Maasai ethnic economy: rethinking Maasai ethnic identity and the ‘cash economy’ across the rural-urban interface, Tanzania

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

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This thesis is a study of ethnicity with specific regard to the pastoral Maasai group of Tanzania, East Africa. I frame the analysis proposed in this study within two sets of anthropological theory: economic anthropology and the literature on African pastoralism, with the former working as the primary theoretical framework to contribute and add knowledge to the latter. The overarching objective of the thesis is to contribute to outline the contemporary state of affairs of the socio-economic position and conditions of the Maasai group in the broader national context of Tanzania, departing from a distinctly spatial investigation across the rural/urban interface. Specifically, I pursue this objective by analysing the local economy of a rural village on the fringes of expanding urban territory. In the thesis I investigate issues that include thrift, exchange, consumption, and the market by making use of these ‘objects’ as analytical devices to explore how Maasai ethnic identity is produced, reproduced, and negotiated across multiple terrains. This study intends to fills the gap that exists within literature on pastoralism and the ‘cash economy’ as regards to these issues and ‘objects’ of analysis.

The sequence of the chapters unfolds to show the manifold terrains and domains in which Maasai ethnicity ‘matters’, from everyday actions and practices of consumption to longer-term investments, to conclude eventually with the organization of the livestock market in which Maasai ethnicity contributes to facilitate trading and the building of trust between market actors. In the end, the anthropological enquiry of the ‘cash economy’ intends to enhance the understanding of how forms of ethnic identification, in this case Maasai, are an essential quality and aspect of the contemporary globalised world and that neoliberal market policies, commoditization and urbanization as expressions of globalisation contribute to strengthen rather than lessen their importance.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the Tutunyo family members for welcoming and hosting me in their home. The nearly two years I have spent in their boma have been filled with endless moments of joy and laughter even during the harshest times of scarcity. My greatest debt goes to them and to all people of Losirwa village who have been happy to share their views and feelings with me. I would like to thank my supervisors at the University of Manchester for their priceless support throughout these arduous years. I thank Prof. Maia Green for constantly encouraging and urging me to challenge my ideas and views, and foster my critical thinking. I thank Prof. Daniel Brockington for teaching me the discipline needed in academic writing. A big thank-you to Daniel for all the time spent in his home with his family in Tanzania including two Christmas days reviewing and discussing chapter drafts. Immense and loving thanks go to my girlfriend Anna who has tolerated my short temper for all the time spent writing and rewriting drafts. Other people I wish to thank for providing information and data, advice on methods, and contacts are: Prof. Katherine Homewood at University College London, Alais Morindat, Ced Hesse, principal researcher at IIED, Dr. Tony Simpson at the University of Manchester who acted as internal examiner for this thesis, Dr. Kate Hampshire of University of Durham and my external examiner, Andrew Williams, Prof. Sarah Randall at University College London, and Prof. Colman T. Msoka at University of Dar es Salaam. Finally, my greatest and deepest thankfulness goes to my parents for their unconditional love and support. This thesis is dedicated to them.
**GLOSSARY**

This glossary includes all foreign (Swahili and Maasai) words that appear in the text. All non-English (Swahili and Maasai) words are translated in the text at least once.

**Swahili words**

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<td><strong>Alama</strong></td>
<td>(body) mark</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bajaji</strong></td>
<td>three wheeled motorbikes imported from India</td>
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<td><strong>Barabara</strong></td>
<td>road</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Baridi</strong></td>
<td>cold</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biashara</strong></td>
<td>business activity</td>
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<td><strong>Bodaboda</strong></td>
<td>motorbike</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boma</strong></td>
<td>an enclosure made of several huts, one or more livestock kraals, and surrounded by a fence made of tree branches, i.e. the traditional Maasai homestead</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chakula</strong></td>
<td>food</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chokora</strong></td>
<td>(pl. machokora) tramp, vagabond, slacker</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gunia</strong></td>
<td>sack containing +/- 120 kg.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Halali</strong></td>
<td>official, legal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hela</strong></td>
<td>money</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Heshima</strong></td>
<td>respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hotelı</strong></td>
<td>local restaurant</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jua</strong></td>
<td>sun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kali</strong></td>
<td>strong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kavu</strong></td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kibuyu</strong></td>
<td>gourd used to store milk and porridge</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kichaa</strong></td>
<td>crazy, mad person</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kijiji</strong></td>
<td>village</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kijijini</strong></td>
<td>in the village</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kubembeleza</strong></td>
<td>coax</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kudharau</strong></td>
<td>disrespect, despise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kukonda</strong></td>
<td>lose weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kunenepa</strong></td>
<td>gain weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kunguni</strong></td>
<td>bed bugs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Magendo</strong></td>
<td>illegal, informal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maisha ya shida</strong></td>
<td>lit. ‘life of problem’, i.e. hardship</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Makande</strong></td>
<td>a traditional Tanzanian dish cooked with maize and beans</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mboga</strong></td>
<td>any kind of condiment (meat or vegetable) eaten with <em>ugali</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mchoyo</strong></td>
<td>selfish</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mchungu</strong></td>
<td>stingy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mchuuzi</strong></td>
<td>peddler</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mdhamini</strong></td>
<td>guarantor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mji</strong></td>
<td>town</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mjini</strong></td>
<td>lit. ‘in (the) town’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mkorofi</strong></td>
<td>nervous, short-tempered</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mkubwa</strong></td>
<td>big (man)</td>
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<td><strong>Mpole</strong></td>
<td>even-tempered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mtoto</strong></td>
<td>child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mtuzuri</strong></td>
<td>good person</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mwanafunzi</strong></td>
<td>student</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mzee (pl. wazee)</strong></td>
<td>elder</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Njaa</strong></td>
<td>hunger</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nyama choma</strong></td>
<td>roast meat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nyepesi</strong></td>
<td>light</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nyumba</strong></td>
<td>house</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nzito</strong></td>
<td>heavy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sherehe</strong></td>
<td>feast, celebration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shuka</strong></td>
<td>square piece of cloth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Soko</strong></td>
<td>market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starehe</strong></td>
<td>comfort, leisure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sufuria</strong></td>
<td>pan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tamaa</strong></td>
<td>desire, craving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tamaa ya hela</strong></td>
<td>desire, craving for money</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wajanja</strong></td>
<td>(sing., mjanja) smart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watoto</strong></td>
<td>children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uchoyo</strong></td>
<td>selfishness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ugali</strong></td>
<td>stiff porridge made of maize flour used as staple and eaten with mboga</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ugoro</strong></td>
<td>a substance used by Maasai and non-Maasai alike produced by pounding together loose tobacco with a saline stone commonly sold in markets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ujamaa</strong></td>
<td>socialism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ukoko</strong></td>
<td>leftovers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ya kisasa</strong></td>
<td>modern (lit. ‘of now’)</td>
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**Maasai words**

| **Allarao’**   | rubber worn out shoe used to gather and drag mud |
| **Balelo**     | lamb or young goat |
| **Emoti**      | pan |
| **Engaoji**    | leftovers |
| **Engarria**   | small cup |
| **Engeten**    | cow |
| **Engobo**     | mid-size cup |
| **Engohola**   | money |
| **Enjipai**    | happiness |
| **Enkaji**     | house, hut |
| **Enkanyit**   | respect |
| **Entoraji**   | sharing |
| **Ilaiguanak** | traditional Maasai leader |
| **Iljirusi**   | local livestock trader |
| **Korianga**   | the age-set prior to nyangulo |
| **Landisi**    | the age-set prior to korianga |
| **Makaa**      | the age-set prior to landisi |
**Moran** warrior

**Moranism, morranhood, murrannyahood** warriorhood

**Ndare’** goats, sheep (pl.)

**Nyangulo** the latest age-set to enter the stage of warriorhood

**Olayoni** child

**Olpul** traditional Maasai meat feast restricted to warriors only

**Olduberrri** big cup
MAPS

Map 1. Location of Tanzania in Africa

Map 2. Map of Tanzania, red rectangle: Mto wa Mbu area
Map 3. Location of Mto wa Mbu

Losirwa rangelands
I witnessed and experienced for the first time the life of the pastoralists Maasai in Northern Tanzania in the 2008 working on a project of economic development in a small Maasai community (a sub-village) of not more than a few hundred people. The project in question focused on income generating activities, above all tourism, which intended to generate income for pastoralists through a series of activities (e.g. guiding guests in the village) carried out by community members. That was my first employment experience in a developing country and I was in fact nearly a newcomer in Africa.

Working for a development project, I was involved in fundamentally two different spheres of relationships. One sphere of professional collaboration with my colleagues and the other of the interaction with the supposed beneficiaries of the project, namely, the villagers who were mostly of Maasai ethnicity. As to my own perception of the attitude and understanding that these two different categories (development workers and villagers) had towards instances of ‘economic development’, I experienced divergences on a daily basis when I encountered complications and obstacles in the distribution of the income and when I listened to the dissimilar opinions about the kind of development for which Maasai people should or need to seek. It was this divergence of opinions in the end that prompted my desire and impulse to investigate the topics that are at issue in this thesis.
On the side of my Tanzanian university graduate colleagues, I could often perceive an attitude rooted in the historical background of Tanzania and contemporary orientations with respect to the proposed trajectories of economic development. Such history is made of an uninterrupted succession of development interventions aimed at ‘educating’ and accompanying the Maasai in the difficult move from tradition-like practices of livestock raising to economic prosperity based on commercial and business oriented pursuits (Hodgson 2001). One of my Tanzanian colleagues, a graduate from University of Dar es Salaam in environmental sciences, was often eager to associate the (supposed) underdevelopment of the Maasai with a (supposed) lack of business-like principles in the management of herds. Another colleague, an environmental sciences PhD graduate from the University of Insubria in Italy, used to refer to her unease in witnessing the disgrace and indecency of her Tanzanian brothers and sisters living in poverty-stricken mud huts. According to their judgment, the attitude of the project beneficiaries (the Maasai villagers) went against the appropriate directions, i.e. economic collective development, but was rather focused on conservatism.

When I turned to the other side, the (Maasai) development recipients, I experienced a whole different picture. I continually dealt with an incessant search for individual betterment especially on the side of Maasai youth who were constantly struggling in search of opportunities for income through wage labour and trade. The relationship that they had with the project was mostly based on an individual engagement aimed at individual earnings that left very little space for collaboration and participation. Nevertheless, this strong inclination toward individual engagement was not mutually exclusive with traditional practices of herd management and ethnic, cultural awareness. Entrepreneurial skills and actual business ventures were visually discernible in the actual physical environment that increasingly began to resemble that of a Tanzanian peri-urban settlement with cement buildings on the sides of the main road hosting retail shops, local bars and restaurants. The two realms that in the eyes of my colleagues had been mutually exclusive were, in fact, proceeding hand-in-hand without apparent conflict.
These few considerations have triggered the overarching claim of this thesis, namely, that Maasai tradition, culture and identity are not in conflict with entrepreneurship but are rather part and parcel of contemporary processes of economic diversification and material development based on business-like principles of profit-making and pursued through, among other strategies, commercial herd management. The first objective of this thesis is therefore to describe the mediation between the collective realm of ethnic identity and the individual motivations, ambitions and initiative that underlie economic diversification and entrepreneurship. By the ‘collective realm’ of ethnic identity, I refer to the whole set of rules, values and practices that have been described extensively and labelled as ‘traditional’ in mainstream ethnography (see next section).

The second objective of the thesis extends to the actual effects triggered by recent economic developments affecting practices and the very idea of being Maasai. I will expand and develop the analysis of the relationship between collectivity and individuality by looking at how this entails a rethinking of the nature and expressions of Maasai ethnicity both at the individual and collective level (and at the intersection of the two). I will pay attention to processes of ethnic identity formation by looking at how Maasai ethnic identity is constructed as a package of values, norms and practices that are deemed to be inherently Maasai and, importantly, in antithesis to what is deemed to be non-Maasai. These constructions, however, are not static and stable but subject to constant negotiations. As the subsistence and ‘traditional’ livestock-based economy encounters the domain of commoditization within the urban economy, these negotiations reveal the ambivalent and unpredictable relationships between single individuals and the collectivity, and produce a transformation of the principles and practices that underlie the reproduction of and ideas connected to Maasai ethnic identity.

The importance and significance of these two overarching objectives will come out gradually in this introduction as I review the main trends of research on pastoralism and ethnicity when applied to the case of the Maasai. In the final section of this introduction focused on methods and fieldwork I will also explain how other factors such as my own identity and
practicalities of fieldwork too contributed to some extent to produce the theoretical framework in which I developed and presented the analysis. Overall, this thesis intends to take an original approach to the study of the so-called cash economy which has had a strong quantitative approach in looking at the extent to which individuals or households rely on the pastoral economy and the extent to which they depend on other forms of wealth diversification for their livelihoods. Unlike these quantitative assessments, here I will attempt an anthropological enquiry by looking at the ‘objects’ of analysis that have distinguished economic anthropology as a sub-discipline of anthropology and that have been qualified as specifically ‘economic’ (Caliskan & Callon 2009, 2010). Some of the objects that will be analysed are consumption, economizing or thrift, investments, exchange, marketing behaviour.

The connection between the economy and money has become a mainstream common assumption and a mental connection that occurs automatically when one hears the word economy. Money in the contemporary world has come to symbolize global connections that are embodied in the borderless financial markets. It is often forgotten however that the original meaning and etymology of the word economy refers in the first instance to the domain of the house and to the actual management of things rather than money. It is in this guise that I will approach the study of the local economy of a rural village on the fringes of urbanization.

Economic anthropology, the branch of anthropology that studies the ways in which people relate to each other within the economic life, provides many different angles from which to look at the relationship between the individual and the collectivity. Many analytical tools have been developed by economic anthropologists and used for many societies and social realities. It is not an objective of this thesis to review the history and development of economic anthropology\(^1\). Some of these analytical tools which I consider relevant in this study (and I will use in this thesis) will be spelled out later in this introduction and throughout the thesis. These tools have, to a very

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\(^1\)See Carrier (2005) and Hann & Hart (2011) for thorough reviews of economic anthropology as a discipline
limited extent, been applied to the case of pastoral east African societies\(^2\); a comprehensive study framed around questions that are central in economic anthropology however is still missing.

The analysis of Maasai ethnicity is the underlying objective that intersects with the anthropological analysis of economic diversification. Ethnicity is the privileged focus of the thesis chosen over other interdependent objects of analysis such as identity and culture. Generally speaking, the anthropological debate on identity and ethnicity that I will describe in more detail later, has tended to consider the former as a broader term encompassing the latter, i.e. ethnicity would be considered a particular form of identity. Culture, on the contrary, is at least as much a slippery and ‘perilous’ (Wolf 1994) term, but has tended to be referred to in the debate on ethnicity as the ‘content’ based on which ethnic identity is ‘produced’ (see later on the debate between ‘primordialists’ and ‘instrumentalists’).

It is almost redundant to point out the ambiguous character of each of these terms as well as the relationships between these terms in their different combinations. Highlighting such ambiguities for anthropologists and social scientists is such a necessary premise that it has become routine (Jenkins 2000, Jenkins 2008: 15, Wolf 1994). Spreading of globalizing forces is on the one hand turning such ambiguous relationships into an “explosive” combination (Geschiere & Meyer 1998: 606). On the other hand, it is proving that identity (taken as the all-inclusive term encompassing ethnicity and culture) needs to be the privileged focal point to make sense of and untangle the contradictions embedded in globalization between homogenizing forces and increasing breaking up and collapse of cultural-social-economic blocks which result in increasing cultural variance (Geschiere & Meyer 1998: 607).

The theoretical assumptions around which this study is framed will be spelled out below in the introduction, such as for instance the close relationship (and differences) between identity and ethnicity as well as the usefulness of the concept of culture to explain the concept of ethnicity.

In this thesis, Maasai ethnicity is both a premise to the ethnographic enquiry and the very object of it. It is taken as a premise to the analysis in the light of the extensive existing literature on the Maasai (and other east

\(^2\)For instance Broch-Due’s use of Appadurai’s theory (1986) on commodities to describe Turkana’s livestock management (Broch-Due 1999)
African pastoral societies) as well as based on my own previous personal working experience among people who refer outright to themselves as Maasai. It is the object of analysis in that this thesis attempts to critique the theoretical approach of existing literature on ethnicity. This is an apparent contradiction that is inherent to the investigation of ethnicity and that can be untangled only by juxtaposing theory with ethnography and vice versa. This point too will become clearer later on in the section dedicated to ethnicity and how previous researchers have dealt with the question of finding methodological solutions to inform or justify their respective theoretical assumptions and standpoints.

Before I outline in greater detail the themes of the thesis I will review the relevant literature in order to provide the necessary theoretical framework in the relevant research areas, that is to say, 1-'mainstream ethnography' that has looked at some of the 'traditional' features of pastoral social organization, 2-pastoralism in relation to social change and economic diversification, and 3-ethnicity both in its theory and application to the case of the Maasai. The aim of the next three sections is to pinpoint continuities and similarities within and across the different areas of research on pastoralism and Maasai ethnic identity. Subsequently, I will spell out the themes of this thesis and the frame(s) that I intend to use to overcome the limitations that I will develop henceforth.

**Social organization and reproduction, and the role of livestock**

To pursue an analysis of the changing dynamics of ethnicity formation in a context of market integration and commoditization, it is essential in the first instance to outline in more detail some of the typical features of the social organization that the Maasai group shares with other east African pastoral societies.

Ever since classics in anthropology such as Herskowitz's well-known paper on the "cattle complex" in East Africa (1926) and Evans-Pritchard's ethnography of the Nuer of Sudan (1940), social accounts of African pastoralists have underlined the close relationship between the presence, exchange (and consumption) of cattle as well as other livestock and some
crucial aspects of social organization. For instance, pastoral production and the environmental conditions (i.e. the availability of natural resources) that allow it are the core of one of the most comprehensive accounts of social organization among pastoral societies in east Africa presented by Harold Schneider (1979). Pastoral production, Schneider points out, differs from agricultural production in that the means of livestock production are hardly subject to monopolization because of, in the first instance, a series of ecological constraints such as tsetse flies. In addition, a great availability of green pastures favours livestock raising in communally managed grazing land which is not subject to the kinds of constraints that lead to privatization. These dynamics allow the reproduction of one of the chief characteristics of pastoral societies in east Africa, which is to say, egalitarianism (Schneider 1979: 10). Exchange (of livestock), Schneider illustrates, is at the base of other foundational relationships of affiliation that are established through loans of livestock within extended families (i.e. either sending animals to be held in other homesteads or borrowing animals from other households) or driven by the rationales to attain social status through generosity or to obtain the affiliation to particularly respected individuals or households (Schneider 1979: 94).

Similarly to Schneider, Rigby has made significant points as to how livestock is important in determining aspects of social organization by highlighting the meanings associated with consumption (of meat). Rigby (1985) departs from a structuralist approach to describe, for instance, the practice of olpu³ as an illustration of the essence and spirit of sharing (entorōji) in Maasai society. Livestock and the consumption of meat and other livestock products, Rigby argues, are the “stuff” of the “means” of communication in the creation of entorōji” (1985: 63). In a subsequent work, Rigby (1992) takes an openly Marxist approach from which he departs to elevate the pastoral praxis at the core of cultural and social distinction, extending to knowledge and ideology. The ideology that Rigby refers to is that of egalitarianism that goes hand-in-hand with the non-acceptance of

³ A traditional meat feast for moran only who segregate from the rest of the villagers for an unspecified number of days to consume meat and meat soup with the addition of roots available in the bush. The combination of (self) segregation and consumption of meat has important symbolic significance for the reproduction of murranism, hence, the reproduction of the age-set system (Rigby 1985: chapter 3)
local forms of Christianity for its advocacy for wage labour and commoditization. The whole system of ideology and social reproduction therefore lies on the premise of the distribution of the means of production and the absence of appropriation of them by one class (Rigby 1992).

A third anthropologist that ought to be referred to when it comes to the relationships between forms of social organization and the presence of cattle/livestock is Paul Spencer, whose work spans several decades and has contributed to outlining crucial characteristics of social organization that are typical of the Maasai and other East African pastoral groups. Already in 1965, in his first ethnography of the Samburu of Northern Kenya\(^4\), Spencer pointed at the inevitable consequences of the characteristic of cattle as a form of property and the endowment of livestock to create bonds between people within and beyond homesteads. He argued that, in order for a homestead to be economically independent, its size (in terms of people) “should be well adjusted to the size of the herd” (1965: 17). This, however, is rarely the case and neighbouring families are interdependent on each other creating eventually a situation in which “each Samburu is answerable to others for his actions and in the final resort the running of his homestead is not solely his concern” (p. 17).

Spencer’s treatises of East African pastoral societies are quite remarkable as contributions to the understanding of one particular feature of social organization that crosscuts pastoral Maa-speaking societies, namely, the age-set organization. This distinctive feature of East African pastoral societies is grounded on highly-defined roles and ideals deeply dependent on clear-cut life stages, in all cases, determined by rituals of passage, e.g. circumcision as ritual that marks the passage from childhood to warriorhood or the slaughter of the Great Ox (Spencer 1988), which marks the definite entry of individuals into the stage of elderhood. In order to understand the way the age-set system is organized, it is important in the first instance to underline the difference between an age-set and an age grade. An age-set is constituted by an homogeneous group (across Maasailand) of individuals in terms of age with slight differences of a few years between extremes (Spencer 1993); age sets are assigned names with which individuals are commonly referred to

\(^4\)Spencer himself begins by saying that the Samburu are a branch of the Maasai (Spencer 1965)
both as a group and as single individuals for all their life (e.g. nyangulo, korianga). To better comprehend the way age-sets and age grades intersect with and succeed one another, it is useful to quote Spencer’s visualization: “If one imagines a queue climbing up a ladder, then this replicates the age system, with each successive climber representing an age-set and each rung an age grade” (Spencer 1993: 140-141). Women do not have as clear-cut an age set system as men, however, as Spencer underlines (1993), gender relations are fundamental in men’s transitions from one stage to another. In addition, women’s roles and position within the family and household undertake important evolutions depending on their age, which affects their economic status in terms of livestock rights and decision-making power (Little 1987, Talle 1987).

Spencer’s ethnographies (1965, 1988) describe in detail how the political relationships that regulate this kind of system of social organization based on what he calls an “upward spiral”⁵ is closely interwoven with the management of livestock, including property rights but also other aspects related to the pastoral activity. In both his more ‘traditional’ (i.e. looking at mainly one society) ethnographies on the Samburu (1965) and Matapato Maasai (1988), Spencer begins with a chapter on the pastoral economy (1965) and pastoral enterprise (1988) which define the dynamics of livestock property rights and the importance of stock for the reproduction of families and homesteads.

In the ethnography of the Matapato Maasai (1988), one of the guiding threads of the description and analysis of the age-set system is that of “rebellion” of moran against elders whose conservative tendency, backed by their control over cattle, confers on them their social and economic status. By retaining property rights over cattle, elders strive to keep the control of the institution of marriage through which they retain the power of jurisdiction over their sons’ marriages, e.g. choosing the bride from a “marriageable” family (Spencer 1988: 228) as well as delaying youths’ plans for marriage in order to preserve, through polygamy, their social and political position. On the other hand, the “rebellion” that characterises warriors is a prerogative of murrannahood as a stage of life that symbolizes

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⁵ From murrannahood to elderhood
Maasainess itself, elders being “less than Maasai” having left behind the stage of warriorhood (Spencer 1993: 152). *Murranhood* is grounded in group loyalty, sharing, and responsibility towards one another, and these ideals are enacted by activities related to livestock such as particular dynamics of consumption of meat (i.e. *olpul*, see above), cattle raids, and protection of family herds from outside threats such as animals’ attacks and raids (Spencer 1988). Age roles finally are established, reproduced, and acknowledged by warriors and elders alike in occasion of feasts and rituals (e.g. the slaughter of the Great Ox) in which consumption of meat in terms of distribution of cuts is regulated by the system of age grades (Spencer 1988, see chapter two).

The work of anthropologists such as Schneider, Rigby and Spencer spans a period of several decades which corresponds to a period of crucial economic changes that occurred across East African rangelands (occurred from the 1960’s to the 1980’s, see next section), Spencer’s first ethnography on the Samburu of Kenya having been published in the 1965. The description of some of the features of the social organization illustrated so well by these authors in some respect currently hold true. The importance of cattle and other livestock as mediators of social relationships within and beyond homesteads as well as the age-set organization continue to define roles and responsibilities, and mark important passages in individual and collective life. Nevertheless, generational roles and age set social organization have acquired new meanings in changing socio-economic contexts. The role of youths (i.e. the warriors) for instance continues to be central but has shifted from defence (e.g. of the family livestock) to workforce through wage labour and income generation. Elders’ political position and function as guidance, and decision-makers, today extend to matters related to land and livestock trade, along with more ‘customary’ aspects of private and public life (e.g. compensations in cases of unfaithfulness in marriage, livestock movements and mobility). Comoditization in its different aspects determines heavily the relationships between warriors and elders when it comes to the entitlements to cash and the power relations embedded in conversions between livestock and money (see chapter five).
It is evident that ‘mainstream ethnography’ has tended to highlight a situation of equilibrium of social organization and reproduction, at times even through “rebellion” (Spencer 1988). This tendency is openly acknowledged by Schneider when, as I say above, he talks about the difficulty of appropriation of the means of production, which results in a tendency to even out wealth differences in the long run. Spencer pushes his intents even further in this direction when he overtly acknowledges to have taken an “unashamedly functionalist” (Spencer 1965: 1) approach in his ethnography of the Samburu. The same approach taken for the ethnography of the Maasai of Matapato published in 1988 prompted many critics, in that, according to some authors (Gulliver 1990, Rigby 1992). Spencer disregarded outright the consequences of economic changes of the 1960’s – 1980’s.

Representations of pastoral societies as social units with a marked tendency towards equilibrium and stability as in Schneider's, Rigby's, and Spencer's works may be illustrative of a context that was substantially dissimilar from the contemporary situation. The considerable time span that separates these accounts from the contemporary situation calls for a reassessment of the socio-economic and political status of the Maasai group that investigates how social organization undertakes evolution and transformations, including instances in which the importance of livestock is either lessened or makes itself manifest in different ways and domains, e.g. in presence of urbanization and commoditization. Certainly, these aspirations sound somewhat odd considering the voluminous amount of works that already exist on the integration of pastoral and 'cash economy'. This kind of research, which I will call ‘diversification’ trend, takes a somewhat recognizable approach to the analysis of instances of social organization and the changes undertaken as a consequence of commoditization. The critique I will make of this research in the next section will lead to stating why and how this thesis proposes a different approach that is more grounded on anthropological theory and reaches alternative conclusions.

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6See conclusion, Rigby, 1992
7Rigby does discuss issues of social change but from the perspective of “resistance” of the Maasai to capitalist forces and globalization
Changing economies and the continuities of change: pastoralism and the cash economy

One of the words that recur in studies of diversification of the pastoral economy burgeoned roughly since the 1980’s is change. This is not surprising considering that the 1960’s to 1980’s presented a set of challenges for pastoralists that contained the seeds of profound transformations of the long-established management of resources based on a communal use of grazing rangeland. During those decades, not only Maasai but other pastoral groups in east Africa (and beyond) became the recipients of foreign aid that, through rangeland management projects, envisioned a turn from communal management of land to ‘Western-style’ livestock production. A series of interventions such as improved technologies for boosting production, water and veterinary development, and cross-breeding were implemented throughout east African rangeland to achieve this objective (Homewood 2008: 228). As much in Tanzania as in Kenya, development interventions have historically impinged on the pastoral way of life based on communally managed rangeland by trying to achieve development through a series of ‘ranchization’ programs (Hodgson 2001, Hughes 2006).

There seems to be agreement that these interventions engendered in concert a fundamental aggravation of the economic status of pastoralists throughout east African rangeland (Baxter & Hogg 1990, Fratkin 2001, Fratkin & McCabe 1999, Galaty 1999, Hodgson 2001, Hogg 1986, Homewood 2008: 228-229). Perhaps the most remarkable example of the failure of development interventions is the Masai Livestock Development and Range Management Project implemented in Tanzanian Maasailand from the 1970’s onwards by the USAID which has come to be known for its mismatch between objectives imposed from the top and priorities and expectations from the bottom. As development projects of this kind continued to be implemented on the ground affecting profoundly the socio-economic situation of communities and individuals across east Africa, issues of poverty, diversification and social change began to rise as the mainstream.

\*See Hodgson 2001, pp-158-163 for details
priority in the research agenda among ecologists, political scientists and anthropologists. These debates have reported the existence of a mainstream view that associates pastoralism with poverty, which favors outside interests and undermines the pastoral system based on commonly managed resources on behalf of privatization (Little et al. 2008).

Today, east African rangelands have reached a degree of fragmentation in terms of ecological conditions and appropriation of land (Galvin et al. 2005) that requires a deep understanding of the variety of trajectories different communities, groups, and individuals undertake in different areas of east Africa. Subtle and fine analysis of the actual conditions of east African rangeland and the people inhabiting them have tried more recently to unpack on the one hand the category of pastoralists and show the heterogeneous collection of groups with a wide range of livelihoods that fall under such denomination (Little et al. 2008), and on the other have turned to the actual meaning of poverty and destitution for pastoralists themselves against classifications imposed from above (Broch-Due & Anderson 1999). Homewood (2008), for instance, tries to highlight the wide range of diversification strategies away from a vision of diversification as merely a set of measures to cope with poverty. Diversification as a strategy for coping with poverty exists alongside ‘risk-management’ strategies employed by families ranked as middle in the scale from poverty to wealthy, and asset diversification employed by wealthy families and individuals as a strategy for wealth accumulation through a variety of channels (Homewood 2008: 238-244). In the end, diversification among pastoralists and in rural Africa is a complex phenomenon that cannot be explained by a linear trajectory from subsistence to commercialization as a path to economic development (Bryceson 2002, Homewood 2008: 244) but rather could be considered an umbrella designation for very different paths.

A linear trajectory however can be detected, I argue, within literature on diversification when one looks closely at the way in which it has touched on instances of social change that the rearrangements in the appropriation and management of resources (e.g. land, livestock) have engendered. Overall, as I will illustrate below in the rest of this section, researchers have brought to light the aggravation of problems related to land scarcity and the
consequences of privatization processes. These, they have argued, have led to a severe disruption of supposedly traditional institutions based on age and gender relationships as well as other kinds of customary elements and features of pastoral societies. Traditional and customary arrangements researchers have made references to are part and parcel of the livestock-based rural economy organised around the three main pillars of land (managed communally), labour, available mainly within families, and livestock. An overt negative focus on consequences on traditional arrangements, roles and institutions brought about by economic diversification may have obfuscated, I will argue, on-the-ground and more subtle dynamics affecting communities.

My own viewpoint on, and critique of, the way literature on diversification treats instances of social change is that, in such studies, a gap or mismatch exists between the way they report on the kind of material changes experienced by people and the conclusions they draw on instances of social change that these transformations have supposedly engendered. Whenever researchers refer to instances of social change they do so by adopting concepts and notions about ‘traditional’ institutions that have been at the core of the anthropological analysis of ‘mainstream ethnography’ (egalitarianism, age-set social organization and division of roles between warriors, elders, and women). The linear development of social change I refer to, as portrayed in literature of diversification, therefore occurs as an ongoing aggravation and deterioration of traditional social institutions or traditional gender and generational roles. This perspective, I believe, is the result of the mismatch between the intention to depict situations of evolution or change by referring to concepts that were devised to depict situations of equilibrium and social reproduction as in mainstream ethnography (see previous section). I believe that in order to cope with this mismatch, novel analytical tools are needed to grasp how these traditional institutions have themselves undertaken changes and not merely how they have been weakened by external factors. Before addressing the kind of approach I envision, I will dissect examples of discussion of social change within studies of diversification.
According to Zaal (1999), for instance, a trend affecting land tenure with increasing privatisation in Kajado district (southern Kenya) has gone hand-in-hand with population growth triggering an expansion of market opportunities for livestock products provided by pastoralists resident in the district. Economically speaking, the penetration of the market has meant an overall higher income for pastoralist Maasai in Kajado who enjoy better economic performances than other Maasai communities in other districts populated by pastoralists. In terms of social change, Zaal sets up his analysis around which features of ‘traditional’ institutions and roles have been weakened and which have survived ‘despite’ the aforementioned changes. As for those that have been weakened he discusses the role and position of elders whose authority, he argues, has been weakened ever since each individual has begun to oversee their own interest in their respective property, as a result of privatization of land. Threats to elderhood as a traditional institution and the respect that is customarily granted to elders among Maasai have come from conflicts between fathers and sons over ownership of land and rights to trade land and livestock with shared rights of ownership. Zaal goes on by turning to *moranism* as another crucial traditional institutions of Maasai society and argues that it too could “fall victim” to individualism caused by land privatization (Zaal 1999: 107). Coast (2002) echoes Zaal on the weakening of the institution of warriorhood when she reports data on the variety of income generating activities outside of the pastoral rural economy exploited by younger Maasai men leaving their villages to move and migrate to cities and towns (Coast 2002: 95-96).

Another example that approaches social change in pastoral societies from a similar perspective and reaching similar conclusions as Zaal and Coast is provided by Smith (1999) in the case of the Ariaal and Rendille Maa-speaking Nilotic groups living in Northern Kenya. Smith introduces his analysis with some remarks on the “challenges to order” (p. 1) that farming has brought to Rendille and Ariaal communities by taking the concept of gerontocracy that Spencer mentioned in his ethnography of the Samburu (1965) as point of reference. In short, Smith argues that a shift from pastoralism to farming in a small community of Northern Kenya (Songea) has challenged the rule of gerontocracy weakening the power of elders of
disposing of communally owned assets (livestock and farms) and their rights over the labour of women and younger men. The rule of gerontocracy, therefore, is put under threat by the fact that women and younger men increasingly detach themselves from dependency on elders by taking advantage of the opportunities that commercial agriculture and market expansion have generated.

Moving on from generational relationships and the institutions of elderhood and warriorhood, a number of studies of diversification have tackled the question of the widening gap between poor and wealthy individuals and families, otherwise referred to as ‘social stratification’ or ‘social differentiation’ processes. Homewood has grouped these studies in a category that takes an approach based fundamentally on political economy (2008: 228). The basic rationale of this approach is to look at how privatization or appropriation of resources have created a situation of an everlasting widening gap between richer families that are able to retain their position within the pastoral economy, and poorer families, pushed to the margin of the pastoral economy and forced to turn to other strategies for coping with poverty (e.g. migration or non-livestock income generating activities). Some of the factors triggering these processes are privatization of farming land (Little 1985), population growth, droughts and political turmoil (Fratkin 2001), as well as the appropriation of remittances from wildlife conservation enterprises (Thompson & Homewood 2002).

In analysing social stratification, Little (1985) acknowledged, cautiously, that trends of social mobility used to occur during the 1970’s among pastoral societies of Northern Kenya (IlChamus) apparently in line with past studies that emphasized the egalitarian nature of pastoral societies (Little 1985: 256) and that, as a result of the spreading of farming, processes of class formation have begun to arise (p. 257). Other researchers interested in social stratification (Homewood et al. 2009, Homewood, Thompson & Coast 2004, Fratkin 2001, Thompson & Homewood 2002) have not made as open a reference as Little to egalitarianism as a term of comparison with the past. Nevertheless, they have carried out their analysis departing from the same framework with the premise of a once less-marked economic gap between rich and poor, and have reached similar conclusions as to the future
expected effect on social organization and order with ecological, political and economic stressors continuing on the path undertaken.

Overall, a widespread agreement may be noticed from reading this literature. Researchers have often painted scenarios in which social and cultural features of the Maasai (or other pastoralist) group in east Africa will increasingly disappear as the trends of commoditization of land and individualization of life continues. Zaal puts it in the most eloquent manner when he says that “Maasai social and cultural life may change [...] much of it being obsolete in view of then-changed conditions. The Maasai will have changed as a people and a culture, away from pastoralism and integrating into the world economy” (Zaal 1999: 110).

This study envisages a different approach that questions and rethinks the framework of analysis employed by researchers of the ‘cash economy’ to assess the consequences of commoditization (e.g. of land) and integration in the market on social organization and traditional institutions. In this ethnography, I will take into greater account how market integration entails changes, evolution, and renovation of traditional institutions as part and parcel of the ongoing, at times, hard to detect, social change that all societies undertake, not in line with the tendency towards a weakening or outright fading away of social institutions as underlined by diversification studies.

One paramount implication or consequence of the approach taken by literature on diversification is that pastoralism, with the forms of social organization it incorporates, and the ‘cash economy’ have come into view as two distinct objects of analysis that clash rather than coalesce, and engender the detrimental effects on ‘traditional’ institutions that I have mentioned above. The historical reconstructions of pastoralism, exchange and markets (Kerven 1992) prove that non-pastoral economic activities have always been part and parcel of the lives of people of the Great Rift Valley ecosystem, and that livelihoods strictly dependent on pastoral products were an ideal underlying ideology of self-differentiation from other groups rather than a real and practicable way of living (Galaty 1982). Pastoralism and diversification or ‘cash economy’ are not therefore two distinct categories and need not be treated as such.
The anthropological approach used in this thesis will tackle questions of commoditization, consumption, and integration in the market departing from the kind of framework that anthropology and social theory have taken in the field of the ‘economy’ with multiplicities, differences, and cultural variation at its core. Bloch and Parry (1989) for instance have highlighted the cultural diversity that springs from the spreading of ‘modern’ money. Likewise, anthropologists such as Appadurai (1986) and Miller (1995) have shown that commoditization and consumption are not necessarily ordered by the rules of global standardization but, rather, trigger differences depending on how people articulate their meanings. This background calls for a different appreciation and judgment of the consequences of commoditization and market integration on the forms of social organization that are peculiar of Maasai society.

**Rethinking Maasai ethnicity**

Shifting attention from how economic diversification affects traditional institutions and social organization negatively to how these undertake adjustments in a broader socio-economic (and spatial) context entails a rethinking of the way one looks at and thinks of the nature and status of Maasai ethnic identity. Mainstream ethnography on the Maasai group has been unquestionably successful in describing vital social institutions of pastoralist societies, or to use Barth’s jargon, the ‘cultural stuff’ inside (1969). When it has come to bringing up to date the exploration of Maasai ethnic identity and its reproduction in a contemporary context of growing commoditization and involvement in the market, the literature on economic diversification has not questioned the anthropological foundations that underlie ethnic identity in Maasai society, but has rather highlighted a decline of established traditional social organization.

The historical analysis of Maasai ethnicity and identity formation prior to exogenous drivers of change such as colonialism (Galaty 1993, Spear 1993, 1997, Waller 1988), has had the merit to show the fluidity between the different groups of pastoralists, agriculturalists and hunter-gatherers and

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*Money supposed to have ‘commoditizing’ power as opposed to ‘primitive’ money, i.e. money used only in specific exchanges (Dalton 1965)*
how the shift from one form of livelihood to another entailed a ‘shift’ in ethnicity, e.g. from ‘Maasai’ pastoralists to ‘Dorobo’ hunter-gatherers, or ‘Arusha’ farmers (Galaty 1982). This historical research deserves credit for reporting on the blurred ethnic boundaries and the necessity to overcome functionalist approaches, which have influenced mainstream ethnography on the Maasai group. Its environmental approach however is suitable for an analysis of a context (pre-European administrations) in which questions related to wage labour, commoditization and market penetration had not reached the effects that can be assessed today and where environmental and ecological conditions certainly had much more impact compared to other man-made factors on the life of the people of the Great Rift Valley ecosystem. A substantially environmental approach to the study of Maasai ethnic identity in the contemporary context would certainly be inadequate and reductive.

In fact, some noteworthy attempts have been made to contemplate how the local context intersects with national and international influences in creating ideas and meanings attached to manifestations of (Maasai) ethnic identity. Hodgson’s (2001) is certainly one such attempt that looked at the historical changes and the intermingling of endogenous and exogenous factors leading to the contemporary status of Maasai ethnicity and idea of Maasainess as equal to being pastoralists and as fundamentally a patriarchal society. Another research venture has looked at the institutional composition of indigenous people’s movements initiated in the 1990’s with the Maasai as the leading ‘indigenous people’ dominating it in Tanzania and arisen on the assumption of a clearly bounded and pre-colonial cultural distinctiveness but, in reality, being grounded on a/the global and international policy environment (Hodgson 2011, Igoe 2006).

To different extents, these works on Maasai ethnicity are embedded in anthropological theory on ethnicity. In their seminal collection Being Maasai, Spear & Waller (1993) for instance depart from a position that is strongly influenced, by their own admission (p. 16), by Barth’s work on ethnic boundaries and the emphasis on the key role of ethnic identity in controlling and accessing (natural) resources. Igoe (2006) applies the same concept, i.e. the ‘instrumentality’ of ethnic identity for accessing resources, by focusing
on the kind of resources that are at stake in the international arena of development; he takes therefore a political rather than an ecological approach as do Spear & Waller. Currently, the research venture on economic diversification has not caught up with the evolution of the anthropological debate on ethnicity after Barth. Framing economic diversification around questions that have been brought up in the debate in anthropology on ethnicity is the objective of this thesis in order to integrate the insights that have come from research on economic diversification with anthropological explorations of how economic diversification affects the meaning of ‘being Maasai’ today.

Ever since the innovative work of Fredrik Barth, ethnicity has become one major ‘object’ of analysis that has engendered extensive debate among anthropologists, often working in ignorance of each other’s work and giving the impression “that the wheel has been invented several times over” (Banks 1996: 2). After Barth, the debate that took shape in the field of ethnicity saw the so-called ‘primordial’ and ‘instrumental’ stances in opposition to each other, with Geertz as the major exponent of the former and Barth himself of the latter (Jenkins 2008: 46).

On the side of primordialists, Geertz for instance refers to a ‘primordial attachment’ (Jenkins 2008: 46) of the individual given by kinship, culture, and spatial identity. Isaac (1975), a political scientist, takes an even more radical stance than Geertz when referring to specific endowments of an individual from the moment of birth that are inherent to the child’s own body as an expression of the ‘value system’ of its parents and group (Banks 1996: 38-39). Contrary to the position taken by primordialists, instrumentalists de-emphasize internalized (either at individual or group level) ethnic identity on behalf of calculative processes that serve the pursuit of political and material interests. Abner Cohen (1969) is often referred to as the major proponent of the instrumentalist trend with specific references to his major work, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa (1969) which looked at Hausa traders in Nigeria and how they ‘manipulated’ their ethnic identity

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(i.e. emphasizing their 'Hausaness') in order to control long-distance trade in kola nuts and cattle.

In more recent years a synthesis has been sought and so have other levels of analysis been explored. For instance, Bentley (1987) departs from the level of individuality and argues that empirical scrutiny of ethnic identity is possible only by looking at practices and how these shape the individual consciousness and sense of belonging. He also argues that such a methodological approach can be used to overcome the weaknesses of both instrumental and primordial stances since neither of the two provide analytical tools for assessing the conscious and unconscious mental processes through which identity formation, individual and collective, evolves and is internalized. Eriksen (1991) takes a similar approach that departs too from the level of the individual and looks at ‘culture’ as the core of ethnic identity formation and preservation at the private level of the family and domestic sphere within which individuals internalize (mostly through language) mental maps of meanings and structures. Making a theoretical and ethnographic leap to the layer of the collective identity, Van Binsbergen (1990) has looked at ethnicity among the Nkoya people of Zambia as a phenomenon of collective identification that has led to the formation of collective Nkoya identity from an heterogeneous group of people and, in contemporary time, has become an ideological common construction that modern Nkoya refer to in order to advance their claims within the political arena.

These examples provide a key to address the question of the nature of ethnicity in that they show the necessity to overcome rigid positions between ‘primordial’ and ‘instrumental’ stances and the necessity to consider different levels of analysis. In addition, these examples demonstrate that theoretical standpoint and methodological approach are necessarily woven together. The accounts of Bentley and Eriksen above as cases of ethnicity as an internalized process of individual consciousness are not dissimilar from the case proposed by Van Binsbergen, in that, all these authors choose the methodology (individual practices and “language-
The first two, and first hand historical sources the latter) according to the initial theoretical perspective from which they depart.

In my case, the theoretical position has cropped up from the critique of different strands of research on Maasai society, Maasai ethnicity and investigation of interaction between pastoral and cash economy. In this thesis, I will illustrate how Maasai ethnicity today in Tanzania is both an inherent feature of individual sense of belonging that comes from nurturing and upbringing and a process of interaction that can be ‘instrumentalized’. This requires therefore the analysis of Maasai ethnicity at different levels from the individual to the collectivity. In the following three sections, I will spell out in more detail the main three themes within which I will pursue my analysis of Maasai ethnicity and will provide ethnographic description that informs and answers the overarching objectives I spelled out above at the beginning of the introduction.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND MAIN THEMES OF THE THESIS

Individuals and (in) society

The first theme of this thesis, i.e. the relationship between the individual and the collectivity, refers to one of the key preoccupations in anthropology and social sciences, which is to say, the necessity to account for both the individual and the society within complex socio-economic systems. To a certain extent, such a preoccupation has translated into a narration of developments in certain areas of the western world (Britain and United States) of a trend to an individualistic society at the expense of a collectivistic nature of social interaction and exchange (Macfarlane 1978, Putnam 2000). Ever since classics such as The Gift (Mauss 1925) and Argonauts of the Western Pacific (Malinowski 1922), economic anthropologists have sought to explain this fundamental link by unearthing the underlying nature of practices of exchange. These early accounts of exchange behaviour in some respect negated the individualistic nature of

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1 A methodology developed by Wittgenstein (1953) to explore cognitive individual processes through which individuals develop their own knowledge of the world
economics behaviour, labelling the practices described as primitive and irrational, denying individual calculus (LeClair & Schneider 1968).

The debate on the nature of economic behaviour in relation to the individual-collectivity dichotomy attained its maturity with the debate between ‘substantivism’ and ‘formalism’. If the former derived from, to use the words of its leading figure Karl Polanyi, “man’s dependence for his living upon nature and his fellows” (Polanyi 1968: 122), and highlighted the importance of practices of reciprocity and redistribution, the latter stemmed from the premise of an individual rationality based on a maximizing behaviour under conditions of scarcity (Hann & Hart 2011: 65-66). Subsequently, the ‘theory of practice’ approach (Bourdieu 1977) gained ground for bridging the two elements of individual and society through the analysis of ‘embedded practices’ but received criticism from post-modern theorists, especially in countries influenced by the ideology of liberalism, e.g. the United States (Miller 2009: 6), for ruling out the human capacity of self-determination.

Recently, one of the authors who has openly referred to the relationship between collectivity and individuality has been Stephen Gudeman, whose theoretical outline and economic model spelled out in The Anthropology of Economy (2001) has inspired the development of the arguments in the thesis and the proposition of the two overarching objectives. In The Anthropology of Economy, Gudeman argues that the economy is made of two interacting realms: the community and the market. By ‘community’, Gudeman refers to the realm of associational life driven by values of solidarity, social cohesion and shared values. By ‘market’, Gudeman refers to the whole set of impersonal, self-interest and short-term exchanges carried out by atomized and separated individuals and driven by the rational motive of profit making or more generally (economic) value production. The two realms are mutually interdependent, for markets would not be possible without the structures and relationships of which communities are made, such as shared values and agreements, common languages, or “implicit understandings” (p. 11). Likewise, communities may be found within markets such as companies, corporations which are grounded in shared values while being structured for the sake of profit and value making (p. 11).
To Gudeman, communities are always changing in nature, overlapping and at times hierarchical but, more importantly, they “rarely define a total life” (p. 25), which is to say, individuals shift between different communities, and this entails composite individual identities. What gels together a community for Gudeman is the presence of a base, which can be a tangible (e.g. land) or an intangible ‘thing’ (e.g. knowledge) that people belonging to a community share. In order for a community to reproduce itself, the base is distributed among the members of the community through processes of allotment and apportionment of which Gudeman proposes several examples.

The definition and interpretation of community proposed by Gudeman constitute the main frame of the analysis of Maasai ethnicity in this thesis; that is to say, I depart from the premise that Maasai ethnic identity constitutes the base of one specific economic community (i.e. Maasai community). The analysis will focus firstly on how the ‘Maasai community’ is enacted through oppositions within realms of morality, meanings and practices between what is Maasai and what is non-Maasai, and secondly, on how individuals act within the ‘market’ as members of the ‘Maasai community’ while being part of other overlapping and co-existing communities that flow from other values and practices beyond Maasai ethnic identity.

Within the present state of affairs, in the literature on diversification individual choices have been taken into account by using statistical modelling and modelling approaches that have very little anthropological content being based on ‘generalizable regularities’ or ‘useful simplification’ (Homewood 2008: 135). My objective is to provide a frame of analysis and a socio-economic context that explain the economic behaviour of individuals who are actively engaged in the reproduction of traditional institutions, roles and forms of social organization such as elderhood or murrannahood but at the same time belong to broader social worlds. This kind of approach will enable an analysis of social change that is not linear as in much literature on diversification (see above), that is to say, not as an ongoing deterioration of traditional institutions, but rather as the product of ongoing negotiations between different sections of the society (e.g. women, elders, and younger generations). These negotiations entail readjustments and remodelling of
social institutions, gender and age roles, as well as Maasai ethnic identity itself.

