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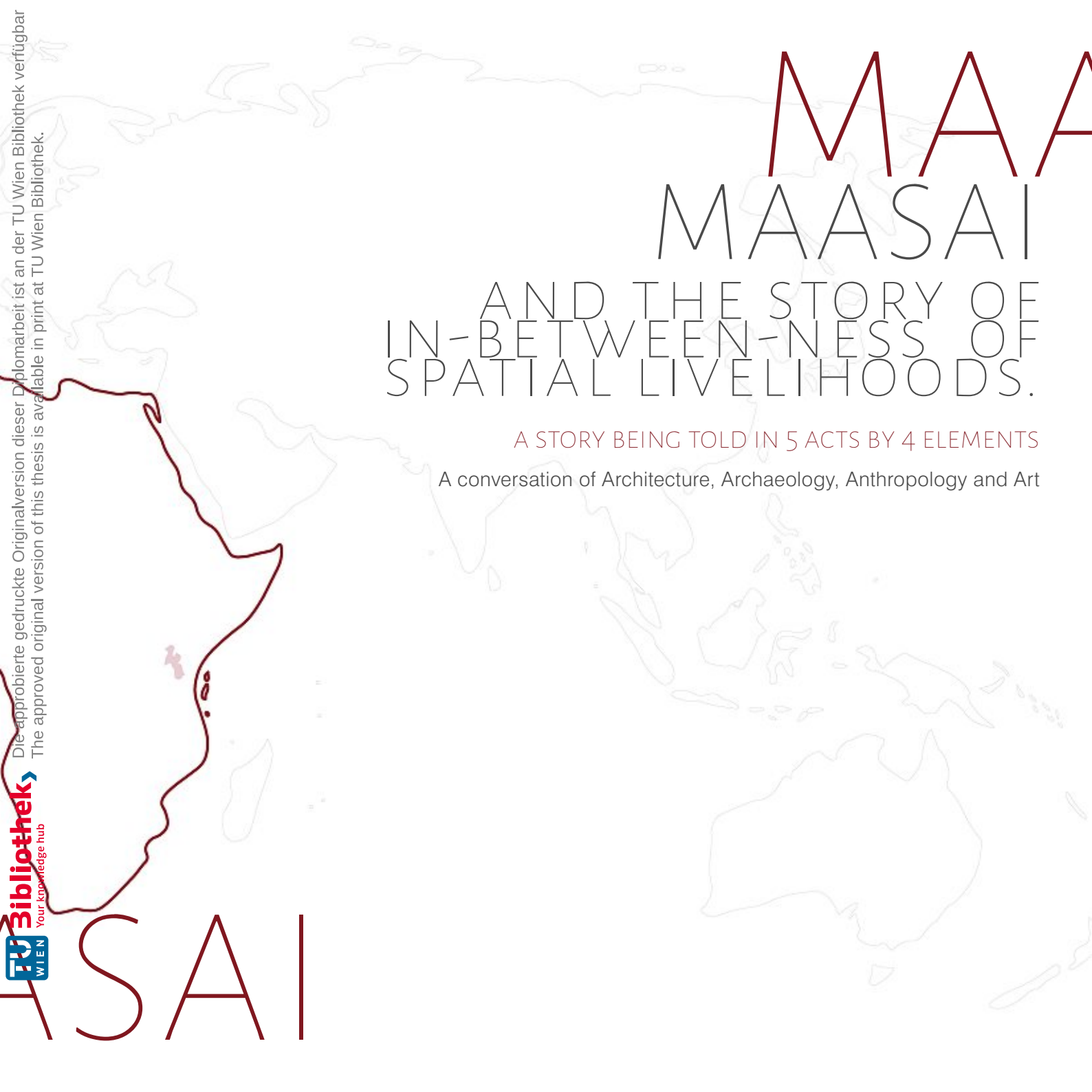
ASAI

MAA
MAASAI

AND THE STORY OF IN-BETWEEN-NESS OF SPATIAL LIVELIHOODS.

A STORY BEING TOLD IN 5 ACTS BY 4 ELEMENTS

A conversation of Architecture, Archaeology, Anthropology and Art





DIPLOMARBEIT

Maasai - und die Geschichte ihrer zwischenräumlichen Lebensweise

eine Geschichte erzählt in 5 Akten von 4 Elementen

**ausgeführt zum Zwecke der Erlangung des akademischen Grades einer Diplom-Ingenieurin
unter der Leitung**

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E 251 - Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Bauforschung und Denkmalpflege

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MASTER THESIS

Maasai - and the story of In-between-ness of spatial livelihoods

a story being told in 5 acts by 4 elements

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Maser of Science in Architecture
supervised by**

Andrea Rieger-Jandl

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presented at Vienna University of Technology

Faculty of Architecture and [Spatial] Planning

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KURZFASSUNG

Diese Masterarbeit ist in englischer Sprache verfasst

Es ist eine Geschichte der Zwischenräumlichkeit der Maasai in Tanzania. 4 Elemente, fast sogar Charaktere, die sich *durch* Tanzania konversieren, um Fragen zu stellen. Fragen der Geschichte, Tradition, der globalen Entwicklung, der Architektur, Identität und der kulturellen Merkmale. Fragen der räumlichen Konfigurationen und warum wir alle eine gute Geschichte lieben. Die räumliche Existenz der Maasai ist tief in das Narrativ der Zwischenräumlichkeit eingebettet, es ist ein Synonym für den Zwischenraum, die Lücke oder Schwelle, ein Wort, das wie Ebbe und Flut eine Geschichte der Veränderung und des Umbruchs erzählt.

Wir reisen zu versteckten Plätzen der Schwelle, wir hören uns Berichte seiner Geschichte an und lesen einen Auszug seines Tagebuchs. Wir spielen ein Spiel, indem einer den Joker in der Hand hält und ihn ganz unbemerkt herumgibt, um Linien und Beziehungen zu gestalten. Wir machen eine Tour und verörtlichen die Geschichte der Maasai, nur um uns dann in einer Linenkonversation zu verlieren. Am Ende steht die Pause, die doch auch am Anfang steht.

ABSTRACT

This master thesis is composed in English Language

This is a story about spatial In-Betweenness in the Maasai way of life. 4 elements, characters almost, that converse across the Plains of Tanzania, posing questions. Questions about history, tradition, global development, architecture, identity, cultural tokens, spatial configurations and why we all love to hear a good story. In-Betweenness is deeply embedded in the spatial narrative of the Maasai, and is synonymous with the space-between that is the gap or threshold. The word 'threshold' translates into German as *die Schwelle*, the swell of ebb-and-flow, the In-Betweenness that symbolises transition and change.

We are travelling to the hidden spaces of the threshold, listening to the narratives of its history and reading excerpts from its diary. We are playing a game in which the player holding the joker passes it secretly on to the next and so draws lines and creates relationships. We are tour through and mapping out the Masai narratives, only to lose ourselves in the lines of conversation. But in the end there is a pause, which is yet the beginning.



“SOMEONE, WHO TAKES A JOURNEY HAS STORIES TO TELL”

for Muma

she always encouraged me to take journies and then listened to my stories

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I am a trained architect, but in addition to Architecture, this research, this story taps into the fields of Archaeology, Anthropology and Art. These 4 disciplines are the main characters within my story and recount the process in my research. I made a conscious decision to refer to each by the name of the discipline rather than the title of the practitioner - archaeologist, anthropologist, architect and artist. Remaining the discipline or knowledge they become allegorical figures with voices that carry them through time and space.

Imagine an architect, anthropologist, an artist or an archaeologist. What pictures do they provoke? Now imagine the pictures that are evoked by the words archaeology, anthropology, art and architecture and the differences these words inherit.

In the end, embodying a scientific discipline in the personage excludes so many other discourses that the science has to offer. For instance, becoming an anthropologist, who has specialised in a particular field, you forget things that you have learned in the past, or you no longer relate to a particular body of thought within the discipline. I am not an anthropologist, nor an artist or an archaeologist, but standing for each as the discipline

I can imagine what the science or knowledge might be like, and ask questions that the science could answer in reference to my own education. And in this way I use the **/** form every time where the sciences intersect.

We have come a long way, travelling through time and space. We are three, like the 3 musketeers and D'Artagnon is our fourth [force].

Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture. We are 4. We come together from different angles and throw a light on different aspects of worldly life, and in the end we weave together into a single thread. We don't really know what it is that the others do exactly, and yet each touches our very own discipline; leaves traces; draws lines; defines relationships; opens the spaces for us to build upon.

As we journey together we discuss and argue; explain and fight. We reason and tell stories; compare, pause, think, draw and build. We take moments; walk together then drift apart; ask and answer questions. This list is sheer endless, numberless, as we continue on that journey, our minds spinning with thoughts of what a future might possibly look like; drawing blurry pictures.

This story, this conversation is one aspect of past and present moments. And sometimes we can't even answer to the questions because of what we do not know yet, but might discover in the ongoing process.

A journey. A story. A conversation. A picture.

P R O E M

Our journey doesn't begin here in Africa. It certainly doesn't end here either. But we are here for a visit, for an exchange of thoughts and beliefs, to push us, eventually, to our boundaries. Arriving here in Tanzania pitches us immediatly into another world. We are still in the present, but everything we know, everything we learned is challenged by the current situation. It looks and smells different, it sounds different, it moves differently and even time passes differently. We are Others in a world that we don't know, with a language that we don't speak, with rituals and customs that we might not understand - simply because, on that side of the world that we come from, Europe, we learned it a different way. And we all, the 4 of us, perceive this place differently, with emphasis on a point of view determined by what we are trained to do.

As Anthropology I study people and their behaviour; their customs and rituals; their identity markers and how their society is formed. I am grounded, I am very precise and always want to get to the bottom of things. I think, it is the origin of everything that goes to make up the other three - human behaviour as the Master of all other disciplines.

As Archaeology, I seem to be stuck in the past. It is very still, never raising it's voice. I am always one step behind, slow and over-analysing. I am simply digging, trying to bring hidden treasures to the surface. In its way, it criticises Architecture for being way too fast, for always seeking the new, the supposedly better or improved, and in the end being a bit sloppy.

As Architecture, I am being torn between the analytic side of Archaeology and the bohemian side of Art. Bound as it is by the kinds of laws, customs and rituals that Archaeology claims as its own, it nevertheless admires the freedom of Art, with its carefree life and way to of looking at things, and its ability to always be in the moment, constantly recreating itself.

As Art, I feel a little outlawed, as though I don't belong to this scientific circle. it feels more than it thinks, and sees the beauty in almost everything. Sometimes it wonders about the past and the future, tries to combine the two worlds in one, only to get lost in the present.

We together, we 4 as siblings, will tell a story. We will have a conversation about this Land where we find ourselves, Tanzania, and a group of people that live there, the Maasai.

We 4 are building the mesh in which perceptions can fluctuate and converse with each other about the lines and traces forming the very space, an In-between-space.

Therefore we want to call this story a story about the In-betweenness of spatial livelihoods.

PROLOGUE I

Maasai culture is in transition, but maybe they were always living a life of adaptation and change. Supposedly deriving from what is today southern Sudan, there are various speculations about when Maa-speaking people migrated to the East African Rift Valley in Kenya and Tanzania. Due to the lack of origin-related oral literature from the Maasai, researchers date the settling somewhere between AD 500 to around AD 1800, based on linguistic evidence [Galaty in Spear, 1993]. However, according to their oral literature, the Maasai hold the firm conviction that [...] “their northern origins and [asserts] that their history began when they ascended *engidir e kerio*, the *Kerio? Escarpment*” [Galaty in Spear, 1993, p.64]. A similar discussion is maintained over their pastoral lifestyle, suggesting that the early Maasai settlers practised both pastoralism and cultivation, but [...] “given the semi-arid nature of the Rift Valley savanna, its occupation would have required the sort of intensification of mobile pastoral production identified with Maasai today” [Galaty in Spear, 1993, p.66]. This suggests that the Maasai people were always moving and adapting to changing conditions, being resilient and hence being able to survive.

This aspect of their story, about their spatial expansion and down-scaling fragmentation, about what it means to be, to live, to identify Maasainess, is telling NARRATE. The ephemerality and the In-betweenness of their livelihoods is elaborated there.

BUILD holds the story of the story. Not only are we humans drawn to narratives in any form, but the way narratives are embedded in scientific and philosophic context is build here. Spatial stories of being in between follow the straight line to the narrative of the threshold, challenging the story into assisting scientific narration. What follows is a fictional conversation interwoven with facts, building a fabric where characters can fluctuate. CONVERSE is the contextual conversation. 4 Characters, 5 scenes, and lines coming to life.

RELATE bears the mere stories of Maasai spatial dimension. Mapping stories.

PAUSE brings the story to a pause. Like the In-betweenness itself is pausing the game. It is not an end. Pause thinks about the importance of being in-between, about its momentum and how we can conserve a long tradition of resilience without dissecting the very fabric.

PROLOGUE II

NARRATE



We arrived here at Arusha International Airport on a warm day. We are tired. The air travel was exhausting and long. When we had finally got through all the controls, and emerged into a heat that wrapped itself around our bodies and minds, thirst was uppermost in our thoughts. These bodily utterances are strangely new to us.

As Anthropology, I decided to be our tourguide. It's a strong leader, always checking and taking an overview, but also sometimes very annoying. As we get to our car, it insists on telling us all about where we are. Bragging with facts and figures that we need to know or it thinks we need to know. We listen to all this knowledge about Tanzania with only one ear, because all the others seem to be distracted by all the new impressions.

And I, as Architecture, I was already captured by the Airport and its size and construction, and the way people move around and about it, trying to wrap my mind around who built this place, and what they were thinking to achieve. Not in a particularly good way, though.

As Architecture, I am very opinionated. And then I look at Art and notice how it looks without any prejudice or evaluation and I think, I don't want to be either of these, unrelaxed and uncool about the Other, and so I listen to what Anthropology is trying to tell us.

Tanzania, officially the United Republic of Tanzania, is a sovereign state in East Africa with a size of 947,300 km² and a population of about 62 million.

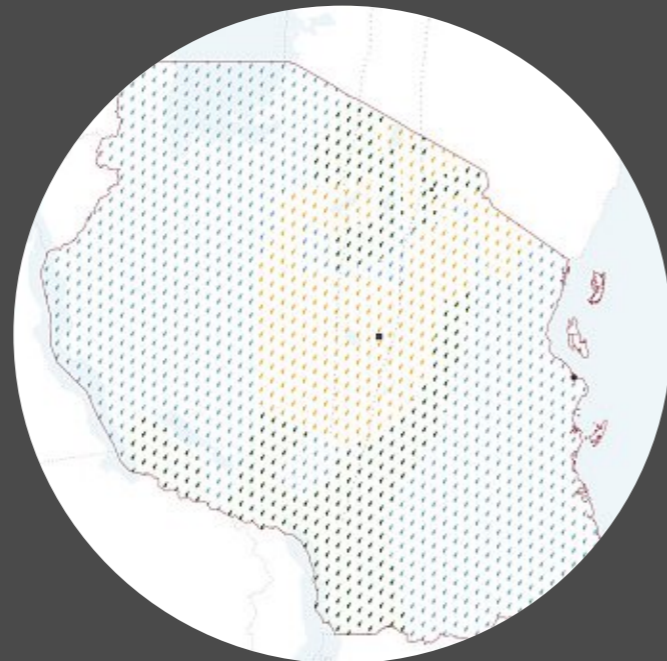
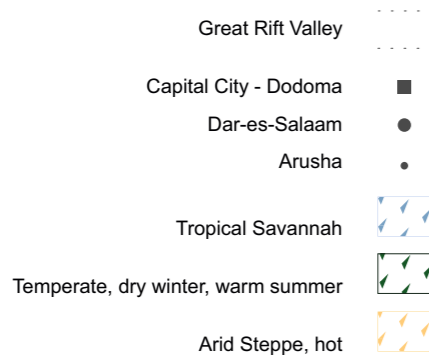
Tanzania borders Kenya and Uganda in the North, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi in the West and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique in the South. Its eastern coastline to the Indian Ocean incorporates Zanzibar archipelago with several islands, its main being Unguja (also referred to as Zanzibar), Pemba and Mafia Island [<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/tanzania/>].

Tanzania's official languages are Swahili and English. However there are more than 130 languages spoken within its territory, which makes Tanzania one of the most ethnically diverse countries in Africa. Ethnic divisions remained rare in Tanzania due to identity transformation emphasized by President Nyerere in the late 1960's and early 1970's [Hodgson, 2011].

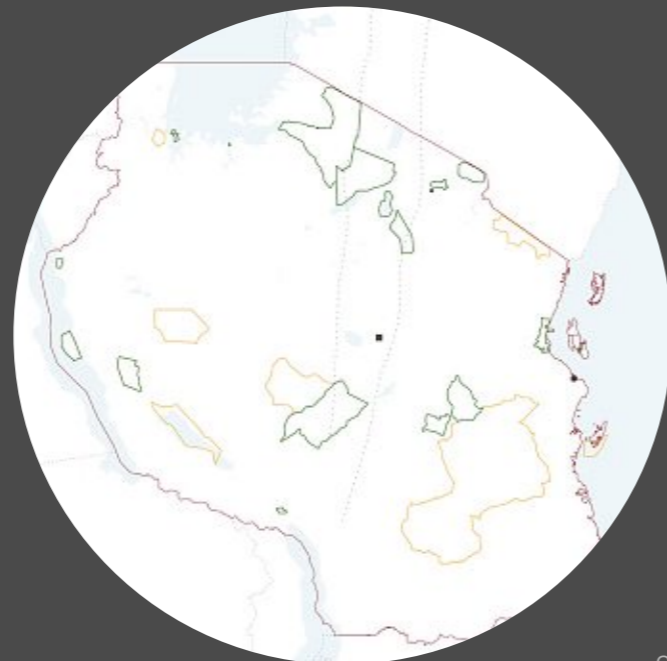
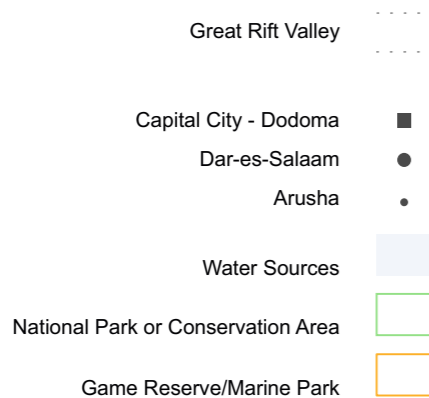
Before WW I Tanzania's mainland, also called Tanganyika, was colonised by the Germans and incorporated in the territory of German East Africa (GEA) together with Burundi and Rwanda. In 1919, GEA was divided between Britain, Portugal and Belgium with Tanzania becoming a British Colony.

In December 1961, Tanzania gained its independence as the colonial rule ended after more than 50 years. In 1964, the mainland Tanganyika merged with its archipelago Zanzibar, a former Arabian dynasty to today's United Republic of Tanzania [Background history of The Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, web.archive.org].

Geographically, the East African Rift runs from North to South forming out volcanos like Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Meru and influencing the climate along the lines of the Rift. Due to its topography, the tropical climate has regional variations.



Tanzania Climatic Zones, graphic by the author,
 see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanzania#/media/File:Koppen-Geiger_Map_TZA_present.svg



Tanzania Map of Nationalparks and GCA's, graphic by the author
 see <https://www.rungwasafaris.com/areas/map.html>

A tropical savannah climate dominates the country. Alongside the Great African Rift, the hot arid steppe extends southwards with temperate dry winters and warm summers. Temperatures range between 15°C and 20°C in the cool season from May to August and between 25°C and 31°C during the hottest period between November and February. In the mountain highlands temperatures stay between 10°C to 20°C [UNDP Climate Change Country Profiles]. There are two major rainfall regions in Tanzania. One is in the southern, central, and western parts of the country and occurs between the months of October to April. The other occurs from October to December and from March to May and is found in the northern parts of the country, from Lake Victoria extending east to the coast [Zorita & Tilya, 2002].

Tanzania has 17 national parks and a variety of game and forest reserves, including the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and the major part of the well-known Serengeti in the north, all of which allow for good biodiversity and a habitat that supports a great variety of animals. The East African Rift cutting through both countries, Kenya and Tanzania, from North to South, provides the ideal semi-arid conditions that are necessary for the Maasai's pastoral and semi-nomadic livelihoods [Homewood et al., 2012].

The Maasai - as Maa-speaking people - migrated [...] "from a homeland they call *Keiro*, which some archaeological and linguistic evidence suggests may be in southern Sudan" [Hodgson, 2011, p.65]. Since the late 1850's they reside in Southern Kenya and Northern Tanzania, where they specialized in livestock herding and developed their identity through pastoralism [Galaty, 1993]. Their traditional lifestyle is highly affected by the climatic change with increasing drought and flood periods as well as land use politics by the Tanzanian government. Since the colonial era, Tanzania's State prerogative on wildlife conservation deprived local communities their rights, leading to loss of grazing lands and water resources through relocation and evictions, and thus increased rural poverty amongst the indigenous people and widened the gap of a successful coexistence of wildlife and pastoralists [Homewood et al., 2012].

This journey will be a long one. As I gaze out the window, seeing what seem to me informal settlements, I am concluding that the life of the people is outdoors. Their huts and houses are tiny. Everyone is gathering on the streets; walking, riding motorbikes or travelling in the tiny busses. Cars are all over the place. It is loud. Animals and people blend into one entity. Who is walking whom?

Markets offering all sorts of big and small things, from plastic containers and clothes to metalwork and wooden furniture. It is staggering.

On the way to our first location, there is another, unexpected aspect. Between this tiny formation of settlements there are these vast areas of green. Are they forests, plantations, agricultural fields? Nature or Culture? One comes across fancy gated residents for expats or the wealthy. We just get a mere glimpse of what would lay behind these walls. Urban constructions with a sense of Eastern Europe during the second half of the Cold War.

It seems to be a mix of timelines, staggering over each other. Layers of traces, or traces of layers. Past and Present interwoven into a complex system, working towards the future. How will this continue?

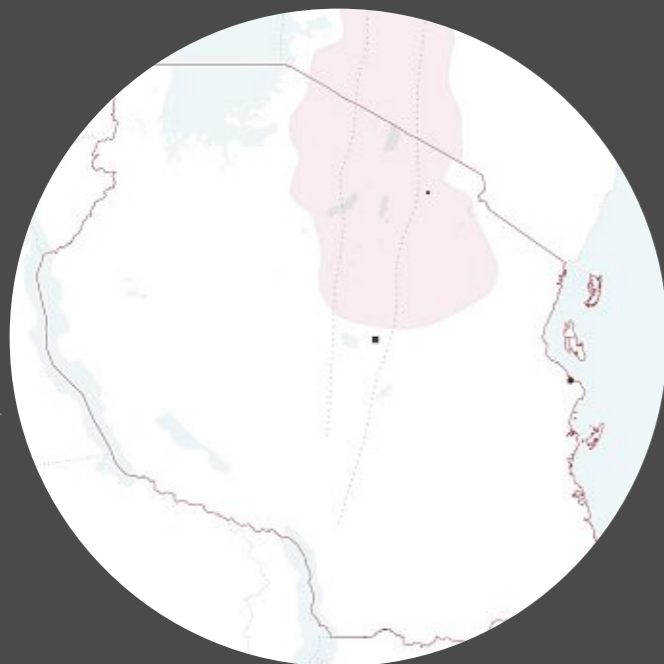
We pass through the urban tissue of Arusha and continuing further, we are enter Maasailand. Change of scenery. And as Archaeology, I am talking about the land we are passing through.

