

**“When men lose their animals, women gain power”:
Women and Change in East Pokot, Kenya**

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ohne die das alles hier nicht möglich wäre
und vor allem gar keinen Spaß machen würde:

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Introduction

Rachel sits in a small hut made from corrugated iron sheets. She proudly presents her goods: beans, sugar, tea, cough and pain pills, Band-Aids, milk, corn, soups, noodles, and some sweets. "Everything you need", Rachel says, visibly proud. Rachel is married and has five children, all of whom go to school or kindergarten. Her husband has no income. They do not have any livestock. Rachel is the family's main breadwinner. She supports her family and pays the tuition for all her children. Here in Chemolingot, she attends church weekly and is a member of one of the largest women's groups in the region.

Her life is very different from that of her sister Chepusa, who lives in a homestead in Kadingding with two co-wives, her husband and their children. Chepusa's husband divides the work among the women and children and makes all the central decisions affecting the members of the household. Livestock management dominates her daily life. She is considering whether to start brewing but has not yet asked her husband for approval.

I followed Rachel's and Chepusa's lives intensively during my fieldwork from September 2010 to August 2011 in Chemolingot and Kadingding, East Pokot in Kenya.

Rachel and her husband moved to Chemolingot in 2003 after they lost their remaining goats in a drought. To have something to eat for her family, she went to the Assistant Chief and asked for assistance. He gave her a bag of beans. She did not use this for her own consumption but sold small portions to neighbors. With the profits

she bought another bag of beans and over the years she expanded her range of goods until eventually she opened her own business.

Rachel's kiosk is on one of the main roads in Chemolingot. Here, the road is lined with shack after shack. There are small restaurants, general stores very similar to Rachel's, stationery stores, stores selling clothes and fabrics, and stalls selling fresh chapatis, vegetables and much more.

Many of the stores are run by women. On the streets you can see women carrying firewood and water to private homes for sale. In the evening, large parts of the village gather at the brewing field. The local alcoholic beverages *busaa* and *changaa* are brewed and sold exclusively by women. The largest elementary school in the region is run by a woman, and there is even a female elder. In my field notes, after six weeks in East Pokot, I wrote: "Settled life and cash income seem to be female sphere's. I have not yet seen a pastoral man working for money". Although I did eventually meet some men with cash income in my fieldwork, the tendency remained true: The face of sedentarization and work for money in East Pokot is female.

Since the 1990s, the number of sedentary households in the region has been increasing. In Chemolingot, pastoral households no longer move around during the dry season. But mobility is also dwindling in pastoral areas: in Kadingding, over 20% of households are permanently sedentary, and many of the mobile households move to a nearby waterhole in the dry season. The reasons are manifold: increasingly long dry seasons and raids by neighboring ethnic groups are shrinking herds and forcing many households to become sedentary and seek alternative forms of income. Settlement is accompanied by socio-economic stratification, and a new elite has emerged based on values such as education and Christianity. In the process, new options and life models emerge for women (and men), but so do conflicts and challenges.

At the core of this work is the question of why women in particular are becoming agents of change, and above all why they seem to be better able to accept and adapt

to the new circumstances. The roles of women and their rights and duties among the Pokot since the beginning of the colonial period have been framed and structured and transformed again and again. The family as a collective unit was transformed by the colonialists into a hierarchical unit with a head (the husband) and a public and private sphere – the latter reserved for women. The post-colonial influences of NGOs and Christian religions have been targeting women in the region since the 1980s in order to use them as multipliers for development programs. As a result, women are increasingly moving into the public sphere. Since they are less addressed by the ideal of the pastoralist, they seem to be able to engage more easily with alternative economic and cultural models of life.

This dissertation examines how ongoing ecological, social, economic and cultural transformations affect the micro level: how they shape individual and interpersonal relationships. I do this by using the framework of the theory of practice (Ortner 2006). Thus, I focus on the agency of women and the habitus of nomadic and sedentary Pokot. As Bollig and Österle note, much is known about the macro level of change, but little is known about the concrete social and psychological effects:

While Harold Schneider described Pokot reluctance to change in the 1950s (Schneider 1959), we have shown that Pokot economy and culture changed rapidly in the 1990s. Not only were pastoral strategies re-orientated but agriculture and trade were also swiftly integrated into household economies. It is striking how quick and efficient changes have been. It is as if an entire community had decided to change its economy and social system. Of course, such a decision was never taken, and it is a great number of individual decisions which persuaded the pastoral Pokot to change. Nevertheless, how individual decisions rapidly translate into community-level structural changes is still very little understood. (Bollig and Österle 2013: 310)

This work fills this very gap by looking at change historically and socio-demographically, and from the individual perspective of the women and men who experience change.

Structure of thesis

In chapter 1, I sketch both the conceptual and theoretical foundations that I use for classifying the transformatory processes affecting East Pokot as well as the empirical toolkit of my fieldwork. Hence, this section provides, first, an overview of the pertinent schools of thought in social science, psychology, and philosophy that concern themselves with the classification and analysis of social change. Second, I delineate my research design as well as the diachronic progress of my field research, my own role as female researcher in East Pokot and the research methodology I have used.

Chapter 2 seeks to explore and understand the female face of sedentarization. First, I conduct a geographical stage-setting by describing the region of East Pokot with a specific focus on Chemolingot and Kadingding. Using a combination of qualitative depictions and quantitative demographic analysis, I seek to verify whether the introductory vignette of Rachel and her family does in fact correspond with social reality. Thus, I describe the phenomenon of sedentarization and analyze both its causes and impact on the social fabric of Pokot society.

In the third chapter, I examine the ongoing stratification among both pastoral and sedentary Pokot and discuss the various economic strategies that women, youths, and local elites use in dealing with societal transformation.

In chapter 4, I trace historical events that have influenced contemporary gender relations in East Pokot and, specifically, potential sources of conflict between men and women stemming from the allocation of material and immaterial resources as well as social roles and tasks. This analysis focuses on the colonial and post-colonial, specifically the British practice of indirect rule and the refocusing of post-colonial politics shaped by development programs and international NGOs.

Complementarily, chapter 5 concerns itself with the impact of progressing social change on these gender relations. First, I analyze the established division of labor between the sexes in terms of reproductive versus productive and domestic versus

public, and the transformative pressure faced by this social regime due to the rise of work for money. Second, I discuss why women engage disproportionately more often in wage labor, specifically casual work, and how this phenomenon relates to the gender ideals of pastoralism.

In the final chapter 6, I seek to understand how the social institution of marriage is transformed under the influence of social change – both among the nomadic and sedentary Pokot. To accomplish this task, first I analyze the life cycles of both pastoral and non-pastoral women with regard to salient differences and similarities. Second, and following a procedural understanding of marriage, I delineate the three salient stages of conjugal union in both social settings: beginnings of marriage, comprising bridewealth negotiations and the entry into married life, and also choices to refrain from marriage; reciprocal rights and obligations within married life; and, finally, conflicts and endings.

Chapter 1: Thinking about Social Change While Doing Fieldwork

How does changing practice drive social change?

This is the core question that I explore again and again – in different facets in this work. When women withdraw from pastoral practices (such as polygamous marriages, nomadic lifestyles, circumcision) and take up new practices instead (working for money, Christian religion, education), what does this mean for social change in a society that is undergoing fundamental transformation (ecological, economic, and social)? Is the relationship between the sexes changing? Do women have agency here or are they driven by the consequences of socio-ecological change?

Examining social change in East Pokot requires, first and foremost, a thorough understanding of what social change consists in, how it manifests itself and what its causes and effects are. To develop suitable concepts to later adequately structure and analyze my empirical findings from field research, I will first flesh out a definition and typology of social change and then, draw on the theory of practice to delineate the key notions associated with this phenomenon – i.e., structure, practice, habitus, agency, power, and social capital. Subsequently, I shall sketch the concrete experience of my field work and the methodology I employed therein to elucidate how the practice of in situ research shaped and informed my inquiry.

1.1 Conceptualizing Social Change

The concept of social change is pervasive throughout historiography, sociology, economy, philosophy, psychology and many other disciplines of the social sciences and humanities – harking back to the writings of Heraclitus, who is credited as the first theorist to have ever considered the essence of change and its effects on nature and society (Bishop & Hines 2012). Yet, it is with the advent of globalization and the end of the Cold War – both of which yielded massive cultural, societal, political, and

economic upheaval worldwide – that social change has become a hot-button issue of academic inquiry (Harper & Leicht 2016), as Roxane de la Sablonnière (2017:2) observes: “Social change is indiscriminately pervasive and global – restricted to neither developing nor Western worlds.” Propelled by human-made technological advancements, such as mobile communication and the internet, as well as phenomena like climate change and mass migration, societies at large and their various ethnic and/or religious communities have been facing rapid transformations of established institutional orders and conventions that have determined their members’ roles, rights, duties, resources, beliefs etc. for decades or even centuries.

Given the vast field of researchers and the heterogeneity of disciplines, there is unsurprisingly no generally accepted account of the term “social change” itself. However, the brief definition by Charles Harper and Kevin T. Leicht (2016: 5) denotes a point of accord: “Social change is the significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns through time.” In this context, social structures are conceived as stable networks of routine social interactions in which all community members are embedded to some degree or another. By contrast, the notion of culture denotes the “social software” (ibid.) that provides meaning to shared ways of living via joint beliefs, values, techniques, symbols, language etc.

Despite its ubiquity, the phenomenon of social change itself is not homogeneous. It comes in many shapes and guises. De la Sablonnière (2017) broadly distinguishes between incremental social change and dramatic social change which differ both in terms of speed and sequencing – though not necessarily with respect to their impact.

Incremental change is, thus, the gradual transformation of societal structures, e.g., the system of socio-economic stratification or the relevant behavioral norms and power structures that allocate material and immaterial resources throughout society, via a comparatively slow process. Depending on its swiftness and scope, incremental social change may, indeed, pass unnoticed for quite some time. Notable examples

include the stepwise reshaping of global communication patterns through the invention of the telephone; the Industrial Revolution, which began with the steam engine being put into operation; or, looking back further in history, the slow decline of the Roman Empire from the late second century AD until the early Middle Ages.

By comparison, dramatic social change consists in a rapid series of events that, due to their speed and profundity, threaten to rupture a society's institutional and organizational structure as well as their shared sense of identity; such changes are often accompanied by an unexpected shift of influence from one group to another. Examples are deliberate political revolutions, such as the American Revolution and the French Revolution, or the collapse of the Soviet Union. While incremental social change allows for societies and their members to adapt to their profoundly transformed social environment (e.g., by establishing new sources of livelihood or by devising novel legal, political institutions), dramatic social change, on the other hand, often leaves little time and opportunity for adaptive action.

However, this binary distinction between incremental and dramatic social change does not exhaust the typology of social change, or rather, social changes. Harper & Leicht (2016) point out that relevant phenomena may also be differentiated by both the objects and levels of change. The former include, for instance: fundamental changes in the way that parts of a social structure relate to one another (e.g. family roles, administrative posts, market actors, shifting responsibility roles in pastoral households) as well as changes in the functions of structures (e.g. churches taking up educational and medical functions in addition to pastoral ones); changes in the relationship between structures (e.g. the devolution of political authority in quasi-centralist states through organizational reform); or the emergence of new structures (e.g. the advent of monogamous marriage throughout Sub-Saharan Africa). The latter range from the level of small groups through organizations and institutions to whole societies and, finally, the entire world; the higher up the level of change, the greater its ramifications and spillover effects.

Indeed, social change always occurs at both the micro level and the macro level because the two are inextricably intertwined. There is no change of social structures without facilitating a change of behavior (and thought, and values etc.) at the personal level of individuals who partake in those structures; and an aggregate change of individual behaviors, in turn, yields structural transformation in the long run. As a consequence, the analysis of social change always has to address both the level of individual biographies and personal coping mechanisms of singular humans and the level of emergent institutional, organizational structures.

In chapters 2 and 3, I examine social change both quantitatively and qualitatively, including all actors, in detail to describe what is happening in the region right now. Climate change is a major driver of social change and one of the main triggers for the social and economic transformation processes described in this thesis. In this monograph, the focus is deliberately placed on how climate-change-driven transformations in the livestock sector are affecting social and economic relations and institutions. Are we dealing with dramatic or incremental change? What is the impact of the transformation on Pokot society – what does it mean for pastoralism, key institutions like marriage, and most importantly, the individuals who experience and drive the change?

Theory of Practice

Certain questions ensue: what does social change consist in throughout East Pokot? Who are the main agents of social change? Which parts of the social structure are affected by change – and which persist? How do the drivers and the changing society with its institutions influence each other? How do individuals drive change, and where and by what are they inhibited? And what do these various transformations mean for the women there? To best address these, I suggest that the most suitable theoretical framework is provided by the theory of practice. It entered the academic scene in the late 1970s and has been championed by Sherry B. Ortner (2006), Pierre Bourdieu (1977), Anthony Giddens (1979), and Marshal Sahlins (1981) among many

others. Practice theorists opt for a view of the social sphere beyond the dichotomy of system-centric structural functionalism and agent-centric conflict theory (Zheng 2022:1).¹ They purport to analyze the relation between socioeconomic as well as cultural and political structures on the one hand and the concrete persons who act within the latter on the other hand by focusing on the ways that both sides influence one another.

There are two central claims shared by all relevant theorists: first, social structures – broadly conceived as the entirety of institutions and organizations, social roles and hierarchies, linguistic practices, societal norms and shared beliefs, and as well as the allocation of resources – constitute human beings as particular social actors. They shape the way persons think, what they desire and value, how they comport themselves etc. (see also Taylor 1985 and Sandel 1984). This does not imply the improbable claim that an individual’s personality is nothing but a function of their social conditioning, a mere imprint so to speak. Rather, it means that to understand human beings and their motives and actions is to understand them as social actors who operate within a specific social setting that both constrains and enables them in regard to particular projects, aspirations and biographical opportunities.