**The rural, the urban, and the ethnic economy**

The rural-urban interface will emerge as a determinant factor that plays in the construction of ethnicity through images and discourses that pertain to the realm of economy, development, modernity, and tradition. The kinds of practices that I will be describing are deeply embedded in a complex set of principles, standards, and codes of behaviour that regulate practices of consumption, exchange, and investments which are all deeply intertwined to the ideas connected to the difference between rural and urban life. Taken as a totality these practices contribute to construct Maasai ethnic identity in the first place by making explicit connections between the idea of Maasainess and the rural lifestyle.

These kinds of changes connected to the idea of rurality have been illustrated by Ferguson (1999) for instance in the Southern African region of the Copperbelt where a situation of economic decline in the 1980’s affected the ideas and discourses of ‘rural Zambia’. The way Ferguson illustrates the interdependence of social economic and political aspects, connotations and values connected to place and identity formation is similar to my own approach. Throughout the thesis, I will show how economic practices prompt adaptations and adjustments of conventional images and principles connected to the rural life and create new forms and ideas of Maasainess that materialize in the idea of the ‘modern Maasai’, or in Swahili language *Maasai ya kisasa* (*kisasa*, modern). Such a contemporary image crops up at the interface between the rural scene and peri-urban territories that in much of Tanzania and across the border with Kenya are replacing formerly rural areas and producing a continuous peri-urban tissue where land is parcelled and privatized and new relationships are established, often based on informal working contracts, between long-term residents and a growing number of job-seekers and would-be petty entrepreneurs.

Inspired by the previous anthropological critique on urbanization and Ferguson’s “cultural dualism” (Ferguson 1999: 82-93), the rural-urban
interface here will be looked at as a socially constructed dichotomy, and will be ‘used’ as an analytical device that helps explain the transformations and readjustments of Maasai ethnic identity with the shift from the rural to the urban sphere, the latter having received little attention, apart from a few cases (May & Ole Ikayo 2007, Talle 1999). The city, or town, stands for locally made routes to an alternative, coexistent and complementary social world that in several instances represents contemporary tensions within the Maasai society, from the perspective of age and gender relationships as well as between forms of individualism and the fulfilment of family and community obligations and morals, i.e. the individual versus collectivity relationship that I have developed above.

A further implication of these dynamics of identity production and reproduction is the effect on entrepreneurship and viability of economic ventures undertaken by Maasai individuals as formerly exclusively ‘rural’ people. Turning attention to the urban scene and its links with the rural economy, questions of mobility, integration and boundaries, and more generally all social aspects that are connected to entrepreneurship across the rural-urban interface become much more compelling than in an exclusively rural livestock-based ethnically homogeneous economy. Economic enterprises within ethnically homogeneous zones in bigger urban conglomerates have been at the core of a profusion of studies. The umbrella term of ‘ethnic economy’ (Light & Gold 2000) has been coined for studies of the labour market, self-employment, and business ownership among ethnic minorities in North American and British cities. Case studies of ‘ethnic economies’ abound in the literature: Indochinese in Saint Paul (Kaplan 1997), Iranians in Los Angeles (Light et al. 1994), Turkish communities in London (Struder 2003), Italians in Toronto (Buzzelli 2001) and so forth.

In the African context, phenomena of ‘ethnic economies’ stem from different premises. In most of Africa, neoliberal policies coupled with a weakening of the role of the state have turned the greatest share of the national economy into ‘informal’ activities to the point that the ‘informality’ framework has been abandoned on behalf of the ‘social network’ approach (Meagher 2010: 11). In many countries, including Tanzania (Tripp 1997),

\[\text{See Kaplan & Wei Li (2006) for a recent collection of case studies}\]
networks and institutions based on different kinds of foundations that are not driven in the first instance by economic motives have replaced state institutions. For instance, Kate Meagher’s case study of garment and shoes’ small-scale producers in the city of Aba (Nigeria) (2010) is one of the most recent efforts that looks at the intertwining of social and economic life in an ethnically homogeneous group, the Igbo of Nigeria, a group known for their marked entrepreneurial skills and “community based networks” that have “underpinned the development of complex local credit and subcontracting networks” (p. 6).

Today, the kinds of networks on which Igbo entrepreneurs rely for their business are those that are built within the domain of kinship, religion (Christian associations) and other kinds of partnership in hometown associations and clubs. Through these networks, entrepreneurs strive to access credit and clients, and apprentices attempt to enter the business of shoes and garment making. The overall picture of the economic situation of small-scale Igbo producers Meagher proposes is rather dispassionate, highlighting, for instance, the shift from strong to weak ties affecting negatively circuits of credit extension, the negative effects of affiliation in certain associations, which increase pressure on entrepreneurs from associates rather than bringing business benefits, and a general aggravation of economic conditions. By emphasizing “network failure” (p. 20), Meagher aligns her analysis with a more recent take on power of networks in contemporary Africa which has been more hesitant on the ‘untapped’ potential (of networks) in a situation of lack of state institutions (Meagher 2010: 20-21).

Notwithstanding the pessimistic view, Meagher’s contribution is important in that it describes the dynamics of economic life and its close links with a multifaceted social life in which individuals are at the intersection of a whole range of different communities, clubs, and associations. Also, Meagher does not rule out the possibility of a more optimistic picture in a different economic and political context. In fact, her study highlights how the rather powerful cultural traits (i.e. a culture of entrepreneurship based on strong ties and networks) of the Igbo group in
boosting economic development have been undermined by external factors linked to the opening to international markets.

The case of the Maasai group in Tanzania may be comparable to the case of the Igbo from the point of view of the strong sense of ethnic identity. Unlike Meagher’s illustration of the Igbo which connects ethnic and cultural identity to entrepreneurial skills, the historical background of the Maasai group reveals conflicting relationships with instances of commoditization, monetary economy and the like (Hodgson 2001). Having reported on the historical background in the next initial chapter, throughout the thesis, I will argue that the ethnic identity awareness that has historically distinguished Maasai from other peoples, mostly those of Bantu origin, in Tanzania (and Kenya) plays an important ‘instrumental’ role in urban-based diversification strategies pursued by Maasai individuals today (chapters three, six, and seven).

The modernity of (Maasai) ethnicity: gender and generations

One final pronouncement needs to be made to complete the theoretical foundations of the thesis and to define more thoroughly the idea of the ‘modern Maasai’. Young males in their 20’s, 30’s and 40’s in their life stage of warriorhood embody the image of the ‘modern Maasai’ which posits them between their position as backbone of the traditional Maasai family with respect to the economic support they (are supposed to) provide, and the multiple trajectories and paths they undertake outside the traditional Maasai family. I have briefly explained above how the role of warriors has changed in a context of commoditization. ‘Defence’ tasks have lost or seen their importance diminished while that of providing for goods and other expenses has become the main responsibility of a man towards his family within his household.

In general, a ‘household’ in a Maasai pastoral community may be referred to as a unit composed of a household head (HH) with his wives and their children; a sub-household is a further smaller unit single-headed by a HH’s wife who occupies a hut (enkaji). Within a household, the household head is supposed to be the provider of food, school, and hospital expenses for all the
members of the household; in addition, the HH is responsible for the management of the livestock with the collaboration of his wives and children. Within a household, co-wives collaborate in terms of labour, childcare, and for other tasks related to the smooth daily running of the household. A boma includes a number of households ranging from one single household to over ten households (see next section on methods below); household heads within a boma may or may not be related through blood or acquired kinship ties (e.g. a father with his married sons, and sons-in-law).

This brief definition of a household and its smaller and bigger related units (i.e. sub-household and boma), however, should not be taken at face value, in that, dynamics within and beyond a ‘household’ are complex and fluid (Sachedina 2008). In several cases, household heads are the main providers not only for their own respective families but also for households related to them through a wide range of kinship ties (either direct or acquired). A household head, for instance, may be responsible for or contribute to the material well-being of his father’s wives. Young males employed in wage labour may be providers for the women in their boma even before becoming themselves household heads (i.e. before marriage). Things become more complex considering that women are often engaged in income generation (Brockington, 2001) and at times may themselves be considered household heads at all effects, for instance when their husbands are unable to provide for them or have passed away (Sachedina 2008: 74).

These and other circumstances contribute to create a situation that requires qualitative analysis beyond the analysis of the household as a discrete unit, and an analysis that takes account of the changing dynamics of gender relations. These have become strictly dependent on patterns of mobility between the rural and the urban which involve to a great extent Maasai youths, and, to a fundamentally irrelevant extent, women and elders. As a result, the idea that connects modernity to Maasainess is embodied exclusively by young men, drawing oppositions and defined boundaries between maleness and youth as the two fundamental traits of the ‘modern Maasai’ while keeping femaleness and elderhood, as a result, excluded from it. To look at the ‘modern’ side of Maasai ethnicity embodied by young males at the rural-urban interface therefore requires looking at complementary
domains, one above all, the domestic, which comes prior to instances of urbanization and ‘modern’ aspects of Maasai ethnicity.

Some attention has been paid to the intersection of ethnicity and gender especially in sociology considering the attention that sociologists have paid to ethnic minorities in western cities. As Fenton et al. (1999) argue: “the experience of ethnicity is gendered and gender relations are ethnically distinct” (p. 1). The attention to the role of women in society has arisen especially as a consequence of the feminist movement initiated in the 1970’s (Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1992: 68, Fenton et al. 1999: 14), which prompted the birth of a new ‘anthropology of women’ (Moore 1988: 1). Women as a category, Moore argues, have, in fact, historically and traditionally been looked at in anthropology considering the focus of classic anthropology on marriage and kinship, but always as subordinate to men following a set of assumptions driven by a “male bias” (Moore 1988: 1). What the feminist movement added to the study of women was a novel perspective and approach that in the first instance triggered an inward look within anthropology to reflect on how women had been represented in anthropological accounts (p. 1).

Intersections of ethnicity with gender show how women in certain respects become “carriers of ethnicity” and embodiment of “ethnic culture” (Fenton et al. 1999: 15), which often occur through the reproduction of the role of women as ‘home-makers’ within the domestic realm (Fenton et al. citing Yuval-Davis 1999: 15). Highlighting the role of women within the domestic realm has been the answer of a certain trend of scholarship on the Maasai and other east African pastoralists that, by referring to the propositions of the feminist movement, has associated the domestic space with *femaleness*. This has been taken as the starting point for the recognition of the prominence of women’s role and against the paradigm of patriarchal and male-centred pastoral societies (Hodgson 2000).

In refutation of the paradigm of pastoral societies as ‘patriarchal’, Broch-Due (2000) shows the legitimacy of the matrilineal principle among the pastoral Turkana of Kenya. She refers to the ‘house’ or more specifically a “house-idiom” (Broch-Due 2000: 167) as a tool of analysis that puts on the centre stage the role of women, their dominant place within the house and
their reproductive capacity all weaved together in a language of fertility that is at the base of a fundamental matrilineal system of relatedness.

The way these considerations on gender-based qualities of pastoral (Maasai) societies enter discussions about ethnic identity and the outline of the idea of the ‘modern Maasai’ begins subtly to take shape. Hodgson argues that Maasai men have been in a privileged position in embodying the ideals that are connected to Maasai ethnicity and, as ‘real’ pastoralists, that comes out in the so-called pastoral ideology defined by Galaty (Hodgson 1999: 42). Feminist anthropology has contributed to the shift from a man-centred paradigm to the essentially ‘female’ nature of the ‘house’, and this has unveiled the hidden potentialities of Maasai women and highlighted the importance of their role within Maasai society as masters of the domestic realm.

With the acknowledgment of women’s role as masters of the domestic realm, the emergence of the image of the ‘modern Maasai’ rising against this background stands out as a further step forward towards contemporary developments of the idea of Maasai ethnicity. As rural-based economies undertake transformations with increasing income diversification (Bryceson 1999, 2002) and small towns arise as reservoirs of opportunities for generating income (Baker 1995, 2012), gender relationships, too, have been remodelled to adjust to these economic transformations (Francis 2010, O’laughlin 1998). Among Maasai, these transformations have put men in closer connections with urban-based economies compared to women and elders. As a consequence, younger Maasai men have become the embodiment of modernity as opposed to women and elders, who are respectively regarded as the masters of the domestic realm and the embodiment of tradition.

**Breakdown of the chapters**

The first chapter of this thesis is divided into two parts: the first, a more descriptive account of socio-economic life of the fieldsite, and the second, a historical part that looks at the controversial relationships between ‘the Maasai’, money, and generally the world of commoditization. The first
descriptive part introduces the reader to the material, social and economic features of the field by describing the morphology of the Mto wa Mbu greater area (i.e. the fieldsite), the kind of economic activities carried out by Maasai people within the urban environment and sketching multi-ethnic socio-economic relationships between Maasai and non-Maasai. The second historical part aims at reconstructing two co-existing and interacting processes; the first is the ‘rise’ of Maasai ethnicity as a historically produced category prompted in part by external interventions by the European (German and British) administrations first and post-independence governments after. The second process starts with a fundamental rejection on the side of the Maasai of the values connected to marketing and trading to a shift that occurred with neoliberal policies in the 1970’s and 1980’s which prompted individually driven economic enterprises and a widespread appreciation for values connected to entrepreneurship.

Part I of the thesis begins the ethnographic description of how the socio-economic and historical background set in chapter one shapes everyday, short-term practices and how these constitute the interactive and dialectal terrain of ongoing negotiations involved in the (re)production of Maasai ethnic identity. Chapter two revolves around practices of consumption, and thrift as its counterpart. It looks at the way consumption practices and the meanings and discourses attached to them construct Maasai ethnicity departing from a series of oppositions between the rural and the urban. Chapter three develops further instances of urban life that have been overlooked in existing literature and looks at the restructuring of the urban social sphere by focusing again on daily practices of consumption and monetary exchange, and how Maasai urban identity becomes ‘instrumental’ within the economic networks of the urban economy. Chapter four shifts attention from ethnic-based networks to co-existing networks of social life based on unequal relationships between ‘big men’ and subordinates. Overall, Part I reports a situation of overlapping registers of evaluation. Maasai people find themselves at the intersection of a composite rural-urban social scene where the ideas of Maasai and Maasainess undertake readjustments and reinterpreting as Maasai themselves are encompassed by alternative registers of human categorization and evaluation (i.e. a hierarchical
structure with the ‘big men’ on top). In the end, ideas and practices that characterise Maasai ethnicity and ‘Maasainess’ stem from oppositions and antagonisms between alternative and apparently mutually exclusive categories (i.e. ‘Maasai’ vs. ‘non-Maasai’), but also, at the same time, contradictions and ambivalences.

Part II deals with these oppositions and inconsistencies by concentrating on how individuals, mostly younger Maasai men in their life stage of *morranhood* (warriorhood), perform and respond to ambivalent and equivocal moralities embedded in the rural-urban dichotomy. The focus here will be on long-term investments through which individuals bridge the two realms through strategies of wealth diversification. Chapter five and six together will look at the entire portfolio of wealth and assets that prevail in the local economy composed of rural and urban-based local resources. Chapter five looks at diversification patterns focusing on conversions between livestock and cash; it does so with specific reference to generational relationships by delving into the nature of social change and the power relations embedded in tradition which in the last instance urge young males to diversify their assets across the rural-urban interface. Chapter six shifts the attention to a particular form of wealth, i.e. ‘modern’ houses, and the relationships to the built environment that hinge on the rural-urban divide, this time from the perspective of gender relationships. It examines how gender relationships change with a marked drive towards individualization of space (which becomes *male* space) and the pursuit of individual and personal development that can be observed in the material and spatial reshaping of the built environment from the rural to the urban domain. Overall, Part II is dedicated to the exploration of the relationship between individuality and collectivity from the angle of analysis presented above in this introduction and deals with issues that are predominant in the study of economic diversification in pastoral communities, gender and generational relationships. It does so by looking at urbanization and wealth differentiation not as factors of change that impact negatively on traditional institutions (e.g. elderhood, egalitarianism etc.) but rather by looking at the inherent changing and flexible nature of such institutions in accounting for
both the pursuit of individual agencies and collective participation within the realm of ‘tradition’ and rural life.

Part III is made of a single chapter (chapter seven) as an ethnography of local market networks that constitute the livestock market in and around Kigongoni/Losirwa. It departs from the objective to describe how Maasai ethnicity constitute a ‘market institution’ (North 1990) that moulds the livestock market through facilitating relationships of trust between market actors and by providing a vital source of capital to Maasai individuals who are involved in or intend to enter the livestock trading business. This final chapter addresses the overarching objectives of looking at individual motives of profit and self-interest in their dialectical and interactive relationship with group and ethnic identity. It does so by looking at ethnicity from one more angle and perspective of analysis, that is to say, the ‘institutional’ aspect of ethnicity which has been neglected by research on the Maasai and economy.

FIELDWORK AND ‘THE FIELD’: ISSUES AND METHODS

Before turning to the first chapter of the thesis, I wish to make a few remarks as to the choice and characteristics of the fieldsite, as well as other practicalities of fieldwork and data collection, and how all these factors influenced the theoretical foundations and actual ethnographic content of the thesis. I will also describe my own position as a researcher and within my host family, and will conclude with a more detailed description of the methods I used to collect the information I needed for different areas of research.

Fieldwork and data collection were carried out in a Maasai village called Losirwa and in a close-by peri-urban centre called Kigongoni (Monduli District, Arusha region) on the outskirt of a small town called Mto wa Mbu (Map 3). Most of the conversations, informants’ words, and descriptions (the ‘data’) presented in this thesis were collected over a fieldwork period of roughly 18 months from November 2010 to April 2012. I had the opportunity to make two other shorter visits for fieldwork in January 2013 and December 2013.
While I was in Manchester writing my research proposal, my intention was to return to the village (in fact, a subvillage) where I had lived for around a year being part of the staff of the NGO for which I worked in the 2008 (see above). As I said at the beginning of this introduction, that experience had triggered my curiosity as to the local meanings of economic development, ethnic identity, and entrepreneurship. For the whole year, I had heard repeated references to ethnicity and ethnic affiliation from the group members to whom the project of poverty alleviation belonged. The multi-ethnic character of the community, inhabited mostly by Maasai but also Meru, Arusha, and Chaga individuals and families, presented a complex situation that was worth the exploration I had envisioned in my research proposals. On my return in Tanzania, however, logistical factors (e.g. remoteness of the place coupled with not having private means of transport) as well as my own desire to start afresh in a new place induced me to seek another community with similar characteristics but more accessible by public transport from Arusha.

Being acquainted with the formal procedures for foreign researchers in approaching government and communities, in the first instance, I obtained a research permit from COSTECH (Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology), then a letter of introduction from the regional office in Arusha with which I introduced myself to the authorities in Monduli district, which is one of the districts most populated by Maasai pastoralists, and where, I had envisaged, I would select a location to settle. The head of the agriculture and livestock department in Monduli suggested Losirwa as a potential location that could meet the requisites for my research (i.e. a multi-ethnic context), being on the outskirt of multi-ethnic Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu (see next chapter for a description of the area), which I had never visited before at that time.

Even prior to landing to Tanzania for the very first time, I had read about Mto wa Mbu and its complex history and multi-cultural character having read William Arens‘ ethnography of the area (1979) while taking my first 

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13 Ethnic differences on some occasions even triggered some mild conflict among members as to the distribution of benefits (money, job opportunities etc.)
14 Obtaining a research permit from COSTECH is a necessary requisite for both nationals and non-nationals nowadays for conducting research in the country. [http://www.costech.or.tz/](http://www.costech.or.tz/)
Masters in the Anthropology of Africa at the University of Sussex in 2007. I decided therefore to pay a visit and assess the suitability of the location. Once in Kigongoni I contacted the Losirwa VEO (village executive officer) who introduced me to the village chairman\textsuperscript{15}, who, in turn, introduced me to the chairman of one of the subvillages that form Losirwa village, i.e. Baraka subvillage.

A few hours spent Kigongoni before even entering the rangeland where Maasai homesteads are located were sufficient for me to take the decision to settle in Baraka. Talking to the subvillage chairman and other Maasai and non-Maasai individuals in Kigongoni, I realised that an important factor that shaped social relationships in Kigongoni was ethnicity. Kigongoni is a peri-urban centre with a history of influxes of people from other regions of Tanzania (see next chapter). I therefore communicated to the Baraka chairman my intention and interest in settling in his boma and in staying there for at least a year.

The change of location from a community where I was well known to another where I was a total stranger entailed a rethinking of my own position as a researcher in relation to the research ‘subjects’ that was unlike that as development worker in which capacity I had worked before in Tanzania. As a development worker I had led a community enterprise which involved taking initiative and sometimes unpopular decisions as to the way benefits were distributed; I was therefore in a position that allowed me to take decisions that influenced people’s everyday lives. As a researcher, I experienced a shift in the power relations with local villagers, also not being backed up by any organization as I would have been in the community where I had worked as a development worker. In Baraka, I had to negotiate my own ‘entry’ in the boma where I settled in terms of my own contribution within my host family (see below). Secondly, I also had to present myself and my research in a way that was comprehensible to most Baraka villagers in order for them to agree to participate; being a ‘student’ (\textit{mwanafunzi}) (though a ‘white’ student) helped in that, considering the local understanding and inclination towards aiding students to succeed in their studies (see below as well on ‘explaining’ my project and my position).

\textsuperscript{15}VEOs are appointed by the government unlike village chairman who are elected by villagers
Admittedly, however, in the end, I did not encounter particular obstacles explaining my research project nor having people agree to answer my questions. On the contrary, I was fortunate to meet very welcoming people, with some of whom I built strong relationships of friendship and trust.

More importantly, besides my own position as a researcher, the change of location entailed a rethinking of the way I had envisioned the ‘field’ in which I would be collecting the ‘data’, and in the end, it affected the very theoretical foundations of this thesis. Besides the multi-ethnic character of the greater Mto wa Mbu area, I immediately realised the importance of another element, i.e. the rural-urban interface, whose theoretical importance I have described above. Appadurai argues that ‘locality’ is not a given bounded and self-evident space, but a “phenomenological property of social life, a structure of feeling which is produced by particular forms of intentional activity and which yields particular sorts of material effects” (1995: 208). In my case, I soon began to conceive the ‘locality’ or ‘field’ as a mosaic of socio-spatial interrelated circles that included the ‘village’ (i.e. Baraka), the ‘town’ (i.e. Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu) and many other circles in between. Here, however, I am not making a case for a ‘multi-sited’ ethnography (Marcus 1995); I am rather highlighting the importance of movements and mobility to make sense of Maasai ethnicity, which until today, has been connected, more or less explicitly, to geographical and spatial boundaries of the ‘community’ or ‘Maasailand’. In looking at the spatial character of the field which includes mobility and interrelated spheres of social relationships, I am following Clifford’s recommendation of paying the due attention to travelling along with dwelling, the latter having commonly been at the centre of the anthropological exploration at the expense of the former (Clifford 1997: 67).

These theoretical considerations have some significant practical implications with respect to the way I planned, carried out, and analysed the ‘data’. In order to grasp the complexity of the social relationships involved I had to become more mobile than I had previously envisioned. I began to spend my days following roughly the patterns of movements of young Maasai men, that is to say, spending some hours in the homestead in the morning, moving to the ‘town’ in the afternoon, and returning to the village
before dusk. It would generally take not more than half an hour to move between the village and the town.

I would often seek the company of other *moran* from my host *boma* but also from other *boma* to move between the village and the town and vice versa. I tried to make use of these occasions to talk through their views and feelings about their life plans in terms of economic diversification across the rural-urban interface. In Kigongoni I would spend my time between different spots, which were usually bars and shops. There, I would join chitchats already going on, or start new ones with the people, both Maasai and non-Maasai, hanging around premises. To move to another spot I would seek somebody’s company, often a Maasai *moran* but also older individuals such as *landisi* or *makaa*. In the morning, I would set some simple tasks to carry out in town such as the purchase of a particular item for myself or for a family member and possibly agree with one of the *moran* of my *boma* to accompany me. Entering chitchats in Kigongoni was not a difficult task because of people’s curiosity about my presence; I would commonly explain my presence and introduce myself as a researcher, or even better, as a ‘student’ conducting a school research project in the Maasai village. This would suffice for people to place me within local ‘categories’, that is to say, a foreigner interested in ‘Maasai culture’ as opposed to a tourist. These categories in some cases overlap but in general are both well established in lay discourses and common sense considering the attention that Maasai have drawn (more or less voluntarily and consciously) in the tourism sector as well as in the international research community in the last few decades. Between one chitchat and another, I would seek a quiet spot, such as the inside of a bar or a bench on a shop premises to write quick notes that I would expand on my return in the village (see below more details on how I recorded the ‘data’).

Along with time spent in Kigongoni, I conducted fieldwork in the ‘village’ as the complementary ‘place’ to Kigongoni. My host *boma*, (and in some instances other surrounding or related *boma*) was the main spatial entity where I conducted fieldwork, and, in the end, it stands for the ‘village’ as a whole in terms of ‘data’ and observations with specific respects to the

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16 See glossary
traditional Maasai family and household dynamics. As I said, in Baraka I was hosted by the Tutunyo family\(^{17}\) of which the Baraka chairman was one of the household heads. The Tutunyo family members are some of the main informants and characters of this thesis, especially young *moran*. The Tutunyo *boma* (Fig. 2, 3, and 18, see also chapter six for a description of the material features of Tutunyo *boma*) also hosts other family units besides the Tutunyo’s. Besides the father and his second son Loshiro, four other household heads reside within the *boma*. Two of them are married to two of the father’s daughters and the other two household heads are related to each other (i.e. brothers), but have no kin ties to the father, other than long-term friendship between the two families (see kinship diagram, fig. 18). When I use the name ‘father’ I refer to the Tutunyo family head, a Maasai elder belonging to the age set of *makaa*.

Within Tutunyo *boma* I soon was ‘assigned’ a role similar to that of unmarried *korianga* who were providing for one or more of their father’s wives. Having been welcomed by the Baraka chairman, Loshiro, I was ‘assigned’ to his wife Neseriani for whom I began to provide food and other basic goods. This involved buying cooking oil, rice, sugar, vegetables, and other foodstuffs; I would personally purchase most commodities available in local shops, while I would hand Neseriani a few thousand shillings for vegetables especially on market days. Providing for Neseriani’s household meant that I consumed most of the meals in her hut together with the other unmarried *korianga* of the Tutunyo family. Besides Loshiro, two other unmarried *korianga* used to provide for Neseriani, especially maize flour which is the staple for preparing *ugali*\(^{18}\) but also other commodities. My role and position resembling those of a *korianga* entailed carrying out other tasks such as accompanying sick women or children to the local hospital, or to hand over a particular item (often money) to somebody in Kigongoni. I was obviously exempt from any responsibility in livestock-related tasks even though I often joined *korianga* when taking cattle to the closest dams, or to the dipping facilities, and more rarely to far away pastures several kilometres from the *boma*.

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\(^{17}\) All names of people are fictitious. Name of locations such as villages, markets, towns, cities are real except specific names of places such as bars and shops in Kigongoni

\(^{18}\) See glossary
Belonging and depending on Neseriani’s household for meals and water I inevitably developed a stronger relationship of friendship with her, also facilitated by the fact that she was one of the few women in Tutunyo boma I could speak to in Swahili (since most women in the boma only spoke Maasai) discussing issues related to the dynamics within the household. Besides Neseriani, I also became acquainted with two other elderly women in the boma, two of the father’s wives who also spoke good Swahili. I occasionally purchased gifts for them, especially sugar, being at times invited for tea and meals in their respective households. While meal and teatime in the evening was my favourite occasion to chat with women in their respective huts, evenings were also a good occasion to chat with the boma and Tutunyo family head under one of the trees in the boma. I used to pay my ‘respect’ to the father almost every evening just as all his other sons did on a daily basis. On some occasions, I would just greet him and leave, especially when he was occupied with other apparently important conversations. On other occasions, I would spend longer time chatting about a wide range of topics from the socio-economic and political position of the Maasai group in today’s Tanzania, to ‘international politics’ which he liked to discuss with me after hearing the international news on his radio.

In the end, the specific conditions in which I conducted fieldwork, coupled or influenced by the geographical features of the area as well as my own identity, all contributed to the designing of the final ethnography presented in this thesis. Undoubtedly, my own age and gender, that is to say, being a male in my 20’s (at the time of fieldwork) and therefore within the korianga age-set eventually led me to develop a greater empathy with the korianga of Baraka. Eventually, the young males with whom I interacted on a regular basis far outnumbered other sections of the Maasai society such as older men and women with whom I established more or less close relations; hence, my choice to present (or better, the realization that I was presenting) the issues under scrutiny with a marked viewpoint, that is to say, that of younger males, who became eventually the main characters of the thesis. As I write, I still have relationships of friendship with all korianga of Tutunyo family with whom I interacted almost on a daily basis throughout fieldwork,
as well as, to a lesser extent, with all other korianga of Baraka (i.e. a few dozen young males) who entertained me with their company and anecdotes.

Language too contributed to my fieldwork choices. Having worked in Tanzania prior to beginning fieldwork for my PhD, I ‘entered the field’ being already fluent in Swahili language (i.e. the official and most widely spoken language in Tanzania, also considered the lingua franca of East Africa). Swahili language proficiency gave me on the one hand an advantage in quickly establishing relationships with people (including younger Maasai men who are usually fluent in Swahili unlike most women and elders), while on the other hand, eventually, it constituted a disincentive in becoming fluent in Maa (Maasai language). Eventually, despite spending several hours per day for a period of at least three months focusing on (Maasai) language learning\(^\text{19}\), I eventually conducted the more ‘formal’ interviews in Swahili and used Maa for more informal communication especially with women in my boma. When I conducted formal interviews with women and elders who did not speak Swahili, I preferred to use the help of a translator (Maasai-Swahili) rather than conducting the interview myself in Maa.

As for ‘formal’ interviews, I conducted a number of them\(^\text{20}\) especially towards the end of the first main fieldwork period between January and March 2012, being aware of the existing gaps of informal conversations and observations. In these formal interviews, I covered several topics which included land, land politics (see chapter six), intra-household dynamics (see chapter five). The main set of issues covered, however, was undoubtedly that of wealth diversification, asset conversions, and general visions of future in relation to economic diversification. These were the themes I had envisaged in my proposal I would develop during fieldwork and, in the end, I was able to carry them forward and explore them mostly in line with the theoretical framework and guidelines for fieldwork as mentioned in my proposal. To delve into these issues, for interviews, I mostly selected those young men who were (or had been) involved in particularly successful trading business or in formal wage labour for private companies. These interviewees (and the

\(^{19}\) For Maasai language learning I aided myself with Frans Mol’s Lessons in Maa (Mol, 1995)

\(^{20}\) Between ten and twenty depending on the degree or definition of ‘formal interview’, and excluding those conducted as part of IIED’s project for which I worked. See final section of this introduction below
information obtained from them), eventually, have inevitably come to play a crucial role in shaping my own judgement and the ethnography that has resulted. Along with the korianga or Tutunyo boma, therefore, they certainly are to be considered key informants even though, compared to the Tutunyo korianga, I did not spend as much time with them.

The ethnography presented here is the product of all these factors that have contributed to shape the way I carried out fieldwork. My own identity, language skills, choice of fieldsite, along with my own intentional choice, have produced one particular narrative focused on young men and the context in which they make their choices for diversification, rather than, for instance, young women, or other ethnic groups within the area. Certainly, other narratives or arguments may have been advanced; acknowledging it is a starting point for future research that focuses on other aspects of Maasai people’s lives in contemporary Tanzania, and that may be carried out along the theoretical lines developed in this thesis.

**Final remarks on methods**

This thesis is an ethnography in the commonly acknowledged sense among practitioners of the discipline of anthropology. This is to say that a great part of the analysis is based on informal discussions and participant observation carried out through ‘immersion’ in the ‘field’. In line with the anthropological tradition of fieldwork, therefore, my main activity during fieldwork was note taking. Through the practice of taking notes I recorded the information I considered relevant according to my own judgement such as descriptions of visual and material features of the area, descriptions of specific episodes, reporting of people’s own words, as well as my own comments and thoughts. In Kigongoni as in Baraka I always carried a notebook on which I would jot down some quick thoughts or a particular scene or words I had witnessed or heard. Other times, I would sit in a quiet place to write in more detail. As I went along, I slowly came up with some macro areas according to which I would organize the information through note taking. Having gathered by the end of fieldwork nearly thirty notebooks (of different sizes) I decided not to

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21 For instance: ‘the rural-urban interface’, ‘wealth diversification’, ‘food and consumption’
transcribe all the notes; instead, I used the macro areas I had come up with and references to dates to classify the notes in a word file where I could easily find the information I needed for the writing phases.

At the beginning of fieldwork (November-December 2010) I compiled a household list of the Baraka sub-village from which I selected a stratified random sample for a brief survey on economic activities (Appendix I). The findings of the survey are reported in chapter five, which also reports the results of a wealth ranking exercise I carried out with the help of the Baraka sub-village chairperson (one of the Tutunyo Moran).

The historical reconstruction in chapter one is based on three weeks of archival research carried out in November 2011 in the Tanzania National Archive (TNA) in Dar es Salaam and one week in the Arusha Tanzania National Archive (ATNA) in Arusha, where I collected information on markets and taxation (Dar es Salaam) and historical information on the development of the Mto wa Mbu area and Monduli District (Arusha). I also carried out two interviews with Maasai elders to collect historical evidence on the evolution of livestock marketing for the period that is not currently covered by the National Archives (1960’s to 1980’s).

Chapter six, part three, reports some of the data and information on land privatization and farming that were collected across the three districts of Monduli, Ngorongoro and Longido as part of a research commissioned by the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF) in which I acted as research leader. The research was part of a project titled Promoting adaptation and climate resilience growth through devolved district climate finance funded by DFID and carried out with technical support from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). A research output to date has already been issued with the title of Community and government: planning together for climate resilient growth (Msangi, A., Rutabingwa, J., Kaiza, V. & Allegretti, A. 2014) and is downloadable from IIED website.

Chapter seven reports data that were collected through mixed methods; firstly, I conducted twenty-five semi structured interviews with livestock

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22 For the household list, wealth ranking exercise and survey I followed the methodology used by Sachedina (2008: chapter 2) adjusted to the specificities of my own fieldsite
23 Tutunyo boma head and Alais Ole Morindat, a Maasai elder and coordinator of the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (NGO, Arusha)
24 It can be downloaded here http://pubs.iied.org/10075IIED.html
holders and five semi-structured interviews with Maasai livestock traders (iljirusi) for a total of thirty interviews all carried out with residents of Baraka sub-village (Appendix II and III). The interviews focused on three major aspects and dimensions of the livestock market. The first relates to the kinds of geographical market networks and routes. The second includes quantitative information on the scale and extent of livestock trading such as the economic inputs that traders put into their business and the economic outputs they gain. The third set of data has to do with the kinds of relationships traders establish with their clientele and the motivations and rationale that underlie business relationships between livestock holders (i.e. sellers) and traders. These interviews were carried out as part of a broader project on the comparison between pastoral value chain and ranching value chain for the production of red meat in Tanzania carried out by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)25, for which I worked as a research consultant. Independent of the research conducted for IIED, I carried out two additional interviews with traders of Iraqw ethnicity26, observations, and informal conversations during market days.

25 Title of the project: “Pastoral VS. ranching system: value chain analysis. Costs and benefits of producing and selling livestock under pastoral conditions, Arusha region”, IIED

26 Iraqw people live mainly on the slopes of the mountainous side of the well-known east African rift valley
CHAPTER ONE

History and contemporary socio-economic dynamics in Mto wa Mbu

ECONOMY AND SOCIETY OF MTO WA MBU AREA: THE RESEARCH SITE

Kigongoni forms, and has historically developed as, a single urban conglomerate with the town of Mto wa Mbu (Map 3) being located a few hundred metres away from it on the same paved road (Fig. 10). Mto wa Mbu is known as an important tourist hub and is visibly more developed than other towns of the same size in Tanzania. Mto wa Mbu town is particularly thriving in the area with many accommodation facilities such as camps, lodges and guest houses being located in a strategic position with respect to the mainstream tourism routes to the most renowned Tanzanian national parks (Manyara National Park, Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Serengeti National Park).

Cut across by the paved road that connects Arusha city to Karatu town on the outskirt of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Kigongoni has a peculiar spatial arrangement. Most major business activities (Fig. 13) are located on, or in proximity to, the main road while the rest of the urban space is virtually entirely allocated for residential purposes. The road (barabara) (Fig. 10) stretching over a length of a couple hundred metres is an uneven peri-urban space made of a number of clusters of business activities (bars, hotels, shops and guest houses) (Fig. 13) interposed with land plots at times fenced and at other times just covered with wild bushes. While the shops and businesses located on the main road usually offer most commodities and goods that are available in bigger towns or cities (e.g. Mto wa Mbu or Arusha), the few business activities located in the interiors are very limited in the choices of goods and in most cases are just temporary selling spots that residents arrange for the immediate neighbours.

Moving from the main paved road into the interiors on both sides one progressively leaves behind the peri-urban tissue (Fig. 8 & 9) to enter the open rangeland which corresponds to the village of Losirwa and is

27 Local restaurants
commonly acknowledged to be Maasailand (Fig. 1). Losirwa village in fact corresponds to the buffer zone marking the transition between fertile arable land of Mto wa Mbu on the west side and the increasingly desert-like and arid land on the east side. The closest boma to the paved road are located at roughly a hundred metres or less from the road. Despite the presence of beacons, which supposedly mark the boundaries between open land and privately owned plots, the border between Losirwa and Kigongoni is blurred and open land gradually spreads out as one leaves behind the peri-urban tissue made of interspersed and unfinished brick and cement houses forming a discontinuous territory with empty plots.

Kigongoni is at an early but rapidly growing urbanization stage. It takes only a few minutes by motorbike or bajaji (i.e. three wheeled motorbikes imported from India) to reach Mto wa Mbu. It also takes little time and trouble to move between the boma in Losirwa and the urban areas in both Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu. Ever since a massive import of motorbikes made in China and India, the distances between urban spaces and between the rural and the urban areas have been substantially shortened. It costs only five hundred shillings to move by bajaji from Kigongoni to Mto wa Mbu and vice versa, and one thousand shillings by motorbike\(^2\). Distances between the rural areas of Losirwa and the urban areas of Mto wa Mbu and Kigongoni can even be covered on foot for the best trained or by motorbike for a few thousand shillings depending on distance. Transport of this kind (bajaji and motorbikes) is readily available at many corners in Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu with many bikers standing on the sides of the road waiting for passengers (Fig. 12). In fact, in the last three to four years, transportation service has become one important employment niche for young Maasai and non-Maasai individuals.

These changes in transportation may in fact be considered not as a trigger to increased mobility but, rather, a response to an increasing need and necessity to be mobile between rural and urban areas. In Tanzania, as in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the life of rural dwellers is constantly shaped by mobility patterns including pastoralists in East as much as West Africa moving seasonally in search of seasonal labour opportunities

\(^2\) 30 cents, 60 cents
(Hampshire 2006, 2010, Hampshire & Randall 1999, 2000). For villagers of Losirwa the rise of the peri-urban site of Kigongoni, coupled with the improvement of the transportation service, has created a type of mobility that occurs on a daily basis between rural and urban areas, closely interdependent on each other. Rural population surrounding the peri-urban site constitutes an important share of clientele of local bars, retail shops, and food providers. Likewise, commoditization of the livestock economy is enabled by the closeness to urban areas. Losirwa villagers are consumers in the numerous bars and hoteli in Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu and at the same time providers of livestock products such as meat and milk that are served in Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu bars and restaurants. This complex is in turn connected to the broader economic system of northern Tanzania with most commodities on sale in Mto wa Mbu and Kigongoni (e.g. clothes, body products, bottled drinks, etc.) coming from bigger east African cities (e.g. Arusha, Moshi, Nairobi) (Map 2).

This system of spatial interdependencies between rural and urban economies has become widespread in many parts of Africa. Economic diversification has been triggered by a overall worsening of rural farm-based livelihoods, urging rural population to turn to wider sources of income and creating “multiplex livelihoods” (Bryceson 2002) that take shape within small-scale economic complexes and nexuses unlike much longer-distance migration from rural areas to big southern African cities (Bryceson 1999). For Losirwa villagers, commuting almost on a daily basis between the town and the village has become a necessity for integrating the livestock-based livelihoods in the rural economy with cash income from trade and wage labour in Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu. Many young individuals are employed in permanent wage labour, mostly working as night guards. Even those who are not engaged in permanent employment rely on petty trade or other forms of income generation and the town generally provides these opportunities. Some of these opportunities are: working as barmen in local bars and lodges, as sellers in shops owned either by other Maasai or non-Maasai, driving motorbikes as transport service, overseeing public construction either for wages or returns in grains. Some other individuals
purchased pool tables (charging TSH 200 per game\textsuperscript{29}) or trade in garments purchased in the wholesale market and resold at retail prices, or trade in livestock (mostly goats), local medicine and handicrafts.

Income generating activities that are high-end and coexist side-by-side with pastoralism while requiring a deep knowledge of the urban economy and urban connections (besides capital) are trading in land and building cement houses in Kigongoni to rent out either for businesses or to tenants. Owning a house or a land plot on the immediate edge of the main paved road is in fact a highly valued asset that potentially can generate significant income through building and renting out rooms for businesses. Finally, providing other occasional services such as selling livestock at markets for commission, trekking livestock to markets for a fee (from TSH 2,000 to TSH 5,000)\textsuperscript{30}, pose for pictures with tourists etc., also require one to be mobile and move between the place of residence (the village) and other rural or urban locations.

Women too are frequently engaged in income generating opportunities. The range of opportunities for them is more limited compared to those for men. A significant number of women are engaged in income generating activities in Kigongoni such as trading in tobacco, handicrafts, and milk. They spend mornings and afternoons several days of the week attending some strategic spots along the main paved road to seize the opportunities coming from tourists passing by on the way to (most likely) Ngorongoro and Manyara National Parks. While women are more likely to do their trading mostly during market days, young males are pulled to the town on a daily basis.

The kind of economic dynamism that has been taking shape in Kigongoni has a great resemblance to the steady peri-urban growth that is visible in many other areas of Tanzania and across the border with Kenya (Hope 2013, Owuor 2007). A few strategic spots, mostly located within the main road networks, are turning slowly from rural to visibly peri-urban bustling centres which attract the surrounding rural population as workers and consumers, and create influxes of people from more distant locations of the country. Satellite towns for instance have arisen on the outskirt of Arusha on

\textsuperscript{29} 10 cents of USD
\textsuperscript{30} Between 1.2 USD and 3 USD
the three main roads that connect Arusha with other major east African cities: Kisongo on the way to Monduli District and Dodoma (the administrative capital of Tanzania), Ngaramtoni on the way to Nairobi, and Usa River on the way to Moshi and Dar es Salaam.

Small towns in their close links with their rural surroundings in Tanzania as in other African countries have acquired strategic importance alongside bigger cities as hubs of services, transport, and, importantly, wealth diversification (Baker 1995, 2012, Baker and Pedersen 1992, Baker & Wallevik 2003, Jamal 2010). One of the effects prompted by the rural-urban spatial arrangements has been a socio-cultural set of ideas, images, discourses and the like that has many similarities with the so-called “cultural dualism” that Ferguson has so well described in the case of the Copperbelt (1999) and I have mentioned in the introduction. The kind of images, discourses, gossips and actual social relationships that unfold in Kigongoni hinge on spatial attributes connected either to the rural or urban, and determine ideas about the supposed and assumed character of economic action and behaviour, and more generally shape the configuration of the retail economy and its actual material expression. Overall, the dichotomization of space between the rural and the urban to a great extent fits with another type of dichotomization that has deep historical roots which I will analyse in details in the second section of this chapter, that is to say, that between Maasai and non-Maasai.

These separations can be experienced on a daily basis during bargains. In Kigongoni it is easy to spot a few simple selling points with small bags of sugar, tea, salt and other petty commodities such as small boxes of creams and other products for the body well arranged on tables or shuka (square pieces of cloth). I was told by one of these vendors that Maasai women like particularly the tiny bags of ¼ of kg because they usually manage very small quantities of money just enough to buy small quantities of sugar and tea leaves for the evening and morning after. Bargains and payments between non-Maasai shopkeepers and Maasai customers often end up with words of mockery, at times veiled with reactions of hilarity and laughter, on the side of vendors and directed at the Maasai buyers. Non-Maasai shopkeepers would ‘explain’ the odd economic behaviour of their Maasai customers by
saying and complaining that Maasai don’t like to use their money, followed often by the conclusion that that is due to the fact that Maasai privilege livestock over money, and rural over urban lifestyle. I could recount several episodes I witnessed of Maasai (women, elders or even youths) being scolded for not having the exact amounts of money needed for the wanted commodity, or for taking too long to count coins (i.e. not having ready bills to use), or again for trying to bargain for commodities to lower the price, which is routine in Tanzania for any good other than basic foodstuffs.

As I concluded from the conversations I had with non-Maasai shop keepers and local hoteli managers, the argument on the ‘otherness’, accompanied with negative overtones, stems from the fact that Maasai are considered unable to comply with the rules of politeness and conviviality, including a ‘proper’ economic behaviour associated with the urban context. On more than one occasion a hoteli or shop manager turned to me with facial expressions of discomfort, almost apologetic, when serving other Maasai customers in my presence. On one occasion, one hoteli manager apologized with me while wiping my table by uttering: “this a Maasai bar..” hinting at the dirt left on the table from previous, supposedly, Maasai customers.

The kinds of perceptions about Maasai people connected to underdevelopment and inappropriateness with urban life are part of broader constructions and categories that have to do with the neat division of the town and the village as respectively the place of ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’. For instance, May & Ole Ikayo (2007) have described how these categorizations have negative consequences for Maasai migrants in Dar es Salaam (the biggest city in Tanzania) who suffer marginalization and discrimination by the urban middle-classes. Talle (1999) has, too, looked at these dynamics in the border (Kenya-Tanzania) town of Namanga and the effects that these stereotypes have on sexual relationships between Maasai men and non-Maasai women who work as sex workers. Kigongoni/Mto wa Mbu is not an exception to this picture from the point of view of the existence and persistence of the same clichés that connect Maasainess to an underdeveloped, rural lifestyle and clumsiness when it comes to the sphere of monetization and economic behaviour. Nonetheless, the emphasis on marginalization may overlook many other aspects that have to do with
Maasai ethnicity within urban life, namely, those aspects that actively shape the society and economy of Kigongoni with the Maasai group playing a role far from marginal. The rise of the ‘modern Maasai’ that I have referred to in the introduction and will describe ethnographically throughout the thesis represents a crucial transformation of dynamics of marginalization.

Maasai in Kigongoni are far from being marginal with respect to the non-Maasai population, nor are they marginalized in the way it has been described by others (May & Ole Ikayo 2007, Talle 1999). On the contrary, they are a preponderant ethnic group, and the impression one has is rather that it is the non-Maasai population that is excluded from ‘Maasai’ networks of social life. Kigongoni has become for Maasai people a major location for consumption (e.g. drinks, food, *nyama choma*[^31] and the like) in addition to being, as said above, a major reservoir of income generating opportunities. Maasai individuals in Kigongoni continue to use their own language, constantly exchange customary greeting formulas, gather in ethnically homogeneous groups, and form flows mostly determined by the customary system of age-set.

Some spots in Kigongoni are visibly frequented mostly by Maasai men, especially premises of bars or shops that are managed by Maasai individuals. In the proximity to a couple of these spots, those most frequented, I spent plenty of time observing flows and dynamics of group formation. In *Kona Engaruka* (Fig. 11) for instance I usually sat at a table in the proximity to a bar/shop managed by Lenga, a *korianga*[^32] originally from Losirwa. *Kona Engaruka* is located at the intersection with the road that heads towards the famous homonymous archaeological site, eventually, to Lake Natron and the Maasai holy mountain of Oldonyo Lengai. The *bajaji* and *bodaboda* (motorbikes) stands are also located at *Kona Engaruka*, plus a maize grinding machine, several vegetable and fruit selling spots as well as a consistent number of clustered shops and bars. The flows of people, cars, *bajaji* and motorbikes are constant and considerable in scale, irregular and changing according to the time of the day.

It is easily noticed that gatherings and groups of Maasai individuals are formed mostly in proximity to Lenga’s shop, which occupies one room

[^31]: Roast meat
[^32]: See glossary
within a wooden construction hosting two other shops. Each shop is arranged with a few basic goods, foodstuffs and a Coca-Cola fridge where the bottled sodas are packed and ready to be served to customers. Lenga has also built a simple kiosk for customers to protect themselves from the sun and have their drinks in privacy. I observed the greetings performed by Maasai individuals and how these are always or mostly dependent on the age-set hierarchy. One approaching the shop would commonly grant his greetings to the different groups and join eventually the group made up of his age mates. As a general rule, it is younger *moran* who pay their respect to elders by approaching elders' groups and greet them before joining their age mates.