The Maasai territory reached its maximum size during the mid 19th century, covering a great part of Northern Tanzania stretching from Lake Victoria to Mount Kilimanjaro. However, by the late 19th century the German colonised Tanzania and the Maasai were forced to keep within their created reserves, south from the Moshi -Arusha-Dodoma road. These restrictions, in combination with plagues such as bovine pleuropneumonia, rinderpest and smallpox, killed nearly two-thirds of the Maasai population and their livestock. This period would come to be known as the *Emutai* of 1883 -1902, which in Maa, the language of the Maasai, means *to wipe out* [<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/maasai>].

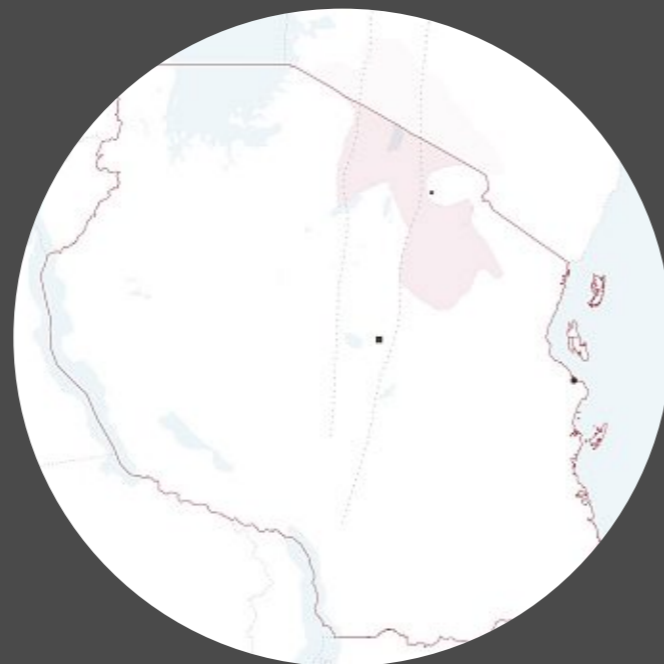
After WW I, the British took over the colonial rule and constituted the *Maasailand* as a place and the Maasai as a *tribe*, which kept the Maasai isolated spatially, politically and ethnically [...] “and disrupted the networks of interaction and exchange upon which their livelihoods and identities were premised” [Hodgson, 2004, p.51]. Being Maasai was linked to living in the Reserve and vice-versa. Maasai who refused to live within the narrow borders were automatically being forced to give up their Maasai identity.

During the colonial era the Maasai Reserve encompassed vast areas of wet season grazing land but more drastically, critical drought preserves and dry season grazing areas were gradually excised from within the Reserve and allocated to foreign settlers, who sold water and grazing rights back to the Maasai, or the land was leased to agriculturists for war cultivation and wheat farming, but never rehabilitated afterwards. Once WW II started, Maasai also crossed the borders of the Reserve to find fertile lands [Hodgson, 2004].

The time between the end of WW II and Independence in 1962 was marked by the Masai Development Plan (MDP) which tried to modernise economy in the colonial territory. The discrepancy increased between Maasai herds and overall available grazing lands and water reserves, thus they needed to be addressed with a planned development. The MDP aimed for financing development and welfare programs and rebuilding Britains economy in the post-war era and therefore to reestablish legitimacy of the Empire, in a time where Imperialism was vanishing in Europe. However the MDP failed to integrate the Maasai visions of their future, but wanted to reinforce the colonial control over landuse and cultivation [Hodgson, 2004].



Maasailand, pre colonial time



Maasailand, 1970's



Maasailand, 1930's



Maasailand vs. NP/GCA's, 21st century

With Independence in 1962, further development was the main focus of the new state, who now owned all land including what was once the Maasai District. Modernization and Progress were the keywords of that time. Julius Nyerere, elected president, implemented the social development plan of *Ujamaa*, a symbol of the new era and a direct rejection of the capitalist and feudal principles of the colonial rule [Ndagala, D. K., 1992].

By 1975 three laws regulated the development and land use in this area which highly affected Maasai livelihoods. The 1964 Range Management and Development Act, the 1974 National Wildlife Conservation Act and the 1975 National Villages and Ujamaa Villages Act. During this time the Masai District was subdivided into smaller more controllable units as part of the 'villagization' program where rural living Tanzanians (not exclusively only Maasai) were relocated to Ujamaa villages [Hodgson, 2004].

Under the name of Wildlife Conservation large areas of Maasai territory became protected areas forcing the Maasai to move away or accept a superimposed lifestyle. Under the Range Management and Development Act, USAID implemented a series of projects commonly known in Tanzania as the Masai Livestock Development and Range Management Project. Objective of the project was to finance water projects and other infrastructural improvements and thus increase beef production as an export commodity by clustering pastoralists into communal large-scale ranches. However, the rationales behind these laws [...] "reflected contradictory discourses about the Maasai as pastoralists especially with regard to their relationship to land and their future development" [Hodgson, 2004, p.158].

After over 100 years of governmental failure to acknowledge the Maasai's needs in regard to their land use and well-being led to disappointment and a great mistrust of governmental projects on the part of the Maasai, which still affects their relationship today.

To this day the Maasai still live within the borders imposed by others, which are regionally subdivided into 16 clan sections, known in Maa as *Illoshon*. A majority of the Maasai population lives in Kenya, with clan sections such as *Isikirari* also mentioned as *Ilkisongo*, *Parakuyu*, *Kore* and *Ilarusa* residing in mainland Tanzania. Some are crossborder clans like *Ilpurko*, *Iloitai* or *Ilmatapato*.

However, Maasai clan sections are mostly excluded from resources central to their livelihoods due to the lack of rights to the land they live on [<http://www.maasai-association.org/maasai.html>].

Here in Maasailand, there is space. One sees across the plains and the view offers this wideness. There is no urbanity anymore. There is only land. There are more people walking cattle and the clothing is different now. The colour of the soil has changed too. It is red. One gets a sense of what indigenous people mean when they talk about their land. The red, almost purple, colour of the soil gives a sense of a forgotten connection with what is deep inside all of us. A wild and free image. This feeling of being down to earth and connected with what is around us. The vegetation, the soil, the animals, the family, the rituals, the customs. I don't see the land in cartographic plots, or in parcels, but in what it offers the people inhabiting it.

I think about the lines, the inscriptions of the people walking their animals. Or is it the other way around? Maybe the animals set the tone, the rhythms of stop and go, the lines for the people to follow and not the other way around? The owners seem to be around the herd, but not leading it. It's one entity floating through the plains.

I think of all the nomadic people around the globe and their paths, choosing a life on the go, being dependent on seasons, fertile lands, animal stock, weather, water supply and how this has changed over the past, and how nomadism today is used in a technological context. Digital nomads. This term seems strange compared to what I am experiencing here.

I am asking myself, if there is an intrinsic human need to move and not settle? What do we even know about pastoral lifestyle?

More than 50% of the world's land area is grazed in different forms, whether that be mixed farming to ranching, by wildlife and pastoralism, a method that is practised on the grasslands covering 25% of the world's land and on drylands, covering 40%. Managing a billion animals including cattle, sheep and goats, as well as camelids, yaks, horses and reindeer and allowing for 10% of the world's meat production, pastoralism is an important industry, driving economies, cultures and societies [Jenet et al., 2016].

Methods to define pastoralism range from production type, cultural identity, land type and mobility, which is a key feature of pastoralism and vital for the use of marginal rangelands, Nomadic and transhumant herders moving with their livestock throughout natural and open lands, following irregular patterns of mobility or in case of the latter depending more on seasonal cycles are forms of pastoralists especially common in areas where resources are scarce and the land is not appropriate for cultivation. Other forms also include agropastoralists who additionally grow crops in a sedentary style as well as peri-urban range farmers foremost in the US and Australia. However, these forms differ greatly from each other as pastoralists and ranchers share certain agro-ecological zones but belong to very different socioeconomic structures. Within this variety of forms of pastoralism, still all are highly adapted to their natural, political and/or economic environments [Jenet et al., 2016].

In East Africa where 2/3 of the land area is inhabited by pastoralists, traditionally with high mobility, herds movement has declined since the 1900's and many pastoralists got settled due to a variety of reasons like climate change, changing land uses, lack of infrastructure and social services, political enforcement or insecurity [Fratkin, 2001].

Affected by the marginalisation of pastoralists are the Maasai, traditionally semi-nomadic herders and closely connected to their livestock which provides them not only with food but with a social order and network functioning as a well established trade commodity.

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Pastoralism around the Globe



The look of the 4 of us, of what we are as single entities, makes me wonder if we are building a society together, our own little A's club.

How do we perceive the identifiers building up an identity. And this is such a big word. Almost overwhelmingly nourished by verbal pictures, of prejudices, of orders, of drawers where one puts all the adjectives.

Deriving from the Latin word *idem*, which means the same, identity fluctuates between here and there. It is always in comparison to the one, which i am not. Identity of myself and the other, in relation to the whole. So identity is always a process of exclusion and inclusion, always moving. It is in-between.

What does it mean to be European or African, or in this case Maasai? What are the identifiers, the markers which constitute being Maasai, or how I, respectively we, will further call it Maasainess. Precisely because the meaning of Maasainess, includes the fluctuation, the renewal, the turning over of identifiers. Because being Maasai, or being anything is not a fixed and static statue, but is a floating process of rethinking, of evolving and changing over a course of a timeframe. What I am today, I might not be tomorrow. Sounds ridiculously like a song text.

Is identity thus a product of time and environment? Can such markers and identifiers be produced? And if so, how are they produced and through what or whom?

And what is the role of the individual in this complex system of Maasainess? And what is the role of male and female in this society? Wondering what I, Anthropology, have to say about that.

Maasainess is produced on the threshold of tradition and modernity, and not only the others (as non-Maasai) but the Maasai themselves are participating in the forming of that Maasainess.

The main ethnographic and anthropological studies of the Maasai emerging between the late 20's to 80's of the 1900s were surely successful in describing the social organizations of pastoralist societies but they didn't allow for a transition into a contemporary context with an involvement in the market economy, a growing commoditization and an emerging individuality. Today Maasai live in the gap between the new western based 'cash' economy with economic diversification and individualisation and the decline in traditional social organizations highlighting the discrepancy between the individual and the collective within the Maasai society and what it means to be Maasai [Allegretti, 2018].

At first colonisers wanted to promote an image of the different but noble primitive that 'Maasainess' thus came to be understood by Maasai men themselves as being a pastoralist and a warrior while women were basically deprived of any importance in the identity making of the Maasai [Hodgson, 2004, p.22].

The identity construction unfold in different figures such as the warrior, mutilated female bodies, contested land and visible markers such as the Maasai shuka and nomadic pastoralists wandering through the semi-arid steppe. These images are still represented in texts and music from maasai and non-maasai authors and musicians from the 1970's to today [Laizer, 2018, p.2].

With African Independence, a new and contemporary own African image should be transported to the rest of the world. Maasainess became a general symbol for the continuation of African traditions even though western products and practices were imported, cities were planned and constructed and the infrastructure development was sold to the Chinese.

However, the colonial nostalgia was and still is of marketable value. When we speak of Maasai people today, we have the colonial pictures in our head of the long, lean warrior in their red and blue shuka, spear in their hand, walking their cattle through the plains of Northern Tanzania, inhabiting the vast spaces and living in traditional dung huts.



Maasainess representing the Maasai as the pleasant primitives, [...] “a human equivalent of the Lion King, the benign animal king behaving in a human way” [Bruner, p.894], is a pleasing image for foreign tourists. It transports Africa as a consumable and safe place to travel, where you can enjoy the plains of the Serengeti and get a sense of ‘Out of Africa’, where on the way you can take a selfie with a young warrior right after circumcision as well as witnessing the traditional Maasai dance in their original homestead the *boma*. Maasai themselves nourish this image, making it their token to the outside world. A commodification of their tradition for which tourists gladly pay, and give the Maasai an opportunity to make money.

While this globally circulating image of Maasai is almost frozen in time, new forms of mobility and new information technologies are opening up new spaces, networks and job opportunities for the Maasai. These new patterns are transforming the set rules by which the Maasai were living for centuries.

They are no longer only pastoralists or farmers, but doctors, lawyers, business owners, tour guides, living in the cities or peri-urban settlements. The masculinity of Maasai identity markers are getting less and additionally female identifiers are emerging. Maasai women claim as their own rights that they were refused the past 100 years [<http://www.pastoralwomenscouncil.org>]. And the network is not reduced any longer to the margins of an invented territory but is rather traceable in their social practices widening the space in which they live.

Instead of walking the cattle, young warriors use the bicycle or the motorbike to explore the rural-urban interface and female Maasai having their own livestock and businesses, instead of relying on their husbands income. They all contribute to the forming of the very interfaces, that consolidates the sense of Maasainess [Allegretti, 2018].

Coming back to the classical anthropological studies of Maasai’s society, we see a clan based and an age-set social organisation, with a little more power to men and elders, therefore it is sometimes termed a gerentocracy [Weiner, et al., 2004, p.1396].



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The strength of the Maasai community is the elaborate family system based on polygamy, kinship and seniority. The prosperity and the social status from the male used to be defined by the number of wives and hence the size of the livestock. Due to this masculine emphasis the males age grading is highly formalised by certain rituals, foremost the act of circumcision, thus entering warriorhood, and further transitioning to adulthood to raise a family. Females on the other hand are mostly graded into two different age-sets which are girls and women distinguishing between child bearing age and elderly women beyond that [Spencer, 2003; Saitoti, 1980; Hodgson, 2004].

Maasai identity is not a clear and stable image but dynamic and historically influenced. Furthermore, it is not the same for men and women.

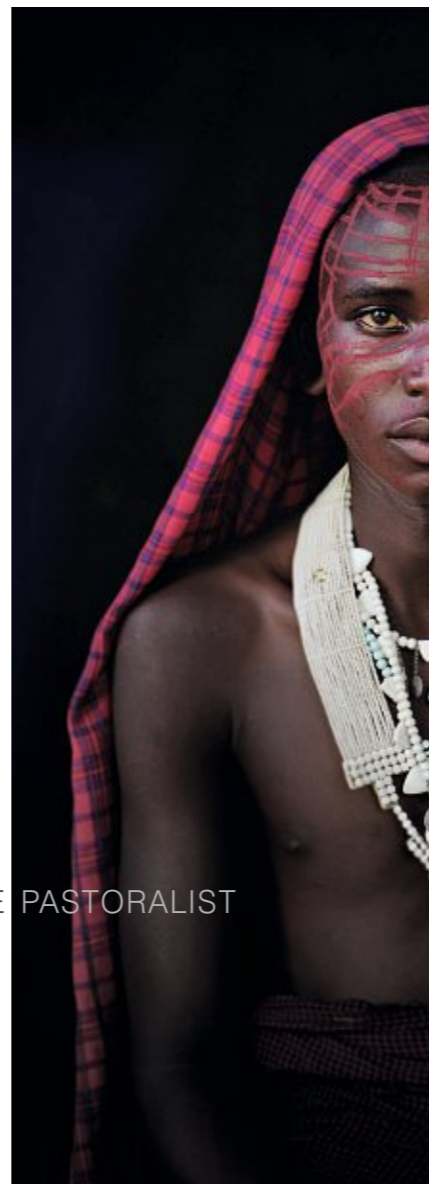
The colonial and post-colonial efforts to reduce the Maasai image to masculine marks, reinforced a male perception of Maasainess even for Maasai themselves.

“Women were seeking a spiritual life out of isolation and despair due to their political, educational and economical marginalisation” [Hodgson, 2004, p. 250-269].

All these perceptions of Maasai identity have an impact on the spatial organisation of their culture, which is a reflection of their social practices and rituals and leaves their traces in the open space.

The geographical boundaries of Maasailand, hence spatialising Maasainess during the colonial era, was an invented act on the assumption that the Maasai are an homogeneous group. Of course these changes of land laws and boundaries is now reflected in their practices.

THE WARRIOR, THE PASTORALIST



THE WIFE, THE SPIRITUALLY POSSESSED



Already at the time of the colonial era, the assumption of homogeneity of the Maasai tribe was not accurate because they were known [...] “to intermarry with neighbouring ethnic groups” [Ndagala, 1992, S.108] and were adapting their lifestyle to political and social changes. Many Maasai were becoming *WaArusha* or *WaMeru*, people of the city, sedentary people, called by the pastoralist Maasai *ormeek*, because they chose to move outside the defined borders of Maasailand or entered a non-Maasai way of life even if they stayed within.

The story of Maasai spatiality is one of changing borders and alienating territoriality, and so the story of identity for the Maasai is one of boundary-making in relation to their ethnicity.

Unlike in Kenya, Tanzania eliminated ethnic status from census categories after 1967 [Ndagala, 1992, p.33], which marked another invasive intervention in their culture. Losing their ethnic status combined with the governmental marginalisation of pastoralists additionally diminished their sense of space and broke open their social structures which had existed for centuries. Spatial distances between traditional homesteads the *boma* (in Maa: *enkang*) increased due to land alienation, population growth and the villagisation program and further weakened the Maasai’s social network and power.

So addressing a Maasai identity and a definite Maasainess today is a balancing act between traditional and modern social organisation, between gender-related tasks, which are strongly heterogeneous, and their traces in the changing spatiality of the culture since Maasai today are participating in different spatial, social and economical spheres.



Cultural identity within the Maasai community is distinct. The age-set system regulates design patterns on shields, jewellery and even hairstyle for both men and women. There is distinct beadwork for young, married, and elderly women, as well as different hairstyles, body ornaments, and weapons for men of different age. There are even livestock ornaments designed for the different animals.

The dualism, which is an integral part within their culture, and the section based system is elaborated within the choices of colour for different ornamental items. Some sections prefer a dark red and dark blue, as others prefer orange and light blue. Differences between Tanzanian and Kenyan Maasai are noticeable, since Tanzanian Maasai weren't as exposed to western cultural values due to their distance to bigger cities, they still tend to live more traditionally as Kenyan Maasai. [Saitoti, 1980; Rukwaro&Maina, 2006].

The Maasai traditionally are colourful people and their dress certainly changed and adapted over the years. Before colonialism they were known to wear mostly leather garments. It was only around the time of Independence, when commercial cloths became accessible, that they changed to their now well known *shuka* - the colourful checkered and/or striped cotton cloth. Both this cultural item, and their art work in general, constitute an important part in forming Maasainess; even today when other types of clothing, occupation, or housing are blending Maasai into (western standard) society.

The exchange of cultural commodities thus works in both ways. Through globalisation as well as easy access to travel and internet, international cultural items are exchanged worldwide. Tokens from travel are symbols of education and savoir-vivre, and could be seen as a form of cultural colonialism.

As Maasai have a global image as strongminded, tall and goodlooking warriors and females, this Maasainess is transported to Europe through their cultural items such as their beadwork, their art patterns and their colourful *shuka*. Cultural appropriation nowadays has acquired a bad connotation. Whoever borrows from another culture is scrutinised by society. But there is a very fine line between borrowing and stealing intellectual property.

In 1994, the World Trade Organization (WTO) incorporated intellectual property into the trade regime through the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, which took effect on January 1, 1995. Despite the questions if these laws were appropriate for developing countries, as they were designed to meet



the needs of developed countries, many African nations have implemented their laws accordingly while still considering their development needs [Osei-Tutu, 2017].

J. Janewa Osei-Tutu argues that human development for African countries is crucial and should be incorporated into the intellectual property laws and policies. She cites Sabina Alkire, who understands human development as [...] “enlarging people’s choices. Improving the health, education and living standards of the population consistently form part of this goal” [idib, p.24].

Economic prosperity is a side effect of this improvement, which is also found as assesment in the UN Human Development Index (HDI). These laws, of course, come with controversy and criticism due to their involvement in facilitating the exploitation of the culture and knowledge of developing countries [idib, 2017].

In the case of the Maasai, and their cultural brand these intellectual property laws should help improving the socio-economic conditions of Maasai, instead of leaving them behind.

In 2012, Louis Vuitton launched a clothing line based on the colours and patterns of the Maasai dress and in 2014, Land Rover published an ad for their accessories based on Maasai Footwear. Both did use distinctive cultural Maasai identifiers without collaboration or permission of the Maasai. Precisely on account of these events, the 2009 Maasai Intellectual Property Initiative (MIPI) was founded by Isaac ole Tialolo, an elder Maasai, supported by the Washington DC based NGO Light Years IP, which specialises in this field, trying to protect the Maasai cultural identity and making use of trademark and copyright laws. In 2013, the estimated value of the Maasai brand was worth up to 10 billion USD annually. Although very speculative, still the founder of Light Year IP, Ron Layton, stated that it ranks as one of the biggest cultural brands in the world [<http://www.uktrademarkregistration.co.uk/News/2013/05/The-Maasai-Brand-Can-IP-Laws-protect-a-traditional-culture/>].

So even if these figures weren't nearly that high, and even if within the past 10 to 15 years a lot has happened to economies and brands, it is evident that a small percentage of a license fee to the (especially traditional living) Maasai would benefit their economic status within the Tanzanian and Kenyan society.

Maasainess understood as the immanent value of Maasai cultural identifiers is embedded in the In-betweenness not only of regional or national but even global spatialities. Not to mention the webspace, which opens up a whole new spectrum of potential conflicts as well as possibilities.

As we drive along the main road, I notice that one hardly sees any settlements. Of course the urban tissue of Arusha or any other bigger town is different, but as soon as one is on the peri-urban land or even further away, there are no asphalted streets, and no houses. There are just people walking beside the streets, with or without animals; school girls and boys walking, young men on motorbikes, freshly circumcised young boys with white painted faces, selling themselves for a dollar picture. Some with cellphones in their hand.

As Architecture, I am constantly wondering where the people are coming from and where they are going to. What business do they have, wandering the roads of the Plains? Where do they live? What might be in the hinterland of these cities or the peri-urban tissue? I see some huts further away from the main road. I try to look at a map to get an orientation but instead, I choose to just look out of the window and look at this supposed Nothingness.

I am Architecture, I am trained to build [up], to look at what is there, to improve constructions, to see details. Nothing I see here can be compared with the Western standards. It is simplicity. Not in a bad way, just different. I am thinking about different spatial levels. From the big to the small cells. To the people forming this space. What seems to me like a chaos of layers, paths, traces and lines, as Art, I am seeking the beauty of all of this. Like biological cells, morphing and growing, getting smaller, dividing, leaving inscriptions on the ground. It's like painting on an empty canvas.