Second, individual persons both reproduce and transform social structures via practice. Curiously, among practice theorists there is no universally accepted definition of practice (for an overview see Rouse 2007). While some (e.g., Bourdieu 1977 and Tay-

¹ Conflict theory claims that change is brought about by conflict among social groups and their corresponding value sets and ideologies (Rössel 2013); the forebear of this theory is Karl Marx ([1867] 1992). The motor of transformation consists in the unequal distribution of resources among classes and in the discontentment created by such circumstances which, in turn, lead to efforts by the underprivileged to overcome their position. Structural functionalism is based on the claim that “societies are homeostatic systems in which changes are re-equilibrating responses to stresses” (Zheng 2022:1). Relevant authors include Emile Durkheim ([1893] 2014) and Talcott Parsons ([1951] 1991). On this account the social order is conceived as a system of institutions and organizations each of which serves a specific function in maintaining a society-wide equilibrium. Social change takes place when that equilibrium is compromised. This leads either to an adjustment of institutional functions – and, subsequently, to a return to stability – or to partial or complete breakdown

lor 1985) use a more narrow, Neo-Aristotelian practice concept that only comprises routine, continuous, and habitual activities, such as bartering, herding, fetching water, or conducting recurring ceremonies, others like Ortner (2006) or Rabinow (1996) opt for wider notion. According to them practice also includes singular, planned actions like buying a house, running for an office, or marrying someone; in other words, the range encompasses all spatiotemporal acts that are performed either consciously and deliberately or unconscious and by rote – and the vast spectrum in between.

In addressing the question of how individuals reproduce social structures via practice, it is best to turn to Bourdieu's seminal *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and the later *The Logic of Practice* (1990). Here, he suggests that individuals (re-)create the social world by enacting various habitus. In his own words, habitus are

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu 1990: 53)

Put differently, they are ultimately a set of socially learned rules of behavior, thought, perception, and evaluation that individuals follow more or less unconsciously and that determine how they assess their world and fellow human beings and interact with them. Habitus are strongly connected with social classes insofar as they generate homogeneity among people with similar backgrounds and experiences; they are group properties. Classical examples include a bourgeois habitus that manifests via a cultivated language, specific tastes for art and food and a certain education as well as distaste for particular forms of “vulgar” entertainment.

However, it is not only aesthetic taste that falls within the realm of socially learned dispositions, but also decisions about what we eat (organic or cheap meat), how we dress (H&M or Prada), how we move (stroll or stride), which value orientation we have (progressive or conservative), and so on (see Meier & Blum 2019). By internaliz-

ing habitus and re-creating them through practice, agents contribute to the perpetuation of the social system, for instance its rigid class structure. Importantly, habitus have an indispensable relief function, because they allow individuals to cope with all possible problems arising in new situations by a kind of practical generalization. The habitual automation of processes of action, perception, thinking and evaluation frees them from having to constantly reweigh all options in every situation.

While Bourdieu's approach does an excellent job of explaining the persistence and reproduction of structures via practice, it has a harder time accounting for disruptions and transformative processes: how can social systems change? Here, Anthony Giddens' monographs *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (1979) and *Profiles and Critiques of Social Theory* (1982), both of which include the concept of the "dialectic of control", come into play.

Giddens (1982: 39) explains his key notion as follows: "By the dialectic of control I mean the capability of the weak, in the regularised relations of autonomy and dependence that constitute social systems, to turn their weakness back against the powerful." He suggests that despite the controlling force of social structures, whose explicit rules create a pressure of compliance via sanctions and whose implicit rules are internalized via habitus, such control is never absolute. Even those agents who are on the lower rungs of society's ladder are never powerless. They can always resist and, through their resistance, transmute the structure itself and the social hierarchies and resource allocation contained therein. This potential for refusal or evasion is based on the fact that social structures aiming at reproducing the status quo are, as Ortner (2006: 7) aptly puts it, "always imperfect, and vulnerable to the pressures and instabilities inherent in any situation of unequal power." They may exhibit "cracks" (ibid.) which agents can exploit to pursue goals of their own.

Agency and Power

Individual resistance to the status quo, however, does not only presuppose ruptures and imperfections on part of the social structure. It also requires two strongly related key elements that figure prominently in practice theory: agency and power (see Ortner 2006: 137).

The agency concept is notoriously contested in cultural anthropology, with authors such as John and Jean Comaroff (1992), Webb Keane (2003) and Saba Mahmood (2005) calling attention to the danger of slipping into a Westernized notion of agency that pits the (allegedly) autonomous individual against society. Underlying such a notion, they argue, is the enlightenment myth “that human beings can triumph over their context through sheer force of will, or that economy, culture, and society are the aggregate product of individual action and intention” (Comaroff 1992: 10). Well aware of the risk of simplistic dichotomies, Ortner (2006) underscores the social constructedness of agency, suggesting that it is always realized and contextualized within specific cultural repertoires and linguistic settings which, in turn, shape the agents’ forms of desires as well as available courses of action.

Despite this social constructedness, however, there is a set of universal criteria of agency that pervades practice theory. The first of these is that of intentionality “which is meant to include a wide range of states, both cognitive and emotional, and at various levels of consciousness, that are directed forward toward some end” (Ortner 2006: 134). Thus, a picture emerges of human beings, who are both socially embedded and yet purposeful, goal-driven agents capable of reflecting their social context and their priorities to devise mid- and long-term plans of their own. In other words, to be an agent means being able (at least) in principle to devise strategies and to engage in strategic behaviour. The second criterion relates to having a modicum of control over one’s own behavior (Ahearn 2001), both in the sense of not being exclusively driven by one’s own internal impulses or ideological indoctrination, and not being wholly dominated by external forces, such as figures of authority or totalitari-

an institutions (see also Berlin 1969). Finally, agency requires the capacity to impact the social world via one's action (or inaction), and, hence, to turn one's plans into reality.

At this point it becomes evident why the notion of power plays a major role in practice theory, too – specifically what Ortner (2006: 137) calls “social power”. As used in practice theory and espoused by Ortner (2006) and Giddens (1984, 1979), social power is not to be mixed up with Max Weber's (1978) or Michel Foucault's (1982) highly influential notions of power. It is neither conceived as the sheer potential to enforce one's will against opposition and dominate others (Weber) nor as an intricate web of disciplining discourses and *dispositifs* that pervade all areas of life (Foucault). Rather, it bears a strong resemblance to considerations from Hannah Arendt's (1960) lecture on *Freedom and Politics*; power, thus understood, is about the resources, skills, knowledge, and social standing to engage in such practices that make a difference to the world. As Giddens (1984: 14) puts it:

This presumes that to be an agent is to be able to deploy (chronically, in the flow of daily life) a range of causal powers, including that of influencing those deployed by others. Action depends upon the capability of the individual to “make a difference” to a preexisting state of affairs or course of events. An agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to “make a difference”, that is, to exercise some sort of power.

Power is, hence, a “transformative capacity” (Giddens 1979: 88) which in turn may stem from a variety of sources. Details on the sources of social power are somewhat sketchy in Ortner and Giddens, but they receive more thorough attention in Bourdieu (1986) and Gianfranco Poggi (2001). Both suggest – though using different terminologies – that power derives not only from economic resources (money, assets, real estate, commodities etc.) and political resources (offices, rights, privileges, public support etc.) but also from what Bourdieu (1986: 242) labels “social capital” and “cultural capital”; and they further argue that these various sources are convertible, i.e., that a lack of one type of resource can, at least to some degree, be compensated by another type of resource.

Social capital comprises, on the one hand, an individual's relations of confidence with other persons and organizations, which allows them to relegate tasks and pool resources (see also Putnam 2000). In short, the greater a person's range of social connections, which they can mobilize for assistance (lending money, helping with work, acquire funding or external support etc.), the greater their social capital. On the other hand, it includes the membership in both formal and informal networks of generalized reciprocity that facilitate reliance among members and permit cooperation without the transaction costs of enforcement mechanisms. Put in less technical terms, social capital is constituted by a long-established mutual trust between well-acquainted persons that allows them to combine forces in the pursuit of shared goals and not have to implement fail-safes in case anyone bails out on their joint agreement.

Finally, cultural capital is an umbrella term for the various power-conferring traits that stem from a person's (academic) upbringing as well as their status within the normative order of a society (see also Farkas 1996). Thus, it consists, e.g., in the respect that those with an above-average education and/or a respected profession (physician, university professor, engineer etc.) receive among certain strata of society, or in the fact that their opinions receive more attention in public debate because they display rhetorical skills and a vast vocabulary. Importantly, cultural capital not only manifests via skills and corresponding recognition but also "in its objectified or embodied forms" (Bourdieu 1986: 241). These include, for instance, works of art that showcase a person's taste and cultural knowledge, but also books, musical instruments or decorative furniture that conforms to a socially acknowledged "haut goût". All of these (and similar) resources have in common that they constitute an individual's capabilities to impact their social world in virtue of their cultural standing and prestige.

One question makes up the core of this work: what is the relationship of women to transformation? More specifically, are they driving change? Are they driven by change? Through what practices do they create a changing world? In this thesis, I

will closely analyze the relationship and examine the interactions in all chapters, and also look at the motives, motivations, fears, and concerns that ground and move the women's "practices".

To do this, in the spirit of the theory of practice, I will focus on women's (and repeatedly also men's) practices and how they develop in interaction with structures. One focus is the question of the interplay between structural and individual change: by what factors are both driven or slowed down? Using the domains of work and marriage, I will analyze the interactions, motives, and obstacles that individuals experience during this period of transformation.

Central to this work, therefore, are the notions of agency and power: do women act purposively and strategically? What are their motivations? What drives them? Do they have power? What resources do they use to change society to their advantage? To what extent does class play a role here? To what extent does the agency of women from different classes differ?

1.2 Fieldwork Experience

In March 2010, I traveled to East Pokot for the first time to select my research site.² After a few days in Nairobi and Naivasha, I drove to Lake Baringo for our first stop. With my colleagues Michael Bollig and Clemens Greiner, we started our excursion to East Pokot.

I knew, from preliminary research done by Michael Bollig (1992, 1993, 1997, 1998, 2006) and Matthias Österle (2008), about the socio-economic changes and ongoing process of sedentarization in the region. Österle mentioned its impact on women's lives without detailing it any further. I wanted to use this first stay to check if the re-

² The research was part of the interdisciplinary research group "Resilience, Collapse and Reorganisation" of the Universities Cologne and Bonn.

gion could be a suitable area for my fieldwork and research interest in gender and social change.

We first went to Kadingding. Michael Bollig was warmly welcomed by the residents. A spontaneous meeting of the men was held. Michael Bollig was asked to present our reason for the visit. Michael Bollig introduced me and my intention to do research in the area. I was given the chance to present my research project. The women sat within earshot and followed my descriptions with interest. The men discussed my request. One elder said that no one had studied women here before and that they thought it would be a good idea. But I would also have to ask the women. One woman asked permission to speak (she would end up being one of my closest informants during my fieldwork). She stood in the middle of the group of the women, telling us that the women would be happy to be part of my research. This was followed by laughter and great approval from the women, who made it very clear that they liked the idea of being at the center of the research.

Next, we went to Chemolingot. Here I met my future assistant Ann. Bilinda Straight, who had worked extensively on warfare, gender, and emotion in this region recommended her to me and gave me her contact information. Ann immediately invited me to her home, and over tea we got to know each other. Afterwards, we walked through the streets of Chemolingot, and I had the chance to get a first impression of the place.

Ann ended up being my assistant throughout the whole duration of the research. She supported me during all interviews in Pokot as an interpreter and organized many contacts and interviews for me. She was my closest confidant during my research. We discussed interviews and impressions during lunch times, and she always had an idea or comment when I felt I was not getting anywhere.

I used this first stay to get to know the region and to define my research setting. Back in Germany, I decided to do comparative research between a region with sedentary

Pokot and one with still pastoral inhabitants – and also decided that Chemolingot and Kadingding would be very suitable for such a project. The comparability of the data with Matthias Österle’s and Michaels Bollig’s work as well as the friendly welcome in both regions made the decision easy.

Six months later, I was again on a plane heading for Nairobi – this time, however, with the goal of staying for twelve months. I picked up a Toyota Hilux with a roof tent in Nairobi and drove to East Pokot to start my field research. At the beginning, I rented a room in a small, very simple hotel in Chemolingot. After a few days and discussions, the possibility arose that I could move into the guest house of the District Officer (DO). Here I had my own room and access to a well in the compound. I shared the house with Mike, who managed the property and sold drinks to guests in the evenings. Mike became a close confidant in my research. We often shared meals together and exchanged ideas about my research. I described my experiences and impressions to him, and Mike discussed and challenged many ideas and assumptions of mine.

Having the guest house as my “home” was a stroke of luck for my research. It was my retreat when I needed peace and solitude, and a quiet and neutral meeting place for interviews and conversations during the day, as well as the place to be for the young, educated elite of Chemolingot in the evenings.

Getting started with my research in Chemolingot was very easy. I was able to move around completely freely and communicate with most of the residents without barriers, as the majority spoke English very well. For the first few months I focused on getting to know the town and its residents. I walked around the town all day for the first few weeks, introducing myself to representatives of churches, ministries, and NGOs. I was mapping the place while talking to vendors, passers-by, and table mates at local restaurants. I introduced myself and my research. Most of the time, my focus on “women in East Pokot” led to people giving me their opinions about what I

needed to know (according to them) about women's lives there: their challenges, concerns, needs, roles, and duties. I let myself be guided by these commentaries to absorb as much as possible and to get to know and assess the diverse positions and opinions. I was received very warmly and openly and had a very good start.

Soon after my arrival, I looked for a Pokot teacher. I was introduced to Tilyot, who for financial reasons had interrupted his studies in accounting in Nairobi for one year and had returned to Chemolingot. I met with him regularly throughout my stay. Since I was able to communicate very well using English in Chemolingot, my Pokot skills never developed beyond a basic level. I could make basic small talk and could follow interviews conducted in Pokot to some extent. However, I required interpreter support for exchanges in Pokot throughout my whole research period.

My second research site was Kadingding. I spent about 60% of my time in Chemolingot and 40% in the Kadingding area. In Kadingding, Assistant Chief Lodinyo Rutuni allowed me to pitch my tent on his homestead. Through doing this I also experienced firsthand the everyday life in a homestead and the organization of life and work in a polygamous household.

It took me a little longer to "arrive" in Kadingding. Because of the language barrier, the distance between the residents and me was greater. It was also more difficult to interact with the men there; my gender played a much larger role in the research dynamic. Men found it strange to be interviewed by two women, and my assistant also felt more inhibited. On quite a few topics that fall more into the male sphere and are not shared with outsiders (especially the area of violence and conflict), I was given evasive answers. I thought long and hard about how to deal with this dynamic. However, I finally decided to accept it as part of my research.