Less than a hundred metres away, Kaieni, another *korianga* from Losirwa, has opened up his own shop (Fig. 14) within another main cluster in Kigongoni (Fig. 13). He has moved from another spot in the interior of Kigongoni to one of the main clusters on the main road. The change of spot, he told me, has brought him a moderate increase in income. The new location is visibly better looking than the previous one; he has painted the outside walls with green paint and has placed a bench and several chairs on the outside, hosting a significant number of passers-by (Fig. 15). Ever since he moved to this more advantageous spot the flow of people attending his premises has significantly increased. Kaieni’s shop, like Lenga's, is regularly frequented by Maasai individuals and has become an important stop over for them. Many Losirwa villagers passing by entrust him with their sticks, bicycles, bags, and purchases to eventually collect them according to their movements. A group of *moran* from Losirwa belonging to his extended family is habitually present on the premises and they enter the shop and even handle cash, selling and returning change to customers while Kaieni is absent. Others may just enter for no apparent reason and leave or sit down on the benches. Those who make their purchases are more likely to leave right away to return home while those who hang around would be unlikely to make any purchase except for drinking or offering a bottled soda.

The use of cell phones contribute to strengthen these networks through enabling communication in Kigongoni, between Baraka and Kigongoni, and across villages, between kin-related families across the Maasai villages of
Tanzania. Maasai men in Kigongoni make constant use of cell phones for many different purposes such as communicating with their family members in Baraka as to, among other things, the commodities needed in the boma, livestock related activities (e.g. herd movements), and the like. Within Kigongoni, networks of Maasai men of the kind described above are reproduced too through lending and borrowing phones and phone batteries, and through practices of ‘asking’ and ‘giving’ (see, for instance, chapter three) of airtime sent through messages, or in the form of phone vouchers.

Easing communication in Kigongoni is the most visible function of mobile phones compared, for instance, to other aspects related to the ownership of phones, e.g. as an ‘object of desire’ affecting intergenerational relationships (Porter et al. 2012, 2015). The relatively recent spread of mobile phones in Sub-Saharan Africa, Porter et al. argue (2012, 2015), is associated with “shifts in the generational balance of power” (2015: 37) with younger generations emancipating from their parents’ surveillance and affirming their connection to a more ‘modern’ world by virtue of phone ownership and “phone expertise” which their parents lack (2015: 37). In Kigongoni I rarely heard references to mobile phones as an item standing for economic success or a connection to a higher status (not even by the youngest korianga in their teens), nor did I see Maasai younger men with pricey phones. What I noticed was Moran, including the Tutunyo korianga, exchanging phones for periods of a few days, to a week, creating networks of exchange based on friendship, based, in turn, on age set. Exchange of batteries as well is a constant among korianga and between korianga and other age sets (e.g. landisi). All phone owners in Baraka use local shops and bars to charge their phones (as Baraka is not connected to the power line passing through Kigongoni) and borrowing and lending of batteries, directly between two individuals or even through ‘couriers’ (i.e. another korianga), is a widespread practice to stay connected when necessary, i.e. during market days.

These snapshots and descriptions of daily peri-urban life illustrate that the individuals who frequent the town of Kigongoni have a certain familiarity with peri-urban life in its different aspects of consumption, commoditization, and the use of communication technologies (i.e. mobile
phones). It is within these realms that (I argue) their sense of collective identity, for instance the reproduction of age set system through sharing, is reproduced in the urban setting.

Beyond the reproduction of ‘Maasai community’ in the urban context, however, younger Maasai men in particular are embedded in other social networks and social worlds parallel to those networks based on ethnicity, both within the village and within the urban sphere. Their identity is a complex assemblage that hinges on their membership in a multiplicity of ‘communities’, and their social lives are shifting and diverse, not limited to those aspects that have to do with customary practices of tradition, or the reproduction of sharing rules in town.

Younger korianga are those most involved in parallel spheres of relationships of which the most forceful were those connected with attending secondary school and the local network of Lutheran churches, including in Baraka. Both these spheres of relationships are somehow recognised in Baraka and beyond as carriers of ‘modern’ values and for their empowering role within Maasai society. Younger korianga embody these contemporary changes across the rural-urban interface. Several of them assiduously attend the local church, supporting and sometimes leading the activities of spreading the religious message, often through organizing events such as collective prayers, religious film showings, and helping followers and non-followers with counselling and other kinds of moral support. Among these young churchgoers, many were at the same time enrolled in primary or secondary school, and those who were attending boarding schools away from Baraka would not miss church events or simply the Sunday Mass on their return home for holidays.

It has been already observed how both religion (Hodgson 2005) and formal education (Bishop 2007) have had, and continue to have, a deep impact on the ‘traditional’ Maasai society. Both education and religion in Baraka/Kigongoni may be considered triggers of the composite identity of younger men who physically live between the rural area of Losirwa and other rural and urban geographical locations. Talking about ‘communities’, being part of the local church for young Maasai men entails a whole host of values that affect practices within and outside the ‘traditional’ realm. As part
and parcel of the local church, these individuals are part and parcel of a broader membership reproduced through specific practices and based on specific values. These individuals often participate in church events outside Baraka, in neighbouring villages, as well as in other towns and cities in Northern Tanzania. They organize ‘choir competitions’ in Kigongoni, Mto wa Mbu and other locations inviting other church groups from other villages and towns in Arusha region. In doing so, the church ‘community’ gels together an heterogeneous group of people in terms of age, gender, and, importantly, ethnicity.

What struck me was how easily these young *korianga* shifted not only in their practices, but also in the way they verbally expressed the contradictions between different sets of values. One thing that struck me in particular was how they never complied with, or better said, intentionally broke, the traditional Maasai rules of food consumption (see chapter two) during church events. They would share meals with women (a taboo in most cases within the Maasai village) in heterogeneous groups and paying very little attention to the sharing rules within age sets (see chapter two). At times, they would express contempt for traditional rules in force in the village; at other times, with little awareness of proposing contradicting ideas, they would underline the value of Maasai ‘tradition’ and their pride in showing group affiliation through food sharing.

Overall, religious affiliation as well as formal education affected these young men’s views about some specific and important aspects of their daily life as well as their visions of future. These aspects had to do with ideas connected to individuality, practically expressed by the rejection of complying outside of ‘traditional’ networks with the sharing rules, and triggering a stronger sense of the self as opposed to group and ethnic collective awareness (i.e. the relationship between the individual and the collectivity). The way they verbally envisioned their future also was expression of contradictions such as their views about what constitutes wealth. They criticised elders’ ‘attachment’ to livestock at the expenses of other forms of wealth such as a ‘modern’ house, while wishing to retain and reproduce their families’ wealth in livestock as a form of reproducing family values and ethnic identity. Polygamy as opposed to monogamy was another
domain that bluntly expressed these contradictions considering that many individuals, including *korianga*, who voluntarily and convincingly had made themselves carriers of religious church values (including monogamy), were in fact polygamous, having married more than one woman, and continuing to marry other women as they continued with their moral engagement with the church. Notwithstanding their participation in co-existing communities and networks, they continued to claim their identity as Maasai and as pastoralists, including *korianga* enrolled in school where usually values connected to agriculture-based livelihoods are highlighted as opposed to pastoralism which is considered a backward lifestyle (Bishop 2007).

Evidently, the ideas that put the Maasai as an ethnic group, their customary and traditional institutions and practices, in opposition with instances of monetization, commoditization, ‘modern’ technologies (i.e. mobile phones), and in general many other aspects of everyday life of youths in Tanzania (e.g. religion affiliation and formal education) have survived as historical legacies of economic policies or development interventions. As I have argued, however, these legacies have created a situation in which ‘tradition’ is not mutually exclusive with, but rather co-exists side by side other aspects of social life of Maasai individuals across the rural-urban interface.

In the next section, I will look at how these historical legacies have arisen by focusing on the transformations and evolution of the Maasai as a particular kind of (ethnic) identity mixed with some aspects of the economic history of Tanganyika/Tanzania and Mto wa Mbu. The historical reconstruction will serve to illustrate on the one hand how Maasai ethnicity was strengthened (in fact, historically created or *manufactured*), but also how especially the last few decades of neoliberal policies have blurred ideas and perception towards the world of money and commoditization. These changes have eventually led to the contemporary situation of multiplicity of value registers as described in this first half of the chapter, and as I will develop throughout the following chapters.
MONETIZATION AND THE HISTORY OF MAASAI ETHNICITY

The core of the argument in this historical section is that processes of monetization and commoditization in Tanganyika/Tanzania during the British administration triggered the very ideas of Maasainess and ‘Maasai tribe’ which were fluid and blurred concepts prior to European rule. These processes, however, occurred not in the way envisioned by European administration; ethnic identity emerged as a result of resistance and opposition rather than adherence to the objectives set by administrators for the projects of monetization and commoditization. With the end of European rule and the changes that followed one another in the post-independence era, a shift occurred and the Maasai group began to search for cash profit by exploiting the commoditizing potential of livestock. The neoliberal shift in the policy environment allowed some Maasai individuals to enrich themselves by trading in livestock and in general changed (Maasai) people’s attitudes towards the domain of money and trade.

The involvement in the market economy has been an objective of vital importance of pre- and post-independence administrations and governments throughout the sub-Saharan continent. Both in British and French, west and east Africa, processes of economic change worked towards increasing the export of African produce for overseas markets, increasing the extraction of taxes from locals (to be paid in money) and the commoditization of labour and land (Berry 1993: 22). The changes African peasants underwent as a consequence of the imposed projects of monetization and production for export need to be looked at not as a ‘revolution’ that transformed subsistence agriculture and pastoralism into commercially-oriented enterprises but rather as a series of micro-adjustments and adaptation to changing situations that Africans have faced, in some cases prompted, throughout history (Guyer 1995). This set of transformations and adaptations triggered by monetization and commoditization resulted in a state of endless instability also as a consequence of convergences between the international and local level of monetary directions in trading patterns and consequently engendered an
endless struggle over the terms of exchange and social and collective identities. (Berry 1995: 308).

One major transformation that occurred in the Tanganyikan territory during the European rule, namely, the institution of tribes, was strictly associated with the project of monetization and was triggered by the so-called ‘indirect rule’. (Chachage 1988, Coulson 1982, Hodgson 2001, Iliffe 1979). As Chachage (1988) argues, colonialists “picked” on those elements of society and culture that were not subversive to the colonial project and manipulated them for the sake of creating an apparatus of governance functional to the “colonizing mission” (p. 220). ‘Indirect rule’ was enacted through the institution of tribes as the basis of native authorities to whom natives were encouraged to identify with and be loyal to. The indirect rule, however, engendered “unintended consequences” (Berry 1995: 307) (i.e. unintended to European administrators), in that, it affected forms of human organization by producing the idea and concept of Maasai ethnic identity and Maasainess as clearly bounded, but failed to achieve the goals of monetization and commoditization that had been set as objectives of the indirect rule itself (in fact, it achieved the opposite result, i.e. opposition to the set objectives).

Prior to the institutionalization of the ‘Maasai tribe’, the ideas and boundaries between Maasai and non-Maasai as well as those between pastoralists, farmers, and hunter-gatherers had been much more blurred and unclear. In fact, because of uncertainties of the environment people moved along a continuum between agriculture, hunting-gathering and pastoralism. This entailed substantial interaction and mutual assistance between different groups living in different environmental niches within one single diverse ecosystem. This co-existence and mutual interactions implied that ethnic identity too was blurred and uncertain, including that of Maasai ‘pastoral’ groups (Bernsten 1976, 1980, Galaty 1982, Spear & Waller 1993, Waller 1976, 1985, 1988, Waller & Sobania 1994). These heterogeneous groups were not unfamiliar with trade, exchange, and marketing. Maasai used to barter ivory, which they obtained from Dorobo33, and livestock with coastal traders in order to obtain cloths, metal, beads, and guns (Kerven

33The hunter-gatherers ‘counterparts’ of the pastoral Maasai. See Galaty (1993)
Women too were in close trading relationships with the caravaneers with whom they bartered donkeys in exchange for goods such as cloths and beads (Gulliver 1965, Kerven 1992). Other exchange and trading networks existed between Maasai, Meru, Chagga and Arusha. Arusha people seemed to have inhabited an “agricultural island” completely surrounded by Masailand” (Gulliver 1965: 432) and an important market was established on the outskirts of the present day city of Arusha (at a location called Sanguwezi) where Maasai women exchanged livestock products (e.g. milk, goat skins) for products such as tobacco, cereals, honey, and gourds. (Gulliver 1965: 434).

With the institutionalization of tribes, the 'Maasai tribe' became an administrative category and those who were labelled as Maasai were assigned geographical boundaries within the Maasai Reserve and targeted chiefly as pastoralists (Hodgson 2001). The boundaries in which Maasai were circumscribed in fact created the very boundaries of Maasainess itself. It was now much easier to target the Maasai with a set of interventions, namely, to use monetization, taxation and the regulation of the market as instruments for boosting the production, in this case of livestock, for the interest of the administrators.

These kinds of processes and approaches of indirect rule influencing human and social forms of organization became common in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa that were under the British administration such as contemporary Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and Zambia (Berry 1993). Partly devised as a strategy for coping with lack of financial means in administering a vast and extensive territory, indirect rule affected existing struggles for resources such as land and labour among Africans (Berry 1993: 24). The clash between existing competition for resources and the new forms of organization devised by the indirect rule generated readjustments and rearrangements that in some instances took the form of novel identities, social roles and 'tradition' (Iliffe 1979, Ranger 1983) that became instrumental for African themselves to access resources (Berry 1993). As Berry (1993) argues: "[T]he effect of indirect rule was neither to freeze African societies into pre-colonial molds, nor to restructure them in accordance with British inventions of African tradition, but to generate
unresolvable debates over the interpretation of tradition and its meaning for colonial governance and economic activity” (p. 32).

The ‘birth’ of the Maasai as a project of governance within the broader design of indirect rule was successful in defining social and geographical boundaries between Maasai and non-Maasai and strengthening ethnic differences, which began to be felt by the people themselves. The unexpected or “unintended” (Berry 1995: 307) result of this strengthened ethnic Maasai identity, however, was that those who had ‘become’ Maasai resisted and opposed full integration into the monetary economy as devised by British administrators.

After a brief and uneven parenthesis of German rule in the territory, the beginning of the British rule marked the beginning of a comprehensive project of governance of which taxation and marketing policies were a core component. Such a project was facilitated by vulnerable economic conditions in which the Tanganyikan territory had fallen as a consequence of the great famine that began in about the 1890’s, caused by the intersection of different natural calamities including the spreading of livestock diseases such as smallpox and rinderpest. Fosbrooke (1948) described this period, which coincided roughly with the German administration, as a time of “great upheaval” (p. 11) for the Maasai of Tanganyika. He reported that during this time (1890's – 1920's) the political organization of the Maasai made up of alliances and affiliations between different clans and sections broke apart.

Taking advantage of this situation, the British administrators attempted to forge the kind of governed subjects and categories that would be instrumental to their project of boosting production. That included the obligation placed on the population to contribute actively to the development of the nation by creating agricultural and livestock surpluses to sell in the international market. The economic measures employed by British rule such as taxation, market regulation and licensing were in fact measures that had the goal of ‘training’ Africans for them to embrace commoditization and ‘protect’ themselves from supposedly deleterious practices such as barter. Eventually, through taxation and marketing policies, the British administration envisioned the creation of a kind of “economic citizenship”
achievable through the alignment of locals to the administration’s objectives and policies.

Unsurprisingly, taxation and marketing policies encountered, right from the beginning, the opposition of many sections of the population. Practices not aligned with the policies and instructions provided by the administration were labelled as unlawful behaviour to be suppressed. A first taxation reform carried out in the 1920’s to replace the former German taxation system was inaugurated with much praise by local administrators even though it soon became evident, as the Chamber of Commerce in Dar es Salaam argued, “that there will always be a certain section whose aims and objects are to evade taxation in any form.” Livestock keepers especially “would plead fabulous and mythical losses by death from rinderpest or east coast fever; others, no doubt, knowing that their “turn over” in animals would ultimately be checked by the numbers quoted in their stock movements permits, by assessors, would take infinite pains to avoid obtaining any permits and increase the existing menace of "cattle-running". Targeted as ‘pastoralists’, the Maasai population had to become livestock producers to contribute to the export economy. Overgrazing and overstocking leading to environment degradation became the core discourses instrumental to the colonial efforts to establish an extensive system of taxation on livestock payable in cash which normally was met by pastoralists through the sale of livestock.

34 It was proposed by the British attorney general Sir L.H. Elphinstone in the 1922 in an explanatory memorandum submitted on the 7th February in Dar es salaam. It was proposed to replace the German “industries tax”, “trade licenses” and “opening fees” which dated back to the 1907. In lieu of such taxes and fees, three different ordinances titled “profit tax ordinance”, “trades licensing ordinance” and “pedlars and livestock dealers’ ordinance” were proposed. Explanatory memorandum. Pedlars and livestock dealers ordinance 7091 Vol I and II, AB 1057, TNA.

35 Ordinance to provide for the licensing of pedlars and livestock dealers. Pedlars and livestock dealers ordinances 7091 Vol I and II, AB 1057, TNA

36 Acting chief veterinary officer. 18th June 1923. In Pedlars and livestock dealers ordinances 7091 Vol I and II, AB 1057, TNA

37 A first attempt to introduce a tax on stock had been tried by the Germans in the 1919. A letter dated 8th December 1919 by the administrator of German east Africa was sent to government house in Nairobi to coordinate and advocate for a tax to be imposed on stock in Maasailand across the two colonies. Speaking on behalf of the officer in charge in the Maasai Reserve, the colonial administrator argued that a tax on Maasai stock in the German colony would not be easily imposed unless the British colonial administration took the same measure in Maasailand in its territory. 8th December 1919. In, 2534/192, AB 108, TNA

The same year the Stock Ordinance was gazetted and introduced the stock tax which was to be paid in coins or notes. The attempt and intention to encourage the use of money rather than livestock was clear: while payments in livestock were allowed in cases of necessity, the tax payer choosing to pay in
Parallel to the project of monetization were patronising discourses and attitudes of administrators who emphasized the attachment of the Maasai to livestock and the need for change achievable by educating the Maasai about the use of money. Henry Fosbrooke, who had served as assistant district officer in the Masai district, for instance mentioned (1948) an “intense conservativism” and “resentment of change” (p. 11) on the side of the Maasai caused by the severe losses they had suffered as a consequence of the outbreak of livestock diseases at the end of the 19th century and the consequent “sentimental” attachment to the animals they had been able to regain after the outbreak. In the 1933, Baxter, the Maasai district officer, rejected the proposal to collect a tax in the Maasai district in kind rather than money (due to a scarcity of the latter in the colony at the time) arguing that such a payment method would be a retrogressive step and would militate against the chances of success of [my] presence policy of education in the uses of money. The Maasai must learn to use money and learn soon. His need of money to pay tax is a main incentive at the moment to induce him to bring his cattle in person to an auction where he sells for cash and is introduced to the mysteries of competition in prices (in Hodgson 2001: 68).

Taxes on stock payable in cash had been a controversial issue ever since the encounter of Tanganyikan territory with European rule and historical records report some striking conflicting views by administrators (both German and British) themselves38. The feasibility for the collection of the tax eventually was put under serious enquiry and doubt; the administrators had to deal with at times insurmountable obstacles such as the difficulty with identifying the ownership of livestock which was always shared among many different individuals39. Also, the constant breaking of the boundaries of the Maasai reserve during collection time made it impossible for administrators to track the movements of livestock to neighbouring districts as passive resistance to the taxation measures (Hodgson 2001: 55).

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38 Historical records on the proposal to introduce a cattle tax span several decades from the latest period of German rule (2534/192, AB 108 TNA) to the British administration almost to the end of the pre-independence period (1950’s) (22183, TNA)  
39 Cattle tax (1940), 22183, TNA
Unlike taxation policies, the efforts to control livestock marketing gained better results since the control of sales did not involve keeping records of livestock in the homesteads and the difficulties related to it. Initially, the strategies employed were quota permits and a closer control over the movements of livestock with the objective of regulating supply and demand in different areas\(^{40}\). During World War I and II, however, demand for meat rose and pastoralist Maasai as well as other groups such as the Samburu in Kenya (Kerven 1992) were targeted as major suppliers by the administrators. Compulsion was needed to boost livestock production\(^{41}\) and continued to be the main strategy of administrators, even after the end of World War II, this time justified by the rise of demand by the African population\(^{42}\).

Compulsion accompanied discouragement of alternative circuits of exchange and trade, which were labelled as ‘illegal’ and ‘illicit’ (magendo) as opposed to ‘official’ (halali) market channels. An “ethic of illegality” (Roitman 2006) was established by administrators, who placed locals and their on-the-ground practices outside the domains of the law and morality they (the administrators) had themselves set up. While on the Kenyan side of the border these networks of ‘illicit’ and ‘illegal’ trade were slowly taken over by Maasai traders who replaced Somalis (Kerven 1992: 34), in Tanganyika, the creation of the Maasai district had had the effect of spatially and politically isolating the Maasai (Hodgson 2001: 51). This condition of isolation led to a lack of opportunities for Maasai themselves to enter the livestock market as active (though ‘illegal’) agents as had happened in Kenya, allowing instead others (Chagga, Arusha and Somalis) to exploit such opportunities\(^{43}\). While Chagga, Arusha and Somalis traders tried to create

\(^{40}\) In the 1942 the director of veterinary services in Mpwapwa proposed the appointment of a Livestock Controller who would be in charge of overseeing livestock marketing and make sure the restrictive measures of sales outside markets be complied with. Appointment of a livestock controller for Tanganyika territory. In, Establishment of operation of livestock control in Tanganyikan territory, 30666, Vol II, TNA

\(^{41}\) See 5\(^{th}\) December 1945 (letter). Markets, Northern Province, 25014, TNA and 17\(^{th}\) September 1945 (letter). In, Markets, Northern Province, 25014, TNA

\(^{42}\) Markets, Northern province, 25014, TNA

\(^{43}\) In the 1950, for instance, the veterinary officer of the Northern Province (i.e. Arusha region) complained that a large amount of the livestock trade in the Ngare Olmontonyi market was in fact Maasai livestock bought in south Maasailand by Wachaga and Waarusha traders who would resell it in the Arusha district markets and Weruweru market in Moshi. Wachaga and Waarusha traders along with Somalis apparently had control of the whole marketing network in the Northern Province and as
their own associations and advocated on their own behalf\textsuperscript{44} no associations of the kind existed among the Maasai pastoralists at the time in Tanganyika.

Instead, Maasailand continued to be the main area from where most livestock traded came from. Such a fact had been already underlined by Fosbrooke (1948) who wondered, rhetorically, whether other tribes in Tanganyika had contributed more to cattle exports than the Maasai and whether the awareness of the ‘economic value’ of cattle had been growing deeper in other tribes than just among the Maasai (p. 49). Such a state of affairs was protracted up to the end of the British rule in the territory, a fact confirmed by the letters of complaints written repeatedly until the independence of Tanganyika by district administrators and veterinary officers who called for timely interventions to stop the “loss of revenues” from “illegally” sold cattle in Maasailand\textsuperscript{45}.

\textbf{Post-independence and the development of Mto wa Mbu}

The objective of the British rule to enmesh the Maasai into the monetary economy in fact had isolated the Maasai spatially and politically, and Maasai were experiencing the monetary economy limited to their role as producers and sellers. On the other hand, the isolation did have the effect of fostering a highly ethnically-based identity that did not embrace values connected to money, trading and commoditization.

During the post-independence period in the 1960’s before the neoliberal turn in the 1980’s, livestock trading, for instance, was considered by Maasai a shameful business. Those few individuals, often the poorest in stock, who engaged in livestock trading as a form of income generation were deprecated for dealing cattle they exchanged for money and for visibly carrying pouches where they used to keep the cash obtained from the sales\textsuperscript{46}. Maasai traders far as Namanga at the border with Kenyan Maasailand (i.e. Kajado). Cattle imports – Northern province. In, Veterinary – livestock markets general, V 1/9 1955-1965, TNA

\textsuperscript{44} For instance, they asked for the cancellation of the 5\% tax on cattle purchased, a measure which had been introduced extraordinarily during the war. 25\textsuperscript{th} March 1961. In, Cattle imports – Northern province. In, Veterinary – livestock markets general, V 1/9 1955-1965, TNA

\textsuperscript{45} Illicit movement & marketing of cattle. In, Cattle imports – Northern province. In, Veterinary – livestock markets general V 1/9 1955-1965, TNA

\textsuperscript{46} Personal recollections, Alais Morindat, Maasai elder and coordinator of the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (NGO, Arusha)
(iljirusi, adaptation from the Swahili word mchuuzi, i.e. peddler) were particularly targeted by warriors as subjects of derision and parody as they were considered cowards for obtaining cattle through the means of money rather than by raid, i.e. an activity that conferred pride and a rite of passage for any young male to be considered a real warrior\textsuperscript{47}. Traders had to bear as well the humiliation of being denied food during their journeys to purchase cattle to resell it in markets\textsuperscript{48}. Considering the importance of food sharing among Maasai for ethnic reproduction and identity, it is easily understood how livestock trading was deemed a disgraceful and degrading business among Maasai people at that time.

With independence in 1961, the socialist model (Ujamaa) became the drive of the newly-formed independent Tanganyika. Similarities and continuities between the colonial administration and the new socialist policies were striking, with increased productivity in agriculture and animal husbandry (the latter through mostly ranching associations) as the main objective of the newly formed independent Tanganyikan state (Hodgson 2001: 153). The relationships between the new independent state and pastoralists continued to be played out to a great extent within the same terrain as had happened before, that is to say, the battle against ‘illegal’ trading and taxation policies. The ‘loss of revenues’ that resulted from the spreading of sales outside the ‘legal’ circuit of state-controlled markets continued to be a primary concern for district councillors, again, like in the pre-independence period, on the assumption that ‘illicit’ trade was detrimental to the provision of services for the development of the livestock sector. On the eve of independence, selling cattle outside cattle markets in Maasailand was a very common ‘offence’\textsuperscript{49}.

Perhaps the most significant operation carried out by the socialist state which heightened the spatial marginalization of the Maasai was the 

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid
\textsuperscript{48} Personal recollections, Maasai elder in Losirwaaraka and former iljirusi
\textsuperscript{49} In the 1964 6,871 sales were recorded in the Masai district by the district administration against roughly 33,000 sales of heads of cattle sold recorded in the 1960. Such a drop was not due to an actual decrease of sales but to the increase in illegal trading outside markets. For the year 1965 the Masai district acting executive officer (and future prime minister) Sokoine estimated the number of heads of cattle sold outside markets as up to 50,000. The scale of ‘illegal’ sales is demonstrated by the dramatic drop of revenues collected from markets which in only four years (from the 1965 to the 1968) went from Shs 137,498 to Shs 96,023. Kiasi cha ngombe wauzwao minadani, 3rd October 1964. In, Livestock markets, MON / V. 1/9/ Vol. 1, ATNA
‘villagization’ program through which it was intended to create villages called *vijiji vya ujamaa* (socialist villages, *kijiji cha ujama*, singular) to address the problem of scattered settlements, improve the provision of health, education and other services, and enact the visions of rural development. As in the other districts of Tanganyika, villagization schemes involved the former Masai District, which was split into smaller administrative districts (Hodgson 2001: 158). The splitting of the Masai District however did not lead to actual changes in administration and resources management, which in Monduli District, for instance, continued to be performed under customary arrangements regardless of administrative boundaries between villages (Hodgson 2001: 158). Having been subject to the kind of spatial marginalization that had emerged as a consequence of the policies pursued by British administrators, the Maasai population in the surrounding area of Mto wa Mbu, as in the case of Monduli50, was not touched by critical transformations even with the villagization scheme that officially declared Mto wa Mbu a *kijiji cha ujamaa* in 1968 and that included them officially within its administrative boundaries (Arens 1979: 66). Mto wa Mbu village and its hinterland populated by the Maasai therefore stands out as a perfect example of how British and post-independence policies in fact and likely unintentionally created or at least strengthened Maasai ethnic identity by spatially marginalizing Maasai people from the rest of the population.

The Mto wa Mbu greater area had been historically targeted for the richness of its natural resources which prompted a proposal by British administrators to make it a natural reserve for photographic tourism (considering the richness in wildlife) to generate economic benefits for its villagers51. The potential for agricultural development of Mto wa Mbu village had not been overlooked by the non-Maasai population whose presence during the 1930’s began to rise steadily. Arens (1979) argues that in 1917 there was already a non-Maasai settlement thirty miles to the north of today’s Mto wa Mbu town (p. 34). Mto wa Mbu as a community dates back to

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50 Mto wa Mbu is under the administrative boundaries of Monduli district but physically separated and distant from Monduli town and Monduli Juu, i.e. the areas that are usually referred to as Monduli
51 Development of Mto wa Mbu, (1935-1950), Accession number 69, TNA
the 1935\textsuperscript{52} as an “alien” settlement of approximately three hundred non-Maasai individuals in the heart of Maasailand. Several influxes of people followed one another in Mto wa Mbu between the 1930’s and 1960’s from different regions of Tanganyika\textsuperscript{53} (Arens 1979: 37). The last influx brought as well a new wave of development with individuals settling not only with the intent of farming but also for trading, opening retail shops and engaging in other activities such as tailoring, carpentry and shoe-making. By the 1960’s Mto wa Mbu was a bustling multi-ethnic centre with farmers coming from different regions as well as a community of individuals with business acumen not very common in the country at that time.

By the time Arens conducted his research in the 1968-69 (p. XI) the \textit{kijiji cha ujmaa} had been just established and it included Kigongoni\textsuperscript{54}. Only 10% of the official population was indigenous with the remaining 90% having migrated from other parts of the country (Arens 1979: 43). The multicultural environment therefore was a peculiar characteristic of Mto wa Mbu town with Africans of different ethnicities, Asian shopkeepers as well as a significant presence of passing foreign tourists\textsuperscript{55}. Although officially belonging to Mto wa Mbu village, the Maasai population continued to be spatially separated and continued with livestock-keeping as their major activity.

Arens argues that these socio-economic features of Mto wa Mbu village created a situation in which a multi-ethnic population, with the exception of Maasai, downplayed ethnic identity to avoid frictions and improve collaboration for the common wellbeing. As Arens (1979) wrote:

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid
\textsuperscript{53}Arens recognizes three different waves of migration into the Mto wa Mbu settlement. The first migrants arrived during the 1930’s mainly from western Sukumaland as well as the coastal regions; they were therefore of Sukuma ethnicity and Zigua, Nguu and Segeju from the coast. The second wave during the 1940’s and early 1950’s saw the arrival of Mbugwe, Rangi, Iramba and Gogo people from central and northern Tanzania (Arens 1979: 37). Finally the third wave took place in the 1960’s with the influx of Chagga and Pare from the Kilimanjaro region.

\textsuperscript{54}Vijiji vya Ujamaa – Mkoa wa Arusha, 23rd December 1969. In Vijiji vya Ujamaa, D. 3/6, ATNA
\textsuperscript{55}The potential for tourism development was underlined considering the consistent number of tourists who would stop in Mto wa Mbu on the way to visiting the Ngorongoro and Manayara national parks. It was proposed that villagers contribute money coming from sales of agricultural produce to open handicraft shops for the visitors stopping by in the village. Taaraifa wa mzezi Aprili 1970. In Vijiji vya Ujamaa – Maasai, D. 3/6, ATNA
The demands of everyday living, which necessitate the creation of crucial social relationships across ethnic lines, militate against the development of important social groupings based on common origin. The composition of the village itself in the form of numerous ethnic affiliation works against this. In order for social interaction to take place on a community-wide level and with the degree of cooperation required by irrigation agriculture, ethnic consciousness must be submerged (p. 73)

This process was further accelerated by the presence of the Swahili culture, whose creation had been one of the political projects of the Tanzanian socialist government for social integration through, above all, the use of Swahili as the common national language. The category of the WaSwahili (Swahili people), emptied of local ethnic connotation, underlined an identity based on national culture and language. In fact, the Maasai population remained detached from these dynamics. Maasai living in the hinterland and villagers of Mto wa Mbu interacted with each other as two distinct communities. Practically, Maasai saw Mto wa Mbu residents as aliens in Maasailand and identified them as simply non-Maasai or Swahili. In turn, the Swahili identity developed also as a process of self-ascription on the side of urban residents who differentiated themselves from the Maasai (Arens 1979: 66).

Despite the spatial marginalization, or perhaps because of the economic repercussions of it, an important break with the British period was the emergence of Maasai individuals conducting trade alongside traders of other ethnicities. For the first time the historical sources report the existence of Maasai traders in the district of Babati in Manyara region (which borders Monduli District to the north) coming from many locations that used to be encompassed by the Masai District56. Such a shift happened gradually when economic conditions for the Maasai worsened due to a shift of economic

56 The Babati executive officer for instance in the 1964 received several letters from other district officers complaining that many Maasai males were travelling to the Babati district to trade in livestock even in days with no market activity scheduled. Such trade was causing thefts all around the districts as these individuals might apparently have been trading knowingly or unknowingly stolen animals. Kununua ng’ombe nje ya mnada, 2nd January 1964. In, Livestock markets, MON/V.1/9/Vol. 1, ATNA In another letter dated 9th October 1965 the senior veterinary field officer (Arusha region) acknowledged the complications arising in the regional markets which were causing the districts to lose important revenues. He argued that that was due to the Maasai preferring to sell their animals either at home or across the border in Kenya in order to avoid the heavy taxation. Report on Masailand cattle markets. In, Livestock markets, MON/V.1/9/Vol. 1, ATNA
resources from Maasailand to other areas and peoples which African elites considered more apt to embrace change (Hodgson 2001: 148-149).

At that time Maasai traders began to collaborate among themselves as well as with traders of other ethnicities in order to deceive the legal requirement of being in possession of a license for trade. ‘Illegal’ traders (i.e. those without a licence) would get the support of the few traders who had approved licenses by handing over to them the animals and the task of selling them only on the immediate outside of the marketplaces. After the sale the licensed trader would return the money to the ‘illegal’ dealer and the two traders would occasionally walk back together on the way to their respective homes57.

In the end, the socialist period for the Maasai prompted an intensification of collective identification triggered mostly by the spatial marginalization as it happened in the area of Mto wa Mbu and overall in Maasailand as former Masai District (Hodgson 2001). At the same time changes began to occur in the way Maasai related to the monetary economy. These two processes were to spiral even further during and after the shift to neoliberal policies, especially the integration of the Maasai into the cash economy due to the worsening conditions in Maasailand and in the whole of Tanzania.

The neoliberal turn

In the 1970's and 1980's an increasing economic crisis went hand-in-hand with the increasing pouring in of external interventions of international donors and the surrender to the pressure of the IMF and the World Bank to embrace economic liberalization. After decades of top-down policies and interventions by the colonial administration first and then the independent state, many ‘informal’ opportunities began to rise, enabled by alternative social institutions replacing institutions run by the state (Tripp 1997). The economic conditions of pastoralists declined dramatically as well, prompting economic diversification and an increasing dependence on non-farm and non-livestock activities (see introduction). Slowly the socio-economic circumstances of pastoral communities began to resemble the kind of

57 Elder in Losirwa, former iljurusı
dynamics that I have described in the first part of this chapter, with growing livelihood diversification, rural-urban migration, and most recently the rise of peri-urban sites as crucial reservoirs of income generating opportunities for rural dwellers.

In the 1980’s, livestock trading was no longer a shameful business but it had become an acceptable way of making a living and a major source of income, which led some individuals to enrich themselves in unexpected ways. Many individuals, who are today respected wealthy elders, gained their economic and social position in the 1980’s\textsuperscript{58} thanks to their particularly successful livestock trading businesses. The ideas connected to money and commoditization have nowadays moral connotations that are much more ambiguous than it may have been in the past and trading is nowadays for Maasai too an ordinary activity to pursue in towns while continuing with livestock keeping in the village.

The sense of identity that distinguished Maasai in the past has also strengthened throughout the post-independence and currently. This is proven for instance by the resistance (of Maasai people) against attempts to ‘modernise’ them with campaigns such as the “operation dress-up” which in the late 1960’s targeted the Maasai and the use of the Maasai shuka, considered a sign of backwardness by the Tanzanian state (Schneider 2006). Nowadays, the Maasai are an ethnic group extremely conscious of its own ethnic identity and socio-cultural distinctiveness reinforced by the tourism industry, which has resulted in an increase of foreign tourists travelling to and throughout Maasailand to witness the ‘disappearing’ Maasai culture.

These days, the social map of Mto wa Mbu and surroundings reflects these socio-economic changes and resembles that of many other peri-urban sites and small towns in northern Tanzania with the additional effects of social differentiation between Maasai and non-Maasai described above that has evolved throughout the decades. Despite the increasing involvement of Maasai individuals in the urban economy of Mto wa Mbu and Kigongoni, the social differentiation based on Maasai/non-Maasai distinction has not dissolved. The daily commuting between the rural and urban areas contributes to reproduce this differentiation on a daily basis. The categories

\textsuperscript{58} Conversation with Alais Ole Morindat, Maasai elder and coordinator of the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (NGO, Arusha)
of the ‘town’ (*mjini*) and ‘village’ (*kijijini*) have arisen as a consequence, creating a dichotomized space with the former, the town, referring to Mto wa Mbu/Kigongoni and more generally urban space, and the latter to Losirwa and more generally and broadly the whole open rangeland of surrounding Maasai villages (e.g. Engaruka, Esilalei).

I started this chapter by untangling contemporary dynamics of social life in Kigongoni, especially the presence of close networks of exchange and socio-economic life among Maasai in town, and ideas that associate the Maasai themselves predominantly with rural life. From this historical reconstruction, it is easy to trace the roots of the strong sense of ethnic identity, which has implications for current urban social life, too. It also becomes easy to understand why and how ideas connected to Maasai, rural lifestyle and the world of monetary exchanges have persisted considering the relatively recent changes, compared to other peoples in Tanzania, that have urged Maasai people to ‘embrace’ the monetary economy to a significant extent.

In the following chapter, I will start to unfold and develop the discussion and description, through ethnography, of how these two historical processes continue up to these days and continue to produce and reproduce Maasai ethnic identity across multiple terrains, and sometimes perhaps in unexpected ways, within socio-economic life. In the next chapter, I will turn to the spatial categories of ‘town’ (*mjini*) and ‘village’ (*kijijini*), how this dichotomized space is socially produced and reproduced through practices and discourse, and how these practices and discourses in fact ‘produce’ ethnicity by creating social categorizations based on the difference between what is and what is not ‘Maasai’.
Figure 1. Open grazing land, Losirwa Village
Figure 2. Tutunyo family’s boma
Figure 3. Tutunyo family's boma
Figure 4. Moran’s hut in Tutunyo boma
Figure 5. Interiors of *moran’s* hut in Tutunyo *boma*
Figure 6. Women's gathering under the shade of a hut
Figure 7. Interiors of an average hut occupied by a married woman
Figure 8. Peri-urban Kigongoni at the 'border' with rangeland
Figure 9. Houses under construction in peri-urban Kigongoni
Figure 10. The paved road passing through Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu
Figure 11. *Kona Engaruka. Bodaboda and bajaji stand*
Figure 12. Bodaboda drivers waiting for passengers at Kona Engaruka
Figure 13. A typical cluster of business activities in Kigongoni
Figure 14. Kaieni’s shop
Figure 15. A group of korianga sitting on the premises of Kaieni’s shop
Figure 16. Drawing in Policy Forum pamphlet Sheria ya mfuko wa maendeleo ya jimbo (front cover)

Figure 17. Drawing in Policy Forum pamphlet Sheria ya mfuko wa maendeleo ya jimbo (page 4)
Figure 18. Tutunyo boma and family, kinship diagram
CHAPTER TWO

Space, thrift, and consumption at the rural-urban interface: the production of ethnicity and the recasting of gender roles through practice and discourse

INTRODUCTION

The kind of ethnic identity this chapter will try to describe is relational and constructed on everyday practices. An account of the contemporary directions and instances of ethnic Maasai identity in the broader socio-economic context cannot omit an initial discussion that takes space and consumption as the realms in which individuals construct selfhood and collective identity. I will describe how Maasai identity is constructed through the polarity of the rural-urban interface, which is built around opposing ideas and practices of walking, making savings, and eating. Being Maasai and Maasainess become states and conditions that are created and reinforced in antithesis to an outside socio-economic environment which is deemed to represent the negation of positive Maasai values. This second chapter, therefore, will lay the foundation of the thesis by trying to address two fundamental initial questions related to the dynamics of ethnic identity, namely: what constitutes Maasai ethnic identity in contemporary Tanzania? More specifically, what are the everyday practices and the attached meanings and metaphors that work as trigger for ethnic determination and, importantly, demarcation and delimitation?

By looking at practices, I depart from the individual as the first layer of ethnic identity and, importantly, how through individual actions and practices, social organization is produced. This brings to light the relationships between the individual and the collectivity whose importance I have illustrated the introduction of this thesis. In line with Bentley’s analysis (1987) (see introduction) grounded in post-structuralist thought (Bourdieu 1977, deCerteau 1984) on the importance of practices as triggers of identity, in this case ethnic, I will show how practices are imbued with meanings that can unveil the processes of Maasai ethnic construction.
The spatial configuration of the rural-urban interface contributes to determine and is, in turn, reinforced by daily practices eventually prompting separations between Maasai and non-Maasai. As Massey (2004) argues, identities are ‘relational’ entailing that “we do not have our beings and then go out and interact, but […] to a disputed but none-the-less significant extent our beings, our identities, are constituted in and through those engagements, those practices of interaction. Identities are forged in, and through, relations (which include non-relations, absences and hiatuses). In consequence they are not rooted or static, but mutable, ongoing productions” (Massey 2004: 5).

In the first part of this chapter, I will describe the ways in which the town and the village represent not (only) two different physical spaces but rather two different social worlds that are constructed on social relationships of a very different nature. While the village is seen as an ethnicized (Maasai) space made of connections within the realm of family and friendship, the town is seen as the space of profit making and impersonal exchanges. The actual action of moving or ‘walking’ between the village and the town for the Maasai has a figurative meaning that conveys the idea of passing between two different social spheres. By attributing values and ideas to the urban space as a space of impersonality, Maasai ethnic identity and the very idea of Maasainess connected with rural life are reinforced in opposition to the urban context.

Part two and three of the chapter centre in on the two complementary aspects of thrift and consumption. They provide substance for the grounds on which oppositions between Maasai and non-Maasai are created and reproduced. Connections between thrift, consumption, and space have long established roots starting with theorists of space as Lefebvre (1974) and deCerteau (1984) who have used the language that pertains to the realm of consumption to postulate their theories on the production of space. DeCerteau for instance refers to the individual as a ‘consumer’ who reworks and produces space through her actions and interactions. Newly forged idiomatic expressions such as “geographies of consumption” (Jackson & Thrift 1995) or “consuming space” (Goodman et al. 2010) have appeared more recently and emphasized the necessity to ‘spatialize’ aspects of
consumption. Here, actions that belong to the realm of thrift and consumption (of food) are fundamental triggers for the production and reproduction of Maasai ethnic identity hinging on the produced oppositions of economizing skills versus ‘wild’ or unrestrained and meaningless consumption, as well as generosity versus selfishness.

Notwithstanding these neat oppositions and the apparent homogeneity of the ethno-spatial opposition (Maasai-non-Maasai as contingent to the rural-urban divide,) in the third part of this chapter, I will underline the existing tensions that the rural-urban interface presents and how these affect gender relationships not limited to the ‘modern Maasai’ that I mention in the first part. If, as Massey argues, identities are relational and forged through spatial relations, space becomes a site of negotiation that can also be conflictual (Massey 2004: 7). Underneath an apparent correspondence between spatial and ethnic categories (the village as Maasai and the town as non-Maasai), commoditization at the rural-urban interface unveils a series of tensions affecting women as much as men. While being a ‘modern Maasai’ enacts ideals of the changing male role in Maasai society, women too recast the way in which they fulfill their role within the domestic realm by exploiting the potential of commoditization.

1. CONSTRUCTING SPACE THROUGH ACTION AND DISCOURSE

Not only the transhumant pastoral activity which requires movements and mobility, but also many other traits and features of social life of the Maasai people are dependent on “spatial conditions” (Spencer 2004: 43)\(^59\). In the context of economic diversification, mobility patterns encompass more diverse social settings at rural-urban interface. Such changes have triggered a redesigning of cultural and social meanings connected to movements and spatial organization of life that are the result of the mixture of customary and contemporary practices. It would not be an exaggeration to say that most young males residing in Losirwa are in a constant search in Kigongoni except when they are occupied with particularly delicate herding tasks that

\(^{59}\) For instance, Spencer refers to the ‘hazards of the bush’ (p. 51) which men only are supposedly in a position to confront when they venture during night into supposedly dangerous spaces. On the contrary, women’s space is that of the homestead and their own huts
cannot be fulfilled by uncircumcised children. ‘Walking the city’ has itself become an occupation through which they try, literally and figuratively, to seize business opportunities and business deals. The way people construct and perceive the physical environment across the rural-urban interface at the same time affects, and is affected by, the “trajectories” (deCerteau 1984) that they trace, entailing in turn specific choices as to where and when to sleep, walk, work, spend one's leisure time and so on. The act of walking from the village to the town has a symbolic meaning that refers to the search for money since, it is often argued, the town, rather than the village, is the place where money circulates.

Eletioni, a wealthy Maasai *moran* from Losirwa village who manages several business activities in Kigongoni, manages his time between the town, where he takes care of his business, and the village. He is known both in Losirwa and Kigongoni as one of the wealthiest individuals, having taken over the livestock trading business from his father who had been able to build a house on the main paved road in Kigongoni and turned it into a bar. He described for me the way in which he manages his economic activities in Kigongoni while retaining his connections with the village:

I get up in the morning; I look after my goats and make sure they get breakfast. I drink tea at home with other *moran* then I take my motorbike and go to town. I must go to town everyday to look after my business; if I don't who is going to take care of my money?! (12th January 2011)

He continued:

The town is full of *machokora*, I force myself to go back to sleep in the village, I don't want to get used to sleeping in town. I must go to town everyday to take care of my business but if I get used to sleeping in town I will forget the village and my home. (12th January 2011)

From his words, it is possible to read the difference between the town and the village as two different geographical and physical spatial entities that represent importantly two different sets of social relationships. The town represents the world of profit making, to which he relates through social

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*60* Tramp, slacker
relationships based on business and monetary contracts whereas the village is the place of social relationships that pertain to the domestic realm. The movements between the town and the village for him, and many others, do not in fact merely entail the physical action of moving between two distinct places, but also and, more importantly, the movement between two clearly bounded social worlds.

Lesikar, another young Maasai shopkeeper from Losirwa who sells traditional cloths in one of the many retail shops in the area described for me the way in which he ‘survives’ in town by relying on a wide range of opportunities to generate some income. He listed to me all the activities tried since he had entered the life stage of warriorhood: money lending, selling clothes and traditional Maasai medicine, trading Tanzanite stones, livestock trade, providing services such as selling livestock on commission. He seemed particularly proud of the network he had been able to build in Kigongoni and beyond. When I asked him what kind of strategy he employs for seeking income opportunities, he answered that he would ‘walk and look into the streets’; his colourful explanation meant to hint at his ability to allure people into entering into business partnerships with him.

‘Walking the city’ presupposes the building of closer relationships that are instrumental and essential for the sake of profit. Paulo, a korianga from the Tutunyo family, at the time of my fieldwork started working as motorbike driver. He explained to me the kind of mutual assistance between drivers of Kigongoni such as handing clients (passengers) to one another, contributing to a common fund in case of accidents and helping each other in case of theft. He also made connections with another non-Maasai living in Kigongoni who would rent his motorbike in exchange for a daily fee. Before entrusting his motorbike he asked to be introduced to the prospective client’s family and neighbours. Building communities and business relationships in town involves building relationships of trust. These communities and relationships are far from powerful and binding but go along with the flow of the short-to-long term economic activities in which one gets involved. As Paulo told me, he would continue to work as motorbike driver as long as there is ‘market’ (soko), then he will shift to another activity that, in the meantime, has become more profitable. As for the people with whom he has
co-operated, he said he would continue to “say hello! to them while passing by”, while also building new relationships with other people in the new working environment.

The town has come to represent for most Maasai of Losirwa village the backdrop of the relationships mediated by the exchanges that belong to the realm of monetary contracts, as opposed to the friendship and kinship ties in the village. For some successful individuals, the opportunities in the urban area have turned into an actual improvement of their economic status. For them, the act of walking to the town or ‘walking the city’ has turned into a successful strategy. In many other cases, it has not. In fact, despite the variety of income generating opportunities I mentioned above, the actual benefit in terms of income they entail may be limited. Most activities people engage in are occasional and sporadic, except working as night guards, which however generates an income that is barely sufficient for meeting weekly or monthly purchases of grains and mboga (condiment). The town, as a result, has become an object linguistically expressed with contradictory terms: at times the place of profit making in a positive guise, other times as the place of perdition and immoral behaviour. Discourses and “spatial stories” (deCerteau 1984) on the town and village are linguistic constructions that bestow a spatial nature on daily life and activities.

