of milk in the wet season, sorghum after the harvest, and whatever is available in the dry season – before departing with the herds in the early morning, and they do not eat again until returning in the evening. It is common for herders to go 12 hours or more between meals, and there is little to eat while herding except small forest fruits. In times of scarcity, people may eat only once per day and sleep hungry. The primary way of coping with the unavoidable experience with hunger is simply to "get used to it" (*tanaik*). *Enaikis* is a polyvalent term that is most easily translated as "adjustment" or "getting used to," in the sense of becoming accustomed to the heat, to a new pair of shoes, or to a new lifestyle. I often heard this term in reference to myself as I was adjusting to life with in Urum. When my new tire shoes rubbed my feet raw for the first two weeks that I wore them, "my feet had not yet adjusted" (*eringa nyenaikinete ng'akajen*). When people offered me water from the local hand-dug wells, they would ask if I had adjusted to the water (*enaikini iyong ngakipi a?)*, or if I needed to treat it with the foul-smelling chlorine "medicine" (*WaterGuard*) that is sold in town.

Turkana herders are renowned for their physical resilience, withstanding hunger, thirst and the intense sun during long days with the livestock. As Nasikiria explained to me, most *raiya* men are described as being "accustomed to hunger" (*enaikinete akoro*), having spent portions of their lives on remote satellite camps during the dry season, relying only on the blood and limited milk of their livestock for food. There are few reliable roads and no public transport in the deep rurals, so travel is by foot, and men regularly undertake long journeys to escort animals between homesteads and camps, to attend social events, or to carry information to

distant associates. Despite their age, many of the elderly men can still keep a quick pace over long journeys.[10] Families may live as far as 20km from the nearest water source, entailing a significant return journey every 2-3 days to water the animals.

Beyond silent inurement to the austerity of pastoral life, *enaikis* also manifests in the moral norms around food sharing. In a place where the dry seasons bring extreme scarcity, the allocation of food is of supreme importance, and the warning that "it is bad to eat among witches" – a reference to eating in front of hungry people, and who may become jealous and curse your food – indicates the importance of sharing to prevent jealousy within the community. The hunger that inevitably accompanies the dry season brings ill will and anti-social behaviour. Upon encountering a taciturn group, a passer-by might ask, "Why are you all so silent? Is everyone here eaten by hunger?" Such people are to be pitied, but they are also feared, for hungry people may become incensed and curse the food eaten by others. People should avoid such scenarios by demonstrating generosity when they are able. A host will often "go without" (*eronit*) while his guests eat, a gesture of public abstention from food that indicates he has skipped a meal to feed the others. The verb root suggests not only abstention but scarcity, as it is also used to say that the livestock "go without water" (*eronito*) when the wells provide less water during the dry season. To go hungry while others eat is a

[10] Physical fortitude and capacity for trekking was emphasized in colonial-era stereotypes of Turkana people, and pastoralists more generally. In the early years when the British were attempting to pacify the Turkana people and establish an administration, Major H. Rayne, who led several punitive expeditions against Turkana raiders, described his impression of the Turkana in a contribution to the *Journal of African Society*: "A stout marcher, he thinks nothing of walking fifty or sixty miles in one day" (1918: 260). This endurance was a threat to the colonial administration, whose militias were easily overtaken by quick-footed Turkana warriors in the desert heat. But it was also a potential resource, and Rayne speculated that the Turkana man would, "when he settles down, provide some of the finest material for our native army, so necessary for the preservation of law and order on our wild East African frontier" (ibid: 260).

form of generosity (*epatana*) and virtuosity, but to do so, one must be able to endure hunger, or as it is more commonly stated, "to sleep just as you are" (*toper kong'ina*).

While feeding others may require a man to forego food, there is no moral shame in the act of eating *per se*. Riesman (1977) describes such proscriptions among the Jelgobe Fulani in West Africa, where pastoralist men abstain from eating or drinking in public, which their norms for honourable behaviour (*pulaaku*) depict as shameful needs to which no free man should be enslaved. But what I am describing among *raiya* people is not shame about eating; rather, people praise the ability to survive despite the undesirable hardships like hunger. If a person has food, his or her companions may request and even beg for a share, and foods heavy in fat are especially preferred because they quickly "rub out" hunger (*topwatar*). Many speak fondly of *Amorumoru*, a greasy dish of mutton preserved in its own fat that can be stored for up to a month in an *ebule*, an airtight wooden container with a cover of stretched skin. The dish can be sweetened with the crushed fruits of the *eng'omo* and *ekalale* trees; two heaping spoons of this dish is enough to satisfy a hungry herder upon his return from the grazelands. Eating is a public activity and a cause for celebration when it is plentiful. Some people plant sorghum along the rivers just before the onset of the annual rains, and the harvest is celebrated by *akimomwar*, a community dance to rejoice in the availability of food. Similarly, the month of *Losuban* (approximately July, near the end of the rainy season) is the time of plenty when people engage in wedding ceremonies and other festivities.

Furthermore, beyond moral norms, many *raiya* call attention to their toughness, conveying bravado in their journeys, hunger, and suffering. During conversations about the explicit meaning of "*raiya*", rural men often told me that they don't prefer modern comforts and urban luxuries, because these things are not suited to them (*nyeyokinitae*). Indeed, many of the features of *raiya* life that townspeople see as hardship – or even a threat to survival – are

described with pride by *raiya* themselves. Herders are accustomed to a diet consisting largely of fresh and fermented milk (*ng'akile* and *ng'akibok*), seasonally available sorghum (*ng'iumwa*) and maize (*epepei*), occasional meat (*akiring*), and during the dry season, blood drunk alone (*ng'akot*) or mixed with a small amount of milk (*nacarakan*). Ground maize flour (*epoco*) and beans (*emaragae*) have become increasingly common staples due to the provision of emergency food aid and the spread of small rural shops run out of people's homes. From the perspective of town, this is a frugal, tasteless diet deficient in vegetables and grains. But *raiya* men say they prefer their foods, not because they are necessarily better than the rice, chapatti, vegetables and pastas, eaten in town, but because these foods "are appropriate for" (*eyokinitae*) the *raiya*. Of course, such statements are often contradicted in practice, as *raiya* people do eat these foods when they visit relatives in town. But claiming that one disdains the "foods of outsiders" (*akimuj a ng'imoe*) is part of the performance of *raiya*, an expression of the ascetic sensibilities by which *raiya* people are distinguished from their urban, educated counterparts.

Similarly, many *raiya* claim that the cloth is the suitable garb for a herder, rejecting trousers (*along'*) and shorts (*esirual*) both because "they have not become accustomed to them" (*nyenaikinete keci esirual*) and because "they do not suit *raiya* people" (*nyeyokinitae ng'iraiya*). Logiriarieng'an maintained a similar adherence to the cloth. He often requested new clothes when I was travelling to town, including colourfully patterned shirts, but he was adamant that he would not wear shorts. If I purchased shorts, he explained, he would simply "throw them out" (*kicaka*).

These depictions may seem to suggest conservative adherence to long-held customs and habits. However, in the following section, I describe how the supposedly 'traditional' aspects

of *raiya* performance reference – sometimes playfully – the urban styles against which they distinguish themselves.

Stylistic "Play" and Citing the Centre

The archival personas described above are the unwritten scripts of *raiya* performance, enacted in the gestures, styles, and dispositions that people present in their everyday activities. Insofar as these figures refer to a collective imaginary of the pastoral archive, as well as the distinction between things of Turkana (*a Ng'iturkana*) and things of outsiders (*a ng'imoe*), they could be considered 'traditional'. However, this section describes how this notion of *tradition* indicates not conservative adherence to the past but a responsive foil to contemporary changes in the Turkana landscape, including the growth of a non-pastoral urban population.

Resourcefulness is an important aspect of the wit that *raiya* people describe among themselves. Both men and women have extensive knowledge of local plants and their uses, many of which are useful in remote places that are far from village markets and medical services. Juice from the stem of the *ekamong'o* plant can be used to treat surface wounds and blisters. The roots of *egung* can be ground, mixed with milk fat, and drunk as a purgative. Various fruits (e.g. *alam, angomo*, *ng'akalalio*, *ng'acokio*) can be consumed from the branch, and others (e.g. *alamac, abei*) become edible after boiling. However, some plants have fallen into disfavour. An aqueous extraction of roots of the *elima* tree are widely known to repel small parasites when spread on an animal's body. But few people with whom I have spoken have ever actually used it, preferring instead the various store-bought tick repellents known collectively as *adip* (referring to chemical "dips" provided during veterinary outreach). Similarly, the fruits of the *ekuore* plant can be crushed and used as a soap to wash clothing,

but almost everyone prefers to use detergent of the regional *Omo* brand, which can be purchased cheaply and in small quantities in town.

When I learned that these ethnobotanical practices had been abandoned, I initially inferred a departure from *raiya* practices and a sign of modernization. Indeed, these plants are considered to be *a Ng'iturkana* ("of Turkana"), whereas bottled veterinary medicines, manufactured soaps, and other store-bought products are *a ng'imoe* ("of the outsiders"). Similarly, Tureti takes the replacement of customary Turkana items in Kakuma as a sign of cultural disintegration:

> The material culture that comprised ornaments, body covers, utensils and containers most of which were made of wood, skins and iron has been replaced by jewellery and clothing, household goods (especially those given by refugee assistance programmes to the refugees) bought from refugee community. What this leaves behind is a disintegrated community where the social norms and values that held them together have been eroded. (Tureti 2003: 115)

However, to be *raiya* is not to adhere conservatively to unchanging traditions and customary technologies. *Raiya* people eclectically incorporate an array of items into their wardrobes and accessories, from discarded trash to repurposed scraps can be put to practical ends. If a man has managed to procure a small amount of sugar during their last visit to the main homestead, they can boil the bark of the *ekuyen* tree to make tea. This plant is recognized as a traditional herbal remedy for upset stomachs, and it is also a widely available alternative for store-bought tea leaves, the latter of which are sometimes referred to as "tea of outsiders" (*emejen a ng'imoe*). However, even if the bark of the *ekuyen* tree allows them to make tea without tea leaves, they still require a fire-resistant vessel to boil water. Some boys possess a discarded metal can that can be filled with water and placed directly on the fire like a kettle. Of course, discarded aluminium and tin cans, often gathered at the roadside or in village trash heaps, are not part of the repertoire of customary Turkana implements. But the can is a highly portable,

Table 7. Traditional Turkana Implements and Contemporary Alternatives

Object	**Traditional Description**	***Raiya "*Innovations"**
Akorora	Leather Write-knife Cover	Strips of the rubber that cover electrical wiring, cut and fashioned with small bits of metal as clamps
Abule	Wooden Drinking Vessel	Cheap plastic cups, discarded cooking oil containers, and even plastic bags with a small hole through which to suck the contents
Ajemu	Sleeping Skin	An old convas food sack (*akalakal*), or multiple smaller sacks stitched together
Akuma	Snuff-box, usually of cow horn	Discarded plastic cosmetic containers

freely acquired alternative to a steel cooking pot, which is too heavy to carry about as the cattle camp moves from place to place.

An outside observer might take the use of such items as a sign of poverty, or the loss of "traditional" culture. But I spoke about these observations with urban dwellers who grew up as herdboys before entering school. Many looked fondly on such resourcefulness, simply exclaiming "These *raiya!*" Indeed, there is little shame in such practical repurposing; in fact, *raiya* people boast of their ability to appropriate resources that would be worthless to them in their intended uses. Several examples of which are provided in Table 7.

During a visit to a homestead outside of Kakuma, I met one *raiya* woman who had incorporated various items into her beads, including an old air freshener and some engine parts from a kerosene generator. When I showed surprise at seeing these objects incorporated into her otherwise "traditional" adornments, she laughed and told me to take a picture (Photo 4). She wasn't certain what all of the items were used for, but she had found them discarded in town and had put them to use for herself. This playful act of appropriation calls to mind the witty incorporation of foreign vocabularies in Uduk:



Photo 4. Items collected from town, woven into a woman's beads. (Credit CR, 2017)

> Uduk-speakers enjoy the sounds of foreign tongues, often adapting elements from them as personal names for their own children… It is stylish and witty to use foreign terms in one's conversation or in naming things. (James 1988: 4)

In another example, a *raiya* man in Lokiriama showed me the blade cover (*akorora*) that he was fashioning for his wrist-knife. Normally, the cover is fashioned from camel skin, but he had procured a strip of the rubber sheathing used to insulate electrical wiring. Splitting it lengthwise, bending it along the curved edge of the circular blade, and securing the ends with clamped bits of wire, he had produced a rubber *akorora* that could last a lifetime. Traditional covers made from skin tend to deteriorate after several years and periodic exposure to water, but this one was impervious. He had taken the strips of wire from the construction site of a small power sub-station just outside the village, which was intended to provide electricity to the new hotel that the County Government was building as a rural getaway for urban professionals. The yet-to-be-built hotel and sub-station were of little interest to the passing herder, but he had taken note of the discarded wiring by the roadside. This anecdotal

experience serves as part of a broader argument that should not be overlooked: mainly, that the association of tradition and *raiya* should not suggest backwardness, for as times change and new material resources enter the Turkana landscape, the *raiya* are there to find new uses.

My point is not to divorce the concepts of *raiya* from Turkana tradition, for in some contexts *raiya* people are expected to adhere to custom (*ng'italio*). Nonetheless, the growing importance of engagements with urbanites, including the village chiefs, has led some of the older, politically active *raiya* to don Western clothing during trips to town. For one, trouser pockets are very useful for storing tobacco, cell phones, and money so that it is not lost or stolen. But moreover, when one is sitting for long periods with urban professionals dressed "like white people" (*ikoni Ng'imusungwi*), they worry about exposing their private parts through the folds of their cloths. It is easy to arrange the cloth to remain discreet when sitting on a traditional stool (*ekicolong*), but this is more difficult when sitting on a chair or "outsiders' stools" (*ekicolong a ng'imoe*).

Whereas *raiya* men must become accustomed to wearing the cloth in town, I was transitioning in the opposite direction during my fieldwork, learning to wear the pastoral cloth. People often stopped to show me how to adjust my cloth, sometimes even intervening to do it for me. To some degree, this was a matter of competency: I needed to learn how to tie the cloth tautly around my waist (*tolid*), tightly securing the folded cloth about my midriff while keeping the corners neatly aligned. Onlookers would scoff at a loosely or messily folded *shuka*, which looks more like a woman's skirt than a man's clothing. In the cool morning air, men wear the cloth draped over one shoulder (*toruwae*), but I was constantly readjusting my cloth to keep it from falling.

The apparent difference between my attempts to wear the cloth and *raiya* men wearing shorts is that my challenge was a matter of skill whereas theirs was a matter of comfort. The main

complaint about shorts and trousers is that they seem confining and even unhygienic, as opposed to the openness of a cloth wrap. But for me, the cloth was a point of frustration; it constantly required readjustment and would often become snagged on thorns as I walked with the herds. Sometimes, those accompanying me would just tie the corners of the cloth over my shoulder so that it would stay up. However, in both cases, whether learning to wear the cloth or overcoming discomfort with shorts, the process of adjusting to a new style was described as *enaikis* or "getting used to" a new form of clothing.

As more *raiya* men don shorts during their trips into town, some onlookers interpret this development as a sign of creeping modernity, acculturation, or a loss of tradition. However, when Amoni, one of Lorukadimoe's in-laws, requested that I bring him a new pair of shorts, I asked if this would make him less *raiya*. He responded that he could wear the shorts when he went to town to sell goats, where he would also deploy his developing language skills in Swahili to get a good price for the goats. But when he returned to the rural reserve, he would once again don his cloth and walk with the animals. Perhaps it is not that modernity has crept into the *raiya* periphery, but that the *raiya* people are socially adept enough to observe others, to assimilate their behaviours, and thereby to cross social boundaries.

Discussion: Style and Belonging

As described in the preceding chapter, there is a popular narrative in Turkana of opposition to and marginalization by outsiders. Ardener wrote of this perception as a common feature of remote communities, one side of the "double specification" that consists of both outsiders' gaze and insider's awareness of themselves as the object of that gaze. He furthermore noted that people in remote areas generally exhibit a heightened sense of individuality, as conveyed through eccentric norms of behaviour or style. He attributes this individuality to remote communities' sense of vulnerability to the outside world, and the gaze that strangers cast

during their visits: “those so defined [as remote] are intermittently conscious of the defining processes of others that might absorb them. That is why they are the very crucibles of the creation of identity” (Ardener 1987: 532). These highly specific forms of behaviour can inculcate a heightened sensitivity to both belonging and exclusion, making strangers stand out and guarding the sense of inclusion felt by “native” insiders.

Raiya men prefer foods associated with rural lifestyles and pastoral livelihoods, as well as clothing styles with which they are familiar. Such cases of apparent cultural conservativism recall early debates about the ability of people – especially the rural Africans who were the focus of early anthropologists – to shift between different cultural contexts. Challenging old essentialist ideas about the primordial tendencies of traditional Africans, anthropologists associated with the Rhodes Livingstone Institute described culture more like a costume that people can don and discard as suits the contexts in which they find themselves. William Watson writes that the behaviours learned in urban areas could “drop off like an old coat” when an African migrant returns home to the rural family farm.

However, revisiting these debates, James Ferguson suggests that people can indeed shift between different styles – such as urban and rural or local and cosmopolitan – but if they acquire the ability to perform those styles competently. Ferguson’s insights recognise that while tribal identity is not natural or primordial, it may seem that way due to the difficulty of altering identity performance convincingly. In his words, “the stylistic implications of wearing a sport coat are not a simple matter of whether or not one wears it but of how one wears it” (1999: 98). The term *enaikis* suggests a similar performative competency, in which habit can reinforce social boundaries and limit stylistic flexibility, as suggested by *raiya* men’s complaints about the discomfort of wearing shorts.

The necessity of wearing clothes in a skilled manner make stylistic flexibility difficult to achieve, but this is the very reason that stylistic variation is useful for marking social boundaries. Moreover, the time required to cultivate a style may foster a habitual or sentimental attachment to that style. Turton distinguishes the *instrumental* aspects of ethnic identity – the uses to which it is put for economic or political purposes – from the *symbolic* aspects, that is, the seemingly primordial basis of tribal identity. Analysis must take account of both, since ethnicity is almost always expressed with some political or material intention, yet the very effectiveness of such instrumental expressions depends on it being seen as natural by those who make claims in its name (Turton 1997: 82). Similarly, the difficulties and discomforts of switching styles may make social groups *feel* natural. The next chapter provides further insight into the role of skill as a basis for belonging, describing how a *raiya* upbringing endows children with a "sensory education" (Ingold 2000: 21) that is different from the formal education of their school-going peers.

CHAPTER 6: *RAIYA* AS ENSKILMENT

Loregae looked badly out of sorts. One of his brothers had lent him an *ekicolong*, a small wooden stool used as a seat during the day and a headrest at night, to carry for the wedding celebration. Within the first hour of the trek, he had already lost it, forgetting it in a river bed where he'd stopped for a break. Like some of his brothers, Loregae was also given a task: to carry the plastic sachets of off-brand spirits that would be enjoyed at the event. They were wrapped within the sheet that he wore around his waist, one of many ways that the useful Maasai cloth can be used as a tool. But Loregae, unaccustomed to dressing in *raiya* clothing, struggled to keep his bundle from unravelling. He occasionally dropped the sachets on the path, to muffled jeers from his brothers. On one occasion, the embarrassed boy was assisted by his father, who quietly helped him to wrap the load properly.

Loregae is the son of one of Lorukadimoe's brothers. When I met him, he'd been studying for two years at Namoruputh Secondary School, about halfway along the road between Urum and Lodwar. I met him when he came home to attend an uncle's wedding. We were on our way to the wedding, which would take place at the homestead of the bride's father, 10 kilometres west of Urum village. Whereas his brothers wore brightly patterned clothes iconic of East Africa's pastoralists, Loregae came dressed in a plain blue bedsheet from his dormitory. His brothers wore the tough tire sandals preferred by herders, but Loregae wore his black school shoes. At one point, I stopped to ask him how he was managing. He was quick to emphasise that he was a student, not a *raiya*, and that this life did not suit him. He was learning many things about the wider world at school, and the rural 'reserve' was no longer his place. His brothers could continue with this traditional lifestyle, but after graduating, Loregae would be pursuing a job in town.

Many *raiya* parents worry that children sent to school will "forget their families" (*emuryakinete sua*). Indeed, many children who make it as far as secondary school find that, upon returning home to visit their families, they have forgotten how to do simple tasks that their siblings carry out with ease. They may lose their ability to perform competently, such that they look and feel 'out of place'. Others develop new sensibilities and lifestyle preferences, as suggested by Loregae's aspiration for an urban life.

As discussed in Chapter 5, *raiya* entails particular stylistic and performative modes through which people embody and express their sense of difference from the expanding urban world of which they are on the fringe. *Raiya* is therefore the basis upon which people of the periphery (*ng'itunga a nakalipatan*) distinguish themselves from those who live "in town" (*lotau*) or "with the government" (*narek*). This chapter considers how this sense of belonging to or exclusion from the *raiya* community develops between siblings who pursue different life trajectories, a distinction that often begins with primary school. Most *raiya* parents send a few children to school while others remain with their parents to tend the herd. In economic terms, this is a form of livelihood diversification for the family, and many parents intend for their children to help one another (*ing'arakinete ng'ikaitotoe*) through their respective livelihood activities in the future. But the negative consequences, as demonstrated by Loregae's estrangement to his rural home, can inhibit cooperative sentiments.

I begin in the first section by explaining how the sense of difference conveyed by the notion of *raiya* emerges from the institution of formal education. On the one hand, splitting the children between school and herding – such that some pursue livelihoods in the urban economy while others tend to the family herd – emerges as a strategic attempt to diversify the family's livelihood options and diversify risk. But on the other hand, many of those who attend school become estranged from their family homes, and parents express concern that

enrolled children will "forget them," become embarrassed to go home, or reject the herd (*tong'er ng'ibaren*). In the second section, I consider the ways that *raiya* sensibilities arise through children's attunement to the homestead, a process of *enskilment* and *sensory education* of which primary school pupils are deprived. From this perspective, a *raiya* upbringing does not leave children uneducated (the conclusion drawn by advocates of universal enrolment) but differently educated, which in turn becomes a basis for the performative expressions of difference and distinctions described in Chapter 5. Finally, the third section discusses some of the ways that *raiya* knowledge is portrayed, which expresses not only a grasp of the "traditional" knowledge required for pastoral livelihoods, but a keen ability to keep pace with their educated counterparts and the urban world that has become part of their landscape.

Formal Schooling and Estrangement

During May 2015, hoping to take a broad survey of Loima sub-County before delving into a local field site, I volunteered with a community-based organisation researching enrolment and retention in schools across the constituency. We made four multi-day excursions to collect data, visiting 56 primary and secondary schools located across more than 7,700 square kilometres. My task was to conduct qualitative interviews and focus groups at 10 of these schools, with the aim of identifying "barriers to enrolment". However, I was aware that universal enrolment was a state objective and did not reflect the perspectives of many parents. Unwilling to write off their concerns as "cultural barriers" (Turkana County Government 2013:181), I initiated conversations around a more open-ended array of questions.

Sedentary families provided an account of the financial barriers to education that is familiar to much of sub-Saharan Africa. Parents hoped to send their children to school and spoke

highly of the opportunities that an education could offer. But they were often forced to retain children at home due to lack of money for uniforms, books and other supplies; to help with businesses, farming, and other income generating activities; or to care for elderly relatives.

Pastoral families, on the other hand, expressed greater ambivalence about education. When asked what makes them *raiya*, many people – including those who identify as *raiya* themselves – refer first to their lack of schooling. Some have attended primary school when they were young, enrolled by their parents in times of hardship so that they would be able to eat, but they left when conditions improved, and they were again needed at home. Others have never been inside a school. Most are unconcerned about what students learn: these are not the concerns of herders. One *raiya* boy told me that he doesn't see any point in education; his father's animals will give him everything he needs to find a wife, have children, and pursue a life of his own. Even parents who send their children to school often show little interest in *what* their children are learning. For one, the lack of qualified teachers in Turkana means that many schools employ instructors from outside, especially Western Kenya. These teachers cannot speak *Ng'aturkana*, and so their relationships with parents are limited to occasional mediated conversations via the local chief. But even when teachers speak *Ng'aturkana*, they complain that there is little interest among *raiya* parents, and it is not uncommon for parents to gather their children and migrate without informing anyone at the school.

On the one hand, parents recognize the potential value that educated children may bring to their families, especially during droughts or livestock epidemics. Whereas the early schools in Turkana were attended primarily by the children of destitute herders forced to settle in villages and famine relief camps, many pastoral families enrol their children strategically to

access the opportunities of the urban economy.[1] On the other hand, herd management requires a division of labour among many people, such that universal education would make pastoralism untenable. Boys manage the various herds into which livestock are divided, and girls are responsible for various tasks – either with their mothers on the homestead or sometimes with their brothers in the satellite camps – preparing food, digging wells, milking the animals, and maintaining the camp. Tasks are gendered, although girls sometimes accompany the herd if there aren't enough boys to watch all the animals. Therefore, most *raiya* parents must retain some of their children *lobaren* ("with the animals"). There are homesteads in the remote borderlands in which no children are at school – Lorukadimoe and his 6 wives have over 30 children, and only one boy has attended school – but in most pastoral families, "the children are split" (*etyekitae ng'ide*).

Some families split their children half and half, while those with larger herds farther from cities and schools may send only a handful of children to school. As shown in Figure 5 above, the proportion of unenrolled school-aged children is much higher in the remote wards of Loima, Lokiriama, and Kotaruk, compared with those living in Turkwel Ward, which is closest to Lodwar town and where herd sizes are generally more limited. Often the oldest boy remains with the animals, so that he can serve as an authority figure in managing herd resources after the death of his father. Many parents consider their children's relative aptitudes, with the strong children remaining on the homestead while their shorter or less physically adept siblings go to school. Ideally, children should assent to whichever role their parents assign them, although some parents spoke of stubborn children who protest until they

[1] Enrolment still increases during periods of drought and scarcity, when free school feeding programmes can be used to reduce the number of mouths to feed on the homestead.

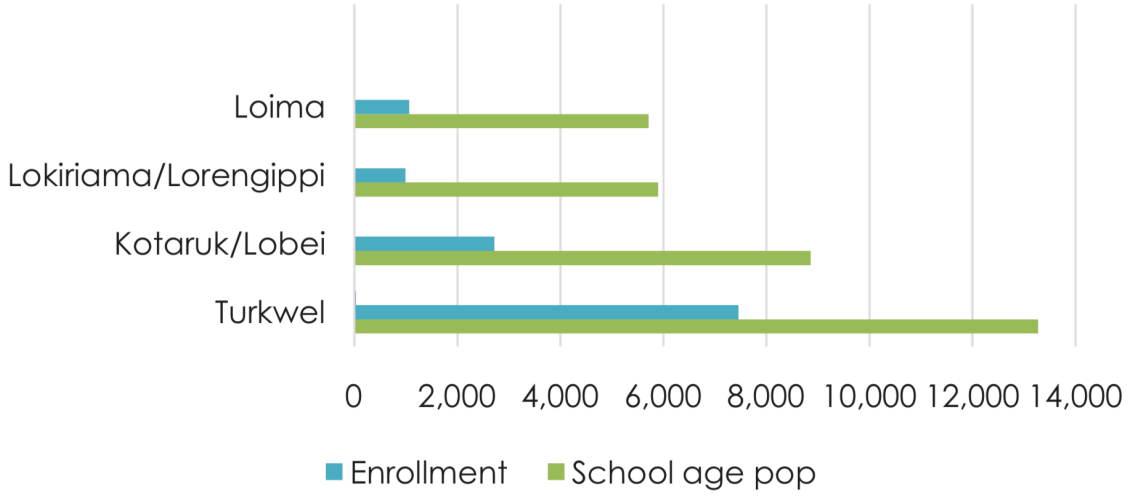


Figure 5. Primary School Enrolment by Ward Across Loima sub-County, 2014.
Copied from an unpublished research report compiled by the Centre for Advocacy, Relief and Development, based in Lodwar, which also collected the data.

get their way.[2] Boys unhappy as herders sometimes run away to stay with relatives in town, who might provide accommodation and enrol them in school.

However, it is not only *raiya* children who express envy toward their school-bound siblings. Discontent occurs on both sides. One girl unhappy at school described how she refused to do her assignments until her parents eventually brought her back home. And many herdboys describe satisfaction with their lives. Ekasikouit, a young boy who tends his father's goats near Loroo, has never attended school, and as he explains, he doesn't see the point. He takes

[2] Aside from a desire to attend school, some young men also cited harsh punishments – including beatings by their fathers or foster parents – among their reasons for leaving herding behind. However, as factors for "dropping out" of pastoral life, it is important to distinguish between harsh lifestyles (which is a universal feature of being *raiya*) and the harshness of corporal punishment (which is not). Corporal punishment features in many of the personal narratives of young herders, and *raiya* fathers are sometimes described as tough disciplinarians, who care more about their livestock than their families. However, despite the stereotypes, physical abuse is neither intrinsic nor unique to pastoralism. The use and extent of corporeal punishment among herders varies from parent to parent, and it also occurs within urban families and in primary and secondary schools. Moreover, such stereotypes do not reflect the father-son relationships among many of the families with whom I stayed. While cases of abuse do occur and warrant intervention, many children recognise that their parents punish them "to teach" (*akitatam*) rather than "to abuse" (*abolyare*).

pride in the fact that he knows so many things about animals: how to herd, how to provide veterinary care (e.g. *akicum*). He acknowledges that being *raiya* entails a certain ignorance (*nyayeni*) about education and life in town, but those out in the field have sharp minds and master what they know.

For the family, the aim of dividing children is not to divide the family, but to create the conditions for children to access multiple forms of wealth and to "help each other" (*eng'arakinete ng'ide*). This is most clearly communicated in a chanted song (*eeios*) by Eiton, a popular singer and songwriter in Turkana.