The exchange with the women in Kadingding was more open. In the beginning, many women were shy. But over time, the women got to know me, and many warmed to me and my neverending questions and interest in their lives.

I tried to make myself useful and offered to transport people and goods with my car – a service that was gladly made use of. I brought goods from Nakuru to the local kiosk and took people to Chemolingot or other parts of the region. So, I always had a full car and a wide network of contacts that strengthened with each exchange. Looking back, there was one key interaction that greatly solidified my acceptance in the community. In January 2011, I was woken at night because a neighboring family had heard that I was staying at the Assistant Chief's homestead. They told me that one of their daughters had been circumcised and had developed a high fever and needed to go to the hospital urgently. I immediately agreed to take the girl to the hospital in Kabarnet, three hours away. The family thanked me very much for this transport and word spread quickly. I had the impression that from that point on I was an accepted and welcome guest in Kadingding.

I developed a routine during my stays in Kadingding. I regularly visited the market in Kadingding, looked to see who was there and asked what had happened since my last visit. In the days that followed, I visited the three dozen households in the surrounding area for more in-depth discussions. In the dry season, I followed these households, almost all of whom moved to Chesemiriyon near the well so that I was able to continue my research.

I was lucky that my research was part of a larger research project and I had so many opportunities for exchange and reflection. Whenever I needed to reflect or simply felt like I was in the grip of cabin fever, I could visit my project colleagues at Lake Baringo, Marigat and Naivasha. These conversations and exchanges helped me a lot to focus and calibrate my research question.

Female, white, married

In December and January my husband visited me for a month. This visit made me very aware of my own position as a researching subject.

My usually lively assistant fell silent in the presence of my husband and behaved very reservedly. When my husband was spotted cooking and washing dishes at the guest house in Chemolingot, two very distinguished educated women sought me out and wanted to talk to me alone. They told me that it would reflect badly on me if my husband did women's work in public. It would seem like I was disrespecting him and neglecting my duties as a wife. Even if they knew that we did things differently in Germany (we had talked about this before), I should pay more attention to the local rules here.

Also, during a visit to Kadingding, I immediately noticed how differently everyone behaved. The women were suddenly very quiet. Men I used to chat with regularly talked to my husband and ignored me.

The most memorable experience was on the day we left Kadingding. While I was packing up the tent and preparing for our departure, my husband was talking to a neighbor who was well acquainted with me. On the way back, my husband told me that the neighbor wanted to give him a tip from man to man, since I apparently needed more guidance and physical disciplining to show more respect to my husband. I should not be allowed to do man's work in my husband's presence, such as driving. When I learned about this, this statement hit me hard. I felt betrayed at first (and also in the following second and third moments) by a close confidant. That he even recommended chastising me physically made me angry. With some distance, I could put the statements in the context of expectations for married women to which I did not adhere – since I clearly insisted on my special position as a white non-Pokot woman. I experienced firsthand the power of the expectation that married women behave respectfully and submit to their husbands' wishes. While I addressed men directly, drove a car (while my husband and other men were passengers), and let my husband cook for me, I disrespected the local norms for married women.

For me, this was a very revealing realization. I had experienced these unspoken rules up close. My different experiences – as a married woman without my husband present, and with my husband at my side – made me understand the local gender dynamics in a nearly physical way. This also directed my focus to the concrete interactions between men and women – as well as to the strategies of “wayward women” who lived outside the classical Pokot expectations.

1.3 Research Design

The research design and even the final research question were not clearly defined prior to the fieldwork. I knew that I wanted to investigate the effects of sedentarization on gender relations. I developed the specific methods in the sense of inductive empirically guided research in the field. From the interviews, records, and conversations I derived hypotheses with the help of which I gradually sharpened the research question. (Bernard 2011: 7). The research design was designed from the beginning as a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods in order to investigate the research object and thus also the research questions from different perspectives in a methodologically sound way. Table 1 displays the central methods and research focus during the field research.

The research can be divided into three phases: 1.) initial phase, 2.) socio-economic and demographic focus and first hypotheses, and 3.) focus on gender and change.

In the first three months, I focused on getting to know the region, deepening my language skills, and understanding the concepts that guide everyday life, as well as local disputes and discourses. I introduced myself and my research project and sought conversation about the current challenges. Participant observation (Bernard 2006: 343) served as a point of reference throughout my research stay. During the day (and in the evening when I was invited as a guest or spent time with acquaintances and friends) I would accompany the everyday life experiences and actions of my interlocutors. Mostly in the evening, I tried to reflect on what I had experienced before by

juxtaposing observations, impressions, and conversations in my evening field notes and drawing cross connections, recognizing cultural codes and symbols. In both Chemolingot and Kadingding, I presented my research concerns to the elders and asked for their support, which I received. In doing so, I also asked for advice on how I should compensate the interviewees. In both regions, the elders suggested that I could value the time and thoughts of the individuals I was interviewing by giving them a small token of appreciation. In past studies, researchers had brought sugar and tea. However, not knowing if some respondents already had enough sugar and tea, they recommended that I rather hand over an equivalent amount of money so that respondents could buy what they really needed. I followed this recommendation, and my interviewees received 100 KSh for an official interview (about 0.8€),³ which was the value of a portion of sugar and tea, the usual host gift.

Method	Research focus	No. of participants		
		CHE	KDD	total
Household Survey	Socio-economic and demographic quantitative basis data of area	120 hh, 598 ind.	77 hh, 618 ind.	197 hh 1216 ind.
Women Questionnaire	Fertility, relationship history, private ownership, inheritance	146	165	311
Life Story Interviews	Biographical narrative interview with focus on life-cycle events	14	6	20
Normative Questionnaire	Expectations of good and bad behavior regarding relationships, education, raising children, work, and respect in family	60	50	110
Free Lists	Ideal woman/man; ideal husband/wife	10	10	20
Focus Groups	economic transformation	2	2	4

³ In East Pokot (and much of rural Kenya), it is common for activities requested by NGOs and research projects to also be financially compensated. E.g., people who clean roads, build wells, or participate in women's groups also receive financial compensation for their participation. This is an important cash-income resource for some.

Wealth Ranking	socio-economic stratification	2	1	3
Gendered Tasks Interview	Allocation by gender of a list of 80 activities	10	10	20
Oral History Interview	Interviews with elders on transformation in East Pokot	3 informants in Chemolingot		
Expert Interviews	With representatives of churches, local leaders, regional politicians, elders, and NGOs	Throughout the field-work		
School enrollment data	1980-2010	-	-	-
Chief register	Cases on domestic violence and divorces	-	-	-
Church registers	Data on weddings and baptisms	-	-	-
Archival data	Reports on the development of East Pokot	-	-	-

1: *Methods and Research Focus*

Socio-economic and Demographic Focus

From January to March, I conducted a household survey⁴ in Chemolingot and Kadingding. My assistant translated the survey into Kiswahili and Pokot. To ensure the quality of the translation, two other assistants translated the questionnaire back into English.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first was a household questionnaire, which had questions regarding the entire household, focused on household composition, economic strategies as well as basic demographic information for each member of the household. The second was a women's questionnaire addressed to all present female household members of 14 years and older. Here, in-depth questions were asked about marital, conjugal, reproductive and birth histories.

A major challenge in designing a household survey is the definition of the household (Lang & Pauli 2002). In Kadingding, the definition was clear: all persons living to-

⁴ I developed the survey together with my colleagues Clemens Greiner and Michael Odhiambo, who used it in their respective research sites – the highlands of East Pokot and the Il Chamus area surrounding Lake Baringo.

gether in a homestead for an extended period of time. The household head is the husband and father of the adult sons living there – as every member of the homestead would point out in unison.

In Chemolingot, some found it more difficult to say who the household head was. In particular, women who lived separately from their pastoral husbands or women whose husbands worked outside East Pokot were hesitant to say whether they or their husbands should be listed as household heads. I documented these cases and then asked the women who they thought was the head of the household: them or their husbands? In most cases, the women thought about it briefly and then very often indicated themselves as heads of household, since the men were not present and also not involved in household decisions (I discuss these cases in detail in Chapters 4 & 5). I always accepted the definition of the interviewee and entered the person named to me as household head. As I will elaborate more in the following chapters, because of the transformation that is taking place, there is some room for maneuver in the distribution of roles in Chemolingot. When I asked pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot if a woman could be head of the household, almost all agreed: “If a woman takes care of her family and makes the decisions alone, then she is head of the household and the family,” as Domongole, a pastoral Pokot in his 50s, told me.

In Kadingding, I asked the elders to make a list of all households living in the Kadingding area. I visited nearly 80 households, of which 77 were inhabited and present. There were 618 individuals living in the 77 households, and 165 women responded to the women’s survey.

In Chemolingot, I was unable to conduct a full survey due to the town’s size. Since the neighborhoods in Chemolingot are very homogeneous, but differ greatly from each other (e.g., the young elite live in the Center, the poorer cattle-less in one neighborhood, people with government jobs in another) I decided to survey 20 households in each of six neighborhoods (Center, Natatur, Karuwen, Milimani, Silangua, Kadili).

I mapped the six neighborhoods, used GPS to select the center of each, and chose 20 surrounding households randomly for the household survey. If a household was not present, I arranged an alternate appointment. So, I interviewed a total of 120 households with 598 household members of which 146 women 14 years and older were present and completed the women’s survey.

	Chemolingot	Kadingding
Households	120	77
Individuals	598	618
Women’s survey	146	165

2: Sample Size Household and Women’s Survey

Following the survey, I conducted wealth rankings in both regions and conducted two focus groups on economic change in the region (for a detailed description of the methodology and discussion of the results, see Chapter 2).

Deep Dive into Psychological and Normative Levels of Gender & Change

After completing the household survey, I took two weeks to reflect and do an initial analysis of my data so far. In doing so, I found that my notes kept revolving around the psychological and normative levels of change – both in terms of sedentarization and change in terms of gender roles and expectations.

Therefore, I decided to focus on these topics for the second half of my research. I developed a set of methods to help me understand the expectations for pastoral and non-pastoral women and men. I wanted to understand the interaction between educated and uneducated, pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot: when is there mutual understanding and empathy, and what situations lead to friction and conflict?

Back in the field, I worked with a mixture of semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, and cognitive methods to provide a broad base for my analysis. To better understand the temporal component of change, I use the concept of generation (Pauli

2019, Newman 1986).⁵ “A generation is a special kind of birth cohort: a group of similarly aged people who share some important formative experience. The focus of the term ‘generation’ is on the shared experiences, not on age” (Newman 1986: 232). In Pokot, three generations can be distinguished. The “older generation” were born in or before 1959 (50 years of age or older during my fieldwork), who were born during the colonial period but grew up in post-colonial Kenya. Almost all of these women and men grew up pastorally in polygamous settings, never went to school, and only had contact with Christian institutions in the course of their lives. The middle generation, born between 1960 and 1974, aged 31 to 50 during my fieldwork, experienced the missionaries, the building of schools, churches, and boreholes. A few men and women, especially those from impoverished households, went to school and in some cases made careers and brought cash income to East Pokot. These few examples became role models for an alternative non-pastoral biographical path. The youngest generation was born between 1980 and 1995 (15-30 years old during the research). This generation is familiar with pastoral life, often growing up in a pastoral setting, but also had close encounters with non-pastoral lifestyles (and in some cases experienced it themselves). They have grown up with a road and daily bus connection to centers outside of East Pokot such as Nakuru and Kapedo. They are the targets of campaigns to increase school enrollment, and to stop female circumcision and early marriages.

I made sure to include women and men from all three generations in my sample to cover the full range of experiences. In my analysis, I look at the shared generational experience and contrast it with the Pokot life cycle to understand the social transformation of recent years.

⁵ The concept of generation has often been criticized as being too vague (Kertzer 1983). I agree with the criticism at its core, but I use the concept here anyway since it correlates conceptually and applies to the same period as the Pokot age sets. However, since only men are classified into age groups in Pokot, I use generation here as the defining concept for both women and men.

In the following months, I conducted *free lists* and asked men and women to tell me what makes an ideal wife and husband for them and what characteristics and behavior an ideal husband and wife should display.

I created a multiple-choice questionnaire with names of 80 activities. I asked the interviewees to indicate whether an activity is usually performed by a man, a woman, or both.

My interviewees were drawn from the household-survey sample. Each household had been given a household ID and each household member had been given an individual ID, which I carried forward for further interviews so that cross-cutting analyses were possible.

I wanted to understand what the expectations were for good and bad behavior in East Pokot and whether they differed between pastoral and non-pastoral members of society. To do this, I created a semi-structured interview guide that asked about expectations for a successful life, but also for opinions on female brewers, cheating spouses, women who refused their husband's request to be able to marry a second wife, and many other similar questions. Using this normative questionnaire, I interviewed a total of 110 people: 55 women and 55 men in Chemolingot and Kadingding across all age groups.

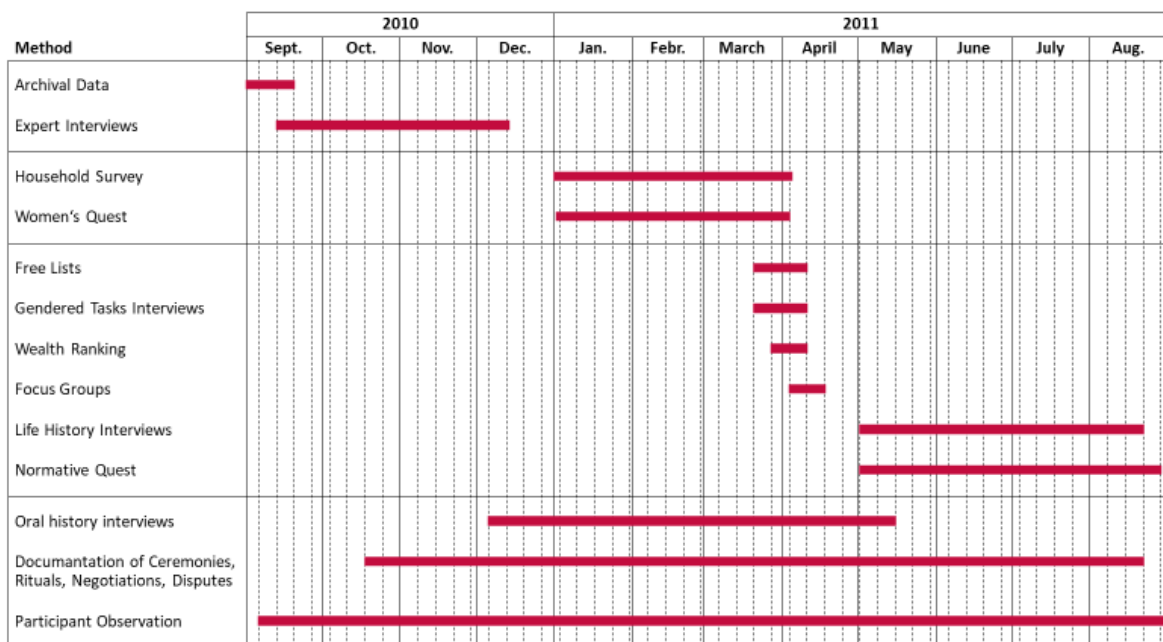
At the end of my field research, I conducted life-story interviews with 20 women. In these biographical interviews, I asked the women to tell me about their lives, starting with their first childhood memories. The women narrated their live stories to me, including crises and high points. These women had become close confidants during the fieldwork. The interviews lasted from one up to four hours and were usually recorded over several sessions. I conducted about half of the interviews alone in English and transcribed them afterwards. The rest of the interviews I conducted with my assistant in Pokot. My assistant Ann transcribed the interviews afterwards in Pokot and then translated them into English.