The stories I have heard on how Maasai were absorbed into the urban life of the town have some common characteristics that are easily recognizable. A recurrent theme is that of the expansion of the town as a corrupting place associated mostly with alcohol and consumption. Elders refer to alcohol consumption in town as fundamentally immoral, as opposed to consumption of locally brewed alcohol from honey in the village. One elder recounted to me that, in the old days, the relationship that warriors had with the town was of a very different nature:

Young warriors used to spend their days drinking alcohol from honey in the bush and they never went to the city unless somebody became very ill. People had no need to go to town to buy food, as everything they needed was available in the village. (23rd December 2011)

The same elder on another occasion recounted how warriors in the past used to walk long distances to visit friends (and girlfriends) and liked to
walk to stay in shape. Warriors also used to spend long periods in the bush where they ate meat and fat, and drank local medicine made from roots. Another elder of the makaa age set said that warriors who used to walk and hang around in town in the past were looked at as machokora (tramps) for walking in town without a precise job to do and for forgetting their own homes and families. He also said that warriors nowadays dislike walking as an exercise and that they would rather move between the town and the village by bicycle or motorbike.

I could hear similar stories on the rise of the town as the opposite side of the village from younger warriors who had been working in town as night watchmen already for a number of years. One of them said that, at a certain point in the past, some individuals became familiar with the town when only a few cement houses existed and they opened some little businesses and began making some little profit. As more and more people followed the example of these ‘pioneers’ of the town, people in the village began to consider the time spent in the village as a waste. His explanation of the birth of the town focused on the rise of a different set of relationships; tellingly, he pointed out the positive side of the town as the place of industriousness and development in opposition to time spent in the village seen as a waste.

The possibility for individuals to build, nurture and, in the last instance, belong to two different sets of relationships, has generated not only opposed ideas and meanings attached to the act of walking, but also shifting and changing ideas of being Maasai and Maasainess. Lekishon, a korianga from the Tutunyo family and one of my best friends in the field, during one of our many conversations described for me his idea of the ‘modern Maasai’ (as opposed to the ‘traditional Maasai’). His words clearly revealed the contradictions and adjustments Maasai people deal with on a daily basis and the way in which they at times resist and at times reject the idea of Maasainess strictly linked to rural life and cattle:

The modern Maasai knows how to drive the car; he dreams about money in the night but goes to graze cows in the morning. He wants to get money to build houses in town but does not forget about his boma in the village. (27th December 2010)
The tendency among Maasai of Losirwa to distinguish and differentiate themselves from the imposed ideas of Maasai as pastoralists and ignorant about urban life is revealed by the knowledge that Maasai of Losirwa look for and project onto themselves; namely, the knowledge of money and the ability to deal with the networks beyond the village. Lesikar, whom I mentioned above, explained to me that Maasai of Losirwa, having easier access to the towns of Mto wa Mbu and Kigongoni, have become *wajanja* (smart), and that has made them different from the Maasai of Engaruka, whom, in his words, embodied the idea of the rural Maasai living in the bush away from modernity. Being a ‘modern Maasai’ is a condition that entails constant negotiations between an old-established idea of being Maasai connected to rural life and backwardness, and novel and shifting networks and practices within the urban environment. The spatial division of town and village as two distinct social worlds produced by the cyclical repetition of daily actions such as walking is the terrain in which the idea of the ‘modern Maasai’ bridges the separations between the sphere of the urban as the place of modernity and the sphere of the rural as the place of tradition.

1.2 Thrift

I have argued above that moving between the village and the town for the Maasai Losirwa villagers entails moving between two sets of social relationship and two different social worlds. I have shown how discourses tied to mostly the act of walking construct a dichotomized space. But what does it actually mean to say that people move between two different sets of relationships? What are the relationships at issue here? On what grounds is Maasainess reinforced in opposition to urban space? Actions of consumption and thrift provide the answers to such questions in that they yield an array of instances of rural life and Maasai identity antithetical to urban life and lifestyle.

That livestock, especially cattle, is a carrier of value among pastoralists is an established fact. Transhumant pastoralists move their herds seasonally in search of the best pastures, administer drugs to their animals, and depend

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61 A Maasai village at the outskirt of the famous archaeological site of Engaruka
on livestock sales for their livelihoods. But the complementary side, and necessary premise to the preservation of livestock and everything it stands for, is often overlooked; how do pastoralists minimize expenses in order to avoid livestock sales and allow themselves to carry on with the activities of livestock grazing and rearing that are carriers of ethnic identity? The act of thrift can be considered the counterpart of consumption, in that it reduces expenses for consumption of food or goods. The act of economizing, therefore, is not a value-free action, or set of actions; on the contrary, it always carries moral meanings that are socially driven (Douglas & Isherwood 1979).

Along with the ethos and values of sharing (entoroji) (Rigby 1985), another type of ethics is imbued in social life among the Maasai, namely, a morality connected to wasteful behaviour when it comes to both spending money as well as managing goods, resources or materials of any kind (from water to clothes and the like). For instance, with respect to the milking of cows, Homewood & Rodgers (1991) mentioned the attitude of giving precedence to calves’ needs over people’s short-term desire for milk and that the opposite behaviour would be considered greedy and wasteful (p. 38). Despising wasteful behaviour goes hand-in-hand with a particular image of lifestyle that Maasai project onto themselves and that is imbued with ideas of hardship and austerity. This kind of self-image, however, takes on positive meanings that confer pride and, consequently, a particularly heightened ethnic collective self-awareness. A condition of increasing poverty in pastoral communities has not led to an idiom of poverty. On the contrary, as Broch-Due & Anderson (1999) underline, the widespread notion popular among pastoralists in Africa that “the poor are not us” has resulted into an idiom of thrift that is carrier of powerful feelings of ethnic consciousness in opposition to the outside.

The first episode that made me think of the importance and social significance of thrift activities involved some matchboxes. In the boma, I used to have spare matches at all times to light a cigarette whenever I wanted without looking for a fireplace, a particularly difficult task to perform in the night when everybody is asleep. One day, I was in the hut with some of the family korianga chatting and I picked one of my
matchboxes to light on a cigarette. I picked the newest box since it would be easier to strike a match, but Elias, one of the *korianga* present pointed at another box which was quite worn out saying that I better finish that one before using the new one. He argued that, in ‘our kind of environment’ (i.e. the *boma*, in the Maasai village), it is common and appropriate to dispose of the available resources without wasting and misusing.

After the matchbox episode, I began paying attention to the management of the household resources and domestic husbandry and began to witness a whole range of activities aimed at minimizing expenditures. A protracted look at the *boma* reveals a whole wide range of materials that are used and re-used for the most diverse tasks. Timeworn buckets for fetching water can be tied to a rope and used for dragging mud away from spots within the *boma* used as walkaway by either people or livestock. The same timeworn buckets are cut in pieces and used as hard materials for handicrafts such as bracelets, anklets, and many other bead-based body ornaments. Timeworn maize bags have similar recycling potential with the single fibres used as strings to weave together to produce threads with beads. The classic shoes used by Maasai (and others) and produced with reused rubber tires are re-used when worn out to collect and gather the mud from the livestock *boma*; once they are re-used they take a particular name (*allaraa*) that indicates such a specific task. Pieces of buckets and pieces of old rubber are used to produce devices that are applied to male goats at the height of the waist to prevent mating and avoid pregnancy during non-preferred periods of the year.62 A comprehensive inventory of all materials and items reused within the *boma* would certainly produce a very long list. Generally speaking, hardly anything is ‘thrown away’ in the *boma* and all items, from water cisterns to benches, plastic bags, maize bags, timeworn dishes, pieces of cloth, radios, tools and utensils and so on usually become part of the furnishing within the *boma*. Especially women usually keep these unused materials in iron boxes along with documents or children’s old schoolbooks and notebooks.

An important set of thrifty activities occurs in cooking, eating, and

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62 These types of devices are applied to male goats roughly during the beginning of the year (i.e. January and February) to avoid pregnancy and female goats giving birth during dry season months (i.e. July, August and September)
drinking. Drinking tea for instance is an important daily activity in the village; people drink tea in the morning and evening just before food. Tea is considered very important to ‘prepare’ the stomach for food and, often, additional spices are added besides sugar. Also, tea is considered a good ‘appetizer’, especially when milk is added. Tealeaves and sugar are the most widespread commodities used in the households and the usual gift one buys when visiting somebody. When there are no tealeaves in the house, women can opt to burn some sugar in the pan, and then add milk and water that takes a brownish colour, similar to the colour of the tealeaves. In cooking, peanuts are sometimes used to complement the diet with additional proteins and fats, when added to ugali\textsuperscript{63} as a surrogate for cooking oil, or other kinds of condiments in days of money scarcity.

Living in the boma, I constantly heard people referring to ‘hard life’ (maisha ya shida) in the village or expression such as ‘this is the village!’ . Some linguistic expressions and references connected to thrifting activities and hardship of life were the mentioning of kunguni (bedbugs) as an allusion to the discomfort of sleeping on an infested bed, eating ugali kavu (plain ugali) or ugali baridi (cold ugali, i.e. leftovers of ugali from the night before) and walking in the village on foot rather than car or motorbike, as in town. Discourses on the difference between the village and the town as well as the difference between the Maasai and the Waswahili often referred to the skills and ability that Maasai attribute to themselves of living in constant hardship, with little comfort but always sharing with one another and never being selfish. On the contrary, Waswahili were often referred to with expressions of contempt such as ‘the Waswahili! They only know money. They cannot live like we Maasai live here in the village’.

The village has come to be deeply associated with hardship whereas the town to starehe (comfort or leisure). Individuals who are in an economic position that allows them to invest part of their income or assets would most likely invest in houses or businesses in the city rather than in items for the boma. During a discussion with one Maasai man, with the intention of triggering his view about development and the difference between rural and urban life, I asked him why Maasai don’t have modern beds but would rather

\textsuperscript{63} Stiff maize porridge
sleep in pain on the cow skin. He simply replied that “we don’t need *starehe* in the village, if we are looking for *starehe* we go to the town and pay 5,000 shillings for a night in a guest house”. His straightforward answer conveyed the idea of the town as a place of comfort in opposition to the village and at the same time as the place of monetary and contractual exchange in opposition to the village as the place of personal and family relationships.

As I mentioned previously, negative attitudes towards urban life and lifestyle while conveying the unease of Maasai towards the commoditization of goods and services at times does leave space to a different judgment. The rise of a ‘modern Maasai’ I brought up above is connected to a dual attitude of Maasai towards urban lifestyle as simultaneously a place of negative and unrestrained consumption, relationships devoid of true love or friendship beyond monetary exchange but at the same time as the place of *starehe*. The relationship that Maasai individuals establish with urban life conveys this kind of dual attitude towards instances of ‘modernity’, which changes in line with the attitude towards rural life and ethnic identification. If, as it is undeniable, the pastoral activity is a paramount premise and condition to share values and ideals that denote ethnic identity, through the material actions of minimizing expenditures Maasai preserve their herds and therefore the prospects to carry on with pastoralism as a form of subsistence.

**1.3 Food and Consumption**

Food, like space, has been an important anthropological object since the rise of structuralism and some of its major exponents such as Mary Douglas (1975) and Levi-Strauss (1970) who looked at food as a metaphor of a given cultural system. In this section, I will turn to how food and its consumption as antonyms of thrift in different regards define and strengthen the same cultural distinctions and opposition that does thrift. The village is not only the place of hard life as ‘less consumption’ in opposition to the town, but it is also the place where consumption complies with a whole set of principles determined by the kind of social ordering that is in force within rural life.
The analysis of food and Maasai society so far has narrowed down to the analysis of cultural significance of some specific foods such as milk and meat (Spencer 1988, Talle 1990) or more quantitative analysis of mostly milk consumption (Grandin 1988, Homewood et al. 1987). Besides, the position and importance of specific foods such as meat and milk have not been looked at beyond the boundaries of Maasai society alone. The 'hierarchies of taste' for instance, described by Spencer (1988) with regard to the allotment of cuts of meat link the acknowledged hierarchy of food to the hierarchy of people, namely, from elders (who get the best cuts) to children, and between men and women (Spencer 1988: 255-266). The differentiation between urban and rural lifestyles breaks out of the limits of gender and generational relationships within the domestic divisions of roles.

In the village the hierarchy of food reflects a specific allotment through which each single individual belonging to his or her specific category has entitlement to food. In town, accessing food depends on the availability of money and this type of expression of commoditization is deeply charged with negative connotations. One moran from Losirwa expressed his view about the difference between the town and the village in one of the very first conversations I had in the field:

I like the village because you don’t have to have money to get food; one has all the food he wants: ugali, milk. But in town you need money for everything and one needs so much money to buy everything he needs. When you get money you spend it all for alcohol and nothing is left for food. The town is very noisy; but in the village you buy a crate of sodas or beer and everybody gets their own drink. (16th December 2010)

These words convey a negative feeling towards food as commodity I perceived to be quite widespread among Maasai based on the words of many informants I spoke to throughout fieldwork. In fact, commoditization of food is at the foundation of one of the main discourses that Maasai make use of in differentiating themselves from the Waswahili. Generosity in the form of food sharing is a characteristic of behaviour that Maasai attach to themselves, in opposition to selfish behaviour and refusal to share which characterise the Swahili in town.
Below, I will describe, in the first instance, the way in which hierarchies of food represent hierarchies of people according to the precepts of enkanyit (respect) shared by all Maasai individuals beyond gender and age sets. Finally, I will conclude by considering the oppositions that food consumption based on enkanyit and food hierarchies within the rural system create when they are put in opposition to the features of food and its consumption in town where the processes of inclusion turn into exclusion that is determined by commoditization.

1.3.2 Order, sharing, and ‘respect’

Food consumption in the boma follows specific rules and dynamics that clearly refer to the Maasai worldview with respect to the social ordering and the hierarchies that are in force and that are dictated by the precept of enkanyit (respect). If sharing (entoroji) is an essential part of daily life for instance among moran (Rigby 1985), it cannot be analysed in isolation from the whole set of barriers and taboos that impede sharing itself and create specific sets of rule of allotment and apportionment.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are domestic animals such as dogs, chickens, and cats. Chickens are allowed in the single huts after people have finished their meals to eat the leftovers dropped. Cats are mostly kept inside the huts and they as well eat the crumbles of left food during and after meals. Dogs on the contrary are rarely allowed inside the huts and are rather fed with pieces of ugali thrown at them during meals. The food that dogs are fed is visibly insufficient to satiate them and they are left free to search and browse for any edible substance including organic waste (i.e. excrement).

Up the hierarchy come children. After cooking ugali, rice or porridge (or sometimes tea) women hand over the pan (sufuria in Swahili, emoti in Maasai) to children who scratch the bottom of it with spoons or with their bare hands to obtain some edible leftovers (in Maasai engaoji, in Swahili ukoko). Engaoji is food set aside for children even though it is subject to further categorization according to the colour it acquires after the cooking process. Women, rather than children, may eat engaoji when in its finest condition with little or no signs of burning, whereas, it is usually given to
dogs when it has become unfit for human consumptions. Men never eat *engaoji*, regardless of age-set. As one woman said, it is not *heshima* (respect) to feed men with *engaoji*.

Turning away for a moment from food itself and looking at consumption practices, porridge becomes relevant as a food that is subject to some rules for its consumption. Porridge is served, mostly by women, in cups of different sizes according to the one who is served. One woman in the *boma* listed to me the different cups and how she would pick one instead of another according to who she is serving: she picks the smallest cup (*engarria*) when she gives porridge to her last born son Moitiko who was around five years old. The biggest cup (*olduberrri*) is for warriors and elders because, she said, they need to drink big amounts of porridge. *Olduberrri* is used as well when porridge is served to women who have recently given birth during the time (usually six months) they spend in the hut hardly coming out. *Engobo*, the mid-sized cup, is mostly used for drinking tea and it is served to both women and men but not to children who would drink their tea from *engarria*. One day, chatting in her hut with another *moran*, she offered me porridge in one of her *olduberrri*, which I politely declined asking instead for an *engarria*. The *moran* present said that I, as a *moran*, should always be given an *olduberrri* and that *engarria* is the cup that suits Moitiko.

In the middle of the hierarchy are foods that are normally consumed on a daily basis such as *ugali* in its different varieties (depending on its consistency and with or without additional fats), rice, *makande* and less frequently banana-based dishes. These kinds of foods do not have particular properties that are connected to specific taboos and consumption practices such as meat and cows’ fat, as I will mention below; men, women and children alike eat these foods. However, the daily practices of consumption mark gender and generational roles, their evolution in time and their reproduction. In Maasai society, major turning points in the life of both men and women are marked by changes in the practice of the consumption of food. Gender relationships are heavily determined by the way these dishes are prepared and eaten. After the wedding ceremony, a woman is not allowed to prepare food for her husband until she ‘pays’ a cow to him. The

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64 See glossary
cow, in some instances a goat or sheep, usually comes from the herd that belongs to the family of her husband, namely, his brother or his father. Once the shift of property right has occurred, the wife is allowed to prepare food not only for her husband but for the other Moran who customarily share food with him. Husband and wife, however, will not share food in the same hut or see each other eating until the rite of circumcision of the following group of males entering the stage of Moranhood, which in turn, implies the former group to abandon their own stage of Moranhood.

While I was on fieldwork, circumcisions for the new age-set started. Nyangulo was the name that was chosen across Maasailand for the newly circumcised children who would go to take over the role and position of Moran that formed the Korianga age set to which, I myself in terms of age, belonged. Sharing meals in our Boma, I could clearly observe the hierarchies through which sharing was arranged. Besides neat distinctions between different age sets, within the same set, Maasai draw less neat distinctions according to age within a single age set, as it is common to spend more time and share food and clothes between same-age Moran. Relationships between males within one single age set but of different age resemble the relationships of dominance between individuals belonging to different age sets but with less pronounced habits or practices of derision and, more rarely, harassment (e.g. beating). In the Tutunyo boma, I observed many cases of older Korianga taking and using items belonging to younger Korianga such as phones or clothes, which are often never returned to the original owner. ‘Real’ sharing in fact occurs between individuals who belong to the same (sub) age-set.

After the circumcision of the Nyangulo, food consumption in our boma followed this kind of hierarchical order. Evening meals were a good occasion to see the dynamics of food allocation and division despite the apparent impression of sharing. Each woman of the Tutunyo family would bring her own dish to the males’ hut and hand it over to one of the Moran, who would place it on the ground. The older Moran would sit on the benches and chairs available in a circle, wash their hands with some water served in a cup and eat from the same plate while continuing to chat. As other dishes are brought in, groups of younger Moran are formed and the food is consumed in the
same guise. While one group is having food, those who are outside the circle usually continue their chatting and interactions paying attention to showing little or no interest in the food that is being eaten by their older or younger comrades. Invitations are constant but always between individuals who belong to the same age category. Moran belonging to the same age category are very concerned that their comrades get their own share and would often put aside the plate waiting for him/them rather than eating right away.

Returning to the proper food characteristics, the foods at the top end of the food hierarchy, meat and cows’ fat, and their consumption in some cases, exacerbate the consumption arrangements described above. While men begin to eat with their wives after the payment of the livestock by the woman, meat and food prepared with livestock fat handled by women are never shared between men and women constituting in the last instance one of the strongest taboos in food consumption in Maasai society. While keeping men and women and their roles and positions in the society separate, meat consumption is a practice that symbolizes the values of sharing and alliance within one single age set. Cows’ fat has the same property of meat and is subject to similar strict rules of allotment based on taste between elders, juniors, and women (Spencer 1988: 262). Not only do married Moran not share with women food prepared with cows’ fat, but they would never eat food that has been cooked with cows’ fat that has been handled by women or even touched or seen by women. Cows’ fat embodies values of prosperity and abundance and is definitely placed on the top of the food hierarchy along with meat itself. Women who have recently given birth have the priority to be given porridge enhanced with cows’ (or goat/sheep) fat. In order to be used for cooking, cows’ fat is melted in large pans and then poured in buckets where it is left to cool to eventually be used to enhance porridge or for the ordinary cooking of mboga.

For weeks after the feast, the restriction placed on Moran not to consume food with cows’ fat that had been handled (or even seen) by women changed the practices of consuming food. Unlike older Moran belonging to the older generations, the younger ones oftentimes showed me their perplexities with respect to the taboos involving meat and cows’ fat. Throughout fieldwork, I could spend only short periods of time with them as they were often away
because of school. One of them, Lazaro, told me that he observes the food taboos involving cows’ fat only for ‘respect’ (*enkanyit*) to his father but that, were it up to him, men and women would eat together just like the Swahili people do in town. This assertion, and other of the same kind, made me think of both the generational change that is continuously underway in Maasai society, but at the same time the power and strength of some customs and taboos such as those related to food consumption and how these continue to determine hierarchical concepts of society based on age, gender, and most of all, relationships determined by *enkanyit*.

### 2. URBAN DISLOCATIONS

Referring to *enkanyit* within the allocation and consumption of food has broader implications that have to do with many other aspects of social life extending beyond the rural sphere of social relations. While in the village restrictions, taboos and sharing rules in food consumption determine the social ordering based on *enkanyit*, in Kigongoni, these regulated practices are not observed and food is subject to commoditization, i.e. sold in *hoteli*, where Maasai eat either in groups or individually. Maasai men see no discomfort in ignoring the gender-based restrictions in consuming food when they eat with Swahili women and they break the taboo of eating apart without sharing food with another or other comrades as well. This kind of commoditization of food in town, however, is not morally neutral. As I have described previously, the town is the ‘place’ associated with monetary exchanges, which are surrounded by negative moral values. Although Maasai men do not comply with the rules of food consumption (especially sharing) in Kigongoni, they are critical of the *uchoyo* (selfishness) of Swahili people. For instance, women serving food in the many local restaurants, say Maasai men, would let someone starve on the street instead of giving out food for free or on credit. I repeatedly heard Maasai men and women alike referring to Swahili people as people ‘without respect’ or people who ‘eat on their own’. These kinds of judgments towards urban non-Maasai people and clearly identifiable urban practices allude to an opposition with the Maasai who, instead, proclaim themselves as generous and respectful people.
Oppositions between the city and the village based on food is further reinforced by dichotomizations of food for instance with the distinctions between the ‘food from the village’ (*chakula ya kijijini*) as a category to put in opposition to the ‘food from town’ (*chakula ya mjini*). This categorization fits with the distinction between the former as *nzito* (heavy) and the latter as *nyepesi* (light). Rather than being a symbol of a new higher lifestyle or a sign of prestige for wealthy families as Talle has argued (1990: 91), for Maasai of Losirwa, the food purchased in town is referred to in most cases as inferior or second-class food. Although livestock products such as meat and milk continue to be considered as the real ‘food from the village’, even foodstuffs purchased in the town eventually become ‘food from the village’ being subjected to the norms described above after the process of preparation and cooking.

Food, its categorization, and its consumption do not elude the dual attitudes towards urban life that I have been describing throughout this chapter. The adjustments to urban life in terms of shifting practices, commoditization of labour and goods and sedentarisation have heavily influenced the diet of Maasai as well as most other pastoral groups in East Africa (Campbell et al. 1999, Galvin et al. 1994, Nestel 1986). A high degree of commoditization in a pastoral diet means a substantial dependence on grains and vegetables while at the same time the use of pastoral products such as milk as commodities for sale in exchange for cash. Commoditization of food triggering changes in pastoral diet implies cultural and social changes that impact the power relations between different spheres of social life and different segments of society. For instance, in writing about the pastoralist Samburu of Northern Kenya, Holtzman (2001) draws attention to beer brewing as an activity that generates a cash flow from men to women and, at the same time, a significant caloric intake for men who find themselves in a marginal and vulnerable situation with regard to the allocation and distribution of food. According to Holtzman, commoditization of this kind has triggered spaces for negotiation through which men and women find solutions to daily gender-based problems embedded in their respective established ‘traditional’ roles.
I came across similar dynamics affecting gender roles and relationships in Losirwa that involved consumption and commoditization of milk and the conflicting interests between men and women. Milk has come to embody a twofold role; on the one hand, as an important food with a powerful cultural role in female identity construction within the domestic realm, which women retain rights of management on and through which they fulfill their role of household masters within the domestic economy (Talle 1990: 82). On the other hand, the rights that women have on management of milk have given them the right of disposing of milk as a commodity as a possible way of coping with poverty (Brockington 2001). This has created a readjustment of women's roles that is no longer limited to the task of feeding, but extends to providing cash in the same way described by Clark (2000) in the case of Asante women (Ghana), who meet their obligations and commitment towards their children not by performing domestic tasks, but by providing cash for their children's needs.

The denomination of milk as a ‘village food’ is clearly confirmed by the negative feelings of men, especially younger ones, towards selling milk. One moran once made me aware that:

milk is home food that should be kept home for people to drink or for guests. It's the same as buying mboga or soda; you keep them at home to eat and drink or for guests, you would not go to resell them. (19th March 2011)

Many times I heard concerns from and perceived anxiety in the moran of Tutunyo family with respect to a shortage of milk in the boma because of milk sales. They tended to blame a supposed women’s ‘desire for money’ (tamaa ya hela) which, according to them, caused women to deny men milk in order to sell it to gain a cash income.

Maasai women commonly sell milk on a monthly basis on debit to non-Maasai women who manage food serving businesses in Kigongoni. Selling on a monthly basis rather than in retail allows Maasai women to have, at the end of the month, enough cash to manage bigger expenses (e.g. clothes) beyond food. Maasai men are very skeptical about milk sold in town; they do not miss a chance to express their contempt towards milk sold in town which, they say, is diluted with water which makes it ‘light’ (nyepesi). The
indignation that Maasai men show towards selling milk, therefore, goes hand-in-hand and is reflected in the contempt shown towards the milk itself in its transformation from a village food to a town food.

Women on the contrary tend to exploit the potential of milk for income. At times, they use the process of fermentation as a way of simultaneously increasing such a potential (fermented milk is sold at higher price than fresh milk) and keeps milk out of the sphere of males’ demands. Milk is fermented in gourds for a period of 3-4 days and sold to local restaurants in town where it is on sale for 1000 TSH against a price of 500 TSH for a cup of fresh milk. Men are less demanding in their requests for fermented milk compared to fresh milk, which is instead considered a staple during periods of abundance. One of the father's wives, Mama Lazaro, depended heavily on sales of fermented milk at the time of my fieldwork, and many moran in the boma would turn to her with their requests (in most cases rejected). On one occasion, she told me that she would make sure that men would get their share of milk but, in some cases, she would give precedence to sales:

What am I going to do? Nobody buys clothes for me, or for my children. I have to buy mboga for my children, sugar, tea to feed my children. (20th January 2011)

On the subject of milk sales, other women referred to milk as the source of income that would allow them to meet their expenses and succeed in their plans, such as building a new hut or buying new clothes for themselves.

The shifts of milk between “regimes of value” (Appadurai 1986) reveals how women’s role as providers within the domestic realm has undertaken adaptations and transformations just as much as men's role as cash earners has with the interaction between the rural and urban economies. While the representation of the ‘modern Maasai’ tends to highlight ‘traditional’ ideas connected to maleness, such as males’ independence and separation from the domestic, hence, the importance given to ‘walking the city’, women harness the potential of commoditization and the urban economy to their role within the domestic domain no longer limited to the task of feeding, but also as cash providers. Similar to market women in Kilimanjaro region who

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60 cents, 30 cents of USD
“domesticate” (Pietila 2007) the market to comply with the acknowledged position of women within the domestic, Maasai women of Losirwa, too, comply with and strengthen their role within the domestic realm by exploiting the urban economy. Once again, this brings to light the tensions that run through the relationship between the town as the place of commoditization and the village as the figurative place of acknowledged social order and respect.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has touched on all the three themes that compose the theoretical background of the thesis. First, it has looked at the relationships between individual identity and self-ascription related to Maasai collective identification in opposition to non-Maasai and how this happens on a daily basis through daily practices, such as walking. Second, it has illustrated how this ethnic differentiation hinges on the kind of “cultural dualism” (Ferguson 1999) that the physical rural-urban interface produces. Third, it has taken into consideration the consequences that the interaction between these two distinct social worlds (the rural and the urban) has on both men and women in terms of the status and evolution of gender roles within Maasai society. All these themes will be further expanded upon in the subsequent chapters.

The framework of the social analysis of space has helped convey these ideas in the light of recent thinking in social theory on the relational nature of space. The structuralist metaphor of society as a living organism had put space on the intellectual agenda but had deprived the objects of enquiry of their dynamism by imbuing relationalities within synchronic structures detached from time and change (Massey 2005). A contemporary approach to space of the kind Massey envisions puts instead dynamism and the potential for creativity and unpredictability at its core (Massey 2005, Chapter 3). In this chapter, I have shown that besides and beyond the acknowledged classifications, one needs to account for the potential for the individual to forge novel paths that, at different times, may comply or break acknowledged boundaries. If Maasai, as a group of individuals organized according to certain rules and roles that confer them their ethnic identity, as
I argue, form a community (i.e. an ‘economic community’ in the way devised by Gudeman) with its own characteristics and values within the national Tanzanian context, it is equally viable and practicable for individuals or groups of individuals belonging to the ‘Maasai community’ to criticize and follow unconventional paths within the bounds and realm of the possibility. In the next chapter, I will turn to some aspects of these transformations, that is to say, the remodelling in the urban context of rules and conventions about sharing, generosity, and altruism described here.
CHAPTER THREE

Urban identities: the remodelling of Maasai ethnicity through exchange, consumption, and entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

Writing several decades ago on ‘urban ethnicity’, Cohen (1974) argued that:

The formation of an ethnic group in town involves a dynamic rearrangement of relations and of customs, and that it is not the result of cultural conservatism and continuity. The continuity of customs and of some social formations is certainly there, but their functions change dramatically – although to the casual observer it will look as if there is stagnation, conservatism, or a return to the past (Cohen 1974: xxi).

Abner Cohen is undoubtedly one of the anthropologists most concerned with the phenomena connected to the transformation and evolution of ethnic identities, originally associated with rural life, and redesigned in the changing context of urbanization, mainly in growing African cities.

While the debate shifted from ethnicity to race and nationalism, it is evident that, within the debate on urbanization, development, and the so-called informality of economy, the stance that prevails stems from the basic assumptions that were initially advanced by Cohen and other anthropologists of the Manchester School. The changing and flexible nature of ethnic identity within the unfamiliar and unsettled life conditions in cities creates social categories through processes of boundary formation and “othering” (Lindel 2010: 208). Ever since the first account of ‘informal economy’ by its pioneer, Keith Hart, who specifically referred to a particular ethnic group, the Frafra of Ghana (1971, 1973), ethnicity has become a crucial ‘option’ for urban dwellers to develop ‘economic’ networks. The burgeoning of studies framed around the category of the ‘ethnic economy’ that I have mentioned in the introduction is evidence of the interest in ethnicity among researchers lately. Studies of informality and ‘ethnic economies’ are preoccupied with assessing the strategic role of ethnicity for the organizational structure of firms and enterprises. This has led to
marginal attention to the social dynamics of construction and dynamics of ethnic identity that Cohen, for instance, had paid in the case of the Hausa identity among Hausa traders (1969).

In this chapter, I intend to combine an anthropological analysis, looking mostly at how the urban economy entails a reworking of ideas and practices through which Maasai individuals differentiate themselves from non-Maasai, and the effects that a reshaped Maasai urban ethnicity has on economic entrepreneurship and economic life.

In the first part, I will argue that the social order constructed through practices of consumption (e.g. food, see previous chapter) continues to work as the foundation for the reproduction of the ‘Maasai community’ in the town of Kigongoni. Age-set social organization continues to mould in town, as in the village, dynamics of exchange and consumption, mostly of drinks. The premise of generosity and sharing that Maasai suggest in creating ideological boundaries between themselves and the non-Maasai, however, is subtly challenged in the urban context where individuals find the possibility to withdraw themselves from the obligation to comply with acknowledged norms of conviviality. Said otherwise, the urban sphere reveals the tensions and contradictions that individuals embody between the social order that is at work in the village and changing moralities that approve individualization (for example, of consumption) in the town, that is to say, the relationship between collectivity and individuality (see introduction). Understanding how values and practices deemed to be traditional and an expression of the domain of collectivity are not overtly challenged but, rather, negotiated along alternative registers of value, such as those of individualization of life that is typical of the urban economy is fundamental to understanding trajectories of diversification which I will describe in Part II of the thesis.

The second part of the chapter will look at the actual effects that this reshaped urban Maasai ethnicity, between values of inclusion, generosity, and self-interest or individualism, has on the retail economy of Kigongoni town between shopkeepers, both Maasai and non-Maasai, and customers (both Maasai and non-Maasai). The ‘instrumental’ role of ethnicity that many researchers interested in urban informal economies have highlighted, within the retail economy of Kigongoni, stems from the same ideas of generosity.
and ethnic collaboration. In order to be successful, Maasai shopkeepers attempt to exploit and manipulate these ideas in order to expand their Maasai clientele. Through careful calculations in extending credit they try to avoid accusations of selfishness and earn a good reputation, while, at the same time, minimizing the risk of economic loss that comes from unpaid debt.

1. ASKING, GIVING, SOLICITING

In opposition to the idea of the urban territory as a place of futile consumption and impersonal monetary exchanges, whose negative connotation is mostly attributed to the Waswahili, Maasai people attribute to themselves the ability and virtue of generosity and altruism. With its origin in the forms of social ordering that in the village assign rights of and access to consumption (food, drinks, milk), the premise of generosity and sharing that have so much been considered as characteristic at the base of egalitarianism in Maasai society (Rigby 1985) does not disappear in the urban context. On the contrary, sharing and generosity in town work in a similar way to the practices of food consumption that I described in the previous chapter, that is to say, to create hierarchies and barriers that are typical of the kind of social ordering in force within rural life. These processes that reveal social ordering, however, do not occur as in the village through inclusion (of individuals within their supposed place in the hierarchy, see previous chapter). On the contrary, they occur as a result of processes of exclusion produced by the co-existence in town of the pressure to share and demonstrate one’s generosity that have their roots in the rural context on the one hand, and the association of urban lifestyle to instances of individuality and detachment from ‘traditional’ norms and rules on the other.

To untangle the coexistence of these two conflicting sets of ideas, I will look at the practices of ‘asking’, ‘giving’, gifting, ‘soliciting’ that occur in Kigongoni in the domain of consumption of drinks. Looking at drinking practices as enactments of social ordering (Carlson 1990, Suggs 1996, Toren 1989), as I intend to do here, necessitates to underline the position of the
soda bottle as a commodity whose meanings depend on the local context of consumption (Miller 1998). In Tanzania the soda bottle is a very powerful icon of the act of offering, generosity, and exchange that, as I will demonstrate, carries meanings that extend beyond the domain of consumption. In the whole of Tanzania, the scale and magnitude of the consumption of bottled sodas is visible in the scale of sales of drinks, which are virtually available at every corner not only in cities and towns but also in semi-rural and rural areas. Nearly every bar has its own Coca-Cola advertisement poster exposed with its own name against the recognizable red background and a cold bottle of the worldwide famous drink. It is common as well to spot advertisements and Coca-Cola posters with their own slogans and catchphrases in Swahili language, which often highlight the necessity to ‘accompany’ nyama choma (roast meat) with a cold Coca-Cola. Other famous drinks such as Sprite, Fanta and the like are all produced by the same company producing the Coca Cola drink (Bonite) and therefore are represented in the Coca Cola posters. Other companies such as Pepsi, Seven Up and Mirinda have their own posters, although they are not displayed on the scale of Coca Cola.

Not only are asking for and offering of sodas ordinary and daily ordinary occurrences but, through the act of asking for a ‘soda’ one may place a request for other things. For instance, the expression “give me money for a soda!” clearly indicates the request for money whereas “let’s go to drink a soda” is a more vague ‘invitation’ and may indicate the request for other kinds of drinks (beer), or food. Bars and shops are, obviously, the places where these kinds of requests are more commonly heard. Lenga’s and Kaieni’s spots I mentioned in the first background chapter are two such spots where mostly Maasai individuals from Losirwa consume drinks in Kigongoni. One assumption I heard innumerable times from Maasai informants is that having cash in one’s pocket entails having to spend it for other people; hence, to refuse a request (for food, drinks, or even money) while having cash in your pocket is the kind of behaviour which would be liable to accusations of uchoyo (selfishness). The logical thread that connects the fact of having money in your pocket with the requirement of having to spend it works as the rationale underlying requests and solicitations.
Despite the existence of these assumptions and premises grounded in ideals of generosity and sharing, one is more likely to observe refusal to pay for others’ drinks and food. Soliciting for an act of generosity occurs continually between people who belong to the same age-set, between people belonging to different age sets, and between men and women. The most common response to the request for a ‘soda’ would be a simple and straightforward marra engohola (‘I don’t have money’). This is certainly not surprising (from an anthropological point of view): the very first account of gifting (Mauss 1925) called into question the commonsensical idea of unconditional, unsolicited and wholly altruistic behaviour in gift-giving emphasizing the necessity and obligation to return the gift. It is rather the obligation and pressure to share that underlie generosity and sharing and prompt solicitations and demands (for sharing), or, as Blurton Jones has put it, “tolerated theft” (1987). This is true for instance of foraging societies such as, for instance, hunter-gatherers in the Botswana Kalahari desert (Kent 1993) or aborigines of Australia (Cashdan 1985, Peterson 1993) for reasons that pertain to the need of securing food in times of resource fluctuations and risk. In the case of Maasai urban consumers in Kigongoni, generosity and sharing is not driven by environmental conditions but rather by social pressure and moral principles and values that are determined by the social roles within the age-set and gender organization of Maasai society. A refusal, as I will show later, is more likely to happen between equals or between unequals with the one who solicits being at a ‘lower’ position such as a moran soliciting a mzee (elder). In fact, the opposite case, i.e. a mzee soliciting a moran, has more chances to end up in an actual ‘gift’ (a soda or money).

1.2. Urban consumption and the privatization of space

The premise of sharing and generosity does affect both the practices of consumption as well as the way requests and solicitations are made. Within spaces of transactions such as Lenga’s and Kaieni’s shops a distinction between public and private space helps describe the dynamics associated with consumption. The outside premises of a bar are spaces where greetings
are the most visible expression of conviviality. The rules of conviviality constitute in fact spaces of entitlements constructed on the premise of sharing and generosity. Accusations of *uchoyo* (selfishness) and of ‘lone eating’ would certainly be heard by one having a drink on his own in a public space such as the outside premises of a bar while in company of other people. Instead, I was more likely to observe a different scene: somebody leaving on his own or urging his friend with a simple *maape* (in Maasai language, ‘let’s go’) to leave the outside premise and enter the inside of the shop/bar to have drinks or to make other kinds of purchases. Public displays of money are infrequent and payments are often made almost in seclusion or hiding with the bar tender or shop-keeper. Bars and shops outside premises are public spaces where gatherings are formed loosely and do not necessarily depend on age, sometimes just for the time of a greeting. Consumption of drinks in public space occurs swiftly and one can consume a drink to quench his/her thirst in the time of a few seconds and leave for another spot.

If the outside premises of bars are public spaces or spaces of entitlement, most bars in Kigongoni have private kiosks and inside areas with tables and chairs where smaller groups gather to consume drinks and food and spend considerable amount of time, sometimes to discuss private issues or business. Within the private space, such as the inside of bars and kiosks, one can spot groups of individuals having drinks and food. These groups are mostly homogeneous in terms of age and the group formation happens according to more strict rules, mostly according to close friendship.

The dynamics of consumption dictated by the difference between private and public space, and the difference between individual and group-based drinking, hinge on the dynamics and situational context of requests and solicitations for gift-drinks. In the public space solicitations and requests for ‘soda’ are legitimate being public space, as I have called it, the ‘space of entitlements’, but, nonetheless, can be easily dismissed with a simple ‘I don’t have money’. Even the more insistent solicitations can be denied with the claim of not carrying money, and even the most insistent town wanderer eventually may desist from their efforts with an acquiescent: “Well, okay, if you don’t have money …”. As one Maasai *moran* explained to me: “It is fine to
say that you are not carrying money when you refuse to buy someone a drink. He does not know if you have money at the moment or not in your pocket, so he cannot accuse you and call you a *mchoyo*.

The way one deals with solicitations within public space is to underline the inability to comply with the request, as the opposite (i.e. being in a position to do so but refusing to do so) would break the rules of the game based on the premise of generosity and sharing. For the same reasons, the pressure to comply with a request for a ‘soda’ is much higher when one displays cash in public or is ‘caught’ giving oneself a drinking treat. On the other hand, the town and the division of space organized according to the difference between public and private space, provide alternative standards of morals and principles with respect to the premise of generosity and sharing which legitimize the right to refuse to comply with the rules.

On another occasion, one *moran* from Tutunyo’s *boma* pointed out the difference between the town and the village by arguing: “in the village it is our tradition to share food with whoever happens to be in your *boma*. But here in town, everyone walks on their own and you don’t have to share if you don’t have enough money or don’t want to, unless you feel pleased to call your friend over and have a soda or food together.” This assertion was in line with what many other informants stated on the difference between the village and the town when it comes to the rules of sharing.

These contradictions and ambiguities lying underneath the rules that govern the dynamics of asking and giving, create hybrid spaces, between the public and the private, where solicitations for gifts are more likely to be successful compared to solicitations in the public space. The description of one such transaction will illustrate and exemplify these kinds of sharing dynamics. One ordinary afternoon at Kaieni’s shop, one *landisi* known in Losirwa and Kigongoni as a wealthy man approached the benches where I, with other Maasai of different age, were sitting and chatting. He exchanged the usual greetings with each of us and moved to the shop counter to make some purchases. One of the *makaa* who was part of my group stood up and, with a rapid move reached the counter to form a circle of three people that included Kaieni, the shopkeeper. Just a few instants, and Kaieni handed him

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66 Selfish
67 See glossary
a soda bottle after he had solicited his junior *landisi* while the three of them continued to chat. Not long passed before another elder who was sitting on the bench left to join the group standing in the inside of the shop and encircling the counter. He too was soon handed a soda bottle. In a few minutes, the group dissolved after the *landisi* had paid for his own purchases as well as the two soda bottles handed to the two elders.

What I have just described is, by no means, an exceptional transaction in Kigongoni. On the contrary, I observed plenty of other solicitations between Maasai of different age-sets. A large number of transactions I observed during fieldwork were of the kind described above, that is to say, solicited gifts by somebody who in most cases belonged to a higher age-set. This consideration is also confirmed by other observations in the field in places such as the market where a particular scene became familiar to me quite soon: an elder walking on his own in the market and approaching a group of *moran* to ask them with unexpected kindness and politeness for a 500 or 1,000 shilling note to purchase a ‘soda’. He would then profusely express his gratitude often by referring to his benefactor as ‘my son’ and walk away, most likely heading to one of the many bars of Kigongoni to meet his age mates and drink together with them. *Moran*, on the contrary, with calm and composed nonchalant moves, try to avoid being asked for gifts by walking away from situations that can make the offering of ‘soda’ inescapable. While walking with my *korianga* friends in the market, it often happened that they would show me the way by saying: “Let’s go this way, that *mzee* over there is going to ask for money!”.

Maasai ethnicity as an urban phenomenon brings to light the relationship and tensions between the individual and the collectivity in the guise mentioned by Gudeman (2001), namely, the repeated compromise between adherence to “imagined solidarities” (p. 1) that underlie the reproduction of (Maasai) community and an inborn individual tendency to self-centredness and self-interest. The close interdependencies between rural and urban economies do not lead to the deterioration of traditional institutions as other researchers have tended to argue (see introduction) since individuals continually move (physically and ideologically) between the rural system, where dynamics of consumption hinge on processes of inclusion and the
urban system where the underlying principles of sharing are questioned, though not overtly.

As I have argued in chapter one, these tensions are, as well, partly the result of historical developments and change that, on the one hand, have resulted in a strengthened sense of ethnic identity among Maasai based on ideals antithetical to commoditization and, on the other, have engendered a situation in which Maasai have turned to urban economies also as a response to the decline of the livestock-based economy. The next section shows these tensions with even more clarity by focusing on small retail shops and how retailers deal with tensions between the obligations to sharing and generosity and the search for profit maximization.

2. URBAN ETHNICITY: GAINS AND LOSSES

Economic success of local economies and enterprises, especially on the African continent, are a topic of great interest in the contemporary context of deregulation (Beuving 2006, McCormick 1999, McCormick & Pederson 1996, Sverrisson & van Dijk 2000). In the introduction, I pointed out how researchers have reached two different, clearly conflicting, verdicts on the power and potential of networks in aiding small-scale entrepreneurs in their local firms and businesses. In this section, I put forward the example of local shopkeepers in Kigonogni by focusing especially on credit-extension as a double-edge weapon for shopkeepers in that, while being an effective strategy for building trust and a long-term clientele, it also entails the risk of loss in the case of unpaid debts.

The characteristics and development of Kigongoni that I described in chapter one have resulted in a higher shops-to-residents ratio, compared to Mto wa Mbu, which means stiff competition among shopkeepers, especially between shops that provide basic and ordinary commodities and foodstuffs. The scramble for customers creates networks of clientelization that are based on credit extension. Through credit extension, a shopkeeper gives a demonstration of their worthiness as ‘good’ shopkeeper as well as a good person. I noticed that several shopkeepers in Kigonogi, unlike Mto wa Mbu where exchanges are more ‘impersonal’, keep records of the sales made on
credit to customers recorded in simple notebooks kept under the main counter. They simply record the name of the customer, date of sale, and the amount due. In some cases, they would not record the name of the actual buyer but the name of whoever is supposed to pay for the goods, that is, in the case of, for instance, Maasai women buying commodities, their husbands or sons. Debts that are recorded vary from modest sums of two or three thousand shillings up to several tens of thousand shillings.

Among non-Maasai shopkeepers, Maasai customers enjoy a very negative reputation for their untrustworthiness in debt repaying; being Maasai itself is considered itself a reason for being cautious in extending credit beyond the trustworthiness of single individuals. Several non-Maasai shopkeepers recounted to me some episode or anecdote of ‘some Maasai’ who once purchased commodities on credit and disappeared without repaying the debt. On the other hand, Maasai often complain about non-Maasai shopkeepers for their reticence in extending credit to them and point to this behaviour as an aspect of the uchoyo (selfishness) that characterizes non-Maasai. In this very low-trust environment, Maasai ethnic identity is exploited both by Maasai customers to obtain advantages such as extension of credit and, by Maasai shopkeepers, to expand their businesses by expanding their Maasai clientele. Maasai shopkeepers, however, are not exempt from accusations of uchoyo as well as the risk of losses even from Maasai customers.

To describe the kinds of strategies that shopkeepers, both Maasai and non-Maasai, utilize to build a trusted clientele while minimizing the risk of losses and how these strategies hinge on the ethnic landscape of Kigongoni, I will compare two different strategies pursued by two different shopkeepers, one non-Maasai (of Chagga ethnicity) and one of Maasai ethnicity.

A - Non-Maasai shopkeepers: the Mchaga

After moving from Mto wa Mbu to Kigongoni in search of a better business situation the Mchaga shopkeeper (known in Kigongoni simply as ‘the Mchaga’) had established himself as a long-term and respected business in town. He sold the most basic foodstuffs and a great deal of sodas and beers
on its premises. After a few months I had spent in the field, he moved his shop of a few metres to another bigger building he owns, located, too, on the main paved road. He also supplemented the shop with other items such as cups, thermoses, torches, and dishes. He had a wide range of clientele, both Maasai and non-Maasai who also used to spend a great deal of time on the shop premises drinking sodas and beers at all times of the day.

In the first weeks or months of fieldwork, I spent a considerable amount of time on the premises of the Mchaga shop. His first business in Kigongoni was located right next to the Enjipai (happiness) bar owned by a wealthy Maasai korianga, Eletioni, whom I have mentioned in chapter two, and where I spent a great deal of time conducting participant observation. When he moved to the other location I continued to spend time in proximity of the premises of his shop and make my purchases at his shop, having become part of his trusted clientele through Loshiro, the Baraka subvillage (of Losirwa) chairman, who was one of his regular customers.

Throughout the time I spent on the premises of the Mchaga’s shop I realized the struggle and pain he had to go through to deal with requests for credit extension and outstanding debts with clients. I heard him many times complaining with his Maasai and non-Maasai customers about debtors not showing up for days and weeks after having contracted a debt. He was particularly pointing out the unjust behaviour of his Maasai customers who, according to him, are the worst kind of clientele. Yet, he acknowledged the importance of expanding his business by targeting Maasai clientele; as he once told me: “Kigongoni has become Maasai so we have to learn to deal with them”. The repeated complaints and claims to his credits however made him unpopular among Maasai customers and, in fact, his reputation among Maasai was to be mchungu (stingy) when asked to extend credit. One strategy employed by the Mchaga was to have Loshiro as an important person in Kigongoni being a local politician and one of his regular customers (in fact, one of the best clients in terms of the scale of purchases) acting as mdhamini (guarantor). The role of the mdhamini is to act as referee or insurance for the creditor in case of non-repayment of debt. I witnessed throughout the months spent in Kigongoni a considerable number of Maasai
customers, both men and women, purchasing their necessities on credit by using Loshiro’s name as mdhamini.