Kisicher ngatameta nakon ng'una	Divide these, your thoughts
Toyereta moi ngide kon kidong'o	So that the children survive tomorrow
Erono ibore ichunakina iyong'o	It is bad to throw it all into one thing
Ewala wapei	It is dawn, and still just the one thing
Aworiu mododo	Now the sun has finished completely
Iwalete ngirwa egelagala nyidong'o	New days are dawning
Anukiro igeno iyong'o muuu	On what do you rely now?
Tolimo tolimok ngikatung'a	Go speak, tell my people
Ngatuk ibore daang'uu	All of these things are cattle
Elalak ng'ikesomak lu eyerete ekalam	Many are the pupils who live by the pen!
Tolimo, Tolimo kiiraasi	Go speak, speak and listen
Ngatuk ibore daang'uu	All of these things are cattle
Tobu ipei lobaren ng'iche losukul a	One with the animals, others to school
Tolimo tolimok ngikatung'a	Go speak, tell my people
Ngatuk ibore daang'uu	All of these things are cattle

As when people sing together at weddings or meat feasts, the song begins with the low hum of men harmonising their vocals, and most of the song alternates between Eiton's solo performance of the short verses and the collective voices repeating the refrain. Although Eiton's career as a singer has largely been for the Catholic Church, much of his music is composed to resonate with the broader community in Turkana, using familiar styles and

formats. The refrain argues against the idea that formal schooling and livestock herding are at odds. Instead, “it is bad to throw it all into one thing” (livestock), and when parents keep some children with the livestock and send others to pursue other opportunities through education, “these things are all cattle”. Children in their different career trajectories will come together to contribute to the herd, upon which the family collectively relies.

In an arrangement of delayed reciprocity, *raiya* children care for animals that sustain their siblings while they study, either as a direct source of food products or by selling them for cash. Then, when students get jobs, they can support their *raiya* siblings with cash, sustaining the rural homesteads during periods of drought when livestock are not producing milk and many are dying off. Many parents spoke hopefully of their school-bound children’s future job prospects, often invoking the image of a child bringing a vehicle laden with food back to the homestead. One elderly woman described how her eldest daughter, a secondary school graduate with a job in the County Government, had arrived unexpected one day in a vehicle loaded with corn and 20,000 Kenyan shillings (about 70 GBP) for her mother and uncle. The woman described how she was brought to tears of happiness, and the whole village saw what her daughter had done for her. Undoubtedly, such scenes must have a powerful influence on parents’ decisions about enrolling their children, regardless of the fact that only a minority of graduates actually obtain well-paid jobs.

However, many parents with whom I spoke also expressed concerns that educated children would “forget us” (*emuryakinete sua*), making a life in town and refusing to return to their rural families. Like Loregae, they might take on a modern perspective, looking back on their former lifestyles with shame. With an independent source of income in town, they could disregard the authority of their parents and refuse to contribute to their siblings. Betti heard similar sentiments during her fieldwork in Lodwar: “The town children are not respectful.

They don't do what they are asked, while the *raya* do it on the spot" (quoted in Betti 2010: 79). And Turkana is not alone in this respect. A study on education for nomadic communities across Kenya's arid northern counties reports similar concerns from Gabra, Boran and Somali parents: that children would "lose touch with the animals" and that they would be taught that "pastoralism is backward" (Birch et al. 2010: 17). Moreover, Turkana parents are concerned that educated girls might move to town and pursue a Christian wedding (*harusi*) rather than bringing bride-wealth (*akuuta*) and affinal alliances to their families. This concern is echoed across the border among Karimojong parents (Stites et al. 2014: 32).

State policies have long cast mobile people as a challenge for education, as well as a problem to fix through education. While mobile schools and boarding facilities make it possible to extend education services to non-sedentary populations (Dyer 2013), formal schooling has often been deployed as an instrument of sedentarisation and control (Clark 2007; Rasmussen 2000). Perhaps as a result, "education programmes appear to oppose nomadic culture at all levels" (Krätli 2001b: 1). On one research visit to interview a head teacher in her office, I saw a SWOT analysis listing the school's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, displayed on large poster-board behind the teacher's desk. The first bullet point under Threats was a single word: 'pastoralism'. When anti-pastoralist sentiment is so explicit, it is easy to see why parents may be wary of enrolling their children.

In many ways, the rejection of pastoralism is perceptible in that the visual signs of *raiya* life are removed from students' bodies when they enrol in primary school and replaced with standardised school uniforms. Uniforms are worn in schools across Kenya, but in places where customary dress is intimately implicated in local social institutions, the uniform takes on an added significance. The shepherd's cloth (*shuka*), which designates its wearer's role tending livestock, must be discarded in exchange for trousers. Similarly, beads

(*ng'akoromwa*) implicitly identify a girl's future bridewealth marriage, when she will bring her beads to the homestead of her husband and distribute them among her new co-wives. Mothers often give their young daughters a few strands of beads to wear as children, but girls have been dissuaded from wearing beads at school, in some cases by formal proscription. While most of the teachers with whom I spoke deny sending girls home for this reason, they generally agreed that wearing beads was directly at odds with the welfare of their education. In their view, a girl presented as candidate for marriage is more likely to be pulled from school by her parents and sent away in exchange for bride-wealth.

Moreover, because students are encouraged to aspire toward professional jobs and cosmopolitan lifestyles, a return to the *raiya* lifestyle in the rural reserve is cast as a failure. This casting of pastoral livelihoods as a failure affects students' views toward those who remain with the animals. *Raiya* children often complain that their educated siblings sometimes put on an air of superiority when they return home, exhibiting a form of pretence or ostentation called *esiei*. When someone complains that about his or her sibling that "*esiekikinit ngesi*!", they mean that they are acting strangely, showing off, and behaving in a way that does not fit them.

This antagonistic relationship with education is not unique to pastoralists and has been a prominent concern for rural families across sub-Saharan Africa. Among Tonga students in post-Independence Zambia, Elizabeth Colson and Thayer Scudder described how "schools have inculcated western ideals of marriage", concentrating graduates' attention on the nuclear household rather than the extended family or lineage (Scudder & Colson 1980). From the earliest missionary interventions, schools were complicit in converting children to Christianity as well as the broader visions of the incoming colonial administrations. In Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *The River Between*, a new missionary centre and school is at the centre of the

prophet Chege's warnings of a coming invasion by the White men. The mysterious potency of missionary education is a recurring theme in the characters' personal reflections. One Christian convert attempting to bring the Church to his rural community describes how "he learnt to read and write. The new faith worked in him till it came to possess him wholly. He renounced his tribe's magic, power and ritual" (wa Thiong'o 1965: 29). However, while many educated children do come to reject tradition outright, their relationship to their families and former lives is often more ambiguous. In a survey undertaken among rural Tanzanian students and school leavers in the late-1960s:

> The strongest specific effect of eight years of primary education thus was that it led to an estrangement from the traditional values, from social institutions such as, for example, the bride service, dance societies, and especially *kisumba* [cooperative farming associations]. (Kaayk 1976: 153)

This idea of *estrangement* is useful here. Rather than an outright and explicit rejection of tradition, estrangement entails a more gradual process by which new values and sensibilities alter one's relationship with old ones. Previously familiar modes of thinking, acting, and socialising come to feel strange. Moreover, estrangement conveys how people come to feel strange in their former homes and communities. Rather than an explicit rejection of traditional life, estrangement entails an experience of disconnection and dissonance, like the sense out-of-place-ness described earlier. This experiential dimension may explain some of education's potency, its almost inexorable influence on students' relationship to their communities. In *The River Between*, Chege sends his son Waiyaki to attend the missionary school to learn about the White colonisers and return equipped to lead a resistance. Despite his commitment to this goal, Waiyaki experiences a mysterious alienation from social life upon his visits back home. At school, "however much he resisted it, he could not help gathering and absorbing ideas and notions that prevented him from responding spontaneously to these dances and celebrations" (wa Thiong'o 1965: 39). School left Waiyaki feeling

estranged upon return home, both through what it conveyed to him – the "ideas and notions" that he absorbed – and what it removed him from, his rural community.

Many school educated children speak of a similar sense of removal from their pastoral homes. As with Loregae, this is sometimes dramatic, creating negative sentiments and potentially damaging the prospects of future cooperativity with *raiya* siblings. In other cases, the sense of removal is subtler. Peter, a young man I met in town, grew up herding animals. However, his father eventually moved to another county in Kenya to work for a wage, and Peter was enrolled in school. After his father's death due to illness, Peter and his family returned to Lodwar, where he is attempting to find work while his mother manages a small farm plot along the Turkwel river. Some of his *raiya* relatives sometimes come to town to help with the cultivation, but Peter no longer feels capable of livestock care. He explains that this is normal, and that he is on a different path from his *raiya* kin, but he also conveyed a nostalgia for life on "the Reserve", and a respect for his family members who tend their herds there.

Whether emphasis is on rejecting pastoralism or simply embracing an alternative but complementary life trajectory, estrangement may best summarise the sentiments of secondary school students who return home to find that they have changed. It is not merely that they have been inculcated with a new set of values that has corrupted or jettisoned the old ones. School children are removed from the milieu within which their siblings are developing different sensibilities. The next section turns to the cultivation of *raiya* sensibilities through young people's upbringing with the herd, or what might be called – in the comparison to formal schooling – a pastoral education.

Raiya Upbringing as a Sensory Education

People often define *raiya* negatively, as that which *raiya* people lack relative to educated, ostensibly "modern" people in town. The stereotype of pastoralist children as backward, conservative and ignorant neglects the lifelong learning required of a competent herder. The Kenyan government's drive for universal education in Turkana stands on the premise that pastoralism leaves children intellectually underdeveloped. From the perspective of policy-makers, "Whatever is learned throughout formal education is seen as a bonus, a better-than-nothing, an opportunity to learn which is additional rather than alternative to the knowledge or skills of out-of-school children" (Krätli 2001b: 22). But pastoral livelihoods entail a highly specialized and constantly evolving repertoire of knowledge, and to be *raiya* is not simply to stand in a field with goats while your siblings go to school. Rather than a "lack of education", this section describes the skills and sensibilities developed through a *raiya* childhood, but left uncultivated in those who go away for formal education in schools.

For a phenomenological understanding of the learning undergone by children who grow up *lobaren* ("with the animals"), I draw on the concept of *enskilment*. Ingold (2000: 36-37) introduces the term as an alternative to *enculturation* in an attempt to understand how people acquire the knowledge to carry out livelihoods such as hunting or foraging. Enculturation implies a cognitive model of learning focused on cultural knowledge, of the explicit sort that an anthropologist could elicit and record in a notebook, which is passed through the minds of subsequent generations. Enskilment, on the other hand, is defined as "the embodiment of capacities of awareness and response by environmentally situated agents" (2000: 5). Rather than abstract knowledge acquired through reading or didactic pedagogy, enskilment refers to the development of practical know-how, skills, and capabilities.

Importantly, skills are not possessed by a self-contained individual – the unit most often studied by conventional evolutionary theory – but by an "environmentally-situated agent". This situatedness emphasises the importance of place in the making of skills; as much as a person is constituted through their relations to its surroundings (what Ingold calls the "organism-in-its-environment"), their skills inhere in the fine-tuning of the ways that it engages with those surroundings.

Enskilment is sometimes described as an *attunement* of perception and action through long-term engagements in a particular field of relations. To operate skilfully in a place, we must be responsive to our surroundings; a hunter needs to understand the movements of animals and a herder needs to comprehend changes in weather. Such information is not abstracted from our senses but inherent in our relational involvement in the world (ibid: 213, 357). This is most evident in examples of movement through a landscape:

Wayfinding depends upon the attunement of the traveller's movements in response to the movements, in his or her surroundings, of other people, animals, the wind, celestial bodies, and so on. Where nothing moves there is nothing to which one can respond: at such times – as before a storm, or during an eclipse – the experienced traveller can lose his bearings even in familiar terrain. (Ingold 2000: 242)

This approach to skilled movement challenges what Ingold calls the cartographic allusion, which describes a way of navigating based on translation of abstract information on a map into practically meaningful instructions. But attunement suggests that people glean information from their environment not by mapping it and translating its meaning, but rather through empathising with it. People develop relationships with their surroundings – including other beings with whom they share the environment (e.g. livestock, birds, the thunder), or the less discrete qualities of the surroundings themselves (the forest, the soil, the weather) – and

these relationships grow through modifications of perception (ibid: 106). The feeling of being "in place" that I mentioned earlier could be redefined as an attunement to one's surroundings; moving through an unfamiliar environment to which one is not attuned leaves one feeling "out of place".

Ingold developed his concept of enskilment in the context of circumpolar ethnography among reindeer pastoralists (1980). I argue that certain of their key tenets are equally suitable to describe livelihood knowledge and pastoral learning in Turkana. First, enskilment uses an embodiment framework that emphasises practical rather than abstract knowledge, focusing on processes of learning that remain unavailable to exegesis by the learner. Second, enskilment is useful in that it "situates the practitioner, right from the start, in the context of an active engagement with the constituents of his or her surroundings" (Ingold 2000: 5). Finally, where many forms of learning are steeped in rationalism, enskilment considers the role of affect in people's skilled engagement with the world. Knowledge is not simply a matter of interpreting the world around you, as a source of information, but empathising with it and other beings similarly embedded in it. Enskilment is therefore not limited to technical matters pertaining herd management, but also development of emotional bonds to animals while growing up with them, caring for them, and coming to know them intimately.

Learning to Herd

Labour requirements increase not simply in relation to the size of the herd, but according to the ways that the herd is divided. The family herd may be split into many units (*ng'isipaan*) based on species, maturation, and the availability of vegetation, each requiring at least one person to accompany them at pasture. Most Turkana herds include five species – cattle, camels, goats, sheep, and donkeys – each with its own feeding patterns and preferences for fodder. As a matter of classification, animals are distinguished according to whether they

browse (goats and sheep) or graze (cattle), and then furthermore by maturity and lactation. Ohta (1987: 4) describes in detail the categorisation livestock by species, sex, reproductive ability, and lactation; for example, adult females are differentiated based on whether they have yet been milked. However, while these conceptual distinctions are useful for the purposes of taking attendance to ensure no animals have become lost, livestock are divided for herding in a way that cross-cuts these categories. A key priority is to ensure that there is sufficient milk across all homes and camps, such that lactating animals must be distributed across different locations and herds.

Donkeys and camels are often left to their own devices during the day time, so long as browse is available near the homestead; camels will even make their way to the watering point unaccompanied if they are sent down the correct path in the morning. Camels are only put under the care of a herder when they must seek dry season graze away from the homestead or if there is a significant risk of theft in the area, in which case a rudimentary satellite camp is constructed. But cattle, goats and sheep require more attention and must be accompanied throughout the day. As has long been common across Turkana, households are split for large portions of the year to access different grazing resources. In the area where I was working, most cattle were taken across the international border into Uganda during the dry season to access the highland plains of Loteere.

Table 8 shows the general herd allocation for Loruakdimoe's animals during the dry season in 2016, when the livestock were most dispersed due to the scarcity of grass and browse. In total, there were nine individual herding units during the 2016 dry season. The new-born animals remain behind at the homestead while their mothers are taken to pasture. Six of the herding units required accompaniment throughout the day while browsing and grazing, which

Table 8. Division of Lorukadimoe's Livestock in Dry Season 2016.

Grazing Unit	Livestock Composition	Corral Location	Labour Allocation
Small Stock (Goats and Sheep)			
1a	Infants (*ng'ikale*)	Main Homestead (no grazing)	Toddlers
2	Lactating Adult Females	Main Homestead (taken to graze each day)	1 Boy
3	Non-Lactating Adult Females & Young Males	Nearby Satellite Camp	1 Young Man 1 Boy
4	Remaining Adults	Distant Satellite Camp in Loteere	1 Young Man 2 Boys
Cattle			
1b	Infants (*ng'itaok*)	Main Homestead (no grazing)	Women
5	Lactating Adult Females & Young Males	Main Homestead (taken to graze each day)	1 Boy
6	Non-Lactating Adult Females & Adult Males	Distant Satellite Camp in Loteere	1 Adult, 1 Boy
Camels			
1c	Infants (*ng'itankaala*)	Main Homestead (no grazing)	Women
7	Lactating Adult Females	Main Homestead (sent to graze alone each day)	None
8	All Other Adults	Distant Satellite Camp in Loteere	1 Man
Donkeys			
9	All	Roaming (gathered when needed)	None
		Total	**4 Adults**
			6 Boys

The number of herders does not reflect a minimum requirement but rather the preferred split based on the availability of capable boys and men at the time. And, of course, a count of the number of herders does not capture the full labour requirements to maintain a herd, which must take account of the work women do to care for the family, as well as the contributions of others engaged in alternative livelihood activities – such as business – who provide cash and other resources such as food and tobacco to support the herders in the satellite camps.

involved four of Lorukadimoe's adult sons and six boys. Other than one son who had graduated secondary school and had built his own house in the nearest town, Lorukadimoe's other children were split between pastoral and village-based homes. While their siblings tend to animals, some children resided in Nakwapua village to help manage a small shop, to prepare local brews for sale, and to chase birds out of the sorghum and corn farms. However, Lorukadimoe took care to ensure that all of his children spent at least some time with the herd

throughout the year. Most of my time was spent herding with four of them – of ages 26, 13, 10, and 9 years – around the main homestead and in nearby satellite camps.

Exposure to animal care begins from the moment children can walk, teetering after their siblings to block the new-born goats and lambs (collectively referred to as *ng'ikale*) from following their mothers as the herd departs in the morning. The *ng'ikale* must remain at home, both because they are too frail for the long trek, and because they would suckle their mothers throughout the day, leaving nothing for human consumption at the evening milking. Livestock are generally milked twice per day, once in the morning and again in the evening. Women milk the large livestock by themselves, but they often enlist their children's help while milking the goats and sheep. Lactating animals are milked in small groups: the children release the young goats and lambs (*ng'ikale*) to suckle and then return them to a small pen where they will not be trampled by the larger herd. The remaining milk is collected for human consumption, squeezed into wooden containers and then poured into a large gourd for fermentation.

Some *ng'ikale* do not have access to a lactating mother, perhaps because the mother has died, the mother stopped producing milk, or the mother is rejecting her infant.[3] Children first attempt to introduce these *ng'ikale* to another lactating female, holding its legs so that it does not kick away the unfamiliar animal. These *ng'ikale* may also be provided with milk in a dish; because they lack the instinct to drink milk from the ground, children hold their heads near the dish and coax it to drink. The provision of nourishment in this way, placing animals in a position of dependency upon human intervention and care, is *akirony*. Even school-

[3] Lactating animals are known to withhold their milk if their offspring are not present, preventing women from milking them or other offspring from suckling. This becomes a problem in two scenerios: 1) when the mother rejects (*esec*) her own offspring, and 2) when the offspring dies.

bound children, who enrol in school before they learn to care for a herd as it grazes, will have been exposed to this early form of livestock care. Many educated adults living in Lodwar and other urban areas nostalgically recall childhood memories tending to *ng'ikale*, a powerful albeit distant connection to *raiya* life.

When boys become somewhat older, they may accompany their older brothers to collect the small stock that graze near the home (Grazing Unit 2 in Table 8). There is little need for any special gear, but boys are given gear to mimic what they will carry when they are old enough to take larger animals to pasture. Mothers give their sons small water containers to carry throughout the day, and many are equipped with a long stick (*akulit*) to whip the animals into movement. Eventually, many boys begin to mimic the *raiya* style of the older herders, disposing of their *akulit* and selecting a thin, straight limb from the *edome* and *ekali* trees to fashion a shepherding staff.

When he is old enough to make the daily trek, a boy will accompany his older siblings further afield to care for the larger goats. His father will often accompany him to pasture when he is available, which can be a considerable imposition. Children often learn the times of day when the animals are least mobile, especially when the sun is hot, and like the animals a young herder will take this opportunity to enjoy a nap in the shade. This may be unacceptable when his father is in attendance. Furthermore, boys cannot rely on expedient herding techniques when their fathers accompany them. Herding on their own, they learn that animals need not always be chased on foot; an easier strategy is to throw well-aimed stones toward wandering livestock, not to hit them but to redirect them back to the rest of the herd. But fathers warn their sons that herding is not performed with stones but with the staff (*aburo*) and by calling to the animals (*kikalak*). While an older brother may be more tolerant, requiring only that the

boys don't throw rocks while the animals are eating, a father will scold his sons, to "make them know" (*akisiyen*) how to tend the herd properly.

Eventually boys will be allowed to herd the main homestead's small herd of lactating cattle (Grazing Unit 5 in Table 8). Because they require grass, which is generally less plentiful than the hardier shrubs and woody plants on which goats and sheep browse, cattle must be escorted farther in a single day than the goats. Despite the additional work, many boys say that they prefer herding cattle, the most important task on the homestead. This is a crucial training period during which boys learn to care for cattle, and Lorukadimoe often exchanged his sons' responsibilities with each moon, moving them between the goats and cattle so that each would maintain a connection with the different species. In regard to cattle, a boy is not ready to move to the satellite camps until *kedal ngesi ng'atuk* ("when he can suckle from the cows"), that is, when he can drink from the udders of the cattle. This is a matter not merely of accumulating knowledge and abilities as skilled individuals, but coming to know the animals personally, and becoming comfortable with them.

When boys are deemed ready for life on the more distant cattle camps, their fathers may place them initially in a nearby satellite camp for goats (Grazing Unit 3 in Table 8). Here, the boys will be close enough to return home if necessary, and their father can still check on them from time to time. But they will learn to live with limited food, surviving on a daily blood meal drawn from a surface artery of a health animal. A cord, often consisting of a fibrous strip of bark from the *ebenyo* tree, is tied around the goat's head to increase blood pressure. The mouth is cleared of anything the goat may have been eating, and one boy will hold the goat while another finds the artery, located on the snout just below the eye. The "blood bullet" (*amal a ng'akot*), a tiny blade fashioned from a discarded nail or another small piece of iron, is used to puncture (*akigum*, the same verb used to describe shooting a gun) the

artery. As the blood streams from the small opening, it is collected in a drinking vessel and consumed directly (*ng'akot narieng'ak*, "red blood"), or mixed with a small amount of milk to make *nacarakan*. Otherwise, food is limited to forest fruits, tubers, and if an older boy is armed with a gun, wild game. If an animal becomes sick and dies, and the disease was not one that poisons the meat, it may be roasted over an open flame.

Eventually, boys will be able to accompany their older brothers to the more distant satellite camps (Grazing Units 4, 6, and 8 in Table 8). Caring for larger animals in more remote places provides young men with a sense of independence and maturity, and while the animals in the herd still belong to a boy's father, this independent living is a preview of an aspirational future with one's own family and herd. Life on the satellite camps is tough, but boys are hardened by their early herding experiences around the main homestead, where they must become accustomed to long periods without food, often at least 10 hours and sometimes more. They can put off this hunger by picking desert berries, setting traps for birds, or collecting the sweet *eminae* that oozes from the *ekunoit* tree. If one follows the call of the *ajeje* – a class of honeyguide birds associated by Barrett (1990: 96-97) with several species in the *Indicator* and *Prodotiscus* genera – they will be led to honey. Children learn to use the resources available to them while simultaneously becoming inured to the general scarcity of food and water. During the wet season, when the water table in the riverbeds is high, children often leave behind their water jugs at the home. Even young children know how to procure their own water by digging a shallow drinking well (*akujah*) at the riverbed, bailing out the muddy water until it returns clear, filtered by the sandy soils. However, time is only sufficient to do this once throughout the day, so boys must become accustomed to walking with thirst (*akure*), despite the hot sun and long distances. When thirst sets in, talking should be avoided and the mouth kept shut to conserve water. When one reaches water after a long walk, they initially abstain from drinking. Instead, you "help your body" first, allowing yourself to

become cool and calm before quenching your first. If you drink too quickly, you can faint or become sick.

However, graduating to cattle herding in the satellite camps does not mean an end to caring for goats and smaller animals, and well into adulthood, young men continue to return for periods of herding at the wet season homestead. Soon after I started my fieldwork, one of Lurakadimoe older sons was called back from the satellite camps to assist at the main homestead. While he did need another hand at home, Lorukadimoe was also teaching his son some of the finer details of herd management, returning him to herd the cattle and goats at home. He gave the older boy additional responsibilities, such as deciding where the herds would graze each day, and even scouting (*akireb*) where the homestead might move in upcoming seasonal migrations.

While boys follow the herd, girls must learn a broad repertoire of skills to make and maintain the materials required on the homestead. Houses must be constructed from thin poles at each new camp, and the thorn bush fences that keep livestock inside and predators out during the night must be constructed and periodically mended. Many of the household objects, such as oil containers (*akitom*) and sleeping hides (*ajemu*) are produced from the skin of slaughtered animals, and must be cleaned, stretched, dried, and fashioned to create the needed implement. Aside from preparing basic meals with foodstuffs purchased from town or received as humanitarian aid, women also make a variety of local specialities, such as preserved mutton (*amorumoru*), dried meat (*anyas*), and cooking ghee (*akimet*). While men must become hardened to sustain hunger and thirst, women do most of the heavy lifting around the homestead, collecting firewood, water and other resources from the surround area. Milking camels can be a dangerous task; beasts with a fierce disposition (*dedeng*) may attempt to kick their captors during the process. At the wells, men are responsible for bringing the animals in

small groups (*agelun ng'ibaren*) to the edge of the hand-dug wells (*ng'akare*), but it is the women who descend into them to procure water, and it is often the women who maintain them. For this reason, *raiya* women are notoriously strong, and many – especially the younger wives in polygynous families – could probably overpower their husbands in a fight, if it came to that.

Knowing Animals

As described above, a *raiya* childhood deals with a broad array of matters necessary to sustaining life on the homestead, from shelter construction and food procurement to weather predictions, medicinal interventions, and hunting acumen. When comparing themselves with their school-educated peers, *raiya* children cede expertise over "those matters of school" (*ng'akiro ng'una a esukul*). But they have their own area of expertise, often summarised succinctly as "matters of livestock" (*ng'akiro a ng'ibaren*). Of course, not all activities involve direct contact with animals. But much of daily life is organised around animals' needs, as suggested by Evans-Pritchard's (Evans-Pritchard 1940) description of "the cattle clock" on the Nuer homestead. Moreover, livestock-oriented knowledge indicates not only technical mastery but an affective relation to animals: to care for them (*akirony*), to guide them to pasture (*akitadak*), provide them with water (*akiruwakin*), protect them from predators and thieves (*akiyok*), apply medicine when they are sick and injured (*akitedekin*), and search for them when they wander and become lost (*akisak ng'ibaren lu ecakara*).

This animal-oriented knowledge consists in various forms. Some could be described as techniques – "skills" in a discrete sense – that can be learned and then applied procedurally in problem solving, as needed. Much of a herder's veterinary knowledge would fit this description. An animal with swollen and infected lymph nodes may be treated by pressing a

hot stone to its flank, a cauterisation technique described as *akimad*.[4] The heat draws out the disease-causing agent (*edeke*) so that it does not descend deeper into the animal's body, which could be fatal.

Such techniques are also used to manage the relations among animals. If a cow is rejecting its calf (*esecet a aite*), a man can blow sharply into an orifice like the mouth or anus. The animal is disturbed (*eporocikinere*), and sometimes she will then accept her calf (*tocam itaok keng*) as it attempts to suckle. In the case of the opposite scenario, when a calf is persistent in suckling even as it has grown old enough to graze on its own, there are techniques to wean the animal. A small flap can be cut from the calf's nose and turned so that it heals into a lump at the end of the end of the snout (*atidae a lokume*). The lump will cause discomfort for the calf's mother when it tries to suckle, such that she pushes it away. In other cases, the calf can be smeared with foul smelling herbs that make it unrecognisable to its mother.

Other forms of knowledge could be described as ability or capacity, such as skill in tracking lost animals, skill in diagnosing livestock disease, or skill in finding the appropriate remedy. This conveys not a discrete procedure but a more general aptitude (*aeoso*). Diagnosing sick livestock requires not only taxonomic identification of the likely disease (*edeke*) but recognising when animals are behaving oddly: an unusual sound, a strange gait, lethargy, refusal to eat the usual vegetation. Many herders have extensive knowledge of the names various plants (*ng'ikito*) growing in their area, as well as their uses: for human or animal food, as building materials, or to treat disease.

Some forms of knowledge are less available to explanation. Much of animal care is a matter of developing a relationship with the livestock, coming to understand their behaviours. On

[4] A similar technique is described among from West Africa to deal with mites and mange (Bizimana 1994: 174).

one occasion, I was accompanying one of the younger boys Akaal to take the cattle to the nearby river. The recent rains had eliminated the need to descend into the wells with buckets, as there were large pools available to the cattle at the surface. However, the wet season had brought a bloom of green vegetation (*elibit*), such that there was little visibility through the thick brush of forested areas flanking the river. When we emerged onto the dry riverbed near the watering hole, where we could again see the animals, Akaal noticed that some were missing. I asked how he'd realised this, if he'd taken a count of them. To my surprise, Akaal wasn't even sure how many animals were with him. I had counted 23 before we'd left, but Akaal guessed between 20 and 25, eventually dismissing the question. "*Elalaka ng'atuk*! There are many cattle here!"

We descended back into the bush, at times crawling through thickets on all fours, tracing the path blazed by the cattle as they'd pushed through the undergrowth toward the river. After wandering for almost an hour, I began to doubt our prospects for finding the animals. But Akaal stopped periodically to observe hoofprints, each time setting off with renewed confidence. At one point, after checking some faint tracks, I asked "*Iyeni iyong kwai akisak ngaatuk lalo?*" ("How do you know to look for the cattle this way?"). Without turning, he replied "*Ayeni cha robo*" ("It's just that I know"). After another twenty minutes we met the three cattle grazing in a clearing and drove them back to the rest of the herd.

Akaal's responses were not expressed dismissively; he spoke not with frustration about my questioning but rather in a self-assured, matter-of-fact way. He was confident in his knowledge, but it defied elucidation. Anderson introduces the term *sentient ecology* to describe the similarly impressive but often inarticulable forms of knowledge possessed by Arctic reindeer on the Taimyr Peninsula about their land and its resources. Asking how to identify the appropriate trees to cut for firewood, Anderson often met with answers like

"Don't you know wood yet?" (Anderson 2000: 117), suggesting a way of knowing that is intrinsic to skilled practice rather than codified, abstract knowledge. Tim Ingold usefully elaborates upon this concept, describing *sentient ecology* as:

> … knowledge not of a formal, authorised kind, transmissible in contexts outside those of its practical application. On the contrary, it is based in feeling, consisting in the skills, sensitivities, and orientations that have developed through long experience of conducting one's life in a particular environment. (*ibid*: 25)

This sentient ecology involves an attunement to the landscape as well as the ways that people and animals move through it. Travelling to the river every other day, cattle follow a path similar to the previous journey, but with slight variations that progressively move them into unexploited graze. Cattle become familiar with the paths, and boys can let the cattle guide themselves for much of the day. Over time, the boys also become acquainted with the peculiar habits of particular animals: which cows have a predilection to separate from the herd, where they tend to go, and – just as important – the places they tend *not* to go. As we sought the lost cattle across the vast tracts of forest and brushland, hoofprints alone do not provide enough information to tell Akaal where to search. But based on his familiarity with the herd, he could restrict his attention to a limited number of familiar paths (*ng'irotin*) and clearings (*ng'atotin*). As suggested by the concept of enskilment, this form of knowledge is intuitive, not in the sense that it is based on 'instinct' or automatism, but in that it manifests as perceptional skill in Akaal's engagement with animals and landscape.