Regarding the anonymization of the interviewees, I faced a problem when completing the work: in total, at least 1,000 people were interviewed and observed. In almost all interviews the assurance of anonymization took place at the beginning. Especially in in-depth interviews on conflicts and adulteries, this was a basic requirement for obtaining information. Other interviewees insisted on being called by their real names. Throughout this paper, I adhere to my original assurance of anonymity. Thus, all names have been changed except for those who explicitly insisted on authenticity.

	Normative Questionnaire				Life Story Interview	
	Che		KDD		Che	KDD
	female	male	female	male	female	female
Young generation: 15-30	10	10	10	10	5	2
Middle generation: 30-50	10	10	10	10	5	2
Older generation: 50+	10	10	5	5	4	2
Sum	30	30	25	25	14	6
Total	60		50		20	

3: Sample Size Normative Questionnaire and Life-Story Interviews

Throughout my fieldwork, I kept a field diary in which I recorded my daily observations and also my personal feelings and struggles. I documented rituals and celebrations, weddings and ceremonies, funerals, festivals, meetings, and events involving politicians and NGOs. I accompanied bridewealth negotiations, settlements of conflicts, and separations. An overview of the chronological sequence of the methods used is given in Table 4.



4: Chronological Overview of the Research Design

The final analysis and coding of the data was conducted in Germany after my return from field research and during a research stay at Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA. The results inform the subsequent chapters of this inquiry and constitute the foundation of my dissertation.

Chapter 2: One Region, Many Modes of Living

Nginyang Market is the place to be on Mondays in East Pokot. Streets are buzzing with people: women in Pokot clothing, youths with trendy fashionable print shirts, cliques of unmarried Pokot girls clearly visible in traditional attire, Pokot men carrying their ring knives and wooden seats, men talking on their cell phones, women carrying canisters of water on their backs. People are riding their motorcycles and bicycles, coming from all directions of the region to meet in the center. All are talking and laughing together. They are enjoying the market, meeting relatives and friends, catching up on the latest regional news, and having a good time. Everybody is mingling. The traditional older lady with three young Christian boys is catching up with her nephew and his friends; the young NGO workers with a group of pastoralists from Silale are discussing the recent prices for goats; the assistant chief drinking together with the elders⁶ of Paka is discussing how to proceed with a case of alleged adultery. In the late afternoon, most people are starting to leave. The crowds disperse in several directions: to Chemolingot in the west, Kadingding in the East, Silale in the North, and Marigat in the south. The young schoolchild goes back to Chemolingot; the old lady from Kadingding goes back to her three co-wives and husband and her big homestead of 21 people; the assistant chief returns to his stone home where he goes to sleep in a Western-style bed.

This chapter tells the story of an area that appears to be divided into two modes of living that are sometimes referred to as “traditional” and “modern”; as “pastoralists” and “post-pastoralists”; as “rich” and “poor”; center and periphery, nomadic and sedentarized. However, this is not a story of two different neighboring areas. This is the story of social change in *one* area and how people use different strategies to cope with these changes – and how these changes affect social relations. Underlying the phenomenon of social change throughout East Pokot is the overwhelming trend to-

⁶ Elders support the Assistant Chief with their work and receive a small expense allowance for it.

wards sedentarization; more and more people are leaving behind their nomadic existence to pursue new modes of living in urban settlements. And since it is, first and foremost, women more than men who are moving to the cities where they take on the challenges and opportunities of this new life, sedentarization does indeed have a female face. Indeed, specifically women are experiencing both the pressure to explore new sources of income for their families and themselves, e.g., via casual work, as well as new chances to attain economic independence or find new sources of value and meaning, for instance, in Christian churches, merry-go-rounds or women groups.

This chapter provides, first, a stage-setting of the areas of Chemolingot and Kadingding as arenas of social change in East Pokot. Then, exploring both areas in terms of their demographic, socio-economic structure as well as the life stories of their inhabitants, I seek to better understand the nature of this fundamental change and its close relation to sedentarization: what does social change in East Pokot consist of, and how does it affect individuals and society? Who is settling down where, and why, and how do these new conditions of existence alter their aspirations and fears, their livelihoods and their notions of the “good Pokot life” in an increasingly post-pastoral society? And finally: what does the emerging predominance of settled life imply in regard to the stratification of society, the divide between rich and poor and their strategies for coping with their economic situation?

Given that sedentarization in East Pokot has a decidedly female face, a strong analytic emphasis lies on the role of women as shapers and beneficiaries of change and their agency in transforming social structures through practice. I examine the reasons behind women’s life choices among socioeconomic transitions and to what extent and why they react differently to change than men. In doing so, I investigate how they incorporate change into their responsibilities regarding their households and their relationships – both as a social group and as individuals.

2.1 Demarcating the Research Area

The Republic of Kenya is divided into eight provinces. The fastest-growing among these is Rift Valley province. During the time of my research stay one of its districts, besides Baringo and Marigat, was East Pokot.⁷ East Pokot was, again, divided into five so-called Divisions – Nginyang Division, Mondri Division, Kollo, Tangelbei and Churo – all of which are administered by a District Commissioner (DC). In addition, each division had its own District Officer (DO). The DC and DO were appointed by the Office of the President, Chiefs and Sub-Chiefs, which constitute the next lower administrative level, by the DC.

Kenya's hierarchical administrative system is combined with a devolution of political responsibilities via quasi-federal power-sharing regimes (called "majimbo" in Swahili). At the communal grassroots level, there are the Elders who take care of domestic issues and small quarrels. Assistant Chiefs and Chiefs are responsible for settling legal cases and bringing evidence. Citizens call on their District Officer (DO) in case they are dissatisfied with the solutions suggested by their Elders, Assistant Chiefs, and Chiefs.

The District Commissioner during my research in 2010/2011 was Amos Mariba in East Pokot. There are 133,000 inhabitants, spread across twenty-four locations and 58 sublocations. Agro-pastoralists are found in Churo and Tangelbei while the rest of the region is mainly inhabited by pastoralists. In an interview, the DO also described a dichotomy between a modern or more developed population on the one hand and those who continue to live very traditionally (especially on the borders with Samburu and Turkana areas) on the other hand.

⁷ Since Kenya's 2010 constitutional and territorial reform, East Pokot has been re-dubbed Tiaty, and the vertical power sharing structure has been partially overhauled. Since these events fall outside the purview and timeline of my inquiry, I shall not delve into these issues any further.

As mentioned above, the population in the area has increased rapidly in recent decades. Census data reflects an increase from about 27,000 in the late 1970s to 63,000 by the end of the 1990s. The most recent census figure from 2009 stands at 133,189 (Kenya Population and Housing Census 2009). As described in Bollig, Greiner & Österle (2014) there is no solid explanation for the recent extremely high growth rates. There have not been any changes in territorial boundaries or any significant changes in migration dynamics.⁸ The census figures cannot reflect a natural growth rate and can only serve as a proxy here.

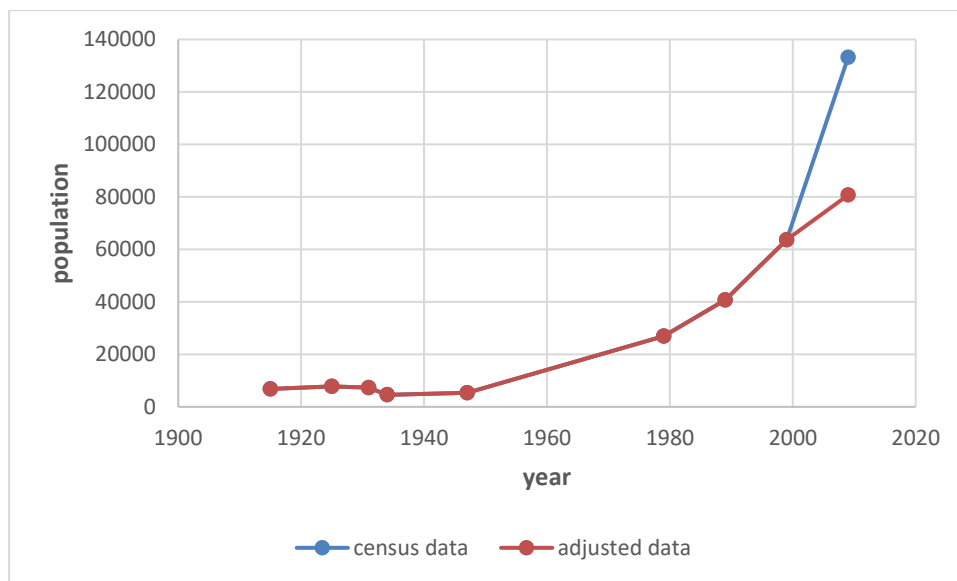


5 Map of East Pokot

My own calculations suggest a population in East Pokot of around 80,000 in 2009, based on an annual population growth of 2.4%. While the human population has increased steadily over the past three decades, the number of cattle has remained large-

⁸ While there is increasing out-migration of pastoralist Pokot toward the abandoned rangelands on the Laikipia plateau, labor migration to rural or urban areas outside East Pokot has remained an option chosen by few (Österle 2008; Greiner 2013).

ly stable at about 100,000 animals (Österle 2008: 83) This steady drop in the cattle/people ratio has been paralleled by the sharply increasing, market-oriented production of small ruminants: since the severe droughts of the early 1980s, the number of goats and sheep has increased more than fivefold to a projected all-time high of almost 700,000 (ibid.).⁹ Importantly, this decreasing cattle/people ratio has instilled in larger parts of the population the deep-seated impression that the number of cattle in general is in decline. However, this could also be related to the fact that fewer and fewer households own cattle, or that cattle are mainly kept on the outskirts, because of bush encroachment of pastures, and no longer play a major role in everyday life (unlike goats), see Greiner, Vehrs & Bollig (2021) for an extensive discussion of this phenomenon.



6 Population Development in East Pokot 1915-2009

The droughts of the early 1980s also spurred rainfed crop cultivation. As in many other areas of North-eastern Africa (Anderson 1988; Smith 2005), aid agencies, like the Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council (KFFHC) established small-scale agricul-

⁹ All data – except the adjusted number of 80,697 for 2009 – are based on census data or, for 1915 and 1935, on the colonial census for tax collection. The population for 2009 is calculated based on a population-development rate of 2.4% per annum. The noticeably lower population numbers in the years 1934 and 1947 can be explained by temporary migration to other areas to avoid taxation by the colonial administration (see Österle 2008).

tural schemes and demonstration plots in East Pokot during that time to help destitute pastoralists to cover their drought losses and to instruct them in rainfed farming. Except in some highland areas and few pockets elsewhere, however, families soon re-established themselves as pastoralists. While in the wider Baringo area cultivating pastoralists have a long history, e.g., the Tugen and Il Chamus (Anderson 1988; Little 1992), as they also have in neighboring West Pokot, where the cultivation of finger millet or sorghum has always been of some importance for most families (Dietz 1987) in East Pokot the partial adaptation of rainfed agriculture can be safely described as a new development.

In contrast to crop cultivation, however, honey production is not completely new to the Pokot, though it is always an exclusively male occupation. It has, however, rapidly gained importance in the past two decades, encouraged by aid organizations, which began introducing modern beehives to spur income-generation activities among local communities in the mid-1980s (Mutsotso 2010).

2.1.1 Chemolingot

Chemolingot is a regional center and since 2013 a sub-county headquarters in East Pokot. It was founded in 1969 with the construction of one of the first boreholes in the greater area by the Kenyan government. Despite the borehole, settlement activity by Pokot was low until the early 1980s. Information about what happened in Chemolingot up until this point is very sparse.

In any case, Pokot preferred to live in the lowland savannahs which were better suited for grazing. Things began to liven up, though, with the establishment of the very first *duka* (Swahili for small town shop) in 1983 by Samson Chepalet who back then was in his 20s. Samson, with whom I conducted several interviews in October 2010, believed that Chemolingot harbored massive developmental potential. Thus, together with a manager from the Ministry of Health he decided to draw a map of the future city, imagining what it could and should look like in terms of new *hotelis* (small

local restaurants), lodges, shops, and residential areas. Once finished, he took upon himself the long journey to Kabarnet, the then headquarters of Baringo District, where he presented the map and his vision for Chemolingot to public officials. His proposal must have made quite an impression because it put Chemolingot on the radar of regional decision-makers. In subsequent years, infrastructure and offices for Kenyan government officials in the Pokot region were built only in Chemolingot.

Therefore, the settlement began to grow slowly but steadily. Samson remained something of a local founding father: in 1987, he opened the first lodge in Chemolingot; five years later he started building rental houses for government officials not coming from East Pokot. His merits were officially acknowledged on Kenyatta Day 2009 (October 20) when he received an honorary certificate for his efforts in shaping Chemolingot into the regional center it is today.

During my interviews, persons from all over East Pokot emphasized Chemolingot's exceptional importance for the region, and its unique role. When I introduced myself to Jacob, a nurse at Chemolingot Hospital, and informed him that, among other things, I wanted to do research on Chemolingot, he told me: "Chemolingot is the center of East Pokot. It is the most developed place in the area here. It is a true cosmopolitan town. It is like nothing else" (Jacob 24.10.2010). This cosmopolitan attribute might sound strange or exaggerated at first glance but is well warranted from an East Pokot perspective.