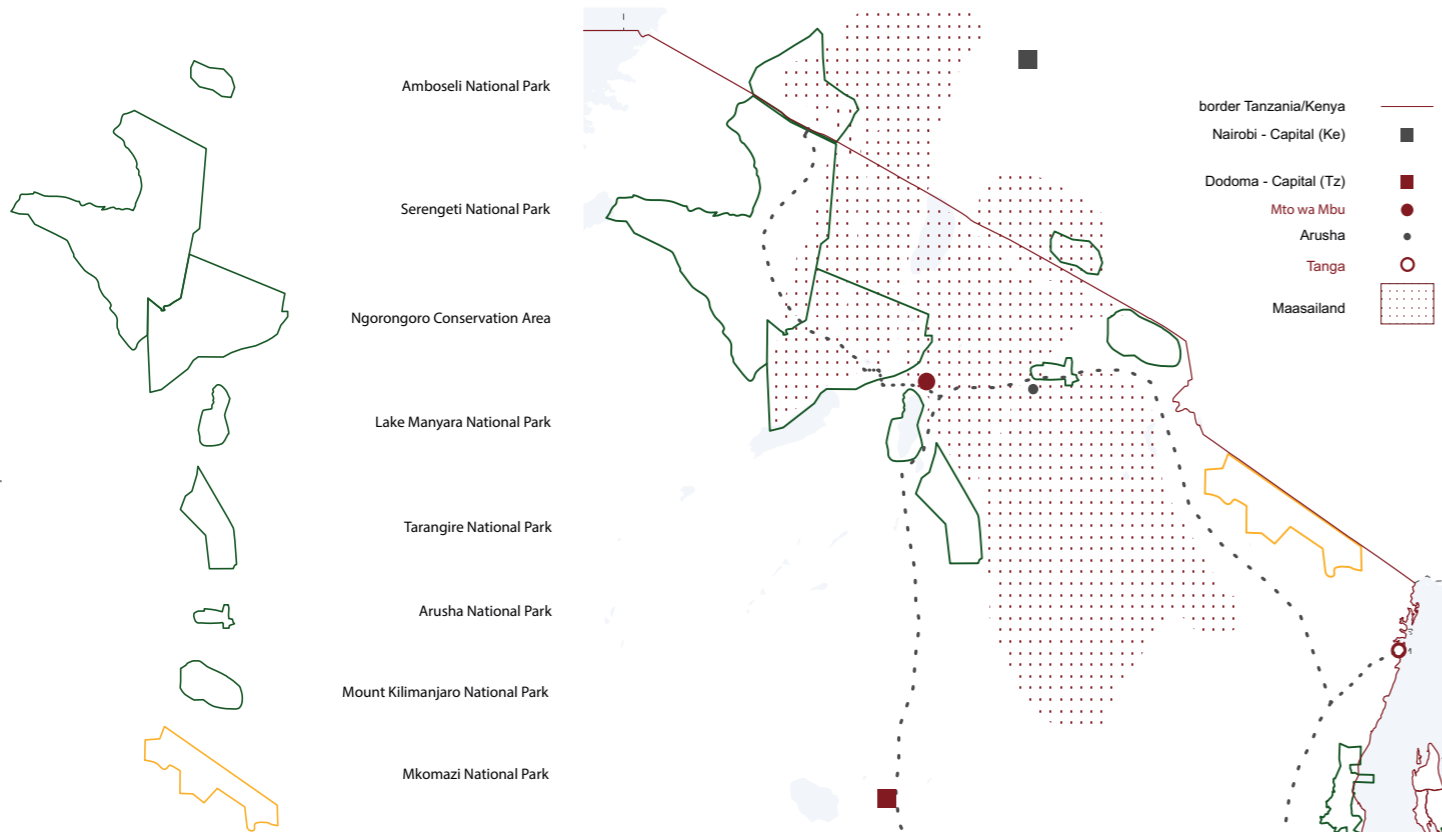
I have to think about Italo Calvino and his book the invisible cities. There is this chapter where he talks about Ersilia and the relationships the inhabitants are building by stretching strings in between points. He calls it “spiderwebs of intricate relationships seeking a form” (Italo Calvino, *the invisible cities*)

It is difficult to identify and place Maasainess on account of their history of constant dislocation and transformation, that led to a fragmentation of the pre-colonial Maasailand. Already before Tanzanian Independence Maasai had gone from being traditional pastoralists to becoming farmers, hunter-gatherers or city dwellers. These new Maasai inhabit and create different spatial zones at the interface between what we call today the rural and the urban. Inhabiting a cross-border land between Kenya and Tanzania, makes it even more difficult to pinpoint Maasainess to one space. Kenya and Tanzania were both under British Colonial control. They developed differently after their Independence in the early 1960's, but the effects on the Maasai spaces and lives are still quite similar due to the states adopting into western style economic systems [Allegretti, 2015].

Ever since the 1980s traditional pastoralist practices among Maasai communities were forced to integrate into the cash economy. The major rangeland management and ranching projects developed with foreign aid, like USAID and the Masai Livestock Development and Range Management Project implemented in Tanzania in the late 1970s, impinged on the pastoralist way of life and led to a mismatch of the objectives and expectations between governmental body and pastoralist communities [Hodgson, 2011].

The privatisation process and approach of western style livestock production widened the gap between richer families, being able to maintain their status within the pastoralist economy and poorer families, being pushed to seek for other opportunities of income, like migrating to the city or non-pastoralist activities. Thus the economic changes were also accompanied by a change of the Maasai social organisation. Education and trading in a western-style manner opposing to the traditional lifestyle led to these opposing spheres of the cash economy versus the traditional pastoralist economy with the two opposing worlds of the city and the village, producing an emerging new peri-urban tissue in-between, where individual ideas, traditional social organisations and livestock productivity blend together [Allegretti, 2015].

An all-encompassing definition of the peri-urban tissue is mostly difficult, as in recent years there has been an attention to peri-urban development. But what some of the definitions have in common are that they define these zones as [...] “places of conflict or competition which exist in between new (urban) and traditional (rural) land uses [and that they are] demarcated by maximum daily commuting distances into [Central Business Districts] CBD's or the urban areas determined by the means of transportation available” [Mandere et al., 2010, p.74].



In Europe the planning of the urban outskirts has been and still is a relatively steady process, whereas in Africa the outforming of the hybrid rural-urban tissue went hand in hand with a rapid and chaotic urbanisation process due to inadequate land administration, thus regulation deficiencies and poor infrastructural development. [Mandere et al.; 2010]. All these factors are contributing to a [...] “ ‘sub urbanism’ especially in Sub-Saharan Africa leading to informal settlements. These informal settlements have many names ‘shanty’ towns in South Africa, ‘Musseques’ in Luanda and ‘Uswahilini’ settlements in Tanzania” [Nuhu, 2018, p.2]. As a result, poorly constructed and unregulated urban environments appear seemingly overnight leaving contractors and developers trying to turn a profit at the expense of the existing communities and leaving the poor in the constant threat of eviction or relocation. This rushed development increases pollution and crime, forcing a decrease in health and the disappearing of indigineous ethnic groups with their traditions and rites blending into urban culture.

Often the peri-urbanisation is occurring along the major roadways and is dependent on governmental laws, foreign infrastructure investments and tourism managment. In Northern Tanzania the main road departing from Tanga on the East Coast stretching along the Tanzanian-Kenyan Border via Kilimanjaro International Airport and the city of Arusha all the way to the Serengeti, is forming out some peri-urban settlements with markets, shops, restaurants and hotels. In Northern Tanzania Mto wa Mbu marks such a town with the peri-urban zone of Kigongoni. Situated in the Monduli District, Maasai traditionally still live in this area. While in other areas such as Ngorongoro, where Maasai are living in the most traditional sense due to the State law, one can observe the life within the peri-urban tissue, connecting the hinterland with the town [Allegretti, 2018].

Younger Maasai men especially move between their homestead and the town either by foot, if well trained, or by motorbike. They seek new job opportunities along the road, walk their cattle to the livestock market, or go to one of the bars or restaurants for pleasure. The use of mobile phones enhances job opportunities and builds up new networks within the Maasai community. This often links them [...] “to the networks within the village and within the urban sphere” [Allegretti, 2015, p.66] leaving their traditions to co-exist side-by-side with the contemporary social life across the rural-urban interface.

These relationships have a deep connection to the ground they are inscribed upon, since exactly this ground is used as a material to build their houses. They live with the ground, within the ground erupting from underneath.

As Art, I remark on the work with clay. I have to think about the materiality of clay. How compact it is and also how fragile. How it tells the story of every touch, of every mistake, of every victory. Art is elaborating on how deep the connection is with something one has already forgotten, working with this material. It tells one when to work, when it is ready to proceed, not the other way around. One needs patience, and knowledge and still it is a trial-and-error sort of working. But there is a simple beauty in working with the hands, in digging up the dirt, in getting in contact with such a material. It is like a conversation, you make a remark and the material immediatly answers. It is the pure story of a relationship.

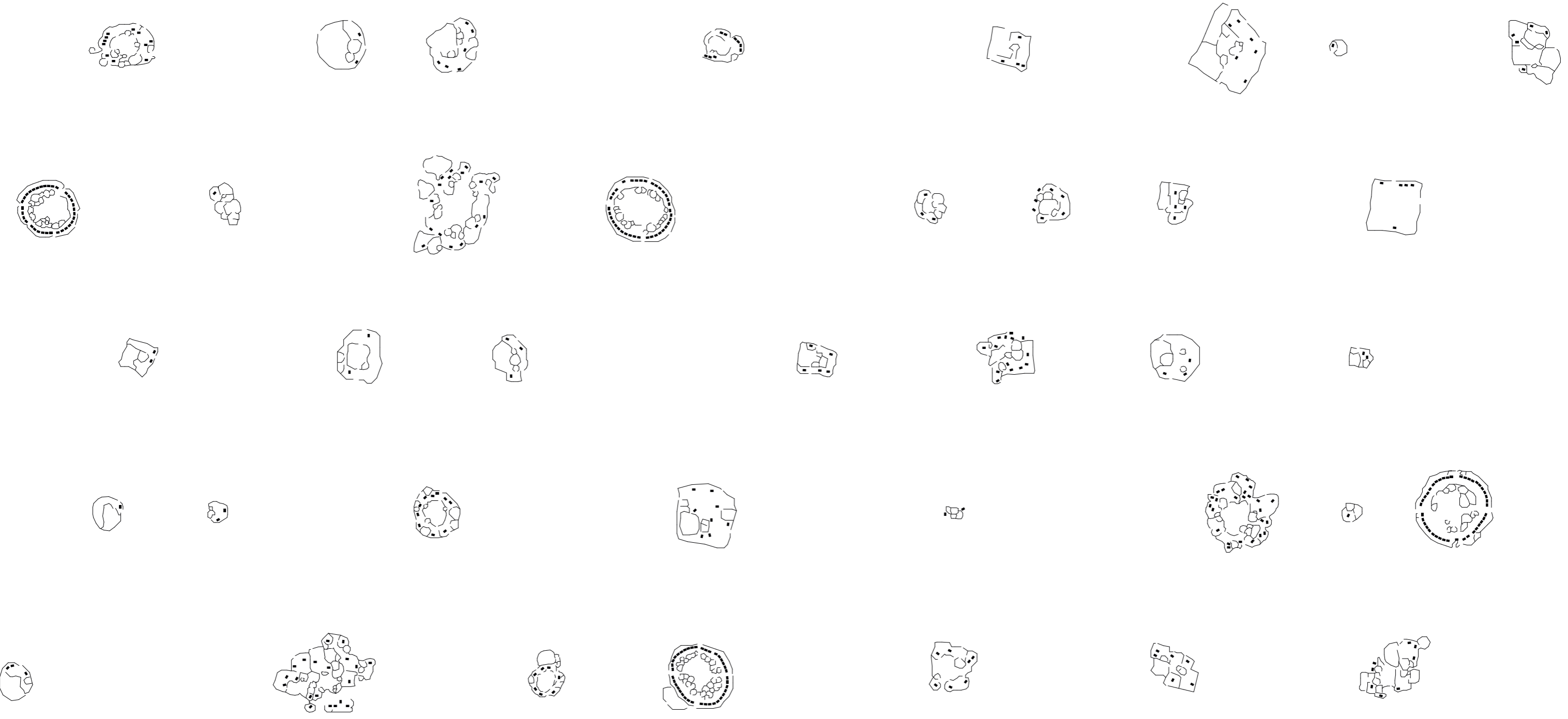
As Art, I am getting carried away but I can't stop asking questions about the relationships of the settlements, and their distance from each other. Their first and immediate purpose is enclosure and the protection of the inhabitants from the outside. Another priority, being in walking proximity to each other in case of emergency, has changed with the arrival of cell phones and motorised vehicles. So now, the space has expanded in distance while the time needed to reach each other has shortened. I am thinking about the conversation of the single houses, their purposes and relationships, and the spaces they produce. And to what kind of conversation they have with their builders: The women.

The Maasai political and economic systems have certainly become more modern since Independence, but their social and spatial organisation haven't adapted as fast, thus a majority of Maasai continues to construct and live in the traditional cow dung homes and fenced homesteads. These homes, which the Maasai call *Enkaji*, as well as the large thorn fence enclosures that surround them, called *Enkangs* (swahili: *Boma*, in some literature you also find it written *engang*), comprise Maasai architecture. Within their simplicity, there is, in fact, an effective and flexible construction adapting very efficiently to the resource-poor and remote environments in which they are built.

The Maasai spatial environment consists of different temporal and transitional spaces as well as private, semi-private/semi-public and public areas. To the private and semi-private areas belong the *enkang*, or homestead with their individual houses, *enkaji*, and the *boo* or *olosinko*, the enclosure for the cattle. The vast surrounding grazing lands, the animal watering points and the pathways for animals and people are semi-public/public spaces. The temporal zones are cattle camping places, *elatia*, which are established during dry seasons. There are ritualistic places, as the warrior's ritual village, *manyatta*, a transitional space, the *enkang'e eunoto*, specially build for the transition from junior to senior warrior or the *enkang'e elng'esherr* for the transition from senior warrior to elder. Recreational spaces, as the meat feasting places for families, *olpejet*, or for warriors, *ol'pul*, are also within the canon of Maasai architecture [Rukwaro, Maina, 2006].

Enkang is not only the word for the homestead, but also the *Maa* term for fence or enclosure. *Enkangs* aren't merely static constructs, but they have the ability to morph and transform overtime and to adapt to new activities, as well as to increases and decreases in livestock sizes, and additions or subtractions of families. Depending on the area and subdivision of the Maasai ethnic group, there are different sizes and shapes within the *enkang*, but also within the single house, the *enkaji*.

The different shapes and sizes of the homestead tell stories of a heterogeneous group of people, adapting to their In-betweenness. A spatial metamorphosis .





The fence of the *Enkang* not only encloses the Maasai homes, but also divides the open land into livestock areas, eating spaces, and other programmed places.

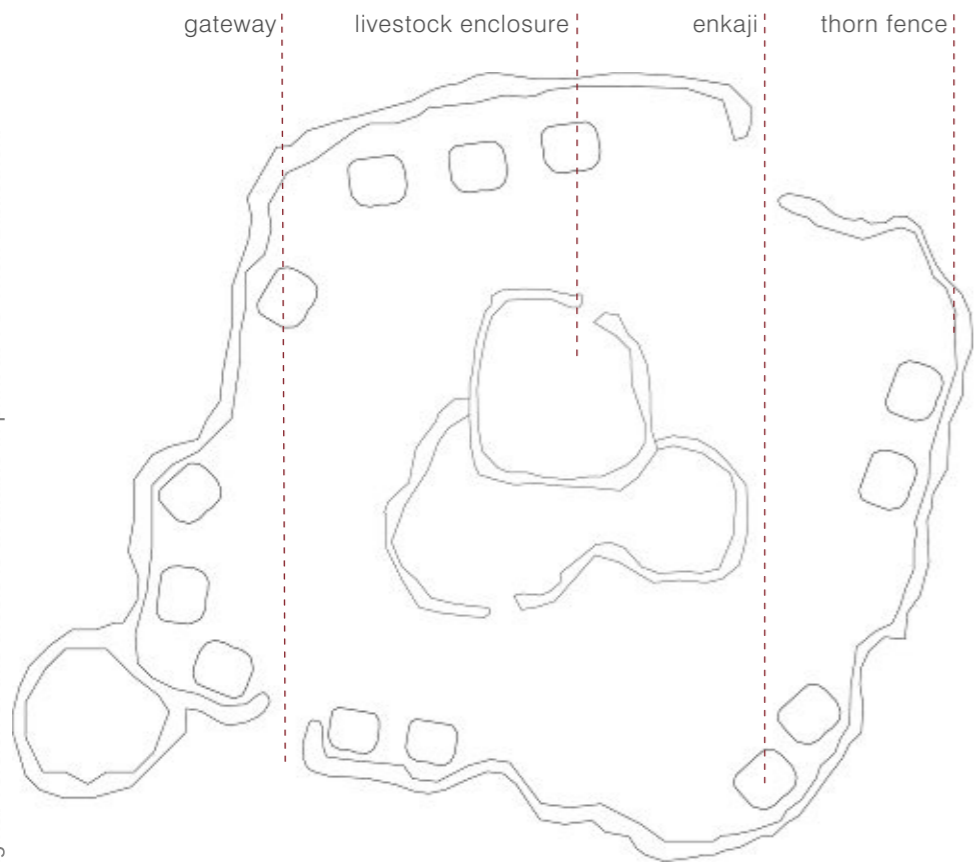
These fences are constructed out of various thorny branches that are piled high and extended in a circular manner to enclose a space. The use of dead thorny branches piled together forms an impenetrable fence. The other type is made of thorny branches that are cut off and planted into the ground so they continue to grow and spread roots, forming a much sturdier foundation for the wall.

The *Enkangs* are forming cell-like spatial fabrics, enclosing and protecting a fragile interior from the threats of a hostile exterior. They were also called *Kraal* (africaans), which today refers to the enclosure of the livestock alone. They are well embedded into the landscape, due to their scale compared to the surrounding plains.

The fences can reach heights of up to 2,5m (the surrounding vegetation grows up to 3,6 m) and widths of 2 meters, and enclose spaces of up to 100 meters in diameter. The purpose of the fence is to prevent dangerous animals from entering, livestock from leaving, children from getting lost, and cattle raiders from stealing livestock. The fences also include a series of gates that are used to control who enters and leaves the homestead. Herders also use these passageways to move their livestock out to graze during the day and back in for protection at night [Saitoti, 1980].

The size of the settlement depends on the number of families living together, their livestock and their source of production. They are built to support up to 20 single homes, the *enkaji*. In older antropological studies the number varies greatly with up to 50 *enkajis* within the *Boma* settlement [Kalter, 1978].

Following the Maasai tradition, a man's homestead is established at marriage and [...] "the wife is supposed to stay in the mother-in-law's house until the groom's mother builds her daughter-in-law a new house on the site designated by the father, for the son's homestead" [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006, p. 57], still within the father's land, but never opposite the father's *enkang*. The arrangement of the single homes within the homestead follows a particular pattern as well. The first wife builds her house on the right side of the main doorway within the enclosure, where she lives with her children and eventually sets aside a designated space for small animals. In case her husband marries again, the wife's second house is built on the left side of the doorway. In this pattern the following wives will build their houses on either side of the doorway accordingly, distributed by even or odd numbers [Sharman, 1979].



graphic by the author



The village differs in size and shape, depending on who lives together, whether it is a polygamous family of befriended smaller families. There might be a gathering place for the men outside the thorn fence about 100-200 m away, where they discuss political and economic businesses and distribute the work for the day.

A village with more befriended families might have more doorways and small gathering places and animal enclosures than the one where all members belong to one patrilineal family [Kalter, 1979].

The spatial privacy concept is deeply intertwined with the social organisation, relying on age, marital status, gender and thus respect and authority. Privacy works on different spatial levels, the whole homestead, as well as the *enkaji* itself. So there are designated areas for family members and visitors, depending on the actions. The entrance and courtyard, as well as the peripheral spaces around the homestead as public spaces host the collective social functions and act as buffer to the private zones, the single houses. These foster the privacy of the single family members [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006].

The *manyatta*, homestead for warriors *Olmurrani*, in full maturity of one generation, their trusted mothers, their girl friends, several junior elder sponsors and the 'fire-stick' elders, who will instruct the warriors in Maasai customs, is one of the settlements, which is especially built for that ritualistic reason. Only these persons mentioned above, are allowed within the settlement, forming a strong body between junior and senior warriors. Difficulties arise when the family sends cattle and the mother to the *manyatta*. In cases, where the father has only married one wife or owns few cattle, this leaves less milk for the family left in their *enkang* and separates the wife from her husband. Warriorhood extends over a period of 10 to 15 years, from early teens to early thirties of a Maasai man's life. For the next step into elderhood, and the associated ceremony *Eunoto*, again a special *manyatta* is built consisting of 49 houses and a special ceremonial house called *o-singira* in the centre of the *manyatta*. *O-Singira* (*Osinkira* in other literature) is a round construction with a conical roof and thus differs from the typical Maasai dwelling with a flat roof. All the main events of this ritual revolve around the *o-singira*. Once this ritual has ended all the members disperse and the structure is abandoned [Saitoti, 1980].

There is an ephemeral concept to Maasai spatiality, which connects strongly to the in-betweenness of their livelihoods. This ephemerality, thus the in-betweenness is inscribed in the landscape, because even when *enkangs* are abandoned, their traces can still be seen from above across Maasailand.



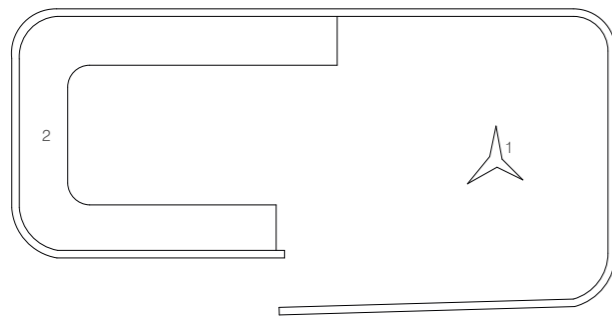


The Maasai women are fully responsible for the building of the single house, and are therefore intrinsically tied to every aspect of its design, construction, and maintenance. Knowledge about the efficient use of materials in the construction, the houses ability to passively control interior climate, the capacity to accommodate different and changing programmes and their capability to protect their occupants from the threats of the exterior environment are carried down from generation to generation of the female family tree. However, to build a house is the work of the women of the boma, but today it might even be that of the whole community, including also men.

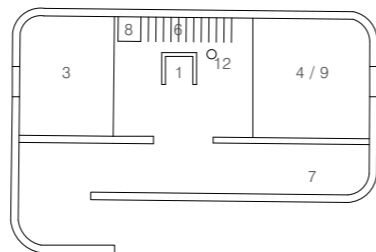
The spatial disposition is well defined and the single buildings have determined locations on site. The *enkaji* are constructed with locally found materials as well as small pieces of metal and plastic. The typical *enkaji* looks like a low-lying rectangular form that has rounded corners, which solves the problem of the corner joints, because the structural skeleton can be continued. Thus the *enkaji* forms out a monolithic structure, which appears to grow out of the earth [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006].

Typically, *enkajis* are around four or five meters long, three or four meters wide, and about 1,70 - 1,90 meters high. They are built directly on the ground and employ a timber frame construction. The traditional foundation is built of the *oleleshwa* trees, where wooden poles are entrenched in the ground, of 40-60 cm depth. Pliable sticks are fastened into the poles. *Enkoirien*, round poles are the main vertical structure. The walls of the traditional house are built in form of a strong mesh. Rigid horizontal *oleleshwa* pliable sticks are tied to the vertical wooden poles and infilled with thin pliable sticks, twigs and leafy branches, to ensure that the applied layers of mud and cowdung mixture don't fall off or go through. This mixture of mud and cowdung are plastered by hand all over the external surface until the infill is totally covered. The hyperboid roof *engaash* is smoothly bent into the vertical structure, to form out an intertwined shell structure. Thatching grass is placed on the roof framework, with an additional layer of cowdung and ash to make it more impervious to rain. [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006].