The strategy of using Loshiro, a person known and respected for his social status among Maasai, to act as guarantor against debts incurred by other (Maasai) customers beyond the circle of his own restricted family, worked only partly and some debts would not be repaid. Relying on a mdhamini is a risky and often delusional strategy and using Loshiro as mdhamini eventually led inevitably him to grant their customers more and more extension of time for repaying debts. In the last instance, the Mchaga’s strategy of relying on the social status of the village chairperson would not be as efficient as the strategy employed by the Maasai shopkeeper who, as I will show next, took advantage of his own ethnic identity by relying on wider networks rather than a single individual as a way of insurance for pending debts.

**B – Maasai shopkeepers: Lenga**

At the time I began my fieldwork and prior to opening the spot at *Kona Engaruka* I have mentioned above, Lenga had a middle-sized shop, selling general items and commodities from sugar, tea leaves and dried beans to kerosene lamps, torches and other ordinary consumer goods. The scale and range of his shop did not differ from the Mchaga’s; in fact, the two outlets may well be placed in the same category as ordinary retail selling points. Despite not being on the main road, like the Mchaga, the position of his shop was a strategic one and the first major selling point one would meet in Kigongoni descending from Losirwa. Being himself originally from Losirwa but living in Kigongoni with his Swahili wife, Lenga drew his clientele mostly from Losirwa villagers, that is to say, other Maasai people from his own place of birth.

His business was one of the most successful in Kigongoni, despite the not-so-convenient location. He too had customers killing time around his shop premises, consuming sodas and beers from early afternoon up to midnight. Many Maasai women made their purchases in his shop and used the maize-grinding machine next door managed by Lenga’s wife. To conclude that the
success of his business depended simply on shared origin and ethnicity would be too straightforward a conclusion. In fact, he had to go through a significant struggle to build a trusted clientele and I heard that especially right after opening his business, he was not immune from the pitfalls of the double-edge weapon of credit extension despite his shared origin and ethnicity.

He had to go through hard times to the point that he stopped selling on credit with the obvious negative consequences for his reputation. He had to face the same struggle most shopkeepers in Kigongoni face to maintain a balance between maximizing profit through building trust with as many clients as possible while minimizing the losses from credit extension (i.e. unresolved debts) that inevitably a shopkeeper takes into account. The turning point of his business, which went hand-in-hand with an improvement in his reputation, happened when he finally decided to employ again the strategy of credit extension but, this time, restricted to the Maasai of Losirwa. I was told this account the first time by Paulo, a Moran of the Tutunyo family and one of my closest friends and informants. Afterwards, I tried to investigate by asking several other Maasai from Losirwa who confirmed Paulo’s version. Lenga invested significant capital in customer relationships by offering drinks to his Maasai customers from Losirwa based on the kinds of relationships that bind Maasai Moran in town and, at the time of my fieldwork, his reputation among Maasai was as a good shopkeeper and in general a ‘good person’ (mtu mzuri).

To sell on credit, but limited to a clientele of Maasai from Losirwa allowed Lenga to rely on the more or less strong ties that usually bond each other in a relatively small community. With time, he was able to take advantage of the networks of social relationships already existing in the village which hosts a few extended (Maasai) families related to each other. In business terms, such an existing network meant, for Lenga, the possibility of selling on credit and being in a position to demand his credits not only from the debtor himself (or herself) but from many other members belonging to the same network or family of the debtor. In other words, unlike the Mchaga who relied on a single guarantor for many of his sales to Maasai, debts contracted
in Lenga’s shop were spread over a much larger number of possible guarantors.

In the last instance, the business strategy employed by Lenga of extending credit unconditionally to other Maasai, but only limited to Maasai of Losirwa, centred around the ideas of sharing and altruistic behaviour which are part of the ordinary world and discourses among Maasai. Such a strategy would certainly not have been viable for the Mchaga shopkeeper.

The successfulness of his strategy, however, was not based unconditionally and straightforwardly on the ideas and values of sharing and generosity which I have described in the first part of this chapter. On the contrary, it was the result of careful choices and a calculations to mediate between the so-called ethos of sharing among Maasai and the need to build a trusted clientele while minimizing losses from unpaid debts.

The different identities of the two shopkeepers entailed different social and business relations with Maasai customers. The Mchaga shopkeeper tried to extend his business being aware of the potential of the Maasai clientele in Kigongoni. His identity as non-Maasai, and, therefore, outside networks of family and friendship bonds, lowered his power of claiming his credits from Maasai customers. In contrast, Lenga started with an initial advantage with respect to acquiring a trusted Maasai clientele. The dynamics of ethnicization of space in Kigongoni played to his advantage in terms of scale and growth of clientele. Along with increasing clientele goes the increased pressure by Maasai customers to sell on credit due to the values of sharing and generosity, which work against relationships based openly on monetary and impersonal exchange. Lenga’s successful strategy stemmed from his ability to assent to the community pressure based on Maasai values, but positive outcomes came from his decision to weigh the reliability of customers before extending credits. Shopkeepers are often ill-disposed to extend credit and they do so mostly under obligation; many shopkeepers try to elude such a pressure by hiring a worker or entrusting their shops to family members such as brothers and wives who are instructed to ‘blame them’ in the eyes of customers for their inability to extend credit.
Ethnic identity plays an important part in shaping urban life and the configuration of economic enterprises in Kigongoni, once again, based on the premise of sharing and generosity that are fundamental values acknowledged by Maasai as inherent to being Maasai itself. Also, once again, and more strongly, such values conceal a rooted relationship between individuality, materialized in this case in individual profit and business success, and adherence to widespread values that are at the base of ethnic self-differentiation. Here, I have tried to illustrate the way in which Maasai ethnicity reveals the relationship that individuals, in this case (Maasai) shopkeepers, embody between community and market (Gudeman 2001) when the two are combined in the business strategies pursued within economic ventures.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has advanced my arguments on ethnicity that I introduced in the previous chapter. Here, I have shown that in the urban sphere the oppositions and tensions between ideas of generosity and sharing (i.e. of the ‘rural’) and those of individuality and commoditization (i.e. of the ‘urban’) clash within the urban sphere alone and are reproduced within single performances of asking, giving, soliciting and the like. These oppositions are neither expressions of a historical passing from ‘tradition’ to ‘modernity’ nor from a livestock-based to an urban-based economy but, rather, are a peculiarity of contemporary lifestyle in the growing peri-urban tissue of Tanzania, which encompasses overlapping social arrangements.

Not too many years ago, Hodgson (1999) made an attempt to show how conflicting ideas and oppositions between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ values, habits and behaviour are embedded for instance in the contemporary idea of ormeek (i.e. non-Maasai), which has gone from a denomination for everything that is not Maasai (people, but also aspects that relate to lifestyle) to a more ambiguous, equivocal and enigmatic term that carries the contradictions of the readjustment of pastoral life. Nowadays, alternative values that are connected to the urban lifestyle are no longer ‘alternative’ to ‘traditional’ values, in the sense that, both moralities merge together in a
single but multi-faceted expression of social and economic life in proximity to interspersed peri-urban centres between rural communities and bigger cities. Part II of this thesis will describe in more detail the co-existence of these value registers by looking at wealth diversification.
CHAPTER FOUR

New terrains of identity: ‘big men’ and unequal exchanges

INTRODUCTION

With this fourth chapter, I conclude Part I of the thesis and the overall investigation of the transformation of the ideas and practices connected to Maasai ethnicity at the rural-urban interface. This shorter chapter proposes one more angle from which to look at urban dynamics and relationships in Kigongoni not contingent on the Maasai/non-Maasai ethnic difference but, nonetheless, encompassing Maasai individuals. These relationships have to do with other kinds of categorizations based mostly on a hierarchical ranking of people between leaders and subordinates, patrons and clients, and have come to be referred to by several researchers of African politics as the ‘big man’ rule ever since Bayart's outline of the state in Africa (1993). Again, as in the previous chapter, the importance of outlining these co-existing types of (urban) relationships and values will become clear in Part II where I will describe how these relationships and values enter dynamics of wealth diversification.

This chapter provides a (partial) understanding of the social life in which Maasai individuals are embedded beyond the boundaries of the ethnic economy. Nevertheless, it is strategic in the development of the arguments in the thesis because of the relevance of the ‘big man’ rule in a context of diversification of the pastoral economy, which I will investigate in the next two chapters (Part II). In Africa, relationships of patronage especially in the political arena have come to be determined by the ‘big man’ logic which, it has been argued, is a colonial legacy of close collaboration between foreign rulers and local ‘chiefs’ (Berman 1998). Today, the ‘big man’ rule contributes to shape political and social dynamics not only at the local but also at the national level, having entered the political arena even in parliaments throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Azevedo-Harman 2011, Van Cranenburgh 2008). Mccauley (2012) has argued that the 'big man' rule arrangements in Africa (i.e. Ghana) have gained such a pre-eminence in society that it has
even shifted to the domain of religion. Having entered the African Pentecostal movement, religion has provided an alternative system of informal welfare between church leaders and followers, who agree to embrace the principles and lifestyle regulated by the movement.

Notwithstanding the conventional image among Maasai people of the ‘Swahili’ as highly individualistic, selfish, and unfamiliar with communal and collective life (which are rather instrumental to the production of Maasai ethnicity through oppositions), it is undeniable that economic life in Tanzania (and the whole of Africa) is deeply interconnected with different kinds of social networks. Hyden (1980) for instance had already referred to post-independent Tanzania as driven by an “economy of affection” that dominated peasantries and was made of relationships of mutual obligations based on kinship and tribal-like kinds of relationships. Against the tendency towards a more equal distribution of wealth, which he underlined in respect to the kind of dynamics that the ‘economy of affection’ produces, Hyden himself has more recently associated the kind of logic underlying the ‘economy of affection’ with the relationships of patronage or ‘big man’ rule which, in rural economies, continue to depend on networks of subordinates and their leaders who occupy positions of power in the political arena (Hyden 2006: 183).

This chapter goes beyond ethnicity-based relationships, not by asking what it means to be Maasai in the urban context or at the interface of the rural and urban, but rather by observing and showing that Maasai themselves are part and parcel of the broader socio-economic and political structural organization, and therefore partake in other parallel ‘communities’ in the sense devised by Gudeman (2001) while continuing to constitute the ‘Maasai community’ (see introduction). These co-existing networks of affiliation, as I will be arguing in this chapter, are based on structural inequalities with the ‘big men’ on top, with some Maasai individuals being ‘big men’ themselves, and acting according to the logics that determine the ‘big man’ rule. Ethnicity alone as an analytical device to grasp the social dynamics of economic diversification needs to be analysed in conjunction with other forms of social organization considering the multi-
dimensional nature of economic diversification in pastoral communities across Kenya and Tanzania.

This short sketch of urban big-man-ship in Kigongoni has the objective to describe and report the existence of these networks and dynamics represented by the icon of the 'big man'. Part II of the thesis will describe in more detail how these values, dynamics, and relationships play a part in trajectories and choices of diversification alongside the collective values of tradition, and those of individualism described in the previous chapter.

1. BEYOND URBAN ETHNICITY: ‘BIG MEN’ IN KIGONGONI

In a local retail shop in Kigongoni, I once came across a small pamphlet titled *Sheria ya Mfuko wa Maendeleo ya Jimbo* published by Policy Forum, a Tanzanian NGO based in Dar es Salaam engaged in raising awareness and empowering civil society by strengthening the collaboration between citizens, local and national governments. The pamphlet criticized the spending and monitoring system regulated by the newly issued policies, including the fact that the regulations were implemented before discussions in the parliament.

As with other publications by Policy Forum, the booklet intended to translate into more accessible and comprehensible language the technical jargon used often in official documents. My attention was caught mostly by the drawings that aided the text. The front page portrayed a dashing red car with the driver, a member of the national parliament, holding a sack of money (that was part of the funds for the constituency) and waving at a man, probably a farmer, carrying a plough. The two characters are clearly heading in opposite directions and a cloud of exhaust fumes released by the car surrounds the farmer (Fig. 16). Another interesting drawing on page four portrays a corpulent man while he exits the MP’s (Member of Parliament) office with a huge sack of money, almost as much as his own size, and just about to load it onto his car and leave. Another character hiding behind the office glances at the corpulent man while he puzzles over such a ‘peculiar’ management of public funds (Fig. 17).

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68 Regulations for the management of funds for the development of the constituency’
Most drawings in the pamphlet have striking similarities, especially when it comes to the representation of the members of parliament or other local government representatives, who are portrayed either driving cars, rushing away ‘accompanied’ by huge sacks of money, which are clearly identifiable as public money (the money that is supposed to go into the budget for the development of the constituencies). The images of the politicians in the drawings are evidently antithetical to that of common laypersons portrayed, who are, instead, carrying farming tools, wearing worn-out clothes and, in general, in much worse body shape (i.e. not as fat as the politicians).

I have chosen to describe these drawings because of their impressive ability to catch and communicate the popular image of politicians and local leaders. In Tanzania, as in most of Africa (Bayart 1993), the metaphor of the belly is a widespread image associated with the ‘big man’ rule. It mostly alludes to structural inequalities which at the level of a small town, such as Kigongoni, is embodied by the local leaders, both Maasai and non-Maasai, who are themselves said to be ‘fat’ and eat public resources. The description is often extended to other wealthy successful individuals who are in fact often associated with political networks through which they may gain favours such as rights over strategic resources. For instance, I heard a large amount of gossips and rumours about Loshiro, the local leader I spent much time with living in his boma. Known as a ‘big man’, one of the most significant jokes I heard once from one of the moran of Losirwa was that he had ‘gained weight’ (kunenepa) in conjunction with his election as local leader and that he was trying to ‘eat’ as much as possible before the end of his leadership, knowing that afterwards he would inevitably ‘lose weight’ (kukonda). These kinds of gossip and jokes about village leaders, both Maasai and non-Maasai, are widespread among people both in Kigongoni and Losirwa and I heard them indiscriminately both from Maasai and non-Maasai.

Local politicians and their attitude and behaviour in Kigongoni are some of the favourite topics of discussion among people and conversations involving the development of the area can be heard constantly in the several bars and shops of the town. Laypeople discussing about local leaders often do so with an attitude that mixes feelings of powerlessness with a playful
and teasing tone. The criticism expressed towards local leaders is mainly of selfishness and ‘lone eating’, which goes against the values of generosity and sharing whose importance I have repeatedly shown in the previous chapter. During a particularly heated conversation I witnessed in Kigongoni, one *moran* from Losirwa performed in his own colourful way the attitude of local leaders when they are approached by citizens who wish to be heard: “You call him in the morning and he doesn’t pick up the phone. Then you call him again and again in the afternoon and evening”. Then he continued by performing the typical response one would get from a local leader who has been sitting and drinking at a bar for hours: “After 10 times you have called, he replies: “Hey, what is going on?”. He acted this last sentence mimicking a drunken person talking on the phone mumbling something without knowing who he is speaking to. “What are you going to say and speak to somebody in that condition?” he concluded, “He has been drinking since morning. He won’t listen to you!”.

The denomination of ‘fat’ or ‘big’ is not limited to government leaders but extends to any person who is in a position of power within their own field and connotes its ability to make structural (unequal) organization intelligible to the general population. Opportunistic behaviour is inherent to positions of power (of ‘big men’) and those who fill them. I have heard the position of teacher being associated with big-man-ship because of the opportunity to seize resources belonging to the public, in this case the complex made of students, a school, and the general system of public education. Other instances of opportunistic behaviour concern police officers, who claim ‘recompenses’ for closing their eyes to road infractions, or doctors, for receiving ‘tips’ in exchange for ditching long queues in public hospitals.

Notwithstanding the accusations, the complementary side of being a ‘big man’ (*mkubwa*) is a moral obligation to redistribution through which individuals in a position of economic and/or political power try to attain a reputation of benefactors and which, in fact, disguise unequal hierarchical relationships. As Bayart argues: “It is certainly not unheard of for a ‘big man’, influenced by the ethos of munificence, to make a point of honour of doing so [...] This is not enough to ensure that the distribution of wealth always takes
place: far from it. The personal relationship on which redistribution is
supposed to depend is by definition highly inegalitarian and hierarchical”
(Bayart 1993: 233). This consideration became clear to me as I continued to
question supposed ‘big men’ in Kigongoni on their position and obligations
towards others. A wealthy Maasai koriianga from Losirwa discussed with me
the role of a mkubwa and argued that one of the obligations for a mkubwa,
among other things, is to lend out money for emergencies such as hospital
expenses. He informed me about the extent and amount of money he had
loaned both to Maasai and non-Maasai in the village and in Kigongoni, saying
that he had more than ten million shillings loaned to people, which had not
yet been returned. He concluded that “When people are in hardship they
must ask for help and if you have the means of helping then you are
supposed to help”. In the last instance, he appeared to be very aware of his
own role and position within both the rural and urban society of
Losirwa/Kigongoni.

The domain of consumption is one important arena in which unequal
relationships between ‘big men’ and the rest of the population are
performed and reproduced. The same instances of consumption, asking, and
offering around which ethnic distinctions are constructed (see previous
chapter) also provide the terrain for the enactment of the kind of urban-style
domestic big-man-ship. Within Kigongoni, a few bars were known as the bars where
‘big men eat’. At the time I started my fieldwork, one such bar, the Babylon
bar, was managed by one non-Maasai village leader. After a few months,
another Maasai village leader had built his own bar on the main paved road
just in the proximity to the local market, which brought to him notable
income especially during market days. The gossip that circulated for a while
after the Maasai leader had opened up his own place was that the two
leaders were competing for who would be able to ‘eat more’. Hanging
around at either of these bars, I often spotted the alleged ‘big men’ killing
time in one of the private kiosks in the inside of the bar while sitting around
tables crowded with drinks.

During market days, the Maasai leader’s bar would be bustling and hectic
with flows of people moving between the inside and the outside, coming and
going across the paved road that heads towards the market. Groups of
exuberant youngsters would play pool at a table placed right outside the external bar porch, others waiting for their turn to play. In the inside premises, one after another, customers would ask the bartender the whereabouts of the host chairman; he would reply pointing at the inside kiosk where the leaders were sitting. Some customers would enter the kiosk and show their respect to the big men. Some of them would be offered (having asked or not) a drink or spend some time chatting only to leave after a few minutes. A scene that I soon became familiar with involves bar ‘wanderers’ grabbing big men by their arms and dragging them into the inside premises when they are ‘caught’ strolling and meandering within the acknowledged public space of the outside premises. The act, accompanied by a few words whispered in their ears, is a playful performance backing requests for food and drinks directed to big men. The concealed, unequal relationships between ‘big men’ and others clearly determine the dynamics of the acts of offering and asking, which hinge on big men’s obligations towards their ‘subordinates’.

CONCLUSION

In the end, big-man-ship is a peculiar characteristic of Tanzanian (and African) society that has different connotations and expressions being, in the case of Kigongoni, a mix of traditional ideals connected to wealth in livestock (Schneider 1979) and contemporary ideas connected to economic and political power beyond the pastoral economy. The presence of ‘big men’, both Maasai and non-Maasai, and the way they relate to the rest of the population (and vice versa) strays away from dynamics that have to do with ethnic identity in the urban sphere but respond to different judgments that are the mirror of hierarchical relationships of power. In the context of multi-ethnic Kigongoni, it contributes to creating a multi-faceted identity that can be said to be part and parcel of being a ‘modern Maasai’ in the urban context.

As a way of concluding this chapter and the whole Part I of this thesis, some provisional inferences can be drawn before moving to Part II. Overall, Part I has shown that people across the rural-urban interface of Losirwa/Kigongoni form a coherent social body according to multiple
rationalities and scales; some of these are ethnically determined (chapter two and three), some are not, as this chapter shows. Maasai ethnicity matters in a composite economy made of different components and niches across the rural-urban interface (chapter two and three). The urban context provides possibilities for manipulation and readjustments of the values that are identified as carriers of Maasainess such as the values of generosity and sharing (chapter three) and this is fundamental for the strategies of diversification across the rural-urban interface that I will look at in Part II. Ethnicity, however, may matter less when other registers of value are at work, such as that of big-man-ship.

As chapter one has described, the history of Tanganyika/Tanzania is a mix of former institutionalized ethnic categories as a legacy of colonial indirect rule, a history of efforts to build a national identity on common language (i.e. Swahili) and common (Swahili) culture following independence, and a more recent influx of foreign investments that have deeply transformed the country by enmeshing it into the world economy. The history of Maasai and Maasainess is pervaded with rises and falls of boundaries, assimilations, and separations with controversial relationships with the domain of money and commoditization. The contemporary Tanzanian urban scene, therefore, is a clash of past categorizations that merge in space and time in middle-sized towns and cities. Urban life in a peri-urban Tanzanian centre such as Kigongoni is diverse, disordered, and unpredictable. It grows and burgeons out of a miscellaneous collection and assemblage of standards, principles, and values. Here I have tried to give one possible version, by no means exhaustive, of some of the possible dynamics.

The implications of these provisional conclusions will come to light in Part II of the thesis, where I will analyse the actual practices of diversification across the rural-urban interface. The next two chapters attempt to show the multiplicity of registers of value that are at work in projects of diversification. The registers of value I will refer to are those described in Part I, that is to say, that of individualism and urban individualization of social and economic life, and that of urban economic success (represented by the icon of the 'big man'). I will structure analysis and description in both chapter five and six, departing from the register of value that is explicitly
associated with traditional practices of livestock raising and Maasai culture, and will proceed to analyse how this continues to exist and is, in fact, preserved, but represents just one component of trajectories of diversification that extend to the urban economy.
PART II
CHAPTER FIVE

Livestock, cash, and social change

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the implementation of economic structural adjustments in Africa, agrarian change has been largely engendered by local forms of livelihood diversification rather than transnational migration (Bryceson 1999). Rural wealth diversification has brought with it the seeds of profound social change affecting generational and gender relationships (Bryceson 2002). In Tanzania the idiom of change in relation to economic diversification is particularly marked with constant references to the necessity of modernizing the socio-economic milieu of the country to suit national and international standards and criteria (Green 2013). This kind of move towards diversification and modernization to achieve through trading transnational and multi-lateral bonds is rooted in the very constitution of the country, which dates back to the colonial period (Green 2013). Ever since the implementation of neoliberal policies initiated in the 1980's, ‘doing business’ reforms (Lyons & Msoka 2010) have been paramount especially in the agricultural sector which has been targeted as the main sector with the ‘task’ of raising the country to the middle-income category (Green 2013).

When one turns to the actual translation of this envisioned institutional framework in the economic life of the population, real day-to-day and on-the-ground practices reflect different necessities and rationales. The analysis of livelihood choices among pastoralists has criticised the policy approach and has reinforced the concerns over the preservation of the conditions for retaining favourable circumstances to carry on with traditional pastoral activity, which connotes the collective identity of pastoralists (Homewood et. al 2009). As I have argued in the introduction, research on pastoral economic diversification has looked at the social aspects of change that integration into the market economy has triggered especially as a consequence of deteriorating economic conditions from the early 1980’s. To a great extent, the social change that takes shape is deemed to be adverse to
‘traditional’ institutions such as elders’ authority, *murrannahood* and the like (see introduction).

The investigation of processes of economic change in Sub-Saharan Africa has put forward an idea of change that is subtle and produces persistent and steady reassessments and rearrangements of dynamics of resource management and mobilization (Berry 1993). It has been stressed how processes of economic change in Sub-Saharan Africa have been triggered by structural transformations which have also facilitated and supported a flexible and adaptable nature of social categories and local institutions (Green)\(^69\). Questions related to tradition and modernity in relation to economic change in rural Africa have received some attention from anthropologists. Parkin, for instance, referred to the ‘paradox’ of custom (Parkin 1994: 101) in rural Kenya he attempted an explanation of why the economic shift from subsistence to cash crops did not urge local entrepreneurs to subvert the existing ‘traditional’ social arrangements embodied by elders. On the contrary, Parkin argues, entrepreneurs endorsed the material practices that pertained to the realm of tradition such as bridewealth payment and funeral investments, with a consequent strengthening of elders’ authority, in order to secure reliable and authoritative witnesses (i.e. the elders themselves) to affirm their claims on land in the absence of a system of legal titles. Accounts of change, specifically dedicated to pastoral societies in Sub-Saharan Africa, recount similarly complex dynamics, in that, they have tried to show how livestock continues to carry, through its management and symbolic representations, the transformations occurring in pastoral societies produced by economic constraints (Broch-Due 1999), integration in the global economy (Comaroff & Comaroff 1990), and even warfare (Hutchinson 1992).

This chapter proposes an anthropological analysis of social change and economic diversification that develops the themes that have run throughout Part I of the thesis of the multi-faceted identity of Maasai individuals at the rural-urban interface. The emergence of the idea of the ‘modern Maasai’ here is explained by looking at how youths continue to share ideals that are connected to tradition and partake in the practices that allow the

\(^{69}\) Anthropology of the Contemporary, issue 9, January 2014, London
reproduction of the rural economy (i.e. the collectivity) while, at the same time, making (or envisaging) alternative choices concerning the management of their assets; these alternative plans and choices are strongly dependent on the economic possibilities that the urban economy provides.

These themes are developed in this chapter by using the same lens as in Part I, that is to say, by looking at the co-existing, at times conflicting, and ambivalent moralities that underlie the dichotomised space across the rural-urban interface. While Part I looked at how these ambivalences work in shaping identity, in this chapter, I will look at how ambivalent identities and values, are in fact embodied in the material expression of assets, above all, cattle and money, the way they are looked at, exchanged, managed, and the shifting and uncertain moralities surrounding them.

In the first section of this chapter, I will set the premises for an alternative frame of analysis for economic diversification among pastoralists by highlighting how the characteristics of the socio-economic context built around the rural-urban interface shape the kind of rationality for convertibility mainly between cash and livestock (but also ‘modern’ houses). In the second and third section, I will look at how these qualitative traits of livestock and livestock-money conversions are manipulated in various directions across the rural-urban interface. In the second part, I will look at the pastoral economy as a complex system that includes social, cultural, and economic aspects of mainly livestock management and the conversions from livestock to cash. The aim of this section is to understand and investigate the power relations that are embedded in the ideas and visions that surround tradition as a domain that is structured around the preservation of livestock as a carrier of tradition itself. The third part will look at how this rural economic system extends beyond the boundaries of the rural economy and is prolonged into the urban domain. I will analyse how ‘tradition’, embodied by livestock, is questioned but not rejected outright by Maasai young males in the life stage of murranhood and how actual livestock management across the rural-urban interface reflects these composite ideas.
1. DIVERSIFICATION ACROSS THE RURAL-URBAN INTERFACE

The diversification of the economy for Losirwa villagers is heavily influenced by the rural-urban interface which affects not only the actual quantitative and concrete economic features such as the degree of involvement in income generating activities, but also, more generally, people’s assessment and evaluation of wealth and assets. Socio-cultural and linguistic expressions connected to different assets such as money, livestock and ‘modern’ houses are heavily determined by the cultural concepts of ‘village’ and ‘town’, which I have described in chapter two and the whole Part I.

In terms of quantitative aspects of diversification, a survey of economic activities carried out in the field in the first phase of fieldwork in Losirwa (see methods in introduction) provided a rough estimate of the reliance on income generating activities. A household list was compiled, which counted a total number of 87 boma and 301 households; afterwards, with help of the Baraka sub-village chairman, the households were ranked according to wealth categories (P=poor M=middle and R=rich). The household list revealed a relatively well-off community with more than half of the households (174, 58%) in the middle category and the remaining households split almost equally between ‘poor’ (76 households, 25%) and ‘rich’ (51 households, 17%). A stratified random sample of 67 households was selected: Poor=19 households, M=37 households, Rich=11 households.

The nearness of the town of Kigongoni and the greater area of Mto wa Mbu provides more opportunities for wage labour especially as night watchmen (nineteen individuals, 28% of the sample), both in tourist camps and lodges and for private houses and businesses (guest houses, shops). Living a few kilometres from the town means that pastoralists of Losirwa engaged in wage labour can go back and forth from the workplace to their homes without having to live away from their families. A few individuals manage retail shops or bars (two individuals, 3% of the sample), and importantly, livestock trading constitutes an income generating activity that is nearly as widespread as wage labour (thirteen individuals, 19% of the sample). Overall, roughly half of the sample of individuals surveyed is engaged in one of these three activities (50.8%) while the other half (49.3%)
has no source of cash beyond the sales of animals that are part and parcel of
the pastoral activity (chart 1).

When analysed in relation to wealth ranking category\textsuperscript{70}, it emerges that
the gap between inactive individuals and those who are engaged in income
generating activities is higher within the category ‘poor’ with the majority
(fourteen individuals, 73\% of the ‘poor’ category) being inactive (chart 2).
This gap (chart 2) is smaller within the category ‘middle’ with less than half
(seventeen individuals, 45\% of the ‘middle’ category) inactive and the rest
distributed between the three different activities considered (chart 2).
Finally, within the category ‘rich’ only 18\% (two individuals) are inactive
and the rest are engaged in income generating activities (chart 2). This
analysis suggests that income-generating activities constitute an important
reservoir for individuals to move upward the hierarchy of economic status
and therefore it demonstrates the importance of the closeness to the peri-
urban site of Kigongoni and the town of Mto wa Mbu.

\textsuperscript{70} The Pearson value (i.e. chi square value) is 0.001 which shows that the relationship between the
two variables is statistically significant. The Cramer V chi square value (0.419) shows that this
relationship is reasonably strong (Cramer V test shows the strength of the relationship between two
variable on a range from 0 to +1)
In addition, the distribution of the income generating activities across wealth categories shows as well the hierarchical nature of these activities with livestock trading being the top occupation for rich individuals, lower among ‘middle’ and absent among ‘poor’ (chart 2). The last chapter of this thesis focused on livestock trading will confirm the elitist nature of livestock trading which requires a number of conditions for an individual to become successful in the business, in some cases, starting with a lower occupation (e.g. working for wages) to accumulate the necessary capital to enter the livestock trading business.

Chart 2. Income type by wealth rank

To assess the preferences and views about different assets, a wealth-ranking exercise was carried out on local indicators of wealth. The wealth-ranking exercise, unsurprisingly, showed that livestock is considered the main sign of wealth. The sub-village chairman tended to consider individuals with less than 5 cattle and 30 shoats\textsuperscript{71} as poor, whereas one owning from 50 cattle and 100 shoats upwards would be considered rich. Those between these two limits would be considered in the ‘middle’ category. Interestingly,

\textsuperscript{71} Sheep and goats
the ownership of a cement/brick ‘modern’ house (*nyumba ya kisasa*) in Kigongoni, rather than a farm, was mentioned as third local indicator of wealth (after cattle and shoats). Local indicators of wealth, which probably used to have more importance, namely, number of children and number of wives, were mentioned last (respectively five and six) after farm acreage (four).

Overall, the picture that comes out of the wealth exercise and the survey indicate the strategic function of the rural-urban interface in affecting, on the one hand, the economic activities of Losirwa villagers and, on the other, changing ideas regarding assets associated with ideas of wealth (e.g. modern houses). Livestock still plays the major role in defining wealth, which connotes the weight of the rural-based pastoral activity. However, the closeness to the town of Kigongoni allows individuals to engage in other activities that generate income while still residing in the village. Importantly, the configuration and composition of the involvement in these urban-based activities do not connote purely a situation of poverty since individuals in the category of ‘middle’ and even wealthier individuals seek a cash income. The mention of a ‘modern’ house right after livestock as an indicator of wealth is another indicator of how the rural-urban system shapes preferences for long-term investments. A brick house, especially when located in a strategic position in Kigongoni, can become a long-term source of income unlike a farm (rain-fed), which is an unreliable source of food and entails potential losses in years of insufficient rains.

Choices and preferences for diversification suggest a combination of different rationales and calculations that Ferguson (1992), in the case of Lesotho, had referred to by the linguistic expression of ‘topography of wealth’, which requires a qualitative assessment of all forms of wealth against each other. A ‘topographical’ characteristic of wealth makes dynamics of conversions between one form and another depart from a ‘linear’ scale as in the ‘folk theory of western society’ (Ferguson 1992: 57). The uncertain nature of commodities as ‘wealth’ has become a core preoccupation of anthropologists who have underlined the political (Appadurai 1986) and “biographical” aspects of commodities (Kopytoff
1986), calling for an analysis of the “product qualifications” (Callon et al. 2002).

I will return to issues related to the political and qualitative aspects of commodities and the effects on ‘conversions’ in the next two sections respectively within the rural economy and at the rural-urban interface. Next, I wish to focus in the first instance, on actual people’s opinions and judgement of the different forms of wealth. Some of the ideas and rationales for diversification are reported through the opinions of three informants in the field.

**Informant 1: Lesikar.**

I asked him in turn to choose between cows against 1-money 2-a motorbike and 3-a modern brick house. Between one million shillings and cattle worth a million he would choose the cattle because “one cannot use or sell one leg of a cow to buy food or other stuff”. He referred to the positive characteristic of cows as wealth, since cows are not easily ‘spendable’ unlike money. Furthermore, he said, cows reproduce themselves and feed the family with milk. Between a motorbike and a herd of cows worth the same amount, he would choose cows because “a motorbike will die just like a cow but the motorbike does not give birth”. Finally between cows and ‘modern’ houses either in the village or in town, he would choose the latter since “houses don’t die like cows do, and although houses don’t reproduce themselves, you can rent out your house and get some profit”.

**Informant 2. Oloitai**

A middle-aged male, belonging to the senior subgroup of the _korianga_ argued for the disadvantage of money saying that “when you leave home to go to town and you have 100,000 shillings in your pocket, it is almost certain that you will go back home with a consistently less amount of money as you will probably have met friends in town and had drinks and food with them. But when you have cows, they reproduce themselves and on top of that you will have milk to drink”.

Then he turned to the difference between cows and modern houses and argued that a modern cement house (he owns one in Kigongoni which he
rents out) is an asset that does not get lost. However, its profit is low and one has to wait the end of the month to see it (the profit). When it comes to the difference between modern houses and cows he argued that cows are mobile and easily saleable, which allows him to access fast credit in case of emergencies or good opportunities for investments.

*Informant 3. Leboi*

He pointed out that cows die very easily and bring huge losses, especially during the dry season when there is not enough grass or water. On the contrary, he rather prefers money because “money has got many uses and you can't run out of things to do and buy when you have money”. Money can be turned into more reliable forms of wealth, which ‘don't die’ such as land or houses.

The importance and prominence of livestock as an asset that can store wealth manifests itself at the crossroads of the rural-urban economy. The opposition between the village and the town influencing values and ideals of thriftiness and good husbandry means that the aspect and quality of livestock to ‘store’ wealth for the Maasai of Losirwa are particularly important as opposed to the values of ‘unrestrained’ consumption in town (chapter two). Accumulating wealth in the form of livestock is an important mechanism that allows pastoralists to deal with money as a form of wealth that is easily dissipated. Conversions from money to livestock are positive transactions since one is able to ‘freeze’ wealth, whereas the opposite conversion (livestock-money) is a negative conversion because of the allures of consumption and the extended entitlements to cash both in town and in the village. The quality of livestock to be ‘many things’ as many informants argued (i.e. to be *mboga*, milk, fat and at the same time to give birth) is assessed against the quality of money as being unable to reproduce itself and be quickly lost. On the other hand, as the last case reported suggests, the potential advantages of livestock need to be counterbalanced by the possible losses embedded in livestock. Although unable to reproduce, money can get one access to alternative forms of wealth whose value is strictly connected to the urban economy. In the long run, investments in assets such as land and
houses are much safer in terms of the risk of loss as they gain rather than lose value.

This qualitative composition of assets that hinges on the socio-economic configuration in which Maasai Losirwa villagers are enmeshed is part and parcel of the rural-urban economic system. As I will describe in the next section, these qualitative aspects of different assets need to be analysed in conjunction with the power relations that exist within the livestock-based rural economy between elders, women, and youths. These power relations create a composite system of entitlements over resources that depends on their material expressions, that is to say, in the form of livestock or money.

2. THE RURAL COMPLEX

Having described the qualitative properties of assets and how these affect the judgement of individuals at the rural-urban interface, in this and next sections I will look at what happens when these qualitative aspects shape and interact with power relations to which each asset is subject. The key question I highlight in this section is the dynamics of conversions between livestock and money determined by a system of entitlements over them. This helps explain why youth who seek employment outside the rural economy create bridges with the urban economy.

The qualitative aspects of livestock and money I have described in the previous section cannot fully account for the dynamics of conversions unless investigated in conjunction with ‘cultural’ aspects of the kind Ferguson had highlighted in the case of Lesotho in the 1980’s when he came up with the idea of the bovine mystique (1985). He argued that the bovine mystique worked as a sort of cultural taboo that assigned rights over cattle to elderly men and prevented the conversion from livestock to money, money being a sphere controlled by women and youths. Similarly to Ferguson, Spencer (1998) refers to the ‘spirit of enterprise’ when he considers the ‘traditional’ system of pastoral husbandry as “a family business, with problems of growth, ageing, and succession, comparable to developing family businesses elsewhere” (p. 4).
Reframed in these terms the ‘cultural’ aspects that I will describe have very fuzzy boundaries with those aspects that pertain to the interests of each section of the family within a *boma* where elders, women and youth strive to preserve or gain rights over resources for their socio-economic position. Next, I will consider in order some ‘cultural’ practices related to livestock such as grazing, body marking and naming, that strengthen the connections between animals and individuals beginning in the earliest life stage, i.e. prior to circumcision, and onwards throughout the warriorhood stage. These practices are part and parcel of the upbringing of younger generations and in the last instance may be looked at as the processes that prompt the ‘primordial attachment’ that Geertz (Jenkins 2008: 46, citing Geertz 1973) refers to in relation to ethnic and cultural identity. Another important consequence, as I will try to highlight it, is how livestock-related practices contribute to strengthening and reaffirming of elders’ authority over livestock management.

In the end, these ‘cultural’ practices are ‘cultural’ aspects of the livestock-based rural economy that deeply affect the dynamics of livestock-cash conversions, entitlements, and the socio-economic status of individuals within the family which I will describe in the last part of this section.

**2.2 The daily cycle**

A typical pastoral Maasai family such as the Tutunyo, dedicates a great part of the day to tasks related to the management of the livestock. The social organization of the family, structured around age and gender differences, provides the dynamics of division of labour. The division of labour that sets daily grazing tasks to young boys, general supervision to elders and older *moran*, and household tasks (e.g. fetching water) to women is well established but accounts for a series of variations that are determined not only by the seasonal cycle but also by the different commitments of younger men. Through the grazing tasks, men of all ages develop particularly deep knowledge of each animal, their physical characteristics, behaviour and health conditions. This knowledge is important in activities not limited to
grazing (e.g. administering drugs) that are all coordinated and overseen by the head of the boma.

The daily management of livestock regulates movements between the boma, its outskirts, and surrounding grazing areas within the village. It also determines a specific rhythm within the boma made of phases of ferment and agitation when herds are within the fringes of the boma or the immediate surroundings, alternated with much calmer and idler times, when livestock has been taken out for grazing. Mornings are the first chaotic time of the day as most family members set out to begin the usual daily work. Women assist men, who guide herds towards the gateways. The Tutunyo boma has two different gateways, one right in front of the cattle kraal, and a narrower one for goats and sheep. The father, as custodian of the family livestock, directs the movements of livestock out of the boma by yelling his instructions to Moran and young boys who promptly do as they are told while running after animals that stray from the beaten paths.

The turbulent time ceases once cattle and shoat herds have reached the grazing areas surrounding the boma. Thereafter, a more quiet and tranquil phase begins which can stretch from a few minutes to longer periods of up to an hour. While women in their respective huts busy themselves with preparation of tea, having already milked cows in the cattle kraal, Moran gather standing or sitting around the father who would sit on a rock or a hump on the ground outside the boma in proximity to cattle and shoat herds. This is the time when the father and his Moran discuss general matters that concern the management of herds while animals are closely overseen. The conditions of the animals are assessed by Moran, who approach the different animals, and check on different vital spots such as mouth and feet. The father coordinates these activities as well by indicating to his Moran the specific animals to check. Cattle are referred to by different names that are articulated according to different classifications. Each Moran is knowledgeable about his own animals that, through shared ownership, create family networks and connections also through naming as I will describe below.

Animals are also known and made familiar with through their own personality and behaviour. A cow that is known to have an irascible attitude
can be named *nape’* and is handled with care when it is administered medicine. An animal that is more docile can be referred to by the name *nabor* and it is often more appreciated by its herder. Herders are more likely to develop bonds of affection with more docile animals, which become part of the herd core for the reproduction of the herd itself. On the contrary, hot-tempered bulls for instance are those that can be selected more easily for sale, as herders take into account the possible damage they can cause to other people’s herds while grazing, or the risk of loss caused by inattention, which can get the animal lost in the open rangeland.

While herds are kept within the *boma* surroundings, the father also sets and arranges the tasks of the day, which can include identifying the water points where cattle are to be taken for drinking, splitting the herds into different subgroups to different grazing areas, and taking cattle or goats to the dipping facilities. *Moran* may or may not be assigned one or more of these tasks according to their working commitments, however more complicated tasks such as longer movements or administering medicines to livestock require the presence of more than a few of them. After arrangements are done and all family members have returned to the *boma* to drink tea, younger boys and *moran* carry on with the tasks they have been assigned; in most cases the latter would simply leave for town unless a specific more complex task has been set which cannot be carried out by younger boys.

The second crucial time of the day is the return of the herds from grazing. This happens in the evening at dusk. Like in the morning, the return of the herds is a task that is facilitated by *moran*, who are present in the *boma* (while others are away for work). They become more vigilant and aware of the surrounding noise as the time of the return of herds approaches. When they are awakened by the cattle lowing, they start moving towards the herd in the open land to eventually run into them and the younger boys who have been grazing the animals since morning. While returning to the *boma*, young boys report on the day to *moran* and the father who has preceded the *moran* to meet the herds. Young boys communicate the tasks they have performed such as the herd movements and the difficulties they have encountered. Before entering the inside of the *boma* the herds are again kept idling on the
outskirt where the father continues to dispense his instructions to the boys and *moran* to attend animals to the livestock enclosures.

Once in the kraal, the control of animals is taken over by women for milking. Each woman manages her own cows for milking according to the health and size of calves, i.e. balancing calves’ needs of milk and human consumption needs. Each woman milks each of her cows one at a time with the help of their young daughters directly into cups (the same cups used for drinking) or in the *kibuyu* (gourd). Once she has completed the milking task, a woman, with the help of her younger daughter(s), accompanies her calves into her hut by grabbing them by the neck and mouth. The daily cycle that involves the management of livestock is over when the kraal entry is closed with wooden bars or shrubs of the kind used as fences.

### 2.3 Naming and livestock body marks

The body marks that cattle carry are the visually tangible signs of the connections that people develop with animals as well as of the relationships between people through animals. Broch-Due (1990) has described the type of body marks among the pastoralist Turkana of Northern Kenya and argued that body marks make animals “mobile metonymy” (p. 43) of family, kin and lineage, relationships and identification. In Tutuno *boma*, as in other *boma*, as a rule, all cows that belonged to the father’s herd have the body mark that represents his name dating back to his own grandfather. In fact, all of the father’s male brothers and cousins in the village of Losirwa, as well as those who have moved to other areas, have marked their cows with the same body mark as a sign of identity, which represents family and clanship. Each cow also has a second body mark on the other side and indicates the ‘second’ ownership of the animal, that is to say, the father’s wife who owns the animal. All cows in the *boma* therefore have a first mark on one side, which represents family and clan identity, and a second mark, which indicate the sub-ownership within the family (between wives). This second mark often differs only slightly between cows that belong to different wives. Once a calf is born and assigned a name, it is also marked with the specific mark of the wife to whom the cow belongs. The children soon become acquainted with
the new calf, including their rights and obligations towards it. As the father told me, the children are made responsible for their own calves so that if a calf died, "they would know that it is their own loss".

Only the father has the power and right to allow his sons to get their own body mark but, while they are under the supervision of the father, all animals purchased or born in the boma will be marked with their father’s mark. Joseph, one of the youngest father’s korianga explained to me that cows that have been marked with his father’s mark are unlikely sold. He argued that the body marking custom is a system for the preservation of the herd, or in other words, a system for the father to avoid animals being sold with insufficient reason (the most common reason for sales are the purchases of food or payment of hospital expenses). Not only animals that are born within the boma, but also those animals that are purchased in markets are marked, even when they already have the body mark of the previous owner. Body marks therefore are not only made to cows that are exchanged and/or gifted within the family but also to those cows that are traded in supposedly ‘impersonal’ markets. An animal bought in a market acquires a certain ‘identity’ when marked with the family mark.

Cattle are connectors between different individuals beyond their own marked bodies. The shift of proprietorship of an animal is linguistically expressed by the specific names that people use to call and refer to each other within the family and beyond. These names depend on the animal that has been exchanged between two individuals; rarely do people call each other with their proper name but use the words for ‘cow’ (singular, feminine): engeten; ‘cows’ (plural, either feminine or masculine): enkishu; ‘goat/sheep’: ndare’. These names are in most cases preceded by the prefix pa- when they are used by people to refer to each other: pa-kishu is used between two individuals who have exchanged more than one cow. Pa-ngengeten is used between two individuals who have exchanged one female cow. Pa-ndarè is used between individuals who have exchanged one or more adult goats/sheep. Other names that indicate a relationship based on exchange of livestock are esupen (female goat), mbalai (from balelo = young goat or lamb), mongh’i (sterile or castrated bull), pa-ingw’ani (bull), n’gae/ndawo (female cow).
In the Tutunyo family, each single individual is related to more than one person; the shift of rights that forges new relationships based on exchange of animals happens mostly on the occasion of a marriage. All of father’s *moran* offered an animal to each other at their respective weddings and refer to each other through this naming system. The father also gifted each of his sons an animal, whose ownership is shared by the son who has been gifted and his wife. The father and his sons’ wives also make use of the naming system when they call each other. The kind of gift offered depends mainly on the social status, in terms of the age and gender of the giver and receiver. All married *moran* received gifts of cattle from their fathers, while younger unmarried *moran* belonging to a sub-group of the *korianga* age-set, donated goats and sheep. Marital status affects the capacity of an individual in gift-giving and an unmarried *moran*, who has not yet received full custody of his own herd, may limit his gift to goats for his brother’s wedding. On the occasion of a wedding, the groom is more likely to receive cattle from his brothers whereas the bride is often given gifts of goats and sheep.

### 2.4 Familial alliances and distribution of rights

**A – Seniors-Juniors**

An elder is not only an owner of his own cows but his role includes that of ‘supervisor’ of all family cattle due to his experience and wisdom in taking care of livestock. The management of livestock is by no means an individual matter. The sale of an animal for instance, requires a family meeting in which the household head must be consulted and, eventually, the power either to agree or refuse to sell the animal is in his hands. The family *korianga* explained to me that they would not sell one of their animals without seeking the consensus of their father while, in some instances, he would have entitlements to sell their own livestock without even asking permission.

At a certain point during my fieldwork, Lazaro, one of father’s junior *korianga* fell very ill and needed prompt health assistance. I realised the worries and agony that his mother went through in searching for financial
assistance. For a few days within the boma, discussions and negotiations went on to convince the father to sell one of the cattle that belonged to Mama Lazaro which that was part of Lazaro’s future herd and for bridewealth after his wedding. The discussions occurred mostly between Mama Lazaro and the oldest korianga of the boma, who acted as mediators and facilitators to convince the father to sell the animal. Eventually, the intervention of Loshiro was crucial in taking the decision to sell the cattle with great relief on the side of Mama Lazaro, who was able to access the necessary assistance for her son. The episode made me understand the hierarchical dynamics within the property rights of livestock and the undisputed role of the father as supervisor of the boma cattle.

For the first few months of fieldwork, I never heard complaints from the father's sons when it came to the role of the father as supervisor of their livestock. On the contrary, they were willing to augment the family herd. Loshiro, his second son had been able to increase the family herd by working as a night guard and all the livestock he had bought had been put under the supervision of his father. Despite having two wives and several children, he told me that he would always ask for advice with regard to the management of his herd and would still have to ask for permission from his father before selling one of his animals. It seemed to me that all sons strongly valued the advice their father gave them and that was keeping them in their father’s boma.

It was only after a few months of fieldwork that I began hearing some complaints and I began inquiring into their feelings regarding not being able or allowed to make use of their herds as they wished. For an upcoming circumcision celebration, I heard for the first time some unhappiness from Loshiro related to his father and he confided in me that he was thinking about moving out of father’s boma. He and the other sons had to offer several of their animals to slaughter for the celebration and that meant the loss of some of their best cattle. They, however, mostly complained about the burden of sustaining their father's wives. For instance, father's eldest son decided to move out of the boma after quarrelling with one of his father’s wives. He told me that she had become very demanding and he was unable to satisfy her requests.
After a few months of fieldwork and being now in a position to ask more personal questions, I asked one of the family korangi, Lekishon, whether he considered his father an obstacle to his own personal and private life projects due to the particular livestock property rights and restrictions. He said that his father would not have any right over his own cash income but, as he ‘converts’ his money into livestock, the animal purchased would automatically go under the sphere of power and decision-making of his father. He clearly identified the commitment of sustaining other women as the main obstacle to having his own family; he told me that all the money he earns is ‘wasted’ to sustain father’s wives and is a major obstacle that has prevented him from getting married.