First of all, since it is the sub-county headquarters (previously district headquarters), it is home to a number of ministries including the Ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture, and Development and of the region's military and police base. Kenyan law requires that members of administration, policy, and military are not to be stationed in territories of their own ethnic groups. As a consequence, much of Chemolingot's population stems from other tribes, thus giving the place a decidedly multi-

cultural atmosphere. However, these government employees live in compounds of their own, which are not inhabited by Pokot.

Residents agree that ever since Chemolingot first became district and then sub-county headquarters, the town's advancement sped up rapidly. Sister Rebeccah, for instance, told me: "Everything has changed a lot during the last eight years. There is a lot of development, and everything is going faster." Furthermore, Chemolingot has the only hospital in East Pokot, with around three dozen employees, most of whom are not themselves Pokot. Finally, there are four schools in town: three primary schools (one of which is private school) and one secondary school. Most teachers are either Pokot who have studied several years in Nakuru or Nairobi and are, hence, used to more urban amenities, or members of other ethnic groups. This part of Chemolingot's population has a demand for a range of specific products and services that are unavailable in other parts of East Pokot, such as bottled beer, hygienic products, pharmaceuticals, textile fabrics, school supplies, and last but not least, non-pastoral food (e.g., rice, beans, chapattis, soda). Consequently, a growing number of hotels, lodges, and shops have opened in Chemolingot.

At present, Chemolingot has approximately 2,000 inhabitants, all of whom are permanently settled. It is structured into nine neighborhoods and divided by one main road that goes from Nginyang to Kolloa. Each neighborhood is represented by an officially appointed elder who acts as the main liaison for the Assistant Chief and participates in regular meetings where collective concerns of each part of town are discussed. Chemolingot's urban core – where I conducted most of my research – consists of Chemolingot Center, Karuwen (also known as Kituduny), Natutur, Silangwa, and Milimani (250 households, ca. 1,200 inhabitants). These neighborhoods are surrounded by four scattered and more pastoral settlements, namely Kadili, Katukumta, Molok, and Motungput (150 – 200 households, ca. 800 inhabitants).

Of all the neighborhoods, Chemolingot Center (founded 1969) is the only ethnically mixed part of town, whereas all other parts are inhabited by Pokot. It is also the most densely populated neighborhood, where all ministries, DEO and DDO, Chief and Assistant Chief as well as the hospital and military infrastructures are located. The majority of dukas and hotelis as well as both lodges are situated north of the main road along three side streets. Stores are usually in corrugated iron houses. Behind those are stone-built residential houses with corrugated iron-sheet roofs and one or two rooms that are inhabited by teachers or younger Pokot who are currently looking for jobs and have received a college education outside of East Pokot. Chemolingot Center is the only part of town where there is, in fact, privately owned real estate that owners either rent out or inhabit themselves. All houses in other neighborhoods are built on communal land. Churches and schools mark the border between Chemolingot Center and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Full Gospel Church is at the border with Milimani (founded 1985), which is by far Chemolingot's richest area. Its inhabitants live in large stone houses on spacious estates with four to six rooms and private water tanks; some even have power connections. Originally, the neighborhood was named Arujap, after one of its first inhabitants. However, in 2003 it was christened Milimani after the prosperous neighborhoods of Kenya's bigger towns.¹⁰ The symbolic decision sought to represent the wealth of the area's inhabitants, thereby increasing their symbolic capital. Most house owners are Pokot public officials and military officers who work outside of East Pokot in other counties. However, their wives and children are constant residents of Milimani. They hold powerful positions in churches, politics and all public decision-making committees of Chemolingot.

¹⁰ Milimani is the name given in all major Kenyan cities to the neighborhood (formerly) inhabited by colonial officials (and today by well-off people), usually situated on a hill, hence the name (Milimani is the word for mountain in Kiswahili).

The center's eastern border with Karuwen (founded 1985) is marked by the African Inland Church and the church's own primary school. Compared to Milimani, Karuwen's inhabitants are more economically diverse. While there are several well-off households living in stone houses, the majority of dwellings are mud houses with corrugated iron-sheet roofs. These dwellings are by no means scattered but are rather adjacent to each other. Many of Karuwen's inhabitants own small flocks of goats that are grazing around the neighborhood. Their income mostly depends on casual work that is done by the household's women.

Chemolingot's private primary school marks off the southwestern neighborhood of Natutur (founded 1983) from the town's center. It is the poorest part, Chemolingot's urban core, characterized mainly by very simple houses built from a combination of mud, stone, and twigs. The neighborhood is mostly known for its brewing place. Since the consumption of *busaa* and *changaa* (the two local brews, see more details in chapter 4.4.1) has a shady reputation in predominantly Christian Chemolingot, Natutur's brewing place is hidden behind acacia bushes. Alcoholism is a severe problem among the neighborhood's population (see also chapter 4). Most inhabitants own neither cattle nor goats, nor do they have any steady income. In Natutur there are no stone houses, but only traditional wooden huts or mud bandas. The homestead structure appears traditional, and the individual homesteads are located about 300 meters from each other

Finally, the northwestern neighborhood of Silungua (1990) is demarcated from the center both by the primary and secondary schools and in the south by the Catholic Church. It is a rather populous part of town with many stone houses as well as traditional Pokot twig houses where kitchen equipment is stored. The population consists almost exclusively of people with steady employment and is composed of teachers and nurses, as well as duka and hoteli owners.

This overview illustrates that since the 1980s Chemolingot has developed from a mere borehole into the most important regional center of East Pokot with a growing number of neighborhoods and a constantly increasing population. Chemolingot's rapid population growth is also evidenced by my survey: of the 120 households I have talked to, 64 (53.3%) had relocated to the town in the last 10 years.

Name	Year	Location	Meaning	Elder	inhabitants
Chemolingot Center	1969		Tall hill	Thomas Naitaturu	Teachers, college educated youth
Natutur	1983	Behind Motherland, local place	Faraway place	Thomas Kasuriot	Poorer
Kituduny/Karuwen	1985	Behind hospital	Many small hills	Samuel Toremor	Middle-class
Milimani Estate	1985	Behind secondary school	named after Nairobi Milimani Estate in 2003 to show the wealth of its inhabitants who want to resemble the Nairobi neighborhood. Before that it was called Arujap, after an old man who lived there. All inhabitants are Christians (mostly full gospel)	Leya Sapan	Wealthy, many in gov. positions
Motungput	1988	Behind the hill	Hill without trees and grass	Teremiah Kiplilan	Upper-Middle Class (Soldiers, Chief, Katupen Family)
Silangua	1990	Behind Catholic Church	Green vegetables that grow there and you make storage for sour milk out of it (moko)	Domongole Kapita	Family
Kadili	1996	Behind Silangua, across the river	Small hill	Krop Menkitsch	
Katukumta	2001		Hill with a lot of trees	Kerapo Apaterengole	Animal keepers
Molok	2002	Behind hill	Different coloured stones before Chepunchat	Luka Lokorua	Animal keepers, still nomadic, brewers, poor

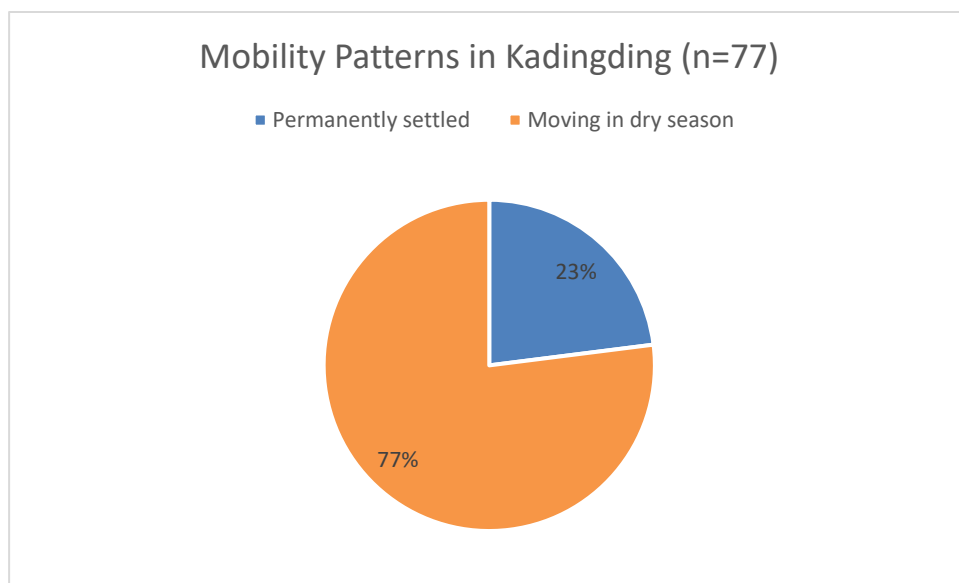
2.1.2 Kadingding

Kadingding is a pastoral area south of Mount Paka that is an hour and a half by car from Chemolingot. It consists of seven separate villages with a total of 146 homesteads. This accounts for approximately 1,500 inhabitants, who make up half of the Paka Location's population.

The villages of Atulan, Moruase and Nyaunyau constitute the center of Kadingding and are clustered around its *kokwö*, the elders' meeting place. The latter has also hosted the weekly bush market every Friday since 2005 where, among other things, bicycle equipment, medicine, food, and clothing is sold; it also functions as the daily busaa and changaa place where people buy and drink alcohol. The area's only duka is located a short walk from the *kokwö* and is open all year. Its owner, David, sells foodstuffs such as rice, maize, beans, and sugar as well as pharmaceuticals. He owns a solar panel, which is the only place in a radius of 15 kilometers where people can charge their cell phones for money. The local water hole, which holds water all year long except for the dry season (January to Mid-March 2011), is located a 15-minute walk from the *kokwö*. Here, women fetch water and young men bring cattle, camels, and goats for drinking. Five kilometers from the *kokwö*, there is a church of the African Inland Church attached to which is a primary school, both of which are run by a young couple from Lake Victoria.

The vast majority of inhabitants of Kadingding lead a pastoral life and they own livestock; only a few households are permanently settled. During the dry season most of them migrate to the vicinity of Chesemiriyon 25 kilometers south of Kadingding where water from the borehole can be obtained all year long. Others venture to the hillsides of Mount Paka or other lowland places where there is water in the dry season. However, despite the continued prevalence of pastoralism throughout the Paka region, there is a noticeable tendency among the population to mostly travel shorter distances with the main household keeping to the region, preferably close to a bore-

hole and a location with medical infrastructure. Meanwhile, cattle are entrusted to *kapariōk*, young herders for hire who take the livestock to more distant pastures. It would be an overstatement to label this development a “quasi-sedentarization” process, especially considering the role that pastoralism still plays for the self-conception of Paka’s population. And yet, movement patterns are clearly changing, and they are tending towards a decrease in the radius and frequency of mobility. The pull of sedentary life, therefore, is not passing Paka by.



8 Household Mobility Patterns in Kadingding

In addition, agropastoralism has become more important in recent years. David (11.05.2011) recalls:

There are more gardens than ten years ago. (...) We are not anymore dependent on goats. Here almost everyone has a garden. Every member of the household is taking care of it. But the most important person is the mother of a home since the garden is also part of the home and she is responsible for everything at home.

The most widely used seeds throughout the area are millet, green grams, and cowpeas. During one visit I spoke to the District Agricultural Officer of East Pokot. He freely conceded that in itself the area’s agricultural potential was low due to the lack of rain. However, there being good fertile soil, he voiced the hope for irrigation projects in the future. Further challenges for farming around Kadingding include factors

such as soil erosion, overgrazing, and the rocky ground, as well as a certain reluctance among Pokot to become full-fledged agriculturalists.

In terms of building patterns, the typical Pokot homesteads (*kaw*) are scattered throughout the area. Each comprises several huts (*ko*) made from twigs where the wives and children sleep, kraals for livestock, and gardens where maize and other crops and fruits are grown. The entire living complex is surrounded by a fence. Most homesteads consist of the head of the household, his wives, children and, rather often, the eldest son who lives there with his wife until he has the means for starting his own homestead.

At first glance, there seems to be little difference between the various homesteads in terms of resources and economic status, because they share the same kind of structure and outward appearance. However, they differ greatly with respect to household size, number of livestock, and additional sources of sustenance. An important difference with Chemolingot is that households in Kadingding are scattered throughout the area and not clustered in specific parts in accordance with their wealth and status.

Furthermore, Kadingding does not have elders in the strict sense of Chemolingot's official appointees. Rather, the *kokwö* is frequented by all men from the neighborhood who engage in conversation, carve wood, and discuss local news with visitors from other areas. In case there are conflicts and disputes (e.g., infidelity, brawls, cattle theft) in the neighborhood, the *kokwö* is the place where initiated men get together to seek joint solutions. It is important to note that the *kokwö* is not reserved for senior men only but is a forum where all male inhabitants who have been initiated can participate in discussion and decision-making; however, their voices carry (slightly) less weight than those of their elders.

It would be a vast exaggeration to say that Kadingding has been subject to the same phenomena of transformation as Chemolingot, but change has not passed it by ei-

ther. Specifically, the *kokwö*, which until recently had been reserved as a meeting place for Kadingding's men, has now turned into a social hub for both men and women from all ages who spend their leisure time there. However, men and women primarily spend their time at the *kokwö* separated by gender. Lodinyo, Kadingding's assistant chief, went so far as to proclaim: "We don't have a *kokwö* anymore. Our *kokwö* is now the changaa field". And although this statement might be fueled by frustration over the recent transformations since the area where the elders meet is used daily by men that are in the area, most of those enjoying the proximity of the busaa.

However, the first thing one recognizes on arriving there are the women in the center of the field selling local brews, standing next to their yellow brewing barrels. As I wrote in my field notes after a visit to the bush market:

When I arrived at the market in Kadingding around 11am, there was already a vibrant hustle and bustle. All the merchants had arrived and opened their small stalls, it smelled like goats in the air since the livestock market had already started. And in the center of it all stood the brewing women of Kadingding. Everybody summoned around the women who formed a circle in the middle of the market square. Men and women were buying busaa and changaa or just standing next to the women and chatting with friends, neighbors and long-not-seen acquaintances. Next to the women are hoteli stalls where women sell ugali and even freshly roasted goat meat. On the outside edge of the square are then lined the stalls of the merchants outside of Kadingding who came here to sell and trade. On the far end, in the shadow of the big *kokwö* tree, sit the elder men on traditional wooden Pokot stools. They watch the market bustle, share some busaa and talk about the newest developments (Field Notes: 23.11.2010).