This reflection is also relevant to Akaal's ability to recognise that cattle were missing in the first place, without actually knowing the number of cattle under his care. Rather than a quantitative count of his herd, Akaal knew the cattle themselves, as distinctive individuals. Each animal has a unique name derived from its physical characteristics, primarily related to the colour and patterning of its fur (*ajulot*), the shape of its horns (*ng'amwer*), and poetic comparisons to wildlife, landscape features, and other objects (see Ohta 1987) for a detailed

description of livestock naming practices). Such identifiable characteristics elevate cattle from generic units of a herd to individual beings recognised by name. Much as my mother did not need to count her children to realise that Cory is missing, cattle herders accustomed to the animals under their watch notice the absence of a particular animal. Granted, a herd owner will often have more quantitative knowledge of the herd size, for purposes of allocating animals for milking or his wives, or to calculate the availability of animals to lend to friends in need. Moreover, the larger herds of goats must sometimes be counted numerically, usually subdivided into the allocations belonging to particular women. Eleven for the elder wife, thirteen for her junior wife, nine for the third, and so on. But even then, the animals are counted off on one's hands, and with each finger, what is verbalised is not a number but the distinctive colour-name of an individual animal belonging to that woman.

Ingold's description of hunters' and foragers' relations to the forest is relevant here: "One gets to know the forest, and the plants and animals that dwell therein, in just the same way that one becomes familiar with other people, by spending time with them, investing in one's relations with them the same qualities of care, feeling and attention" (Ingold 2000: 47). Similarly, herders come to know animals with names and individual qualities. This is not so much a matter of Turkana ontology – which distinguishes clearly between people (*ng'itunga*) and livestock (*ng'ibaren*), and moreover between livestock and wild animals (*ng'ityeng*) –



Photo 5. Knowing Cattle. Cattle become nervous around strangers, but with familiar herd-boys, they remain calm even when approached and touched. Contact with animals is not simply an exhibition of a herder's affinity to them, but a demonstration that the herder and the animals know each other. (Credit CR, 2016)

but it is inherent in the human-animal relations that *raiya* develop with their livestock. People become attuned to the livestock under their care, a process captured by the word of *anaikis*. As described earlier in Chapter 5, *anaikis* describes the process of becoming accustomed to the hardship of hunger and thirst (*enaikinete akoro ka akure)*, as well as to heat, difficult work, and solitary time at pasture. But *anaikis* is broader than just inurement: it describes an ecological form of adjustment based on exposure to one's surroundings and the development of relationships with other beings. It entails abilities that are intersubjective rather than inculcated in individuals.

This involves a reciprocal relationship of intimate familiarity. Boys often exhibit their closeness with the cattle, singing to them as they graze, drawing them near with a call, and tickling their undersides to calm them if they begin to fight. On one occasion, I witness a boy

approach a large roan bull named Lopus. The animal bore a bell (*ekadong'at*) around its neck, which the boy wanted to adjust. He approached him quietly from behind, whistling gently, and then "tickled" him behind his back leg. As Lopus slowed, the boy proceeded around him to his front, stroking the tender skin of his underbelly as he walked forward. The animal eventually slowed to a halt and hung its head, relaxed, as the boy fixed the collar holding the bell.

Table 9. Generic Livestock Calls used by Herders.

Phonetic Sound	**Approximation**	**Context of Use**
Labial Ingressive Affricate	"Kissing Sound"	Cattle Call
Buccal Ingressive Affricate	"Donald Duck Sound"	Goat Call
Mid-Closed Back Vowel	Elongated "Woo"	Sheep Call
Mid-Closed Frontal Vowel	Sharp "Hee!"	Camel Call
Buccal Ingressive Click	"Cheek Click"	Generic Herding Call

This relationship develops over time spent together. While some people initially explained that there were appropriate calls for each kind of animal – which I have attempted to describe in Table 9 – many herders developed their own idiosyncratic uses. The sound chosen depends on the species addressed, directionality (i.e. whether the targeted animals are being urged forward, collected together, or called toward the speaker), and the urgency of the situation. Over time, the herd comes to know the herders' calls. Indeed, I often struggled with the affricate goat and cattle calls, but when I expressed my frustration to one herder, he explained that "they would become used to my call" (*enaikinete keci nakon*), regardless of whether I perfectly mimicked the sounds produced by my companions. It is not only that men must know *about* animals; they must also know the animals in a more personal way, which requires a more intimate and attentive way of engaging with them.

But this sensibility is not simply the exclusive domain of men; women also develop strong relationships with the herd. It is especially important for women to know the camels that they milk. I was sometimes required to stand at a distance from the camels during the morning and evening milking period, as were many of the other men, for the camels had become accustomed to the women (*enaikinete ng'aberu*). Such familiarity develops over time. Lactating animals change hands for various reasons: to settle a debt, or simply a source of support for friends. When a camel had been accepted into Lorukadimoe's home in the wet season of 2015, the women dealt with it cautiously; it hadn't become accustomed to them yet. Each day, two of the women would approach the animal cautiously for milking, often raising and binding one of its legs so that it would not kick them during the process. The previous possessor was of the Ekatapit brand, and so throughout milking, the women repeated *katap, katap, katap,* reminding it of its former home. They would do so until it "adjusted to the Ng'ipuco brand" (*paka enaikini Apucait*).

Being *riaya*, then, is a matter of situated learning about care for animals, an education acquired in various ways including verbal endowment, strategic training, and the attunement of perceptual skills. This insight is relevant to much of what was written in the previous chapter about the performance of *raiya*-hood. Composing an ox-song, dancing *edong'a*, and decorating one's praise animal are all examples of skills that must be practised and honed over time. This is a matter not only of developing technical know-how but of cultivating the kinds of sensibilities required for an emotional attachment to and relationship with animals.

Observing the rural Reserve from town, urban-dwellers sometimes describe these sensibilities as traditional, a customary and perhaps even "backward" attachment to animals. But as described in the next section, many *raiya* value the power of their perception and wit, which

allow them not only to persist in the ways of the past, but to respond to new circumstances and powerful incursions.

Ignorance, Knowledge, and Wit

During orations at public meetings, *raiya* speakers will sometimes express the lament "*Ebang'ana eturkanait*!" Many English-speakers in Turkana translate the phrase as "the ignorance of the Turkana people", an admission of the formal education that *raiya* children lack and a call for universal primary enrolment. However, reflecting on the broader semantic meaning of *ebang'ana*, I would argue that the term is more of an expression of frustration than an admission of intellectual inferiority. When a child sits silently without responding to a question, adults may say "eh, *ebang'ana"* and turn away. They do not mean that the child's intelligence is in any way inferior, but that they are uncomfortable, unfamiliar with the situation, and unprepared to answer. Similarly, in conversations about the relative intelligence of different livestock species, I have been told that goats and cattle are "smart" (*ewosok*), but that sheep and donkeys *ebang'aka*. When pressed for an explanation, people explain that goats and cattle react to the presence of danger, either by running away or even forming a defensive cluster. Sheep and donkeys, on the other hand, become frightened and stand by, unable to respond to the threat; they may watch as another of their group is killed and eaten by hyenas, only to be attacked once the predators turn their attention back to the remaining animals. In this way, the phrase *ebang'ana eturkanait* seems to refer to the inability of many *raiya* people to respond to contemporary problems. Many feel powerless, left only watch as perennial droughts decimate their herds, undaunted raiders make off with their animals, and their own children turn toward urban temptations.

While often frustrated, *raiya* people do not see themselves as ignorant or in any way slow-witted. A *raiya* can quickly assess and comprehend new circumstances. In the Ng'aturkana

language, such wit is communicated by terms such as *ajukoit* ("genius") and *ekebe* ("quick learner"), but I was also surprised to hear some use the Swahili term for intelligence (*akili*). Borrowing from a foreign lexicon often reflects the foreignness of the referent, and the term *akili* is most often used to refer to the kinds of knowledge acquired through formal schooling. Developing *akili* is the rationale behind sending children to school, even if the actual content of the curriculum is largely a mystery to many *raiya* parents.

The term *akili* is also used to contrast the status of educated Turkana people in the broader national and international scene, where their threatening wit makes them a potentially dangerous force to be reckoned with. Recalling the historical encounter of the Turkana people with the British invaders, one informant in Kakuma suggested that the former colonial rulers' administrative strategies had been based on their fear of an empowered Turkana people:

> Those people don't want Turkana in their place. The Kikuyus have gone to their country to study. The Luos, the Kambas, and others as well. But the British knew the Turkana were smart (*aouso*). And stubborn! Even if not educated, they are quick to learn. They were dangerous, so they didn't invite them to their universities. (Lodwar Interview, 2016)

This is relevant as well to Turkana's place in post-colonial national politics. During my fieldwork, a Turkana man who had spent several decades working as a lecturer in the United States returned to Turkana County to vie for the position of Governor. Some saw Malik Ekal as an outsider who had become accustomed to "the land of the white people" (*akwap a ng'imusungii*) and disconnected from Turkana. But others defended his departure, recalling how he had been banished form the country under the administration of former President Daniel Arap Moi. It was suggested that President Moi banished the man because he was aware of the innate intelligence of the Turkana people and feared that his reign might be at risk if they became more involved in national-level politics. In line with the narrative of Turkana's marginalization, this account implies that Kenya implemented an intentional

strategy to disempower a potentially threatening sector of the national population. However, following the ratification of a new constitution in 2010 and ensuing decentralization of power in 2013, the sitting president Uhuru Kenyatta welcomed Malik Ekal into his party, urging him to run for the Jubilee Alliance Party. As one informant conveyed to me, even the President could see that "if you give a Turkana the opportunity, he will take over".

Much this view attributes Turkana's marginalisation to outsiders' fear of the inherent intellectual capacities of the Turkana people, *raiya* people sometimes refer to the *akili* of herders when comparing themselves to their formally educated peers. Community sensitisation campaigns – in which advocates of university primary enrolment advertise the education upon which *raiya* children are missing out – must raise questions among Turkana herders about their own capacities, intellectual or otherwise. But during my conversations about *raiya* life, many men boasted that they and their comrades "know many issues" (*kiyeni sua ng'iraiya ng'akiro nakaalak!*), including but not limited to technical knowledge of pastoral livelihoods. Such statements put forward a sense of *raiya* self-worth amidst the government's enthusiastic promotion of formal education. There is a popular story of a young herdboy who decided one day to attend class at the nearby primary school. After attending for some days, he decides that the goats need to graze elsewhere. He departs, but not before achieving the highest marks on an exam, having quickly learned what the other children required years to master. This story – even if apocryphal – clearly rejects any idea that the *raiya* are incapable of the forms of education that their educated siblings undertake in school.

Discussion: Skill and Belonging

This chapter is about education of two sorts: the formal education provided in primary school and the enskilment undergone through an education among animals. It is well known that formal education can fiercely reinforce socioeconomic class categories. Following

independence in Ghana, Philip Foster carried out extensive surveys of educational institutions across the country. Among other findings, his work showed "a definite association between paternal occupational characteristics and access to secondary-school education", a correlation that was even stronger for girls than boys ([1965] 1998: 242). This is not merely a matter of securing the economic means to pay for school fees (although that is an important point). Once brought into the urban professional sensibilities by a formal education, people often find themselves alienated from the more localist places that they once called home, and they choose to have their children educated in this way as well.

However, the upbringing experienced by *raiya* children also entails an education. This was a major point in Betti's thesis on the different ways that Turkana children can be socialised. The attractive economic opportunities that draw many people to urban livelihoods and formal schooling are removing children from the moral education of a *raiya* childhood. Parents familiar with school are concerned that "the new forces of socialization are taking the children away from the community, making them into *ngide lu anangoleyang*, the children of the government. They are providing younger generations with means to loosen themselves from the control of their families" (2010: 79). Similarly, children are spoiled much in the way that the hot sun spoils the grass, a joint reference to unwelcome social and ecological transformations (*ibid*: 95).

Complementing Betti's work, my own insights were drawn not only from talking to people about the different forms of knowledge and skill developed by *raiya* children, but through my efforts to learn some of the skills required by herders. This apprenticeship foregrounded some of the techniques and actions that might be taken for granted if not attempted by an incompetent newcomer, who quickly realises the difficulty of keeping track of 100 goats roaming through the underbrush, as animals do not respond mechanically to human

instruction. The inconspicuous structuring structures of *habitus* seem insufficient to depict the intentionality of many of these activities, as well as the effort that herders put into the craft. Nonetheless, "training" seems too excessively deliberate. Enskilment seems a more appropriate characterisation of the ways that these abilities emerge through relations developed over time. Or perhaps the Nga'turkana term *tanaik*: to become accustomed to something through exposure to it.

While I became close family with whom I stayed, my attempts to gather a herd or perform an ox-dance would immediately foreground my outsider-ness. These were important insights into the embodied aspects of belonging, and they are relevant to the development of a sense of difference between school children and their *raiya* siblings. These social boundaries are not uncrossable; many *raiya* children learn to speak basic Swahili from their siblings or partner with them to operate urban businesses. Similarly, many school graduates continue to visit home, accompany their siblings with the animals, and provide help with pastoral tasks. Such attempts at "boundary-crossing" show that social boundaries are permeable, but they also make the boundaries themselves discernible.

The meaning of *raiya* and its continued salience in Turkana is a product of encounters between people who see themselves as inhabitants of different worlds. In its deployment in syntax, the term *raiya* can serve as an adjective to describe people (like "traditional"), as a demonym to categorise them (like "pastoralist"), and as a locative for the remote places where they live (the countryside or "the Reserve"). The last three chapters have approached each of these issues from the *raiya* point of view to elicit some of the term's more implicit shades of meaning. I have conveyed how people living in different landscapes cultivate distinctive spatial sensibilities, such that *raiya* people are at ease in the remote borderlands while urban visitors feel "out of place" and vulnerable. I then discussed the everyday ways

that herders perform a *raiya* style, steeped in the idea of a traditional Turkana past but also exercising a creative praxis that appropriates motifs from urbanity and development. Finally, I described the ways that a *raiya* childhood is embodied as skills and sensibilities attuned to life among animals.

All of these aspects of *raiya* refer to popular binaries of social difference (traditional-modern, illiterate-educated, rural-urban). However, attention to performance, enskilment, and perception provide insights beyond the reductive shallowness of these dichotomies, maintaining a sense of continuity that allows for permeability between and connectivity across ostensibly different social worlds. In the chapters to come, I will describe how this connectivity is achieved in practice, both in the formation of families across the rural-urban divide (Chapter 7) and in the negotiation of authority between rural elders and urban elites (Chapter 8).

Part II: Navigating Change

CHAPTER 7: KINSHIP ON THE PERIPHERY

> Questions of boundaries, identities, and connections lie at the molten core of the encounter between local forms of power and understanding on the one hand and increasingly globalised forces of social and economic transformation on the other. (Hutchinson 2000: 55)

As described in the chapters of Part I, the notion of *raiya* entails a sense of belonging among rural Turkana communities living on the periphery of growing urban areas and expanding state power. While previous chapters have described what it means to be *raiya* – participation in livestock care, observance of custom (*etal*), residence in remote areas, and distinctive styles of dress, among others – this chapter turns to a topic in which these boundaries must be crossed: the making of families between *raiya* and urban kin.

Kinship constructs provide a basis for defining groups and setting social boundaries. For example, the "principle of descent" implies common origins through which a group can define itself, distinguishes those belong from those who don't, and opposes assimilation into the dominant society. But, as Okely describes for Traveller societies, notions of descent do not prevent mobility across these imagined boundaries, for "an individual with Gypsy parentage can choose to adopt the life style and values of a Gorgio [house-dweller] and 'pass' into the wider society" (1983: 68). Adherence to a principle of descent-based kinship distinguishes the community from outsiders, but kinship relations also transcend those imagined boundaries.

Similarly, *raiya* herders distinguish themselves from the growing urban populations by enforcing a customary system of descent-based belonging, as practised through the transfer of bridewealth (*akuuta*) to officially complete a marriage. Meanwhile many urbanites have turned to Christian weddings that do not involve any contribution of livestock. However, at the same time, most contemporary Turkana families encompass people living across the

rural-urban divide, dispensing with any dichotomous models of separate rural and urban kinship systems. So long as there are connections between *raiya* herders and their town-based brethren, customary kinship categories will be used to define the formal and practical aspects of those relationships.

This chapter discusses the notions of kinship through which *raiya* people create and codify bonds both within and between pastoral homesteads, as well as across the urban-rural divide. I focus especially on the role of non-marital children in Turkana, that is, those men and women whose fathers did not pay bridewealth, or who were born before the bridewealth transfer was completed. Often referred to as "children of the dancing ground" in allusion to illicit sexual liaisons during youth's night-time gatherings, their place on the pastoral homestead is structurally inferior to the children of married mothers, entailing subordinated rights to inheritance and limited access to herd resources. When the British administration and later the Catholic missionaries established famine camps for pastoralists impoverished by drought, it was largely unmarried mothers and their children who were forced to undergo the transition to settled life (Dyson-Hudson et al. 1998). As former District Commissioner Lambert wrote in 1962, "There are 10,000 people in the camps… Many of the inmates are unattached women with their children obviously abandoned by their men folk who were able to survive in the desert when relieved of the burden of their families" (quoted by Good 2007: 33). Now, across Turkana County, many of the most influential politicians and business leaders are "children of the dancing ground", sent to school in the early years of formal education in Turkana and finding themselves after graduation with a monopoly on many influential positions among NGOs and missionaries. As opportunities for urban employment and political office have risen, educated children – including many with unmarried mothers who left their father's homesteads – are able to provide financial support to rural kin, who are reconsidering the position of these children within their families.

I begin by introducing the notion of *ayan*, which I argue is the best shorthand translation for "kinship" in the Turkana language. After providing a broad review of the kinds of bonds that qualify as *ayan,* I move on in the next section to describe two important Turkana structural concepts: the descent-based lineage and the exogamous brand. The choice to begin with these units is not an attempt to fit Turkana kinship to the anthropological conventions of agnatic and affinal relations. Rather, *lineage* and *brand* correspond to two distinct Turkana concepts evoked in negotiations over authority and belonging, respectively, and their prominence in my ethnography reflects the incidence with which they arose during fieldwork conversations. Having laid out the principles and tensions shaping relations within *raiya* families, I then move on in the next section to address the contemporary situation of unmarried women and children, who have transitioned from a marginalised group within the pastoral family to a dominant political class supported by urban opportunities. Notions of kinship must be re-articulated within families that now encompass people living both in the pastoral countryside and in town.

My focus of analysis differs markedly from the functionalist and structuralist concerns that motivated the old debates between 'descent' and 'alliance' theorists, many of whom were primarily concerned with identifying the system-wide organisation of corporate groups and the group-level mechanisms of social cohesion.[1] My work approaches social organisation

[1] The most obvious difference between 'descent theory' and 'alliance theory' was in the relative emphasis on blood bonds through descent and affinal bonds through marriage, respectively. However, there were more substantial theoretical differences in the approach to social organization. Descent theory relies upon the structural-functionalist approach to social organisation championed by Radcliffe-Brown (1952, Chapter X) , who suggested that the structures within a society could be treated in much the same what that biologists study the organs within the body. 'Alliance theory' refers to an alternative structuralist approach focused on the cognitive basis of kinship systems, elevating 'structural principles' above the empirically observable structures themselves (Lévi-Strauss 1969). These labels were not embraced by most discussants in the early kinship debates, and few anthropologists would fit neatly into either camp, but the retrospective outline provided by Schneider (1965: 25) places Fortes, Goody, Gough, and Gluckman in alignment with Radcliffe-Brown, and Dumont, Leach, Needham, and Firth with Levi-Strauss.

closer to the ground, describing the ancestral line and the brand not as parts of a system, but as two notions of kinship that fit together uneasily. This re-articulation of kinship – in new circumstances but with familiar notions – reveals tensions within families attempting to renegotiate authority and belonging across the rural-urban divide.

Ayan: Formalised Friendships and "Clear Kin" in Turkana

The literature from Turkana contribute a great deal about family structure and kinship practices among herders. Perspectives differ significantly depending on the theoretical orientations and interests of the ethnographers. Older studies applied functionalist analysis to understand kinship systematically, as evident in Gulliver's (1955) investigation of family structure as the determinant of herd ownership and inheritance rights. More recent studies (e.g. Broch-Due 1990, 2000) approach the Turkana family as a more fluid arrangement of relationships, in which people must invest time and energy. However, while most studies from Turkana discuss kinship in some manner, few ethnographers have interrogated the meaning of 'kinship' – as an abstract category of relations – in Turkana terms, nor do they put kinship into an historical perspective in the way that Hutchinson (1996, 2000) did for late 20th Century Nuer. This section defines kinship in Turkana terms, setting up the following sections to discuss specific forms of kinship and the ways that they may be changing with the rise of an urban elite class.

Gulliver paints pastoral kinship as a narrow field of relations oriented around the immediate family. He estimated that most people came into contact with perhaps a dozen people on a daily basis, a consequence of the highly dispersed settlement patterns required herding in such an arid environment (1955: 44). Furthermore, livestock must be moved to new pasture according to seasonal changes, and any herd's annual path may need to change from year to year, engendering a "principle of individual movement according to personal choice and

opinion", uninhibited by obligations to follow family members (Gulliver 1955: 164). One's social interactions were therefore primarily within the pastoral family, defined by joint care of a collective herd and encompassing an elder male (*ekapolon*), his wives, his children, and any of his sons' wives and children. Similarly, Lamphear suggests that the arid environment and the necessity of year-round herd mobility limits enduring social links to the primary level of production: the homestead (1992: 13-14).

This notion of kinship is based on co-residence, daily interactions, and other forms of relationality and intimacy based on contact, which are empirically observable by outsiders. The down-playing of less visible forms of kinship was probably influenced by the idea that Turkana are nomadic, a designation that encourages romantic depictions of "individual freedom" (Gulliver 1955: 12) and "rugged individualism" (Lamphear 1992: 13-14). This quality was probably emphasised in Gulliver's ethnography, which contrasts the Turkana family to that of their neighbours the Ng'ijie, an agro-pastoral people relying less substantially on livestock and more heavily on cultivation of sorghum and other seasonal crops. Whereas Ng'ijie reside for part of the year in permanent villages, which facilitates permanent bonds based on recurring co-residence, Turkana might migrate at any time throughout the year. This juxtaposition emphasises the mobility or "nomadism" of the latter, which in the European imagination implies a lack of attachments.

Such biases can be circumvented by exploring kinship through the concepts and categories used by the group of interest (Schneider 1965: 454, 1984: 200). Along these lines, Broch-Due discusses *akwanet,* a derivative of the word *akwan* that means 'body' in its nominal form and 'same' or 'similar' in its adjectival form (1990: 97). The suggestion of kinsfolk as people of similar body composition broadens the basis of kinship beyond the Euro-centric focus on blood (Carsten 2011) and resonates with Broch-Due's interest in the various substances –

semen, blood, milk, meat – that come together to constitute people and the bonds between them. The *akirum*, a vessel used to store and serve milk, suggests the kin-making power of food: "The milk inside simultaneously and significantly serves as a metonymic flow which brings together in relations of consumption not only sets of spouses and siblings, but friends too" (Broch-Due 1990: 99). Tellingly, *akirum* in its verb form also means "to inherit", highlighting how descent is defined through nourishment from the herd, rather than solely through the consanguinity of blood relations.

However, while Broch-Due discusses Turkana terms that provide insight into the ways that people make kin relations, she does not identify a term conveying a notion *kinship* itself, in the abstract. Like other anthropological classifications of social phenomena such as 'religion' or 'medicine', kinship encompasses a set of relations that may not share a matching category in other languages and cultural contexts. When such a category exists, however, linguistic considerations can lend valuable insight. For example, the term *qaraba* in Arabic refers to kinship bonds, encompassing relations of trans-generational continuity (*nasab*), by marriage (*musahara*), and co-lactation (*rida'a*). The term literally means 'closeness', an etymological observation that highlights the significance of 'social proximity' as a linguistic dimension of kinship in the Arabic language (Conte & Walentowitz 2009: 227).

During my attempts to make a comparable linguistic analysis of 'kinship' in the Turkana language, I was taught the term *ayan*. Rather than closeness, *ayan* refers to association or familiarity; when I ask whether two people are related, my interlocutor may respond "*ey, eyanasi*" ("yes, they are related"). Ohta (2007: 23) recognised this term as an indication of kinship, along with *enyamasi* ("those who eat together") and *emasasi* ("those who drink together"). However, Ohta understood these terms to indicate relationship by descent, as defined by the lineage. My own work suggests that one's kin (*ng'iyanet*) encompass a

broader range of relations, defined not by descent but by formally recognised relations that are, in principle, permanent, as opposed to more mutable friendships and territorial affiliations. *Ayan* explicitly includes the following kinds of bonds:

1. By common descent in an ancestor's lineage (*alesit*), as between brothers (*ng'ikaitotoe*),
2. By belonging to the same brand (*emacar*), the largest group defining exogamy,
3. Through marriage, as between affines (*ng'ikamurak*),
4. Between *asapan* initiates and their sponsors, who become like a second set of parents,
5. With name-sakes (*ng'irora*), who have been given the name of a family friend.

Compared to most of the existing literature, this list includes a more extensive range of relations within the realm of kinship. For example, male initiation is usually described as a unit of political organisation, not a basis of kinship.[2] But during my fieldwork, informants were clear about the bonds of *ayan* that are created through the *asapan* rite. Anthropologists working on male initiation rituals elsewhere have written about the bonds forged among age-mates through the experience of undergoing ordeals together, such as enduring the pain of circumcision or the loneliness of collective isolation during convalescence. But Turkana initiations do not entail circumcision, and the initiands do not co-reside for any prolonged period. The *asapan* rite involves only a short collective liturgy focused on a ritual meat feast, after which each young man goes off to spend five days on the homesteads of their sponsors. In this way, *asapan* is somewhat peculiar in East African initiation rituals, in that the focus seems to be less on the sense of comradery between age-mates than on the bonds of kinship between initiands and their sponsor families.[3]

[2] Gulliver restricted his analysis of kinship to agnatic descent and marriage. To his credit, Gulliver did devote an entire chapter to stock-bonds, that is, relations created through mutual care of one another's livestock. Although he does not go so far as to call these kin relations, this was an important step for an anthropologist in his era toward recognising bonds beyond blood.

[3] It is reasonable to assume that this rite may have changed since the days of Turkana military conquest, when initiation may have been more oriented toward forming a body of warriors under the

While the list of relations recognised as kinship is extensive, there are certain kinds of informal relations that are clearly excluded. For example, people who reside together in an *adakar,* a group of homesteads grazing their animals together, will share a great deal of time together and build trust through the collective execution of defensive duties. But if asked whether two people related only by co-residence in the *adakar* are relatives (*ng'iyanet*), they are likely to explain that they are "just friends" (*ng'ipaelon ca*) or neighbours (*ng'ikedunyet*). Once they disperse during the next wave of migrations, there is no formally recognised basis for an enduring relationship.

Similarly, although voters often favour politicians from their own territorial section (*ateker*), this level of social organisation does not generally create bonds of *ayan*. If people from the same *ateker* encounter one another while living abroad, they may discuss friends and family back whom in search for a more intimate commonality. If no such bond is established, the shared territorial group itself won't keep two people together, as suggested by various migrants from the Ng'ikamatak sub-tribe living in Kakuma (which is generally considered the territory of the Ng'ilukumong and Ng'imonia). These migrants were generally aware of fellow Ng'ikamatak in their neighbourhood but did not necessarily suggest they were close.

Even within the formal relations of *ayan* – a formal relation that one can evoke when making a request – not everyone is embraced. For any individual, there are hundreds of people who would be recognised as *ng'iyanet* through one of the relations described in the list above. Anyone forced to respect all of these relations would soon face extreme poverty (*aboot*). During my time with Lorukadimoe's family, as I was increasingly incorporated as a fictive son, I was also introduced to the vast network of kin living in and around Urum: full brothers

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leadership of the war leaders and Great Diviners of that era. But I have found no evidence in this regard.

(*talokato*), half-brothers (*talokapa*), maternal uncles (*ng'ikaimamai*), fellow members of the Ng'ipuco brand, in-laws (*ng'ikamurak*), and others. As I became more familiar with the extended family and further incorporated into it, I also found myself called upon more frequently for contributions of money, tobacco, beer, and other small goods. Uncertain when to acquiesce and when to decline, I was eventually pulled aside by one of my host-sisters Arukut. "Don't give your money to just anyone," she explained. "There are many who are kin (*elalak a ng'iyanet*), but know those who are clear (*toyen lu elarete*)." A bond of *ayan* is a formal relation, but it does not always indicate social proximity, nor does it necessitate that one responds to requests for assistance. Much as the new kinship studies recognises kinship not as a fact of social structure but as the making of ties that are "instituted and nurtured over time through various actions" (Levine 2008: 377), Arukut distinguished "clear kin" as those with whom we share.

Furthermore, this selectivity of *ng'iyanet lu elarete* is not limited to those with whom one shares *ayan* by birth. Close friends may formalise their relationship through elective forms of kinship, such as becoming affines through marriage. Another option for elective kinship that is less prominent in the African anthropology literature is through name-sakes, in which one person names a child after the other. This name is often in addition to the birth name given by a child's mother, which usually reflects something memorable about the place or timing of their parturition. A child born during a downpour may be called Ekiru ("rain"), someone born at the boundary of the homestead will be called Elaar ("fence"), and I knew a boy born during the 2002 elections who is named Campaign. Asking the meaning of a birth-name will sometimes instigate a story, but inquiry about a name-sake often receives the one-word response *elimokinitae*, meaning that "they have been called after someone". Name-sakes may be passed within families, reinforcing bonds already between those already recognised as kin, but they are often endowed on significant others not yet recognised as *ng'iyanet*. A prominent

Somali trader befriended by Lorukadimoe was eventually given a name-sake, a case highlighting how kinship can be created across ethnic difference. Now, when he visits the homestead, he refers to the boy as "my name" (*ekiro kang*) and to Lorukadimoe as "my father" (*apa kang*), while Lorukadimoe reciprocates by calling the Somali man his son ("*lokoo kang"*).