Although he, like most Maasai youth, agreed that livestock was a very good store of wealth that helps people avoid wasting money in town, turning his salary into livestock was not helping him because of the entitlements his father had on the family herd. On the contrary, he told me that his father would not have entitlements over his own cash. I perceived his impotence and inability to get himself out of such a situation which trapped him between women’s needs and the particular system of family management of herds which assigned his father an important power over his own animals.

On his own side, his father often pointed at the lack of knowledge of young people who ‘don’t know cows’ and ‘only know the city’. In one interview I conducted towards the end of my fieldwork, I tried to trigger some views on the generational difference when it comes to cattle and livestock. He explained to me his own role as supervisor of his sons’ livestock:

Young people nowadays do not graze livestock until you force them, instead they just run to town and forget about livestock. If I allowed them to dispose of their own livestock it would be the end of our herd as they would go selling all their cattle to spend money in town for alcohol and women. (13th February 2012)

Elders are harshly critical of urban life and are eager to stress connections between the town and the use of money. The father recounted to me his view on the difference between money and cows: “money has no friendship because if you give somebody money, even up to a million, he will not remember you because money has no name. But each single cow has her
own name and, when you gift somebody with a cow, he or she will remember you forever”. The narratives involving knowledge, tradition, and genuine relationships are certainly instrumental for elders’ retention of their privileged position over the management of livestock within the family. In this sense, the ‘cultural’ aspects of the pastoral system conceal vested interests and relationships of power in a similar way Ferguson (1985) had argued in the case of the ‘bovine mystique’ in Lesotho and Parkin (1992) with the ‘paradox of custom’. In response to elders’ narratives, youth advance their status as ‘modern Maasai’ that associates them with diverse choices across the rural-urban interface, backed by narratives that are critical of ‘tradition’ as I will discuss in the next section.

\[ B – Men-Women \]

For their part, women have little say over sales of livestock. This may be, in part, the result of historical processes that Hodgson (2001) has described very well and that may have marginalized women from rights over livestock. Nevertheless, unlike elders, women have much greater entitlements over young males’ cash coming from livestock sales and wages. This may be, incidentally, a consequence of the disenfranchisement of women from rights over livestock, which has resulted in women gaining the absolute control of the household (see introduction). As masters of the household, women are in charge of the domestic tasks including cooking, fetching water, feeding children and, in order to carry out these tasks, to a great extent, they depend on the cash resources of their husbands, sons, and other men. Within the ‘traditional’ pastoral system, therefore, the position of women ties them more to the domestic space (see next chapter) and less to the livestock domain. This is not without consequences with respect to the entitlements over household resources since it is males’ obligation to sustain their households and, at times, one single individual is in charge of providing for more than one household in the *boma*.

In the Tutunyo family, almost all the father’s sons of the *korianga* age-set were, or had been, employed at some point mostly as night guards or earning cash from other activities such as driving a taxi-motorbike or
covering some activities for the development of the village such as supervising the works for the repairing of the village dam. Although some women had their own source of income from selling tobacco or handicrafts, requests for cash made by women was a daily occurrence. Drinking time (tea) in the morning was the main occasion women had to chat with men (as most young males would just leave right after to go to town) and ask them for some cash to use in town to purchase vegetables, foodstuffs, or other petty commodities. The handing over of money involved several stages and bargaining: the first response of males to women’s requests for money is a straight and clear *marra engohola* (‘I don’t have money’). Even though most requests for cash are straightforwardly dismissed, men are aware of the responsibility of sustaining their own wives and mothers and being able to sustain them properly gives them pride in fulfilling their role as men.

Gifts in cash are an important field in which gender relationships are played out not only within the family. Women may ask for gifts in cash not only from their own sons, husbands and brothers but often from other men with whom they are in relationships of friendship or love/sexual involvement. At times, men’s role as providers entails feelings of unease when women seek cash gifts outside the sphere of family relations. Paulo told me, “I would not accept my mother and wife to look for money outside the family. If they need something, they should just tell me and my brothers; I would feel ashamed if others thought I and my brothers were not able to take care of our own family”.

The organization and division of tasks in the family, which assigns men the role of sustaining the households economically, makes young wage earners a very important ‘asset’ or human capital for women. In fact, the women who are ‘rich’ in social capital, meaning in sons in their twenties/thirties and engaged in wage labour, unlikely seek an income of their own but would rather depend on their sons. Women who turn to petty trade and other income generating activities are usually those who have no male figure in the family who can take care of their children such as widows, women with no male children or those women whose husband is unable to sustain them. Women with male children are in a better social position to augment their own household with foodstuffs and commodities. Being the
manager of a prosperous household for a woman is fundamental to complying with her role as provider of children and men (in terms of food and other services) and this is a further motivation for women to urge their husbands and sons to augment their respective household with stock. Not being able to feed children is a very serious accusation against a woman; cooking for children and men is a major activity for women, and while I often heard complaints about fetching water or other kinds of tasks, cooking seemed to be a pleasurable activity and women were always concerned that children and men have satisfied their appetite.

In the end, as Spencer (1998) argued, traditional animal husbandry in pastoral systems is designed as an enterprise whose main objective is growth and this characteristic stretches across most pastoral societies in sub-Saharan Africa and was observed and mentioned in many studies and accounts of African pastoral societies including the Nuer of Evans-Pritchard. Notwithstanding the negative association between 'tradition' or the 'cultural' aspects of pastoralism and the idea of enterprise among policy makers throughout history, this analysis of family relations shows that the rationality and power relations behind conversions between livestock and cash are driven by vested interests of different sections of the family to increase and accumulate wealth and that these interests in some cases are in conflict.

Family relations in the boma and the management of family assets determine mutual interdependences that posit each category (juniors, seniors, women) and, in turn, a condition of either advantage or disadvantage to each other. Seniors are in a position of advantage in relation to juniors due to their acknowledged role as ‘custodians’ of livestock that gives them the right of disposing of livestock owned by juniors. Seniors, however, have very limited entitlements to the cash that juniors earn through wage labour and businesses in town. On their own side, women are in a clear subordinate position to both seniors and juniors with regard to livestock rights but they have greater entitlements on males’ cash compared to elders.
Within this triangle of mutual interdependencies, younger males, either married or unmarried, find themselves in the most vulnerable position. They carry the burden of sustaining the women within their original families and also struggle to accumulate the capital necessary for their own marriages. These struggles are augmented by the changing dynamics of bridewealth, which is paid fundamentally in livestock but requires a significant amount of money as well. Besides the customary payment in livestock, the groom’s family is in charge of the preparations and negotiations involved in the phase prior to the wedding celebration. The preparations involve and require the purchasing of food and drinks, as well as the dispensation of sums of cash to both parents of the bride. All these expenses are met by livestock sales, in most part, belonging to the groom’s herd as well as his brothers’ and father's. Bridewealth is an important source of cash for the brides’ families, and grooms and their families need to account for a significant number of livestock sales only for the sake of negotiations, preparations, and celebration.

3. BEYOND THE RURAL COMPLEX: ‘TRADITION’, HERD COMPOSITION, AND ‘BUDGET’ SKILLS

Departing from the context described above, this final section looks at how the ramifications of the rural economy into the urban affect the idea of tradition and actual choices of livestock management across the rural-urban interface. The discussion above contributes to explaining why it is mostly younger generations (i.e. men) to seek income within the urban economy. As their opportunities in the rural economy are restricted by the ‘traditional’ practices of livestock management that favour elders, younger Maasai generations turn to the opportunities offered by the urban economy to diversify their own portfolio of wealth, when possible, through investments that they manage individually rather than collectively within the family.

This final section will try to find some answers to questions such as: how do choices of diversification enacted or envisioned by youths reflect and are affected by the readjustments of the social, cultural, and moral context of the urban economy described throughout Part I? Grounded in livestock and the
practices of grazing, naming and body marking described in the previous section, how does ‘tradition’ enter economic choices of livestock management beyond the rural economic system as younger generations increasingly wish for and, when possible, opt for alternative forms of investments? And finally, how does diversification bridge ‘tradition’ within the rural economy with the ideals of individualism and urban economic success (i.e. becoming a ‘big man’) that are connected to the monetary urban economy?

To answer these questions, one could start with the notion of ‘spheres’ that is peculiar of economic anthropology. According to the spheres of exchange model devised by Bohannan (1959), among the Tiv of Nigeria exchanges depended on the existence of different categories of goods and rights placed on a value scale. The lowest category was related to subsistence and included food and utensils, the middle category included slaves, cattle and ritual ‘offices’, and the highest category (the prestige sphere) was that of rights in human beings other than slaves, particularly rights in women with regard to marriages. Exchanges across the three categories were possible but had moral implications. To gain goods from the second sphere through exchange of goods that belonged to the first sphere was an exchange considered a positive maximisation, whereas the opposite exchange had a negative moral implication.

When applied to the case in question here, the rural-urban economic system has a resemblance to Bohannan’s model, in that, ‘tradition’ may be taken as one possible sphere that is characteristic of the rural complex with the principles regulating the morality of exchange between livestock and cash set by elders. As illustrated in the first section of this chapter, however, when the ‘sphere’ of ‘tradition’ in terms of the livestock management as mostly a store of wealth intersects with the domain of the urban economy, the morality regulating exchange in all possible combinations becomes much more ambivalent, contradictory, and less straightforward to the point that, as I will argue later on, the whole system of sphere may not suit the contemporary state of affairs. The way youth embody ambivalent ideas about livestock resembles the way they embody conflicting moralities
concerning money and consumption across the rural-urban interface (see Part I).

While partaking in the kind of social relationships in the village of which livestock are the carriers (e.g. through naming and body marking), younger Maasai individuals refer to and manage livestock according to other principles and objectives that are very different from the elders’ view, which is much more homogeneous and refers to livestock mostly as the main form and store of wealth embodying ‘tradition’. Alternative views and values attached to livestock, such as the rejection of ‘tradition’ and highlighting the monetary value of livestock, are part and parcel of broader strategies through which these younger generations seek to diversify their wealth across the rural/urban interface.

Taken in their entirety, herds continue to represent a way of keeping tradition and complying with the social norms in the village. Some individual animals, however, may be disposed of according to different assumptions and plans. Makarot, a young male in his thirties who was formerly employed in the road construction sector, told me that he was able to purchase cows and, later, ‘convert’ them into a house on the outskirts of the urban tissue of Kigongoni. When I asked him how he picked the animals to sell and how he felt in selling cows for something other than ‘shida’ (food or other basic necessities) he told me that he just sold the animals that ‘have money’ (meaning the animals that would fetch a higher price compared to others) and that he didn’t have particular feelings in selling them. Instead, he criticised those Maasai (especially elders) who continue to see livestock as the ultimate form of capital and disregard investments in land as more advantageous strategies. He argued that:

Nowadays, the real wealth is land. Land is what can make you rich, make you become a mkubwa in town. But wazee continue to go after cows to become rich, but they don’t understand that these days cows just die and you can find yourself a poor man overnight; you will never get rich if you only seek cows. Wealth in town is what makes you rich and once you have become a mkubwa nobody can take that from you. (24th January 2011)

Through ‘conversion’ of part of his herd into a land plot first, and a ‘modern’ house later on, therefore he intended to undertake a trajectory of
diversification of his assets alongside the livestock management activity. This strategy of conversion hinged on the situation of multiplicity of value registers since his choice was driven by the wish to keep connections with the rural economy while expanding links with the urban economy and the values connected to urban wealth, i.e. becoming a (urban) ‘big man’. A particularly calculated management that exploited the compositional character of his herd, i.e. single animals moving outside the sphere of the traditional economy and entering the domain of commoditization as ‘money’, is what allowed him to achieve his goal of expanding his portfolio of wealth across the rural-urban interface.

I had already heard similar references to certain animals as ‘just money’ from other individuals in Kigongoni. A well-known and respected local trader in Losirwa told me that he does not even mark some of the animals that he will resell later on because those animals ‘are just money’ that is going to help him for other purposes such as business, trade and other investments. Cows that ‘have money’ have a special allure to younger Maasai individuals who express a particular appreciation towards them, including the moran of the Tutunyo boma. On one occasion, one moran pointed to one of his bulls and conveyed to me his appreciation for it by saying: “When I look at my bull and see how big and fat it is becoming, I am delighted and pleased because I think about the things I can do when I sell it”. He continued, saying: “That is my own bull and only I can decide what to do with it, when I sell it, and what to do with the money I get”. He hinted at the kind of investments that many young individuals opt for mainly within the urban economy, including livestock trade. Nonetheless, asked about his milking cows, he said that they are equally important as “they are food for the children” and “their place is the boma for women to milk them”. His words demonstrated how the compositional character of herds allows in some cases young Maasai men to fulfil different objective, undertake multiple trajectories of diversification and, hence, participate and be involved in parallel spheres of morality between the collective responsibility, e.g. feeding the family, being part of the community ‘just’ by being a pastoralist, and personal initiative and entrepreneurship that hinge
on values of individualism and individualization of life that I have described in Part I.

This assortment of views on the actual or envisioned livestock management indicates an heterogeneity of moralities regarding livestock that cannot boil down to unilateral system of terms of exchange as Bohanna’s model and as Ferguson had envisioned by referring to the bovine mystique as a disguise for the power relations that favoured elders’ interests. The compositional nature of herds indicates the necessity to include an analysis of the qualitative traits of livestock, that is to say, the potential for differentiating herds and single animals and fulfil different objectives, such as feeding the family, reproducing social relationships (e.g. through body marking, naming, or gifting between family members), and pursuing investments beyond the rural economy, plus the potential of each animal to fulfill all (or nearly all) these roles and functions at different times, in sequence or even simultaneously.

As I described in the first section, qualitative traits of livestock have to do with the potential of livestock to store wealth against the risk of loss and these qualities are measured and assessed against other assets according to the same criteria. When these qualitative traits enter power relations within and beyond the rural economy and are imbued into the composite context of moralities at the rural-urban interface, they trigger a situation of a multiplicity of registers of evaluation. This multiplicity is visible for instance in the actual body marking including the absence of the body mark when some animals are purchased for the sake of sale and trade. Just as body marking communicates the kind of social relationships within the extended family and clan (see previous section), the absence of marks on animals that are traded within a short span of time is an (in)visible sign of this continuum between cows as ‘gift’ and cows as ‘just money’. Leboi and other livestock traders informed me that they would not mark the animals they intend to trade. Another trader, Eletioni, said that, in some instances, he happens to appreciate some particular traits of an animal he purchased for trade (either behavioural such as a particularly docile attitude or physical) and decides to return it to the boma and allocate it to one of his wives. In those cases, he
would mark the animal with the specific body mark of the wife to whom the animal has been allocated.

These kinds of practices and conventions, along with the ambivalent views on livestock management and livestock as a form of wealth, support the kind of theoretical thinking on the nature of money and commodities in anthropology that has questioned the idea of a fully commoditized world anticipated by earlier anthropologists including Bohannan and Dalton (Bloch & Parry 1989, Hart 2007, Shipton 1989). These practices of marking, including the choice not to mark animals that are destined for trade, resemble the practices described by Hutchinson (1992) among the pastoralist Nuer of Sudan and the categories of ‘cattle of money’, ‘cattle of girls’, ‘money of cattle’, and ‘money of shit’, but also other kinds of differentiations even in very different contexts such as the kind of money earmarking illustrated by Zelizer in nineteenth century United States which created “special monies” for domestic expenses (Zelizer 1989).

Eventually, the whole structure based on spheres that for instance Spencer (1998) describes within the rural economy becomes increasingly unfit to make sense of the complex dynamics of exchange and investments at the rural-urban interface. In its place, there seems to be a continuum of regimes of value surrounding livestock as a whole but also, and perhaps more importantly, single animals that can shift between different regimes of value. This resembles the idea proposed by Appadurai (1986) of commodity as a ‘process’ rather than a ‘thing’ with, at one extreme, livestock as embodiment of ‘tradition’ and, at the other, fully commoditized animals referred to as ‘just money’.

Broch-Due (1999) has given an illustration of how, among the Turkana of Northern Kenya, this continuum along which livestock is valued and judged creates strategies of diversification and how it has triggered the metaphor of ‘path’ as a cultural construction that stands for the ability to make the appropriate choices that lead to prosperity. To Turkana pastoralists, the difference between being poor and being rich lies in the ability (or inability) to ‘make a path’ not only in reference to the movement of livestock but, in

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72 These are: peaceful husbandry controlled by elders, predatory raiding pursued by moran, trading of pastoral goods conducted by women, employment of stockless herdsmen and foraging to be employed in times of crisis (Spencer 1998: 43-44)
general, as a “complex quality, relating to the person’s ability to manage a whole range of physical and social processes” (Broch-Due 1999: 54).

In my fieldwork, I came across the notion of ‘budget’, which, in several regards, resembled that of path described by Broch-Due. With the notion of ‘budget’ young males living across (urban and rural) space referred to the strategies employed to carefully, strategically and qualitatively differentiate their assets in order to find a balance between family and individual needs, and avoid dissipating their wealth for ‘wild’ consumption in the city. On one occasion, Oloitai prided himself on his own ‘budget skills’ that allow him to enjoy the pleasure of urban consumption while, at the same time, keeping his herd intact. For several years, he had been working as driver for several organizations including one very influential international conservation agency and, whenever he had an opportunity, he would come back to Losirwa to visit his family and herd. His opinion tended to underline the fact that ‘budget strategies’ have to be tailored to the individual case and each individual needs to be aware of his potential and not imitate others’ budget strategies:

If you think “how come such-and-such drinks beer everyday and yet his herd is still growing?” you will get lost because you try to model your own budget to other people’s budget. You need to have your own budget: for instance, I can use my salary to buy up to 13 gunia\textsuperscript{73} of maize within three or four months. The maize would last up to one year so that I would not be bothered every week to buy maize; most of the times I am away and I would not be able to take care of the family and give my wife money for maize. When I am home, I give my wife two or three thousand shillings to buy mboga and other little things like soap, etc. With the money left, I slowly improve my house and, if money is left, I go ‘walking’ in town and buy myself and my friends beers and nyama choma. But other Maasai don’t think like that; they don’t want to sell cattle so they sell goats every week to buy maize until they are left with no goats, and no money. But my herd remains the same and it even grows because cows and goats give birth! (17\textsuperscript{th} February 2012)

Another example of ‘budget’ I received from Alais, a young Maasai male in his early 20’s, revealed the way diversification suited his need of complying with different registers of value and finding a balance between different needs that pertain to individual, family and collective identity. He uses the

\textsuperscript{73} Sack containing +/- 120 kg (Sachedina 2008: 88)
salary he earns in the town of Moshi for two purposes: he puts part of it in his bank account and uses for his own needs, and uses some of it to buy cows to keep in his boma which he entrusts to his older brother. He told me that ‘everything is budget’, by which he referred to the strategies he employs to provide for his own family in the village and live a decent life in the city. He would not be able to send money to his family living far away but he would rather save some money so that, on his return in the village, he can buy a cow or two that, in case of need, can be sold by his family members. Therefore, he keeps two different accounting systems which allow him to diversify his wealth according to the kind of expenditure (whether his own need or his family’s) and that allows him to keep a bridge between the town and the village by also building up livestock at home, which can be useful in the future for himself. He mentioned keeping livestock at home as a way of keeping a connection with his own culture and tradition and drew a comparison with the Waarusha74 who, he argued, unlike Maasai “quickly forget about their own culture when they leave the village to stay in town and then yell 'Maasai!' on the streets, and they are Maasai themselves!”.  

In the end, ‘budget’ strategies and skills are developed as a result of the mediation between the collective sphere of ‘tradition’ within the rural economy to which these individuals continue to belong, and the search for individual success. Tensions exist along a continuum of moral evaluation, which has, at one extreme, the highest regard of tradition through livestock keeping and, at the other, its rejection and criticism. Strategies of diversification always tend to move to one or the other extreme but in most cases, stem out of the manipulation of this continuum. A constant manipulation of this order and scale of value allows younger males to shift between the two while being embedded in different networks across the rural/urban economy. If elders’ strategy of retaining their rights over livestock goes hand-in-hand with the stress on the virtues of rural life, younger men continue to preserve the domain of livestock which is part of their wealth portfolios and is enacted through the preservation of family ties, cultural and ethnic identity. At the same time, however, they seek to attain

74 Waarusha may be said to be the agricultural ‘counterparts’ of the Maasai having shifted to agriculture in the 19th century. See Spear (1997)
the ideals of the ‘modern Maasai’ by pursuing different and parallel careers. The result is a flow of resources between different economic niches, which, eventually, connects the rural and urban economy into a single complex economic system that is expanding in peri-urban Tanzania around peri-urban centres and small towns.

**CONCLUSION**

The foundation for the arguments proposed in this chapter originates in accounts of social change of the like proposed by Parkin (1972), as mentioned in the introduction, and Ferguson (1985, 1992). These accounts show the trajectories of change that heads towards increasing interconnections between local national and international economies and networks. These interconnections are facilitated also by the spiral of rural income diversification and have had impact on the selfhood of individuals finding themselves at the intersections of multiple communities and networks (Snyder 2002). In this case, it is younger males who embody these shifting ideas when, ‘being Maasai’, may also mean and include contestations over the meanings and implications of ‘tradition’ but definitely not the outright disappearance of it, as diversification studies have argued (see introduction).

I agree with Parkin when he underlines the malleable and manipulable nature of change and with Ferguson and the power relations that are embedded in tradition he highlighted. Nevertheless, I have argued that a more thorough analysis of change and diversification ought to go beyond a choice between a position that stresses ‘conflict reconciliation’, as argued by Parkin (1994), and the opposite extreme of tradition as a reservoir of elders’ rights. Both narrations are framed around the conflict (and resolution of conflict) that occurs within a unitary, homogeneous, and unilateral system of rights and entitlements over, and distribution of, wealth.

I have argued in this chapter that the questions related to the nature and consequences of ‘tradition’ as it has been framed, as well, in a great part of literature on pastoralism (Spencer 1998) could benefit from a broader scale of analysis, which emphasizes more the socio-economic qualities of assets.
When looking at these qualities, one realizes one is dealing not with a unitary system of rights over wealth in the way conceived by Ferguson and Parkin, but with a system that is heterogeneous in its diverse contexts (in this case, the rural and the urban) affecting valuation and estimations of goods. Such a diverse system becomes unitary only through strategies of diversification, i.e. through conscious and calculated individual plans that bridge the rural and the urban by making them two segments of a single system.

This process is clearly enacted by the specific management of livestock that has taken shape across the rural-urban divide with livestock that eventually enters and exits circuits of *commodification* (van Binsbergen 2005). Livestock are still fundamentally and powerfully at the core of social relationships in many different, manifold and changing ways, which, in this case, take the form of the relationship between the rural economy of distribution of rights over of livestock, and the urban economy which provides niches for alternative individual investments.
CHAPTER SIX

Gender and individualism: the politics and materiality of the domestic space and built environment

INTRODUCTION

In this sixth chapter, I will apply a similar type of analysis as in the previous chapter but with a more pronounced focus on gender rather than generational relationships and their associations to ethnicity. In the previous chapter, I took ‘tradition’ as an instance of the collective realm in relation to alternative management and ideas on livestock through which youths enact alternative ideals of modernity. In this chapter, I depart from the rural domestic realm and domestic space to the broader built space and environment to look again at the position of mainly male younger individuals, how they deal with the ambivalences of the rural-urban divide, and how these ambivalences are enacted through ideas and management connected to wealth, assets and the material expression of the broader environment.

The house as a domestic space and material artefact has been a subject of analysis within many different disciplines at many different levels. From the individual level of perception and psychology that takes the house as a phenomenological object (Bachelard 1994[1958]) to the house as a metaphor of kinship and greater social organization (Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995), the ‘house’ merges the most diverse aspects of individual and collective life. Psychological or psycho-cultural aspects of ‘house’ as experience and its symbolic meanings contribute to make the ‘house’ a complex and enigmatic object whose importance and significance cannot be grasped from a single perspective (Lawrence & Low 1990). Eastern African studies on pastoral societies have tended to take the ‘house’ as an entry point into the analysis of social structure and household resource management. References are made to the ‘house’ as material artefact by Talle (1987) and Hodgson (2001) respectively on the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania, while Moore dedicated much attention to the changing material
characteristics of the ‘traditional’ house among the Endo, an agriculturalist ethnic group of Kenya.

In this chapter, I will try to merge these two aspects, i.e. the house as an analytical device for the analysis of social organization, in this case, gender relationships, and the house as material expressions, also in relation to the surrounding environment. In the first section, I will analyse the domestic space of the 
\textit{boma} by looking at the movements, spatial dynamics and how these are enactments of gender relationships with women mastering the domestic sphere and men being mostly detached and excluded from it.

The house has another crucial connotation, which connects the domestic space to the values and space of collectivity; expressions and enactments of conviviality occur mostly within the house and domestic space where guests are welcomed, food is shared and collective management of livestock is carried out. Eventually, a common thread runs through the domains of the domestic space, collectivity and femaleness, which are three interrelated spheres dependent on each other.

In the second section, I will move to the description of changing architecture, furnishings, and other material expressions of the house and how these are connected to ideas of development that has important gender implications. The tendencies to ‘modernise’ the house in Losirwa and across the rural-urban complex of Losirwa/Kigongoni are a reflection of the actual, imagined or envisioned trajectories of development that in the case of Maasai males reveal the kind of ambivalences between the realm of collectivity, in this case the domestic space to a great extent controlled by women, and the realm of individuality.

These relationships become even more evident and acquire further dimensions that are connected to ethnicity when one turns to the broader built environment in its connections with the dynamics of land management between the rural and the urban environments, which I will look at in the third and final section of this chapter. ‘Modern’ houses in town are the material expression of the desire and aspiration for profit and economic success for younger Maasai males. Successful individuals invest in the construction of modern houses as long-term investments that are also considered the apex of individual and personal success and development,
while the rural space continues to constitute the acknowledged space of residency, kinship, and family values (chapter two).

Seizing land is crucial to the project of investments and representations of the urban landscape as continuation of the rural landscape, inherently Maasailand, become instrumental to these aspirations. Interestingly and importantly, urbanization as an expression of individualism through privately owned land and ‘modern houses’, as opposed to rurality as collectivity, causes transformations of the practices of land management that within open rangeland are performed by virtue of shared and collective Maasai identity. Therefore, as I previously argued and illustrated, commoditization in its manifold forms (in this case, land) entails transformations of the ideas connected to Maasai ethnicity that have their roots in collective forms of social organization characteristic of rural life.

1. GENDER OF THE DOMESTIC SPACE

To analyse how young males build connections between the rural and the urban realms, it is essential to depart from the kind of gender relationships within the field of the domestic economy and management of resources. The arguments of this chapter, therefore, unfold in a similar way to the previous chapter where I departed from the register of ‘tradition’ morally (and actually) controlled by elders dominating the rural pastoral economy to eventually conclude with co-existing complex registers individually determined that are enacted at the rural-urban interface.

The Tutunyo boma (Fig. 2 & 3) is located a few hundred metres from Kigongoni and is placed at the geographical centre of the community. The Tutunyo boma does not differ from the boma structure most common throughout Maasailand in Northern Tanzania. It is composed of a circular fence made of short wooden branches closely and tightly woven with one or two livestock enclosures at the geometrical centre and surrounded by as many huts as married women in the boma. In total, it hosts thirteen huts each belonging to a married woman with her children. Young women who have recently married and have newborn children, however, may still be living in their husbands’ mother’s hut before building their own and moving
out. At the time I was in the Tutunyo *boma*, three young married women who had children younger than one year were sharing the hut with their respective mothers-in-law and only one young married woman with already grown up circumcised children (one of father’s daughter) was still living with her mother (father’s third wife).

Our *boma*, as in most *boma* I have visited during my visits in Maasai villages, had one hut, which was considered the men’s hut (Fig. 4 & 5) and where most *korianga*, including me, used to have food and sleep. Only the father had his own private hut where he slept on his own when not sleeping with any of his wives. Towards the middle of my fieldwork, he ceded his hut to his younger sons who were in high school and had returned from school for the summer vacation. That then became the men’s hut as the previous one needed reparations.

The hut itself is a single room of circular structure made of a lattice of branches, plastered with a mixture of cow dung and mud. Roofs are made of branches as well, woven into a spiral tied together with ropes made of tree bark. Once the roof has been completed, it is lifted and placed on top of the tree structure before the walls are finished. The inside of the hut is basic and rustic (Fig. 7). Most huts have two beds made of a wooden skeleton with a dried cow skin placed on top. Some huts have a few shelves skilfully engraved in the wall itself. Furnishing is mostly non-existent; most dishes and crockery are kept on the floor in large plastic basins, bowls, or buckets used to fetch water and for other common domestic tasks.

A household includes one head, usually the man, with his wives and their respective huts. The single huts and surroundings however are the space where most interactions occur and importantly a crucial sphere of gender relationships. Each single woman is fundamentally in charge of the domestic space represented tangibly by her own hut. Unlike men, whose movements and activities are either focused on grazing tasks away from the *boma* or profit-making in Kigongoni, a woman’s typical day is spent mostly within the inside space of the huts or in the immediate surroundings (Fig. 6). The description of a typical day in the Tutunyo *boma* focused on the movements

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25This kind of definition of household in pastoral studies is convenient for the sake of methodology. In African studies however the notion of ‘household’ is known to be problematic and indefinite (Guyer 1981, Sachedina 2008: 74)
and activities carried out within the boma and immediate surroundings will indicate the close relationships that women have with the domestic realm and the concurrent detachment of men from it.

Morning. Herds have left the boma and are being overseen by the father and his moran, both korianga and nyangulo, before younger uncircumcised boys take them out into the grazing land. In the boma, observing women’s movements from one spot close to Mama Kaaka’s hut, I see Mama Lazaro moving between hers and another hut close-by. As she returns to her hut, she is holding some tools that she has borrowed from her neighbour. She is about to begin her daily work for preparing ugoro\(^{76}\) by pounding tobacco in wooden pots and mixing it with a pounded saline stone purchased in the market. Mama Kaaka has returned to her hut from the opposite side of the boma and is now standing on the premises with two of her daughters. She is talking to the father who is standing at a certain distance looking at the lines of herds moving afar. The father hardly enters the huts of the women who live in his boma. Most conversations he has with women in the boma, including his own wives, occur with him standing or sitting outside the hut with the woman in the inside. Evenings are the time when the father has longer and occasional conversations with his wives discussing family matters. The shelter of a big tree within the boma is father’s favourite spot for talking with his wives before they retire to their respective huts.

The father has now left the boma to reach the goat herds and Mama Kaaka is now spreading the tobacco leaves on a maize bag laid out on the immediate premises of her hut on a spot lit by the sun’s rays. In the meantime, Mama Lazaro has entered her hut to perform the usual domestic activities. Women are no longer moving around the boma; they have already collected the tools and crockery they need to prepare tea to serve to their children and to moran before they, especially korianga, leave for Kigongoni. All women are now in the inside of their respective huts and only children and the nyangulo are outside, the first playing, the latter moving around idly in groups of three or four. Korianga have entered the men’s hut and are waiting for the tea to be ready.

\(^{76}\) See glossary
Moving and sitting at the opposite side of the boma, I cannot spot a single woman outside of their huts except Neyay who is moving between hers and Mama Loshiro’s hut where Lekishon’s wife is, at the moment, residing and recovering from childbirth. Neyay is involved in daily care within Mama Loshiro’s hut, cooking and fetching water according to the conventional practices of mutual support among women who have recently been through childbirth. She had, herself, received the care of Mama Loshiro (her mother-in-law) as well as her co-wife on the occasion of the birth of all her sons and daughters.

It does not take long for women to finish preparing tea and the Moran soon leave the men’s hut to start walking within the boma and enter the different huts looking for tea. Korianga are more independent ever since the nyangulo have taken over the responsibilities that are assigned to the role of Moran. Korianga move individually within the boma; some of those who have work commitments are impatient to have tea and leave most likely for Kigongoni or Mto wa Mbu.

I have now entered Mama Kaaka’s hut with Paulo; she is handling cups and a teapot waiting for the tea to be ready. At times she checks on the fire and adds some sticks of wood. Once tea is ready she pours it in cups and serves me, Paulo and her daughters. One nyangulo has entered the hut and asked for tea but she has dismissed him and told him to go looking for tea somewhere else. Moran spend some time in the morning looking for tea before their search is successful; they visit more than one hut and spend a few minutes chatting before leaving. Being successful in having their requests satisfied for men depends on a great extent on the judgment of women who have the right and option to refuse. Men are nearly totally dependent on women with regard to food and, when they enter women’s huts, including sometimes their own wives’, they do so as guests. Despite their complaints and insistent requests, their hunt for food may end up in a missed meal. This happens more easily to younger unmarried Moran like the nyangulo, but it is not uncommon to happen to elders, too, as Holtzman (2001) has observed among the Samburu pastoralists in Kenya. In the morning, if given tea, men would spend the time necessary to finish it inside
the hut. During tea time, women hardly leave the hut; instead, they send their children in search of specific pieces of needed crockery.

Once teatime is over, moran who prefer to stay around the boma retire to the men’s hut to sleep. Some of them have returned home from the night work (as watchmen) while others have woken up very early to let herds out of the boma. Women hardly take any resting time after preparing tea; instead, they start preparations for cooking lunch, which is usually served around noon.

Afternoon. At around 14.00, all men are away and women can have their deserved rest. Afternoons are the idlest time. Some women have left for Kigongoni where they sell ugoro. However, most women have remained in the boma. A group of women has gathered under the shade of Mama Loshiro’s hut (Fig. 6) including a couple of guests from neighbouring boma. They are sitting on maize bags laid out on the ground while looking after the children who are playing. Other women are asleep in their respective huts. I can see the father sitting under the shade of another tree at a certain distance from the boma with the company of a few goats and sheep. The only men left are a couple of sluggish nyangulo walking around the boma. Women dedicate this time to more calm activities such as resting, child care, chatting as well as some mild tasks such as working on handicrafts, e.g. bracelets, anklets and other body ornaments made of beads. All these activities are done either independently or in groups mostly under the shade of the hut.

Evening. The second heavy load of work for women begins right before herds and herders have returned home from grazing at dusk at around 18.00. Calves have been grazing throughout the day within the family alalili77 nearby the boma and they themselves are waiting for their respective mothers. From the first spot (Mama Kaaka’s hut), I see a group of three women standing and chatting. Some nyangulo are within the boma giving a playful performance of their physical strength, i.e. hitting each other with sticks. They will promptly leave the boma as soon as the cattle moos

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77 A relatively small piece of grazing land privately managed (but not owned) by individual household/boma heads, or at times in partnership with two or more individuals. Alalili is set aside for animals that cannot walk long distances in search of pasture such as calves or sick animals since alalili is often at a short distance from the boma of its manager.
reach their ears. All women stand by holding a cup waiting to start the milking.

The cows are back now, still on the outskirt of the boma where the father is yelling instructions to the nyangulo and cows are suckling their calves. As herds enter the cattle kraal, all women reach for their respective cows to milk them, helped by their respective daughters. The milking lasts a few minutes while a few women, mostly those with daughters old enough to cook, entertain themselves in the kraal chatting. Within ten or twenty minutes, all women have returned to their respective huts while the father has taken cover under the boma tree to chat with his sons while continuing to dispense instructions to nyangulo who are checking on the cattle. Once the milking is done and women have entered their hut, a new cycle of exchanging utensils, preparing tea and food begins. Moran have returned home and they move between the men’s hut and the single women’s huts to chat while drinking tea and waiting for food.

In a well-known article on the Berber house, Bourdieu argued that to say that the woman is ‘locked up’ in the house misses the fact that by the same token the man is ‘kept out of it’:

The man who stays too long in the house during the day is either suspect or ridiculous: he is “the man of home”, as one says of the importunate man who stays amongst the women and who “broods at home like a hen in the henhouse”. A man who has respect for himself should let himself be seen, should continuously place himself under the gaze of others and face them (qabel). He is a man amongst men (arga yer irgazen). (Bourdieu 1970: 158)

Bourdieu’s description of gender relations in the Berber house is not dissimilar from the dynamics of the Maasai house based on the description of movements and in the light of acknowledged cultural roles described by Spencer that associate males with ‘the bush’ (Spencer 2003: 50) and women to the domestic space. When these dynamics are reworked as a consequence of urbanization the role of women as master of the house is even strengthened (see chapter two).

The different relationships that men and women have with the domestic space are revealed as well by the different relationship that men and women have with household objects in the homestead. The domestic space viewed
through the optic of the objects, furniture or decorations that fill it have been extensively under the lens of anthropologists (Gram-Hansen & Bech-Danielsen 2006, Miller 2001, Money 2007, Waldman 2003, Wilk 2001) especially in conjunction with a renewed interest in anthropology for material culture (Miller 2005, 2009). The analysis of the house through the materiality of objects has enjoyed a new wave of studies in the 1980’s and 1990’s which have shifted the focus from the structural and symbolic meanings of the house to the consumption practices that pertain to the domestic realm when embodied in the material artefacts placed in it (Miller 2001: 9). From the point of view of gender relations in pastoral societies, for instance, Tobert (1989) has highlighted the importance of material artefacts and the life cycle of women among the pastoral people of the Zaghawa in Sudan (Darfur). She stresses the social significance of objects within the household and how the dynamics of owning or acquiring items such as cooking pottery, protective screens in the house, and a cooking hearth depend on the life stage of a woman.

Within the Maasai boma, women are the undisputed "heads of houses" (Talle 1987) and this role is reproduced through the reproduction of organization of production. The specific division of labour that assigns men of all ages different tasks connected to herding and women all the domestic tasks of feeding and child rearing make the 'house' (enkaji) the material expression of the role of women as masters of the house (Talle 1987: 66). In the boma, each woman is highly knowledgeable about her own dishes and items such as cups, spoons, and other tools through which she carries out the daily activities (Fig. 7). In the evening, each korianga's mother enters the men's hut with her own plate of rice, ugali or porridge and more than one fork or spoon. According to availability, milk is also served to Moran in gourds of wood decorated with beads. After sharing the food, plates and other dishes are placed on a top shelf to prevent dogs and mice from touching them. In the morning after, each woman enters the hut (or sends one of her children) to collect only the dishes that belong to her but leaves untouched all other dishes that belong to other women. Once I asked Mama Kaaka about her personal dishes and how she is able to recognize hers from other women’s. She grabbed a cup and pointed at a small spot on the edge of
it meaning that she would recognize that specific cup by that spot. Straight after, I asked two korianga who were in the hut whether they would be able to recognise their mothers’ or wives’ dishes the way Mama Kaaka had just done and they said that only women are able to do so. They pointed at Nayio, the 10-year-old and second born Mama Kaaka’s daughter and said that she, too, would be able to distinguish the dishes. One of the two korianga grabbed another cup and handed it to her and she pointed at a small ring made of beads surrounding the handle of the cup.

The relationship that women have with their respective homesteads and and relative stock is also relevant when looking at women’s obligations, in their qualities as hosts, to welcome and entertain guests in usual circumstances or, on occasion, of celebrations. Being able to contribute with stock is part and parcel of the performances and practices of sharing. In reality, the higher the social status of a woman, the heavier the obligation is to ‘share’ her stock with other women. This consideration reveals the hierarchical nature of domestic relationships among women when it comes to socio-economic status (Llewelyn-Davies 1978: 214) unlike other expressions of solidarity and mutual support that occur in situations that pertain to the realm of childbirth and sexuality and reveal an underlying principle of equality (Lewellyn-Davies 1979). Most dishes women use daily are often lent and borrowed, for instance, when a woman has more guests than spoons, in which case, she would borrow spoons from other households. Items that can be lent/borrowed are teapots or pans of different sizes, kerosene and solar lamps, torches, baskets, bowls, basins, buckets and ropes to tie them on donkeys and fetch water. Generally speaking, every item in a woman’s hut is subject to these rules of lending/borrowing, and this, in most cases, depends on the relationships between women such as co-wives, mothers and daughters in law or simply women in relationships of friendship.

Some specific pieces may be kept outside the usual set of utensils used on a daily basis and used only for specific occasions, such as celebrations and feasts. One day on her return from the market, Mama Kaaka showed me two

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78 On occasions of adultery which contravenes the precepts of respect (enkanyit), for instance, solidarity among women of different age can be expressed through the safeguarding of the secret by all women from the adulterer’s husband (Lewellyn-Davies 1979).
new plates and one cup she had just bought with the money earned from the sales of tobacco. She looked more gratified by the purchase of a brand new *olduberrri* (big cup) which, she said, she would leave in its original box and use it only on the occasion of a *sherehe* (feast).

These close relationships between women and the household are in opposition with the total lack of interest that men have in the household objects, stock, and the material look of the huts. The description above of movements of women and men inside and outside the *boma* has shown that men are in proximity to or inside the huts mostly as guests. Within the *boma*, men have a few possessions besides clothes. Unmarried men keep their personal effects in the men’s hut and most objects are shared between them (Fig. 5). Only after marriage and moving in their own hut do men gain their private space. Nevertheless, they continue to show little interest in household objects and would often hand over the management of their own belongings to their own wives. At times, negative feelings that come from lack of privacy take over the general disinterest of men, especially for unmarried *moran*. In the last instance, men’s relationships to the household objects are limited to their role as providers, that is to say, their obligation to sustain as best as they can afford their wives and their huts with commodities, foodstuffs and stock such as maize, beans and the like.

Hodgson (2001) has interpreted the gendered spatial differentiation as described throughout this section as an outcome of historical developments that have relegated women to the domestic domain as a consequence of a progressive disenfranchisement of women from rights over cattle and other instances of development. Hodgson, based on innovative historical resources (Merker [1910]1904), considers the ‘autonomy’ of women from the domestic space during the early colonial period as a sign of gender equality and mutual respect between men and women before a progressive deterioration brought about by colonial and state interventions in the following decades until now (Hodgson 2001: 35). Nonetheless, the description here shows that a perspective that stresses a spatial physical confinement of women within the domestic space conveys a limited conception of the domestic space itself.
As I have tried to convey with my own description, to say that women are somehow physically constrained by their attachment to the house misses the relationships that men have with the domestic space, which is one of subordination. The recognition of this last consideration is at the foundation of the feminist perspective, which takes the association of the domestic space with *femaleness* as the starting point for the recognition of the prominence and worth of women's role in pastoral societies (Hodgson 2000). One is inevitably led to wonder whether the idea that connects maleness to a space beyond the domestic could in fact be a cultural feature of Maasai society that has, nevertheless, partly developed in concurrence with or as a consequence of the development of close bonds between women and the domestic realm. Such close bonds may have had the consequence of denying men the privileges of privacy and ownership of the domestic space, which are entirely retained by women.

On a more general and theoretical level, ever since Gluckman’s (1950) elaboration of the model of property inheritance in polygamous African pastoral societies, theoretical speculations have followed one another on the inherent nature of Gluckman’s “house property complex”. The established patrilineal (and patriarchal) inherent nature of the rules of property inheritance, stressed by mainstream ethnography on African pastoral societies, has left more space for different interpretations that have underlined how the “house property complex” determines the rules of property inheritance from fathers to sons exclusively through women. (Broch-Due 2000: 166). The description of the dynamics within the domestic space and rural economy sets the premises for the following discussion on how these dynamics change as one moves to the rural-urban interface. The next section looks at how the house as a material artefact embodies changing registers of values and evaluation about the ideas of development and the connected gender aspects that emerge from what I call the ‘modernisation’ of the house.

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79 Despite her argument on the disenfranchisement of women from rights over wealth (2001), Hodgson had prior edited a collection (2000) in which she with other authors had highlighted the crucial position of women in pastoral societies and contested the ‘patriarchal’ feature of pastoral societies as portrayed in previous studies.

80 According to which family assets (i.e. cattle) owned by a household head are kept physically separated by each house consisting of a wife with her children.
2. MATERIAL SHIFTS

Already in the 1980's, Aud Talle (1987) reported on the changing form of the ‘traditional’ house in Maasai villages in Kenya and argued that the building of ‘modern’ houses (i.e. houses made of walls of concrete and corrugated iron roofs) resulted in a weakened control of women over the domestic space. Since ‘modern’ houses were built by craftsmen paid by men and, in the last instance, represented men’s efforts (especially wealthy men) to enact their higher social and economic status, women would remain marginal and would not access the rights of ownership of the house (Talle 1987: 75). Talle incorporated her reflections on the material expression of the house into a broader discussion over women’s weakened position within the domestic space that had resulted from the penetration of the market into the ‘traditional’ organization of labour and distribution of rights over livestock. Penetration of the market, argued Talle, led to commoditization of livestock augmenting men’s power over animals that were ‘traditionally’ under the sphere of influence of women and as a consequence women saw their ability to carry out the domestic tasks, i.e. their role as “heads of houses”, diminished (Talle 1987: 76).

My view differs from that of Talle in that, the domain of the domestic realm in the specific case of my own fieldsite does not conflict with the domain of ‘modernisation’ of the house in the same way the register of ‘tradition’ and embedded power relations co-exist with other registers of evaluation in the case of livestock (previous chapter). Women continue to perform their role as master of the house while men strive for development that indicates their individuality in the sense of personal socio-economic improvement without challenging the role of women within the domestic space. Through modernisation of the house, men try to achieve personal development that is not mutually exclusive with the domain of the domestic realm, which continues to represent the sphere of collectivity, sharing and conviviality and men acknowledge as embodied by women. These processes reflect the contemporary changes that I have been describing throughout this thesis and that relate to the ambivalent position of Maasai younger males as ‘modern Maasai’ at the interface of ‘tradition’, which, in this case, is
embodied by domestic female space, and ‘modernity’, embodied by ‘modern’
houses.

Processes of ‘modernization’ of the built environment in east Africa have
been underway for several decades often promoted by national
governments, particularly forcefully in Kenya among Maasai, but also among
other ethnic groups considered ‘traditional’ or ‘underdeveloped’, for
example, the case of the Endo described by Henrietta Moore (1986). In
Tanzania, too, Maasai villages have witnessed a steady remodelling of the
visible built environment and outlook in places like Monduli Juu (Hodgson
2001: 172), another area populated by Maasai within the Monduli District. In
Losirwa as well, these transformation are visible and I will give some
examples of them below. The particular spatial configuration at the outskirts
of a peri-urban site however affects these processes, in that, investments in
the material expression of the house occur within the village but also more
broadly at the rural-urban interface.

In this section, I will provide some examples of ‘modernisation’ of the
house and the implications for the kind of gender relationships that are
enacted by the built environment. Before moving to the description, a brief
discussion on the terms ‘modernization’ and ‘tradition’ with respect to the
built environment is necessary to make sense of how instances of
development are conceptualized and how these reflect the difference
between the rural and the urban context.

The two terms ‘modernization’ and ‘tradition’ need to be framed within
the local meanings that are attributed to local material expressions of the
built environment. It is commonsensical to think of tradition in reference to
a temporal past or at least in reference to the reproduction of something that
is deemed to belong in time to the past. In his essay, On the attributes of
“tradition”, the architect Amos Rapoport (1989) argues that the term
‘traditional’ when referred to housing is often misused or used
“unselfconsciously” (p. 79). Often, he points out, ‘traditional’ is associated
with “old” or “of the past” but then one would wonder what actually “old”
means when referred to houses and housing style. Rapoport (1969) argues
that the opposition between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ when referred to the
physical expression of the house arises as a consequence of the potential for
choices, which is a characteristic of the latter ('modern') and is missing in the former ('traditional') and its crucial point is the potential to account for agencies. Miller (1988) similarly considers the role of agencies with respect to house objects and decoration in a North London neighbourhood, which express the desire, mostly on the side of women, to ‘re-appropriate’ the ownership of their apartments and reject the feeling of being ‘haunted’, originated in the fact that their houses, in fact, belong to the city council. What Miller in fact argues is that the very materiality, in this case, of houses and domestic space, may be said to ‘possess agencies’ (Miller 2001: 112).

Departing from these initial premises, one could argue that ‘modernisation’ of the house may be made sense of as a willing choice to shift from a conventionally and locally acknowledged or assumed ‘traditional’ form, to forms and material expressions that are deemed to be modern or at least non-traditional within the local conception of modernity and tradition. Henrietta Moore (1986) has described the processes of ‘modernization’ of the Endo house among the Endo people of Kenya from this perspective. She highlights the way in which ‘modernisation’ is in fact enacted within different arenas, many of which are spatial in nature. The first arena has to do with the location where ‘modern’ houses are supposed to belong, namely, the valley floor, which is opposed to the escarpment where most dwellings have commonly been built by Endo in the past. This opposition between the valley and the escarpment is associated with the opposition between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ houses also in the light of the repeated attempts by Kenyan governments to persuade Endo to abandon ‘traditional’ way of life on the escarpment and move on to a more ‘modern’ lifestyle by building ‘modern’ houses in the valley (Moore 1986: 121).