While most people I interviewed could not recall when their household had moved to Kadingding – which indicates that they had been living there for a very long time – nonetheless 25% (19 households) had come to Kadingding in the previous ten years. The vast majority (13 households) of these newcomers have relatives living in Kadingding and chose it because of the good opportunities for agriculture and grazing.

When we started the survey in Kadingding it was just the peak of the dry season. Most of the people could no longer live there and had started to migrate in ear-

ly/mid-January. They mainly moved to three areas: Loruk, Chesirimion and Tangulbei (including Chepkalacha). A few (about 20 homesteaders) remained in Kadingding. However, since the dam had already dried up, they had to make the arduous one- to two-hour walk to Chesirimion every other day to fetch water.

Migratory movements sometimes take place very quickly. When a dam runs dry, people sometimes decide within a few hours that the entire homestead must move to an area with reliable water sources. The rapidity of such decisions is essential: after all, the lack of water means that the entire herd and all family members are in danger of dying of thirst. I could also personally observe this behavior when I conducted surveys at the waterhole in Chesirimion three days in a row. On the second day the borehole had a technical defect. Although it was immediately announced that the mechanic had already been informed and was very likely to repair it, this hardly calmed the people present. Almost everyone left immediately and moved on. When I returned the next day, the waterhole had been repaired – but almost all the Pokot from Kadingding had moved elsewhere.

Many had moved to the waterhole in Loruk, which seemed to be very stable and continuously supplied with water. More and more Pokot came every day, having moved there to have guaranteed access to drinking water for humans and animals. This of course meant increased pressure on the pastures and especially Lake Baringo and the Il Chamus, a Maa-speaking people numbering around 30,000 persons, who live there. Tensions were almost corporeal, with Pokot assuming threatening postures on nearby hills. Michael, with whom I spoke at length about the situation, expressed worries about a violent escalation since the Il Chamus might feel obliged to fight the Pokot so as not be considered cowards – despite being inferior in terms of numbers and weaponry.

Besides such potential conflicts with other ethnic groups, however, in the dry season, different households join to help each other. It happens that siblings join forces (e.g.,

Lodinyo shared the homestead with his sister her husband and their children during the dry season in 2011. They combined their livestock and thus minimized the risks for each family), the extended family is called up again and returns to the paternal homestead, or friends decide to live together. These cooperative ventures usually persist only during the dry season and dissolve again when the rains come.

Sometimes, though, they shatter even earlier. In Lodinyo's case, for example, he got into an argument with his father over grazing strategies and herd management. He wanted to take the family and herd farther away to Akwashatis. However, his father refused, and since he had the final say as head of the family, Lodinyo was forced to comply. However, he decided to split from his father and set up his own temporary homestead with his brother-in-law in Chemoril.

2.1.3 Comparison of Both Research Sites

Analyzing the data from our survey provides a quantitative comparison of Chemolingot and Kadingding in terms of demographic and ethnic composition. It corroborates key observations from preceding sections of this chapter. Importantly, however, it also yields three major insights, which I shall elaborate further in the subsequent sections on sedentarization and stratification respectively:

First, there is indeed a sedentarization process taking place throughout the entire region of East Pokot. However, it is occurring at both a faster rate and a larger scale in Chemolingot than elsewhere, for instance Kadingding. Figuratively speaking, Chemolingot is the gravitational center of settlement developments and, with some conjecture, foreshadows developments yet to come in other areas.

Second, the societal change that goes along with sedentarization, and which is, indeed, catalyzed by it, alters a multitude of socio-cultural and economic parameters such as: marital and other relationship statuses, religion, education, the size and composition of households, and the distribution of monetary as well as non-

monetary resources (estate, livestock) among social classes and individuals. Thus, quantitative analysis demonstrates that change permeates all strata and areas, both private and public, of Pokot society.

Third, it is specifically women who are shapers and beneficiaries of change. Since they do not “fit” into the traditional, male-dominated pattern of Pokot culture, which revolves around herding cattle, anyway, they have much less trouble settling down and accepting incentives initiated by NGOs or churches to pursue novel life paths. Being responsible for the continued welfare of their families in transitory times provides them with the opportunity to leave a more or less passive role, as prescribed by pastoral society, in favor of a more active one. In turn, the new role generates new demands and aspirations on part of the women as well as dissatisfaction with long-established structures and, e.g., property relations.

Ethnic composition

In both areas, Chemolingot and Kadingding, the ethnic majority consists of Pokot. According to our survey, 95.7%¹¹ of the inhabitants identify as Pokot. The few non-Pokot (Tugen, Turkana, Kikuyu, Maasai, Nandi, and Marakwet) live almost exclusively in Chemolingot. They are either employed in situ, for instance at the hospital or at administrative posts, or are school children staying with relatives.

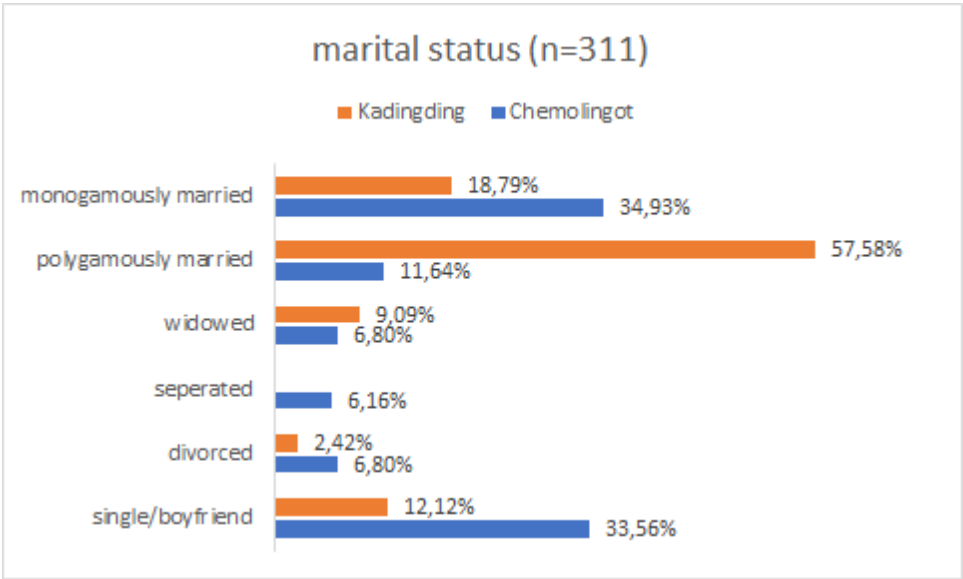
Marital statuses

Overall, Chemolingot displays a far greater variety of life paths and interpersonal relationship models than Kadingding. This is indicated, for instance, by the comparison of marital statuses.

¹¹ The de facto number of non-ethnic inhabitants of Chemolingot is much higher. Nurses, soldiers, police officers, and teachers mostly live in their own housing units on the hospital grounds, which were not part of the survey.

In Kadingding, polygamy is yet very much the dominant norm, with almost 60% of the women over 14 having co-wives. Yet it is a declining phenomenon, as the comparison with earlier inquiries by Bollig (1992) and Österle (2007), who had still noted the ubiquity of polygamous marriage, shows. Also, it is noteworthy that the 18% of monogamously married Kadingding residents are not a fixed quantity. The number does not represent that current total of all residents who have opted to marry just one partner, e.g., in accordance with Christian values. Rather, it also includes those male Pokot who have not yet amassed the necessary resources to marry a second or, subsequently, a third or fourth wife. Especially regarding men under 40, this status is still amenable to change.

By contrast, in Chemolingot, over one-third of the adult population over 14 is monogamously married. One-third is either single or in a relationship, and only a tenth is in a polygamous marriage. Interestingly, polygamous households in Chemolingot usually comprise two wives, whereas in Kadingding there are often three or four co-wives. Furthermore, and importantly, women who are divorced or are living separately are almost only found in Chemolingot, too.

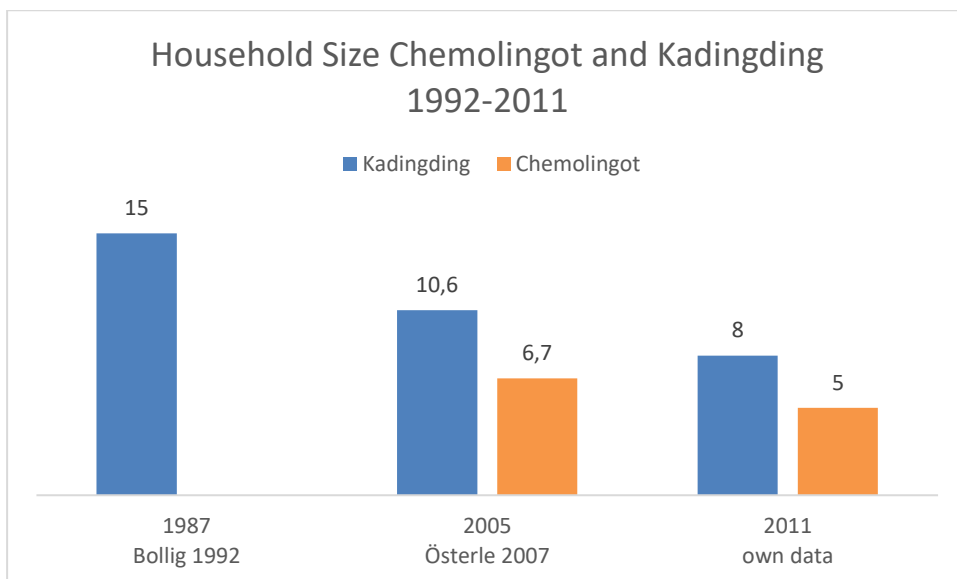


9 Marital Status in Kadingding and Chemolingot

Thus, while in Kadingding, there is still largely a “blueprint” for female life, providing both guidance and restrictions by defining clear roles for both genders in the pastoral lifestyle, no such biographic template exists in Chemolingot anymore.

Household sizes

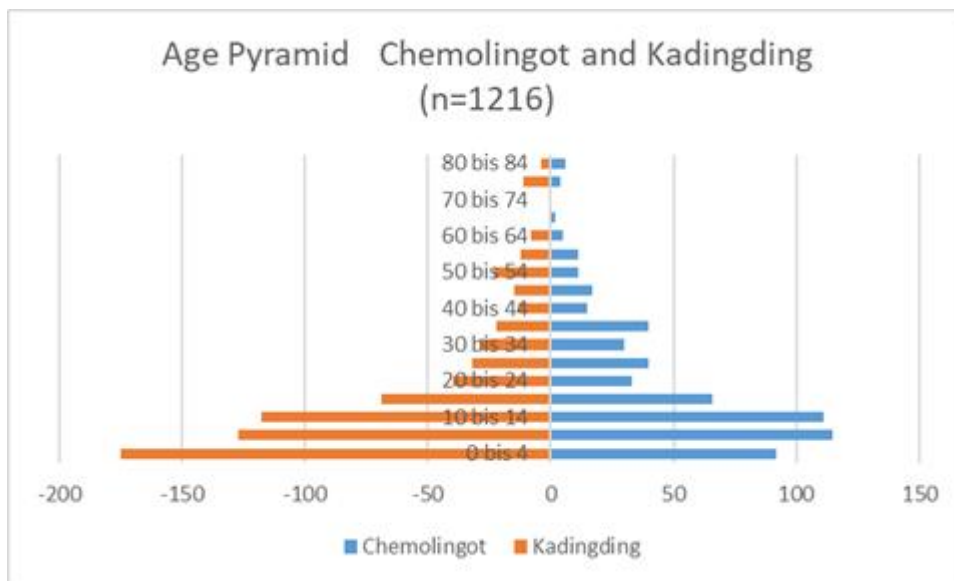
Correspondingly, both areas differ with respect to their household sizes, too. In 2011, the average household in Chemolingot numbered five people, while the average Kadingding household comprised eight persons. This difference is due to a greater prevalence of polygamous marriage; hence on average, more women and children are living in a single household. Strikingly, however, the most recent average household size assessed for Kadingding is below that found in earlier surveys by Österle (2005, 10.6 persons) and Bollig (1987, 15 persons) respectively. From a long-term perspective, Chemolingot and Kadingding are thus on track towards ever smaller households. Even at risk of simplification, there is a straightforward equation at hand in this matter: larger households are associated with a prevalence of pastoralism while smaller households point towards increasing sedentism. Thus, the long-term significant decrease of household sizes indicates a comprehensive and strong trend towards sedentarization in both areas.



10 Household Size Chemolingot and Kadingding 1987-2011

Age distribution

Taking a look at the age pyramids of Chemolingot and Kadingding respectively reveals wide-reaching congruences. Both areas are in fact noticeably young, with an average age of 19.5 years. A notable difference pertains to the relatively higher number of small children (ages 0-4) living in Kadingding. The children per household ratio in Chemolingot is 3.1 (3.6 in 2005, Österle: 2007) while in Kadingding it is 5.5 (6.8 in 2007, Österle 2007). This fact is explained by the interrelation between both areas: many children are born in rural Kadingding but are sent to school or preschool in Chemolingot once they have reached a certain age. Thus, and as mentioned above, Chemolingot and Kadingding areas are not strictly separated areas epitomizing vastly different facets of Pokot society – e.g., traditional pastoral life vs. modern post-pastoral life – but are rather subject to constant exchange and interdependence.