Like the other forms of *ayan* described ahead, the practice of giving name-sakes may be changing due to rising social stratification. As a matter of convention, the honoured individual is supposed to bring a present to their name-sake some weeks after their birth. The traditional gift is three male goats, but it is also now common to contribute clothing and other purchasable goods for the child. Although further gifts are not prescribed, it is expected that the child could visit "their name" to request support in the future, if times are hard. As a minority of educated countrymen have built wealth and influence through urban opportunities, it is increasingly common for parents to give them name-sakes among their children. Adiaka, a primary school teacher from Lorugum shared his theory that this pursuit of patronage, along with increasing deprivation among herders, is evident in the increased incidence of children with names of mismatched gender. Generally, female names begin with the prefix *A-* or *Na-*, while male names begin with *E-* or *Lo-*, but such rules are often disregarded for name-sakes, as demonstrated by Adiaka's name. In the past, he explained, such mixing was avoided and prefixes matched the gender of the child. If parents wanted to give a woman a name-sake, they would wait for the birth of their next daughter. But

desperation among marginalised herders has led people to break norms in search of expedient access to resources.[4]

Like the name-sake, other relations of *ayan* are also shifting in response to changing socio-economic circumstances. In the coming sections, I will discuss how these bonds are realised in practice, as well as the ways that they are being evoked amidst urbanisation and the rise of an urban elite class. I begin with the two most prominent kinship institutions in Turkana.

The Brand and the Lineage

In this section, I provide an overview of two distinct but related principles of kinship used to articulate authority and belonging within families in Turkana. The lineage (*alesit*) is the line of ancestors through which one traces descent and determines seniority, while the brand (*emacar*) is a broader group sharing livestock insignia and setting the boundaries of exogamous marriage. Many elders describe these institutions as aspects of Turkana custom



Photo 6. A gray cow bearing the mark of the Ng'ipuco brand. (Credit CR, 2017)

[4] I have no quantitative data on names to test Adiaka's suggestion, but it would be interesting to survey name-sake relations in Loima, quantifying the proportion of name-sake across genders and across the rural-urban divide.

(*etal*), two parts of a timeless system of rules for social organisation. However, there are also important differences in the situations where either is invoked. In this section, I describe their instantiation in different contexts, first among those collecting and distributing bridewealth for the marriage of a female relative, and second among brothers calling for cooperation in producing enough animals to pay bridewealth. I argue that the lineage and the brand embody authoritative and at times conflicting ideals of hierarchy and cooperation that can be evoked to deal with competing interests within families or to call upon the extended family for assistance. While this section considers their instantiation among people adhering to marriage through bride-wealth (*akuuta*), the next section considers how this shifts among families increasingly stretched across the urban-rural divide.

The first kinship institution described here is the *alesit*, a line of ancestors from whom one has descended. A person may trace an *alesit* to any ancestor from whom they descend, through both male and female lines. The *alesit* is recognised as an important institution when determining one's social position, whether by identifying oneself with the prestige of prominent ancestors, or determining the order by which male relatives will undergo initiation and marriage or receive bride-wealth at a female relatives' wedding. Whereas, strictly speaking, any particular *alesit* is a chain of descent relations between two people, relatives can speak of being in an *alesit* together, as when they share an ancestor.[5]

Furthermore, everyone in Turkana belongs to an *emacar* (pl. *ng'imacarin*), a group whose members mark their animals with the same insignia. The term *emacar* can refer to the group, the insignia, or the iron rod used to emblazen the design into the right side of the animal. Only goats, cattle and camels are branded with this design, while donkeys and sheep are often

[5] Ohta (2007:23) claims there is no Turkana term for 'lineage'. While my linguistic investigation proves otherwise, it is true that there is rarely need to refer to the unit in the abstract.

left unmarked; the design differs for male and female animals. There are many *ng'imacarin* spread across Turkana, many of which are recorded in Barrett (1998b). Some derive from groups that predated the arrival of their ancestors, others are shared with neighbouring peoples like Ng'ikaramojong and Ng'ijie, and yet others have emerged more recently in the course of Turkana history.

Practically, the *emacar* is an indicator of livestock ownership, but it also prescribes group-specific customary rules and taboos (*ng'italio*) to which its members must adhere. One of the most important rules is universal: no marriage may be carried out between members of the same *emacar*, making this the social unit that defines exogamy. Sexual intercourse between two people belonging to the same *emacar* would constitute incest and require ritual intervention to cleanse the perpetrators and their families.

My understanding of the brand and lineage draws on the writing of previous ethnographers in Turkana but differs in the ways that I describe the relationship between the two. Gulliver's (Gulliver 1955) early account of Turkana family structure distinguishes between the nuclear family that lives together under an elder male and the extended family of agnatic kin. He

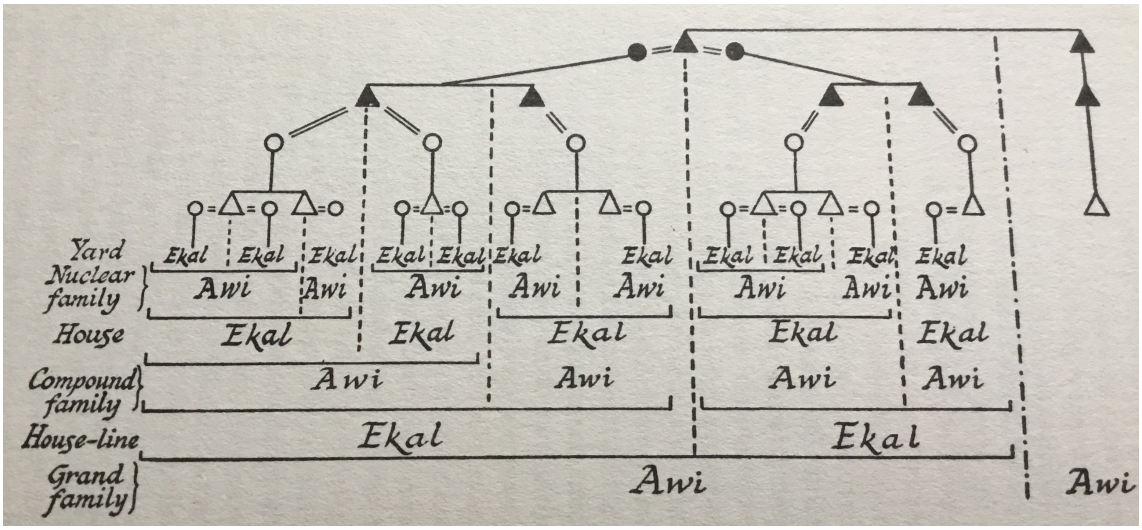


Figure 6. Gulliver's depiction of Turkana family structure.
(Copied from Gulliver 1955, page 152)

describes the tendency toward progressive fission as siblings grow older and establish their own homesteads, but also the reformulation of new cooperative bonds with brothers, agnates, uterine kin and friends. His focus on rights to the herd for inheritance and bridewealth required detailed documentation of lineages. He does not acknowledge the term *alesit*, but instead describes the lineage through the metaphors of homesteads and houses (see Figure 6). The *awi* is the male-headed polygynous household, while the *ekol* is the female-headed house in which each woman raises her children. In terms of actual living arrangements, the *awi* remains together under a living husband, but upon his death each *ekol* may become an individual unit under a single woman, which upon her death may break into one or more homesteads under her sons. But the brand, which he found analytically enigmatic (Gulliver 1951: 67-71), is conspicuously absent from his lineage-centric account of the Turkana family.

In more recent ethnography, Ohta similarly recognises the brand as a means of livestock differentiation and a unit of exogamy (1987), but explains that it "does not constitute a local group, and there are no opportunities for its members to come together. In short, a clan does not have any political or economic functions" (Ohta 2007:4). Barrett (1998b), on the other hand, recognised the significance of the brand, describing it as "the most important institution in Turkana society", paramount in daily activity as well as the rites of passage that mark birth, marriage, inheritance, and death. He catalogued many of the various brands and their associated customs and origination stories, but his work is primarily descriptive and does not provide much analytical insight into the meaning of the brand, or its relationship to the lineage. He does differ from most of his predecessors by rejecting the translation of the brand as a 'clan', the conventional anthropological term for the maximal exogamous kinship unit. He justifies his terminology with the brief point that the term 'clan' derives from Gaelic and refers to a group united under a chieftain or common ancestor, which is not always the case in Turkana. My own disagreement with the term 'clan' is more concerned with the way that it

has been defined in the ethnographic literature on Nilotic kinship.[6] Within the segmentary system depicted in *The Nuer*, the clan is an amalgamation of multiple descent-based units, like a maximal lineage. As depicted graphically in Figure 7, a clan is "a system of lineages" and the lineage is "a genealogical segment of a clan" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 192), a view common in the literature on lineages in Northeast and East Africa (Evans-Pritchard 1951; Lienhardt 1961; Parkin 1978). Nuer themselves refer to all of these units as *thok dwiel*, but Evans-Pritchard follows anthropological convention by distinguishing the clan as the level at which the lineage is large enough to constitute a unit of exogamy.

In Turkana, the terms *emacar* and *alesit* provides a clear linguistic rationale to distinguish the brand from the lineage, but the relation between the two has been a point of confusion. Ohta (2007) and Gulliver (1951) refer to the brands as "patrilineal", suggesting that they are

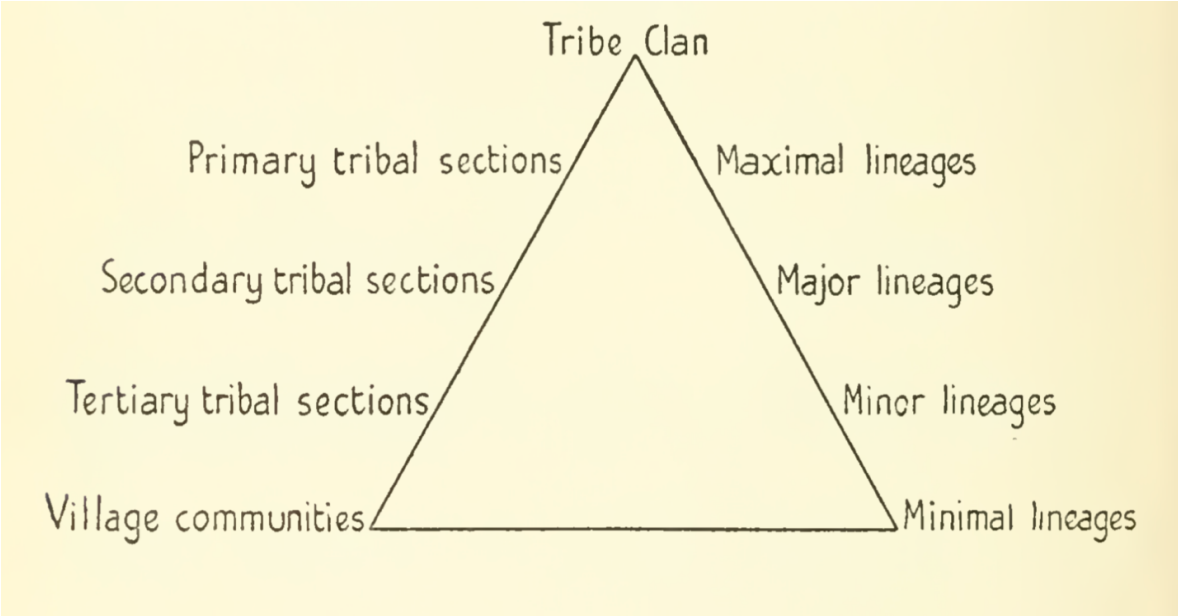


Figure 7. Nested Territorial and Geneological Units.
(Copied from Evans-Pritchard 1940, page 248)

[6] Furthermore, the word clan is often used confusingly among English-speaking people in Turkana to refer both to a territorial section (*ateker*) as well as a brand (*emacar*).

defined by descent through the male line. Broch-Due defines the brand as a clan "composed of multiple agnatic descent groups (*awi*) whose pedigrees do not necessarily intersect in any precise manner" (1990: 94). Her depiction remains problematic in that she treats the brand as an amalgamation of smaller descent-based units, but it usefully highlights the lack of common ancestry in the brand. She suggests that the brands arose historically as "transformation centres" for non-Turkana immigrants, "who later created fictional kinship ties by forming into an exogamous group in terms of marriages" (ibid). While I will not argue either for or against this particular historical explanation for the brands, it does suggest that the brands facilitate a flexible form of belonging that is related to but not completely defined by blood descent.

My own account describes the lineage and the brand as different notions of kinship that are often compatible, but which differentially emphasise seniority-based hierarchy and fraternal cooperation, respectively. The lineage is a means of tracing ancestry and establishing one's rights and duties among agnates, while the brand is used to convey a sense of the sentimentality and belonging through the image of the commonly marked herd. Furthermore, whereas both the lineage and the brand have often been described in terms of descent, I follow critiques of classical kinship that oppose the reduction of all kin relations to the categories of consanguinity and affinity (Conte & Walentowitz 2009: 228; Dumont 2006: 6), which effectively reduces siblingship to a second-level descent relation (e.g. FS or FD). Rather I focus on siblingship as an important form of filiation in its own right. Gulliver's model of homesteads and houses remains useful here, not merely as a metaphor for descent but in reference to notions of belonging through a shared home. Consider what Riesman describes for the lineage among Jelgobe Fulani agro-pastoralists:

> There are no rites which call the lineage together; its members do not meet and they do not act in common with a collective goal. On the other hand, belonging to a lineage

> gives an individual a sort of socio-geographic base from which he can operate… other members of the lineage will not be strangers to him but *suuda baaba* [those of his father's house]." (Riesman 1977: 35-36)

The house in Turkana does not provide rights to a territory, but it does designate a group among whom one can expect members to respect their obligations as brothers. They provide assistance to one another in gathering bridewealth, in which the requests are not framed in the idiom of "giving me" animals (*nakinae*), but rather as "driving out our animals" (*torama ng'ibaren luyok)* to the home of the bride's father.

Gulliver (1955: 93) recognised early on that the most obvious evidence of an agnatic principle in Turkana is the ideal to mutual commitment among brothers. Fraternal obligation was so strong in Turkana that Gulliver detected an elevated valuation of affinal relations, which could provide a useful relief when requests from brothers become excessive. Affines sometimes deposit animals in each other's herds in an arrangement that Gulliver refers to as "stock bonds". If calamity strikes one herd, a family will not lose their entire wealth and can recall animals from the other herds among which they have been distributed. This arrangement is difficult among one's brothers, as individual ownership may be disputed. Brothers refer to their animals as "ours" (*luyok*), inclusive of both speaker and listener, and indeed the animals all bear the same brand marking. But among affines the different brand markings clearly distinguish ownership, and one may speak of his animals as "ours" (*lukosi*), exclusive of the listener. This sharing is often presented in the literature as an indigenous insurance mechanism, building the ties of inter-reliance between families, creating social obligations, and pooling the risk associated with livestock protection.

Comparing Turkana to Samburu, Spencer suggested that high bride-wealth payments in the former contribute to high levels of intra-familial competition and frequent conflicts among brothers. He describes how "the Samburu regard the lack of discipline within the Turkana

age-set system and the tension that exists within their families with disgust" (Spencer 1965: 192). But Gulliver argues that this tension reflects the strength of the agnatic principle, which pushes men to seek relief in other forms of kinship.

In my own work, I emphasise how these relations are managed through the different principles of kinship that people evoke, namely the lineage and the brand. Rather than a system to manage fraternal tensions, the lineage and the brand embody different principles of obligation and authority that are evoked and emphasised in contextually contingent ways. This is best depicted through what is said and done during marriage processes. Formally speaking, marriage in Turkana is defined as the transfer of bridewealth from a groom to the family of his bride, a process that can take weeks and sometimes years. Completing a marriage brings a woman – as well as any of her future children – into the brand of the husband, such that the woman's offspring perpetuate her husband's rather than her fathers' lineage. But for the brand more broadly, marriage also creates alliances with the married woman's father and brothers, who become their in-laws (*ng'ikamurok*). The word *akuuta* describes the entire process, including preliminary negotiations (*eloto*), the transfer of animals (*akidet ng'ibaren*), and the rituals carried out to finalise the union. The same word *akuuta* also describes the actual animals that are given away, and a marriage without animals would not constitute a marriage at all. The Swahili term *harusi* is often used to refer to church-based wedding events, which are both common and acceptable in urban areas like Lodwar. But without the transfer of livestock between two brands, an *harusi* does not constitute a legitimate marriage union or make the two families affines.

During my time in Turkana, I was present for three marriage processes involving Lorukadimoe and his brothers. In the first, which occurred prior to the short rains (July) in 2015, he and others in his brand received bridewealth to complete the marriage of a female

relative. In the second event, which took place after the short rains (August) in the same year, Lorukadimoe's elder brother married a new wife, and in the third event during the late dry season (February and March) of 2016, Lorukadimoe's eldest son also married. All of these marriages involved prolonged negotiations between parties, sometimes taking months and even years, and so I was present for important events and developments but not the entire process. My attendance was contingent on the fortuity of my fieldwork period coinciding with the timing of these events, often requiring a great deal of patience; during the third wedding we walked two days to the home of the bride's father, only to camp in a dry riverbed for six more days waiting for our host to return from a last-minute trip to Lodwar.

In the remainder of the chapter, I consider the ways that different contexts – specifically at weddings and bride-wealth negotiations – place different emphases on the brand and the lineage.

Cooperation and the Prominence of the Brand

Lorukadimoe's life is intimately tied up in the brand, the Ng'ipuco (sing. Epucait). He raises his children, grows his herd, and builds his prestige through this group, and he has also negotiated his local political influence through the brand. In earlier ethnographies, political influence was sometimes attributed to structural position of certain "dominant lineages," an association between a descent group and a territory:

> There is in every tribe a definite relation between its political structure and the clan system, for in each tribe a clan, or a maximal lineage of a clan, is associated with the political group in which it occupies a dominant position among the other agnatic groups that live in it. (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 211)

Whereas the prominence of dominant lineages among Nuer was described as a fact of social structure, Lorukadimoe's local political influence was not an obvious consequence of his personal background. He lived in Urum, but his agnatic ancestors were actually from

Loreng'ipi, about 80km to the south. Rather, he has renegotiated his belonging in Urum through careful manoeuvring in relation to his brand, to affines in other brands, and to regional politicians. As one man in Lokiriama explained to me (in English), "the Ng'ipuco are like the nobility of Loima". Lorukadimoe's reputation is not as widespread as that of his half-brother Lobilamoe, who is the leader of the distant cattle camps in Loteere, the western plains in Uganda where Turkana, Karimojong and Jie herds graze in close proximity. In part due to his brother's influence, Lorukadimoe is periodically called by public officials and NGO employees to accompany them for inter-ethnic meetings in Uganda. The two have become influential leaders in the anti-raiding efforts that culminated in the 1973 Lokiriama Peace Accords, which ended decades of hostility between the Karimojong and Turkana. Local chiefs employed by the government may speak eloquently about the perils of war, but verbal commitment by elders and former warriors like Lorukadimoe and Lobilamoe provides legitimacy to these gatherings.

Barrett traces the *Ng'ipuco* to the founding of the Turkana, sometime in the 18th Century, when a group of Ng'ijie men wandered into the Turkana Basin and become lost in the Tarash valley, to be discovered by Ata Nayece, a mysterious elderly woman living far from the Jie homeland.[7] In the account provided to me, the *Ng'ipuco* brand derived from an unusually patterned stone that was eventually discovered in the Tarash Valley, and which became the inspiration for the designs that they cauterize into their animals. On one occasion, I visited the stone bearing the design of the *Ng'iponga* clan, which showed three concentric circles on

[7] Barrett (1998b) specifies that the old woman Ata Nayece was an *Apucait* from the *Jie* who had wandered far from her home collecting fruits, never to return. However, I have not found any indication of the *Epucait* brand in the literature on the *Jie,* nor have I heard this rendition of the story of Nayece and the Grey Bull. It is possible that this was an embellishment by *Ng'ipuco* story-tellers to associate their brand with the founding of the Turkana, and Lorukadimoe himself was good friends with Anthony Barrett.

one of its broken faces.[8] This is the pattern branded into the flanks of both male and female cattle, camels, and donkeys. Nearby was a large pile of stones covered in dried branches. Elders of the *Ng'iponga* visit this site from time to time, adding stones to the pile and placing an offering of tobacco on the stone. Lorukadimoe explained that the *Ng'ipuco* have a stone located to the north near Kalio. While Barrett does not indicate such a sacred site, he does note the significance of stones around Kalio. The founding group of Turkana eventually moved into the *Moru Apolon* mountains in what is now Loima sub-County, living for some time in caves inhabited by baboons. This period of dwelling in caves (*ng'aturkan*) is the most probable reason that they took the name *Turkana*.[9] However, to expand out of this region, the group needed to traverse the Kalio pass. They were directed by a matriarch to gather stones and placed them on either side of the path before ascending through the pass. These stones may be linked to the sacred stone described by Lorukadimoe, which he called *Apak a Ng'ipuco*.

The Ng'ipuco can be found across Turkana, from the shores of Lake Turkana to the western borderlands of Urum, where Lorukadimoe keeps his animals. All of the Ng'ipuco within this area are in principle his brandmates, but he is especially close to his brothers, the people with whom he shares animals. He can call upon them in times of need, when he needs food during a drought or livestock contributions for the payment of bridewealth. As shown in Table 10, notions of fatherhood, motherhood, and brotherhood cover a broader array of people in Turkana. All of a person's paternal uncles are considered to be his or her fathers. As such, the

[8] A similar stone is described for the *Lokatap* brand in the Jie tribe (Lamphear 1976:18), which is known as the *Ng'ikatap* brand in Turkana and may be related.

[9] During a month of fieldwork on the western slopes of *Moru Apolon* ("large mountain"), my travel companions often pointed out the cliffs and caves where baboons were living. While no one confirmed that people had ever lived there, the term for these sites was conspicuously *awi of ng'icom* ("baboons' home"), rather than simply "baboons' cave" or "baboons' cliff".

word *talokapa*, meaning "sons of my father" refers to paternal parallel cousins (FBS). Similarly, all of the wives of one's father are his or her mothers, such that *talokato*, meaning "sons of my mother", refer to both full siblings and half siblings.

Table 10. Terms of Immediate Filiation in Turkana and English Languages

Turkana Term	Genealogical Relation	Standard English Term
Apa	Father (F)	Father
	Father's Brother (FB)	Uncle
Ito	Mother (M)	Mother
	Father's Wife (FW)	Co-Wife / Step-mother
Lo/Nakato	Sibling (MS/MD)	Sibling
	Half-Sibling (FWS/FWD)	Half-Sibling
Lo/Nakapa	Father's Brother's Child (FBS/FBD)	Cousin

The brand was focal throughout the latter two marriages, in which Loruakadimoe and his brothers called upon relatives to "contribute" (*adokun*) animals for bridewealth. Lorukadimoe's son Ecor spent over two months traveling throughout western Loima to seek out relatives identified by his father, asking them to contribute to his wedding. Where people could not themselves attend to provide the bridewealth, they would send another relative to represent them. While contributors included some close affines, the greatest contributors were Lorukadimoe's brothers. While Lorukadimoe generally herded his animals independently, three of his "brothers of one father" (*ng'ikaitotoe*) herding their animals together beneath the Nalemtogoe hills.

Any marriage is both in the interest of the individual groom, who receives a wife to give him children, as well as the broader brand. In the wedding of Lorukadimoe's elder brother, Lorukadimoe was concerned not only with assisting his kin, but in strengthening the bond between the himself and Lokaale, a wealthy herder among the Ng'ikamatak territorial section. Lokaale had already married one of Lorukadimoe's daughters several years earlier, and so he was already an affine. But Lokaale was also a brandmate and distant relative to

Ng'ilobol family, whose daughter Lorukadimoe's brother was marrying. As such, Lokaale's existing affinal connection to Lorukadimoe would be strengthened by his involvement in a second bride-wealth exchange between the two brands.

At the wedding, the focus is on the collective brand rather than the individual groom. The groom's brand enters the homestead en masse, slowly shuffling forward with staffs raised above their heads, marching in a long winding line and circulating until all of the space is full of people. At the end of the first day of festivities, a collective prayer (*agata*) chanted among the groom's brand blesses those present and calls for them to be prepared to contribute to future marriages. Brothers of the groom speak of marrying "our wife" (*aberu nakosi*), emphasising the solidarity of all those who have contributed bridewealth.

The notion of coming together was a common theme. When the timing of the wedding was delayed, Ecor explained that he was still waiting while his people gathered (*ecunasi ng'itunga*) to contribute bridewealth. At all three of the weddings that I attended with Lorukadimoe, I heard songs that included the refrain: *Omunoi Ng'ipuco nakuuta! Tocunosi Ng'ipuco!* ("The *Ng'ipuco* gather at the wedding! Come together *Ng'ipuco*!"). Indeed, attendance by members of the brand was an important display of belonging. Even though Lorukadimoe's brother Lobilamoe could not attend the wedding, he sent one of his wives to eat at the event. Even if he cannot eat among his people at the event, he makes claims to the food that belongs to him. Similarly, when passing a home or settlement on the way to a wedding, relatives of the involved brands may explain that they cannot attend but request that you bring them their meat. Many women leave the weddings leading donkeys loaded more heavily than when they arrived, packed with uneaten cuts of camel and beef wrapped in leather or plastic. The day after people return from a wedding, there is often much visiting

between homes as women bring gifts of meat to those close to them: their co-wives, their mothers, their unmarried sisters, their daughters and their *ng'amwi*, the wives of their sons.

Seniority and the Prominence of Descent

However, while the notion of the brand evokes fraternal obligations among brothers to contribute bridewealth to one another's marriages, the lineage becomes more salient when brothers are making competing claims for bridewealth received at the marriage of a female relative. In the short rains of 2015, the daughter of one of Lorukadimoe's brothers was living with Epim, a young man of the Ng'ilobal brand. He arrived one day to announce that he was prepared to "open his corral" and release the final animals to the Ng'ipuco, completing the marriage. He came with an initial customary contribution of 10 small stock known as the *eloto*, and Lorukadimoe was asked to come speak on behalf of his brother (*akisiruor ng'akiro a akuuta*). I originally assumed that Lorukadimoe had been called to speak because he was the eldest of his brothers. The brothers were not actually the sons of one father (*ng'ikaitotoe*), but the sons of brothers (*ng'ikaipapae*). All of the men were descendants of Alepang'imoe, whose eldest son was Lomala. Lorukadimoe was the son of the elder brother Lomala, while Moru (the father of the bride-to-be) and the other two brothers were sons of Esekon. This made Lorukadimoe the elder of the four (*apolot ngesi*).

However, an anomaly emerged when I asked about the brother's generational alternations. As explained in Chapter 3, all men are divided into generational groups called the "Stones" (*ng'imor*, sing. *emoruit*) and the "Leopards" (*ng'irisae*, sing. *erisait*). The sons of a Stone will be Leopards, and the sons of a Leopard will be stones. Among Lorukadimoe and his brothers, I found that most were Stones, but perplexingly, Lorukadimoe and one of the others were Leopards. This led to some confusion, as I expected that the sons of a Stone should all be Leopards, and vice versa. Furthermore, I learned that Lorukadimoe's father Lomala had

been a Leopard, suggesting that the two were formally of the same generation. I have outlined a simplified genealogy of Lorukadimoe's descent from Alepang'imoe and Lomala, as it was originally conveyed to me but including the apparent generational anomaly, as indicated in Figure 8 (top). I attempted to investigate this issue for over a month, bringing it up during moments that felt appropriate. When I raised this concern within the family, most would just chuckle and change the topic. It didn't strike me that anyone was trying to conceal anything, but they seemed reticent to discuss the issue openly.

Arrangements were made for the Ng'ipuco to come to receive their livestock at the home of Epim's father Abong, about 30 kilometres to the west, across the international border in Uganda. Several days later, we departed in the early evening, tracing our path through the darkness in the white glow of the full moon and arriving in the early morning at the steep escarpment (*adoket*) that forms the Kenya-Uganda border. After ascending the slope and taking water, we arrived at the home of Abong in the late morning and sat in a semi-circle to the east of the homestead. Abong came to greet his visitors, cheerfully welcoming us and kindly offering the weary anthropologist some of the morning's milk. He retreated back to the homestead to commence the giving out of livestock, known as *akidet ng'ibaren*. The next time he appeared it was with the rest of his Ng'ilobal brothers, who had come to contribute animals for Epim's wedding.

The Ng'ilobal approached in a tight group, staffs raised in front of them, and knelt on the ground facing the Ng'ipuco. Each of the Ng'ipuco sat upon his wooden stool (*ekicolong*), but the Ng'ilobal laid theirs to the side, instead taking a knee on the hard soil. This was later explained to me as a custom (*etal*) for those paying bridewealth, an act conveying the hardship of procuring the animals required to complete marriage (*egogong akuuta*). The Ng'ilobal opened the negotiations; an old man rose and walked to the centre of the group,

addressing the Ng'ipuco and asking who would require animals. The Ng'ipuco then sent forward a spokesman to name those requiring bridewealth for the marriage of "our child" (*ikoku nikosi*). Speakers of each side alternated in this fashion; Lorukadimoe spoke most often on his side, although Moru (the father of the bride), Merikori (an elder brother), and several others took turns as well. Periodically, the Ng'ilobal retreated back into the homestead to procure animals, which they would drive back to the Ng'ipuco before resuming their position to continue negotiations.

In requesting animals, the names of those in attendance were rarely mentioned; talk focused on procuring animals for ancestors, most of them now deceased. Until that time, my genealogies had gone back just a generation beyond Lorukadimoe, to Lomala and his younger brother Esekon. However, as the men began naming ancestors owed animals, other brothers were named, as well as unmarried sisters, all listed as the children of Alepang'imoe. As expected according to the Turkana rules of seniority – which roughly approximates primogeniture – Lomala was named first, and all of his children preceded the children of Esekon. But what surprised me was that Lorukadimoe's animals were not procured within the line of Lomala, whom I understood to be his father; rather, Lorukadimoe negotiated his animals near the end of negotiations.