The *enkaji* is entered through a single narrow doorway, located in the centre or near the corner of one of its exterior walls, mostly on the longer side. When entering the doorway, one travels down a short hallway,

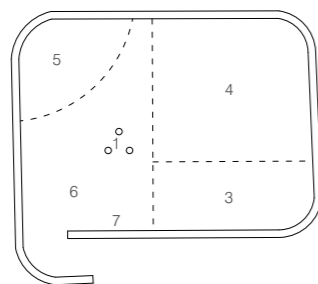


floor plan, by the author,
see F. Stuhlmann in J. Kalter, 1978

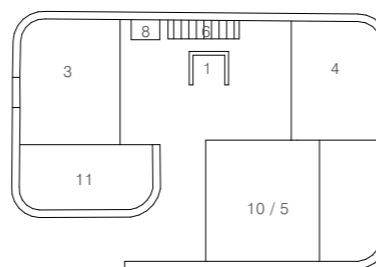


floor plan in Orkinos, by the author,
see J. Kalter, 1978

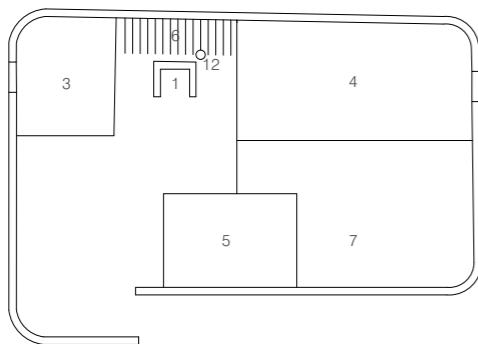
- fireplace 1
- bedding 2
- woman's bed 3
- man's bed 4
- calves stable 5
- fire wood 6
- storage space 7
- wall rack 8
- guest's bed 9
- bed for circumcised boys (il murrān) 10
- grandmother's bed 11
- roof hatch 12



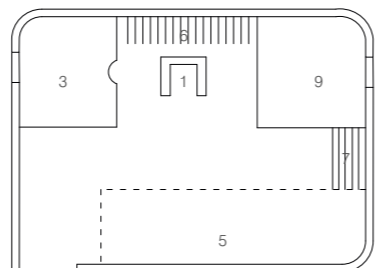
floor plan, by the author,
see M. Merker in J. Kalter, 1978



floor plan in Orkinos, by the author,
see J. Kalter, 1978



floor plan in Ol Bun, by the author,
see J. Kalter, 1978

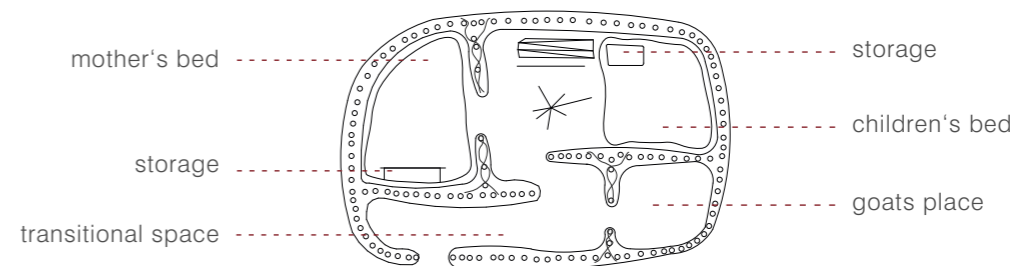


floor plan in Olepolos, by the author,
see J. Kalter, 1978

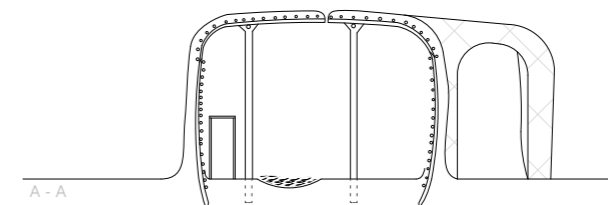
bringing you to the centre of the house, the location of the fire place where cooking, socializing and other activities happen. The *enkaji* varies in size and interior programming [Kalter, 1978].

Some of the floor plans show a modification to a zigzag circulation towards the interior, building out a buffer zone allowing the residents to defend their home from outside threats. This buffer zone prevents either livestock from accidentally entering as well as dangerous animals or alien people from having direct access into the heart of the *enkaji* [Hasey, 2015], but recently these buffer or transitional zones seem to vanish for individual spaces. Once inside the main space of the house, one can find sleeping spaces, on either side of the house, that are separated with a wooden screen for privacy. These small rooms include a single piece of stretched cowhide elevated on wooden pegs that act as mattress for sleeping [Sharman, 1979].

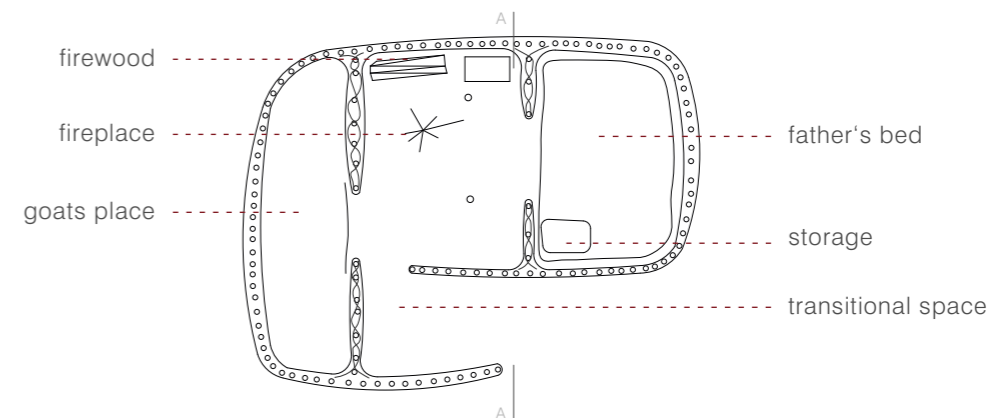
Depending on the size of the family, the interior programming can have a separate bay for baby goats, sheep or calves. This livestock room, *olale*, is either located directly off of the main hearth space or is accessible part way down the main entryway.

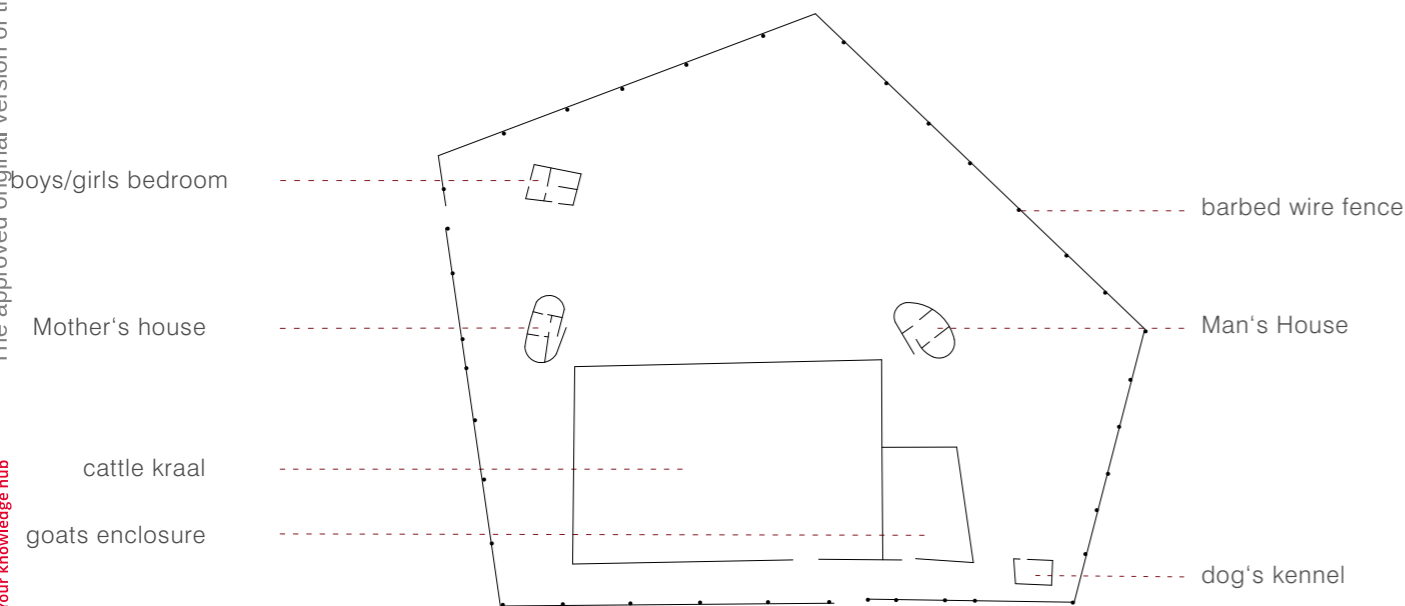
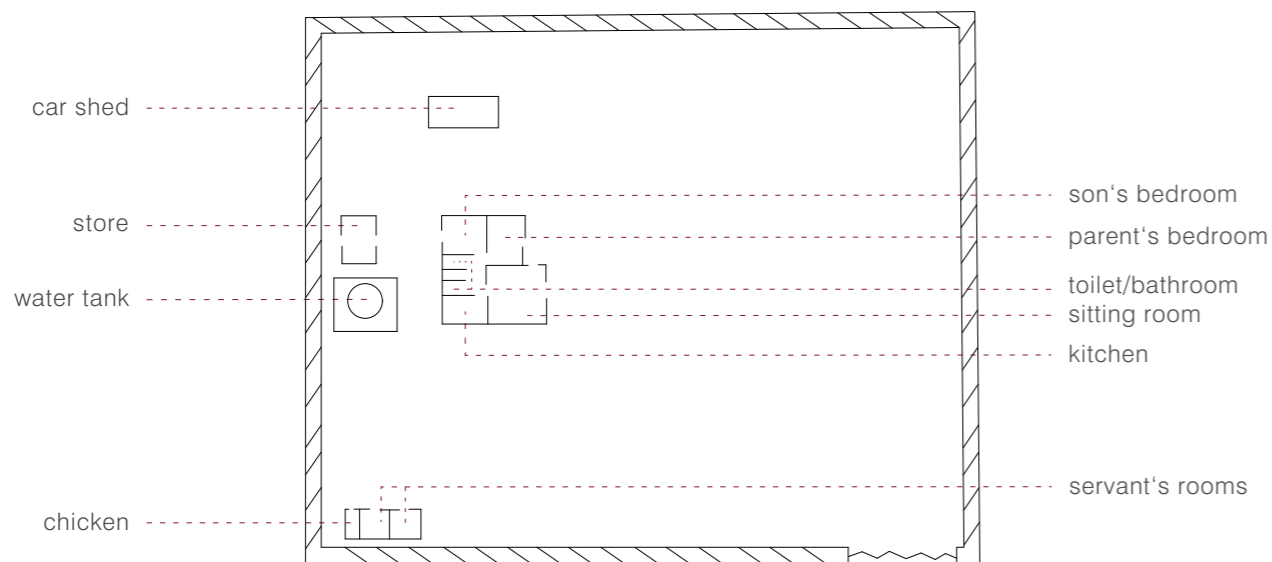


floor plan, Wife's House, Maasai Kenya, by the author, see R. Rukwara, 2001



floor plan and section, Man's House, Maasai Kenya, by the author, see R. Rukwara, 2001





However, these layouts and building strategies are not as consistent anymore, as they used to be. As their settlements were a reflection on social life with kinship, mythology and social ties within the community, revolving around the (architecturally and symbolic) central location of the kraal, these forms evolved in parts of the Maasailand, both in Kenya and Tanzania [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006].

New (western) values appear to have generated specific design concepts such as single family houses, permanence and linearity, in contrast to the traditional community based values on kinship and mythology which were generating patterns such as centrality, privacy, dualism and communalism [Rukwaro, 2001].

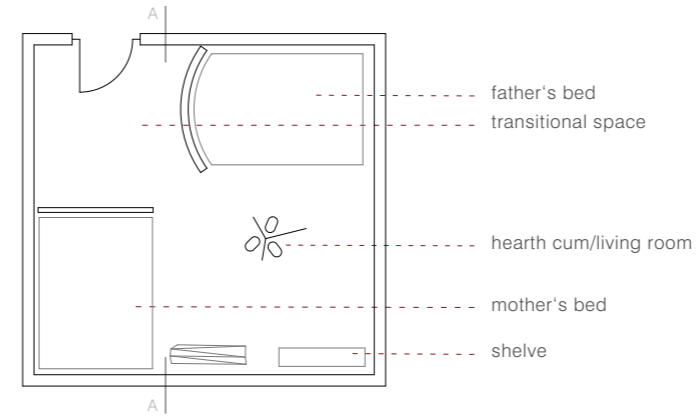
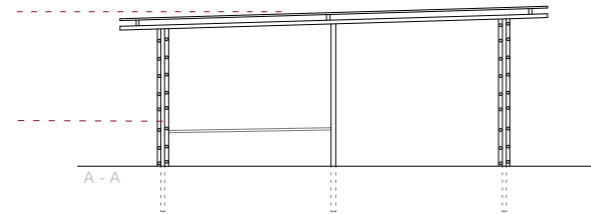
Clan lineage still organises the homesteads but now land ownership leads to permanent settlements. Homesteads are organised along an axis, thus a functional approach has been implemented. Alongside the traditional building units there are new and modern layouts, in rectangular building form with different roof forms, using other materials as tin, plastic or brick. The rooms are outformed bigger, sometimes even each room has its separate exit. Often there are even big articulated windows, internal doors and thus solid partitions. Additionally there are also more external buildings such as stores, [...] "chicken houses, external cooking spaces, enclosures for treating animals, hay stores, built up spaces for young animals and kennels, and sometimes garages" [Rukwaro, 2001, p.90]. Often the traditional houses and new house types are found within one homestead. In general it can be said, that [...] "for every three houses there is one traditional and two non-traditional houses" [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006, p.97]. Within the contemporary typology of houses, the disappearance of transitional and special designated spaces is evident, as well as the blurring together of private and public spaces. Additionally women are not the mere builders anymore but are interchanged with local craftsmen and carpenters, a *fundi* [Rukwaro and Maina, 2006].

Due to formal education leading to new occupations, the cultural variables of the Maasai have changed. Adopting new religion, like Christianity, led to new family types and even changed from a polygamous lifestyle to a monogamous family. Western standard values such as independence of individuals, self empowerment, the changing role of genders, are definitely challenging the traditional way of life and thus stressing the loss of generational knowledge. Maasai (hi)story is transitioning, not only in its architectural articulations but in the spatial narratives that they are telling us.



galvanised
corrugated Iron
sheets on timer
roof structure

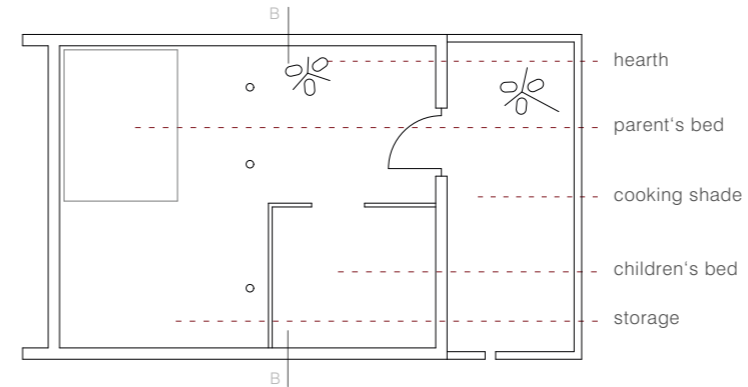
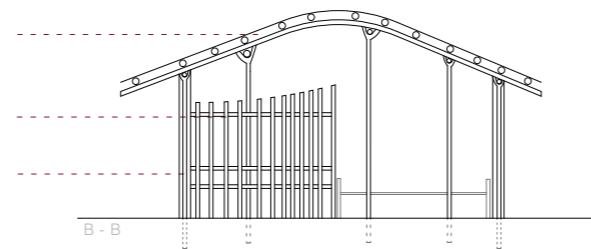
mud/cowdung
plastered earth
filled wood pole
and twig wall



grass thatch
on wooden
structure - roof

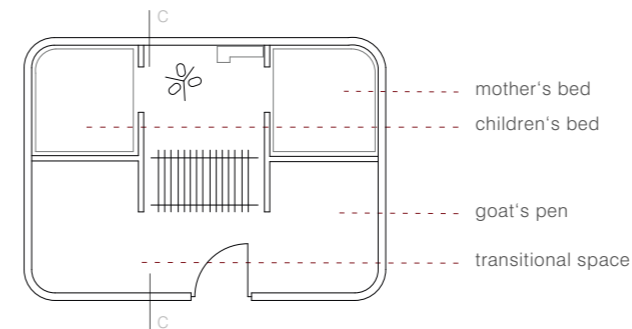
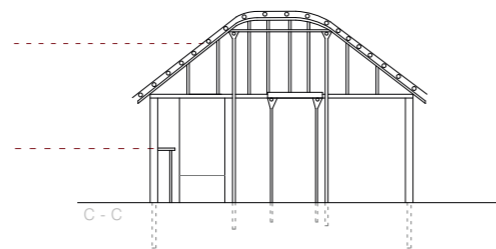
wooden partition

mud/cowdung
plastered earth
infilled wood pole
and twigs wall



grass thatch
on wooden
structure - roof

mud/cowdung
plastered earth
filled wood pole
and twigs wall





BUILD



As Architecture, I am trained to construct and bring to life what was once on paper. As Archaeology, I am trained to dig and bring to the surface what was once of value. As Anthropology, I am trained to observe and to connect the data which was once collected. As Art, I am trained to create and look beyond what is presented to us as truth. What we have in common within our work is building up stories around what we want to address.

We sell the stories of a building to contractors, to sellers, to inhabitants, we sell the same one of an ancient coin, of a brave warrior, or it might even be intrinsic to our artistic creation. Stories are personal but they come in all different shapes and sizes, as mythology, as analogy, as poem, as parable, as fairy tale, as picture, as sculpture, as music, as a play, in gaming, in dance, as mathematical equation. This list can be endlessly continued.

Storytelling has various origins and names, and looking beyond, each also tells its own different story. It has a strong temporality inscribed in its term and also a strong spatial connection; be it as a storing place for ancient glyphs, or paintings, or as gathering spaces where people came together listening to stories - and they still do. Therefore, the spectrum of possible story-spaces opened up with the web, and the mediums or 'vehicles' transporting these very stories broadened with technology.

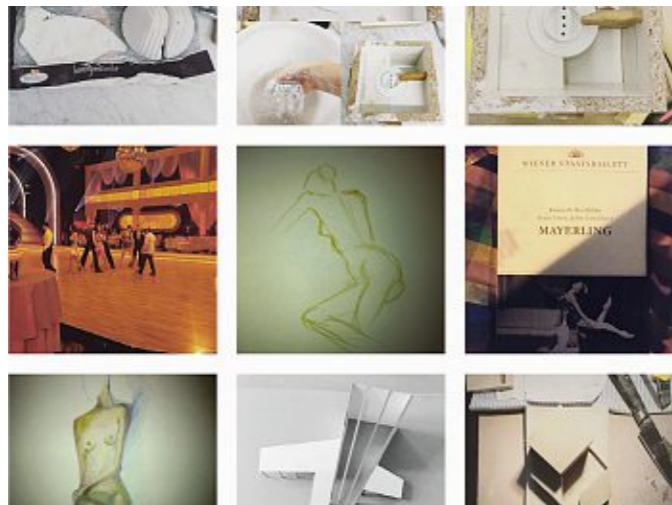
Narrative or Narration etymologically derives from *gnarus* – knowing or to know, so the word is bound to an epistemological understanding. History basically has similar roots to knowledge. Confabulations on the other hand originated from the word *to talk*. The German word for both story and history – *Geschichte* – has an ambiguous meaning if you transport it to a vertical perspective of piling things over each other. Just as in a palimpsest where layers are put over each other, leaving traces of what was beneath, so can *Geschichte* be interpreted as parts laying over each other. So there is a horizontal temporal line, as well as a vertical lingering line inscribed in the word. And even though they derive from different backgrounds, and today they might be used almost synonymously, they all have a common denominator relating to the world of stories.

Storytelling is intrinsic to the human experience, as even the title of Jonathan Gottschall's book 'The Storytelling Animal' – how stories make us human - reveals. And certainly [...] "story evolves like a biological organism [and] it continuously adapts itself to the demands of its environment" [Gottschall, 2012, p.180].

Historically you can go back as far as to 30.000 BC to the first cave paintings in Chauvet Cave in Lascaux, France, to prove that storytelling (in some form or another) has been part of humans gathering, storing and conserving knowledge. But not only an epistemological approach arises. There is an ontological understanding about stories, depicting who we are, and how we understand our being in the world, as through stories we were always setting standards and certain rules within a society.

Narrative is deeply connected to language and, as Egyptian hieroglyphs, Mayan glyphs and Chinese letters that combined logographic, syllabic and even alphabetic elements evolved, and papyrus and Chinese paper were invented, it became possible for stories to be written down formally. Even if, originally, they were information carved in stone or walls.

Within the Greek and Latin speaking areas stories evolved as Greek mythology and the Bible, which were of course first orally spread, before they were written down. As Greek myths are stories about the relationships of gods with humans, there is still a story of how everything began. A sort of genesis about the world, about time and we humans. The bible on the whole can be interpreted as a set of rules of how society works and how we



should behave with each other.

From the time of the 15th century, when Gutenberg brought the printing system to Europe (though it had already appeared 150 years earlier in China), the history of narration changed completely. Suddenly knowledge was accessible to everyone, at a fast pace. Plays, poems, stories, fables, myth could all be written down and could be accessed by the literate communities. For about 300 years, books were the means of transporting stories worldwide. This changed in the 19th century when the first projector inventions of Thomas Edison and the Lumière Brothers put photographs into motion, and the invention of the radio minimised the distance between the storyteller and the listener to zero [<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/storytelling/>].

The digital era, of course, makes use of all these means. Facebook, instagram, tiktok, podcasts, youtube and spotify or pinterest (just to mention some of them) are all digital forms of one of these ways to communicate, to store, to tell stories, leaving a digital fingerprint in the world.

As Jonathan Gottschall puts it: [...] “the essence of story is not changing. The technology of storytelling has evolved [...] but it doesn’t fundamentally change story” [Gottschall, 2012, p.186].

When we think of story today, we basically think of fiction, or invented stories in novels, poems, fairy tales.

Now that I am here in this In-between land, I am thinking about all the stories wandering around, (almost) forgotten ones and those still in the making, about my own stories and that of my fellow travellers. I think of possible Maasai tales and stories they were and probably are still telling to one other. What could one make of these, and do they have the same purpose as stories have at home?

Questions arise everywhere the stories go. As the 4 A's, we are in the midst of the lived storyworld, our present continuously unfolding a new (story)line, a new chapter, a new character, a new pattern. What will be left of our being here, once we are gone? What stories will be told? As Art, I am thinking that our past as well as our future is very much fictitious or virtual, and our present has virtually no timeline at all. My head is spinning and I try to make sense of all the events. Of course I do! Humans are strangely concerned with knowing and explaining, with ordering and indexing.

Is that what drives one to stories and why is it such an important part of one being? What differentiates our own stories from one another and how we do make sense of the abundance of stories out there in the world? Are there narrative patterns and are stories a way of ontological or epistemological approach? Can we trust the narratives of our worlds? Is there a scientific approach to the storyworld and can that be used to build a methodology?