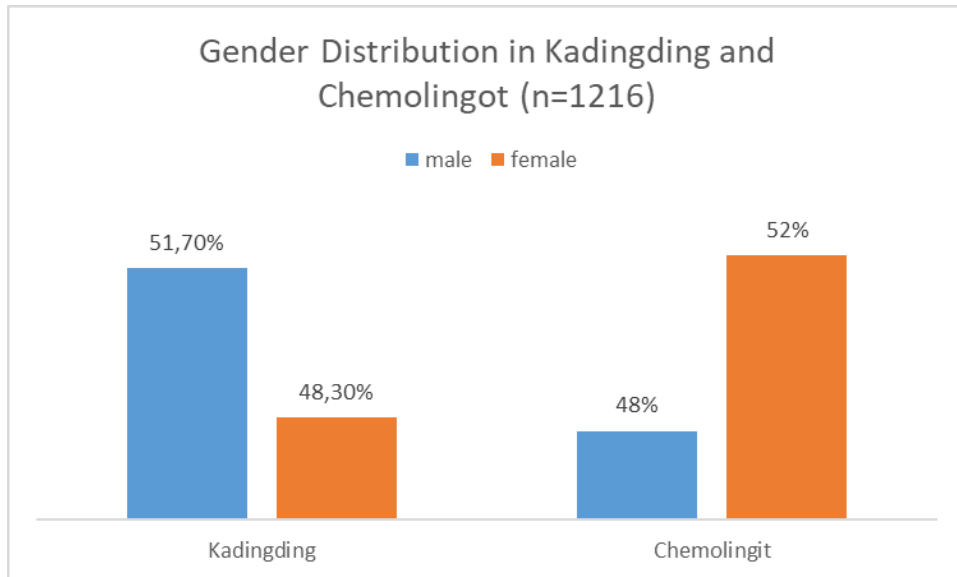


11 Age Pyramid in Chemolingot and Kadingding

Gender Distribution

Demographic differences between both areas also concern the issue of gender distribution. Significantly more women (52%) than men are living in Chemolingot, with the reverse (48.3%) being the case for Kadingding. This suggests indeed that women rather than men are moving into the city to live there. Sedentarization is associated more strongly with women, for reasons ranging from a desire for education that can

be obtained in Chemolingot to the job opportunities found there (for an in-depth analysis of the motives driving sedentarization see the next section).



12 Gender Distribution in Kadingding and Chemolingot

Female-headed households

As people settle down, the phenomenon of female-headed households also seems to be on the rise. Österle (2008) mentioned the large number of female-headed households in Chemolingot. In my survey, too, a woman was the head of the home in one-third of the interviewed households. In Kadingding, however, the figure was 15%.

“Female-headed” is rather an umbrella term that summarizes different phenomena: in total, 47 women identified themselves as head of the household (33 in Chemolingot and 14 in Kadingding when asked who the head of this household is. The reasons why a woman lives alone (often accompanied by her children) are manifold, and differ in the two areas. The women can be categorized into several sub-types:

For pastoral women, three sub-types of female-headed households can be categorized:

1. Women from polygamous households who live separately to minimize risks and strengthen the household. These women move to a pastoral area like Kadingding to take care of some animals (that their husbands have assigned to

them) or take their children (and often some children of her co-wives) to centers with better schooling (Chemolingot 5, Kadingding 10).

2. Another sub-group consists of women from polygamous households who have separated from the household due to conflicts with their husbands or co-wives and prefer to live independently in a center like Chemolingot or Nginyang where they can find income and support themselves (Chemolingot 11; Kadingding 0).
3. Widows (Chemolingot 3; Kadingding 4), especially after menopause, can decide without restrictions where and how they want to live.

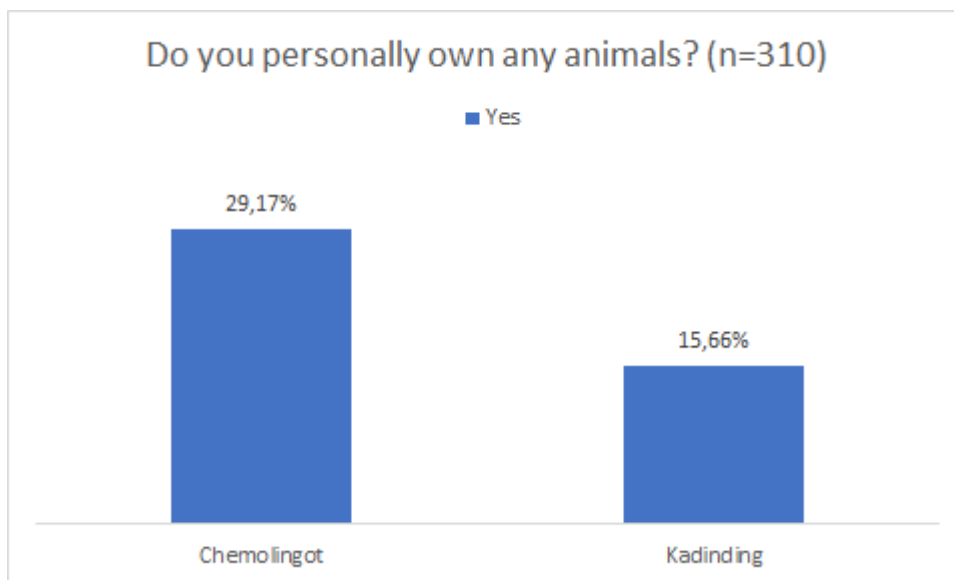
Non-pastoral, educated women mostly live without male life partners due to other reasons:

1. Women whose husbands are migrant workers living in faraway parts of Kenya, only returning for a visit every few months, who quite often identified themselves as head of the household, stating that they do not have daily contact with their husband and make all important decisions for the household and decide how to spend the money they have (Chemolingot 6).
2. Non-married women who do not yet have children and live alone in the center who are looking for employment in Chemolingot (Chemolingot 2).
3. Non-married women who have children but do not live with the father of the child or are no longer married. (Chemolingot 10)
4. Divorced women (Chemolingot 2)

The majority of female-headed households come to Chemolingot deliberately to take advantage of the education and cash opportunities available here. Women who have a pastoral background and live separated from their husbands and co-wives find a home in Chemolingot just like widows, single women, single mothers, and divorced women. Chemolingot's population is characterized by very diverse biographies and backgrounds.

Female livestock ownership

The growing importance of female-headed households for society in both Chemolingot and Kadingding is reflected in the areas' livestock-ownership structures. In both places, women themselves own animals – and while only 15% do so in Kadingding, close to a third of female Chemolingot residents possess livestock. In Kadingding, most women have obtained their animals via inheritance but there is an increasing number of women who buy goats with money earned by brewing or other casual work. By contrast, the greatest percentage among female animal owners in Chemolingot have bought them by themselves and with their own money.

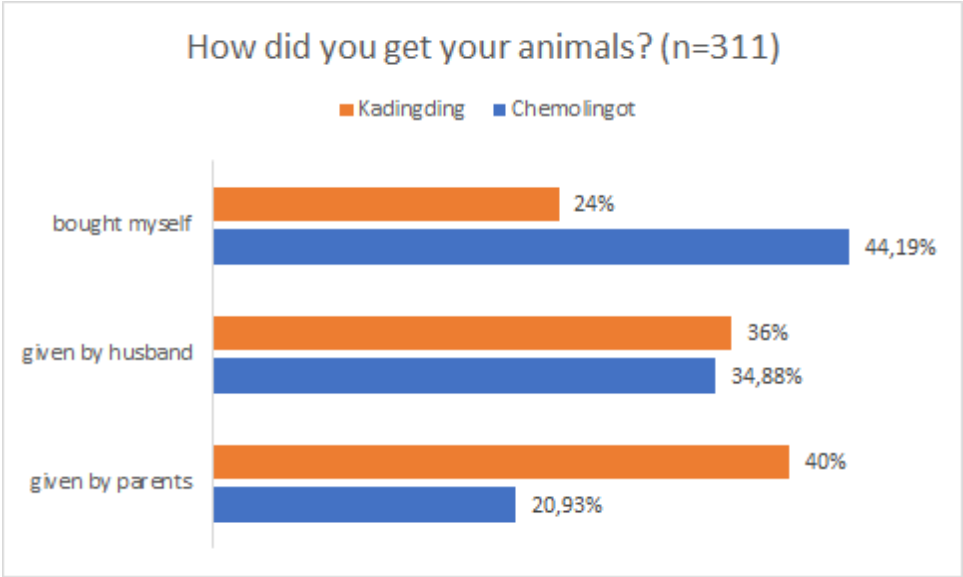


13 Female Livestock Ownership in %

Usually, women, both in Kadingding and Chemolingot, own a few goats as financial backup and for daily sustenance. Yet, during my stay I observed more and more women buying cattle, too. Without exaggeration this signals a paradigm shift for Pokot culture since the purchase and ownership of cattle has been a male prerogative for the longest time.

However, it is only half of the women who own their livestock and can sell it independently. The other half discuss such transactions with their husbands (and is expected to as well) to reach a joint decision. Unsurprisingly, there are quite a few

women who are deeply unsatisfied with current property rights pertaining to animals and the above-mentioned decision-making practices. Those with whom I spoke at length argued that they bought their own goats and still their husbands claimed that they belonged to their (husbands') herds. I will discuss this issue in greater detail in chapter 4 & 5.



14 Reasons for Female Livestock Ownership

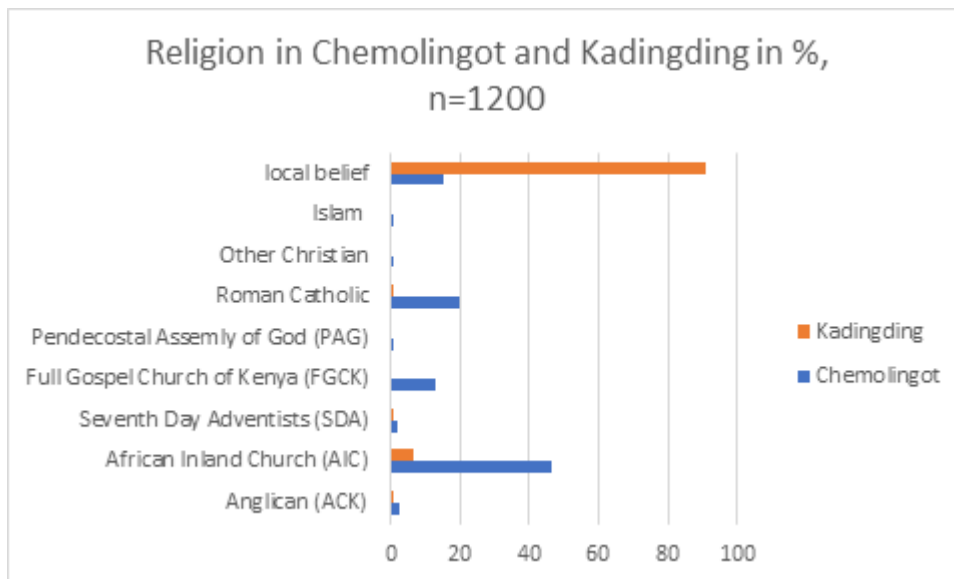
Religion

In Chemolingot most residents are members of a Christian church (85%), divided among six religious communities and churches. The biggest church community is the Africa Inland Church (AIC) with 50%. The AIC is among Kenya’s largest religious communities, with around 2.5 million members throughout the country. It is Kenya’s national branch of the Africa Inland Mission (AIM), a mission-sending agency that has been establishing churches in central and eastern Africa since the mid to late 19th century. AIC has been in Chemolingot since the 1990s. It has an orphanage attached and therefore has a very young congregation, largely made up of schoolchildren. Services there are short and always follow a structured liturgy. The second largest denomination (20%) is Roman Catholic. The Catholic Church has existed in Chemolingot since 1996. The Catholic Church has larger locations elsewhere in East Pokot (a

total of 19 missionaries in the region) and also larger parishes (mainly Barpello and Kositei). In Chemolingot, services are attended primarily by new residents who have already attended Catholic Church services their hometowns. The Catholic Church is a major healthcare provider in the region, with two mobile clinics, perceived by many as an NGO rather than a church. The Full Gospel Church of Kenya (FGCK) has been in Chemolingot since 1977 and is the oldest local religious community. It is a Pentecostal church with long, very emotional services and a very faithful following that attends services every week. The Anglican Church (ACK) is also very popular for its services and counts some very renowned community members among its followers who have been faithful to it since their school days. The 7th Day Adventist Church is rather small in Chemolingot. The newest church in Chemolingot is the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG): a Pentecostal church that is very active in the Churo area and has recently opened a Nursery School in Chemolingot. Its members see themselves as a young, educated elite whose members are very devout. This church currently has the largest influx of new member. It distances itself very strongly from pastoral Pokot and describes the polygamous lifestyle as blasphemy and sin.

By contrast, in Kadingding, only 10% of respondents report belonging to a Christian church, while 90% of the interviewed state that they follow the local belief. There is also only one very small church in Kadingding, an AIC congregation that is sporadically attended by women who live nearby.

This finding underscores a strong causal relation between settled life and the acceptance of organized Christian belief (and education, as detailed below) – and between pastoral life and local religion respectively. Put succinctly, sedentarization is a catalyst for Christianization and the type of social organizations (communal self-help associations, women's groups, schools; see below) that accompany the propagation of Christian faith.



15: Religion in Chemolingot and Kadingding

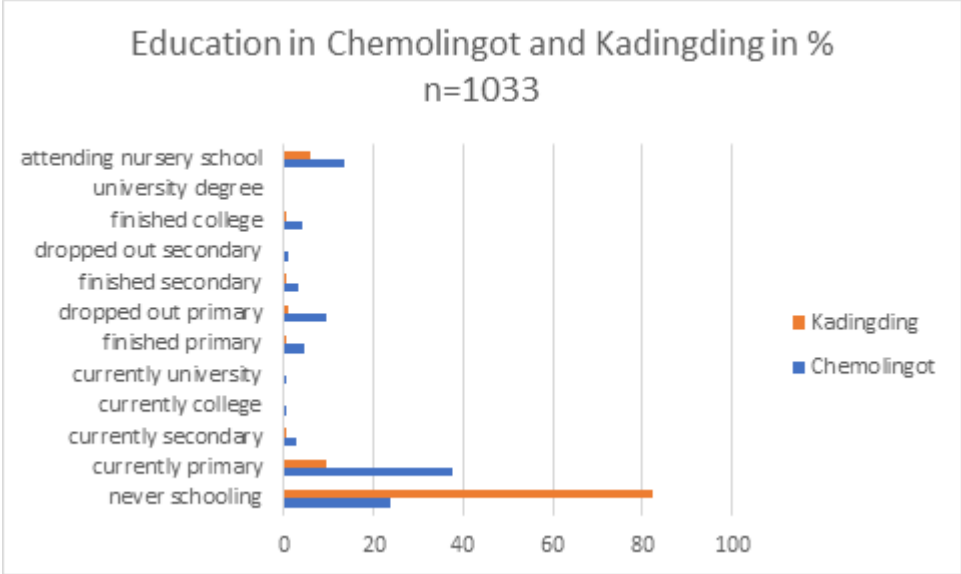
The churches in Chemolingot and Kadingding are “churches of women” (Hodgson 2006). The majority of the services are attended by women, and most of the offers and projects target women (women's groups, educational programs, fundraisers for women's projects). All churches in Chemolingot have a Women’s Committee and Women Leaders who address women’s concerns.