When the bridewealth transfers were completed, Lorukadimoe requested an additional goat to feed his fellow travellers before their departure. As the goat was led to a clearing outside the homestead, individuals from either side chatted together. Not all of the animals discussed during the day – which included well over 30 large stock and around 100 small stock[10] –

[10] This particular bridewealth negotiation was actually the sequel in a two-part series; an initial allotment of animals had been transferred the previous year. The groom's party had requested a deferment in the proceedings while they sought more animals.

were present, and some would need to be transferred on later occasions. Meat was eaten, and the party dispersed, some returning to Urum, and others continuing westward to check on their sons' cattle camps in the dry season grazing grounds of Loteere.

Over the ensuing weeks, I pursued my inquiry about Lorukadimoe's place in the line of seniority among his brothers. Eventually, younger male relative from one of family's more junior lineages explained that Lorukadimoe's mother Kirin had been inherited (*erumito*) in a variety of levirate marriage. Kirin was one of Alepang'imoe's junior wives, and upon his death, she had moved onto the homestead of the eldest son of her husband's eldest wife. Whereas Lorukadimoe presents himself as Lomala's son in daily conversation, Alepang'imoe remains his father according to Turkana custom (*etal*). Kirin wore a metal marriage band (*elagama*) of the colour silver, indicating Alepeng'imoe's membership in the Stones generation alternation. All of her children, even if they were consummated by another man after Alepang'imoe's death, would be of the Leopard's generation, indicating that they followed Alepang'imoe.[11] Even though Lorukadimoe had grown up on Lomala's homestead – indeed, Lomala may have been his biological father – he remains in the *ekol* of Kirin, Alepang'imoe's wife. This case, outlined in Figure 8, highlights the central role of women in tracing one's lineage, often overlooked when descent is described as 'patrilineal'.

[11] Anthropologists studying supposedly patrilineal societies have long recognized that the problem of paternity "is not so much a matter of legitimacy, as of the father making sure that the children – particularly males – that are born to his wife are definitely under his control – that they are legally his children" (Fox 1967):115). In this sense, Lorukadimoe is 'legally' Alepangimoe's child, and a younger brother to the deceased Lomala and Esekon. While he is senior to their children in terms of generations (he, like Lomala is a Leopard), his own lineage is junior to theirs.

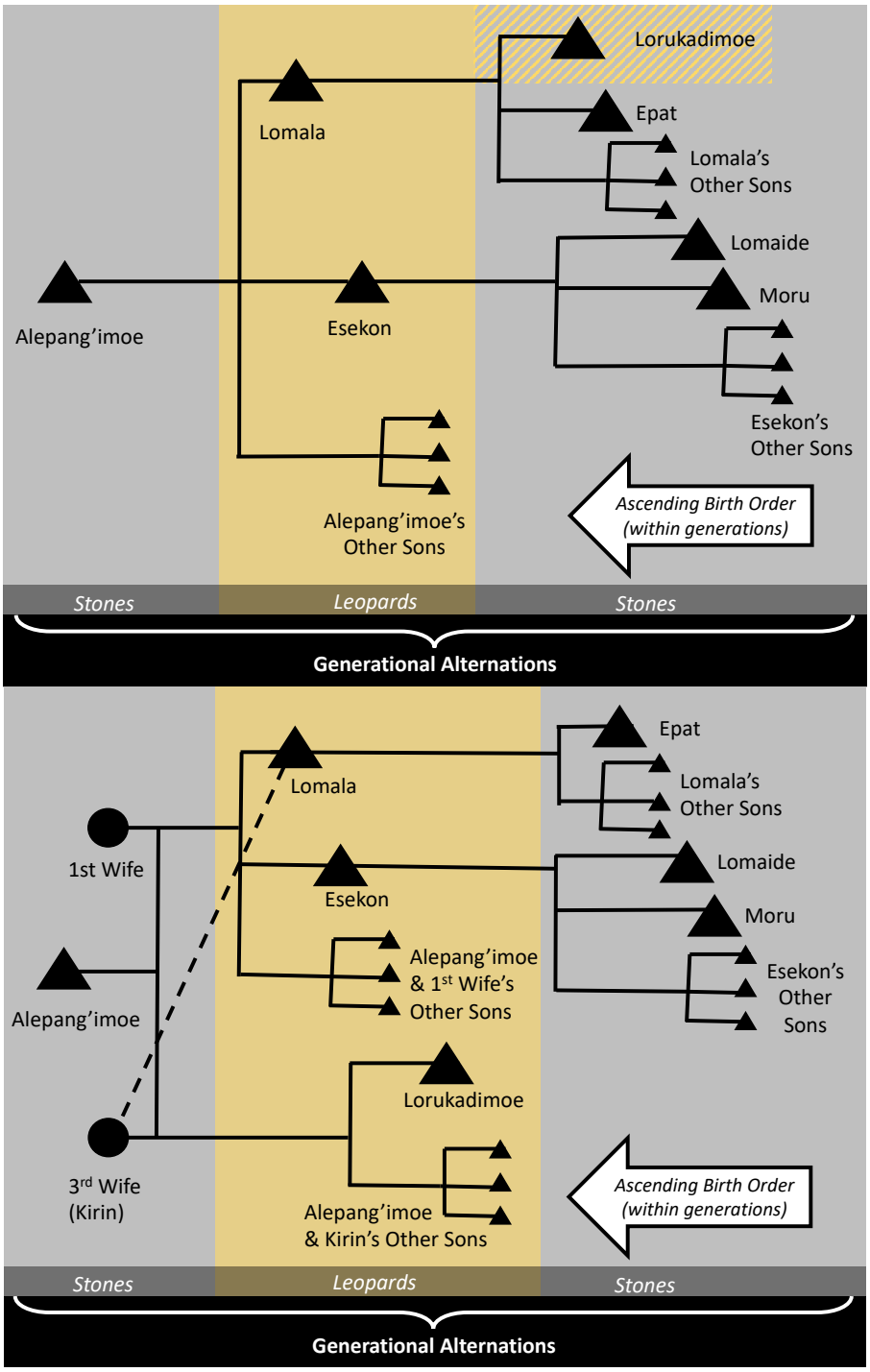


Figure 8. Lorukadimoe's Genealogy by Genitor (top diagram) and Pater (lower diagram).
The birth-based genealogy (above) was explicitly recognized in conversation and was inscribed on Lorukadimoe's national ID card. However, it features an irregular extension of the Leopards generation to cover Lorukadimoe. This anomaly is accounted for in the second genealogy (below) by acknowledging Lomala's inheritance of Lorukadimoe's mother after Alepang'imoe's death, indicated by the dotted line. Generations ascend in seniority to the left, as do individuals within each generation.

For this reason, Lorukadimoe is well positioned to serve as a spokesperson among those whom he otherwise calls "brothers". He is officially their senior in terms of generation, yet he has weaker claims to the animals under primogeniture. A similar dynamic was described in the bridewealth negotiation observed by Ohta, who saw that a man of senior generation but junior lineage "acted as a representative of the bride's side" (2007:15). Formally relegated to collect his share at the end of the process, when the groom's herd has been exhausted (*akisunyar*), he can coolly stand as a less interested individual, managing tensions and speaking for the senior lineages.

Negotiating bridewealth is therefore a balancing act, with brothers turning to their lineage to distinguish among themselves by seniority, while evoking the brand to highlight shared concerns and call upon agnatic obligations of cooperativity. There are multiple lines of tensions to manage; as Lorukadimoe manages fraternal frictions as the spokesmen among his Ng'ipuco brothers at bridewealth negotiations, he must also manage the competing interests of his brothers with those of the other brand, who may one day be an important source of support. He must argue for more favourable conditions that will preserve the wealth of his brand, but not at the risk of being seen as selfish or ungenerous. His generosity toward future affines will widen his network and increase his influence (*topolor*, literally meaning to grow big). Stinginess may result in bad blood between the two brands, which can become visible at the wedding celebration: a wedding ox that bleeds from its nose when it is sacrificed is an omen of lingering ill will.

Herders have sometimes been accused of inconsistency – whether by forgery or forgetfulness – in their recollections of lineages. Gulliver often received divergent genealogies when he asked multiple people within the same family about their ancestors. He attributes this, in part, to the gradual simplification of genealogies. Whereas the tendency of brothers to establish

their own homesteads and herds would quickly lead to a high level of fission within families, they sometimes reformulate their relations to create greater proximity. He attributes this both to intentional creation of 'idealised fictions' as well as 'forgetting or neglecting' actual genealogical links, until eventually "the men assume them to be closer than in fact they are" (Gulliver 1955: 106). The case I have described suggests a similar shifting of genealogical links.

But rather than forgetting their actual descent relations, the material here suggests that divergent genealogies reflect different emphases in sibling relations, embodied in the respective notions of the lineage and the brand. Where fraternal cooperativity is emphasised among brothers contributing to one another's' marriages, the brand is the salient idiom of kinship. Siblingship among more distantly related *ng'ipaipapae* (paternal parallel cousins) are framed in more intimate terms as *ng'itaitotoe* (full brothers), which may be conveyed by reference to a common male ancestor. However, Lorukadimoe and his brothers know their genealogies in great detail. When making claims at the bridewealth distribution, there is a clear system of seniority.

Having laid out the distinct but related principles of siblingship conveyed by the brand and the lineage, the next section discusses how these principles must be renegotiated to accommodate contemporary developments. Attention to practices and debates surrounding seniority within one's lineage and belonging in a brand shines light on tensions across gender, generation, and livelihood in a rapidly changing landscape. Of particular interest here, the expansion of urban economies, international aid, and state funding in Turkana has opened up new opportunities for women and placed increasing power in the hands of political elites, to whom many rural families invoke kinship-based claims of patronage.

Kinship through Animals

Among those practising the bridewealth-based marriage (*akuuta*), the brand takes on particular significance. Their belonging to the brand – visually manifest on the flanks of animals in the herd – is telling of the centrality of livestock in the making of kinship within herding communities. As described in the Chapter 5, young *raiya* men define themselves publicly through the performance of songs about their praise animals. Although some men – especially those who have not yet received a praise animal from their fathers – can compose songs about an imaginary animal, the animal itself is important. Young men choose a colour-pattern that they want to take as their own, after which their father should provide them with an animal of that colour. Ideally it should be an ox, but many young men are initially given a goat. They can then decorate the animal with their own patterns, once they have learned to use the branding iron. As conveyed in the following account from my fieldnotes, recorded during the wet season of 2015, the highly egotistical act of decorating one's praise-ox is tied up with the collective responsibilities to the brand, as embodied when praise-animals are marked with both the standard insignia of the brand and the creative decorations preferred by the young men who take their praise-name:

One morning in the wet season of 2015, I woke with the other men at the sleeping area (*aperit*) on the eastern side of Lorukadimoe's homestead as one of the young boys lit a fire. As the rising sun burned off the dew, we gathered around the flame to rid the cold (*akatorot*) from our bodies. Lorukadimoe sat next to his son Logirarieng'an, and discussed the morning's work: marking the younger animals with the Epucait brand.

One of Lorukadimoe's wives gathered wood to build a fire near the cattle pen while another emerged from her house with a bundle of branding irons. Once the fire was hot enough, Lorukadimoe and three of his sons walked to the kraal to select the first calf for branding.

When a male calf had been chosen, one of the boys grasped its head while the other two pulled it from the rear, and together they wrestled it to the ground. With the calf laying on its left side, one of the boys sat down and tightly held its right rear leg, pressing his right foot into the animal's stomach to hold it steady; another restrained the fore-leg and lower jaw. Lorukadimoe approached with one of the hot irons and carefully drew it in a wide arc across the rear haunch, the fur smoking and the skin crackling under the heat. He repeated the movement for a concentric arc, and then replaced the iron on the fire. Taking another, still hot from the coals, he drew a line across the animal's snout and continued the movement down its neck.

After inspecting his work, Lorukadimoe instructed the boys to release the animal and bring another. This time, he handed the iron to Lokaru, who carefully copied his father's work. After two more calves had been branded, Lorukadimoe seemed satisfied and left his sons to continue the task. Males were marked in the same fashion as the first, but a different pattern marked the females. The calves were finished by noon, but the marking of the young goats was saved for the next day. Custom (*etal*) proscribes branding animals in the afternoon sun. The next morning, a smaller fire was built at the sleeping area, and the young goats – most born about 3 months earlier at the start of the wet season (*akiporo*) – were brought forward one by one. The process required only two people, and so I restrained the hind legs of each animal while Lokaru held the head with one hand and made the marks with the other. The branding patterns for the goats were the same as for the calves, except for an additional burn beneath each animal's budding horns. The burn was small and would not be visible once it healed, but it would turn the growing horns from *lorionga* (pointing toward the animal's back) to *lokodos* (erect).

When we had finished branding the goats, Lokaru instructed one of his younger brothers to bring forward an older goat, a red male that had already been branded. He referred to the goat as his ox and called it by the name *lotimo ariengan* ("Great Red One"), which he was making his own through a process of decoration and song composition (*edwaritae*). As I assumed my position holding its rear legs, he carefully created a mark of his choosing, an elaborate pattern of concentric marks around the existing brand. When he had finished, he rose and recited a phrase from the animal's new praise-song:

> *Eh-yoo, logirariengan a-ne!* (Eh-yoo, the striped red one!)
> *Lomacarin ketwar atowo loreng gira!* (Shepherding the brand, I stand with red stripes!)

The insignia of the *emacar* emblazoned on the animals of a herd designate that they belong together, just as the family should remain together to herd them. By teaching his son to use the branding iron, Lorukadimoe raises Lokaru's awareness of his place in the brand and his loyalty to his father. But this is not a relationship of inter-generational domination; Lorukadimoe also provides the praise-animal through which Lokaru expresses his own individual sense of self. The new designs christened this animal "Logiriarigang'an", and this is now one of the names that Lokaru has taken for himself. At the night dances (*edong'a*), he enters the dancing circle to sing his praise-song, in which the refrain above is interspersed with new verses that he composes while herding. The attendees surrounding a performer would often learn the man's refrain and join in unison as it was repeated. The praise-animal becomes a metonymic link between the herder and the herd, emblazoned with both the creative decorations of individual self-expression and the cauterised emblem of belonging to the brand.

New Kinship Formations across the Urban-Rural Divide

Those without a strong basis of belonging in a brand suffer from herdlessness (*aboot*), which in an arid environment like Turkana – where farming and gathering are marginal activities – would imply poverty. But in the context of urban markets and a cash economy that provides an alternative form of wealth, livestock are a less salient basis of kinship. In the first part of this section, I consider the pathways for growth among unmarried women and their children, including both those who remain with their pastoral families and those who have sought independent livelihoods in town. I focus in particular on Joseph, a first-generation urban professional, and his mother Akamais, a woman whose life trajectory highlights both the challenges that face unmarried women as well as the changing circumstances of women's economic opportunities in contemporary Turkana. I argue that as the brand has become significant for *raiya* among those in town, the lineage has become more significant as a means of maintaining rural belonging.

In order to belong to a brand, you must become a person of that brand. Membership in a brand is conveyed to everyone by birth, through which he or she takes the brand of his or her mother. However, the completion of a wedding, marked by the spearing of the wedding ox, moves the bride from her father's to her husband's brand. As she begins bearing children in her husband's brand, she is recognised not as a girl (*apese*) but as a woman (*aberu*). Marital children (*ng'ide lu eusitae*), sometimes known as children of the house (*ng'ide a ekai*) follow her as members of their fathers' brands.

When a woman's marriage has not been completed, that is, the wedding ox has not been speared (*nyecumio emong*), she and her children remain in the brand of her father. She is formally known as a "girl of the leather skirt" (*apese a ng'abwes*), and her children are called "children of the dancing ground" (*ng'ide a akeor*). Both terms refer to promiscuous relations

at night-time dancing events. The *abwo* (pl. *ng'abwes*) is a leather skirt, the bottom of which is divided into strips ending in a heavy leather pad (*ecelet*). These pads clap together when a woman jumps, making the *abwo* both the appropriate attire and something of an instrument at dance events (*edong'a*). Most dances take place at night on a large clearing known as an *akeor* ("dancing ground"), and while acceptable these events are also associated with secret sexual liaisons, undertaken outside the supervision of parents and against the prescriptions of custom (*etal*).

Evans-Pritchard (1951: 26, 118) recognised that many Nuer women live without husbands as unmarried daughters or concubines. However, he treated them as exceptions to agnatic descent, treating them as dead ends rather than considering how women may build their houses and promote new lines of growth (Gough 1971: 106; Mckinnon 2000: 60). In Turkana, an unmarried woman often remains with her birth family, building her *ekol* among her father's or brothers' wives.[12] So that she can provide for herself and her children, she is often allocated resources from the herd and a plot of land for sorghum gardening. She is not ostracised, nor are her children treated as illegitimate in the sense connoted by the English term 'bastard'. After all, like the married women in the brand, a "woman of the dancing skirt" can also contribute children to grow the brand, including sons to care for animals and daughters who will one day bring bridewealth through their marriage. They are not illegitimate or anomalous; the elder Lomala was well known for stubbornly refusing bridewealth offers for his unmarried sisters and daughters, insisting that his herd was sufficient and that he preferred to keep his family at home.

[12] The term *apese a ng'abwes* suggests that a girl has not been married, but this includes women whose husbands are in the process of negotiating bridewealth. In such cases, the woman may reside with the prospective husband.

In a system that values relations established through exchange of bridewealth, there are clearly disadvantages for unmarried women and nonmarital children:

> Like all adaptive responses, [the bridewealth system] has costs as well as benefits. The primary benefit accrues to those established pastoralists who are heads of polygynous families and owners of substantial herds, that is, to those who are most successful at the pastoral strategy. The cost is born principally by women and children outside formal marriage unions and by younger sons. (Dyson-Hudson et al. 1998: 20)[13]

Indeed, unmarried women and their children occupy a low position in the family hierarchy, especially when the children are young and rely on the generosity of more senior male relatives. Nonmarital children take the same generational alternation as their maternal uncles, essentially making them a junior son of their maternal grandfather. After the old man's death, an unmarried woman and her children fall into a more precarious situation as her brothers begin making their own claims to the herd so that they can marry their wives and establish their own families. But the status of "children of the dancing ground" can change over the life course. As a nonmarital son grows older and his maternal uncles pass away, he is likely to find himself as the last surviving member of his generation. He may be of the same age or even younger than many of his uncle's children, and they will maintain their privileges as senior lineage members in terms of bridewealth and inheritance. But the nonmarital son will be their elder due to his generational status, and much like Lorukadimoe, he will often be a preferred representative in negotiations with other brands. I have not attended a Turkana

[13] Importantly, this analysis did not consider the marriage histories of people who had moved to town and ceased herding "because most do not return to the pastoral production system and most do not have traditional marriage" (Dyson-Hudson et al. 1998:21). However, a corresponding study by the same authors suggests otherwise: of surveyed adults, 1047 were still herding, 463 had ceased herding, and 135 had ceased but since returned (Dyson-Hudson & Meekers 1996:311).

funeral, but I have been told that elderly *ng'ide a akeor* will often preside over important parts of the post-mortem rituals, including the spearing of the deceased's dance-ox.

Nevertheless, foreign interventions such as humanitarian famine camps and the rise of educational institutions in the 1960s provided a way for struggling herding families to reduce the number of mouths they had to feed. Whether by personal choice or by compulsion from others, unmarried women and nonmarital children were more likely than married women and their children to emigrate from the pastoral sector. Children of families migrating to urban areas during the 1979-1981 drought were 66 percent more likely to be children of the dancing ground (Dyson-Hudson et al. 1998: 28, 41). Initially a marginalised demographic that was "sloughed off" (*tobutokin*) from the dominant pastoral population, they were the first to access formal schooling, making them the only candidates available for employment opportunities offered by the Church and international NGOs.

Within increasing urbanisation and development, educated "children of the dancing ground" have disproportionate claim to certain forms of economic and political capital: employment opportunities available only in town; privileged access to the imported goods required to open shops; government positions that require a minimum level of schooling. Prior to the last elections, at least six of the seven Members of Parliament in Turkana were children of the dancing ground, as is former senator John Munyes, the current governor Joseph Nanok, and the former Speaker of the National Assembly Ekwe Ethuro. As such, there is a sense that the status of "children of the dancing ground" is changing in Turkana. A man living in Lodwar explained to me that children of unmarried women have become respected children within their families. He sometimes referred to this as a matter of Turkana custom, but he also recognised that there have been tensions about this among the older generation, suggesting that this might reflect a change in status. When he had been a child, he and his siblings had

sometimes felt neglected relative to their cousins, in part due to the way that their maternal uncle allocated food and other resources within the family. But his mother would point out "these children are just yours!" (*ngide lukon ca lu*!), and so he was urged to distribute money evenly for school fees.

The Urban Option for "Women of the Dancing Skirt"

The story of Joseph and his mother Akamais conveys the ways that unmarried women and their children have managed to exploit the opportunities of development and to create a place for themselves across the pastoral town divide. I first met Joseph in a Nairobi cafe, just days before boarding the bus to Turkana for the start of my fieldwork. He was in in Nairobi studying for a Bachelor's Degree in social science at the University of Nairobi. Despite his impressive height and build, there was nonetheless a relaxed air about him as he sat slouched in his chair, patiently answering the questions of an anxious doctoral student setting out on fieldwork. Chatting in English, I found it hard to place his accent. He has lived abroad for several extended periods while working with an international NGO, which sent him on missions to the DRC, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia, Belgium, Egypt, and elsewhere. Reflecting on a recent event at which he had spoken in Turkana, he complained that his time abroad had reduced his competency in his mother tongue.

Despite Joseph's well-paying NGO job, he was not born into this cosmopolitan world of international travel and professional employment. Raised in Nalemng'orok in southern Turkana, Joseph grew up tending to his maternal grandfather's goats and cattle. He was recognized early as a strong, intelligent boy, and his grandfather recognized his potential as a herder. Meanwhile, Joseph's mother Akamais was living with his father Eng'olol far to the northwest, in what is now Loima sub-County. Eng'olol had not yet paid the bridewealth, and

so Joseph remained at his maternal grandmother's home.[14] Eng'olol eventually gathered enough animals, but on the day of the bridewealth negotiations, a dispute arose between Akamais's father and her maternal grandfather, the latter of whom wanted to claim some of her bridewealth because she had been raised on his homestead. The dispute culminated in the termination of the marriage process, and Akamais returned to live as a "woman of the dancing skirt" among her father's family in the South.

Akamais's father was fond of Joseph, but she was concerned what would happen after the old man had passed, when their well-being would depend on her brothers, who had their own families to worry about. Fearing that her unmarried status would weaken her and her son's rights to the herd, Akmais decided to send Joseph to school at the Catholic mission in Lorugum. Meanwhile, Akamais began dabbling in her own business ventures in town, selling local alcohol (*epurot*) brewed in her home. Urban areas offered opportunities for women to take on jobs cooking, cleaning, collecting firewood, and watching children. Others produce and sell local alcoholic brews (*epurot*) such as *busaa* (sorghum-based beer) and *chang'aa* (a distilled spirit), and those who collect enough money can sometimes open small shops. Women's' business opportunities have been promoted by the organization of village savings and loans associations (VSLAs), which are locally referred to as "groups". During my fieldwork in Urum, local women were being registered in groups so that they could receive loans for local business plans, most of which were focused on running small shops.[15] Such

[14] Joseph could have been incorporated into his father's brand by completion of the bridewealth exchange and payment of an additional fee (*akicul*), which is required for children already born prior to the spearing of the ox.

[15] These particular projects were being implemented as a partnership among the government's National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), the Turkana County Government, and several NGOs including Practical Action, Caritas, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the Alliance for Pastoralist Development (APaD).

groups have been in operation in Turkana for decades,[16] and Loima's first groups were founded in Kalemnyang, Namorupus, Lorugum, and Turkwell (Sangnes 1989). However, such groups have only formed recently in Urum.

Many men recognise that women are increasingly being drawn to the opportunities of town. Some complain that women in the past were interested in a man with cattle, but today's women are more interested in a man with money. Some men may embrace the opportunities offered to women in urban spaces, distributing their polygynous families across various places including villages or town where they can run small shops, farming areas where they can tend to sorghum and corn, and *lobaren* (on the homestead, literally "with the animals"). But urban areas and markets offer women a pathway to more independent economic arrangements.

Moreover, women who move to town can invest in her "house-line" (*ekol*) by educating her children and positioning them for employment in the urban economy. Akamais's long-term strategy for moving to Lorugum was to enrol Joseph in the Catholic-run primary school. After graduating, he was sent to study ICT (information, communication and technology) at a small college in Nairobi, and he eventually secured employment with an international humanitarian agency. He is now a respected and influential member of Lodwar's professional class, founding his own development NGO and spearheading research projects on rural education for international funders. Along with his wife, an employee at the County Government's Ministry of Roads, he is building a large house in Lodwar's Nakwamekwi

[16] The first women's group was founded among basket weavers in Kalokol in 1968, and a total of nine groups were founded prior to 1980. As of 1989, 74 groups had been formed across Turkana, but 6 of them had collapsed and 13 were largely inactive. During a survey by of the 68 women's groups across the 6 divisions of the district in 1989, Turkwell division (which corresponds with what is now Loima sub-County) had only 4 women's groups, compared to 26 in Turkana Central and 14 in Turkana South, then referred to as Katilu (Sangnes 1989:5).

neighbourhood, one of the few two-story buildings (*ghorofa* in Swahili) in the area. In the plot outside, the shade under his well-watered *neem* trees provide a nice place to escape the midday heat. Akamais lives in her son's house whenever she is in Lodwar, and he has provided her with a portion of his salary so that she can start a small shop outside of Lorugum, where she spends most of her time.

The income to which Akamais now has access has allowed her to purchase goats independent of the family herd and enter into pastoral partnerships with her brothers, not as a dependent but as an equal stakeholders. While Joseph was attending primary school in Lorugum, Akamais had established closer relations with the family of her uncle Lotom, and she now keeps her animals along with his children. about 40 km from Lodwar, among the Ng'imonia territorial section. This group lives alongside friends in an *adakar*, a co-habiting group whose animals feed (*edaka*) together. Unlike the cattle camp (*awi*), the *adakar* is not limited to agnatic kin, but includes affines and even unrelated stock associates. In areas that are further abroad, an *adakar* might disperse with the change of the seasons as people migrate to different pasturelands, perhaps coming together later in a different composition of members. But where small centres have cropped up along roads and near schools and dispensaries, these groups have become more enduring, even if sections of the constituent households may migrate periodically during the dry season.

Akamais's brothers and cousins have taken in the animals that she owns jointly with her son. They keep them in a corral near the rocky plain (*ekitela*) areas where they graze, while Akamais sells alcohol that she brews in her small plot in a small nearby village centre. While they maintain a hand-dug well (*akare*) at the nearby Tiya river, they also utilise the mechanical pump installed by the Catholic Diocese on the shore. Akamais is present every day to water the animals, and she often prepares a small meal for the men who have

accompanied the animals that day. She also provides assistance periodically with tending the goats as they graze or searching for lost animals. Joseph, meanwhile, visits occasionally, although his international work keeps him away for long periods. His primary contribution to his mother's herd through cash, sent electronically through Akamais's m-pesa mobile money account.

Returning Home as 'Children of the Dancing Ground'

Joseph looks fondly on his *raiya* childhood. He was a diligent herder – strong and resourceful – and his grandfather preferred to keep him with the animals. He possesses a deep familiarity with the NGO sector, and he espouses an optimism about education that fits well with the modernist ideology of development. However, he also possesses a healthy scepticism about the burgeoning oil industry and other economic interventions in Turkana, as well as a deep respect for the traditional ways of life of Turkana people. A middle-aged Catholic man, Joseph married his wife in a Christian wedding, but he is open to the idea of marrying a second wife through a bride-wealth marriage. He makes a great effort to attend customary events with rural relatives, including weddings and funerals, and unlike his urban half-brothers, he has been graduated into manhood through the *asapan* initiation ceremony. It was at Joseph's recommendation that I started my study in Urum, deep in the western borderlands of Loima sub-County, where he suggested that I would find people who persisted in their traditional livelihoods and who continued to observe the old rituals.

Even though he grew up as a "child of the dancing ground" and belongs to his mother's brand, Joseph maintains good relations with his birth father Ang'olol, who lives further west among the Ng'ikamatak. His father would sometimes visit Joseph while he was attending primary school in Lorugum. Joseph tells of one break between terms when he travelled independently, largely on a whim, to visit his father where he was living in Loreng'ipi. He

stayed for several months, getting to know his father's extended family and herding his cattle alongside his sons. Now, Ang'alol brings an animal each Christmas to eat at Joseph's home in Lodwar. Joseph has taken in one of father's youngest sons while he attends school in Lodwar; while he is technically his half-brother, Joseph is raising him like a son. Joseph continues to visit his father when he can, bringing gifts of food supplies, tobacco, and beads, and Joseph jokes that while he is not technically a legitimate child, he has become like Ang'olol's favourite son. Ang'olol's wives are similarly keen to accommodate Joseph. When he visits his father's home, the women welcome him, praising him for his hard work in town and among the outsiders (*ng'imoe*). He may not be their son, but his role as a patron is appreciated.

The connection with his father's brand also gives Joseph a claim to belonging among his father's brand, the Ng'isiger. With both formal and informal kin distributed across Loima sub-County, Joseph even vied in 2017 for a position as Member of County Assembly in Loima's Turkwel Ward, in which he achieved second place. Although he did not win the election, he attributes his support to his ability to draw on support from across the territorial sections of both his mother's and his father's brands.

However, the unprecedented nature of this relationship can lead to disagreements and conflicts within families. For one, Joseph's status puts him under a great deal of pressure, and the shade in his yard is often occupied by rural relatives requesting money, meals, or temporary shelter while visiting Lodwar. His mother resides in Lorugum, where she sells goods out of her home and tends goats with her cousins. But the shop has not done well, and her relatives often request financial support during the dry season. Joseph's four half-brothers also live in Lodwar, but unemployment is high and they often require assistance. He also fosters the children of some of his *raiya* relatives, who have sent their sons and daughters to

live with him while they study in town. The financial strain is evident in the state of Joseph's house: his wife and children live on the furnished ground floor, but the completion of the upper level and exterior of the house has been stalled due to lack of funds.

Joseph has also struggled with growing demands for cash from some of his mother's cousins, who warn him that an extended dry season may force them to eat his goats if does not send more money. Akamais's brother Lotom was often less demanding, but after a spat between Akamais and Lotom's wife, the couple departed with most of Akamais's goats and sold them at a distant market. Lotom did not extend the principle of fraternal obligations to his sister.