The case of the Endo described by Moore shows how instances of ‘tradition’ and modernisation are embedded in local regimes of value enacted through the material expression of the built environment. I observed similar dynamics of change during my fieldwork both within the rural landscape of the boma and across the rural/urban interface of Losirwa and Kigongoni. The tendency that I witnessed in Losirwa towards the ‘modernisation’ of the boma acted, more or less, towards pronounced separations between the space where sharing and conviviality rules are
enacted, which is inherently female space, and private spaces that are drawn by men within these collective spaces. These rising private male spaces reveal, through better outlook or furnishings, men's aspirations for personal development.

When I first visited the boma in Baraka sub-village to survey economic diversification (Appendix I), I had the opportunity to enter most huts and realized that some boma distinguished themselves based on some different architectural characteristics or because of a different furniture style. I will report three cases to show the range of features that distinguished some boma from the average.

(Case 1). The first time I saw a slightly different furnishing compared to my previous experience of Maasai houses, I was in Eletioni’s boma. I have already previously discussed the position of Eletioni as an acknowledged wealthy man both within the village, mostly due to his father, and in town where he is regarded as a ‘big man’ (chapter four). His boma is not particularly different or better built than other boma in Baraka; it comprises three huts, two of which host his two wives and one is his private hut. His own hut is visibly much better built with a better quality door. The interiors are furnished with a wooden bed with mattress and a wooden wardrobe with shelves. He at times welcomes his guests in his own private hut where, on the occasion of my visit, we were served food with spoons, which is not normal practice in a Maasai village (where people in most cases eat food with their hands). Also, tea was served in a shiny teapot rather than in a thermos as I had been used to in the Tutunyo boma and in most other boma I had visited in Maasai villages. In contrast, his wives’ huts are basic, mostly in line with the average of other huts in Baraka and, when I entered their huts, I could not spot any particular item that would demonstrate a supposed higher status of the household head compared to others.

(Case 2). The second case, Leboi’s boma, highlights the separations that exist between collective space and private spaces and how these separations are subtly drawn within the generally acknowledged domestic space. I have mentioned Leboi, too, in previous chapters and argued that he was one of the most successful individuals who had been able to diversify their assets across the rural-urban interface mostly as a result of a particularly
successful livestock trading activity. I visited Leboi’s boma twice in total
during my fieldwork, the first time at the beginning of my fieldwork for the
household survey and the second time towards the end of my fieldwork
when I interviewed him to collect the information I am reporting now.

The second time I visited him, I could observe his boma in its entirety
ingcluding the interiors of one of the huts and observed the visibly better
features of the boma in terms of the materials and skills that had gone into
the construction. The hut we entered to have tea and milk was made of the
same common material (mud mixed with cow dung); however, the colour
tone tended more to the grey rather than the more common brown of most
huts in Maasai villages. He told me that the grey colour is given by the ashes
that are spread on the walls as well as floor and ceiling. Ashes are used
mostly to strengthen and improve the consistency and resistance of the
walls and avoid cracks where ticks normally reproduce. The ashes used gave
a much better look to the general appearance of the house, which seemed
warmer and cosier compared to the average Maasai hut. Instead of the
common three-stone fireplace, on one side of the hut the wall formed a
hollow that worked as fireplace and left a spacious hearth. Three holes in the
walls had been left at the time of construction and worked as windows as
they were filled with glass plates to let the sunshine enter the hut. In terms
of furniture the hut had a double bed as well as a more common bed with a
cow skin of the kind described above. He also showed me a particular
insecticide spray that he uses to get rid of ticks and bed bugs especially from
the mattresses where they proliferate. Bed bugs (kunguni) often enter
discourses related to development and hardship of life and have become
somehow a metaphor through which Maasai refer to their ‘resistance’ to
hard life and lack of comfort (chapter two). Not having ticks in one’s own
house is quite a remarkable thing and something that practically and
metaphorically improves and lifts up the lifestyle from the average ‘Maasai’
lifestyle.

The hut I entered belonged to one of his wives and he told me that the two
other huts had similar features. His boma does not have a hut to be used as
‘men’s hut’ as in many other boma including Tutunyo’s. He simply argued
that he did not need a hut for himself and preferred sleeping and receiving
guests in his wives’ huts in shifts. However, he had drawn within each hut his own private space with a simple curtain creating a private room with a ‘modern’ bed that he would share neither with his wife nor with other guests spending the night in his boma. Instead, each of his wives in their respective huts had a bed made of a cow skin placed on the ground, which they would share with occasional guests. Leboi’s choice, therefore, was in alignment with the previous case, in that, separations were drawn between the domestic collective space and private space. His choice however differed in that, he could afford to build a higher-quality boma encompassing the domestic space, where women performed the usual domestic tasks and, within this space, he had carved out his own ‘modern style’ private niche.

(Case 3). A final case worth being reported is that of Yeremia, who lives at the ‘border’ between the open grazing land and the urban environment of Kigongoni (Fig. 8 & 9). In fact, one of the roads or paths that people used to return to their boma passes by his house, after which one would just see boma, sparse flocks of herds, and no more ‘modern’ houses. The compound where he lived hosted two different types of construction, one of which was a three-room brick house. The other building was made of the same material used for the traditional boma but of rectangular shape and with a corrugated iron roof. The compound also included a pit latrine with an area used as bathtub, another room used for cooking, and a cattle compound made of trees and tree branches. The rooms in the brick house were respectively one for himself, one was occupied by his first non-Maasai first wife and children and the third one was reserved to guests. The mud house hosted his second wife, who is of Maasai ethnicity and visibly younger than both himself and his first wife.

Yeremia is a very talkative and laid back middle-aged Maasai man and, on one occasion, he told me how he ended up living in his present house. He used to live in another sub-village bordering Baraka but belonging to the Losirwa village called Munghere. There he was living with his first wife, who is of the ethnic tribe of Arusha. The topic of socio-cultural differentiation between Maasai and Arusha especially in an urban and peri-urban context would require a study of its own. For the argument I am pursuing here, it will suffice to point out that interethnic marriages between Maasai (men)
and Arusha (women) often carry at the micro scale the same issues that are
at stake at the macro level: for a Maasai man to marry an Arusha woman it
entails, from a certain point of view, an advancement of his own socio-
economic status.

When Yeremia moved to Losirwa/Kigongoni, he soon encountered several
problems due to some contestations involving the plot where he had built
his house. He wanted to move back to the village but his first wife refused
because she, according to his words, had now become ‘accustomed’ to urban
life and would not accept to go backward in lifestyle in the village. Once in
Losirwa/Kigongoni, he married his second Maasai wife. When I asked him
about the division of domestic space and houses he told me that his first wife
would never agree to live in the mud house but his second wife, being a
Maasai and from the village, would see the mud house in town as an
improvement in her life and would never dream of asking him to build her a
‘modern’ house.

The kind of organization of domestic space that took shape within
Yeremia’s house compound eventually hinged on different kinds of
assumptions and ideas connected to development, rural and urban life of the
kind I have described previously (Part I). The allocation of space hinged on a
ranking that enabled him to assign to himself one of the rooms within the
higher-quality house where he carved out his own private space. The lower-
quality house was assigned instead to his second younger wife who had a
weaker voice in claiming ‘development’ within the family considering her
origin (i.e. from the village) and partly her ethnicity (i.e. Maasai) compared
to Yeremia’s first wife, who gained the right to occupy a room in the
‘modern’ house having already become accustomed to urban lifestyle and
‘required’ better lifestyle because of her ethnicity, i.e. Arusha instead of
Maasai.

81 Arusha people share with Maasai language and most age-set features of society (Spear 1993); the
development discourse in Tanzania, however, place them at a higher position compared to the Maasai
in the first instance due to their agricultural practices that historically in Tanzania are surrounded by
discourses of modernity in comparison to pastoralism, which is deemed an archaic and disruptive
activity
These three brief examples, though not exhaustive, are indicative of the trends and shifts from the more common Maasai boma. All three individuals have made some choices (Rapoport 1969) which can be either to have a personal hut and improve it with 'modern' furniture but leave women’s huts more basic (case 1), or to build better huts for the wives and not have a personal hut but reserve for himself the better spot, i.e. the 'modern' bed (case 2), or finally to move to a urban environment and have two different houses of different quality for the two wives (case 3). Undoubtedly, the three household heads all had a greater margin for choice compared to the majority of household heads but their choices are meaningful in different instances. In the first instance, choosing to use part of one's wealth to augment the house is in itself a choice, namely, to shift from livestock as the only store of wealth.

Wishing to have a personal space within the boma as in case 1 is common among males. Nearly all moran I talked to on the topic of houses told me that it is one of their goals to build a modern house within the boma compound and that guests would either eat in the modern house but sleep in women's hut or not enter it at all. A common explanation for that is that “if a guest enters the modern house he will feel too comfortable and will never leave again!”. While the sharing ethos especially among moran has still powerful meanings in Maasai society, I should not mistake it with the willingness to reject outright private and personal property or belongings. In several instances, moran complained for not having the possibility of storing their clothes without others using them. Once I heard Paulo complain that other people would use his Maasai shuka when he left them in his mother's hut. While it is normal for males of the same age-set to share clothes, he told me that he often prefers ‘Swahili’ clothes (ordinary t-shirts and trousers) to Maasai clothes because ‘Swahili’ clothes are not very popular among his Maasai age mates and not many other people would wear them. Sharing (or not sharing) clothes is not much different from sharing (or not sharing) a space, in this case, a modern house. It is through building a modern house or ‘modernisation’ of the ‘traditional’ boma or hut that individuals intend to carve out their own personal space while still complying with the rules of sharing.

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Case 2 here confirms such a tendency. Leboi had the economic availability to build a boma with better materials and generally of a higher standard compared to the majority of the boma in the village. He placed in each single hut one cow skin and one ‘modern’ bed, the former for his wife and the latter for himself. He said that the bed is a personal possession and that guests would not be allowed to sleep on it but would sleep on the cow skin. The modernisation of the domestic space therefore goes hand in hand with a neat differentiation between the common space of sharing and the private space of individuality. The relationship between sharing and individuality is evidently related to the gender dimension; where the domestic space undertakes renovations and improvement, the carving out of the individual space is unquestionably male space and women are kept separated from it as in case 1 and partly in case 2 where the private space is embodied in the ‘modern’ bed. Case 3 in part differs from the first two cases in that it adds a further dimension that has to do in part with the relationship with urban and rural lifestyle, which I will develop in the next section.

Talle (1987) had envisioned a process of increasing weakening of women’s status and autonomy caused by increasing commoditization of livestock that undermines women’s rights over it. The evolution of the material expression of the house (from ‘traditional’ huts to ‘modern’ houses) augmenting males’ rights over ‘development’, she argued, contributed to a diminishing autonomy of women as ‘heads of the house’. The description and analysis I have proposed in this and the previous section contradict Talle’s prophecy; as it happens with livestock and its composite management that does not exclude ‘tradition’ as domain of elders, changing built house forms do not compromise the importance of women’s role and position within the domestic space as it was underlined by feminist anthropology. Instead, as I will try to illustrate in the next section, the domestic space as women’s prerogative remains intact and males seek to access ‘development’ mostly at the rural-urban interface and in the urban economy.
3. THE URBAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT BETWEEN COLLECTIVE IDENTITY AND PRIVATIZATION

In this final section I will continue the discussion about how modern houses represent a crucial material investment through which younger Maasai individuals strive to attain individual development in the way I have begun to illustrate in case 3 in the previous section. In this final section, I will proceed with the description of the kinds of relationships between a ‘traditional’, collective domain of identity and a co-existing array of practices conveying individuality and individual agencies. To move forward with the analysis of these relationships, I will move on from gender relationships of the kinds I have been describing so far in this chapter, and proceed by broadening the spectrum of analysis from houses as material artefacts, to land, the built environment, and a more comprehensive examination of landscape as an analytical device.

Communal management of rangeland across Maasai villages in Tanzania represents a set of practices that denote a high sense of Maasai ethnic awareness. The rural landscape of Losirwa (Fig. 1), as in many other Maasai villages, despite the impression of an open and borderless environment with scattered boma, is subject to a precise system of land tenure and land management with the objective of preserving communal grazing land for livestock raising. Well-known Maasai indigenous institutions such as alalili and ronjo determine the division of space according to grazing rights but, at the same time, preserve the communal nature of land tenure. In turn, the reproduction and maintenance of this system enable, and are enabled by, the reproduction of social relationships within the village, which enable younger generations to gain the right of settlement. All these arrangements are communally agreed upon by the community with the supervision of elders who are at the core of the decision making process.

The ethnic label attached to land within the rural landscape of Losirwa is continually affirmed by villagers in Losirwa, who would always express their

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82 Alalili: see footnote 77, ronjo: village land set aside for grazing only where settlements are prohibited, eindurra: mobility
83 Regular meetings are organized within the community to discuss issues relating to village land management. These meetings are known as enkikuanna-oo-enkishu (meeting of the cows)
unwillingness to sell land or let ‘Swahili’ people build their houses in proximity to their *boma* as eventually they would illegally take over a much larger piece of land than that they had purchased. Collective decision-making and traditional institutions are instrumental to the assigning of grazing rights as well as the right to settle within village land. Such a right is hardly granted to ‘outsiders’, whereas local youths are those who are supposed to have priority to settle with their own *boma*. One prominent elder I interviewed on the topic of village land and settlements once argued that:

Maasai people trust each other but, if one granted the right to build to a non-Maasai (a ‘Swahili’), he would trespass the limits he has been given and will take over somebody else’s plot. Swahili people should never be allowed to build within the village land because they only bring problems and they are not to be trusted. (25th March 2012)

Traditional leaders (*ilaiguanak*), the same elder continued, still have the role as guardian of village land and have the power to mediate land disputes in the village and to grant the right for settlement. Matters involving land in the village, in the first instance, are dealt with between the disputers and traditional leaders and, only in a second instance, may cases be brought to the village government. The authority of traditional leadership is strong enough to assign legal status and recognition to decisions taken in the village in matters regarding land. Tribal identity is, in fact, what allows traditional leadership to be acknowledged and respected. The same elder told me that when a case is brought to leaders and a decision has been taken (for instance a plot has been granted to somebody), no other discussion nor official documentation is needed.

These types of communally-agreed arrangements in matters of rangeland management have survived in several Maasai communities (for example, Losirwa) despite the well-recorded history of controversies involving land management in Tanzania. Cases of eviction, dispossession, and resettlement have involved many areas formerly managed communally by pastoralists in Tanzania on behalf of privatization and creation of reserves for wildlife conservation (Brockington 1999, 2002, Igoe & Brockington 1999). The way Maasailand (or Maasai landscape) is evolving in contemporary Tanzania definitely shows the battle between the struggle to preserve land and
everything it represents, including ethnic identity, and processes of commoditization. These processes are not limited to the case of the Maasai but are underway in many parts of East Africa and the world (Basso 1996, Searles 2010). As Shipton (1989) has argued in the case of the Luo of Kenya, processes of commoditization of land entered the peasant economy leading to a deterioration of the connection between people and the cultural icons that tie humans to their land and identity.

Throughout Maasailand, there is a rising shift from communal to individual land holdings, which entails a shift from communal to individual land management and the consequent weakening of traditional institutions. The close association between land and identity manifests itself as management arrangements (allowed as well by the existence and persistence of traditional institutions such as alalili and ronjo) are put under stress by privatization, including farming at the expense of livestock grazing. In other areas of Monduli District to which Losirwa village belongs, the processes of privatization of land has led to the outright disappearance of the areas of alalili and ronjo. Beginning in the 1960’s, land privatisation accelerated in Monduli District in a great part due to a series of factors such as an influx of Arusha farmers from the outskirts of Arusha town and other areas taken over by the army \(^{84}\). Seeing the rangelands increasingly converted into farmland, pastoralists of Monduli have encroached on the communal land as a way to secure land for themselves. In Mti Moja, the process of land parcelling for agriculture began between 15 to 20 years ago, causing a chronic lack of pastures for livestock \(^{85} \). In Emairete, the only communal areas that remain are the cattle routes \(^{86} \). Even in Losirwa Village where communal arrangements are still strong, the chairman reported that the community has increasingly had to resist pressure over the area of ronjo which nonetheless, to date, continues to be managed communally. In Emairete, I recorded contrasting opinions on the actual situation in terms of mutual support expressed through the acceptance of outsiders in the village rangeland for grazing purposes. A young Maasai man argued: “We are Maasai. We cannot refuse anybody to graze their cows on our land, not even

\(^{84}\)ibid
\(^{85}\)ibid
\(^{86}\)ibid
the land that is owned privately”\textsuperscript{87}. An elder, however, had a different opinion:

In the past we used to have oloker\textsuperscript{88}. It was unthinkable to refuse somebody to graze his cows in communal areas; even people from Kenya were being welcomed. Nowadays, the situation is different. You have to ask for permission to graze your cows. Everywhere is owned privately and individually. You cannot move without asking permission. Sometimes you move to a place and then you have to leave because people refuse to welcome you.\textsuperscript{89}

In Losirwa, issues connected to commoditization of land are rapidly rising and originate in the high market potential of peri-urban land in Kigongoni. It is, in fact, the rapidly growing peri-urban tissue of Kigongoni that constitutes a major threat to the pastoral way of life of the kind already experienced much more intensely in other villages of Monduli District, such as Mti Moja and Emairete. While traditional leadership and collective management of land are still powerful enough in Losirwa to avoid important areas such as ronjo, alalili and cattle routes from entering the domain of commoditization, urban land of Kigonogni is the subject of contestation and increasingly the buffer zone that separates Losirwa from Kigongoni is entering these dynamics. Rather than representing a collective identity, land in Kigongoni is the equivalent of individual profit-making, accessed largely through the building of houses for the opening of business activities such as shops and bars or rented out to tenants. People talk about land in town by using a kind of jargon that pertains to the realm of profit-making, business, and commercial transactions. Within narratives and discourses surrounding the urban landscape, the more the environment acquires a clearly recognisable ‘urban’ look expressed by ‘modern’ cement houses, the more the language used reveal the ideals of profit-making and private development.

Despite pressure over land at the border, the peculiarities of the rural-urban interface in Losiriwa and Kigongoni has created a situation in which, just as happens with the management of livestock, Maasai individuals, at least those who intend to, or already own, plots, can mediate between the

\textsuperscript{87} ibid
\textsuperscript{88} Another name for alalili (see footnote 77)
\textsuperscript{89} ‘Community and Government planning together for climate resilient growth’ http://pubs.iied.org/10075IIED.html
two different arrangements with respect to land management without affecting significantly the pastoral economy and the pastoral way of life as it has happened in other villages. Maasai villagers of Losirwa partake in the practices and ideas connected to village land described above and target urban land in Kigongoni, rather than open rangeland for their projects of diversification through the construction of ‘modern houses’ to access the kind of individual development that can lead to economic success and big-man-ship in the urban economy.

With an eccentric metaphor of the city ‘entering his mouth’, one moran once explained to me his supposedly successful relationship with the urban economy through which he had been able to secure several acres of land in Kigongoni. His plan, as he explained to me, was to sell part of the land he owned to obtain the necessary capital to start building houses in town, which would bring him cash profit to further develop his economic conditions and status. Another informant recounted to me the strategy he pursued to build his own house in Kigongoni by draining resources from his own cash capital and family herd. He began with an initial capital gathered in a period of two months by allocating part of his salary to buy the initial materials he needed to get started. He continued to save part of his salary for house construction but, this time, purchased goats and waited (for the goats to breed) until he could sell a stock of goats big enough to purchase cement and pay labour. Finally, in order to complete the house and turn it into a profitable asset by renting it out, he decided in consultation with his family to sell five cattle that would fetch enough money to purchase the corrugated iron roof, window frames and the remaining materials. After finishing an initial two-room house that he quickly rented out, he continued to invest his salary directly or converting it first in livestock to build additional rooms and improve services such as electricity and a water tank.

At the time of our conversation, his house had eight rooms, all rented out at a monthly lease of TSH 18,000\(^90\) per month. Having started with a two-room house which gave him only TSH 8,000\(^91\) profit per month he was now earning around one hundred and fifty thousand shillings monthly that he manages as he wishes to deal with his family’s needs and his own expenses.

\(^{90}\)Around 10 USD  
\(^{91}\)Almost 5 USD
The strategy he employed involved partly extracting value from a pool of resources, namely livestock, that are managed collectively at the level of the family as illustrated in the previous chapter, to pursue individual accumulation in the form of an asset (houses) that is detached from the entitlements and property relations that are typical of livestock in the village. Furthermore, the house in town gives him a money income that he can manage individually.

3.2 Maasai ethnic landscape and private gains

With these changing dynamics between communal management and privatization centred around land, the fragmentation of the landscape is not to be judged unilaterally as a negative effect of commoditization since some Maasai individuals are able to take advantage of it and, overall, the majority of younger villagers of Losirwa work towards diversification of their assets that supposedly involves investments in land and ‘modern houses’. Even though commoditization of land was and still is, as Shipton (1989) showed in the case of the Luo of Kenya, a growing phenomenon in east Africa that affects negatively a collective sense of identity, I have tried throughout this thesis to shift from a linear process that sees commoditization as the factor leading to the deterioration of social organization, ‘tradition’, and identity. On the contrary, I suggest that commoditization leads rather to the rise of co-existing and overlapping registers of value that affect the way ethnic identity undertakes transformations as it shapes and determines economic life.

As Barbara Bender has put it: “The landscape is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate and contest it. It is part of the way in which identities are created and disputed, whether as individual, group, or nation-state” (Bender 1993, p. 3). The way Maasai individuals of Losirwa engage with the fragmented landscape of Losirwa/Kigongoni does, in fact, as Bender argues, have implications that have to do with the manifold nature of Maasai ethnicity across the rural-urban interface. Maasai ethnic identity at the Losirwa/Kigongoni interface does not only determine communal land management within the rural economy but becomes an ‘asset’ in many matters involving land within the peri-urban environment when the
essential character of Kigongoni as the extension of the (Maasai) village is affirmed. Ethnicity enters these dynamics in Tanzania as in other parts of Africa where formal institutions (for instance regulating land trade and titles) are weak, and identity, often ethnic, enters the political arena in the competition for resources (Hyden 2006: 183).

If within the rural rangeland of Losirwa being an insider (i.e., of Maasai ethnicity) is the necessary condition to gaining rights of settlement, in Kigongoni, the dynamics and politics of access to land change radically and land sales involve a much more restricted circles of actors compared to the village, namely, sellers, buyers and the local government leaders. The Losirwa Village chairman confirmed to me that land in town is openly traded as a commodity and does not involve traditional leadership or community meetings. The lack of the apparatus that regulates rights of settlement as in the village leads in town to endless conflicts and quarrels over access, ownership, and boundaries of land plots. In fact, settling land disputes in Kigongoni is a daily occupation for local leaders and prominent individuals who have assets and stakes in Kigongoni.

One informant, a Maasai of Losirwa active in the land trade in Kigongoni, explained to me how the underlying assumption put forward by Maasai individuals of Losirwa of Kigongoni as the extension of open grazing Maasailand has an effect, for instance, in the negotiations over prices of plots. He argued that an informal hierarchy based on ethnic identity and ‘insiderness’ exists in Kigongoni and that, according to such a hierarchy, Maasai individuals residing in Losirwa may try to exploit their status as both Maasai and insiders, whereas outsiders have less bargaining potential since they are not embedded in the local networks. He came up with a hypothetical case of a ‘Chagga’ (person) who arrives in Kigongoni not properly networked into the local society. To find and purchase a plot, he argued, the (hypothetic) Chagga would have to contact a local trader (such as himself) who would claim his own commission. Then the owner of the plot would begin with a higher price compared to a resident of Kigongoni or Losirwa. The final total price will certainly be higher compared to the price an ‘insider’ would get, since an insider would not even go through a trader but, instead, would have the information on which plots were on sale. The
same informant then said that, for an outsider, to break into the land trade business in Kigongoni would be an even more arduous task since he would find obstructions from local leaders unless he worked on 'social capital' beforehand (in the form I described in chapter five with respect to 'urban big-man-ship').

The village chairman confirmed that the idea of Kigongoni as an urban space, but also simultaneously as the extension of the (Maasai) village, legitimizes the preservation of Kigongoni as 'Maasai' space by discouraging non-Maasai newcomers. As he told me once: “if we sell land to ‘Swahili’ people they will build their houses and will call over other ‘Swahili’ and, in no time, the whole area will be full of Swahili”.

The narratives of land cases and disputes that I heard throughout fieldwork often exposed these dynamics based on ethnic identity, which influenced the settlement of disputes by playing on the advantage of Maasai residents. A first case narrated to me by the village chairman involved a ‘Swahili’ woman and a Maasai man from Losirwa and a certain plot to which both contenders claimed ownership. The woman accused the chairman of having (re)sold her plot to the other contender, unbeknownst to her, because of their common ethnicity and that she had been discriminated against and dispossessed of her plot because of her identity as a non-Maasai. The settlement of the dispute saw the Maasai contender prevail, according to the chairman, as he was in possession of a certificate showing the ownership of the plot. The case, however, was brought to the district court by the non-Maasai contender and was, at the time, waiting to be heard in the district court.

A second case I heard involved another plot in Kigongoni, which put one Maasai of Losirwa in opposition to a ‘Swahili’ man; apparently both contenders were in possession of the document certifying the ownership of the plot but the document owned by the Maasai from Losirwa had been endorsed with the official village stamp. The dispute was won by the Maasai contender but the other contender accused the chairman of having sided with his Maasai associate because of common ethnic identity after having accepted money, beer and *nyama choma* as compensation. While it is problematic to assess the factuality of cases such as these and others I heard
in Kigongoni, the narratives themselves in some measure unmask the power dynamics of land trade. Within the narratives of land conflicts, at the very least, feelings of disenfranchisement experienced by non-Maasai contenders recounted by the village chairman (including his own arguments on the ethnicization of the urban territory of Kigongoni) expose the importance of long-term residency as well as Maasai ethnic identity within the socially constructed territoriality of Kigongoni.

The dual system of valuation involving land across the rural-urban interface constitutes in fact the contemporary dynamics of social change occurring at the interface of preservation of the pastoral way of life and the pursuit of individually-owned land and houses. The case of Losirwa/Kigongoni narrates not merely a chronicle of detrimental processes of commoditization of land affecting collective identity as Shipton (1989) illustrated in the case of Kenya, but rather a condition of co-existence of registers of value which underlies economic diversification and eventually assigns land ambivalent connotations, that is to say, as inherently Maasai land but at the same time as equal to individual development and profit making.

As Hirsch & O’Hanlon (1995) have argued, landscape always finds itself at the crossover of “an ordinary, workaday life and an ideal imagined existence vaguely connected to, but still separate from, that of the everyday” (p. 3). If the ordinary and the imaginary merge in the rural landscape as purely Maasailand, the fragmentation of landscape at the interface between the rural and the urban represents the contradictions and tensions that exist in the contemporary Maasai society when it becomes embedded in the broader context of contemporary Tanzania. Maasai ethnic identity enters the imagined landscape when Maasai themselves capitalize on the supposed unitary nature of Maasailand across the rural-urban landscape in matters of land owned or traded privately. In so doing, land and landscape, in the same way as composite livestock management (previous chapter), carry the transformations and evolutions of meanings and ideas of, and practices connected to Maasai ethnic identity. This occurs by merging the aspects of identity that enable preservation of the pastoral way of life (in this case
CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have linked and merged different lines of enquiry and keys of analysis. I have departed from social organization viewed from a gender perspective and developed the analysis of the actual material expression of the built environment. After Rapoport highlighted the element of ‘choice’ with respect to changing house form and structure as I mentioned in the second section, Ingold (2000) has more forcefully and compellingly emphasized it when looking at the broader and surrounding environment in interaction with its human inhabitants. Ingold calls this interactive process a ‘dwelling perspective’ according to which “human beings […] are the authors of their own designs, constructed through a self-conscious decision process – an intentional selection of ideas” (Ingold 2000: 175).

This chapter has shown how the choices taken by the Losirwa Maasai villagers have shaped and continue to shape, in the first instance, the domestic space with the separation between male and female space and, through the preservation of the latter, the preservation of a collective space that represents collective identity and that is enacted through rules of sharing and practices. In the same way, conscious choices of young males to invest in land to build ‘modern’ houses in the urban environment reflect as well the intent to preserve open grazing land with all that it represents in terms of economic motives through the pastoral activity and the socio-cultural aspects of collective identity that are involved.

This chapter concludes Part II of this thesis and concludes the analysis of the state and condition of the Maasai group enmeshed in socio-economic processes that encompass Tanzanian society in a peri-urban ethnically diverse centre. With this and the previous chapters, I have tried to build further evidence to support the main objectives and themes that were laid out in the introduction. Part I looked at how the two spheres of collectivity and individuality are bridged and rejigged in a context of commoditization of short-term practices, such as consumption and exchange, and how the spatial arrangement of the rural-urban division comes out as a trope through
which these adjustments are conceptualized and handled. Through the analysis of longer-term investments and the visible effects that these have on the management of assets and material aspects of the environment, Part II has shown how these rearrangements are to an important extent deliberate and intentional and the result of the clash of different views surrounding ideas of development, wealth, and the individual.

In this Part (II), Maasai ethnic identity emerges as part and parcel of gender and generational dynamics within Maasai society and the links with a composite peri-urban society. I have analysed the different aspects of ethnic identity and its economic dimensions especially when they shape economic decisions, both short and long term, and contribute to build bridges between the two economic domains of the rural and urban economies while keeping cultural, social and moral separations between the two. In doing so, it has become clear that ethnicity is a composite phenomenon that is neither fully ‘primordial’ nor fully ‘instrumental’. Both Part I and II have shown that Maasai ethnic identity is part and parcel of the individual and collective identity ‘pool’ that is generated by practices carrying symbolic meanings that refer to ethnic identity itself. At the same time, the analysis has shown that Maasai ethnic identity is subject to processes of manipulation that underlie dynamics of power between different sections of the population both within Maasai society and at the multi-ethnic rural-urban interface.

In the next final chapter, I will expand on the ‘instrumental’ role of ethnicity whose effects on entrepreneurship I have already looked at in the case of the retail economy of Kigongoni (chapter three) and in this chapter of land trade. In the next chapter, however, I will move beyond local dynamics of Losirwa/Kigongoni and look at the broader organizational structure of the livestock market in Northern Tanzania. Unlike classic ‘instrumental’ approaches which tend to underline conscious choices in ‘manipulating’ ethnicity for the pure sake of individual benefit (e.g. Cohen 1969), I will refer to Maasai ethnicity as a ‘market institution’ (North 1990), which merges collective forms of identification and social organization prior to the market with their ‘instrumentality’ in and for the market, revealing in the last instance, once again, the inherently indefinite, composite, and diverse nature of Maasai ethnicity.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Maasai ethnicity in the livestock market

INTRODUCTION

As I delineated in the historical reconstruction of processes of monetization, commoditization and market integration in chapter one, the Maasai pastoralists of Tanganyika/Tanzania have historically been encompassed and targeted by policies regulating markets as part of a broader geographical and organizational marketing structure in the east African block. In this chapter, I depart from this historical background to analyse the present state of affairs of the livestock market in Tanzania in the era of neoliberalism with the objective to illustrate how Maasai ethnicity plays a role as a ‘market institution’ within the regional livestock market of Northern Tanzania.

I argue that, in contemporary Tanzania, Maasai ethnicity is a ‘market institution’ in the way proposed by Douglass North (1990) and the economists of the New Institutional Economics (NIE) framework. Unlike the neoliberal market ideology, NIE accounts for a whole set of norms, institutions, and customs which are not necessarily intended and generated, in the first instance, as market-oriented or market-driven. Here, I will illustrate how customary practices in livestock raising of the kind described in chapter five, norms, conventions such as for instance customary law, all have currently become instrumental to the functioning of the livestock market, in that they aid Maasai market actors in their qualities as producers, sellers, buyers, occasional and long-term traders, to minimize costs, maximize returns from, minimize the risk of purchasing stolen animals, and deal with the constraints of the market.

The livestock market is taken as the analytical device precisely because of the historical developments which have associated pastoral Maasai with livestock raising and the consequential interventions that, by targeting livestock as a resource, have impacted on people’s life through projects of monetization and commoditization.
The co-existence of ‘traditional’ customary practices and values with those values that pertain to the world of commoditization as I have been describing throughout the thesis is not unusual within the market and, in different ways, it has been addressed by many anthropologists following different lines of thought. Bernal (1994), for instance, untangles the (apparent) "paradox of peasant production within capitalism" (p. 792) by looking at the multi-faceted strategies of production among peasants who integrate subsistence (or ‘nonmarket’) production with resources mobilized through channels that are typical of the capitalist system (e.g. wage labour). Authors aligned with the ‘moral economy’ paradigm initiated by Thompson (1971) and applied by Scott to the case of Asian peasants (1976), highlight the continuation of ‘moral’ precepts that extend rights of access to resources (above all, food) to a larger base even when peasant economies are fully embedded in capitalist-like systems. French Marxist anthropologists (Godelier 1972[1966], Meillassoux 1981) analysed the household production system and family-based arrangement of division of labour with a Marxist approach (that is used for greater systems) in order to understand the dynamics of inequality between different sections of the family. Evidently, markets are always part and parcel of greater constructions and forms of human organization to which free-market economics have left very little room (Dilley 1992).

1. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE LIVESTOCK MARKET AND TRADE AS A SUCCESSION OF (OVERLAPPING) LAYERS

My description of the market in this chapter will be divided into three different subsequent but overlapping layers with subsistence livestock raising and selling on one extreme, and for-profit livestock trading on the other. In between are forms of social organization that are instrumental to the market such as, for instance, Maasai customary law which, as will be illustrated, works as a base for trust in trade by minimizing the risk of trading stolen animals.

The possibility of a co-existence of different layers that merge practices of subsistence with profit-oriented trading within a unitary organizational
system had been anticipated by Bohannan & Dalton (1962) who outlined three main types of communities arranged according to the existence (or absence) of the ‘market principle’ (p. 4-5). These three types of communities however were considered in isolation from rather than in interaction with each other.

More recently, a few studies of the intersection of ‘the market’ with the broader surrounding socio-cultural background in the era of neoliberalism in Tanzania have appeared. For instance, Fleisher (2000) advances Dalton & Bohannan’s position by showing how, among the Kuria of North western Tanzania, the same cattle holders may, at the same time, pursue composite strategies and herd management through buying-selling cattle as a way to retain the ‘traditional’ status quo (i.e. ‘customary’ practices) while also partaking in the raiding ‘business’ driven by the ‘market principle’ through direct involvement, or indirectly by seeking benefits from those who are directly involved (Fleisher 2000: 12).

Pietila (2007) presents the case of the Chagga in the Kilimanjaro region by showing how, through discourse and gossip, ‘the market’ becomes ‘domesticated’ and how the neoliberal policies have not merely changed market regulations (by waiving them), but have contributed to create a situation of ongoing negotiations at the local level and within the domestic realm (p. 3).

These case studies show that the dynamics of integration between the ‘market’ and other aspects of social cultural and political life are common in Tanzania. Similar dynamics exist within the regional market of Arusha region, at least in the light of webs of interconnections that link local realities of subsistence pastoralism with commercial urban and peri-urban enterprises. For instance, in Arusha region, most businesses serving nyama choma (roast meat) obtain their supplies from primary and secondary markets or directly from pastoralists of Maasai ethnicity (Letara, MacGregor & Hesse 2006).

With the contemporary vision on the livestock market that has been taking shape since the beginning of the neoliberal era, local realities of livestock raising have remained unaddressed in their connections with the recognized market networks. The ‘market’ has received support from
government and donor-led programs in the form, for example, of investments in market infrastructures on the assumption that pastoralists want and are eager to sell their animals and that better market services is the answer to an array of challenges such as environmental degradation (e.g. soil erosion), poverty, and food insecurity (McPeak & Little 2006).

The following analysis of the market organised according to a succession of (overlapping) layers and the role of (Maasai) ethnicity may shed some light on the actual on-the-ground market dynamics and aid future policy debate.

1.1 Layer 1. Sales: herd reproductive potential and family decision-making process

Despite several attempts on the side of national governments to ‘modernise’ the livestock sector mainly through ranching, to date in Tanzania (as in other countries in Africa), the greatest share of livestock raised and marketed comes from the mobile ‘traditional’ pastoral system of which Maasai are one important group (Williams et al. 2010: 4). For that reason, the importance of the ‘traditional’ Maasai family as the first actor of the market is undisputable. Families in the rural areas are the main producers of the livestock bought and sold in the marketing system in Tanzania.

Within the traditional Maasai family (such as for instance the Tutunyo), livestock sales, in terms of the animals selected for sale, depend on two major factors, namely, the need to gain enough money for ordinary expenses, and the need to preserve the fertility potential of the family herd. Each sale of an animal, therefore, is intended to find a balance between these two criteria. One Maasai informant in Losirwa summarized his initial strategy for the judgement of animals when he decides to sell saying that the initial major criterion is the obtaining of the highest possible cash return. As he argued, the question that he asks himself when selecting an animal for sale is "Which cow will enable me and my family to carry on for one or two

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92 Some of the data used in this chapter were in fact collected for a project that intends to act on policy debate (see methods in introduction)
93 By ordinary expenses I also mean expenses that are ‘ordinarily exceptional’ such as, for instance, unforeseen health care expenses or children’s school fees
months?" Such a primary concern is counter-balanced by the need to preserve the reproductive potential or fertility of the herd, which is to say, animals that could fetch a higher price may not be a primary target for sale due to their strategic importance for herd reproduction.

Summarizing the viewpoint of the informants interviewed on selling strategies, the following considerations on the judgment of animals may, by and large, be considered logical and viable for the ordinary average Maasai family in Losirwa. As a rule, the reproductive power of the herd is retained by selling males in the first instance, especially those whose reproductive power is either declined, such as old bulls, or none, such as infertile bulls.

Another major criterion that intersects with the first two rationales has to do with the security of the household livelihood through human consumption of milk. Fertile females with a great potential for future reproduction (mature females that have given birth no more than two times) have a very high market value potential; nevertheless, they are not a primary target for sale considering the provisions the family needs for milk consumption. On the contrary, females that do not produce enough milk, sterile females, and old females are animals that are more likely to be targeted for sales along with bulls of the kind mentioned above. Fertile young females are the animals that are never sold except in extreme cases for unforeseen events and when no other animal that responds to the characteristics mentioned above is available for sale. Feelings of loss are connected to the sale of a fertile young female; as one male elder informant argued “some cows are like your child”, then referring to women’s feelings about the sales of their animals: “when mama finds out her cow has been sold or sees it being taken to the market, she nearly cries”.

Another important aspect involved in sales is the process of decision-making that occurs especially within larger *boma* with several household heads related to each other (e.g. an elder with his adult married sons). Another informant who lived in Losirwa village in a large *boma* with his father and four other brothers (of whom one *korianga* still unmarried) gave an account of the habitual and conventional practices in terms of negotiations within the family that occur within the decision-making process when one of the household heads intends to sell one of his animals. A family
meeting is called within the *boma* in the presence of the *boma* head (the father); the intent of the meeting is to assess the possible alternatives in selecting the animal to sell. If the prospective seller cannot dispose of animals that are suitable for sale, i.e. animals that respond to the characteristics outlined above, one of his brothers may offer one of his bulls that would likely fetch a higher price and, in exchange, would be given a milking cow. In this way, the reproductive potential of the herd is retained and returns in cash too are maximised. Both actors involved in the negotiations will benefit from the exchange: the prospective seller will gain a higher return in cash and his brother will get a milking cow whose use and reproductive value is higher to that of a bull. In addition, as the informant argued: “the good cows will stay within the family”, referring to the milking cow. These kinds of exchanges are a common practice within extended families but can even occur between individuals related by other kinds of relationships, such as neighbours, friends either within a village or even across villages between individuals related for instance through clanship.

The role and presence of elders as customary authorities that advise on sales (see chapter five) ensure that the two objectives that drive sales (maximising cash returns while preserving herd fertility) are achieved. In the end, the control of elders over sales contributes to maintain the ‘traditional’ sphere of exchange within the family and community by setting restrictions and control to the commoditization of animals that belong to the latter sphere. For instance, animals that have been received as a gift on the occasion of celebrations or weddings are kept out of the sphere of commoditization for an undefined period of time. On one occasion, Lekishon told me his father would not let him sell a milking cow he had received as gift, at least not until it gives birth to one or two calves. On another occasion, I witnessed the upset reactions of the members of the Tutunyo family when Papaiai, another *korianga* from the related Ntii family, had sold three calves that he had been offered as gift by some of the Tutunyo/Ntii *korianga* (including Loshiro) for the inauguration of a house he had recently finished building in Kigongoni. For that matter, the father called a family meeting with his sons to express his consternation for the whole situation and later on, Loshiro confided to me that Papaiai had disrespected (*kudharau*) his
father by selling calves that he had received as gifts from family members and that he had let the craving of money (*tama ya hela*) take over.

1.2 Layer 2. Market and ethnicity

1.2.1 Trust, mistrust, and customary law (1)

The following layer of the market breaks the boundaries of the family domain and encompasses communities of individuals sharing Maasai ethnic identity. One contention often heard from Maasai people is that they (the Maasai) trust each other and are not like the rest of the Tanzanian population (i.e. the ‘Swahili’). When referred to the livestock market, the arguments of trust are advanced for instance in cases of trade of stolen animals. Maasai pastoralists are eager to stress that purchasing an animal from another Maasai seller involves only a very slight probability of risk of dealing in stolen animals because of the presence of *wazee* (elders). Prior to working in the livestock market at large, trust works as a common ground across Maasai villages and communities with elderhood working as an institution that is characteristic of Maasai society and that has developed historically in Tanzania among the Maasai (Hodgson 2001) and in other African countries that were under British administration during the colonial period (Chanok 1989)94.

Despite the emphasis on trust, cases of theft in Maasailand are not an exception; throughout fieldwork, I heard of several cases of animals stolen from a certain *boma* in a given community and resold in another village to another Maasai individual. What is distinctive of such cases is that the disputes were settled in all cases within customary channels rather than through state law. The first case I heard of involved a group of *nyangulo* as

94Chanok (1989) argues that the misinterpretation of British administrators (as well as anthropologists) and their efforts at freezing existing flexible laws and rights neglected the existence of personal and individual motives or interests of particular segments of society. The consequence of this short-sightedness was that in much of colonial Africa elder males gained power over other categories such as women and juniors. Among the Maasai in British Tanganyika, Hodgson (2001) argues that elderly men were able to forge strong alliances with administrators with whom they developed a fixed system of customary law which would favour their interests and strengthen their authority over juniors and women. Importantly, with respect to theft, Maasai elders in collaboration with administrators strove to repress cattle raiding by *moran* in order to protect their own herds (Hodgson 2001: 65).
offenders accused of stealing three cattle from the village of Selela and reselling two of them to a member of the Natii family in Losirwa and the third cow to a butcher in Kigongoni. In his capacity as Baraka chairman, Loshiro had been informed about the theft by the boma head who had suffered the loss of his animals. Once the details of the theft had been ascertained and the culprits identified, their families were fined according to specific rules within the Maasai customary law: namely, one cow as compensation for each cow stolen but returned, and five cattle for the cow that had been sold in Kigongoni and not returned (having likely been slaughtered) as “the owner will never see his cow again”, as Loshiro argued. The penalties were inflicted as a verdict agreed upon by elders from both the family of the accused and that of the accuser(s). The fines paid in livestock were in line with the system of fines throughout Maasailand, which includes penalties for other kinds of offences that break customary law arrangements such as, for instance, arrangements in grazing land management\footnote{Breaking for instance the agreements on \textit{alalili} (see footnote 77) or \textit{ronjo} (see footnote 82)} but also offences that endanger the wedlock such as adultery\footnote{A man caught in a sexual relationship with a married woman is given a fine by the husband of the adulterer woman that is usually a bull as well as payments in drinks (beers and sodas)}.  

A second case highlights the importance of the body marks (\textit{alama}) that work as signs of identity of the animals and their owners (chapter five). As body marks are recognisable signs of clanship within and beyond a single community, an animal that has been lost or stolen can be recognised either within the village or in a different community and returned to its owner(s). One elder in Losirwa reported to me one case of theft he had personally suffered two years prior to our conversation. Two of his cows had been stolen and found the following day in the village of Gelai a few hundred kilometres away. The animals were recognised by the body marks they shared with animals owned by other Gelai residents belonging to the same clan of the elder who had suffered the theft. The informant underlined the role that his \textit{alama} had played in tracing his stolen animals; he pointed out that the body mark carried by his animals was initiated by his own father and became known throughout Maasai villages as the prominence of his father as \textit{laigwanai} (i.e. customary Maasai leader) grew in Maasailand. The association of livestock body marks with elders and elderhood is critical as it
demonstrates the progressive gain in authority of males as they leave the life stage of *moranhood*, get married, and 'become’ elders.

Younger males in the stage of *moranhood* concur when affirming that theft cases and other disputes would not be easily settled without the presence of elders. One *moran* argued that “it is unlikely that young people meeting to discuss a case will find a feasible solution, they will likely end up arguing and fighting”. On the contrary, elders “are quiet, speak slowly and never yell at each other like young people. Even if you have one elder who is crazy (*kichaa*) you expect that there will be another or other elders who will chair the discussion and reach an agreement”. As the same *moran* said, handing over a case to elders is an assurance for reaching a final agreement and closing the case with a clear verdict, which each party will (have to) accept and comply with.

Today, customary law is a very efficient apparatus made of livestock body marks, elders’ authority, penalties, and fines payable in livestock firmly grounded in the shared social identity and the practices that connote it.

1.2.2 Trust, mistrust, and customary law (2)

The effects of customary law reach beyond informal sales and local cases of theft and enter the market dynamics within more formal market channels, i.e. marketplaces, where sellers and buyers of different backgrounds, ethnicities and with limited kinship ties or other kinds of relationships meet to trade animals. To a significant extent, the dynamics of livestock transactions within the marketplace of Kigongoni, for instance, are affected by the customary system of law that is mobilized for theft cases. The customary law applied to theft of stock works mainly as deterrent for sales of stolen animals as it contributes to establishing relationships of trust between sellers and buyers of Maasai ethnicity regardless of kinship or other additional ties. Such a mechanism does not hold when transactions occur between Maasai and non-Maasai.

Located at a walkable distance for Losirwa villagers (from a few hundred metres up to 4-5 kilometres depending on the location of the *boma*), the
Kigongoni market is classified as a primary market\textsuperscript{97}. However, it is located in a strategic position on one of the main paved roads in the whole country (the road that connects the northern circuit of national parks) (Fig. 10), and attracts people from up to three districts (Monduli, Ngorongoro, Babati) (Map 3). Unlike the bigger Duka Bovu market on the outskirt of Arusha city, Kigongoni market is a general market with traders of all different kinds of commodities from agricultural produce to clothes. With regard to the livestock market only (goats, sheep and cattle), in terms of ethnic presence, while many individuals of Iraqw ethnicity also attend Kigongoni market, Maasai are, without a doubt, the most represented ethnic group. In fact, Losirwa Village is the last spot of Maasailand on the west side before the Iraqw settlements on the Tanzanian Great Rift Valley. Iraqw traders or sellers in Kigongoni market may be recognised by some specific pieces of clothing such as long sleeved jackets and a wide range of hats and sticks. Besides being a place for market and business transactions, Kigongoni market is an important centre of social life. Maasai living in different neighbouring villages on the eastern side of the market such as Losirwa, Esilalei and Selela use Kigongoni market not only for livestock sales or purchases but also for meeting with their kinsmen and friends. While Maasai use Kigongoni market facilities for transactions in both cattle and shoats, Iraqw individuals coming from the close areas of Kilima Moja, Rotia and Mbulumbulu on the western side trade mostly in goats and sheep\textsuperscript{98}.

Market transactions and negotiations between Maasai begin with the same rituals of greetings that are typical in Maasai society. Even in the market ring, a potential buyer will approach a seller standing by his animals, greet him and ask his place, family and clan of affiliation by using the expression: *ole 'ngai?* (literally, ‘of whom?’). It is common practice among the Maasai to identify the family or clan one belongs to and possibly find a connection through common kinsmen, which can become the headway for further conversation. The rituals of greetings to familiarize with each other are much quicker and more straightforward between Maasai and Iraqw or other non-Maasai. A Maasai approaching a seller/trader of other ethnicities

\textsuperscript{97} Primary markets are more numerous in number and smaller in size compared to secondary markets. Primary markets are usually located at locations that are off the main road networks
\textsuperscript{98} Information provided by an Iraqw trader interviewed as key informant
would ask him in Swahili the price of the animal(s) on sale straightforwardly, almost aggressively, and continue the negotiation for a few seconds before, in most cases, walking away.