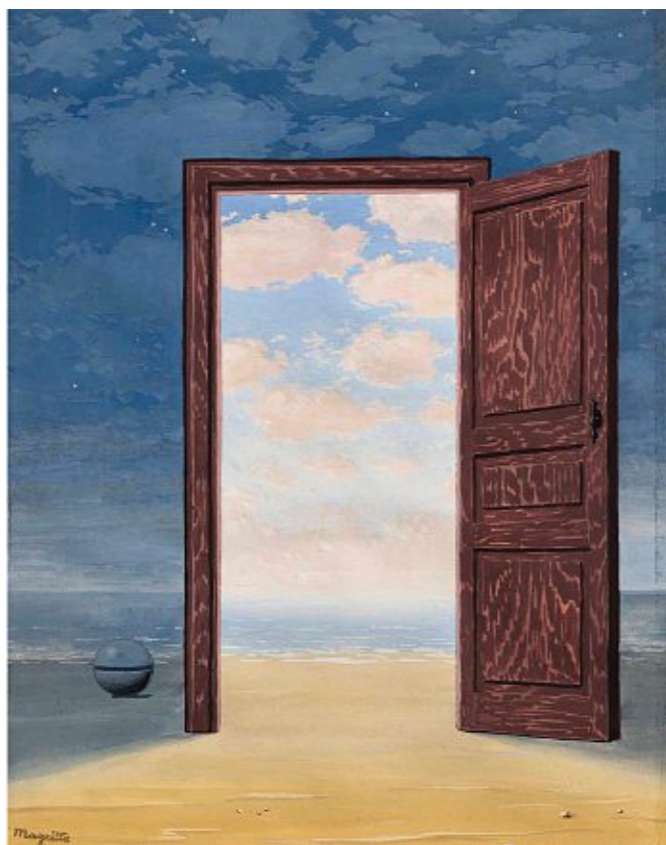
Narrative is used in the scientific context to emphasise the refined level of both fictional and factual stories. There has been a shift in understanding that narrative is not exclusively a matter of literature and language, but within the physical and social sciences for analysing patterns of communication, conception and perception [Nash, 1990, Foreword xi].

It is basically understood that narrative is [...] “central to our essential cognitive activities (Ricoeur), to historical thinking (White), to psychological analysis and practice (Lacan), to political critique and praxis (Lyotard)” [Nash, 1990, Foreword xi] and that it answers to ontological as well as epistemological questions in philosophy.

Literally translated as the love of wisdom, philosophy can be generally understood as the study and understanding of our world. It is though very simplified because there are sub-fields which developed throughout the last decades and which can be categorized in various ways. However, philosophy is concerned with the nature of being and the questions of how and what we know. Narration, I argue, is the consequential accomplice of these questions and as Peter Lamarque argues has four dimensions: time, structure, voice and point of view [Lamarque in Nash, 1990, p. 131]. Plot is understood to be an idea of structure since it is a sequence of events. And especially these telling of events make up narrative, be it fictional or factual.

The relation between these two is complex but [...] “narrative *per se* is indifferent to truth and reference. [...] Narratives can be about real people or fictional characters and their descriptive content can be true or false” [Lamarque in Nash, 1990, p.132].

Memory can produce such contradictory narratives, because they are not precise records of what supposedly really happened, but are all versions of someone's story, where fact and invention blend together. Conspiracy theories are another example of such story making where people connect real data with invented conclusions to a fictive narration of explaining our world. Confabulations, etymologically derived from *fabula* – *fable*, inherit the sense of fictitious narrative, and also pinpoint to a blurring of truth and invention. The need for human beings to order and make sense of the world leads to connecting fragmented facts to form a coherent and meaningful story.



Jonathan Gottschall calls it the Sherlock Holmes Syndrome linking together random clues to an orderly conclusion just to get an explanation.

Hermeneutics focuses on this interpretation of narratives. Historically it was used to analyse biblical texts as well as mythology, but today it incorporates both verbal and non-verbal communications, as well as semiotics, presuppositions, and pre-understandings. On this basis you might also find the interpretation of dreams in psychoanalysis, as well as forms of psychological therapy.

J.M Bernstein claims that [...] “human self-reflection is dominantly, if not exclusively, either structural or narrative” [Bernstein in Nash, 1990, p.55], and [...] “that exactly this theory-mediated self-reflection looks to be but a specific and obvious account of hermeneutic understanding, as an act of extending, altering, de-forming and re-forming of one’s own horizon of understanding” [ibid, p.64].

As for all of these sorts of stories, the common denominator is tragedy. J.M Bernstein argues that [...] “emancipation is only possible as tragedy” [ibid, p.55] and J. Gottschall also claims that conflict is the fundamental element of fiction, and that in just about any story the protagonist efforts to secure what s/he desires, usually comes at some cost [Gottschall, 2012]. For him [...] “story = character + predicament + attempted extrication” [ibid, p.52].

The storyworld is an abundance of what we have seen fictitious stories with a certain element of fact that all, of course, differ in their semantics and semiotics, but one might presume, as Peter Lamarque considers, [...] “there is no difference in principle between modes of storytelling and [...] there are no special privileges accorded to any one kind of storyteller, historian, philosopher, scientist or novelist, with regard to the ‘representation of reality” [Lamarque in Nash, 1990, p.151].

This representation of reality can be stated as metaphors, stories, models or histories, and certainly as narrative, in whichever ‘vehicle’ it is transported. It represents life as such, but is not life’s simulacrum.

Narrative has a clear spatial consequence. It connects two levels of spatiality. One are the spaces and buildings, store and pile up all this knowledge, like libraries, universities, schools, bookshelves at home, the very paper and ink, the pen, the pencil, the rubber or eraser, and all the related industries forming this knowledge and the spaces where people gather to tell each other stories, like living rooms, fireplaces, churches, sanctuaries, therapy rooms, etc.

The other one are the narratives themselves, which are telling stories of their very own spatiality intrinsically interwoven in the plot.

These two levels have nothing to do with each other, someone might think, but let's go on a speculative journey here.

What might the world of Shakespeare's "A Midnight's Summer Dream" communicate to the main library in London? What relation would unfold between the Greek mythological underworld and the garden of Versailles? How could a conversation play out between an old East African map and the national library in Vienna?

As Archaeology, I could go on with this kind of speculative thinking connecting things which appear to have nothing in common but that can be connected through a storyline in the readers mind.

Now that this has opened up possible new narratives, I want to have a look beyond and see how space is constructing narrations of its own kind.

Poiesis* of spatial confabulations.

***Poiesis in philosophy is "the activity in which a person brings something into being that did not exist before", deriving from the Greek root of to make**

Stories are intrinsic to the human being. Thus it is not surprising - that Paul Emmons and Luc Phinney claim that [...] "the universality of narrative makes us members of the species *homo fabula*" [Emmons et al., 2017, p.1]. This is certainly true as [...] "story is older than writing, older, perhaps, than permanent settlement" [ibid 2017, p.1]. The need to find shelter to be protected from the forces of the environment, to be settling for a timely instance, to lay down and even to bury, is inherent in human behaviour. Thus, I shall call human species *homo ponendi*.

[from the Latin word ponere which includes translations from putting or erecting something, as well as setting, enclosing, placing, locating, planting, leaving, laying down to burying [https://de.langenscheidt.com/latein-deutsch/ponere#sense-1.1.1]

As we put our bodies out there in the world as *homo ponendi*, we are constantly setting spatial narratives, and this since time being. As space in narratology was considered merely a concept of plot, thus narrative structure, it [...] "intersects with narrative in two principle ways. On one hand, it can be an object of representation, on the other, it can function as the environment in which narrative is physically deployed, or, to put it differently, as the medium in which narrative is realised" [Ryan et al., 2016, p.1].

There are two major ways to describe the spatiality within a narrative: The tour or the map. The tour structure follows the travels of a solitary hero, like in *The Odyssey* from James Joyce or in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, following a main character through places and landscapes, to encounters, discovering new cultures and customs and thus [...] "the tour literalizes the popular spatiotemporal metaphor[:] *life is a journey*" [Ryan et al., 2016, p.32]. The map is well known in architecture as it is both a medium and a tool in architectural narration, and follows particular design patterns. In narratology it is experimental and understood as a post-modern form of organisation. It dissects the sequential itinerary of a traveller to points of the map, which can be visited without any temporal order. The map is merely the surface upon which language is imposed. A map example in literature is William Least Heat-Moon's *PrairyErth* [Ryan et al., 2016].

Tour and map as elements in narratology are profoundly assigned to its character and to [...] "the key characteristics of the environment or settings within [which they] live: location, position, arrangement, distance, direction, orientation, and movement" [Ryan et al., 2016, p.7].

These are specific spatial terms and correlate not only to a literary sense of space but to an architectural one as well.

Space is certainly not an easy concept in narrative. How space is interpreted and told is totally different in physics, geography, ethnology, anthropology, architecture and certainly in philosophy. This list is far from complete and yet, we can grasp the relation they have with each other and how they all form the realities of spatiality or rather, spatialities.

Bookshelves are filled with spatial theories, but it is evident, especially when connecting it to the *homo ponendi*, that spatial narrations are constituted by the human body. Some philosophers like Michel De Certeau, Foucault and Lefêbvre claimed models of spatial practice and stressed that the body was an essential element of it.

Michel De Certeau for example constituted his theory around two major ideas which are coherent with map and tour: *lieu* (place) and *espace* (space). As place consists of an order and fixed points, granting stability, space is formulated by action and movement and thus dependent of pace, directions and time. These two elements are set opposite with *carte* (map) and *parcours* (tour) deriving from different point of views of the spatial scope – from above and from within. This results in an understanding as *carte* as presupposed network of set points and *parcours* as the network of spatial relations and entanglements formed by the daily commuter [original in German, Günzel, 2018]. These spatial and narrative relations leave lines inscribed in the surface, be it in an urban surrounding of a western style city, or in the African plains of Maasailand.

With modern technology these very lines can be traced and stored, and are made visible to a broader audience.

With GPS systems, our movements are traced cartographically. Running patterns, delivery services for food or commodities are memorised on a daily basis and are stories told in the environment. Projects of digital memory spaces, connecting the map with historical or personal stories of particular points or digital games like geocaching, reinventing the treasure hunt, are all contributing to the very forming of space in the sense of Michel De Certeau, and simultaneously leaving a story to be read in that very space.

The similarities in narrative *tour* and *map*, and theoretical *parcours* to *carte*, with architectural *drawing* and *plan* can be easily formulated. The architectural drawing can be read as a *tour*, a temporal itinerary of progression, a network of diffused lines formulated by the designer, having strong temporalities, whereas the plan is a joining of fixed points, each readable on its own, where architectural language is imposed.

For a long time the order by which we were living was a dual system: two positions which automatically excluded the other. Lefêbvre and also Foucault refused to accept the homogeneity of the oppositional thinking, even though Foucault addresses these oppositions in his book *Of Other Spaces* and remarks that [...] “perhaps our life is still ruled by a certain number of oppositions that cannot be touched, that institution and practice have not yet dared to undermine” [Foucault, 1967, p.16]. He claims further that, though we are in an [...] “epoch of simultaneity; we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and the far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed”, “an epoch in which space is given to us in the form of relations between emplacements” [ibid, 1967, p.16] and that time is the operator who distributes these elements and thus forms the very relations.

Lefêbvre stresses a triad of space - the spatial practice, the representations of space and the representational spaces. He further stresses them as *espace perçu* - perceived space, *espace conçu* - designed space and *espace vécu* - lived space. This triad allows for different levels of spatiality. First the perceived space which is the production of space (spatial practice) of everyone on a daily basis, owning their streets and ways. The designed space (representations of space) as the space of planners, which is determined by a set of codes, rules and signs that give a certain order and last the lived space (representational space). This is a highly symbolic and imaginary space that tends to produce loads of images and signs which don't need to be coherent at all times [Lefêbvre, 1991].

Foucault also claims a triad of spaces in time. The medieval space as a space of emplacement, the extension of space, and the contemporary relational space, which all are connected to a mode of control on different scale levels. In *Of Other Spaces* Foucault constructs another set of spatial relations and speaks of spaces as utopias, heterotopias and of an in-between space, which is ambiguous: the mirror.

This certainly gives a hint of of horizontality and verticality, forming a spatial grid or matrix in which the elements can fluctuate.

The spatial reality of the Maasai is embedded in this grid of the relational space. Not only is their land undergoing constant change and certainly control on the horizontal (time) line, as argued by Foucault, and could be understood as a Heterotopia, but their livelihoods are vertically nested in the production of space, as argued by Lefêbvre, by their production, signs and set of old and new rules as well as their highly symbolic societal space. As we have seen above, Maasai movement within space is also coherent with Michel De Certeau's reasoning [de Certeau, 1984, p. 97ff].

All these spatial relations automatically evoke notions of position and distance, of margins and openings, of control and disorder, hence of spatial narratives, and of how we describe and perceive space as human beings. As a matter of order, humans tend to split, to cluster or to organise their lives in sets of relations, which makes it easy to categorise, hence to place things on a certain point of order. This act of ordering forms margins and boundaries, excludes that which does not fit, protects one from the another, and thus the inside from the outside, and encloses what is in the centre. Therefore marginalisation is always an act of (de-, re-) placing someone or something outside of a certain category and hence changing the order of things, producing a different and new set of relations. Re- or displacement makes elements vanish from the centre (of attention), pushes them to the sidelines, but makes them even more visible, in this space called *Between*. We don't really know what this In-betweenness means or what it might look like?

Bruno Latour with his Actor-Network-Theory could give us an answer to that. His theory involves the equalisation of people and things, so that both are actors in a set of relations forming a network. Actor is to be understood as a neutral element fluctuating between being object and subject. This marks an ontological In-betweenness, from where all actions arise. He borrows the term of the quasi-object from Michel Serres, who narrates the story of his theory through a metaphor of the games - '*hunt the slipper*' or '*button, button, who's got the button?*' [Arch+, 2015]. The furet, the token in the game - it could be the ball in football as well as the joker - marks one person in a game, but it is continuously passed around. Thus, [...] "[t]his quasi-object is not an object, but it

is one nevertheless, since it is not a subject, since it is in the world. It is also a quasi-subject, since it marks or designates a subject who, without it, would not be a subject" [Serres, 1982, p.225]. The *collective* plays, the furet marks the single *I (as the Individual)* in the interruption of the game, when the furet is presented.

The furet itself acquires an agency within the collective building up the relations by being passed around. The better the players, the faster the game's pace. The furet is a witness of these relations, marking the one whose attention wanders from the token as a victim. [ibid, 1982].

This is a highly transitional metaphor or model, Michel Serres presents in his book *The Parasite*. The parasite, as he presents it, changes the relation, the direction of subject to object and vice-versa. The prefix *para-* in the word parasite even means that [...] "it is on the side, next to, shifted; it is not on the thing, but on its relation" [Serres, 1982, p.38].

This relation [...] "upsets equilibrium, making it deviate. If some equilibrium exists or ever existed somewhere, somehow, the introduction of a parasite in the system immediately provokes a difference, a disequilibrium. Immediately, the system changes; time has begun [and] (hi)story will follow" [Serres, 1982, p.182 ff.]. So the parasite or the furet (the ball, or joker) is basically the exciter of forming lines, but at the same time it is an element of the chain.

So the In-betweenness is a parasitic relation, a line, a transformational moment, which continuously changes the very interrelationships between the quasi-object and the quasi-subject, and gives new meaning to each of them.

In-betweenness is a void, a quasi-zero, a 'quasi', a 'virtually', which lingers over the forming of new networks.

WHAT WOULD FABLE BE WITHOUT METAMORPHOSIS?
MEN MUST BE CHANGED INTO ANIMALS WITH A WAVE OF THE MAGIC WAND.
AND HOW CAN THAT BE? THE SECRET OF THE FABLE IS METAMORPHOSIS IN THE
FABLE. IT HAS TO DO WITH A MIRACLE OF HOSPITALITY -
OR WITH AN INFINITE NUMBER OF PARASITIC RELATIONS.

MICHEL SERRES, THE PARASITE , P 99

I have a purpose, yet not a fixed one. I can be used, transformed, recycled. I can be destroyed or conserved. I can be in disguise and hide from the viewers of my time. I often stand alone. I can be a monster or a saint. I am a narcissist yet sharing everything with others. I have multiple shapes and edges. I have wounds, but I am strong. I am void, yet full of life. I am made up of many pieces, yet I am considered as a whole.

I answer to politics and laws, to boundaries and order. I am not free but I am in open space and yet not confined by myself. I am a painting and a sculpture. I exist, yet I am imaginative and real.

I have my own language. My environment often doesn't understand what I try to say. I am not literate in the other's language, but still I am speaking and telling stories.

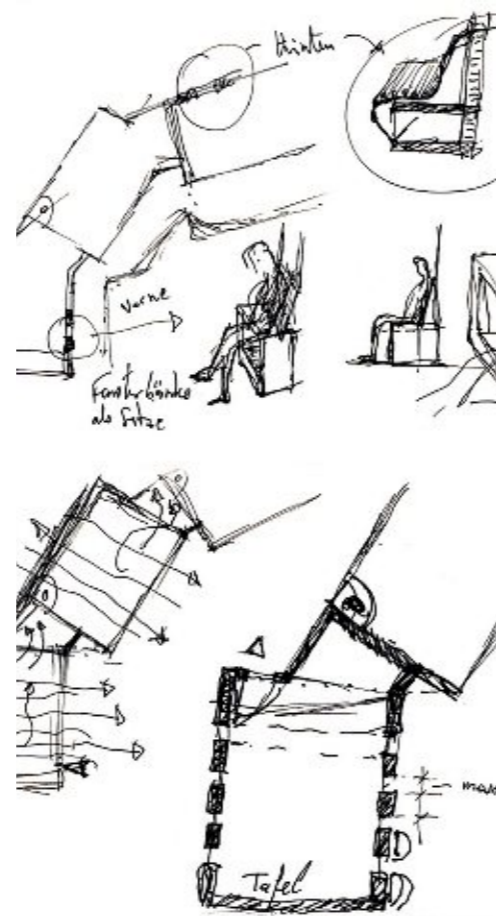
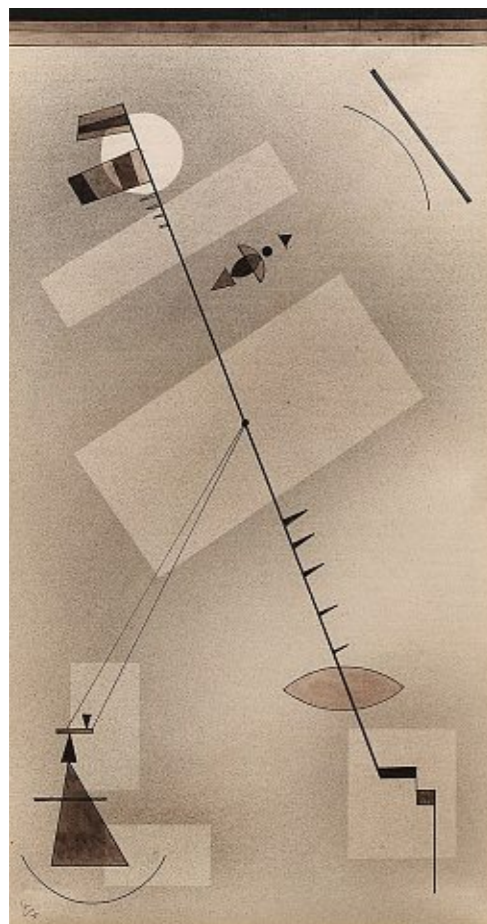
Poetry of figurative architectonics.

To begin with this quote from Michel Serres, the fable bears the metaphor of transformation. It also brings us back to the *homo fabula* or the *homo ponendi*, and to the emancipation through tragedy or contradiction. The threshold of the exchanging relations holds these conflicting narrations. The line transports a sense of demarcation and of bifurcation. Space is generated out of these relational terms, but what about built architecture as narrations of these relations. These relations are formed out of a constant movement. If the movement stops, the narrative ends. Michel de Certeau also tells us [...] "that in modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called *metaphorai*. [...] Every story is [thus] a travel story - a spatial practice" [de Certeau, 1984, p.115].

In narratology movement is abstract and not measurable in time. The distances are verbally suspended. A character can easily go from one place to another in just a few words, or pages. Or around the world in 130 pages. Transitional spaces in narratology are various: the rabbit hole in Alice in the Wonderland, which transports her to a completely different world, or the picture in Mary Poppins, where suddenly they escape the unfriendly surroundings of London in the early 1900's, to be transported to a world of speaking penguins and live merry-go-round horses. The star-gate and holodeck in recent fictional outer-space narratives are possible ways to move around the time-space-continuum; either you move to a different planet or you create a situation which can be visually, acoustically and haptically perceived. All these narrative pictures of transition transport the main character somewhere unexpected, where they are desorientated, surprised and displaced and where his*her perception is altered as s*he travels through.

Architecture, is another form of narration in space which transports the viewer or the perceiver into another realm [Emmons et al., 2018]. In the (hi)story of western architecture poetics, aesthetics were important for finding form. Proportion, scale, [...] "mathematical and geometric qualities of architecture became subject to linguistic expression both discursive and poetic or emotional" [Pérez-Gómez in Emmons et al., 2018, p.111]. Harmony - deriving from music, and atmosphere - *Stimmung*, were narrative architectural expressions for finding its voice - *Stimme* [Pérez-Gómez in Emmons et al., 2018].

Algorithmic and parametric design strategies replaced poetic strategies in architectonic narration, and tried to formalise and neutralise its own expressional form. The informational language is digitally formalised and



follows binary codes. The human is a mere vehicle here of assembling the information, while the computer is rendering a possible form out of many options. Alberto Pérez-Gómez argues that [...] “[u]nderstanding the importance of literary language for architecture also entails, fundamentally, grasping, the crucial importance of literature to disclose the nature of urban contexts with all their cultural complexities, essential for an ethical and poetic practice of architecture and urban design” [Pérez-Gómez in Emmons et al., 2018, p. 114].

To understand narrative structures, we must be literate in the language we try to decipher. The architect's main way of telling a story is drawing. As I have argued before, the architectural drawing can be interpreted as a spatial narrative form of the *tour*, a temporal itinerary of progression, a network of diffused lines formulated by the designer. The very act of drawing, this bringing to paper of the mind-hand connection, is a creative process and can be interpreted as formulating the very lines that Michel de Certeau calls *trajectories*. In architecture, the creative process is often the act [...] “of connecting elements not obviously belonging together [but] their productive relationships, unnoticed before, produce a new result” [Mindrup in Emmons et al., 2018, p.141]. Finally these new results perform another architectonic and spatial narration.

The act of drawing an architectonic idea is devoid of any material or actual constructive information, yet tells a story about arrangement, about position, distance, openings, about relationships between elements, about interstices. It might imply uses, but it often fails to give a proper scale. It gives a hint of how the final building might look like, but ultimately has nothing to do with it. There is a translation from the drawing to the factual plan which has a totally different, more formalised architectural language, and thus generates a totally different output, mimicking the drawing it derives from.

Mimicry in architecture is used in different senses. It connects, as bio-mimicry, the design-process to the world of nature, creating supposed forms that imitate nature; on the threshold to the environment, the architectural body may possess elements mirroring what is around it, almost hiding just to scare you when confronting someone coming closer [<https://www.archdaily.com/954004/what-is-biomimetic-architecture>]. Why else would it be in camouflage, in disguise, if not to attack an possible enemy?

However, the threshold of transition can have various architectural and spatial articulations.

THE MIRROR IS, AFTER ALL, A UTOPIA, SINCE IT IS A PLACE WITHOUT PLACE. IN THE MIRROR, I SEE MYSELF THERE WHERE I AM NOT, IN AN UNREAL SPACE THAT VIRTUALLY OPENS UP BEHIND THE SURFACE; I AM OVER THERE, THERE WHERE I AM NOT, A SORT OF SHADOW THAT GIVES ME MY OWN VISIBILITY, THAT ENABLES ME TO SEE MYSELF THERE WHERE I AM ABSENT.

UTOPIA OF THE MIRROR.