In a separate case, a man in Lodwar recounted his late father's regret at leaving his goats with the relatives of his wife while the family went "upcountry" – to the agricultural highlands of Western Kenya – to pursue paid work on the farms. Upon returning he found that his animals had been sold, his supposed affines claiming that these had been confiscated to cover the balance of the incomplete bridewealth transaction. Affines can be an important source of support in Turkana, but only if the marriage securing their ties has been marked by the killing of an ox, which has become more difficult among those devoting only part of their time and energy to their herds.

As changing economic conditions complicate the factors according to which men establish their homes and women build their houses, the structural principles underlying kinship and family structure in Turkana must be redeployed in new ways. Many urban people are uncertain of their own brand membership, or even the difference between a brand and a territorial section. Such animal-centric forms of kinship are less significant to them than more human-centric forms of descent. Rather, they focus on their ancestral line (*aleesit*), establishing relations with rural kin by tracing descent through to influential historical figures such as chiefs, prophets, or colonial era resistance fighters. By pointing to common ancestors

rather than shared herd ownership, kinship across the rural-urban divide is increasingly based on blood relations among people, rather than shared ownership and care of animals.

Discussion: Notions of Kinship

The circumstances facing Akamais and Joseph reflect both a long-standing position of unmarried women within their families, as well as a changing political economy that is providing new opportunities for these women and their children. In a place where it was previously nearly impossible to achieve wealth independent of the herd, individuals like Joseph who can sustain themselves on the cash economy have stepped outside the role reserved for "children of the dancing ground". Through his access to the cash economy, Joseph has established strong relationships with both his mother's and his father's family, engendering bonds of cooperativity and conviviality. The urban economy dips and rises with its own current, and urban income may still be available as the resources of the herd become scarce during a drought. For this reason, *raiya* have an economic interest in maintaining ties with urban patrons who can access employment.

With the rise of urban economies, the cattle-centric world of *raiya* herders has become increasingly involved with new forms of value and exchange focused on the Kenyan Shilling. The complication for herders is that the new source of wealth available in urban areas allows subordinated relatives – especially women and children – to pursue alternative livelihoods and cut their economic reliance on the herd.[17] Hutchinson described a similar situation among Nuer families in the 1990s:

[17] Older ethnographies describe the introduction of cash as a point of confusion for herders, some of whom rejected its use as currency. Similarly, urbanites in Turkana tell stories of *raiya* people in previous decades who would receive money from relatives and discard it as worthless scraps of cloth. However, herders have been aware of the interchangeability of livestock and cash since the British introduced saleyards in the colonial era, and money is now an integral part of Turkana economic life. For example, Hutchinson describes a reticence about money among Nuer, which – unlike cattle – does

> Before the introduction of currency and markets, the sense of self people cultivated through their relations with cattle invariably implied the support of a broader collectivity… The role of cattle in creating and maintaining this socially augmented sense of self was subsequently weakened, however, by emerging opportunities for the individual acquisition of cattle wealth. Consequently, relations of autonomy and dependence between men and women and between senior and junior men began to shift as individual and collective opportunities for the exercise of power through controls over cattle wealth declined. (Hutchinson 1996: 51)

Where kinship obligations focus on the herd, the reduction in significance of livestock can weaken claims between kin. But in the face of similar changes, the material above shows that Turkana kinship is not a traditional system that is falling apart or being left behind. Rather, kinship in Turkana has always been practised as a flexible coming-together of widely recognised principles of relatedness (*ayan*). These principles underlie the familiar organization of the raiya family, whose lives revolve around the care of livestock. For much of Turkana history – and still today for *raiya* communities – both the brand and the lineage have been evoked in the process of transferring bridewealth for marriage. Rather than forming a systematic organisational structure, the lineage and the brand are principles of belonging that stress seniority and cooperativity, respectively. They are evoked with different emphases depending on context: the brand is foregrounded to call upon fraternal obligation when contributions to pay bridewealth, and the lineage is stressed to maintain a sense of order among relatives receiving bridewealth. As imperfectly entangled institutions embodying different notions of kinship, there is flexibility in the ways they can be realised in the bonds between people.

It is for this reason that the Turkana family can accommodate relationships spread across the rural-urban divide, in which some individuals have little commitment to the family herd.

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not have blood and cannot reproduce. But when I asked some of the first shopkeepers in Nakwapua village about investments in business versus livestock, some explained that money, like animals, could multiply through profit (*eurieta ng'arupiae*, literally "money gives birth [to money]").

Despite the new circumstances, familiar notions of kinship can be deployed in novel ways. For urban elites, many of whom are non-marital children ("children of the dancing ground"), the brand and ancestral line can be evoked to connect with maternal and paternal kin, respectively. These notions of kinship have important political repercussions. Elites campaigning for government positions should be able to establish their family relations with people in the places where they are campaigning. *Raiya* elders may call upon distant members of their brand, as well as in-laws, to mobilise voters in support of a favoured candidate. Moreover, herders are often keen to cultivate bonds with urban kin who become influential, as has Lorukadimoe with his unmarried sister's son, who is employed as a chief in nearby Lokiriama.

In the next chapter, I turn from the principles underlying kinship to those deployed in the political sphere. This is not a separate sphere of activity – and as noted above – kinship remains an important basis upon which political authority is mobilized. However, authority is exercised according to a similarly flexible array of "stubborn and substantive" notions (James 1988), which – like the brand and the lineage – can be deployed in new ways to negotiate political relations between rural elders and urban elites.

CHAPTER 8: THE POLITICS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Whereas the previous chapter discussed how rural communities are negotiating both long-standing and newly emerging tensions within families, this chapter turns to broader political tensions across the urban-rural divide. I discuss the notions of authority upon which both *raiya* elders and urban elites draw in their political dealings, and the ways that the two are interacting amidst an expanding state apparatus and a burgeoning development industry. By dealing with kinship and politics in separate chapters, I am not suggesting that they are separate domains of activity. Rather, kinship is deeply implicated in politics, and much of what I discussed in Chapter 7 is relevant here.

The aim of the chapter is to discuss the notions of authority upon which different political figures draw, either for their own legitimacy or to influence the legitimacy of others. I begin by discussing how urban elites have increasingly adopted a mix of the technocratic language of development as well as familiar notions of gerontocratic authority to frame themselves as the leaders of their rural communities.[1] I describe a meeting of the Loima Professionals, an association of urban elites who have staked their claim as leaders in rural development. While acknowledging their genuine desire to provide development as a service to their communities, I also argue that the humanitarian imperative has reduced their accountability

[1] The term gerontocracy originated in the anthropology of Melanesia and Australia to specify "government by old men", but Spencer influentially applied it to polygynous pastoral societies in East Africa where power is in "the possession of wives", as expressed by older men over their sons (1965: 206). Such power was often formalized in systems of age organisation. While gerontocracy is severely inadequate to describe a political system observed in Turkana, it conveys important *principles* through which certain groups make claims to authority, especially insofar as it is invoked by elders during communal decision-making events and ritual contexts.

to the people they serve, putting the development resources of *raiya* communities at risk of 'elite capture'.

The second section turns to *raiya* elders and the chanting events (*agata*) where they chase out maleficent agents and request God's beneficent intervention. By claiming responsibility for protecting "life" (*akiyar*) among the Turkana people, elders present an alternative to the humanitarian authority of the professional class. However, they also attempt to bring the elites into a relation of interdependency and accountability through the mediating role of diviner-prophets. The third section turns to the role of prophetic figures in responding ritually to community-wide concerns such as drought. I describe a large gathering in which the prominent prophet Epeniki Ng'isir instructed his attendees on the appropriate ritual procedures to bring rain during a protracted dry season. The interdependency between prophets who divine solutions to problems and the elders who execute solutions entails an alternative model of accountability in which the prophet's power is contingent upon legitimacy from the broader community.

Agents of Development: The "Political Class"

> This dry season has really grasped us! Even the forest fruits cannot be found, the ones on which we usually depend. And now the government promises to help us through the Lopetun programme. But where is that now? (Tioko, informal conversation, July 2016)

While walking into town one day in Lodwar, I recognised a familiar figure walking toward me, a green plaid-patterned cloth draped over one shoulder and a squat hat perched high above the grey fuzz of his receding hairline. Tioko had travelled from his rural homestead near Kawalase to collect his money from the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), locally known as *Lopetun*. But like the others gathered around the bank, he had been frustrated to

find that the money was not yet in his account. As we shared tea and *maandazi* (fried dough), he lamented the drought that had killed much of his herd, leaving him in poverty (*aboot*).

Like the fruits that had long staved off people's hunger during difficult seasons, the cash transfer programme has become part of his pastoral survival strategy. Tioko spoke of Lopetun as a way for the government "to help them" (*king'arak sua*). This derivative of the Turkana verb "to open" (aking'ar) implies the removal of obstacles, as in "to open the path" (tang'a erot!). By alleviating barriers such as drought and livestock disease, God allows people to pursue wealth through the care and growth of their herds. But Tioko also spoke of Lopetun as something upon which he and others rely (*ategemere*, a modification of the Swahili verb *kutegemea* (["to depend on"]). Such relationships of dependency are undesirable but necessary consequences of the increasingly volatile ecological and political contexts in which people must practise their pastoral livelihoods. Herders deplore the "aid-waiting" that restricts their mobility, ties them to urban areas where aid is distributed, and weakens their freedom to attend to the needs of the herd (Reidy 2012). Tioko was similarly frustrated with the *Lopetun* programme as he debated whether to return to his homestead or continue to wait at the bank. He eventually acquired some food from an urban relative and set off for his home, complaining about the money lost on transport and the need for a future trip to collect his cash transfer.

Programmes run by outsiders – including the government (*nang'olanyang*), NGOs (*akampuni*), and missionaries (*akanis*) – have a long history in Turkana. They have long employed local people for work, first focusing on destitute herders recruited for physical labour. But the missionary-run school system produced graduates capable of occupying higher professional positions. As this group came to constitute an elite class, they developed patrimonial relations with their rural communities which – while sometimes corrupt – did

provide some structural accountability. But as I will argue below, that accountability has been eroded as this elite class has increasingly translated their economic privileges into political authority.

Elections for Members of the National Parliament (MPs) have long entailed patrimonial political arrangements akin to Bayart's (1993) "politics of the belly". Candidates achieve rural support through relations with local elders, by belonging to the locally prevalent territorial sections and brands, and via skill as a public speaker. Elders organise the people under their authority to vote for "their" candidates, who in return are expected to "feed their people" (*kisimuj ng'itunga kec*) with the resources of the state, such as the Community Development Funds over which each MP has control.

Following the 2017 elections, some with whom I spoke suggested that a new dynamic was at play. In the campaign for the next Member of Parliament for Loima sub-County, the incumbent Protus Akujah was challenged and defeated by Jeremiah Lomurukai. Akujah was known for his popularity speaking in front of rural crowds, as well as his influence among local elders, so the results were surprising to many. One university graduate from Loima provided an explanation: "These old men and women may like one candidate. But if their educated child comes home and tells them to vote for the other one, they will fall in line." While Akujah was popular among "the *raiya* masses", Lomurukai had successfully courted the new "political class" of educated elites who could coordinate the votes of their rural communities. While anecdotal, this observation has been taken to suggest that *raiya* people are increasingly acknowledging that their educated children have a superior understanding of government and politics, putting them in a better position to choose the appropriate candidate. Whether or not this post-election theory is accurate, it does provide insight into perceptions about the changing political relations between urban elites and rural

communities. Patrimonial politics often entail corruption and are scorned by international observers. But it also entails a relationship of obligation between politicians and their communities, which Bayart (1993) suggests can provide a form of accountability. This relation is bypassed when decision-making power is commandeered by a "political class".

The Loima Professionals Association

What are the notions of authority upon which this new 'political class' derives its authority? While I do not have any survey data to analyse statistical changes in rural opinion, I did observe various encounters in which elite put their decision-making authority on public display. In this section, I reflect upon observations at a meeting of the Loima Professionals Association, an informal club of urban professionals, politicians and business owners. The club serves as a forum to foster debate and collaborations relating to rural development in Loima sub-County. But it is also a venue at which urban elites can put on a performance of expertise in front of a rural audience, displaying their technical knowledge of development and their aptitude in negotiating local politics. By framing these competencies within a moral narrative about the need for selfless service "for the common good", speakers put themselves forward as the leaders who guide Loima toward a better future.

In July 2017, I was invited to attend a public gathering of the Loima Professional Association in Naurienpuu, just 10km west of Lodwar across the border between Turkana Central and Loima sub-County. We arrived two hours early but the venue, a clear area near the bank of the Turkwel river with shade from several large acacia trees, was already crowded. A sound system with portable batteries had been set up at the front of several rows of chairs. The chairs were set up for members of the association, mostly composed of business-leaders, NGO workers, and government employees, most of whom had arrived by private vehicle.

There were also several politicians in the front row, as well as a prominent female academic from Loima.

I was immediately struck that the arrangement of seating at the venue was roughly the same as the arrangement in which elders sit while at the feasting circle (*akiriket*). The feasting circle is a constructed space that is built wherever men want to roast an animal. The material structure of the *akiriket* is nothing more than some clean stones or leaves (usually of the *esekon* tree) that are arranged in a large half circle. The open side of the circle faces place where young men carve and roast the meat, while the elders sit around the outside of the



Photo 7. Men Gathered at a Feasting Circle (Akiriket). Photo taken at an *asapan* initiation event in Lorengalup, from the eastern side. (Credit CR, 2018)



Photo 8. Professionals Gathred at the LPA Meeting, Naurienpuu. Photo taken from the western side of the circle. (Credit CR, 2016)

akiriket, strictly organised according to seniority and generational alternation (see Photo 7). Similarly, the circle of plastic lawn chairs arranged for the Loima Professionals Association were arranged in an east-ward facing semicircle (see Photo 8).

But rather than elders, the seats were occupied by the members of the association. The deployment of a familiar symbol of authority in the name of the young professionals seemed to me a clear case of power inscribed in space. Meanwhile, the *raiya* onlookers were removed by about 10 metres from their crescent of plastic lawn chairs (see Photo 9), much as women and children sit away from the *akiriket* during a meat feast, hoping for a cut of meat from a generous male relative. At one point, an elderly *raiya* man seated on his stool stated authoritatively that he wanted to speak to the Member of County of Assembly (MCA) for his ward, who was in attendance, but he was told to keep quiet until the meeting was complete. He and the others sat and watched, although the meeting was conducted primarily in the English language, such that many of those observing from the rear would not have been able to follow along.



Photo 9. Local Residents Gather to Watch the Meeting. At several times, onlookers were asked to lower their voices so as not to disturb those participating in the centre. In the rear right, a group of herders perch on their stools to observe. (Credit CR, 2016)

The meeting was opened by the popular Christian singer Eiton, who performed his song *Ng'atuk Ibore Dang* (see Chapter 6), which urges *raiya* parents to send their children to school by suggesting that an investment in education – like an investment in the herd – brings value to the family. This song aptly captured the sense of purpose that pervaded the meeting, which was to bring the populace of Loima into the fold of the modern world, for the attendees to use their own education to help their rural communities access the benefits of schooling, business, and development. The meeting was billed as an opportunity for exchanging ideas and building capacity to implement projects across the sub-County. Attendees were lauded for taking action unlike *ng'idukakituk*, a slang word for people who hide (*eduki*) behind their words (*akituk* = "mouth") while putting nothing into practice.

The meeting included a brainstorming exercise in which the attendees were divided into 8 small teams, each of which conducted a SWOT analysis identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to development in the sub-County. One of the key weaknesses was the historically low rate of primary school enrolment. Some saw this as an infrastructural problem, stemming from poor facilities, bad roads, and understaffing at the schools. Others decried the poverty and ignorance among the rural population, leading many parents to keep their children at home to watch the animals. This issue highlights the multiple perspectives that many professionals hold toward *raiya* communities. On the one hand, Turkana traditions are celebrated as the embodiment of a shared history and way of life that professionals hold in high esteem; one participant listed among Loima's strengths the fact that its cultural systems have remained "intact", a potential opportunity for tourism but also a good-in-itself. On the other hand, traditions are also described as a barrier to gender equity and education. One participant listed as a threat that "our culture is anti-girl", referring to cases of young women being removed from school to be given away for bridewealth; another

participant suggested making humanitarian food aid contingent upon enrolment of children in primary school.[2]

The focus on development objectives was accompanied by a call for individuals to put aside their personal interests and political feuds. Some saw such divisions as a factor in Loima's historic marginalisation. One participant alluded to Ekwe Ethuro's time as MP of Turkana Central, saying "There was a time when the leadership, and I will not say who, allowed us to lose our history. Fifteen years of our history. We accepted somebody to mismanage us. So, we mismanaged ourselves." The mismanagement was a reference to the perceived nepotism of Ethuro's time in office, described in the section above, which had placed Loima residents at a disadvantage relative to the lakeside communities loyal to Ethuro. However, rather than dwelling on the past, participants were urged to take responsibility for participating in the patrimonial politics that had long been a norm and thereby making that mismanagement possible. His comment was both an acknowledgement of historical grievances and a call to arms for a new, non-partisan approach to governance and development.

The general sentiment was that the group needed to move forward cooperatively and for the common good. One man rose early in the meeting to urge the Loima Professionals to work together despite coming from "different tribes," alluding to the disagreements territorial sections, especially the *Ng'ikamatak* and *Ng'imonia* sections that make up most of Loima's population. "The professionals have become divided. They are not good keepers. They are taken by capitalism." Another attendee affirmed this observation and highlighted the conflict between personal ambition and responsibilities to the community: "You must ensure that you are helping people back home, even if you leave to make your wealth elsewhere." They

[2] In an even more blatant example of this anti-tradition perspective, a SWOT analysis posted on the wall in a local secondary school included the single word "pastoralism" in the Threats section.

reprimanded the professionals for perpetrating such divisions while the *raiya* continue to trek a parched landscape in search of water and grass for their animals. The image of a herder traversing the land despite its territorial and political divisions provided a metaphor for unity. But it also framed the herder as a moral role model who puts the well-being of their herds and their families ahead of politics.

The meeting of the Loima Professionals Meeting was an effort to challenge political in-fighting and foster collaboration among influential urban leaders in pursuit of development for the inhabitants of Loima sub-County. The virtue of this vision is that it challenges nepotism and corruption, subordinating personal political interests to the needs of the community. However, by urging leaders to avoid the old tit-for-tat norms of patrimonial politics, this vision also excludes rural communities from political participation. Herders were described as moral exemplars to be emulated (e.g. the image of the man traversing Loima for his animals) but also ignorant traditionalists in need of leadership. Similarly, Turkana tradition was held up as a sign of shared history and ethnic unity but also a barrier to development. Much like the *raiya* men seated on the periphery of the meeting, which was conducted in a language that few of them knew, the beneficiaries of humanitarian leadership are framed as targets for intervention rather than subjects to whom the leaders are accountable. Development agencies recognise that these arrangements raise the risk of 'elite capture', and, as discussed in the next section, *raiya* people in Turkana also have reason to be sceptical of such altruistic conceptions of elite leadership.

Elite Capture

The term 'elite capture' has been coined to describe the hijacking of development and aid programmes by well-positioned insiders. When international agencies apply participatory methods to devolve decision-making and project implementation to the local level, there are

often few mechanisms to prevent local leaders from misappropriating the resources (Galasso & Ravallion 1999; Platteau & Abraham 2002). In Turkana, the educated elites represented at the Professional Association are often the first point of contact for representatives from the national government, international agencies, and other sources of funding and projects, putting them in a position to mobilize resources for their communities but also to redirect opportunities for personal gain.

The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) is a good example of a well-intended programme that can easily be manipulated to the economic ends of privileged elites. Many people in Turkana have come to rely on bi-monthly cash transfers from the HSNP, an aid programme implemented by a group of international funders in partnership with the Government of Kenya's National Drought Management Authority. HSNP covers four dryland counties including Turkana and is part of a broader cash transfer programme that also targets other at-risk populations such as the physically disabled, widows, and orphans and vulnerable children. Nationally, the programme has been branded under the Swahili name *Inua Jamii* ("raise the society"), but in the Ng'aturkana HSNP has become known as *Lopetun* ("dispersed across the land") in reference to the efforts to extend support to the remotest corners of the county. Vulnerable households are identified and registered with an Equity Bank ATM card, into which cash is transferred every two months. While data on household economies is generally unavailable in Turkana, HSNP beneficiaries were selected using readily visible proxy indicators of at-risk households, such as housing materials, source of water, and the presence of material goods such as bicycles, mattresses, and radios.

After dispensation of *Lopetun* money to beneficiaries' accounts, the Equity Bank offices in Lodwar, Kakuma, Lokicar and other major urban centres were inundated with crowds of *raiya* travellers from the countryside. While the funding was an important source of

assistance for rural dwellers, especially during the dry season and droughts, stories emerged of *raiya* beneficiaries being scammed when asking for assistance at the machines. Others told of elderly men and women being beaten and robbed at night while walking with their collected cash. The threat of theft was coupled with a sudden migration of elderly people to the urban areas, where they could reside near the banks rather than make the trip out of the countryside and back every two months. Urban relatives complained that their elderly relatives had suddenly been dumped on their door steps. Many of the elderly without urban contacts settled for unsanitary or insecure accommodation, putting them at risk of disease or violence, and there was concern about what would happen to vulnerable beneficiaries if *Lopetun* was discontinued.

After identifying these concerns during Phase I of HSNP, the cooperating bank devised a scheme for Phase II that involved registering rural shopkeepers in each sub-Location of Turkana County as Equity agents. Supplied with a satellite-connected card reader, they could distribute cash to *Lopetun* beneficiaries closer to their places of residence, eliminating the requirement for rural dwellers to make the long and sometimes dangerous journey to town. However, there were soon complaints of a new form of exploitation. Some agents would intentionally exhaust their cash reserves prior to the arrival of *Lopetun* beneficiaries. They would then offer the beneficiaries two options: either 1) await cash dispensation at a later date or 2) take merchandise from the shop on credit, which would be balanced upon receipt of the cash from Equity Bank. Distraught at the idea of returning home empty-handed, beneficiaries become captive customers, left with no choice but to accept goods from the shop at a marked-up price. Because many of those registered as Equity agents were also close to public officials such as chiefs – and in some cases they *were* chiefs – they were able to avoid basic accountability mechanisms and "capture" a portion of the cash transfers for personal gain.

Some have argued that local "historically-rooted systems of forms of community based governance" are still more effective at keeping elites accountable to their communities than externally imposed monitoring mechanisms (Arnall et al. 2013: 306). However, elite capture has been widely reported as a consequence of the 2013 devolution of political power to the county level across Kenya (Cornell & D'Arcy 2014: 177). The new extractive industry in southern Turkana has been marked by a similar dynamic insofar as "political and economic elites are able to capture the bulk of the gains, by using their power and connections in order to divert opportunities toward themselves and their cronies, while the rest of their communities have to struggle for the scraps left behind" (Runci 2015: 146). Not only are educated elites the only qualified applicants for many jobs and contract tenders, but many opportunities are only advertised online and thereby accessible to those with internet accessibility (Mkutu 2014: 504).

Within Turkana, devolution has boosted the authority of the local government, and educated urbanites are often the only qualified candidates for office. This may be an especially prevalent problem in remote areas like Turkana, where stark differences in the formal education of schools and the sensory education of herding reinforce people's sense of difference and division. In remote places, "the same people take all the new jobs… development money tends to channel through the same entrepreneurs, however tiny their activities by world standards" (Ardener 1987: 48). In Turkana, educated urbanites like those in the Loima Professionals Association hold a monopoly on the technical knowledge required for leadership in development projects, including those funded by both governmental and international agencies. They put this knowledge on public display at gatherings like the one described above in Naurienpuu, where they also call for moral leadership in the face of divisive political norms. However, this notion of altruistic leadership depoliticises their vision

for rural development, replacing the informal accountability mechanisms of patrimonial politics with a vaguer sense of moral accountability.

Having described a gathering of professional elites and discussing some of the forms of authority upon which they draw, I now turn to a gathering of *raiya* elders. This section will discuss the basis upon which they perform authority, not through the discourse of development but rather by evoking tradition (*etal*).

Agents of Custom: The Patriarchs

> It is these people, the *Ng'imaruko* and the *Ng'isemae*, who are the most senior of the groups (*ng'ikapolok a ng'ajore*). When it comes time for ritual (*etal*) – initiation (*asapan*), weddings (*akuuta*) – these are the seniors (*ng'ikapolok*). Yet to come tomorrow are the others: the Ng'ikwapatom, the Ng'inyangalemwo. Yet to come are the Ng'ioiyeriko. Yet to come are the Ng'ieriyapae. These are the people of the rituals (*ng'italio*). That is the end, and their seniors are the Ng'imaruko and the Ng'isemae, the highest of these groups. (Etuko, Elder among Ng'ikamatak Section, Interview July 2016)

In Turkana, the term *ekasikouit* refers to elderly men, who may have less physical wherewithal than in their youth but who have come to command authority through their seniority. As such, their work is less focused on the day-to-day care of livestock, which they allocate to their sons, and more focused on strategy and politics, which they discuss together while sitting at the "tree of men" (*lokitoe a ng'ikiliok*) in their area. Among Swahili-speaking urbanites in town, the term *ekasikouit* is used almost interchangeably with the Swahili term for an elderly person: *mzee*. This term is easily comprehended by outsiders from other parts of East Africa, who also recognise that male elders should be treated with veneration. However, in ritual contexts, Turkana elders can make a more specific claim to seniority and status by invoking the name of their age-set. If they are in one of the senior sets, men are recognised as the big men (*ng'ikapolok*) of ritual (*etal*, pl. *ng'italio*).

This term *ng'italio* refers to the customary rules and principles to which people should adhere, from specific practices and taboos involved in daily tasks to overarching ideals of an appropriate social order. In the broadest sense, *ng'italio* encompasses customary life, including traditional forms of dress, gender conventions, and rituals like weddings, funerals, and animal sacrifices. But sometimes the term is invoked to account for an action when no other explanation is available. One should not touch the neck of a young camel when separating it from its mother during milking. Manure removed from the cattle corral should be spread in a linear formation radiating out from the homestead, not parallel to the outer fence. Bad milk may be disposed in the bush, but never in a fire. The virtue of these seemingly idiosyncratic rules is not always known, but they are followed "because they are custom" (*kotere etal*).

Rural elders are the keepers of Turkana tradition, the ones who know the *ng'italio* that their ancestors practised. As Lorukadimoe explained to me before departing for a bridewealth negotiation in 2016: "We have become the ones who are asked about these issues, the issues of Ng'isemae [his age-set], of the traditions of all our people, the traditions of all the children, the traditions to be done." He then outlined some of the procedures that would be carried out at the negotiation, the number of animals that could be expected, the new affinal relations established between the brands of the bride and groom, the celebrations to ensue. The *ng'italio* constitute the knowledge-base of elders' authority. The youth often misapply or wander from custom, and so they are reminded that when the elders are no longer alive to inform them of the appropriate ways to do things, there will be problems.

As the custodians of tradition, elders emphasise their role as the protectors of their people and lands. One way of protecting the community more generally is by gathering together at chanting events (*agata*) to call for God's intervention and "chant out" undesirable agents

from the land. A senior age-set is sometimes referred to as an *ajore a agata* ("chanting group"), as it is the elders who make their will known to others and to God (*Akuj*) by performing collective proclamations at ceremonial events, such as at the wedding that I described in Chapter 8:

> Having finalized their status as affines (*ng'ikamarak*) by killing the wedding ox, the groom's brand retreated beyond the outer wall (*alaar*) of the bride's fathers homestead, the men sitting together in the shade of a tree-lined stream-bed. After several hours, the bride's mothers emerged with three enormous watering troughs (*ng'atubwae*) full of porridge soaked in a rich milk fat (*akidyedyet*), which they then heaped directly into the open hands of their hungry guests. After filling themselves, satisfied that the day's events had been carried out appropriately, the elder men gathered together, perched on their small hand-held stools (*ng'ikicolongo*). A chant-leader (*ekagatan*), informally elected from one of the elder age-sets, rose to the front of the group, eccentrically engaging the gathering with invocations, to which the respondents voice their collective responses:
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | Speaker: | Toloto aronis! | Evil be gone! |
> | Group: | Toloto! | Go away! |
> | Speaker: | Toio nakwap ngina! | Let the land heal! |
> | Group: | Toio! | Heal! |
> | Speaker: | Kiyotok akoro! Ng'atuk eya? | Hunger, move aside! For are there not cattle? |
> | Group: | Eya! | They are here! |
> | Speaker: | Ni aronon arotoki awi! | That which is bad, leave our home! |
> | Group: | Torotok! | Leave! |

These exhortations, declared forcefully by the collective voice of the group, continued for about 15 minutes, calling for the departure of unwanted agents including disease (*edeke*), hunger (*akoro*), or evil in general (*aronis*). At the end the speaker thrust his herding rod westward over the heads of the gathering, blocking evil from coming eastward to cause harm.[3] The east is the source of life and renewal, as demonstrated each morning with the rising sun, and anyone who sleeps with their head facing the west risks possession by malevolent spirits. The Ng'ikamatak people of Loima also have a particular geographical

[3] Similarly, Karimojong elders also perform *agata* to chant out unwanted entities. Knighton describes a Karimojong chanting event at which the chant-leader gestures westward with a spear, demanding that "Anything bad, let it go set with the sun, everything is carried by the wind or Akuju" (2005:169).

relationship with the west, which is inhabited by ethnic groups with whom Turkana people are periodically in conflict, but among whom they sometimes graze together in the dry season.