The spatial organization of the marketplace indicates social differentiations based on ethnic lines. While the cattle ring is visibly and usually occupied to a greater extent by Maasai sellers and buyers, the division of space according to ethnicity is quite evident within the area set for sales of goats and sheep. Such a spatial organization is not imposed but naturally (probably involuntarily) created by the market attendants and their movements. Both Maasai and Iraqw sellers and buyers attend the market in groups, made mostly of family members, e.g. brothers, fathers with their sons or individuals who have joined in a trading partnership. The two (ethnic) groups tend to spend most of their time within their own ethnically homogeneous area, chatting and exchanging offers, bids and counterbids. Individuals and groups in search of animals to purchase assess the state of the animals on sale across the market, i.e. in both ethnic areas. In an ordinary negotiation between groups of different ethnicities (Maasai and Iraqw), the buyers (e.g. a group of two or three individuals, for instance, brothers or an elder with his sons) collaborate to persuade sellers to bring down the price of an animal (or animals), whereas, sellers join forces to resist persuasions and obtain the highest possible selling price. Each group exchanges ideas in their respective ethnic language once a price offer has been made.

Trust based on ethnicity manifests itself once a successful transaction is to be endorsed on both sides. A system of issuing receipts (kibali) to endorse the exchange of animals implemented in neighbouring villages of Iraqw ethnicity is implemented in Kigongoni market too by some sellers. It is mostly Iraqw sellers/traders who issue a strip of paper with the description of the animal (i.e. the colour of the animal), the name of the seller and the stamp of the village of origin. In the Iraqw villages of Karatu District which borders Monduli District and Losirwa Village, for instance, all sales are endorsed by the village government that, prior to the animal being taken to the marketplace, checks on the condition of the animal, makes sure that the animal has not been stolen from another household, and issues permission
Maasai market frequenters in Kigongoni tend to show indifference towards the system of issuing receipts as a way of minimizing the risk of illegal trade (i.e. trading of stolen animals). They simply argue that Maasai trust each other and, in case of sale of stolen animals, wazee would mobilise the necessary means and open a case of theft to be solved through customary law. Instead, many Maasai informants I interviewed stated that when they buy an animal from a non-Maasai they ask for the receipt. More than one Maasai informant asserted that he would not agree to conclude a transaction (i.e. buying an animal) from a non-Maasai without being handed the receipt.

One livestock trader of Iraqw ethnicity I interviewed as a key informant confirmed the prevalence of this kind of attitude and market behaviour on the side of Maasai buyers. He asserted that Maasai market frequenters do not partake in the system of receipt issuing organized at village level because of mutual trust based on ethnic identity. On the contrary, recounting his own experience, he argued that relationships of mistrust often underlie transactions with Maasai buyers or sellers; a Maasai buyer would ask him several questions especially about his place of origin and the whereabouts of his trading activity. A Maasai buyer would also solicit him to release the identification strip that shows the characteristics of the animal traded. His own viewpoint on how these differences based on ethnicity affect the broader market was negative in that, he asserted, the suspicion and attitude of Maasai buyers has caused his trading activity to shrink in the area of Mto wa Mbu where markets are mostly attended by Maasai. Instead, he has tried to invest in trade across longer marketing routes (i.e. Moshi) and bigger markets or to rely on Iraqw sellers in the villages of Karatu District. On the other hand, he said that mutual trust between Maasai is certainly a positive thing for the Maasai themselves considering the characteristics of the livestock marketing business, which requires having people to trust in order to be successful and avoid inconveniences.

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99 Information provided by a key informant (Iraqw trader,)
100 A trader who has been doing long-distance trading and is knowledgeable about the whole northern circuit of markets from Karatu to Moshi
1.3 Layer 3. Livestock trading

1.3.1 Traders and livestock trading patterns

Livestock trading for profit constitutes the final layer of the market explored here. Today, trading in livestock is a feasible income-generating activity and, although the conditions required to be successful are several and of a different nature, which means that only a few individuals carry out trading on a long-term basis, many other individuals sporadically conduct or have conducted trade in livestock by exploiting the potential for marginal gains.

At the time of fieldwork, five-to-six individuals from Losirwa Village were involved in long-term trade. The long-term traders interviewed had begun their activity between 1995 and the 2005. While still residing in Losirwa, livestock traders are very mobile within the regional market networks. Livestock trading and the pastoral activity are not mutually exclusive. Traders continue to pursue composite strategies of livestock rearing, raising livestock as family assets while trading in animals that do not enter the family sphere. In fact, all traders mentioned being pastoralist as their first activity (and their identity) and, as will be described, being pastoralists and part of a broader community is an essential prerequisite for the livestock trading activity.

Livestock trading is a profitable activity, especially during the high season, with low input costs besides the cost of purchasing the animals, and significant profit. In order to be successful, a number of conditions need to

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101 The traders interviewed attended mostly two main routes/market channels. The first has Kigongoni market as the main selling point for livestock bought in nearby markets (Karatu, Mbulu, Esilalei, Selela, Makuyuni) in Monduli and Ngorongoro districts which are at walking distance. The second route, used for sales of bigger numbers of animals, extends as far as Duka Bovu (i.e. secondary market on the outskirt of Arusha city) as selling point. Kigongoni market therefore serves traders in Losirwa as both a buying and selling point. A third option for traders is to sell to butchers in Kigongoni and Mto wa Mbu towns.

102 Livestock for trading is usually purchased and sold right away on the same day or after a few days (within a week)

103 Traders may trade from 4/5 to 10/15 animals per week during specific periods of the year such as after harvests. The gross income that derives from the sale of an animal is estimated by traders themselves to oscillate between TSH 2/5,000 to TSH 70,000 (between 1 and 40 USD) in ordinary circumstances, but it may reach up to TSH 100,000 (60 USD) in case of particularly fortunate deals in sick animals after treating them with drugs and reselling them. Net profit depends mainly on the money spent for transportation and market fees, which however rarely exceeds TSH 5/6,000 (3 USD).
be met, including the availability of hard cash, as high as possible a number of suppliers and importantly, connections that are instrumental to these first two conditions. The major source for these resources is the ethnically homogeneous community of origin of the traders, i.e. Losirwa Village. Connections and support found within the family and the broader community are fundamental to entering, preserving, and expanding their business activity. A mix of strategies, which entail taking advantage of different sources of support, is vital to avoid an early collapse of one's business activity. Two of the traders interviewed found all the necessary resources to begin with the trading business within their restricted family since their own fathers had themselves been successful traders during the liberalization turn in the 1980’s. Their own fathers introduced them to the business with initial economic capital raised within the family. Therefore, they entered the livestock trading business through what Quarles Van Ufford (1999) calls the *kinship mode* (p. 178). The three other traders interviewed used a strategic mix of the *apprenticeship mode* (p. 185) and the *self-made trader* strategy (p. 188), which is to say, they acquired the necessary initial skills by walking and attending markets accompanied by other Maasai traders but had to look for economic capital by themselves within or beyond the family.

The case of the two traders and brothers Leboi and Kilamian shows the composite strategy employed by traders that merge the three different ‘entry modes’ into trading mentioned by Quarles van Ufford. In 1995, Leboi was introduced by his own father, a wealthy Maasai elder who had enriched himself by trading livestock in conjunction with the neoliberal turn. He learned the basic skills from his father and received the initial capital as well from the sale of part of the family herd. Later on, he acted as business mentor for his own younger brother, Kilamian, with whom he worked for an initial period in partnership, including sharing economic resources. Nowadays, they conduct their activity independently from each other but continue to collaborate occasionally by borrowing from, and lending capital to each other or entering in partnership.

There are three main kinds of partnerships between traders: 1-lending to and/or borrowing money from each other; 2-joining economic capital
(money) to purchase large numbers of animal; and 3-sharing market information regarding animals potentially on sale. In the first kind of partnership, the conditions for returning loans vary between loans open to only two or three weeks to loans open to up to one year. Accessing loans is a major requirement to be successful in the business. Within the previous three years prior to the time the interviews were conducted, all five traders interviewed had borrowed a sum of cash between TSH 500,000 and TSH 1,500,000\textsuperscript{104} with the exception of one interviewee who stated to have borrowed five million shillings\textsuperscript{105}. Loans between traders are given on an informal contract and the conditions for repayment resemble the informal loans that are given between family members or close friends\textsuperscript{106}. The second kind of partnership occurs mainly when a trader does not have all the necessary capital to purchase enough animals with profit expectations. In these cases, a trader searches for another trader within the community to join the business venture, share expenses such as transaction costs as well as profit. In the third kind of partnership, the capital shared between two traders is of a different kind: when a trader has information on an animal waiting to be sold in the community but does not have ready cash, he shares the information with another fellow trader who may have the capital needed. Such a kind of information, which is different from what is usually referred to as ‘market information’ on price, is highly valuable and represents the only share that a trader puts to enter in partnership with another trader for the purchase of an animal. Partnerships of this kind secure for the trader who has participated with market information half of the net profit gained from the sale of the animal.

The first kind of partnership clearly requires the highest degree of trust between the lender and the borrower compared to the second kind even though the second kind of partnership, too, involves trust (e.g. animals may be entrusted to one of the traders either within the marketplace or during trekking) and a shared understanding of the optimal strategy for the sale of the animals (e.g. the markets chosen for purchase and sale). The third kind of

\textsuperscript{104} Between 300 USD and 900 USD
\textsuperscript{105} 3,000 USD
\textsuperscript{106} More formal money loans are usually endorsed by local leaders and sanctioned by written contracts that state the terms and conditions of the loan (i.e. time and condition of repayment). Loans between local traders in Baraka are commonly not of this kind.
partnership rather denotes the inclination of traders to support and help each other since the favour will likely be reciprocated. This kind of partnership therefore implies existing long-term relationships of trust and cooperation.

All five traders interviewed have, at some point, collaborated with one or more than one trader of the five through one or more types of partnerships. One of them asserted that:

We all have known each other for many years, ever since we were *elayoni*[^107] and we used to graze herds together. It is easy to communicate and meet since we all live close to each other and we do business in Kigongoni market. (4th May 2011)

Connections within the family and the community are vital for entering and maintaining a profitable trading business. On the contrary, traders asserted that collaboration with traders outside the community is limited to exchanging opinions on the conditions of the beasts during market days and communications on market conditions and prices. This latter kind of collaboration, however, has little weight in decision-making on the side of traders since traders, as they asserted, prefer to gain and update their knowledge about single markets mostly through physical repeated presence in the places of trade (i.e. the markets).

Ethnicity was, indirectly, mentioned by both Maasai traders in Losirwa and non-Maasai (Iraqw) traders residing in close-by villages on the west side (Kilima Moja, Karatu) as a factor in business partnerships. They referred to the physically different locations as a deterrent to expanding connections for closer collaboration. One Maasai trader in Losirwa for instance argued:

*We live here so we work with each other, we don’t go looking for somebody else outside. You don’t know what kind of people you are going to find outside your community.* (15th March 2011)

Another trader of Iraqw ethnicity residing in the area of Kilima Moja similarly argued:

[^107]: Child, here intended as plural
We live in our place and help each other, they live in their own. When we meet in the market, we do business there so that each one can go back to his place, that's it. (15th December 2013)

Lack of collaboration with other individuals outside the ethnically-homogeneous community was therefore not identified as an obstacle, nor a missing opportunity to trading. On the contrary, as in the case of the Maasai group, family and community connections that existed prior to the trading activity have become the main resource pool from which they drew the necessary capital. All traders were sceptical on the feasibility and practicability of establishing connections with other individuals for closer collaboration in trading because of the nature of the trading business, which requires long-term relationships on which trust is built.

1.3.2 Traders and sellers: clientelization and transactions

The community as a resource for the potential connections that are critical to the business activity is equally important when it comes to traders-sellers/suppliers relationships. Marketing behaviour on the side of sellers shows that opting for the closest market facilities and selling at home to a trader are the two most common strategies. Sellers would opt in the first instance for the market channel that present the lowest transaction cost108. On the one hand, a commonly shared rationalization among livestock keepers in Losirwa is that ‘business is business’ (biashara ni biashara), meaning that, regardless of the identity of the buyer, Maasai livestock holders argue that they would sell their animals to any buyer who is able to offer the best price. Some informants told me, for instance, that they can search for a trader either within or outside their own community, and either

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108 The risk of investing time and money to go to a faraway market lies in the fact that in some cases sellers are unable to obtain the price they had anticipated and would therefore return home without selling the animal having already invested in money for transport and other expenses related to the missed sale. Most Losirwa villagers used Kigongoni market in the majority of cases. Other markets used sporadically are Duka Bovu (also called Meserani) and Mbauda (both on the outskirt of Arusha city) and Selela, which is located on the road to Engaruka (Ngorongoro district). Only three interviewees, however, told me that they use or have used these markets and only when they failed to sell in Kigongoni. Duka Bovu market is mostly used for sales of five cattle upwards or particularly big animals.
Maasai or non-Maasai and, in some cases, 'try' more than one trader in order to fetch the best price. Some respondents stated that they prefer not to sell at all to traders because traders often do not offer acceptable prices. As one interviewee told me, he does not sell to traders because a trader "knows that you are selling your cow because you have a problem and want to sell as quickly as possible", so he would rather take his animal to the market where power relations would be more balanced.

On the other hand, maximisation of return (i.e. gaining as high as possible a price from the sale of an animal) is considered in conjunction with other kinds of motivations and rationales for sellers’ choices. For instance, one informant stated that he would sell his animals only to his own brother who is one of the Losirwa traders. He argued that he would rather not let his cows "get lost outside the family". In fact, the majority of informants stated that they have a trusted trader whom they call whenever they need to sell an animal and they would sell to a different trader only if their trusted one is unable to buy the animal. In most cases, the trusted trader belongs to the Losirwa traders’ community (the five traders interviewed). Relationships between traders and livestock keepers/pastoralists in Losirwa were often built over a period of several years and, in most cases, 'business relationships’ developed out of existing relationships based on neighbourhood or family that are typical of a relatively small community such as Losirwa. As one informant argued with regard to his trusted trader: “I have gotten used to my own trader here in Losirwa. I have known him since we were young. So, I like to sell to him because I know he is going to give me a good price”.

Some of the reasons for livestock keepers (i.e. sellers) for selling animals to traders rather than in a market show that benefits from selling to a trader are not limited to the maximisation of profits but have to do more generally with some of the features and constraints of the livestock market which I will describe later. The rationales mentioned by sellers were:
• A trader can ‘help’ one to sell an animal quickly in case of unforeseen events, which require fast cash.
• Sellers ‘barter’ a possible higher price, which they might be able to fetch in the market with the ‘transfer’ to the trader of the risk due to the unreliability of the market (i.e. the risk to take the animal to the market and fail to sell, risk that entails a potential loss in terms of transaction costs).
• Selling animals in the market is considered hard work (jua kali, literally ‘hot sun’, meaning that it is hard to stand under the sun for hours bargaining with people) and sellers are happy to spare themselves time and fatigue.
• Sellers acknowledge that a trader can make profit out of their cows but that, at the same time, they can even fail to sell, or may end up selling at a lower price of that of purchase.
• The network of trust implies that even though a seller can get a better price in the market, he may opt to sell his animal to his trustworthy trader to ‘help’ him to make profit.
• Sellers may have access to part of the profit made by the trader to whom the animal has been sold (seller and trader may go to eat nyama choma together after the animal has been sold and it is the trader who pays for it, having cash in his pocket).

On the side of traders too, networks of clientelization with potential suppliers is a major determinant to be successful. Despite the presence of several markets within the routes I mentioned above (which means an ample availability of animals on sale), purchasing animals directly from livestock keepers within the community or outside the marketplace has a much greater potential for a higher return in cash once the animal is resold compared with buying an animal in a market and reselling it in another one (e.g. from Kigongoni to Duka Bovu).

Partly as a consequence of liberalization policies and the consequent end of measures of market control imposed from the top (e.g. auctions, weight and grade system of determining price value), the process of price formation has been left to the fluctuation of several determinants which in many cases are by no means straightforward and comprehensible (Adugna 2006, Andargachew & Brokken 1993, Barret et al. 2003, Barret & Luseno 2004, Radeny et al. 2006). Other kinds of factors such as physical distance from
market places (which leads to high transaction costs) and asymmetry in the access of market information need to be accounted for.

The very nature of livestock as a non-standardised and hardly comparable commodity may contribute to networks of clientelization especially as a consequence of total liberalization and deregulation. For Alexander & Alexander, in the case of markets of these kinds “knowing the prices one week is a very uncertain guide to the next” (Alexander & Alexander 1991: 504). Ascribing poor market performance to asymmetry of market information may be problematic; price (and price formation) is a vague and fluctuating tag assigned to a commodity. Alexander & Alexander, for instance, have argued that for Javanese, price is to be considered a range rather than a brute fact (Alexander & Alexander 1991: 504). These considerations serve as (partial) explanations for why the ‘eye judgement’ (Quarles van Ufford 1999: 177), bargaining, and networks of clientelization are employed by pastoralists and contribute to determine price formation.

In a context of uncertain price formation, a lessened potential of market information as a strategy for price maximisation, and structural market constraints, networks of clientelization arise within broader forms of social and economic life which, in the case under scrutiny here and, as others have argued (Quarles van Ufford 1999, Quarles van Ufford & Zaal 2004), come about as a synergy between sellers and traders within the same ethnic group, in this specific case, the Maasai ethnic group. Transactions between Maasai livestock keepers (i.e. sellers) and Maasai traders, for instance, reveal these synergies in that they (i.e. the transactions) are imbued with the forms of conviviality and sociability that denote shared ideals and identity between Maasai livestock keepers (i.e. sellers) and Maasai traders, and are very different from more straightforward transactions in the marketplace of the kind I have described above.

The scene of the transaction and negotiations is the seller’s household; having communicated by phone, the trader usually visits the seller’s boma to ‘eye’-judge the conditions and size of the animal on sale. This activity may be done in the presence of other individuals besides the seller and the trader such as the brother(s) and/or father of the seller. It is mostly the seller who informs the trader about the life history of the animal, such as, for instance,
in the case of females, the number of times the animal has given birth, age, any particular behavioural qualities (mostly in cases of bulls), e.g. whether the animal is nervous (mkorofí) or even-tempered (mpole), and other relevant health conditions. As one trader said, this is mostly a one-way activity with the seller (and possibly his brother(s)) trying to highlight the valuable qualities of his animal. The discussion unfolds in an atmosphere of trust on the side of the trader, who takes the information he is given as truthful while comparing them against his own (eye) judgement. As the same trader said: “I must believe what they tell me. And of course I know myself the worth of the animal when I look at it”. He added that the presence of an elder is an additional guarantee that the information is truthful and that no other relevant information is being concealed from him.

These transactions between sellers and traders are negotiations that occur between individuals who have the same socio-cultural background and have most likely previously concluded other deals in livestock. Transactions that are undoubtedly of a profit-making kind (especially for traders) are veiled by a kind of common and shared language that belongs to the realm of the family values, i.e. the shared values of sustaining one’s household and children. Sellers highlight the problem that has triggered the need to sell the animal. The ‘problem’ is in most cases the need to buy food for the family and for children. Sellers may use some widespread and familiar formulas to the traders, too, such as referring to their ‘hungry children’ (watoto wana njaa) and other constraints that are all well-known to the trader, such as shortages of pasture that causes cows to lose weight and catch diseases, as well as the consequent scarcity of milk that inflates expenses for mboga. On their own side, traders make use of a language that, at the same time, sympathizes with the seller’s ‘problem’ and uses the same formulas to veil the business principles of trade and profit-making. The trader highlights the uncertainty that trade business entails, which is to say, that he will go to search for good luck to strike a bargain in the market and gain even a small profit out of it. He would likely argue that he will use the profit to buy maize for the children and to help his wife to buy food for her household. Sellers refer to this strategy used by traders as ‘coaxing’ (kubembeleza).
The negotiation itself, limited to the discussions for the agreement on the price, is quite straightforward and takes only a few minutes; the bargaining usually begins with an offer by the seller with two or three subsequent exchanges of offers and counter-bids by each party. The buyer eventually sets the final price, which the seller will accept or refuse. The negotiation for the transaction of an animal, however, is followed by some activities of conviviality (besides the exchange of information that occurs prior to the negotiation) with seller and trader, such as drinking tea or milk, or eating food in the seller’s hut. The trader is likely to spend a few minutes with the boma head as a form of respect with whom he exchanges greetings and information on each other’s family members. In some cases, seller(s) and trader walk together to the market where the seller does his purchases with the money he has gained from the sale of his animal.

These kinds of negotiations and jargon that tend to personalize the relationships between sellers and traders while at the same time attaching a ‘moral’ connotation to the profit side of the transaction may be interpreted as a possible way of coping with the “trader’s dilemma” (Evers & Schrader 1994) of mediating between profit-accumulation and a moral social obligation for redistribution. The part that Maasai ethnic identity plays in other fields of the economy, which I have analysed throughout this thesis, enters the traders-sellers relationship and is revealed in negotiations that occur within single transactions. The tendency to underline the obligation to account for ‘moral’ rules between individuals who share the same ethnic identity beyond the maximisation motive becomes part and parcel of plain profit-making on the side of traders and maximisation of returns from livestock sales on the side of sellers.

The observations mentioned above on price bear relevance here, in that, livestock are commodities whose price could be better conceived of as a range. In a situation in which both seller and buyer are knowledgeable about the potential of the animal on sale, in order to reach an agreement, traders need to secure for sellers a return from the sale at least in line with the potential price a seller might fetch in the market. At the same time, sellers need to take into account the margin for profit for traders which, in other words, means for sellers to consciously settle for a price that is (potentially)
lower than the price (potentially) obtainable in the market. Informants showed that they were aware and willing to (hypothetically) give up a part of their return on behalf of the profit margin for traders; as one interviewee argued: “I agree with the price [the trader] gives me so that he can go to the market and get at least 5 or 10 thousand for himself”.

CONCLUSION

In the introduction to this chapter, I departed from the premise that Maasai ethnicity in contemporary (Northern) Tanzania works as a ‘market institution’ in the way devised by Douglas North within the regional livestock market. According to North, “institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction”, and their function is to “reduce uncertainty by establishing a stable (but not necessarily efficient) structure to human interaction” (North 1990: 1). Throughout this chapter, I have investigated the effects that Maasai ethnicity has on the livestock market on many different levels. From the level of the ‘traditional’ family to that of for-profit livestock trading, membership in the Maasai collectivity shapes the economic behaviour of individuals and the economic actions that belong to the complex arrangements making up the local and regional livestock market.

In this chapter, I have analysed how Maasai ethnicity in its aspects and elements of the institution of elderhood, customary law, a code of behaviour that balances self-interest and values of generosity and altruism, all together form the foundations upon which market exchanges, transaction cost, contract enforcement and property rights are regulated, addressed and defined. These last three elements have been some of the main preoccupations of new institutional economists and more recently of anthropologists themselves (Ensminger 1992), who have rethought the neoclassic approach and framework bringing to surface the ‘submerged’ aspects of market that neoclassic economics leave undetected.

After a long history of heavy control from the top (chapter one), the progressive retreat of state interventions has left space to processes of
market self-regulating that, as many have argued, has changed the rules of the game (Pietila 2007) giving way to the rise of alternative institutions (Tripp 1997) of which Maasai ethnicity can be considered a case in point.

Unlike other former British controlled territories (e.g. Nigeria) in West Africa where an indigenous marketing system developed historically without outside interference (Kerven 1992), market arrangements and organization in Tanzania today is shaped from the bottom but, at the same time, is also the result of ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ forces and rules that historically have worked in interaction and have affected each other. In this sense, the livestock market and Maasai ethnicity mirror each other in their history, development and contemporary forms uncovering the blurred boundaries and interdependent processes between social and economic change that have been under scrutiny throughout the thesis.
CONCLUSION

The analysis presented throughout this ethnography has tried to outline the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the economic life among the Maasai people in a Maasai village on the outskirts of a peri-urban centre. The significance of this study extends beyond the specific location in which fieldwork was conducted: mutual relationships between the rural and the urban spheres of social and economic life, exchange, and economy are not a peculiarity of Losirwa Village. On the contrary, throughout Northern Tanzania, Maasai communities are enmeshed in broader networks and webs of relationships beyond those that are typical of Maasai society.

Although previous research has looked at instances of social change caused by urbanization, and integration between pastoral and cash economy, this ethnography has tried to offer a different view, angle, and framework of analysis of social change that could be applied to other pastoral communities in Northern Tanzania and possibly throughout East Africa. The initial proposition was to shift from the kind of framework of analysis used in previous literature on pastoral economy in its integration with the cash economy, which has mostly treated the two as two distinct objects of analysis (see introduction). Also, it envisaged a step forward from ‘mainstream ethnography’, which has tended to look at the ‘market’ as threatening and antithetical to Maasai culture, tradition and society. In this study, I departed from the premise that commoditization and integration in the market economy are rather the terrain in which these are reproduced and negotiated.

In order to inform this statement, I spelled out two main broad objectives, which would enable me to overcome the limitations of the existing literature. Firstly, following Gudeman’s model of economy, I proposed to look at how individuals within a context of commoditization and integration in broader market networks play out the relationship between values connected to individualism and self-interest that are supposed to be regulating the market, and those that are characteristic of a collective sense of ethnic identity or ‘community’ which supposedly connote Maasai ethnicity. Secondly, I planned to investigate how this ongoing negotiation results in the
first instance in an ongoing transformation of the ideas and practices that are linked to Maasai ethnic identity, positioning individuals, especially young Maasai men, in a hybrid terrain where they negotiate their own identity between being Maasai and being members of multiple communities across the rural-urban interface.

Throughout the chapters, I have tried to provide a host of examples of circumstances in which economic practices and the values underlying them are reflections of the negotiations involved in the shaping of individual and collective ethnic identity. For instance, in Part I, chapter three, I observed how the values that work for self-ascription for Maasai in opposition to non-Maasai are negotiated across the rural-urban interface and influence Maasai retailers’ strategies to handle competition from other non-Maasai entrepreneurs. Chapter six and seven provided other examples of the instrumentality of ethnic identity in land trade the former, and livestock dealing the latter.

Intersecting these processes are dynamics internal to Maasai society that have been dissected by ‘mainstream ethnography’ (see introduction). What has come out of the description, especially in Part II, is that renegotiation of ethnic identity across the rural-urban context entails a renegotiation of gender and generational roles and that it is younger Maasai individuals to embody both processes across the rural-urban interface. Younger generations find themselves at the crossroad of a multiplicity of potential choices; even considering the struggle and limitations that they face in their life projects, they embody the contradictions and ambivalences of being ‘modern Maasai’ between ‘tradition’ strictly linked to the practices of the rural economy, in both its interrelations and mutual interdependencies with the urban economy.

Between Part I and Part II, I have focused on the description of the middle ground young Maasai men occupy in attempting to find a compromise between a plurality of value registers while trying to materially capitalize on the opportunities available to them across the rural and urban economic contexts. This peculiar and unpredictable condition of young Maasai generations contributes to maintain the balance of the rural economy and society. Elders’ status and elderhood, and the reproduction of the domestic
realm as women’s space I have analysed in Part II as instances of the ‘rural complex’ in the end constitute a piece of the puzzle which links to the rest of the socio-economic context through the mobility and adaptability of young Maasai men.

On the side of Maasai young men, the boundary between unpredictability or transience of their condition (with the built-in potential) and insecurity is fuzzy, and, in this thesis, in light of its objectives, I have certainly been more inclined to bring out the aspects connected to the former condition rather than the latter. Unlike their fathers, whose well-being in their old age is contingent on the well-being of the subsistence and relatively stable rural livestock-based economy, and unlike women whose interests as masters of the domestic space are directly connected to the reproduction of the ‘rural complex’, young Maasai men draw on a variety of sources and try to mobilize a wide range of resources. In this thesis, I have tried to look at how the undertakings of young Maasai men prompt them to build connections across a variety of spheres of social relations and I have focused less on situations of economic instability which they do experience in their everyday life and that have been so far prevailed in previous literature on the Maasai and urbanization (May & Ole Ikayo 2007, Talle 1999).

Many young Maasai men from all over Maasailand I have met during the years I have spent in Tanzania have experiences of work outside of their birth villages in big cities such as Arusha, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi doing a whole set of jobs. Some have spent periods in Zanzibar working as street vendors and tour guides. Others have gone on to graduate education and work in the third sector in cities (mostly in the development sector) and some have been fortunate to receive scholarships to study abroad to return eventually to work in Tanzania. The extent to which their undertakings are successful varies but a few months of struggle in a big city doing modest jobs in the worst scenario earns one a fairly sizeable flock of goats or sheep to add to the family herd, which is not a negligible return for a family whose livelihood depends mostly on livestock.

Focusing on young Maasai men and the multiple paths and economic choices they pursue has led me to achieve another important overarching objective of this thesis, which is to understand the character of Maasai
ethnicity today in the light of the history of Tanganyika/Tanzania and pastoralism in east Africa. The debate on the nature of ethnicity between ‘primordialist’ and ‘instrumentalist’ views on ethnicity in anthropology that I reviewed in the introduction helps comprehend the relevance of this question. It does as well, as I will spell out later, raise interest and significance both for anthropologists and policy makers when one thinks forward about the ‘future of the Maasai’.

For young Maasai men, being Maasai has a manifold significance that spans from a real internalized sense of identity to a ‘capital’ that they, at times, employ for their economic ventures. When commuting or migrating to more distant places for work, Maasai young men carry with them their own social and cultural background that is produced through the kind of upbringing and practices that are typical of the ‘rural complex’ (chapter five) described in the thesis and that makes up the ‘primordial’ side of ethnic identity. Throughout my own work, study and personal life experience with Maasai people, both in rural and urban contexts, I have realized how this background gives Maasai young men confidence and self-esteem and how they attempt to recreate familiar environments when they work and resettle in cities. I have personally taken pleasure in working and living with people with an incredible sense of belonging and attachment to their families, place of origin, habits, language, lifestyle, and judgement that I had not encountered previously in my working and private life in and outside Tanzania.

At the same time, this individual and collective cultural background does have a few important economic implications of the kind I have provided in the thesis when I referred to the ‘instrumental’ role of ethnicity as, for instance, in the regional livestock market (chapter seven). Even outside the local context of a peri-urban site such as Kigongoni, for instance in bigger cities, ethnic identity provides safety nets and vital connections for those Maasai individuals who find themselves in unfamiliar circumstances, contexts and among non-Maasai. Many migrants, for instance, obtain employment far away from their villages through connections with friends and co-villagers who decide to return home and hand over their work positions. Others leave their villages in search of employment without
connections but knowing that they will possibly find support in terms of shelter and food for the time necessary to get acclimatized in unfamiliar surroundings and gain employment. In cities like Arusha and Dar es Salaam, Maasai occupy relevant labour niches such as the security sector but also more financially rewarding markets such as the market in stones (i.e. Tanzanite) with an informal ‘marketplace’ in the city centre of Arusha for Maasai brokers to meet and trade.

Maasai ethnicity today exhibits its many facets as one looks into the manifold socio-economic setting in Tanzania between rural and urban dimensions. The analysis of Maasai ethnicity in this thesis contributes to intensifying and amplifying rather than solving the puzzle anthropologists have encountered in untangling the question of the nature of ethnic identity. Urbanization and commoditization in contemporary Tanzania have acted on Maasai society in unexpected ways. On the one hand, they recreate the conditions for Maasai tradition, culture, and social organization to perpetrate through the continuation of the ‘rural complex’, and on the other, they generate novel ideas and practices tied to Maasai identity, especially through Maasai younger generations, detached and independent from the rural socio-economic networks. This, however, should not come as a surprise; having in mind the historical background (chapter one), Maasai ethnicity has manifested itself in different domains and forms, shifting from an undefined feature of identity driven by environmental conditions in the pre-colonial period, to an institutionalized component of foreign administration (through indirect rule), to finally an (informal) ‘market institution’ in the era of neoliberalism.

**The ‘future of the Maasai’: research and policy recommendations**

As my final words, I wish to add here my own perspective on the understanding of Maasai society, ethnicity, and prediction of potential future courses and trajectories of development in light of the findings and conclusions reached in this thesis and in light of what other anthropologists and researchers have inferred.

Either explicitly or more subtly, many recent (and less recent) works on
the Maasai in one way or another treat the question of the ‘future of the Maasai’. Whether it comes after an analysis of pastoral practice (Rigby 1985, 1992), pastoral economic systems (Schneider 1979, Spencer 1998), history of gender relationships (Hodgson 2001), or the history of ‘the Maasai’ as a representation of ‘indigenous people’ to gain terrain in the national and international political arena (Hodgson 2011), the inferences that authors make in their works touch on the compelling necessity of envisioning future lines and trajectories of development. Such a preoccupation is indeed crucial for forecasting the impact of present policies on the welfare and prosperity of pastoralists as a significant section of the Tanzanian and Kenyan population.

Inferences made by anthropologists on the future of the Maasai do not seem to offer auspicious projections. Hodgson (2001) underlines the “uncertain and difficult future” (p. 272) that Maasai will be facing in a context of ongoing aggravation of their present marginal position engendered by decades of top-down policies and the paternalistic attitude of national governments that resulted in a progressive shift of resources from Maasailand to other areas of Tanzania. Elsewhere, Hodgson (2011) underlines the questionable achievements of the Maasai NGO movement which, as a prominent Maasai activist admitted, has succeeded in proclaiming what Maasai do not want, rather than setting an agenda of what Maasai want (Hodgson 2011: 211).

Hodgson’s judgement resonates somewhat with what Rigby had contended earlier in his Marxist analysis of the Ilparakuyo Maasai (1992) enmeshed in commoditization processes and capitalist relations of production and exchange. A distinct judgment that envisages future predicament filters through Rigby’s analysis of Ilparakuyio Maasai despite Maasai’s attempts to resist and oppose the capitalist system by maintaining and reproducing their culture and social organization based on pastoral practice, or as he calls it, pastoral *praxis* (Rigby 1992: 179).

While some of the considerations made by anthropologists (such as Hodgson’s emphasis on the historical progressive shift of resources from Maasailand) are indeed a reality that cannot be denied, I believe that from this thesis some divergent conclusions on the ‘future of the Maasai’ could be
drawn which are not in line with the considerations above. In the first instance, ‘the Maasai’ today cannot be regarded as a discrete social unit with a specific ‘tradition’ or culture as distinctive traits of ethnic identity spatially bounded as it may have been, for instance, during the pre-independence years when specific boundaries confined people to the Maasai Reserve first, then Maasai District. On the contrary, even though the rural economy persists in specific spaces that could be even identified on a map, ‘the Maasai’ in contemporary Tanzania may rather be regarded as an assemblage of individuals each with their own life experiences within rural life and, importantly, outside of it. Even though this thesis has described these developments within the limited spatial unit of a small peri-urban centre, I have mentioned in this conclusion how young Maasai men travel much longer distances in search of employment or business opportunities and many of them settle permanently in cities and only occasionally go back to their villages of origin. The ‘future of the Maasai’ as the reproduction and welfare of the rural livestock-based economy therefore provides an incomplete picture of the future of the actual Maasai people as an assemblage of individuals living throughout Tanzania and Kenya.

Secondly, having designed the analysis in this thesis of Maasai ethnic identity around the relationship between individual self-interest, and the collectivity, I have attempted to portray a specific type of social change that is not linear, e.g. from subsistence production to commoditization, but rather as an ongoing negotiation between the two. An ongoing process of negotiation between the ‘traditional’ rural economy and lifestyle, and a multiplicity of outside social and economic arenas, I believe, provides an appropriate analytical tool to make sense of the changes that commoditization and the market produce. It helps explain how and why average young Maasai men are not the only ones to live across multiple economies and communities. Even highly educated Maasai, of whom I have met a number, who live in cities and work for important NGOs, continue to have their own boma in their respective villages, and pursue parallel economic careers in their villages as livestock owners and occasional upscale traders, raising and trading better quality livestock such as crossbreeds (e.g. zebu mixed with borana) with the help of their kin in the villages. As long as
Tanzania continues to be a predominantly rural country whose greatest share of GDP is constituted by agriculture and livestock raising, and even with increasing pressure over common resources, my own personal prediction is that Maasai rural lifestyle, social organization, and culture will undertake some steady readjustments rather than major transformations to adapt to changing conditions.

From the perspective of future academic research, in the first instance, this thesis has shown that alternative analytical frameworks can be employed in enhancing the understanding of the socio-economic context of Maasai ethnicity and society today. Secondly, it offers several suggestions for future research as topics and issues discussed here can all benefit from further research and exploration, from the dynamics of exchange, entrepreneurship, and consumption in an urban context in relation to ethnicity, to ethnic politics of land. These are important issues that are relevant not only to the case of the Maasai and other pastoralists in east Africa but also to many other realities in sub-Saharan Africa as urbanization presses on.

Further research on livestock trade that contributes to policies may be useful especially in a context of increasing climate variability. This thesis, as well as other existing research should suffice to finally abandon the ideal of a fully commoditized system of livestock raising that overlooks the small scale local harsh environmental conditions in which many pastoralists raise their own livestock. There is no reason nor evidence to believe that the Maasai or other pastoralists would not have exploited opportunities for commoditization if the conditions had allowed them to do so. Pastoralists do take advantage of these opportunities where circumstances are favourable as I have described in this thesis, and many others wish to do so (i.e. through trading) but lack the necessary means. On the contrary, as I have described in the last chapter, the livestock market as a nexus of informal networks of business nature based on trust has a very lively potential and could be supported by policies and interventions departing from the existing indigenous informal structural organization as it happens in other realities (e.g. Nigeria, Kerven 1992).

Rather than measures such as quotas, taxation or licensing as in the
British and post-colonial past, more support could be offered both to producers to widen the channels through which they can dispose of their animals or enter themselves in the market as traders through loan schemes and other safety nets in case of financial hardship making therefore the livestock trading a less ‘elite’ business (chapter seven). Measures to support the sales of animals to protect pastoralists from the bitter rule of supply and demand, especially during particularly harsh environmental constraints, are desperately needed. If the present day trend of climate change continues as expected and droughts strike at shorter intervals, the mobility system will increasingly become insufficient to cushion the effects of (temporary) lack of pastures. Pastoralists will need support to sell at least part of their herds when still in good condition when the signs of a drought become visible, in order to avoid selling skinny and emaciated animals at unfavourable prices. Governments could act as purchasers and/or brokers to support pastoralists to sell faster and in less risky conditions compared to existing markets. Banking facilities and services tailored to the specific circumstances could also be offered to pastoralists perhaps in collaboration with telecommunication firms using existing services of electronic money\textsuperscript{109} in order to allow pastoralists to have at their disposal the necessary cash to purchase the livestock sold before a drought once pasture conditions begin to allow a higher capacity for grazing. Cross-sectorial research in the form of feasibility studies, economic assessments of potential market niches as well as more social and ethnographic accounts of goals and ambitions of younger generations to diversify their assets may be a powerful instrument for policy makers to address the climate-related economic issues that affect pastoralists within the rural economy.

The final recommendation for research and policies I want to advance is connected to the potential for research in the areas of urbanization and urban employment that I have been focusing on throughout this ethnography. In continuity with the historical background so well described by Hodgson (2001), Maasai people have been, and continue to be, targeted by policies mostly in their qualities as pastoralists; livestock, agriculture, and natural resource policies are the major policy areas that, compared to other

\textsuperscript{109}M-pesa (Vodacom), Airtel Money (Airtel), Tigo Pesa (Tigo)
areas, affect the lives of families and individuals across Maasailand (Homewood, Kristjanson & Trench 2009). However, a great deal of research on mixed livelihoods, including this thesis, has shown that an important part of income on which families rely comes from non-farm and non-pastoral activities. National policies and government interventions have made some attempts in addressing the development of pastoralists (i.e. Maasai) away from the livestock or natural resource sectors, for example, in the field of cultural tourism.\textsuperscript{110} In part, the NGO sector has succeeded in this regard through the valorisation of traditional handicrafts sold in the international market to benefit Maasai women in the rural areas.\textsuperscript{111} However, much could still be done in light of the actual conditions of present diversification patterns and aspirations of many to diversify their assets beyond the pastoral economy.

‘Doing business’ reforms already exist and Tanzania has been classed as a ‘top reformer’ in the field (Lyons & Msoka 2010); however, they have had very little impact on micro-traders and, in some cases, have had the opposite effect of further marginalize them (Lyons & Msoka 2010). A number of some possible interventions could be taken or at least contemplated either through cross-sectorial policies\textsuperscript{112} or by addressing the absence of interventions on non-livestock economy within livestock, land, and natural resource policies. Some of these interventions are the fostering of development of skills for Maasai to enter and compete in the employment market, create new market niches tailored to the Maasai (such as the handicraft market created \textit{ad hoc} for Maasai women), strengthen measures of social protection within the employment sectors already occupied by Maasai (e.g. security sector). If developed, all these ventures could certainly directly and indirectly improve the economic conditions of the rural population considering the strong reciprocal links between the rural and the urban economy.

To date, existing research has looked at urbanization, urban employment,

\textsuperscript{110}E.g. Cultural Tourism Programme initiated by the Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB), Ministry of Tourism
\textsuperscript{111}See an Arusha-based NGO called MWEDO and Tanzania Maasai Women Art initiated by the NGO Oikos East Africa
\textsuperscript{112}Some efforts in this direction (i.e. cross-sectorial policies) have been made for instance with the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA)
and economy as by-products or ‘side effects’ of changing dynamics and conditions (either for better or for worse) within the pastoral economy. The level of integration in the global market today requires a shift of approach from a one-way direction (from the rural to the urban). It requires looking at the mutual relationships between urban and rural economies with interventions focused on urban employment and business conditions side-by-side interventions on the livestock-based economy whose outcome has historically been criticised and subject of controversies among specialists as well as researchers.
APPENDIX I

INITIAL BROAD SCALE SURVEY – HOUSEHOLD HEADS

1. Unmarried korianga are not considered household heads and not surveyed
2. Non married seniors of older age sets are considered household heads

1- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a) Name
b) Boma No.
c) Wealth rank
d) Age (or age-set)
e) Level completed in school
f) Leadership position
g) No. of wives

2- WEALTH/POSSESSIONS

a) Make a list of possessions (e.g. farm, plot, ‘modern house’) belonging to you or to a member of your family and how you came in possession of them (e.g. purchase, inheritance)
b) List the possessions that belong strictly to you, to other members of your family or shared among people
c) Are you at present in the process of acquiring any other item/purchase any of the above? How recent?

3- NON-FARM, NON-PASTORAL INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

a) List the sources of income your household relies on besides livestock sales but including trading of livestock
b) Are you personally engaged in any of these activities at present?
c) How long have you been engaged in these activities?
APPENDIX II

Interview guide – PASTORALISTS

A. Inputs to raising livestock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal details:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership position:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth ranking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position in the value/supply chain:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Veterinary input COSTS (e.g. medicine)

The purpose of these questions is to find out how much money pastoralists spend on veterinary costs each year for their animals. You will need to have a general discussion to find out what veterinary services they use, when they use them (i.e. which seasons), how often they use them and how they pay for them – e.g. do they pay for services for the whole herd or just certain animals or a combination of both depending on the type of service? When asking about costs, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you understand whether the costs are per animal or for the whole herd.

1.1 Guidelines for data collection

For each kind of veterinary service collect the following information: brief description of the treatment (e.g. vaccination, injection), purpose of the treatment, frequency of treatment (including seasonal variations), animals treated, who treats the animals (e.g. government vets), and the reason for using different services; finally, the rough monthly or year estimate of cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Purpose of treatment:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Administration:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Animals treated:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dosage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Monthly usage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Seasonal variation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Purpose of treatment:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Administration:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Animals treated:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dosage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Monthly usage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Seasonal variation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. Paying for security

*Here we want to find out what investments pastoralists make to protect their herds. For example, how much did it cost them to construct their boma or how much do they spend on repairing their boma. In many cases, pastoralists will have inherited their boma from their father, so you will need to find out whether or not they spend any money or labour on maintaining it. Maybe, they have built additional boma for their dry season camp. You need to have a discussion about this.*

### 2.1 Guidelines for data collection

For each type of investment briefly describe the costs involved, e.g. days of labour, number of people involved in the construction of the *boma*, costs for material collection.

#### Investment 1

#### Investment 2

---

### 3. Hiring additional labour

*Here we want to find out whether or not pastoralists pay for additional labour (i.e. not his family) for looking after their animals (watering, taking to pasture, etc.). Whether they pay for additional labour all year or for just part of the year. You also want to find out WHO the hired herders are (where do they come from?) and HOW much they are paid and HOW they are paid (in cash, a heifer, in milk, etc.). Plus there might be other benefits for the hired labour such as support they get whenever they get family problems, medical treatment, clothing, accommodation& meals.*

### 3.1 Guidelines for data collection

Describe how the task of grazing herds is shared among the people of your *boma* (e.g. children graze cows in the morning, women return herds into the *boma* in the evening etc.). Does anybody else (i.e. not your *boma*) help with the grazing? Who? When (including seasonal variations)? How do you pay them? If you don't, why don't you (e.g. neighbours helping each other)? If you hire labour, when do you hire? Who do you hire? How many people do you hire? Why? How much do you pay them? (draw a rough year estimate of the cost of hiring)
4. Costs to access pasture, water, salt, etc.

You want to find out whether they make any other payments over the year. For example, do they have pay to access water – if yes, in which season, what type of water point, how much does it cost, can they negotiate, how is the payment calculated (e.g. per animal for a certain number of days)? ETC. Also ask them if they have to pay for access to pasture – if yes, in which season, why, how much do they pay (in cash, in kind), etc.

Consider also any additional ‘cost’ in entrusting herds in the customary movement of herds among relatives, clan fellows and/or friends; is there any ‘cost’ or expenses in terms of gifts, or other kind of commitment to be fulfilled in entrusting herds to somebody else?

4.1 Guidelines for data collection

Describe the seasonal patterns of pastures and water resources use, and the costs involved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wet season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dry season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
5. Contribution cash/kind to building LABOUR & PARTS

Here you want to find out if they have contributed cash or labour for building infrastructure that will have an impact on their livestock – e.g. dips, dams, etc.

5.1 Guidelines for data collection

Collect information on which village infrastructures and services are commonly used by villagers, who built the facility, who manages the facility and whether had to pay either for the construction (including labour) and/or for the use of the facility. Try to estimate how much (money) the informant contributed for the construction and the year estimate for the use of each service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure/Service 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure/Service 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure/Service 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Foodstuffs purchased to compensate missing milk calories

These set of questions has the aim to calculate the cost related to mobility in terms of additional purchases of foodstuff during periods when herds are away and cows cannot be milked: would cows (how many of them) be milked if not moved to distant pastures? It is however debateable whether such cost is to be considered a cost of meat production or a normal implication of mobility on which pastoral system of production is based...

6.1 Guidelines for data collection

Describe the pattern of foodstuff purchases during the year in relation to the movements of herds (i.e. whether the herds are in the boma and cows can be milked or not)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Milk intake</th>
<th>No milk intake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mboga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Marketing behaviour

#### 7. Animals’ sales

Here you will need to have a discussion to find out how pastoralists sell their animals (e.g. do they take themselves to market, do they sell within the village or do they use a middleman), which markets they use and why, whether they use different markets for different seasons and/or types of livestock.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Middlemen</th>
<th>Animals selected for sale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 9. How does negotiation work?

Finally, you want to find out how much power of negotiation pastoralists have over the price of their animals. Are they able to negotiate a price or do they have to take whatever price if offered? Do they have more power of negotiation at different times or for different types of livestock?
APPENDIX III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Inputs to buying and keeping livestock before market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Business profile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Here we want to find out how important the trade in livestock is to the trader – is it his main business. How many people does his income support - direct family members but also other people who are involved in or benefit from his business such as lorry drivers who truck the animals or people who supply fodder for the livestock while they are being trucked to market or waiting to be sold, etc.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How long have you been buying and selling livestock?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you involved in other business activity? If yes, which of these are more important?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[significance in % if possible]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important is the livestock trade to your household income?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people directly depend on the money you make from your livestock trading business – e.g. family members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people indirectly depend on your business – for example, truck drivers who transport the animals, vets who depend on your business, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From whom do you buy livestock? Do you have certain clients from whom you always buy? Do you specialize in certain livestock? Does this vary within and between years or seasons?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where do you sell the livestock you buy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the price setting and negotiation work – between (i) you and the person from who you buy and between (ii) you the person to whom you sell?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you invest in the livestock trade – approximate numbers of animals bought and sold over the past year/season; does this fluctuate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## How many other traders are there in the area? Do you compete or collaborate?

---

### 2. Input COSTS (e.g. labour and services)

The purpose of these questions is to find out the nature and magnitude of investment traders make on the livestock they buy before selling them, including the initial purchase cost. You will need to have a general discussion to find out what services they use, when they use them (i.e. which seasons), how often they use them and how they pay for them. When asking about costs, it is important to understand whether the costs are per animal or for the whole herd, per day, month, season, year. Below are some examples of services.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Veterinary inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Credit from the bank or a relative/friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Fodder, salt, water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Transport – hiring transport/paying own vehicle costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Hired labour to take the animals to market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Fees, taxes, licences, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>How does this vary by season?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>What are your profit margins? If possible express this as a %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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