BUT IT IS ALSO A HETEROTOPIA IN SO FAR AS THE MIRROR DOES REALLY EXIST, AND AS IT EXERTS ON THE PLACE I OCCUPY A SORT OF RETURN EFFECT; IT IS STARTING FROM THE MIRROR THAT I DISCOVER MY ABSENCE IN THE PLACE WHERE I AM, SINCE I SEE MYSELF OVER THERE.

MICHEL FOUCAULT, OF OTHER SPACES



The mirror is certainly a special threshold, opposed to reality, but virtually showing what I normally can't see and inverting any movement. Close is closer, far is further. The mirror as *mise-en-abyme* in the paintings of the Baroque, had the role of abolishing spatial limits between interior and exterior, of being the universal eye, and letting the spectator into intimate moments [Teyssot, 2005]. The mirror was considered a token of miracles, disclosing hidden secrets or illusions and distortions [Arch+, 2009]. As building material it got very popular in post-modern times, but was already used in the 1800s and 1900s.

Thresholds could be described as architectural oxymoron. The English language knows synonyms of thresholds, such as beam, sill, limen, steel base plate or swell. The swell is the most similar to the German word of *Schwelle* which derives from the Old German *svelo* which refers to the ground. The meanings of *swell* and *schwellen*, though, refer to something growing bigger, like ebb and flow. The German word *Schwelle* has both connotations. The term threshold also carries two meanings, that of the constructive beam in the ground, marking the transition from outside to inside, from private to public possible, but also signifying the line of entrance, and thus demarcating a boundary [Arch+, 2009]. These contradictory propositions, as line of conjunction and demarcation, make this space specifically narrative.

For Walter Benjamin, the threshold is an ephemeral zone of passage, of change, and must be differentiated from the border. In his elaborations of the threshold, he compares it with the awakening of a dream, which marks a passage, a rupture and continuity at the same time [Teyssot, 2005]. "Even the despotic alarm of the doorbell that reigns over the apartment gains its power from the magic of the threshold. A shrill sound announces that something is crossing the threshold" [Teyssot 2005, citing Benjamin 1982, vol.1, konvolut C3, 5, 141]. Still, there is lingering a hint of timely pause, an ephemeral void within, marking the threshold, and forming out two oppositions.

Michael de Certeau refers to the frontier as a threshold, due to its paradox, [...] "created by contacts, [where] the points of differentiation between two bodies are also their common points" [de Certeau, 1984, p. 127]. As an In-between space, he asks to whom it might even belong, it is mediating with the world. Thus [...] "borders,



frontiers and thresholds are not abstract lines drawn on a map, or dotted markings on the floor, or strings pegged out between two points. [...] Any limit or border has a mediating role, permits communication, and allows for passage” [Teyssot, 2005, p.107].

He elaborates this narrative with the example of the river (the wall or even a tree) marking the frontier and giving it a voice, a mouthpiece of the river, in form of the crocodile revealing from it. Through that actor, it creates communication and separation at the same time. The frontier is the third, changing the narrative, becoming a bridge by making passage possible [de Certeau, 1984].

The various thoughts on In-betweenness, of between [...] “things and beings, between one and another, between the limited (in Greek *perás*) and the limitless (*à-peiron*), between the known and the unknown, the sedentary and the nomadic” [Teyssot, 2005, p.107], have a mediating role, permitting communication and allow for transitioning and repositioning.

The narrative of a threshold, is a narrative of the third, very much in the sense of Michel Serres' *furet*, being passed about, changing the relations but ruling the game. The architectonic articulations of thresholds, especially in African (semi-) nomadic and European sedentary architecture are very different, but the mere concepts remain very similar.

What follows is a small narration and variation of the most iconic thresholds in both cultures: Boundaries, Surfaces, Entrances, Interstices, Ritual.

**What may stick between the lines,
resembles the most whitened space,
subtle, hidden, it faintly signs,
a clear suspicious trace.**

**The crystal beauty brightly shines,
which takes its virtual place,
withered in the course of times,
is left mere ephemeral gaze.**

**Variants of our kinds,
are held between the lace,
hardly ever someone finds,
the threshold and its grace.**

Diary of a threshold

Boundaries

We are bound within constraints of differing boundaries. They often come in disguise or are not articulated as such. Their voice says: Stop! Deviate. They mediate between what is dear to us and its possible enemies. Exclusion and inclusion is sometimes not easy to understand. The boundary works in both ways, depending on where we stand. Inside or outside? On the one side, or on the other side? The other is always referring to our own identity.



agibaker, februar 2021

Entrances

Different entrances tell different stories, depending on factors, such as use of the building, location, orientation, transportation, construction, security protocol, etc. They mark a frontier but every door which is closed may be opened and transgressed. They are thresholds between public and private, between shared and intimate. Sometimes they reveal what is behind, sometimes they reflect what is on the outside. They are an articulation of the void. Presence of Absence.



Interstices

Similar to the musical fugue, also the interstice is a compositional technique bearing its beauty in the repetition of a theme. Whether it is called seam, joint, mortice or gap it always intensifies the importance of the single part in a whole. The interstice marks the crossing of materials, leaving space for a *swelling*, narrating from growth and reduction. In its beauty and strength it holds also a big vulnerability.



Surfaces

The various tactile characteristics of surfaces and their perception, shape the different concepts of building and of how we perceive the very space. The transitioning between different surfaces, can have a great impact on the human narrative. The most prominent surface with which we perceive the world instantly is the human skin, the threshold of the human body. But, the skin itself is also the stage, where we perform the exchange with our environment.



Rituals

Rituals are a special kind of threshold. They mark the transition of an individual into another stage of life. Not only are there certain architectonic articulations for this purposes, like the manyatta or the church, but the very body is marked at the event of or after transition as well as the identity of the individual, which is transformed by the ritual itself.



The sun is hidden behind clouds, but still we all feel the heat. We are all quiet, no-one is talking and this silence is sharp as a knife, cutting through the air. Everyone of us is staring out the window, wandering through the landscape. I am alone. Where did they all go? Have we ever been four? I take a sip of water. I can't even think straight. This In-betweenness is depriving me of thoughts. I feel like I am in that door, that window transitioning from one world to another. Questions are lingering in the air, trying to be caught, like butterflies. A kaleidoscope, patterns and colours continuously changing with their movement. I loved looking through this magical instrument as a child, transporting me to a bright and colourful imaginary world. All these mirrors inside reflecting and breaking a single image into pieces, and putting them together randomly, to create a new image. *Magia Naturalis**.

This story is a kaleidoscope, an image fragmenting into pieces. That image is myself. As Architecture, I am reflecting into Archaeology, into Art, and Anthropology, creating different pictures with our perpetual questioning. How does the spatial In-betweenness speak to the geometrical lines. How can one understand and speculate about findings and the temporal lines. How do the societal relations, the kinship lines, articulate as In-betweenness? How can one read the translation of the virtual to the actual and vice-versa, the translation of abstract lines? This story is mirroring the lines in a kaleidoscopic conversation.

**reference to Giambattista della Porta's book Magia Naturalis where he described the multiple reflections by two or more reflecting surfaces.*

We elaborated already that we are the *homo fabula*; that stories are intrinsic to our understanding of the world. Research has shown that stories activate our brain regions, that they do affect us mentally but also physically due to mirror neurons [Gottschall, 2012].

In Michel de Certeau's understanding stories, [...] "whether everyday or literary, serve us as means of mass transportation, as metaphorai" [de Certeau, 1984, p 116]. These stories are producing geographies of actions, but they don't supplement pedestrian enunciations, but they organize walks, and thus perform the journey before or while the body itself is doing it [de Certeau, 1984].

So not only are we trying to understand the world through stories but they activate our deepest connection, as it were, with the body and/or the mind. That is why advertisement and marketing develop strategies of storytelling for their purpose, precisely because of the mirroring effect of emotions through stories.

Coca-Cola is one the first to brand its drinks thorough stories, or Axe, telling a 'anti-transpirant' story of a modern hero.

In academic research there is still not much to be found about storytelling as methodological research. In IS systems, there was a common belief that stories would somehow obscure critical data, rather than reveal it and thus, the interview, highly formalized, was the main method of gathering data [Kendall&Kendall, 2012].

An Information system (IS) is a formal, sociotechnical, organisational system designed to collect, process, store, and distribute information. The data is used to provide information, contribute to knowledge as well as digital products [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_system].

In general, the narrative form is a method used in the qualitative or interpretive research methodologies. Some researchers claim that [...] "the narrative approach is not a method but, rather, a frame of reference in a research process" [Moen, 2006, p. 2]. Torill Moen further claims that it is exactly a method and a way of representing the data collected in a research study, [...] "[h]ence, the narrative approach is both the phenomenon and the method" [ibid, p. 2].

The study of human beings is at least as various as the study and theories about space, and sometimes they even blend together. There are [...] "models that emphasize the importance of the environment for the

development of individuals, and on the other hand, we find theories that focus on how development is propelled by an inner biological maturing of individuals” [Moen, 2006 p.2]. Another approach is social constructivism, claiming that the individual learns through the participation within the world and hence, the learning and developing is through this exchange between individual *I* and the collective *We*, and is dependent of timely and spatial context. She refers to Bakhtin’s concept of the dialogue, which stresses the dialogue as all human action and considers three main parts: utterance, voice and addressee. The utterance might be spoken, written, or even thought of on a mental level, but is always assumed to have a voice. Neither exists in isolation and both are always addressing someone, an addressee, even if that addressee is within ourselves, which her*himself has a voice. Thus, we are in constant dialogue, in a constant relation-building process with our world, where voices are exchanged and even adjusted to each other [ibid, 2006]. Everyone talks differently to different group of people. You have a different voice when at work, to the one you have at home with your family and friends. This results in a multi-voicedness, that reflects also in the world of narratives.

Precisely this exchange of voices is found in sociocultural research approaches. One is of the researcher, and one is of the research subjects, which should be regarded primarily as collaborator or informant, rather than as a subject. Aren’t we all in this scenario the quasi-object and/or quasi-subject in the sense of Michel Serres’ Ontology, currently exchanging positions by the story told?

Equality between the two parties taking part in the research is certainly important for the quality of the results, but the different voices of the narrative are not to be ignored. Information to interpretation, is crossing a river with the crocodile in it. It can go either way.

Torill Moen elaborates on the useful theory of Paul Ricoeur [*Hermeneutics and the human sciences. Cambridge University Press, UK, 1981*] to undermine the written process of an oral told story. The first and second premise are that the narratives being told are becoming written text and thus are fixed on paper, detaching them from the moment in which they occurred. In the third instance, [...] “the narrative can, in this way, assume importance that goes beyond the initial situation and becomes relevant in other contexts. The story has been liberated from its origin and can enter into new interpretive frames, where it might assume meanings not intended by the persons involved in the original event” [Moen, 2006, p. 6]. At last, the narrative itself has become an open text able to

engage in various situations and interpretations, and thus is transformed into a whole new story that is being interpreted by others who read and hear about it [ibid, 2006].

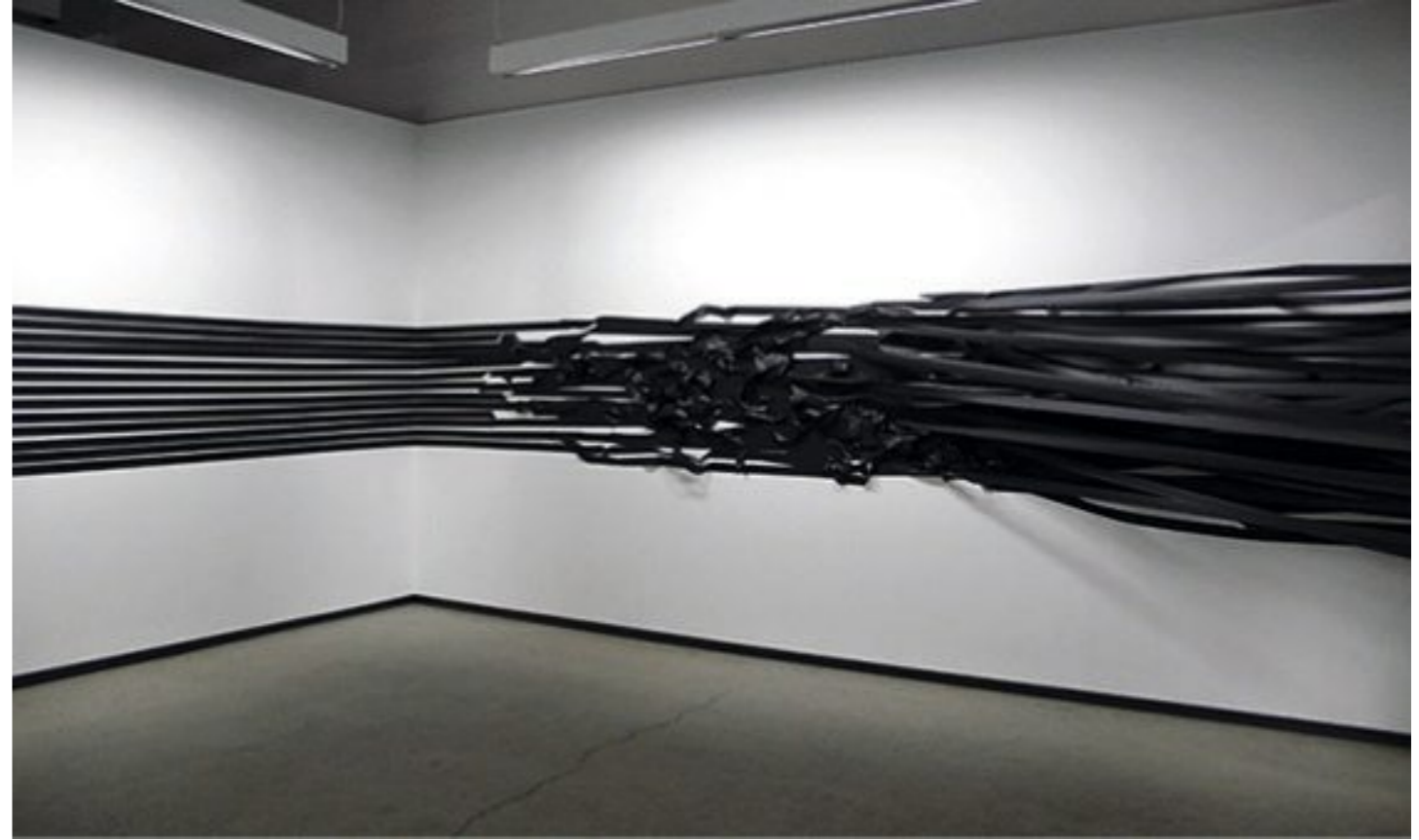
Of course, this raises questions of truth, authorship and momentariness in storytelling. Truth is connected to memory as we have already seen. Sometimes memory can be highly fictional. Since there is no absolute truth, and no absolute reality, but rather a plurality of truths and realities, depending on which point in the relating we are at. When it comes to stories, one might even claim that there is only truthfulness. This re-occurring troubles are often witnessed in the court of law.

Authorship in the scientific sense is a sensitive subject as it accounts for the discussion of truth. In scientific research, a theory or story is often believed because it was published by a specific author. So within different bodies of thought, there are different scientific ‘gods’ who set the tone within a discipline, to the exclusion of anyone who is strangely against it. That is why some scientists claim for indexicalisation [Nash, 1994].

Momentariness derives from the constant process of relation-forming, and is thus similar to the In-betweenness. It is in itself a threshold. To textualise an oral narrative is always an historic act. The moment it is written down, the story might have already changed and developed, or even stopped. But since momentariness is in itself a threshold, an In-betweenness, it has a double face. It might be the end of something but at the same time it might be the beginning of something else, bringing the game to a pause. It is a furet, a joker with multiple voices, building relations, revealing the individual and knotting up the collective. What results is a fictional story, with implied facticities, resulting in a speculative and ephemeral conversation.

Nevertheless, this speculative narrative generates factual questions and tries to find suitable answers.

CONVERSE



Converse comes from the ancient English word for „to move about, live, dwell; live or behave in a certain way“. These meanings are now obsolete, but I like the way that our conversation today has a hint of dwelling and moving about along these lines.

That is literally what we 4, have been doing all along. We are on a journey, we are moving about, living, dwelling and hence having a conversation with what is around us, and what is going on between us.

What is it, that connects us, and what distinguishes us? We have different backgrounds, but we certainly do all think and work with space, all in our very different ways. How does the space evolve within our disciplines, and where do we cross one other? How can we learn from one other? How can we understand where the other is coming from and where it is going to?

So we are sitting together at an imaginary table, with abundant information, and we are moving about it. It is a fictional memory game, as every card is different, the variations to connect two pairs are virtually infinite. We are turning them, sorting them, trying to make sense of what we understand, and what the other is telling us about the uncovered cards. And then there is still the joker.

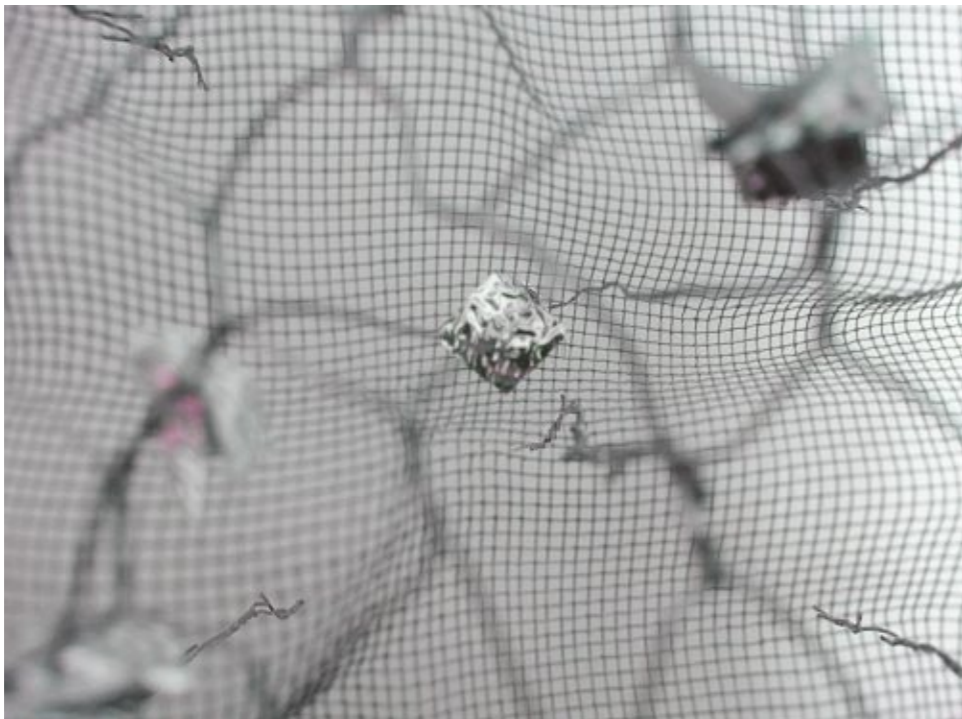
We are turning cards. We are drawing lines. We are conversing.

We encounter lines almost everywhere we go or whatever we do. Already in kindergarten we form lines to go about; we progress in lines while waiting to board a plane, to enter a shop. We begin to draw lines on a sheet of paper, which we then elaborate on as we grow, but which remain as lines. We recite lines from poems or scripts. The dec-*line* is dropping a line. Statistics are narratives in lines. Lines are there to organise our world, whether you park, you wait for trains, or you follow a path. Tying the knot, is forming a line. Writing is drawing a line in the shape of a letter. The red thread is the logical line within the narrative fabric. Fabrics are woven out of single strands of wool, silk, or even plastic nowadays.

Words ending with a line, such as *masculine*, *adrenaline*, *discipline*, *waistline*, *cosmoline*, *compline*, *hotline*, *online*, *feline*, *spline*, *timeline*, *patriline*, *crystalline*, give us a glimpse of a relational world formed out of lines, that create momentum and thus movement. The line has a mathematical description, whether straight or bent, and parallels do meet at a point on the line at infinity. The horizontal line gives us that hint of infinity, of a space, where we enter into another world far away.

The line is accompanying us. It lingers in our world, just to be drawn somewhere. Its momentum gives it a vivid appearance. The conversation is a dwelling, drawing the lines onto paper and bringing these lines to life. A creative process of building relations. It is hence also a story about *the life of lines**

* *The Life of Lines*, is a book published by the British anthropologist Tim Ingold in 2015. He is an Anthropology professor at the University of Aberdeen and worked on an European funded project at the interface of Anthropology, Architecture, Art and Archaeology. This project, and Tim Ingold's research interest in combining these fields, which he calls the 4 A's, was the inspiration for this conversation and for elaborating my Master thesis this way.



MUCH ADO BETWEEN THE LINES

a play in 5 scenes

Dramatis Personae

Architecture, *Arture, following A*

Archaeology, *Archy, follwoing A*

Anthropology, *Anthrop, following A*

Art, *Art, following A*

Legishon, *the driver, a Maasai*

Scene: Tanzania

Scene 1 [Jeep while driving]

A: Look outside the window. Isn't it just amazing. The sun is shining. We are all here. Pure freedom.

A: Do you ever think about something else?

A: I don't know why you need to be so grumpy all the time. But ok. I am trying to be more sophisticated for you. *[sophisticated high voice]* My dear, A, isn't it wonderful, as we are here all travelling together, this beautiful scenery; beautiful weather; we are all leaving our traces on this beautiful land, inscribing our stories over each other. Like a palimpsest.

A: You do know that weather has a strong temporal connotation, do you?

A: Oh dear, again the story *Kairos* vs *Chronos*? You always need to put it out, how literate you are.

A: Well, some people might be interested in my stories. Just because you heard them already several times. Look out the window and just don't listen, while I tell it. Anyway, where was I? Ah yes. Well, the Greek have known two times. *Kairos* and *Chronos*. While *Chronos* was the sequential time, measurable and quantitative, which we still know in 'chronological' for example; *Kairos*, is more qualitative, a proper or opportune moment for action. And in modern Greek it also translates to Weather.

A: You also know that this is not only in Greek language like this. Also Italian, or French.

A: I certainly did know that. But with Greek there is always this hint of mythology and storytelling to it, which I like. A personification of Time and Weather.

A: While we are on the subject, I can add to that. Drawing and image. Both have the same root in French and Italian. *Disegno* and *disegnare*, *Dessin* and *dessiner*. This is because Euclidian geometry was understood as a geometric projection of a conceptional image and thus became the

same word, but we do all know that there is a big difference of what I scribble on paper, and what is actually built. And the word 'scribbling', by the way, has a strong connotation of carving to it; or, to be more precise, cutting.

A: Wow, an excerpt of the geometrical and temporal line within the first half hour of our way. Off we go, this is such an adventure.

A: Oh, don't be such a poor sport!

A: Well ok then, Should I be elaborating about the abstract line, about Kandinsky and his fish?

A: Oh fish.. I am getting hungry

A: *[laughs loudly]* Typical. That must have been your cue now. Anyway. We are also just lines moving about. Abstract in our way, because we are just passing between points. A continuous variation of A. Like the abstract line of the river current or of the ebb and flow.

A: *[dreaming out loudly]* Fish

A: Hey, Legishon, can we please stop to get something to eat for my friend here.

L: Sure, there is a market that we will be passing. They don't have fish there, but I guess you will be fine with fruits and bakery goods?

A: Sounds perfect

A: *[thinking to itself, half aloud, while everyone is quiet]* Obviously I will not begin with kinship lines again. What does Tim Ingold say? Perhaps the tragedy of kinshp is that its lines, bound at source, can only grow apart [Ingold, 2015, p.20].