Sometimes the target of the chanting is specified more precisely. In 2015 the national government's Department of Refugee Affairs signed an agreement with representatives of the local Turkana community in Kalobeyei Ward to allocate 15 square-kilometre of land for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to build a new refugee settlement. While the agreement included benefits for the local community, many herders felt that the benefits had



Photo 10. *Agata* in Loreng'elup. The chant leader (*ekagatan*) leads his fellow elders in *agata*. He raises the spear as he speaks, and then thrusts it forward into the air as the crowd follows with their collective refrain. (Credit CR, 2018)

been directed to specific political insiders and employment-seeking urbanites who had dominated negotiations. Lokwamor, the site targeted for the new refugee settlement, was an important wet season grazing area. Elders gathered to chant against the outsiders (*ng'imoe*) who had come to take their land, calling for their efforts to be waylaid. Over the following months, various failures and accidents – including a construction vehicle that sank deeply into the soft sands in a dry river bed – were attributed to the work of the elders. The contractors responsible for drilling boreholes failed to reach water. The *agata* was accompanied by various acts of sabotage, as when newly dug foundations and latrine holes were re-filled with dirt overnight. As one resident of Lokwamor explained:

> We were consulted but those people wanted to do things without our consent. That's why we rejected them and cover up the beacons they had put here. No one would ever accept such arrangements which happen without the knowledge of the people who live here. [Interview, Lokwamor, September 2017]

These interventions succeeded, and the UNHCR decided to depart from the Lokwamor site. By 2014 it was negotiating land in the more arid area of Natukobenyo, which was of less value as wet season pasture. The situation showcased the politics of representation that complicate community engagement in Turkana. Leadership that does not represent the interests of *raiya* communities – as well as the heterogeneity of interests within those groups – is unlikely to leave the majority satisfied. More than just "elite capture", in which influential individuals turn international resources to their own profit, this seems to represent a form of "urban capture." This may not imply deviousness on the part of urban leaders so much as a sedentarist myopia, in which the mobile majority do not feel properly represented.

While protecting both individuals and the broader social body from evil agents and misfortune, such actions also showcase elders as ritual protectors of their communities. The protective role of elders is formalised in their role as fathers (*taapa*) of all of the people. Their power is sometimes described as the beneficent capacity to call upon God for assistance, or

more negatively as a curse that can strike those who breach the authority of elders and their instructions on custom. Lorukadimoe once warned me that, regrettably, "when we are gone (*kemam sua*), there will be problems (*ng'ican*)", since the younger generation lacks the knowledge needed to carry out tradition.

Agents of God: The Prophets

Turning now to a third embodiment of authority, I consider the role of prophets as ritual leaders who deal with community-wide issues like drought but who also depend upon the elders for legitimacy. While often framed as a fading institution of customary leadership, I argue that prophetic figures remain important in part due to the structural accountability that they maintain between central authority figures and their followers. The ethnographic record from Northeast and East Africa has often described a tense relationship of cooperation between elders and prophets, in which the religious authority of the latter depends upon but at times challenges the descent-based authority of the former (Bonte 1981; Rigby 1988: 75). I consider a discussion of a large gathering called by an influential prophet to bring rain to the parched lands of Loima in 2015, one of the most important examples of interdependencies among customary leaders and urban elites. This provides insight into the ways that elders use the prophet's need for legitimacy to maintain a relationship of accountability. Moreover, insofar as prophets have called upon politicians to attend their gatherings, they accommodate relations with urban elites into their ritual roles.

"Remain as You Are": Moral Lessons from a Traditionalist Prophet

By September of 2015, herders in Loima had become worried about the state of the short rains, which are needed to spur the last wave of germination and vegetal growth (*elibit*) before the onset of the long dry season. The concern was not just Loima sub-County itself,

but the Loteere plains further west in Uganda. Loteere is the dry season grazing area for most of the Ng'ikamatak people's cattle, and it usually provides grass even when other pastures have been depleted. However, one of Lorukadimoe's older sons Erot had recently returned to the main homestead in Urum with news that even Loteere had become dry. The only site with sufficient water was Kabebe, where the Ugandan government had constructed a dam for watering livestock, and even their levels were ominously low.

Herders' concerns in Turkana were paralleled by those of experts in Nairobi. The period from 2015 to 2016 was affected by the El Niño Southern Oscillation, which was expected to cause flooding in much of Kenya. But in Kenya, El Niño would cause a dry spell. Indeed, by early October, "very poor vegetation had dominated… caused by drier than average conditions lasting since mid-August" (World Food Programme 2015).

In response to these concerns, an influential prophet (*emuron*, pl. *ng'imurok*) named Epeniki Ng'isir called together the Ng'ikamatak elders for a gathering to "appease the ancestors" (*ng'akipeyos a ng'ikaram*). The event was also called "killing the pelt" (*taar ajulot*), referring to the sacrificial slaughter of appropriately-coloured livestock, as prescribed in the prophet's dreams. Others called it going to the tree (*lokitoe*), the term referring to a convenient shady place where men gather for both ritual and casual conversation.[4] Yet others called it *agata* ("chanting"), referring to elders' collective invocations for rain, by which they make their will known to God (*Akuj*).

[4] Across Turkana, certain large trees become recognized as convenient meeting places and ritual sites. A tree of this sort becomes known as a "tree of men" (*lokitoe a ng'ikiliok*), the recognised meeting place for meetings amongst elders, initiations rituals for young men, and sometimes livestock sacrifices for the community. When elders are away to attend such events, those at home will explain to inquiring visitors, in simple terms, "he is at the tree" (*eyei lokitoe*).

If attendees performed as instructed, rain would come before the end of the ritual. The prophet would not attend the event in person but would give instructions about the appropriate ritual procedures to appease the ancestral spirits. The event would take place at Locor Lomala, a spring in the mountains to the south east of Urum that had been given the name of Lorukadimoe's late father Lomala, an influential elder in the area. For this reason, Epeniki Ng'isir had emphasized the importance of Lorukadimoe's attendance. In late September, Lorukadimoe travelled to Lokiriama, 40 kilometres to the south. He was accompanied by his two youngest wives, who would remain in Lokiriama while he was at the gathering in Kapil. His son, a secondary school graduate who ran a small business in Lokiriama importing the herbal stimulant khat, decided to accompany his father to the ritual.

Due to the strictness of the prophet's traditionalist doctrine, non-Turkana people such as myself were not allowed to attend the event. I therefore remained in Lokiriama with Lurukadimoe's nephew, an assistant chief. I inquired about the event from a distance, speaking those who came and went with instructions from the prophet. After a week I returned to Lorukadimoe's homestead, which had recently been moved westward to Moru Ita due to the dry season. Afterwards, I followed up on the events by interviewing attendees, but I never met the prophet Epeniki Ng'isir in person, as he was murdered several months after the event in what appeared to be a feud between diviners.

As Lorukadimoe departed for Locor Lomala, life in Lokiriama carried on as normal. Most town residents – who do not often describe themselves as *raiya* – remained behind. While many had never attended school, their urban livelihoods are focused more on trade than livestock. They do not wear traditional clothes or tend to animals, and so they would have felt out of place at the prophet's gathering. They described Epeniki Ng'isir as a devout advocate of traditionalism, adhering to *ng'italio*, the "customs" associated with the Turkana past. He

rejected the food of outsiders (*akimuj a ng'imoe*), partaking only in foods associated with Turkana's pastoral past. Meat, milk, blood, and sorghum were appropriate, and even corn was acceptable, but rice, pasta and manufactured items sold in rural shops were shunned. He urged women to wear traditional hide clothes (ng'abwes) rather than contemporary cloth skirts (*amarinda*). I noted that men were not held to the same customary standard. The colourful Maasai cloth (*ecuka*) was not available prior to Independence, and many men went with little or no clothing to cover their bodies during the day. However, the standards of normality have shifted, nudity is no longer acceptable in public, and the Maasai cloth is now treated as traditional garb. The line between customary and contemporary is blurred. Some observers joked that Epeneki Ng'isir drew the line as he saw fit, as reflected in his exception for Coca Cola in his otherwise austere lifestyle prescriptions.

The name Epeniki Ng'isir means "he scolds the Ng'isir people", a nod to the prophet's hortatory tendencies among rural people increasingly drawn to the goods and technologies associated with urbanity and modernity.[5] I first learned of him during a conversation with a Lodwar resident about ongoing development projects in Loima. I expressed the reservation that not all interventions are necessarily beneficial to locals, and the man sitting across from me at the shoe repair kiosk immediately agreed. He had family in Puc, a remote settlement in the mountains of northern Loima. The area is currently reachable only by a poor road from Namorupus and a footpath near Nakwapua. Some of the inhabitants of this area, concerned that government intervention would bring internal conflict to their community, had rejected government proposals to build a new road; some had even threatened to use force to prevent

[5] The Ng'isir people are sometimes described as a section of the Turkana people living in the dry central basin east of Loima. Others describe Ng'isir as an umbrella category encompassing multiple sections (Barrett 1987: 7; Barton 1921: 207). Regardless of its territorial implications, the name Ng'isir is derived from the word for decorations and adornments (*esir*), referring to those whose showy attire would go against the prophet's ascetic sensibilities.

construction. I soon learned that Epeniki Ng'isir had been influential in this local anti-modernization movement. In addition to his strict asceticism, the prophet had a reputation as harsh and even dangerous. He belonged to the Ng'ing'olereto clan that is prominent among the Ng'isonyoka people to the south, where he had lived for most of his life. However, under mysterious circumstances following his wife's death (some claimed he had killed her with his powers), he eventually left to join the Ng'ikamatak people.[6]

When I asked why Epeniki Ng'isir adhered so strictly to his traditionalist code, one man told me that other prophets are more accepting of development and modern life, including Locan, an *emuron* living in Lobei who owns his own shops. Whereas Locan was accepting of modern things or "things of outsiders" (*ecamit ng'iboro a ng'imoe*), Epeniki Ng'isir urges people to remain as they are (*kidong' kong'ina*). By adhering to custom, the prophet wanted people "to live together (*boi kaapei*), for if someone stays alone (*kotere kesilikin etwaan*), they must be mean or greedy (*emwona ngesi*)". While many of the residents of Lokiriama town had engaged in business and trade, they nonetheless felt that they – like the raiya – were targets of the prophet's moral sanctions.

Many anthropologists agree that prominent prophets are relatively recent figures in East African history, arising in troubled times as a response to challenges facing the community (Anderson & Johnson 1995: 4), especially external threats such as warring ethnic groups (Lamphear 1992), colonial incursions (Iliffe 1967), or the state (James 1988). Yet others attempt to deal with internal social problems, responding to "disintegration" (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 310) or serving as peace-makers (Hutchinson 1996; Johnson 1994). High prophets

[6] The *ng'imurok* (encompassing prominent prophets as well as more mundane healers and diviners) in the south are renowned across Turkana as dangerous. It is said that if a woman walks past a group of old men and refuses their requests for water, she will not make it home without meeting some sort of problem.

among Nilotic people may have been inspired initially by interactions with agricultural Bantu societies, among whom prophets were more common (Berntsen 1979; Fratkin 1996: 94). However, prophetic figures of pastoral societies – including the Nuer *gwan kwoth* or "possessor of Spirit" (Johnson 1994), the Samburu *laibon* (Spencer 1965) , or the Dinka *tyet* or *aciek* (Lienhardt 1961) – have figured centrally in their respective ethnographies.

To acquire a following, any prophet must draw upon existing principles and practices familiar to their respective communities. New prophets may invoke 'prophetic traditions' by imitating the behaviours of widely recognized predecessors (Anderson & Johnson 1995: 16). But the ebony diviners described by Wendy James draw upon more fundamental idioms in the cultural archive of the Uduk people, an array of resilient notions that precede the prophetic legacy. Uduk body cosmology places the will in the liver (*adu*), the primary focus of the body's animating power (*arum*), as well as the stomach (*bwa*), the organ of autonomous thought and within which previous experiences are stored. Knowledge is the product of seeing-knowing (*mish*) via interactions of the eyes-and-liver or eyes-and-stomach. One way of pursuing this way of knowing is through dreams, and the dreams of the Ebony Diviners endow them with the knowledge required to intervene for the sake of people's *arum* (James 1988: 70-77). These ideas of health and sentience constitute a body cosmology that is fundamental to Uduk personhood. By referencing this deep cosmology, the moral knowledge of the ebony diviners strikes a chord with the sensibilities and everyday experiences of their followers.

Turkana prophets such as Epeniki Ng'isir make similar references to a 'cultural archive', some of which relate to body cosmology. Aside from community-wide concerns like rain and raiding, an *emuron* may be consulted to deal with disease (*edeke*, pl. *ng'idekesinei*). Ordinary disease is often attributed to God (*ng'idekesinei a Akuj*), in which case the ailment should be

left to resolve on its own (*kimyek ca*) or treated with simple home-based remedies. Alternatively, disease may be attributed to witchcraft (*akapilanut*), in which case it requires intervention by an *emuron* to determine the identity and intent of the assailant (Shelley 1985). In my own fieldwork, I have also heard people distinguish between "disease alone" (*edeke pas*) and "bad disease" (*edeke lokaronon*). Whereas the former may be severe enough to necessitate a visit to the hospital, they are of a simpler etymology than "bad diseases", which are complicated by the malign intentions of witches or spirits. The term *emuron* is sometimes used to describe anyone with specialist knowledge of herbal remedies (*ng'ikito*), but only an *emuron* with divinatory prowess will be able to deal with diseases inflicted with malicious intent or witchcraft.

I was told of many kinds of witches (*ng'ikapilak*, sing. *ekapilan*). Some operate from a distance, and an *emuron* may divine that someone's ailment has been caused by a faraway person. However, most witchcraft-related ailments are attributed to a more direct interaction. An *akasilikan* tricks their victim into eating a poisoned piece of food. Upon being swallowing (*akiliko*), the food becomes lodged in the person's throat, where it remains for days or even weeks. While the victim will not suffocate, they will find that the food prevents them from acquiring strength when eating, and the person will eventually wither away and die. Alternatively, an *akeyangan* steals human body parts from shallow graves and cuts (*akiyang*) them into bits, which are scattered throughout the shallow wells upon which people rely for water. Those who drink this water are then cursed and made ill. A third kind of witch is an *akarakan*, who inflicts a curse (*arakar*) on a person by staring at them or their food. In all of these modes of transmission, illness is imparted into the body through its points of vulnerability, especially the mouth (via food) or the eyes (via staring). These are the places at which the body is permeable to other people, especially those who feel jealousy (*atereku*) for what the victim possesses. Much as Uduk people may experience their own thoughts and

experiences through their stomachs, jealous others in Turkana are encountered through intense and often uncomfortable moments of seeing and staring, or being seen and being stared at.

Aside from the evil intentions of the assailant, witchcraft is sometimes attributed to stinginess of the victim. One should not eat in front of other people who do not possess food, lest they find themselves "eating in the midst of witches" (*enyami kiding a ng'ikapilak*). People should display generosity (*epatana*) to avoid ill will from others, feeding their hungry visitors and sharing food when it is plentiful. The former war heroes of Urum (*ng'ikaruok*) are celebrated for their heroic confrontations with enemies, but only those who are generous maintain their prestige as influential elders. Rural shop-owners, however, tend to develop a reputation for stinginess. They display their abundant stock on the shelves of their shops, but they do not give it freely. Instead, they become hard (*togogonger*), accustomed to the covetous eyes of those who cannot afford their merchandise. It is for this reason, in part, that Epeniki Ng'isir despised the emergence of shops that accompany road construction and economic development.

Both those who withhold their wealth and those who are excessively demanding remain alone (*akisilikin*), and it was against this breakdown of social inter-reliance that Epeniki Ng'isir was fighting. His moral preaching is reflected in local stereotypes of the two most prominent territorial sections in Loima: the Ng'ikamatak and the Ng'imonia. The Ng'ikamatak are sometimes described as the people who speak in proverbs (*ng'akamatak*). But others suggest that their name was derived from the abundant water in their territories, which has made them accustomed to drinking (*emataka*) copious amounts of water. On the other hand, the Ng'imonia are known for their stinginess. A common refrain among the Ng'ikamatak is that *kimina ng'oni ng'akipi* ("we love water") *ka Ng'imonia eminasi akure* ("and the Ng'imonia

love thirst"). In their typical proverbial fashion, they are suggesting that the Ng'ikamatak are quick to drink, but also quick to let their guests drink. But the Ng'imonia will sit with thirst so that they do not have to offer what they have to others. As one man explained to me:

> This thirst is actually stinginess (*arae akure amwonis*). When a visitor arrives, the man's ear will go two ways. On the one hand, he will want to welcome and feed his guest. On the other, he will look at his goats and want to preserve the herd. It is not that he is bad-natured, but he will have concerns. Maybe it is because the Ng'imonia live in a harsher climate than the Ng'ikamatak. (Erukut, informal conversation, Lodwar, August 2016)

Erukut was not suggesting that the Ng'imonia are bad people. But he joked that the Ng'imonia may have acquired their name because of their *amwonis*, a term that refers to both stinginess and heat, the latter of which is a property of witchcraft (*akapilanut*) and the jealousy from which it derives. Erukut's comments provide an unlikely etymology,[7] but they reflect the reputation of the Ng'imonia people in popular opinion: that when asked to for help, they are "hard in bringing it forth" (*egogong kec akipotor ibore*). By preaching for people to stay together, Epeniki Ng'isir is opposing those who fit this stereotype, and more particularly the *amwonis* of those who remain alone.

Bringing Rain

October 3rd: Lorukadimoe and his companions returned to Lokiriama without any signs of rain. Epeniki Ng'isir had reported that there had been some disruption of the rituals in his absence. News arrived that another *emuron* living in Kaloboi to the east had found the source of the problem: his son had used witchcraft to curse the event, perhaps out of jealousy for Epeniki Ng'isir's prominence. Epeniki Ng'isir explained that everyone should gather for

[7] The most probable etymology for the Ng'imonia people's name is that they once lived in a forested area (*amoni*), perhaps in the Loima hills, which are unusually lush compared to the surrounding plains.

another event further east at Kapil. The perpetrator would transfer goats to the elders at Kapil, a fine paid for his transgression. With this interference cleared, the prophet predicted that it would rain several days after the new moon. Epeniki Ng'isir would now attend in person to ensure that the rituals were executed appropriately. He also called for some of the local politicians to attend, but he warned that they could not drive the whole way to the event in their Landcruisers. They should leave their vehicles some distance from the dry riverbed where the event was taking place.

October 10th: Lorukadimoe departed for Kapil, but not everyone remained confident in the prophet's revised timeline. His brother Ekeno, a prominent leader further west, decided to return with his companions to their herds in Loteere. The diminishing resources meant that Turkana herders were forced to graze their animals alongside Jie and Karimojong people, and the intermingling of their herds could bring tension. The leaders did not want to be gone too long. Those gossiping in Lokiriama also suspected that Ekeno was not fond of this new prophet.

October 11th: A young man named Ekaru returned to Lokiriama from the gathering at Kapil. He arrived at the home of Lorukadimoe's nephew Ekuruka, the assistant chief of Lokiriama, to request medicine for his chest cold (*arukum*). He had been instructed to follow the Nacarakan river westward to Loteere to procure an ox for sacrifice. The prophet had divined that the rituals would not bring rain unless an animal was slaughtered on the grave of a prominent herder named Sikiria. Epeniki Ng'isir had indicated that this ancestor, who was also known as a prophet, needed to be fed by his descendants. The ox would be taken from the herd of one of Sikiria's sons, who was staying on the near side of Loteere. Ekaru passed the heat of the afternoon in Lokiriama, and in the early evening he drank a deep pitcher of

water offered by the assistant chief's wife and departed westward with just his stool and herding staff.

October 15th: The new moon arrived, but Lorukadimoe's wives were getting anxious. Their three older co-wives had remained behind to milk their camels, watch over their possessions, and care for their children. But as the youngest and ablest of the women, they feared that their long absence might be felt on the homestead. Moreover, one of Lorukadimoe's recently married daughters Arumait had returned several months prior due to disagreements with her new husband; the two had been unable to have children and were blaming one another for sterility and infertility. There were rumours that the man and his brothers were planning to demand that some of Arumait's bridewealth be returned, perhaps forcibly. I made arrangements to ride with a Ugandan driver heading to Urum village to sell vegetables.

Back at the homestead, we found that life was carrying on as normal. The surrounding plains were dry, but the family had relocated to the base of the mountain Moru Ita, where the grass and browse was still available. The wells were now faraway, about 12 kilometres by the paths. The animals were only watered every other day, and donkeys were used to transport large jerry cans of water back to homestead for drinking and cooking. The homestead was also conveniently located along one of the main paths to Loteere, so the women were able to ask passers byes for news about the rest of the herd in the dry season grazing grounds, 30 kilometres to the west. One man brought news that Lorukadimoe's eldest son had taken in a Karimojong woman. While interethnic relationships are neither unusual nor forbidden, the woman was already married, making this an illicit affair. The threat of a visit from their Arumait's former husband was compounded by the fear of an attack from an angry Karimojong mob, and the women hoped that neither would occur before the men's return, while they were alone at the homestead.

Oct 19: It rained late in the afternoon. The desiccated river-bed that wound around the base of Moru Ita was rendered impassable within an hour. I assisted the women as they rushed to cover their houses with hides (*ng'ajemu*) and plastic sheeting (*eam*), quickly turning the open wooden skeletons into solid patchwork domes. One of the younger co-wives Akal was fighting the rising ground water, reinforcing a series of small furrows to direct it around rather than through the house. I suggested that the ritual at Kapil had succeeded, and she replied, "yes, but let God slow the downpour (*kiyapak Akuj elal a ng'akipi*)!" Early the next morning, with the rivers gushing and the mud thick on their rubber sandals, Lorukadimoe and two companions returned from Kapil. Confident that their ritual work had succeeded and that their efforts would be deemed satisfactory to those who had remained at home, they nonetheless continued to adhere strictly to *ng'italio*. Upon returning to the homestead, they refused to shake hands in the way of outsiders (*ng'imoe*) and only greeted us in the customary way – a call (*naa*!) and response (*paiya*!) that is repeated two or three times between the interlocutors – as prescribed by the prophet.

"All the Prophets are Dead": Legitimacy in Prophetic Leadership

While I have thus far translated *emuron* (pl. *ng'imurok*) as "prophet", this term is in need of clarification. Others have described *ng'imurok* as witch-doctors (Barton 1921: 206), diviners (Lamphear 1992), folk healers (Sakumichi 1997: 229), and as "diviner, healer, religious leader, magician and witch-doctor rolled into one" (Harragin 1994: 3). The last captures the variety of figures who may qualify as an *emuron*. An *emuron* is sought by individuals ailing from disease, young men preparing to go raiding, communities that suspect an imminent attack from enemies, and by elders during times of drought. It seems that the term is used today with less specificity than in the past, and perhaps with greater suspicion.

One reason for this broadened use of the term may be that the term *emuron* has been associated in the urban imagination with the Swahili term *mganga*, which encompasses customary healers, herbalists, diviners and various other informal practitioners. For many advocates of modern medicine, as well as anti-traditionalist religions such as Pentecostalism, this association carries negative connotations, as the *mganga* is popularly implicated in stories of witchcraft, sorcery, and Faustian deals. Town dwellers sometimes describe *ng'imurok* as charlatans; others fear that they will use their powers to malicious ends. Locals in one village outside Kakuma, weary of an *emuron* who used his powers to bully people into providing tribute, called upon a sorcerer from the local Somali diaspora to intervene.[8] The *emuron* and the sorcerer faced off in a duel, casting spells until the *emuron* was bested and forced to capitulate. The sheik released him from his mortal curse, on the condition that he cease using his magic to harass those in the community. Further south in Lokicar, an area known for particularly dangerous *ng'imurok* (and from which Epeniki Ng'isir had come), stories circulated of young children being abducted from school by *ng'imurok* for use in their magic. These accounts probably reflect a fascination with morbid stories of murder for magical work, including human sacrifice and even cannibalism, that have circulated in the international media across Africa. But many *raiya* people with whom I spoke dismissed such stories as rumours; *ng'imurok* do not carry out human sacrifices.

However, another reason for the broadened use of the term is that the more conventional role of the *ng'murok* as a diviner of everyday ailments such as disease has been embellished by

[8] While more ethnically homogenous than other counties in Kenya's arid north, Turkana has been host to Somali migrants since British occupation, when they served in military and administrative posts for the colonial government. Many of the prominent transport, wholesale, and restaurant businesses in Turkana are now run by Somali families. Some Somalis have also married Turkana women and own large herds. While some complain that Somalis do not permit their own women to marry Turkana men unless they convert to Islam, others praise their willingness to learn the Turkana language and live the *raiya* lifestyle.

the more pretentious performances of the "Diviners of God" (*Ng'imurok a Akuj*), who claim to acquire their knowledge directly from God. Lamphear (1992) writes that these powerful authority figures probably arose sometime in the 19th century to fill a need for military organization. Lokorio was one of the first great diviners to exercise influence across most of the Turkana population, at a time when they were expanding into new territories against neighbouring groups like the Suk. After Lokorio's' death, few succeeding *ng'imurok* achieved the extent of Lokorio's authority, but they were prominent in resistance movements against the colonial administration, especially in the northern reaches of Turkana. Today, the most powerful prophets have influence over a section of the Turkana, such as Epeniki Ng'isir's authority among the Ng'ikamatak, but I have not heard of anyone acquiring a following across the entirety of the Turkana people. While Epeniki Ng'isir is often described simply as an *emuron*, strictly speaking he is an *emuron a Akuj*, a prophet speaking directly to God in his dreams (*arujere*), whereas the ordinary *ng'imurok* rely on oracles for their divinatory work in treating illness. Nonetheless, both prophets and ordinary diviners are often referred to simply as *ng'imurok* in everyday discourse. For this reason, the more eccentric and often aberrant behaviour of the prophets seems to have coloured public opinion of the more mundane practices of ordinary diviners.

However, despite these important differences, the ritual role of the prophet (*ng'imurok a Akuj*) is in many ways similar to that of the ordinary *ng'imurok*. They use their divine insight to determine the nature of a problem and to prescribe an intervention. Intervention often involves a livestock sacrifice (*ajulot*) of an animal with particular features. The term *ajulot* is the singular of the term for fur (*ng'ajul*), referring to the hide of the animal. In order to distinguish individual animals, herders use a complex naming system to describe animals according to their features, including fur colour (e.g. *lokwan* [white], *lokirion* [black], *long'or* [grey], *loarieng'an* [red], *lomug* [purple-brown] *lopus* [roan]), as well as the pattern of those

colours (e.g. *lomeri* [spotted], *long'orok* [patched], *loaze* [striped]). Colour terminology has been described extensively in discussions about the priority of livestock in the vocabulary (Evans-Pritchard 1940), aesthetics (Coote 1992), and subjective perception (Buxton 1973; Turton 1981) of pastoral people.

When a prophet provides instructions for sacrifice in response to a problem such as disease, they prescribe the fur (*ajulot*) of the animal to be sacrificed, which can be general (e.g. black or white) or sometimes quite specific (e.g. *lomeripus* [spotted roan] or *lokapelimug* [purple-brown with a large white patch on the torso]). An animal fitting that description must then be procured and sacrificed, usually via *akicum*, that is, penetration with a spear on the right side of the body.[9]

By partaking in a chanting ceremony (*agata*, described in the next section), the elders at Kapil called upon God (*Akuj*) to water the land and allow the herds to grow large (*topolor*) and their owners to become wealthy (*tobar*). However, this request would only be met after appeasing the ancestors (a*kipeyore ng'ikaran*), such as the late prophet for whom Ekaru was seeking *ajulot*. When he passed through Lokiriama to procure an ox for sacrifice, he referred to it as *emunyen* ("clay"). *Emunyen* is applied to the body either as decoration or, on some ritual occasions, for protection. The purpose of the clay depends upon its colour. Red clay is hot and should not be worn by men or married women, but young women wear it in their hair to indicate their marriageability and implicitly their fertility. But blue clay (*emunyen lopus*) is associated with men and possesses a cooling effect; it is smeared onto the bodies of the sick

[9] Certain diseases require sacrificial methods other than *akicum*. For example, the disease *lomesekin*, which involves severe swelling and pain in the legs, requires a sheep to be slaughtered while held above the sick individual. The blood pours over the person's body, washing away the disease. In another case that I witnessed, a child was suffering from *agule*, a leg ailment causing pain and often associated with polio). As a remedy, a goat was slaughtered by cutting the throat, and the meat was cooked to produce a hearty soup (*epoko*) for the patient. Whereas spearing (*akicum*) is the sacrificial method of men, *aking'ol* (cutting the throat) is a method of slaughter reserved for women.

to reduce the hot effects of their disease (*edeke*), especially when the disease has been sent by a witch. However, Ekaru used the term '*emunyen'* as a metaphor for a sacrificial animal, of a colour prescribed in the dreams of the prophet. Unlike clay, the colour of the animal does not indicate its properties or ritual effects. However, the colour of the animal must match the description provided by the prophet. The animal was slaughtered near the grave of the late prophet Sikiria, feeding (*akisimuj*) his ancestral spirit and creating fortuitous conditions for elders gathered at Kapil to call for rain.

The events at Kapil highlight two important relationships discussed in the anthropological literature about Nilotic rituals: that between people and their prophets (religious) and that between fathers and sons (ancestral). Starting with the former, the events at Kapil were a test of Epeniki Ng'isir's abilities. At stake in the prophet's predictions for the coming of rain was his legitimacy among the Ng'ikamatak community, including the elders in attendance at Kapil. When the first of his deadlines of the start of rain was not met, Epeniki Ng'isir needed to establish the reason for the failure (including the meddling by a young rival *emuron*), resolve the disruptive factors, and revise community expectations. This is because the prophet's power is not inherent in his abilities but contingent upon faith among his followers, who are responsible for carrying out the sacrifice. The relationship between prophets and elders in Turkana reflects that described between the prophets and priests among Nuer:

> The most outstanding conceptual difference is that whereas in the priest, man speaks to God, in the prophet God, in one or other of his hypostases, speaks to man… there is a fundamental difference… between the representative of man to the divine and the representative of the divine to man… Though prophets, like priests, may sacrifice on behalf of other people, the distinctive character of the prophet is not, as it is of the priest, his sacrificial role, but his revelational role deriving from spiritual inspiration. (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 304-308)

In Turkana, the *emuron* carries out the role of the prophet: to acquire knowledge from God to determine the nature of a problem and the appropriate course of corrective action. However,

rather than priests, the general community of elders serve as the counterparts in speaking back to God. Just as divination and sacrifice are complementary parts of the complete ritual at Kapil, so are the roles of prophets and elders. This relationship fosters a form of dependency that makes prophets accountable to their communities, rather than all-powerful authority figures.

Epeniki Ngisir's legitimacy is dependent upon the elders' acceptance of the legitimacy of his ritual prescriptions. When Ekeno departed with his companions after the failure of the first ritual at Locor Lomala, the prophet suffered a loss of legitimacy. He had called upon local politicians to make a showing at Kapil, and many did attend, including the MP representing Loima in the National Parliament as well as several members of the County Assembly. Although the senator of Turkana County did not attend, Epeneki Ng'isir's influence was demonstrated by his ability to bring together such an influential group of VIPs. Many of the political figures and NGO employees at the Kapil gathering were relying on Epeniki Ng'isir's ability to bring the influential elders together to discuss peace efforts with the Karimojong, Jie, and Tepes across the border. Because Ekeno was the leader of the wealthy cattle owners living in the borderlands closest to these peoples, his allegiance was of particular importance to Epeniki Ng'isir. Nonetheless, while Ekeno left, enough elders remained at Kapil for Epeniki Ng'isir to call another meeting of the elders of the Ng'ikamatak territorial section in February 2016.

Lorukadimoe himself was uncertain of the prophet's capabilities. At the beginning of my research, Lorukadimoe often denied the existence of ritual leaders, saying that all of the *ng'imurok* had were in the soil (*eya nalup*), meaning they were all dead. On the one hand, these claims reflect a lack of trust at the beginning of my research. Ritual leaders are often associated with raiding, traditional healing, and other activities rejected by urban authorities,

and Lorukadimoe may have feared that I would report on any allegiance to their positions. But moreover, Lorukadimoe and Ekeno had previously been close to the late *emuron* known as Natubwa, who had been a powerful leader in western Turkana until his assassination by the Tepes. In this light, Lorukadimoe's claim that the *real* prophets were dead indicates an allegiance to the late Natubwa. Many doubt that the surviving prophets could live up to Natubwa's power.

Aside from relations between prophets and elders, the meeting at Kapil also highlights intergenerational relations. Father-son dynamics were discussed in Chapter 7 in the context of familial interactions on the homestead. However, these relations remain significant even after death, as elders continue to influence earthly affairs as ancestral spirits (*ekaran*). Meeker (1989) suggests that East African pastoral societies can be distinguished between two types based on the salience of son's obligations to their ancestors. On the one hand, societies in which the fathers hold a great deal of authority tend to focus on ancestral spirits that hold living descendants to account. These societies tend to focus on conflict with enemy groups, displacing tensions between fathers and sons onto the tensions with anonymous outsiders. On the other hand, societies with a monotheistic cosmology tend to downplay the role of ancestral spirits and focus on tensions within the family.

While it would be questionable to categorize pastoral societies according to Meeker's types, they do suggest important associations between religious principles and the political tensions to which they are relevant. The religious world in Turkana encompasses both ancestral spirits (*ng'ikaran*) and a monotheistic divinity (*Akuj*). However, reference to *ng'ikaran* reinforces the necessary obedience of descendants to their ancestors, dispelling tensions between fathers and sons onto the relationship between *raiya* and outsiders. This focus emphasises concerns

already raised in the prophet's concerns about contradictions between development (*maendeleo*) and custom (*ng'talio*).

In the end, the prophet's revised prediction that it would rain before the elders departed from Kapil was fulfilled. But it was not enough; the rain provided respite for about three months before the area was ultimately struck by a drought that persisted throughout 2016 and early 2017, killing many herds and forcing the government to distribute extensive food aid. Such failure was not necessarily blamed on the prophet, who is not actually expected to "make" the rain. An *emuron* may garner greater legitimacy by correctly putting forth predictions on an *ad hoc* basis. The late prophet Natubwa was renowned for waylaying raiders who were enroute to attack Turkana herders. On one occasion he claimed that there was an incoming raiding party, but that he would render their weapons inert. Upon their arrival, many of them were frustrated by jammed guns, and they retreated back to their territories. Similarly, Epeniki Ng'isir's claims that the rain would arrive by the new moon, or before the departure of the ceremonial attendees, were an attempt to impress his followers.

Ng'imurok have an impressive capacity for predicting weather patterns. I have heard speculation that they can carefully detect changes in the directions of the wind or the appearance of the clouds. Others suggest that they assess the behaviour of livestock and other animals; some ground-dwelling critters such as scorpions supposedly emerge from their holes prior to rain. Yet others point to the anatomical responses that some people have to barometric changes. My host family noted that the arteries in my arms tended to throb in the hours prior to rain, a predictive sign that they call *arikirik*, but which some scientists have termed 'biometeorological activity' (Katanić 2013). By honing their perceptual attunement to their surroundings as well as their own bodies, an *emuron* can develop impressive sensitivity to changes in the weather.

However, no one in Turkana expects that a prophet can "control" the rain. All they can do is instruct the elders as they call to God for help and request a more fortuitous turn. Similarly, as Evans-Pritchard described among Nuer:

> Any Nuer can pray to God to send rain… Some Nuer said that a prophet's prayers and sacrifices for rain might be effective, and they seem to have had some faith in those of the prophet Gwek; but I found that in general Nuer showed little interest in the subject. They certainly do not think that anyone can 'make' rain. Whoever it may be, priest, prophet, member of the Gaawar clan, or just an ordinary person, he can only pray to God to send the rain. They say, 'There is nothing we can do if it does not rain. God has given us nothing [to make it]. We are merely ignorant folk' (Evans-Pritchard 1956: 298-299)

Gatherings to appease the ancestors and pray for rain are not abnormal events in Turkana. They are even more common among their more agriculturally oriented Karimojong predecessors (Knighton 2005). But it is not a "rain-making" event, and the prophet is not expected to bring rain. Rather, the prophet instructs the elders in the procedures to appease the ancestors and sacrifice the appropriate animals in order to "beg for" (*akilipokin*) God to send rain. When elders decide that a prophet has not met their expectations, they will simply refuse to participate, "voting with their feet" as did Ekeno when he departed from Kapil after the new moon. But if they are confident in a prophet's ability to lead, elders provide legitimacy through their participation.

Discussion: Notions of Authority

Increasingly over the past few decades, and especially after Kenya's 2010 Constitution devolved substantial power and funding to the County Government, rural communities are faced with an empowered class of educated elites – including politicians, professionals, and business proprietors – who draw on the resources of the state and international agencies to execute their vision of rural development. Some in Turkana interpret the increasing prominence of this "political class" as a new order to which the old traditional authority

structures of elders and "customary leaders" is giving way. However, attention to large-scale ritual events showcases how *raiya* elders maintain their roles as protectors of the land and custodians of tradition. My argument is that the gerontocratic authority of *raiya* elders is not a dying vestige from an old authority structure, but a familiar method of negotiating legitimacy, upon which the urban political class still relies to implement the interventions of the humanitarian state.

When asked who leads the rural people in Urum, many people point to the location chief, a position created by and reporting to the Office of the President. However, Lorukadimoe's son told me that the leaders were the elders, many of them war-heroes (*ng'ikaruok*) like his father, and the prophets (*ng'imurok*) like Epeniki Ng'isir. Some people are quick to categorize elders and prophets together under the label "traditional leaders", despite the fact that the descent-based authority of elders and the religious authority of prophets have each arisen and changed in response to particular historical moments, and at times they can be seen as competing structures. While highly reductive, this characterisation may usefully highlight how the notion of "tradition" (*etal*) has been mobilised by rural communities to mediate their relations with an increasingly powerful urban sphere.

The urbanites speaking at the Loima Professionals Association drew upon the principles of progress and humanitarian care to describe their agenda for developing their rural communities. Attendees were asked to put aside their political feuds and focus on "the common good". By focusing on the imperative of bringing education, healthcare and other goods to rural communities in Turkana, development actors conceal the politics underlying their activities. It is in this manner that development discourse has been described as a means of "depoliticising" the activities of technical organisations and agencies working in rural areas (Ferguson 1994). Yet political relations are inherent to development, which Escobar

describes as “an efficient apparatus that systematically relates forms of knowledge and techniques of power” (1991: 10). The meeting of the Loima Professionals provided a venue where elites could showcase their technocratic authority in front of a non-specialist audience of rural onlookers.

‘Customary leaders’ also rely on displays of their power – as shown when they chant at *agata* – although the notions of authority upon which they draw are different from those of development actors. Elders and ritual leaders like prophets have often relied on competing but inter-dependent forms of authority. However, in the contemporary context of state-driven development in Turkana, this hybrid leadership seems to be adjusting yet again. Much as the elders have long allowed prophets legitimacy to operate as military leaders of the youth, while nonetheless maintaining political ascendency as seniors, today’s elders and prophets are forming a similar alliance to contend with the rising class of urban elites. Epeniki Ng’isir’s influence in Loima – that is, his ability to bring together people for ritual purposes – depends upon the allegiance of elders, but they rely on his ability to bring them together and to liaise with urban politicians.

Rather than the erosion of a timeless social order, these changes should be seen as a re-articulation of familiar notions of authority in new contexts. This most recent re-articulation fits within a longer history of transformations in the system of authority. As reviewed in Chapter 3, Müller-Dempf has argued how the generation-set system in Turkana and Toposa was adjusted due to an inter-generational conflict. He describes the switch to a dual alternation system as an example of “social engineering” (Müller-Dempf 2009). Similarly, and as I will describe elsewhere (not in this thesis), the practice of initiation (*asapan*) in Turkana is shifting from the control of large groups of juniors to the demonstration of fathers’ authority over their sons. In this way, the institution of initiation, like the office of the

prophet-diviner, is being reworked in the context of a state-backed urban elite who are subverting the authority of their *raiya* elders.

DISCUSSION

The history of Turkana is full of encounters with outsiders, from competing pastoralist societies to colonising armies to the Kenyan state. But with the gradual rise of an urban population – many of whom either belong to or work for the political class – the ranks of the outsiders are increasingly constituted not by "enemies" (*ng'imoe*) or "foreigners" (*ng'ibukwi*) but by Turkana themselves. In this study, I have attempted to understand what the rise of this non-pastoralist elite class – as well as development-induced social stratification more broadly – means for pastoralists in Turkana.

This chapter provides a summary of the dissertation and offers its theoretical and practical implications. To begin, the first section reviews each chapter and integrates them into an overarching argument. It also discusses the strengths and weaknesses of this ethnography and explains the choices made about theory. The second half turns to the implications of this study for current developments in Turkana and presents a view on the current debate about the future of pastoralism in this area.

To understand the course of social stratification in Turkana, as well as its impact on the future prospects of pastoralism, I have undertaken a phenomenological ethnography of *raiya* inspired by Merleau-Ponty's approach to perception. Phenomenology is useful in redressing two shortcomings of systems-thinking about livelihood change, one of which is ontological and the other teleological. For one, the systems approach to livelihoods reifies 'pastoralism', treating it as an entity in the world rather than a construct with which to think. Applied at the systems level, the resilience framework discusses the state of 'pastoralism' and its prospects for survival rather than the experiences of the people who practise it. Second, livelihood change in a systems approach is often framed teleologically, as an ends-oriented process. More specifically, the concept of adaptation relies on a consequentialist understanding of

system change, as if 'pastoralism' has an objective to survive or an intention to maintain itself. I aimed to bring ethnographic attention down from the birds-eye view of objectivism, shifting from an ontic view of systems to a phenomenological perspective on various actors navigating the social landscape.[1]

The ethnography was presented in two parts in order to deal separately with two questions about *raiya*. The first part asks how people experience and make sense of the increasingly stratified social landscape in Turkana. I approached this question through a phenomenological lens, discussing difference and distinction as they are conveyed explicitly (e.g. the notion of *raiya*) as well as the more implicit sensibilities, styles, and skills through which people mark themselves as *raiya*. The second part of the dissertation asked how *raiya* people are navigating this divided social landscape by re-articulating notions of kinship (Chapter 7) and political authority (Chapter 8) that encompass relations across deepening social divides between rural herders and urbanites, the latter of whom include an increasingly empowered professional elite.

Part I of the ethnography attended to the ways that *raiya* herders describe their situation in an increasingly stratified social landscape, as *ng'itunga nakalapatan* ("people of the periphery"). In this analysis, I departed from conventional analytical categories – e.g. pastoralists and dropouts, clients and patrons, subsistence and commercial producers, etc – which are not necessarily recognised by the people who occupy those categories. Instead, I took *raiya* as the analytical focus, approaching the notion of *raiya* from three angles: as a way of perceiving places with distinctive spatial qualities, (Chapter 4), as a stylised way of dressing, talking,

[1] This approach does not entail a rejection of systems-thinking. Rather, researchers studying pastoralism through a systems framework could incorporate insights from a variety of approaches – including phenomenology – which need not culminate in a unified and coherent picture. Maintaining ambiguity and pluralism – rather than reducing it into a coherent holism – could put multiple perspectives into productive tension.

and otherwise presenting oneself to others (Chapter 5), and as a skilful way of practising daily tasks and interacting with animals, acquired through a *raiya* upbringing (Chapter 6). These three ethnographic angles reflect the ways that *raiya* was described in fieldwork: as a place, as a way of dressing, and as a closeness to animals. Thy also approach social belonging through three phenomenological lenses on the development of the subject: attunement, performance, and enskilment. A key theme throughout these chapters was the way in which *raiya* signifies a kind of community or pastoralist solidarity, to which people must demonstrate their belonging.

In Chapter 4, I described the ways that situated actors become accustomed to the places where they live. Spatially-attuned people can move competently through the landscape and attend to its affordances (Ingold 2000: 242), while those who lack this ecological relation to their surroundings can feel uncomfortable or "out of place". Aside from the characteristics of a particular place – such as the village of Urum or the plateau of Naukurutome – I discussed more general physiognomies that distinguish urban and rural spaces. This difference in spatial qualities is particularly exaggerated in a place like Turkana, where the simple linearity of small towns contrasts sharply with the open landscapes of the remote borderlands. Those in town refer to the cartographically determined cardinal directions of 'north' and 'south', while *raiya* directions indicated by '*kwap'* and '*kuju'* vary according to the course of the nearest river. The ways that attunement to these different places can mark people is clearest when outsiders (such as myself) visit the pastoralist countryside. We find ourselves unsettled by the lack of familiar spatial logics, which leaves us uncomfortable in an illegible landscape.

Urban land in town is fenced off as private plots, while rural herders refer to a vaguer form of territorial belonging based on one's general "home place" (*ere*). My ethnography did not go so far as to define which land belongs to whom, or the boundaries between different

territorial sections. But such details are often fraught with conflicting accounts and competing interests. Pastoralists in Turkana make vehement claims in reference to their "home place" (*ere*), but this is not a bounded territory. Belonging is vague and contested, requiring deliberative efforts to build consensus rather than contractual agreements based on simple borders. This fits well with Ingold's dwelling perspective, which describes human interventions on the environment that are "incorporative" rather than "inscriptive". Rather than borders and lines, belonging is "enfolded into the forms of the landscape and its living inhabitants by way of their own processes of growth" (Ingold 2000: 87).

Chapter 5 turned to ways that herders – and especially men – display their *raiya* belonging in everyday styles of dress and ways of walking, as well as the more occasional performance of ox-songs. Poetic compositions about a man's praise-ox (*emong'*) are a mainstay in the ethnography of cattle-keeping societies, but with increasing social stratification in Turkana, these performances have become a marker of *raiya* sensibilities. These dances, usually reserved for night-time events (*edong'a*) under the full moon, are accompanied by more mundane demonstrations of *raiya* belonging, including the wearing of a Maasai cloth, the carrying of certain implements like the shepherd's staff (*aburo*), and a bravado that reflects a warrior ethos. While some aspects of *raiya* performance are specifically masculine, both men and women showcase that they are *raiya* through their toughness (*egogong*), their inurement to hunger and thirst, and their observance of custom.

I had initially considered using Butler's (1993) notion of performativity as a form of citation, in which each enactment of a "script" references the previous enactments that it intends to emulate. However, as suggested by Ferguson (1999) in his account of Localist and Cosmopolitan styles, achieving belonging in a group is not simply a matter of taking off your own costume and donning a new one. It requires one to demonstrate competency in the

requisite performative modes, which can take time and effort. The Turkana term *anaikis*, which could be glossed as "getting used to", reflects that enskilment is not always a process of intentional training. Instead, it entails a more passive process of becoming accustomed to new circumstances, be it the hardship of long periods without food on the cattle camp or the convenience of urban consumerism. In this way, my analysis of performance was already keyed into the importance of enskilment, the focus of the next chapter.

In Chapter 6, I turned to forms of learning and enskilment that children acquire through a childhood on the pastoralist homestead. This includes not only cognitive knowledge of the sort that is transmitted explicitly, but also more practical forms of *know-how* such as tracking lost animals or building fences, as well as a more personal way of *knowing animals*. Like formal education acquired in school, the sensory education of *raiya* children cultivates embodied sensibilities that mark a person's social status. From the perspective of urbanites in Lodwar, Kakuma, and other towns, the *raiya* are the "real Turkana", not just because they are pastoralists, but because they are the embodiment of the pastoralist ideal. Even those who lived on the homestead prior to attending school may feel estranged from their former homes, where they are made to feel like outsiders by their incompetency in tasks that their *raiya* siblings carry out with ease. Inversely, *raiya* people now look at the Turkana people living in town – who know nothing of animals, refuse to drink fresh milk or blood, and exhibit a different array of urban sensibilities – and question whether they are really Turkana at all.

Across all three of these chapters, a common theme was the creativity involved in *raiya* identity, which makes reference not only to an imagined traditional past, but to that which is modern. Pastoralists often seem conservative and insular from the perspective of outsiders, especially "in some of the more remote places, and among people who appear, at least on the surface, to be stereotypically traditional" (McCabe 2004: 91). But many ox-songs and styles

of dress refer not just to a customary past but creatively and sometimes playfully draw inspiration from the urban world of which *raiya* are on the fringe. Unlike Bourdieu's *habitus*, these practices do not adhere to the lines of social stratification but provocatively cross them, suggesting that to be *raiya* is not simply a conservative stance against the encroachments of modernity, but a "creative praxis" (Huysmans 2004: 117) through which herders are engaging and responding to the practices of the dominant other.

It may be useful in future work to develop a notion of *habitus* that downplays automatism and accommodates greater improvisation. One way to do this would be a synthesis of Bourdieu's practice theory and Merleau-Ponty's perceptual phenomenology, which would treat *habitus* not as an internalisation of structure but as an attunement to certain kinds of affordances. Some aspects of practice theory may also make this phenomenological approach more amenable to research frameworks that relies on systems-thinking; the concept of social capital has already been adopted widely in studies of resilience (Adger 2000; Magis 2010; Norris et al. 2008).

Part II of the ethnography turned to the ways that herders are re-articulating kinship and political relations with the growing urban population, including professional and political elites. Whereas Part I described the notion of *raiya* – as both an explicit recognition of social difference as well as implicit ways of perceiving, performing, and practising livelihoods amidst widening stratification – the second part described the ways that *raiya* people navigate this shifting social landscape. The key argument in this section was that supposedly "traditional" institutions like the family should not be understood as systems, but as articulations of familiar notions. By 'notions', I am referring to the vague and often implicit ideas that are nonetheless widely familiar and semantically evocative, which Wendy James (1988) conceptualises as a "cultural archive." Their vagueness lends them flexibility, such

that they often re-emerge even across periods of dramatic social change, providing a sense of familiarity and continuity despite disruption. Following Hirsch's call for "defining resilience as a grounded, necessarily local, actor's theory of permanence" (2017: 462), the persistence of the cultural archive in the iterative articulation of kinship, authority, or – more broadly – 'custom' is suggestive of a form of *raiya* resilience.

In Chapter 7, I describe the forms of kinship instituted by bride-wealth, which has been a mainstay of ethnography among pastoralists and key to early debates about kinship, between the descent theorists and the alliance theorists. Many anthropologists have described bride-wealth as a system (Evans-Pritchard 1951; Ohta 2007). However, my account provided a different view, in which the practice of bride-wealth is based on the situational application of various notions of "kinship" (*ayan*), such as the fraternal obligations inherent in the brand (*emacar*) and the dictates of seniority according to lineages (*aleesit*). When conflicts emerge within or between families, people draw on these notions in pursuit of a resolution. This view of Turkana families resonates with the 'new kinship studies', shifting emphasis from structures to meaning (Carsten 2004), and describing dynamism, fluidity and contingency rather than stability and structural coherency (Levine 2008: 377).

This fluidity can account for the apparent contradictions encountered when trying to map family structures based on people's descriptions of genealogy. Accounts of family structure sometimes seem to contradict one another, as when Lorukadimoe describes Lomala as his brother in one setting and his father in another. However, the discrepancy is only a contradiction if kinship is described as a system. If kinship is understood as an ongoing process of making relationships, then discrepancies in people's accounts of family structure may be accounted for by the instantiation of different principles of *ayan* (e.g. the brand and the lineage) in different contexts. As described in this chapter, when agnates are determining

seniority to receive bride-wealth, Lorukadimoe falls into a junior lineage as a young brother to Lomala. But in his day-to-day interactions with others in the Ng'ipuco brand, he emphases his siblingship with them by looking to Lomala his father and the other men as his brothers. Similarly, among Pokot herders, "while the gerontocratic age-based system was founded on the principle of respect (*tekotön*), solidarity (*tilyontön*) was the basic ideological principle of friendship" (Bollig 2016: 28).

This contingency also accounts for the ways that people make sense of kinship and politics amidst new social dynamics, such as the emergence of an urban elite. When people from pastoralist families move to town and become less involved in the management of the herd, they do not simply fall outside the traditional family structure. Instead, these relationships are re-articulated according to the flexible but familiar notions of kinship. In practical terms, this often entails a shift in emphasis from the more cattle-centric brand to the more anthropocentric ancestral line. Due to the lack of bridewealth marriages among urbanites, they often identify loosely with their maternal brands as "children of the dancing ground" while focusing their energy on establishing relations through the ancestral line (*aleesit*). This was useful for Joseph, whose focus on descent relations allowed him to establish relations with both his mother's and his father's families, whereas a *raiya* man focused on brand-based belonging would be likely to associate with just one side. However, this form of kinship was based more on patronage than fraternal obligation, facilitating cooperation when there is money to go around (as when Joseph sought his father's support while campaigning for MCA), but which can break down when money is not forthcoming (as when Joseph's maternal uncle made off with his goats).

In Chapter 8, I describe a similar dynamic in the broader political relations between state-backed agents of economic development and the rural "custodians of tradition". While elders

have often held power through their role as the custodians of "tradition" (*etal*), their authority has been challenged by the rise of an urban elite empowered by the resources of the state and international agencies. Due to their formal education, urbanites are often the only individuals who can access these resources. However, rather than displacing the power of "traditional leaders", urban elites continue to rely on older notions of authority to gain legitimacy – and votes – among the *raiya* majority of rural Turkana. Elders, meanwhile, continue to deploy these notions to exercise their own authority, and have interest in maintaining elites' adherence to customs such as initiation (*asapan*) and bridewealth (*akuuta*). While I have emphasised the flexibility with which old notions can be deployed in new circumstances, these re-articulations are sometimes contested by elders who – in light of their customary authority – may attempt to impose their own re-definition of kinship in the authoritative terms of "tradition" (*etal*), through which they can mediate their relationship with the increasingly powerful class of political and professional elites.

By approaching change as a *tactical* re-articulation of loosely defined principles rather than *strategic* adaptation (de Certeau 1984), this study shines light on the polysemic meaning of *raiya*, in both its explicit and implicit aspects. The term *raiya* – derived from Swahili and imbued with new meaning among rural Turkana-speaking communities – has now become shorthand for "rural herders", as opposed to the urbanites who have become less dependent on pastoral livelihoods. Borrowed terms are useful in that their meanings are not completely defined. This ambiguity allows for enough semantic malleability to articulate an unprecedented situation, and to re-articulate it. The explicit ways that some *raiya* define themselves, as *ng'itung'a nakalapatan* ("people on the periphery") indicate that many herders are aware of their marginality in the contemporary Turkana landscape. Furthermore, the flexible polysemy of the term *raiya* describes not only pastoralists as a livelihood group but also their lifestyles, aesthetics, sensibilities, and the remote places where they live, all which

mark them as distinct from the urban centres expanding in their midst. As the growing social capital, economic strength, and political power of urban professionals positions them as an elite class, rural herders have turned to the term *raiya* to make sense of their situation.

Implications for Development

Having outlined the argument of this thesis and discussed *raiya* as a situated perspective on social stratification, what are the future prospects for pastoralists in Turkana? The present situation does not suggest any strong directional trends: some herders are seen to "drop out" of pastoralism and assimilate to the urban lifestyle, but many persist in their *raiya* ways of life. The estimated proportion of settled population has not shifted dramatically in the past three decades (Barkey et al. 2001; Brainard 1986; Watson & Binsbergen 2006).

However, the more implicit meanings of this term – as discussed in Part I – suggest that being *raiya* has become a basis for belonging, in which herders are embracing their peripherality to distinguish themselves as a moral community. This solidarity among a marginalised group reflects the situation among remote Meratus communities in Indonesia, who are described as "an untamed people" by those who see themselves as the "'civilised' regional majority". But Tsing describes how "Meratus respond, reinterpret, and challenge even as they accept and are shaped by these forms of knowledge" (Tsing 1993: 8). In some cases, being seen as deviant or exotic and occupying a peripheral position may seem a better alternative than incorporation and indoctrination (Devereux 2010).[2] This conclusion is suggestive, but it is

[2] This approach has implications not only for pastoralists but for other communities that make their place on the periphery of a dominant group. Much like the *raiya*, itinerant people in Europe such as the Roma, English Gypsies, and Irish Travelers conceive of themselves as peripheral communities set apart from – and sometimes threatened by – a dominant class or society associated with the state (McVeigh 1997; Vanderbeck 2005). Marginal communities can capitalise on their marginal position by maintaining distance from dominant and dominating centres of power while also drawing on them as a resource (Scott 2009).

uncertain to what degree *raiya* people will be able to capitalise on their own marginality, especially if the extension of the technologies of state control reduces the space for tactical manoeuvring.

From an economic perspective, and as reviewed in Chapter 2, there are two conflicting assessments of development and social change in Turkana. One view depicts the pauperisation of herders amidst development-induced social stratification, which replaces the moral economy of wealth-in-the-herd with a more individualist cash economy. Poor herders may move to town for work, where they lose their ties to pastoralist family members and become a permanent class of urban poor (Broch-Due & Sanders 1999). Others become employed by wealthier livestock owners and pursue a form of sedentarised herding that is less sustainable in the long-term (Hogg 1986; Little 1985a). The alternative assessment is that urbanisation and commercialisation offer new opportunities for herders, promoting livelihood diversification and cash-based insurance options. Müller-Dempf (2014) suggests that cooperation with people beyond the pastoralist sector opens up new opportunities for herders, including livestock markets for sales and a labour market for supplemental income.

Both Broch-Due's warnings about pauperisation and Müller-Dempf's notion of "hybrid pastoralism" are framed in economic terms, as either the exclusion or integration in the context of an expanding urban cash economy. My own study suggests that there are additional questions to consider beyond economic integration, pertaining in particular to the ways *raiya* people maintain kin connections and contest political authority outside the pastoralist sphere. Many families in Turkana now encompass both urban and pastoralist relatives, a point that Müller-Dempf recognises as facilitating economic cooperation.

This ethnography describes how pastoralists in Turkana are navigating a changing and challenging social terrain, less tumultuous than the war-scapes described by Vigh (2006) but

nonetheless characterised by a deepening social stratification and the political marginalisation of the uneducated pastoralist stratum. To find their way, *raiya* people draw on vague but deep-rooted *notions* of tradition, kinship, and authority to shape the new social formations that emerge, thereby managing family and political relations across the divisions wrought by stratification. Familiar notions of authority are at play on the new political scene, in which an empowered county government provides funding for Turkana politicians and their entrepreneurial colleagues to implement a development agenda throughout rural Turkana. While their legitimacy in the eyes of the state stems from their formal education and fluency in the language of development, they must maintain support in their communities by adhering to other notions of authority. At the Loima Professionals Meeting, the seating arrangement was made to mimic the traditional feasting circle (*akiriket*) in which attendees share meat, and in which the seating reflects seniority. Politicians must adhere to the ritual prescriptions of respected prophets, and many must also undergo the initiation rites (*asapan*) organised by their fathers. Although many urbanites feel an earnest desire to uphold the "customs" of Turkana tradition (*ng'italio*), there is also a clear instrumental benefit to their compliance.

Müller-Dempf recognised some of these dynamics, taking them as a sign of hybridity between the urban economic regime and the pastoralist sector:

> Almost all Turkana adults, even those living in town, are former pastoralists, and most youths in town recall the pastoralist time of their family, and many do this in a romanticised way…At least for the moment, animals seem to be in the Turkana DNA" (Müller-Dempf 2014: 6).

However, my own work has described how being a pastoralist – or rather, being *raiya* – entails sensibilities that are cultivated through a childhood on the pastoralist cattle camp. What will happen as an increasing proportion of the urban population are second-generation town-dwellers? While the continued outmigration of school-bound children from *raiya*

families will maintain some sibling relations across the urban-rural divide, there will also be a growing class of people born in town, with little or no connection to the *raiya*. Many urbanites maintain a sense of respect for the pastoralist lifestyle, but even many first-generation urban migrants feel like outsiders when they visit their *raiya* relatives, where they are unaccustomed to performing their ox-dances, tending to animals, and undertaking harsh journeys across remote landscapes.

An important implication of this is that there will be an increasing proportion of elites – including both unelected administrators like chiefs and politicians like members of the county assembly – who have lived their entire lives disconnected from the pastoral sector. When relations across the urban-rural divide are made up only of links between distant cousins, rather than sibling bonds, there may a significant weakening in kinship obligations and political accountability. Whether a child maintains positive relations with family is a key factor in determining future economic connection between the rural *raiya* and the urban economy, and if the urban elite becomes decoupled from the *raiya* majority, a "hybrid economy" is a less likely prospect than an entrenched class system.

Beyond these long-term socio-economic trends, there are also a number of more dramatic developments that will have more acute effects on herders' place in the social landscape. The 2013 discovery of oil in southern Turkana has put the county – formerly a marginal backwater – at the centre of Kenya's *Vision 2030* development agenda. To the north, across the international border in the Omo Valley, Ethiopia has constructed a megadam and associated irrigation projects that threaten massive downstream ecological impacts on Lake Turkana. And in Kakuma, the site of a three-decade-old refugee camp, the UN Refugee Agency is undertaking an ambitious project to construct an "integrated settlement" promoting economic self-reliance among refugees and their local Turkana host community.

What many of these large-scale – and often internationally-funded – interventions have in common are attempts at community compensation or benefit sharing. Yet the idea of "a community" in Turkana ignores the complicated politics of belonging and representation. As social stratification deepens the sense of difference between pastoralists and urbanites, compensation programmes need to deal with increasingly divergent interests and aspirations within their target beneficiaries. And if positions of political leadership are occupied solely by urban elites, the interests of the *raiya* majority may become invisible.

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