Scene 2 [peri-urban market]

A: Finally, something to eat. Have you ever seen a red banana before? Delicious, I am telling you, and its red. How funny is that?

A: Legishon, thank you so much. As you can see. A is in fruity heaven.

L: Well, my pleasure to welcome you here and show you the icons of our culture.

A: *[overwhelmed by all the impressions, wandering inbetween all the market stalls]* Look over there at all these objects that they've made.

A: You know that you shouldn't call them objects. Artefacts.

A: You again. All these ARTEFACTS. These carpets, this basket, the beadwork, and wooden pieces. How wonderfully they are handcrafted. Where we come from, you do not get these items anymore. At least not like this.

L: Well, especially the beadwork is highly embedded within the material culture of the Massai people.

A: Art is exaggerating a little, always talking in ultimates. However, making in this sense is really a bodily experience and a process of engaging with the materiality of these artefacts. That, I find really beautiful. Often we mistake the image of a thing for the thing itself. A dilemma, which occurs in our picture-flooded world.

A: *[drawing a banana on the ground with a stick]* Ceci n'est pas une banane.

A: Totally right. Questions of the reality of objects. Ah sorry, artefacts

L: *[a bit confused]* You are funny people.

A: Anyway, the beadwork is really arty. The art of tying points together.

A: We all know of course, that knotting is a textile articulation of architecture and is connected

to the great Gottfried Semper.

A: As far as I know, he did trace the origins of technicity back to the Sanskrit word *taksan* referring to carpentry and the use of the axe *tasha*. So, it is the capacity to form knots and to slice through them. Like Archaeology uses the trowel to carefully cut the earth to search for what is underneath it, and that is then also basically tying a knot to Greek *tekton* and thus architecture.

A: Professor A, how did you get so clever?

A: Life, my dear. Just life.

A: *[wondering]* So you are referring to carpets and baskets as architecture?

A: Well, knotting and weaving certainly are fundamental elements of woven structures and are ancient forms of human arts. Take this basket for example. The making of it, the knotting is a process of contrary forces of tension and friction. Not only are the single strings made out of various fibres twisted together by the movement of the hand, held together by tension, but are entangled within vertical strands to a frictional fabric. When you think of indigenous buildings, the same applies. The tectonic structure is a fabric of knots holding it together.

L: *[thinking further]* There is a lingering movement in the word knotting.

A: Indeed. Knots are a highly interesting matter. Their movement of looping creating interstices. Their surfaces do not enclose but lie ,between the lines' of the materials that make them up

[Ingold, 2015, p.15]. **Surfaces of In-betweenness**

Scene 3 [Maasai *boma*]

L: Welcome to our *boma*. In Maa we say *Enkang*. Sometimes it is also written with a *g* instead of the *k*. But anyway. This is where we live.

A: It seems like the huts, are emerging from the earth itself. It seems like we are meeting Semper again here, or at least his elements of architecture. Earthwork, hearth, framework and the enclosing membrane with the assigned crafts of masonry, ceramics, carpentry and textiles.

A: If we were to try to conceptualise them today, I would say they refer to ground, surface, wall and screen.

A: But wall is not equal to wall. Depends on how you define it.

A: True, and it certainly raises the questions about tectonics and stereotomics, of what is joined or knotted together, or that is cut in solids grounded by gravity.

A: Gottfried Semper definitely thought of the wall as a textile membrane.

A: He was German wasn't he?

A: Are you sure? Does it even matter?

A: Well yes, if you think of the German word for wall *Wand* and its counterpart, clothes, *Gewand*.

Even a blind person could see the similarities. Oh sorry, where are my manners, even a blind person could hear the similarities.

A: [cynical] As if that was better!

A: But there is another German word for it as well, I mean the wall.

A: Do you mean *Mauer*?

A: Exactly. So where is the difference?

A: Well the Mauer-wall refers definitely to the stereotomic type of the wall typologies.

A: It reminds me a bit of Vilém Flusser. Didn't he say something about the screen-wall and the solid wall?

A: It was long ago, but I think I do remember that there was something about it being connected to wind and the tent. So something along the lines of the screen-wall primarily protecting from the elements, like a tent, unlike the house, which is basically grounded by gravity.

L: So a Maasai *Enkaji* is basically a tent and not a house?

A: You could say that. But do you remember exactly, A?

A: [laughing] No, I guess I must have skipped that class!

A: Sure, where is that knowledge, when we need it!

A: Maybe you find it digging down the earth.

A: [a little embarrassed] Please, would you two just stop arguing the whole time. They must think we are such lunatics.

A: Are you referring to us?

A: Please look in the mirror!

A: [sarcastically] Well, that type of screen [pointing to the mirror] definitely doesn't refer to the lightweight, membrane-like wall you are talking about.

A: Can't we find some common ground?

A: That is the best line, you could have taken right now!

A: We should really draw the line here?

A: You know A. Just delineating all times!

A: Can we please stop with these line jokes? I guess when the ground heaves, the wall answers with its heft. It is a process of correspondence [Ingold, 2015, p.35].

Scene 4 [border]

A: *[wakes up through an abrupt movement]* **Why are we stopping here? What's happening?**

A: **Good morning, sleepy-head. We are entering a protected area. Let's just get out of the car for a bit.**

A: **Yes, let's do that.**

A: **That is a heat out here. Does someone need some water?**

A: **Elemental.**

A: **What did you just say?**

A: **Water. Element. Elemental?**

A: **No i get it. Indeed, I feel it too. This elemental state we are in. *[twinkling the eye]* state.. you get it?**

A: **Yeah, just not funny. I am still thinking about what we talked about earlier. The tent. The force of nature. Natrual habitat, and the elements.**

A: **True. Well the semi-nomadic lifestyle surely brings us back to an ancient understanding on how to live with nature. Not in the sense of cultivated land or also in the sense of cultivated land, but rather with the elements, or even with scarcity of elements. Water for example.**

A: **Well, as you were elaborating on the tent, i thought about the earth, fire, wind and water.**

A: **When I think of wind as a noun and wind as a verb. To wind, this rotational movement, I see that in this landscape. Aren't Maasai winding along their paths'? Aren't their buildings even winding about the ground?**

A: **The wind is even in-between the sky and the earth. Winding air, so to say, moving condition of interaction.**

A: **In nomadic culture, all these elements are intrinsic to their lifestyle. Trade winds, storms, sun, heat. The reflection of the sun, leading to fires. Controlled burning, leading to better pastures. Rainy seasons. Its either drought or flood. Earth in the sense of different topographies, the surface line, mediating orientation of settlement patterns and house sites, being a resource for different flora, modifying light, thus shade and conditions of the wind.**

A: **And a resource of art, poetry, myths and stories.**

A: **Very true.**

A: **Atmospheric.**

A: **Well, and we are back again to the weather.**

A: **Atmosphere and weather both link to the climate. What a big and important word in our world right now.**

A: **And to the time aspect of the weather.**

A: *[philosophically]* **We are all weathering away.**

A: **That was dark. But true in a way. Earth to earth. The timely pattern is continually woven in the multiple rhythmic alternationas of the environment - of day and night, sun and moon, winds and tides, vegetative growth and decay, and the comings and goings of migratory animals [Ingold, 2015, p.71].**

A: **Speaking of animals**

A: *[interrupting]* **..... you want to see a zebra.**

A: **How did you know that?**

A: **Lines.**

Scene 5 [campfire]

A: Did you notice the full moon?

A: There is something magical about it.

A: Transitional. A continuous movement of occurrence and disappearance.

A: That is the thing about things. „They occur, that is, they carry on along their lines. This is to admit them into the world not as nouns but as verbs, as goings-on. It is to bring them to life [Ingold, 2015, p.16]“.

L: [wondering] so the moon is mooning? I think someone had too much to drink.

A: Bollocks. I am serious. All the elements we were talking about. They are folding, lining, joining, knotting. Something occurs within the verb. Without folding there are no creases. Without joining, no flexible and sympathetic union. Take our bones for example. How do you think they hold together?

A: [acting like in school] aahhhh ... I know .. I know Ligaments

A: A union of rigid and flexible lines.

A: Knotting is basically the same. It is a joining together in the movement of loops. A circulating line.

L: Without knotting, no baskets, no cloths, no *enkajis*

A: There you go. Legishon got it totally right. Spatial and architectonic elements are held together by stiches and interstices, but also garments, papers and books. Choose what you like.

A: So basically what you are saying is that lines are everywhere and that they correspond to our world and beings.

A: Exactly. And further this correspondence hosts In-betweenness. In-between is the realm of the

life of lines.

A: I think, I understand where you are getting at.

A: If you think of correspondence, it is a purely relational term, where the premise is movement, in-between is arterial.

A: So what is the difference between ‘between’ and ‘in-between’?

A: This question is almost pedantic.

A: I think we need more beer.

A: Or less.

A: Maybe we should all go to bed.

A: Let me finish first.

A: A, I already know that there is no end. It will just be the pause. Tomorrow is another day.

A: Ok. Let me rephrase..... Let me get to the pause.

A: I know that the difference might be vague, and imperceptible as well as speculative. Between carves out a dualistic world, where there is the one and the other. Opposites always exclude what they are not. “In-between is a movement of generation and dissolution in a world of becoming, where things are not yet given - such that they might then be joined up - but on the way to being given. It is an interstitial differentiation, a fission/fusion reaction, a winding and unwinding, inhalation and exhalation, flowing one way in a direction orthogonal to the double arrow of between but with no final destination. Between has two terminals, in-between has none [Ingold, 2015, p.147]“.

A: Interesting. However, my destination is the tent.

A: [astonished] did everyone see that

A: What now

A: a zebra.



RELATE

There is a message that stretches across the world (land) surveying it.

The path; the pole that is used to make holes when a house is being built.

Riddle of the Path

Kilikuai oshe kop.

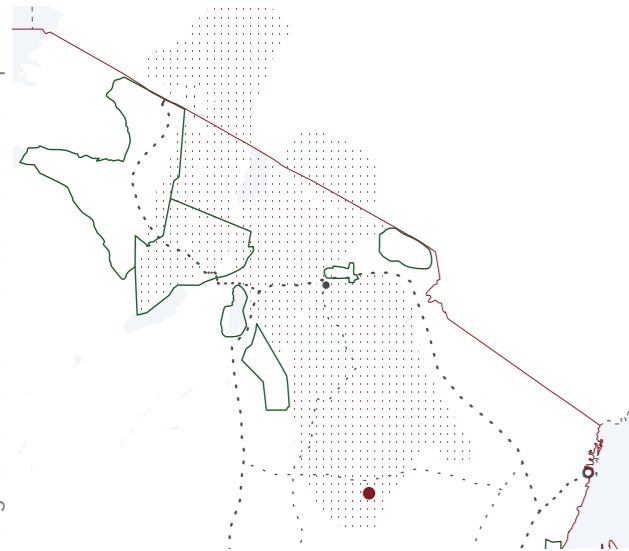
Enkoitoi; enauner.

[Naomi Kipury, Oral Literature of the Maasai, p.132]

Gilles Deleuze introduced [...] “a distinction between a sedentary *Nomos* (the law, in Greek, originally meaning to apportion according to rules) and a nomadic *nomos* (to spread in an aleatory manner on a limitless space) elaborating that “the nomadic view [...] “is not so much a dividing up of that which is distributed, but rather the division among those who distribute themselves in an open space” [Teyssot, 2005, p.106].

These are their stories.

Stephanie Fuchs
YoB: 1986
Female
Married
1 son (5 yrs old)
Only wife to her husband



“Situating in the Maasai Steppe in Kiteto district in Tanzania, I live with my husband - a Maasai warrior - and with his extended family in their *boma*. The closest towns are Kijungu and Songe. Our boma consists of about twelve (12) single homes, *enkaji*.

I grew up in Germany and studied biology and conservation and after graduation signed up to being a volunteer with a British NGO in a remote part of Tanzania. I was meant to stay only for 5 months but obviously stayed longer. I met my husband, while I was working in a camp located on Mafia Island after already spending 1 year in Tanzania. I had learned Swahili and fell in love with that beautiful country.

I fell in love with him, Sokoine and we got married, moved to the mainland to live in the traditional *boma* with his family. This was 2012.

I had no idea how to build a house when I first came here to the Maasai Steppe and thus, I had help building the traditional house. My first house was such a traditional built Maasai house, built by the women. Now I live in a newly built house.

In the Maasai Steppe, the Maasai are not the only tribe living there, some are pastoralists as well, but most of them are crop agriculturists.

I work on preserving the Maasai and their culture, while educating the Maasai in family planning and birth control as well as empowering Maasai women. I hold secret women-only meetings in the bush, I teach Maasai girls and women about their menstruation and bodies, about their sexuality and contraception and the need for girls to attend school. My latest project is the sewing of menstruation sanitary kits for Maasai women.”

masai_story



Kiparian Ole Kitambei

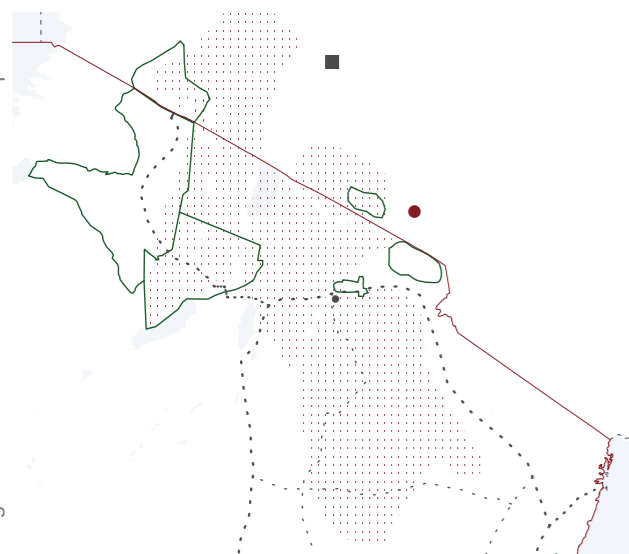
Age: 32

Male

Married

has children

only 1 wife



Occupation/How do you earn money: **Keeping cattle**

Do you own a mobile phone? **Yes**

With whom do you live in the house: **Wife and kids**

With whom do you live in the *Enkang*: **Entire extended family**

Who actually built the house you are living in: **My wife**

How big is the house: **1 master bedroom, 1 room consisting of the kitchen, living room, and the children's bedroom**



Did you build your *Enkaji* traditionally? **Enkaji is normally built by women so my wife did.**

What material did you use to build your *Enkaji*? **Thin tree branches, cow dung and thatch for roofing**

Do you have rooms? **Two rooms. One master bedroom and another one which serves as the kitchen, children's bedroom, and living room**

Do you have doors? **Only one main door**

Does your *Enkaji* have windows? **A small opening of about 100mm sq for letting in light.**

How many *Enkajis* are within your boma? **They are twelve (12)**

Is everyone related to one family clan or do you live with befriended families? **We live with two families whom we belong to the same clan**

How far is the next big town, and which is it? **It is Namelok town which is 10km away**

What animals live with you? (cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, etc..??) **Cattle, sheep and goats**

“At the tender age of Moranism, cattle rustling, *enjore*, was common amongst the Maasai community. We would gang up in a group of 10 morans, *Il-murrani*, armed with spears and swords. There is this day that we plotted to carry out our normal activity of stealing cattle from other villages far away from our place. We used to live in a village known as Illouwai in Kuku, we planned to raid a village almost 200 km away in Kitirwa, a journey that took us one and a half days. On our way we could spend our nights at the villages and proceed with our journey in the morning. As we reached our target destination it was around 11:00 am and the cattle were already at the grazing fields with three young boys. This made our mission easier as we only had to chase away the young boys and take away all the cattle. We started our journey back home with ‘our’ cattle. We had our first sleep over in a Noomaiyanat village but no one could realize that we were cattle raiders, we just woke up very early in the morning and proceeded with the journey. Dusk caught with us at a village known as Eluai and decided to spend our second night there. Little did we know that in that *boma* there were some warriors who noticed us as cattle raiders and they also knew the owners of the cattle. They decided to secretly inform their father who planned and ordered them without our knowledge to wake up at midnight as we were still asleep and take back the cattle to the owners. To our dismay we woke up very early in the morning only to find no single cattle but we couldn't ask anybody. We shamefully walked back home with no cattle to pay the dowry for five of the warriors in our gang as that was our intended purpose.”

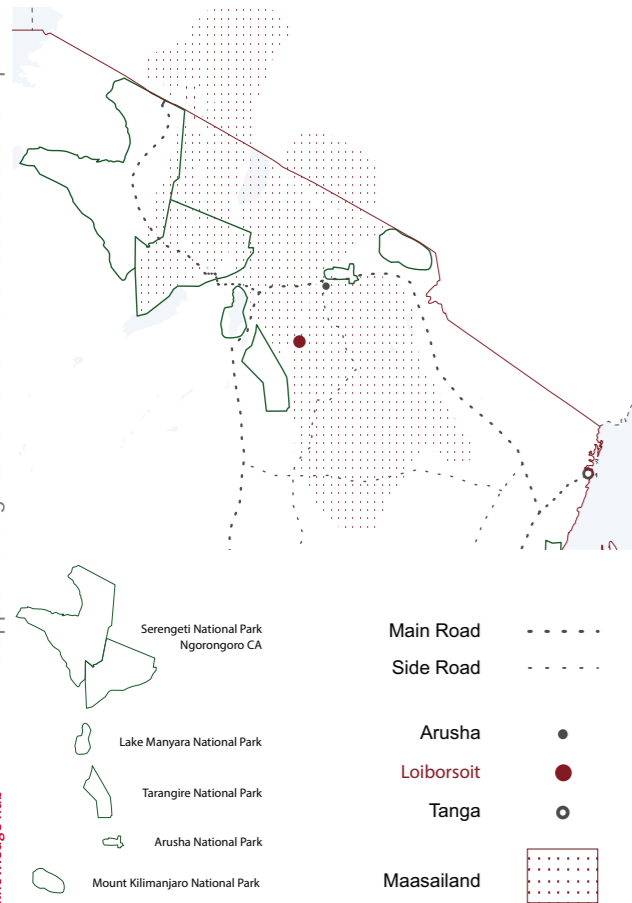
Lota Lazaro Narda

Age: 32

Male

single

no children



Occupation/How do you earn money: **Farming and keeping animals**

Do you own a mobile phone? **Yes**

With whom do you live in the house: **Mother, younger brother and younger sister**

With whom do you live in the *Enkang*: **Uncles, sister-in-law, brothers, aunt, younger brothers (his father passed away long time ago)**

Who actually built the house you are living in: **His mother**
 How big is the house: **it is a round house, having 2 bedrooms that is containing the cowhide as the mattress. Bedrooms are very close to each other. It is just separated by a light weight (screen)wall.**



Did you build your *Enkaji* traditionally? ***Enkaji* is built traditionally, using the different materials, strong wooden sticks, cowdung and soil for the wall. Dry grass is covering the roof.**

What material did you use to build your *Enkaji*? **thin tree branches, cow dung and thutch for roofing**

Do you have rooms? **Two rooms. One master bedroom and another one which serves as the kitchen, children bedroom, and living room**

Do you have doors? **yes, small entry door**

Does your *Enkaji* have windows? **yes**

How many *Enkajis* are within your boma? **They are five (5)**

Is everyone related to one family clan or do you live with befriended families? **Everyone is related**

How far is the next big town, and which is it? **It is Arusha and is 100km away**

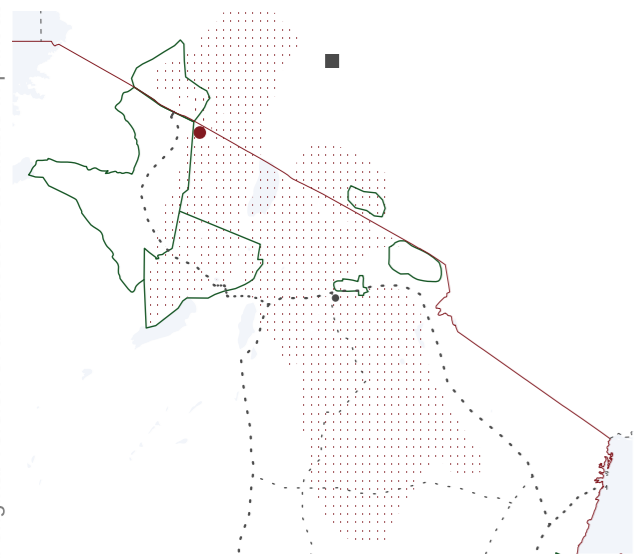
What animals live with you? (cattle, sheep, goats, chickens,etc..?) **Cattle, sheep and goats**

Do you remember a funny or sad story about your animals? **One day, a hyena came and attacked the goats in the boma. It was the middle of the night, when that happend. The hyena killed 5 goats, and we didn't know that this was even possible and we didn't expect for this to happen. So it was very sad.**

Do you remember a funny/sad story about living together? Coming together? Restive activities? **"I remember the ceremony activities that took place when I was transformed from childhood to adulthood. This ceremony is normally done after the boys are about 7 years old. For me it was funny because I have moved from one stage to another."**



Noongepa Kipila
Age: 42 (best guess!)
Female
married
no biological children - looks after 4 children
like they are her own (3 girls and 1 boy)



Occupation/How do you earn money: **Working with Maasai Honey**

Do you own a mobile phone? **Yes**

About her life at home: **Her life was very difficult until she began working with Maasai Honey; then it became better.**

About building her house: **She says the job of building the home is carried out by the women; the men do not know these tasks. They cut wood from the forest and carry it on their backs. Then they plan the map of the house and build it completely. Beginning with timbers then covering it with a mix of dirt and cow dung.**



How far is the next big town, and which is it? **Arusha city is about 2 day trip (410 km) away. Karatu is about 267 km and Mto wa mbu 300 km.**

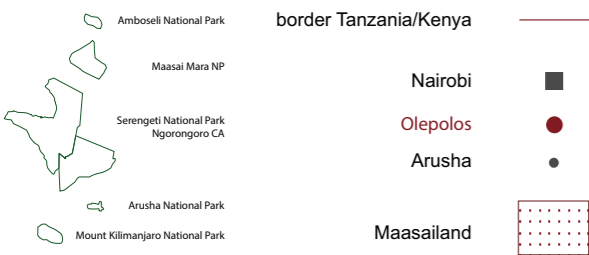
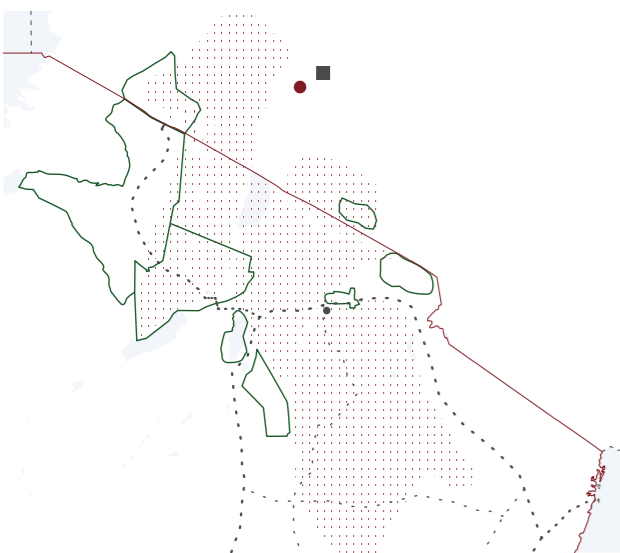
Noongepa lives in Ololosokwan where she looks after two boys and two girls (maybe that changed, since she wrote 3 girls and 1 boy - but these are not her biological children). She doesn't speak any English or Kiswahili, but only Maa.

She is the first of her husband's three wives. At her home she has 14 sheep as well as a garden of greens, peas, and other vegetables. She has been working with Maasai Honey* since 2011 and especially enjoys making soap and candles.

** The women are a little over their heads, plus internet in the village is almost non-existent for sharing files. That is why I got a lot of informaton from the website www.maasaihoney.org. Maasai Honey was established after the founder Krysten Ericson (living in Old Greenwich, Conneticut, USA) travelled to Tanzania in 2008 and [...] "observed that many of the women lacked education, recources and opportunities to support their families" [maasaihoney.org]. The project was founded 2010 and is since then growing.*



James Leshinka
Age: 1992
Male
Married
has children
only 1 wife



Occupation/How do you earn money: **Pastoralist**
Do you own a mobile phone? **Yes**
With whom do you live in the house: **Wife and children**
With whom do you live in the *Enkang*: **Brothers**
Who actually built the house you are living in: **James himself built the house**
How big is the house: **3 rooms**



Did you build your *Enkaji* traditionally? **No**
What material did you use to build your *Enkaji*? **Drums, timbers, iron sheet, cement, sand and nails**
Do you have rooms? **3 rooms and a sitting room**
Do you have doors? **yes, 4 doors**
Does your *Enkaji* have windows? **yes, 4 windows**
How many *Enkajis* are within your boma? **There are six (6)**
Is everyone related to one family clan or do you live with befriended families? **Family**
How far is the next big town, and which is it? **24 km, Kimana town**
What animals live with you? (cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, etc.??) **Cattle, sheep, goats, chickens**
Do you remember a funny or sad story about your animals? **Yes, back to the 2007 when we had a group of Lions attacking our cattle and were able to kill three cows and left 5 with very serious injuries**
Do you remember a funny/sad story about living together? Coming together? Restive activities? **Yes, my funniest story is when we were 10 years of and below being told of the ancient stories by our parents, most funnier and worriest was about the monster.**



To be able to map contemporary Maasai stories, I sent out a questionnaire. Simple questions and a memory shared are speaking of contemporary Maasai tales, and share what they value. This was not easy, not only because of Covid-19, making it impossible to do a field trip, but also because in Tanzania, many Maasai are not literate in English or Swahili, but only speak Maa. Even if they have a mobile phone, electricity in remote rural areas is simply not available, access to a computer sheer impossible. So I had a lot of help in getting these stories. Also more male Maasai were willing to participate and share their stories. Thus, to overcome the marginalisation of women within my thesis was attempted but not quite achieved.

Questionnaire of Maasai spatial livelihoods

Name:
 Age/ YOB:
 Gender:
 marital status:
 Children yes/no

for men: how many wives?
 for women: are you the only wife?

Area/village/town of living:

Occupation/How do you earn money:

Do you own a mobile phone:

With whom do you live in the house:
 With whom do you live in the Enkang:

Who actually built the house you are living in:
 How big is the house?

A story/tale you remember or concerning living as a maasai, growing up as Maasai, building your own house, helping to build a house or repairing the house, watching someone building the enkaji, coming together in the enkang, commuting to markets, being in the manyatta while warriorhood, etc..

If someone doesnt really remember a story he/she can answer to these questions
Implied questions for the story:

Did you build your Enkaji traditionally?
 What material did you use to build your Enkaji?
 Do you have rooms? Do you have doors? Does your Enkaji have windows?
 How many Enkajis are within your boma?
 Is everyone related to one family clan or do you live with befriended families?
 How far is the nearest big town, and which is it?
 What animals live with you? (cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, etc.??)
 Do you remember a funny or sad story about your animals (gotten killed by wild animals or disease?)
 Do you remember a funny/sad story about living together? Coming together? Festive activities?

2 photos:

- 1 of the person in front of the house, or doing something, they normally do
 1 of the house outside

The Maasai have a strong belief system, which is strongly dualistic. Good and Evil, Life and Death. Red and Black, cattle and children.

These tales and myths give a glimpse of their values and beliefs.

Thunder of Gods

Once there were two gods: the black god and the red god. The black god was very humble, kind and loving, while the red god was malevolent and did not care about the people at all. These gods lived together way up in heaven, but the black god lived below the red god, and therefore closer to the people on earth.

One day famine spread all over the world. Cattle could find neither grass to eat nor water to drink and they were [close to] dying from starvation. Then the black god spoke to the red god and said: "Let us give people water for they are about to starve to death." The red god was at first reluctant to let people have water, for he had no liking for them, but after much pleading from the black god, he relented. It was then agreed that water was to be released from heaven to earth. When this was done, it rained very hard for many days.

After some time, the red god said to the black god: "You can now hold back the water, for the people have had enough." The black god answered: "Let us leave it for a few more days for the earth has been parched dry." This was done, and when the red god again told the black god to hold back the water, he did so and the rain stopped falling.

A few more days elapsed and the black god once more asked the red god to release some more water for the people. The red god refused, and there ensued an argument between them, with the red god threatening to wipe out all the people, whom he described as having been spoiled, and the black god struggling to prevent him from doing so. And so, up to this day, when one hears loud thunder, it is the red god who is trying to get past the black god to wipe out the people on earth. But when the sound of thunder is not very loud, it is the black god who is trying to prevent the red god from killing the people. [Kipury, 1983, p29ff.]

There are parallels with the black god *Enkai narok* and red god *Enkai nanyokie*, in the origin stories of the clans of Maasailand in the ownership of cattle: the black cow *Orok Kiteng* and the red cow, *Oodo Mongi*.

A story is told that, in the early days of the Maasai Natero Kop married two wives. To one he gave red cows, and she built her house on the right-hand side of her husband's gate to the kraal; the other was given black cows and occupied the left-hand side. Each of the wives was named according to the color of her cows. The first wife, Nado Mongi, gave birth to three children: Lelian, who founded Ilmolelian clan; Lokesen, who founded Ilmakesen clan; and Losero, the founder of Iltaarrosero. These three clans form the right-hand pillar of Maasai clans. The second wife, named Narok Kiteng, gave birth to two sons: Naiser, the original ancestor of Ilaiser clan and Lukum, the father founder of Ilukumae. These two clans are the left-hand pillar of the Maasai clans. The Ilmolelian and Ilaiser clans are the most prominent and powerful among the Maasai, and so it is thought that they must have been founded by the eldest sons of each of the two pillars. It is recommended that the right pillar should marry the left pillar, but if marriage does occur within one pillar of clans, the prospective husband may pay a heifer to the family of his bride to wipe out the incest. [Saitoti, 1980, p.27ff.]

There are different life stages in Maasai male culture, which is slightly different for women [Saitoti, 1980].

- Youth *Inker*

To have and bear children is very important in Maasai culture. Pregnant women are given special, and have special customs for food, what they should and should not eat at various stages of the pregnancy. Childhood is a time of great freedom, until the age of 6-7. Gender rules apply to both sexes, and set what they will learn during this stage, but in general children are treated with much love and care. The self-confidence for later stages is built in these young years.

- Circumcision *Emorata*

Is the initiation for boys and girls into adulthood. It is believed that this ritual builds the mental and physical strength for later challenges. For girls it means losing their freedom and going straight into marriage. Girls are normally circumcised around puberty or shortly after. They don't gather like the boys, but do wear black, and are not allowed to be seen or talked to by strangers, particularly men. After healing they prepare for marriage.

The boys' ritual is highly ritualised. It must be announced ahead of time and certain objects must be collected like ostrich feathers, honey, wax, etc. After circumcision the boys dress in black and paint their faces with white

chalk, and must not wash or eat food with their hands during the time of healing, which takes up to 3 months. After that, the boys will enter into warriorhood.

- Morranism or Warriorhood *Ilmoran*

A young warrior is expected to be strong, courageous, clever, confident, wise and gentle. He must protect the community and the herd from predators, go hunt for lions to kill them - when they get the chance - to prove their bravery and gain respect of his contemporaries/age-sets, as well as to elevate his family name. This age set can have a duration of about 15 years.

- Elderhood *Ilpayiani*

This signifies the period of responsibility for men and women that begins with marriage, the building up of a family and the acquisition of wealth and security in form of children and cattle.

PAUSE



I breathe in. And I breathe out. There is this silence. I fear that this is the end. But it isn't. We will continue to argue. We will continue to converse, to dwell and to inscribe our lines. We will continue to play that game, revealing who has the joker in hand. And then, again, there will be a pause. Its like a fictional *momentu[u]m mobile, the story of an everlasting recurring movement, pausing once in a while.**

As Art, I am taking on the thoughts of the pause. There is a sheer beauty in it. In music and in speech, whether oral or written, and in artistic pieces the pause is what gives significance and meaning. The pause is void, yet not empty. Without it, there would just be indeterminable noise. The pause gives time to breathe, to think, to reflect, to moderate, to articulate what is coming next. To pause doesn't mean to entirely stop, but to have a moment within a movement where you embrace the nothingness, the zero, the void, the threshold and celebrating the In-betweenness.

The pause translates to transition. The pause is like a bridge, making a passage possible. As Architecture, I am thinking about deCerteau's river analogy and what might be the bridge's crocodile? The pause's passage links past and future with a present In-betweenness. The pause is changing time. *Un'attimo*, a pause in time for a breath.

As Archaeology, I wonder about the conservation of pause? How can something that is moving so fast be even captured and conserved? As Anthropology, I see the various sides of the pause. I wonder, if all our human movement might even be the pause between birth and death? Highly speculative, but finally it would mean that all that movement, all the *momenti mobilia*, are entirely inscribed in that In-betweenness. All just lines of In-betweenness.

Architecture is narration, a story told on the scale of the built environment, leaving visible and lasting signs with its structures, and thus influencing societal behaviour. But this connection works in both ways. Societal changes also influence the way we live and therefore build. This is a fundamental question, which cannot be answered generally [Arch+, 2013]. However, architecture has [...] "repeatedly served as a catalyst for social processes at least in the limited context of local communities. As a constructive discipline with effects that typically operate on groups of people over longer periods of time, architecture by no means escapes responsibility" [Arch+, 2013, p.05]. In architectural modernism of the early 1900s this was the main question and the architects of this time were accepting the responsibilities and were keen on not only helping individuals but to improve society as a whole. In the early 1950s, some architects [...] "sought to keep the questions of architecture's social responsibility present in their theoretical writings and practical work. Such efforts, however remained outliers in the discipline" [Arch+, 2013, p.06].

The social responsibilities were demoted to a marginal note, as architecture sought the form of art and the architect promoted him*herself to the *starchitect*. Due to the rise and fast growth of cities in Africa, Latin America and India and other parts of the world and the expansion of informal settlements, formal architecture and planning continued to lose relevance. Starchitects are often seen as aliens of the postmodern architectural times. The Venice Biennale curated by Kazuyo Sejima in 2010, *People Meet in Architecture*, [...] "reveals architecture's total helplessness in staking a clear and relevant position in response to the pressing issues of global society" [Arch+, 2013, p.06], but didn't dare to question the position of the architect as author of the built narrative. Climate change, issues of sustainability, scarcity of resources, overpopulation, poverty, refugee movements, political relations are issues which contemporary architecture cannot ignore, as well as his own position in this plot.

Bernard Rudofsky was one of the first architects who addressed some of these issues within his 1964 MoMA (NY) exhibition, *Architecture without Architects*, claiming that [...] "there is much to learn from [vernacular] architecture. The untutored builders in space and time [...] demonstrate an admirable talent for fitting their buildings into the natural surroundings. Instead of trying to 'conquer' nature, as we do, they welcome the

* reference to 'perpetuum mobile' but instead I used the momentum as driving force for the creation and recreation of the very relations.

vagaries of climate and the challenge of topography” [Rudofsky, 1964, p.5]. Ecological integrity of indigenous architecture of the commons using local materials and building traditions, with a strong socio-economic relation is a perspective of not many contemporary architects around the globe like Francis Kéré, Anna Heringer or Alejandro Aravena. Local communities seeking western standard buildings and infrastructure are mostly not appreciating the value of their own traditions, or how they can be applied to contemporary architectural practice. The lack of a theoretical context on this development and the absence of a broader discussion by contemporary architects, [...] “threatens to obscure the movement [think global, build social and local] among its individual positions” [Arch+, 2013, p 09].

In developing countries, like Africa, the notion of architecture is basically understood as concept of the West, also because there is more Western architectural literature than African. Another issue of reduced visibility of indigenous architecture is that a lot of renowned Western *starchitects* were able to build in major cities in Africa and that the vernacular architecture has a connotation of being primitive in its form and technology.

This is also a gender problem. In most indigenous architecture, women are the builders of the house because it belongs to the household. Today contemporary craftsman and trained construction workers are mostly men. Since women were (and still are) marginalized in a patriarchal society, they are not trained to build in a hybrid way, but are seeking job opportunities in embroidery, jewellery making, sewing works to support their family’s income.

Facing these problems is a matter of conservation. Etymologically this implies keeping (intact), maintaining, guarding, but the term raises the question of how we can preserve traditional knowledge in such a way, that we can profit from it in the future. What might be the architectural and societal bridge?

Conservation in Archaeology is elaborate, as it is in the field of wildlife and nature. Architectural conservation in the sense of storing traditional building knowledge translated into a contemporary practice, has not yet gained real attention. *Learning from Las Vegas*, the famous architectural treatise by Denise Scott-Brown and Robert Venturi, could be transitioned today to *Learning from Favelas - What favelas could teach us about resource control, sustainability, privacy and space*.

This title could as well be *Learning from the Enkang - What traditional Maasai architecture can tell us about spatial expansion, resilience, sustainability, community and material use*.

The current situation of Maasai people is addressed in various narratives, especially in linkage to works on conservation of the East African wildlife and environment and their related profits of the tourism industry. But they all tell a story about the difficulties the Maasai face in regard to land and livelihoods.

Land loss due to conservation efforts are still going on in Tanzania and Kenya. Community based tourism (also called ecotourism) and community based conservation are trying to ameliorate the life of the Maasai. Pastoralism and wildlife do not stand in antithesis to one another, but can exist in symbiosis, where one profits from the other, but the same tour operator and conservationists who sell the [...] “image of the ‘native’ Maasai in harmony with nature, [...] are often not entirely at ease with the idea of complete devolution over wildlife and rangelands to Maasai communities” [Snyder and Sulle, 2011, p.3]. The Village Land Act of Tanzania 1999, which came into law 2001, was an attempt to make village councils the land managers. People have the right to occupy and use the land but still the President effectively owns that land and can take it in the public interest, though he must pay compensation for it. If followed properly, and with valid Village Certificates of Land, this is a chance for villages to increase mobility, to move about the landscape in search of grazing and water, and prevent land grabbing from private investors or agriculturalists. But not surprisingly most villagers have not been educated of their rights and possibilities [Snyder and Sulle, 2011]. In Kenya, land tenure is different. Maasailand in Kenya was highly sub-divided and privatised, and Maasai were put into group ranches, to provide for more control over livestock production. Some of this communally owned land, like in Amboseli is still under debate to be privatised [Nkedianye et al., 2020], meaning that the land is enclosed by borders and fences, enforcing settlement and making every Maasai seeking pastures a trespasser. Even though land tenure in Tanzania and Kenya are different, land in both countries (as for a big part of the world) is a trade commodity mainly for state profits.

Environmental and wildlife conservation both influenced land development in Maasailand due to its geographical location hosting several conservation areas like Amboseli National Park and the Serengeti and the correspondig tourism (ecotourism as well as establishing hunting blocks in Tanzania).

“The establishment of National Parks and protected areas has restricted access to resources for pastoral

people. In Northern Tanzania, the creation of the Serengeti, Manyara and Tarangire National Parks and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, have had major impacts on how Maasai pastoralists use the land and manage natural resources” [Woodhouse & McCabe, 2018, p.2]. They were mostly excluded from water resources and vital pastures and their traditions of coping with land (e.g. controlled burning) and their semi-nomadic lifestyle were conflicting with the regulations of the Parks and Reserves. Additionally, traditional settlements are not allowed within the protected areas with the exception of Ngorongoro Conservation Area. The Maasai living there have strict regulations on how to build their homesteads and they are among the poorest of the whole Maasai tribe [Woodhouse and McCabe, 2018].

Certainly there are economic and societal potentials in tourism and conservation for Maasai livelihoods, for both men and women, if Maasai were integrated into the decision making process, being educated and heard from official institutions. As long as the economic benefits as well as the respect - on both sides of the table - are not impacting the Maasai, there is little success for either conservation work and the improvement of Maasai spatial livelihoods. But environmental conservation and tourism are only 2 parts of the spectrum.

The Tanzanian Development Vision 2025 addresses the improvement of all its citizens and clearly states that to reach the vision’s premises (high quality livelihood, good governance and the Rule of Law, a strong and competitive economy), there is a need to [...] “create an open and democratic society that provides equal opportunity for every person. This entails creation of an active and participatory civil society in the articulation of its needs and in taking pride to fulfill its societal responsibilities; and to permit a greater role for local actors to own and drive the process of their [own] development” [Tanzania Development Vision 2025, p.19]. The acknowledgement of Tanzanians as a homogeneous group by the state’s narrative is highly controversial in the face of the actual problems. Not only are the spatial trajectories from a Tanzanian city dweller from Arusha totally different from the semi-nomadic and today more sedentary Maasai, but even the Maasai are not a homogeneous people, and their sections dispersed within a territory that is partially classified as protected and thus not accessible for Maasai. Due to the political, environmental, climatic and topographic variations, there are certainly different problems and challenges that they face. Local initiatives, often financed by US or European NGO’s, are trying to address these difficulties, creating opportunities for Maasai men and women.

The NGO Oikos International (European funded with Oikos East Africa) was conducting the Eco-Boma project from 2015 - 2019 with the main goals of increasing vulnerable Tanzanian communities’ capacity to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and to contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas [<http://www.ecoboma.org/the-project/>]. Within these goals they held a leather tanning technology training with 24 participants of which 20 were women.

The Pastoral Women’s Council in Tanzania, funded 1997 by 9 Maasai women, is a non-profit membership organisation working to achieve gender equality and community development through the empowerment of Maasai women and girls. Their work in Maasai communities seeks change for women, in order for them to be able to control their economic status by improving their livelihoods to meet their daily needs, and strives to increase solidarity amongst women so they are able to raise their voices to successfully advocate on issues of concern and to educate girls, so that in future they can create a society where women are independent, equal partners to men [<http://www.pastoralwomenscouncil.org>].

Microcredits for women, to buy land and to create their own business, and distribution of solar panels for electricity, as well as women solidarity bomas, are only a few of initiatives for women to become more independent.

For architectural conservation, as I claim, educating women and girls in crafts[women]-ship and carpentry to be able to combine their traditional knowledge with a contemporary building style, while employing themselves and being able to support their families would be one way to change the game of being In-between, and producing a new narrative of being a Maasai.

But I guess this will be a future story.

I came a long way finishing up that narration, which isn't remotely finished, but just pausing. People I met on my journey, who left it, new stories I encountered and future journeys I might endeavour, are lingering within my personal web of lines.

I am grateful and thankful for the support of my dear friends Sebastian and Annika, who are a continuous narrative within my life lines.

To Mary-Lynne, whose line is relating to Tanzania and she graciously agreed to proof read my English grammar. To Birgit and Babsi who willingly read this story, even though they have nothing to do with that subject.

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My thoughts to Rwanda who unknowingly got me back to my creative thinking and strength. This story is now in the world, and hopefully gets an own life.

"IT TAKES ONE DAY TO DESTROY A HOUSE BUT TO BUILD A NEW ONE WILL TAKE MONTHS, PERHAPS YEARS.

IF WE DESTROY OUR WAY OF LIFE TO CONSTRUCT A NEW ONE, IT WILL TAKE THOUSANDS OF YEARS."

MAASAI QUOTE

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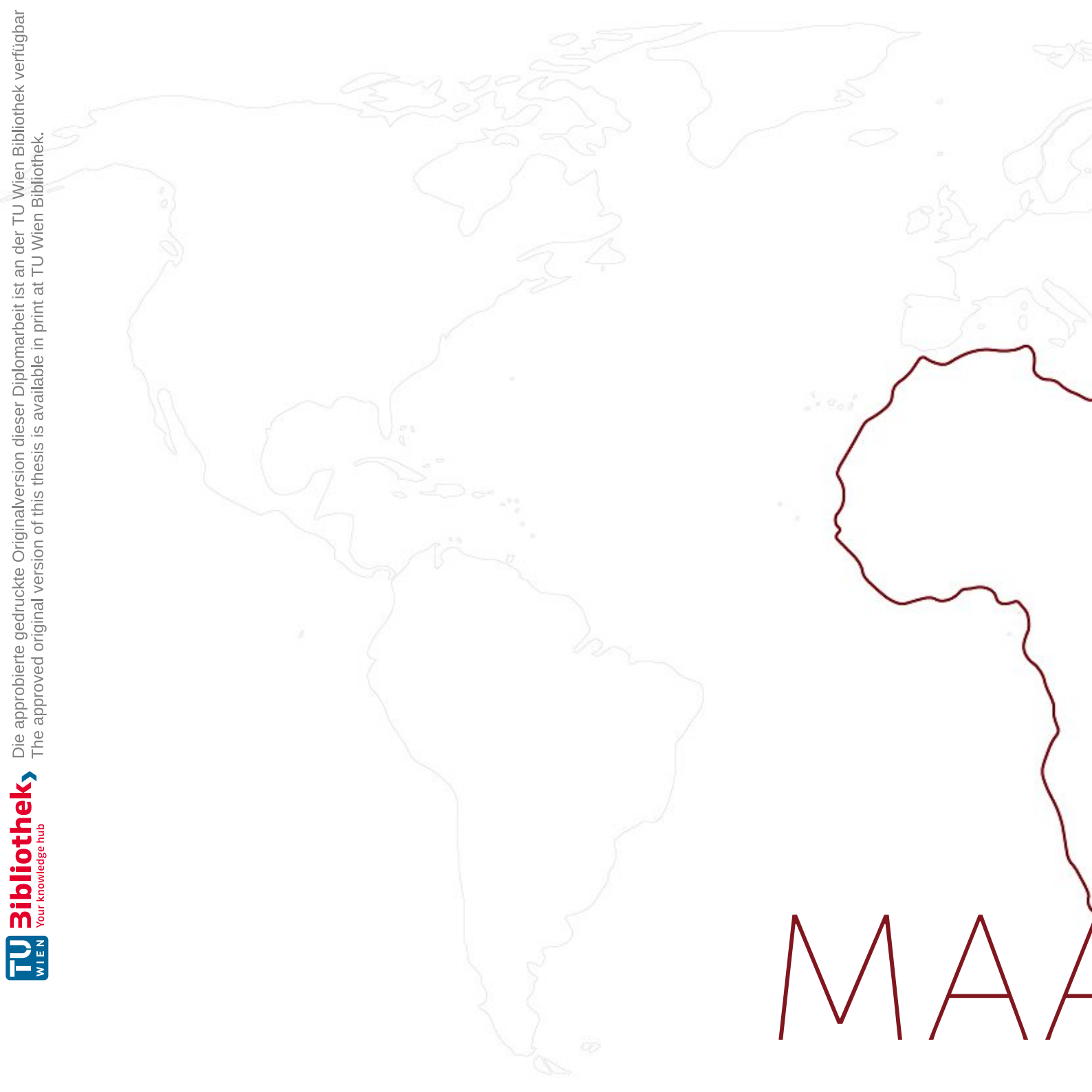
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