While male church members are almost exclusively recruited from the educated elite, both non-pastoral and pastoral women attend services and take advantage of church offers. A thesis of this book is that through Christian church offers, women (1) get to know the teachings and contents as an alternative to the classical pastoral model and actively use them in arguments with parents, couples, boyfriends; (2) use the women’s networks to help each other to develop and become economically independent; (3) appreciate that as women they can occupy church offices and have official influence, thus gaining “social power” (Ortner 2006: 137), which is not possible for them in pastoral functions.

Education

In terms of education and schooling, notable differences between both areas exist, too. Generally speaking, the educational level in Chemolingot is much higher than in

Kadingding. In Kadingding, 80% of the population have never attended school; 9% are currently in primary school, 6% are in nursery school, and 2% have dropped out of school. By comparison, only 23% of Chemolingot residents have no formal education whatsoever, while more than three-quarters are either currently attending school (38% primary school, 15% nursery school, 3% secondary school) or have completed their education (5% finished primary school, 3% finished secondary school, 4% finished college).



16 Education in Chemolingot and Kadingding

The school career in Kenya first involves attendance at a nursery school (at around 3 years of age). Then, at the age of 6, children start primary school, which they attend for eight years. If a pupil gets a good degree (Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education), she or he can go on to secondary school. After four years, pupils can graduate with the Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education. If they graduate with a B+ or better, they can attend university. If they have worse grades than that they can go to a middle-level college or tertiary college.

The number of schools (and therefore the number of students too) has grown rapidly in the last two decades. Between 2007 and 2011 alone, the number of primary schools in the district increased from thirty-four to one hundred (Bollig, Greiner and Österle

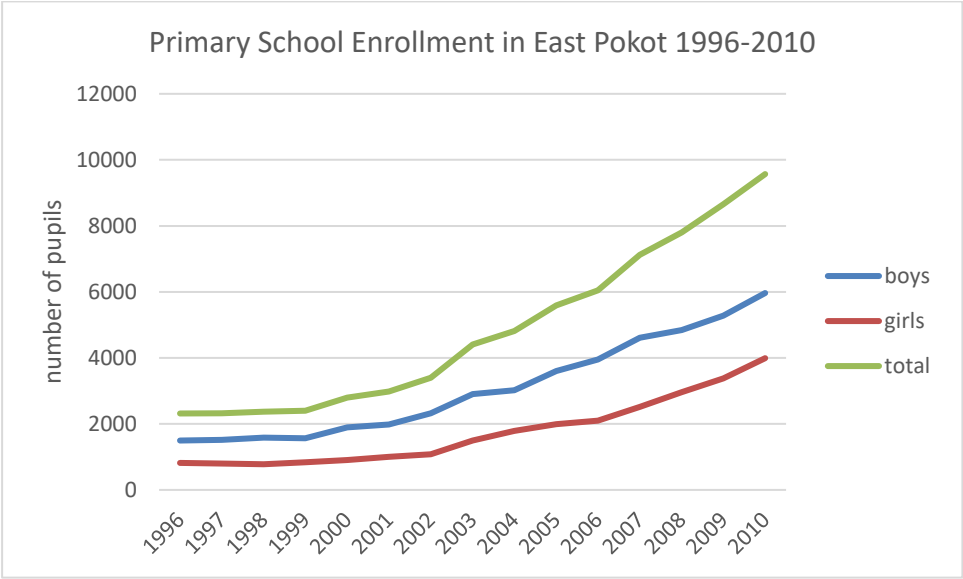
2014: 58). In terms of student numbers, this translates to 9,956 students (5,965 boys / 3,991 girls) in the primary school and 560 in the secondary school (326 boys and 234 girls) (Ministry of Education, Chemolingot 2011). As the numbers indicate, only a few of the primary school students later go on to secondary school. Many leave primary school without graduating – girls because they get circumcised or become pregnant; boys due to poor grades, or to support their families, or because they lack financial support for school fees.

There are still far more boys than girls in primary school but the ratio evens out in secondary school. The difference is largely due to the fact that girls are married off young and therefore often do not attend school at all, or leave school for circumcision. In the statistics, however, the proportion of female students increases every year. Schooling is also increasingly seen as valuable in pastoral families. The prospects of a job and steady income are enticing – especially in times when livestock can quickly die or be raided.

Of course, the number of schools that are available is also a factor in the school-attendance rate. In Chemolingot, for example, there are several nursery schools, and the largest primary school and the largest secondary school in the region. In Kadingding, on the other hand, there is only one small village school run by the married couple who also run the local AIC Church. Rural schools do not have a good reputation and many people say they that send their children there mainly because of the free school meals. Indeed, parents who care about education send their children to Nginyang or Chemolingot. Hence, there is education migration in the region. Many of the households in Chemolingot have moved there in recent years to send their children to school.

This vast educational disparity and its correlation with the differing prevalence of Christian faith is no accident. Christian denominations in Kenya (and Sub Saharan Africa in general) consider education as one of their central goals, founding and

maintaining schools wherever there are churches (see e.g. Theuri 2013). In fact, there are no schools found throughout East Pokot without ecclesiastical sponsorship. The AIC church in Kadingding sponsors the local school. In Chemolingot, the biggest congregations all have their own nursery schools, while the primary and secondary school are funded by the Full Gospel Church.



17: Primary School Enrollment in East Pokot 1996-2010

Conclusion

There is indeed a social change taking place throughout the region: sedentarization is on the rise overall and even in areas that are still largely pastoral people tend to prefer a more sedentary lifestyle. Specifically, they travel shorter distances and major households remain in one region, preferably close to a dam. In the meantime, the cattle are entrusted to kaporiaks who let them graze on pastures which are farther off.

This shift also engenders what might be called a change in societal ideals. A waning appreciation of pastoral values in favor of the goods of sedentary life, such as medical facilities, living close to a church or having ready access to a variety of commodities only available in a market economy, is noticeable. Motives and reasons for set-

ting down are variegated, and yet there is a dominant pattern emerging: often, it is men who lose their cattle (due to drought or raids) and women, more often so than men, who move to settled areas on the lookout for casual work to see their family through such trying times; Chemolingot is the major center of attraction of these movements. In addition, important reasons for sedentarization include, e.g., providing an education for the household's children, escalating conflicts between husband and wife/wives or the establishment of new income opportunities.

Having detailed the key demographic congruences and differences between Chemolingot and Kadingding and the role that sedentarization plays, the subsequent chapter delves into the issue of sedentarization. Specifically, and utilizing both quantitative data as well as personal interviews with residents, I will investigate which people are leaving behind their pastoral lifestyle and analyze their reasons for doing so.

Chapter 3: Sedentarization and Stratification in East Pokot

The trend among East African pastoralists to leave behind their nomadic lifestyle and settle down in or around towns commenced as early as the 1960s but had increased enormously by the end of the 20th century. Since then, the pastoralist shift to sedentism has come into the research focus of not only anthropologists but, among others, geographers, physicians, and economists, too (for an overview see Fratkin & McCabe 1999). As Fratkin & Smith (1995: 434) rightly note, “sedentarization is not a single process, it does not occur in the same way for all pastoralists, nor even in the same way for one pastoral society.”

With that in mind, the ever-growing body of research lists numerous causes driving pastoralists towards settling – which, of course, vary from region to region. Relevant ecological, economic, political, and demographic factors include civil unrest and the increase of violent cattle raids; severe droughts which negatively impact cattle herds; the loss of herding lands due to bush encroachment or the emergence of private farms; and – this last factor being a key issue in East Pokot – immense population growth. Österle (2008) underscores that, given the severe restrictions the savannah puts on increasing the size of cattle herds, the pastoral lifestyle sets limits on the demographic change that it can sustain. Thus, “Pokot pastoralism has changed rapidly and profoundly in recent years. Most households have shifted from a nomadic lifestyle to the largely sedentary and market oriented keeping of small livestock” (ibid. 85).

In moving towards towns, East African pastoralists have been gradually changing and diversifying their livelihoods. They have turned towards agriculture (for instance, the cultivation of maize, millet, beans, and vegetables), agropastoralism or trade; and women, specifically, have picked up work as cooks, maids, charcoal makers or beer brewers, and have founded hotelis or entered civil service in a branch of the state government.

Among researchers, evaluative assessments of the impact of sedentism on pastoralist life – and specifically on the life quality of women and their children – are varied, to say the least. Mitchell (1999) and Renfrew (1991) highlight the negative impact of settled life on both sexes, pointing out the increased unemployment of men and, correspondingly, rampant alcoholism and marital abuse as well as the spreading of infectious diseases (AIDS, syphilis, malaria etc.), malnutrition, inadequate housing, lack of access to clean water, and a massively increased workload for women. Fratkin, Roth & Nathan (1999) in particular express their dismay over advocacy for pastoral sedentarization by the World Bank, USAID and state governments, given its dire consequences. On these grounds, sedentarization is seen as a path towards poverty and social fragmentation.

In Fratkin & MacCabe (1999) and Fratkin & Smith (1995), on the other hand, the positive effects are emphasized. These include new (marketable) skill sets learned via sedentarized life, better health care, and greater educational opportunities for both adults and children in view of the proximity of schools. Most importantly, however, town life is considered to provide greater economic opportunities in a diversified market economy, especially for women.

Irrespective of their verdict on the overall impact of sedentarization (which, researchers readily admit, largely depends on specific cultural and economic circumstances), most authors agree that “not everyone benefits equally from town life.” (Fratkin, Roth & Nathan 1999). Integration into town markets, success in the job market and overall well-being depend on economic status, with poorer households struggling more to seize the opportunities of sedentary life. Österle, focusing on the specific ramifications for East Pokot, (2008: 85) states that it “is common practice of the members of the wealthy and educated elite in East Pokot (e.g., civil servants, politicians, teachers, and pastors) to have at least a piece of land” while being permanently settled. Thus, sedentarization is said to catalyze stratification and deepen the divides between rich and poor.

Finally, a second point of agreement among researchers concerns the effects of sedentarization on the established social and normative order. The economic and cultural change engendered by this shift affects traditional age and gender hierarchies, which leads to fixed roles becoming more fluid and the division of labor between the genders becoming more flexible (see Fratkin & McCabe 1999). Harking back to Ortner's notion of social change through practice, these are instances where the "cracks" (Ortner 2006: 7) in previously stable social structures can be utilized to shift society's power balance.

Why do people settle in Chemolingot?

Many people in Chemolingot live like we do. One person might have casual work, the other one has nothing or is searching for something. It is not hard to live in Chemolingot. It is the center of everything. All food is here. I think that living in town is better than in remote places. Here we have dukas. In the remote areas you might be rich but you cannot buy anything. And here the school is near, the CDF [Constituency Development Fund]¹² money is near, so they will give you money to pay the school fees. Chemolingot grew because of two events. In 1952 the borehole was built. The locals decided for it because the Nginyang river was too far away to fetch water there, but Muzungus supported them. And in 1991 when the Turkana raided Silale very badly, many people came to Chemolingot to settle here since there was water because of the borehole. Chemolingot developed slowly slowly. Since 2007 when it became District Headquarter it has grown much. People from outside of East Pokot came here and settled and so came many possibilities to find casual work. My wife and I were both mobile before we came to Chemolingot. When we married we settled down. Animals were less because of droughts and we wanted to send our children to school, so we decided to settle (Thomas Naitatuny, Chemolingot Elder 19.11.2010).

This extensive quote by Thomas (60), one of Chemolingot's elders, accurately illustrates the diversity of people who have settled down in Chemolingot since the middle of the 20th century and the range and complexity of their reasons for doing so. Our survey paints a comprehensive quantitative picture of the causes of and motives for sedentarization in this area. For instance, 42% of the surveyed households have

¹² Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) are central government funds to members of parliament for expenditure on their constituencies. CDFs were first adopted in India. They were introduced in Kenya in 2003.

moved to Chemolingot rather than being born there, citing reasons such as no income opportunities in their prior dwelling place (20%), loss of livestock, or the unavailability of food and water in other places (15%). And yet it is chiefly the individual life stories of Chemolingot residents that facilitate a deeper, more thorough understanding of the identities and motives of those Pokot who have left behind, at least partially, their pastoral lifestyle.

Talking to Chemolingot residents about who has settled down in the past decades and for what reasons, a typology emerges that comprises five groups which are not clear-cut or mutually exclusive, but are still helpful to structure the phenomenon of sedentarization. These groups are: (1) former Pokot pastoralists who lost their livestock and moved to Chemolingot in search of new income sources; (2) Pokot pastoralists who established a side-household in Chemolingot to diversify their income and send their children to school; (3) female-headed households where there occurred either a falling-out between husband and wife or the women did not seek a classic Pokot life path from the outset; (4) states employees, both Pokot and from other ethnic groups, who live in Chemolingot because they are employed in local or regional state institutions, such as schools, hospitals, or military facilities; and (5) young adults who are well-educated with a college degree and are either on the lookout for a job or in temporary contracts with NGOs. In the following, I will sketch each group in turn to create a more nuanced view of Chemolingot's sedentary society.

Loss of Livestock

The aggregate of all Chemolingot residents who lost their livestock – primarily either due to droughts or cattle raids – and thus moved to the city constitutes the largest group. It makes up roughly 80 percent of the town's population. None of them cling to their former pastoral life, even though some may still own a few goats as investment or means of subsistence. Also, they cherish the educational opportunities offered by Chemolingot and send their children to school there.

Most of these residents are poor with a very limited education and make ends meet by engaging in casual work, such as cleaning, brewing alcohol, or collecting stones or firewood. Thomas, whose view on sedentarization in Chemolingot I have quoted above, exemplifies this type of biography. Together with his wife, he lives in Chemolingot center and has been sweeping the DC office in the morning hours since 2007 (making 2,000 KSH per month). Thomas also owns a very small duka where he sells tea leaves, sugar, and salt but – as he readily admits – their income is barely enough to get by. Nonetheless, he has no regrets and prefers the amenities of town life to the sparsity of pastoral existence.

In many respects, Cheposeten Psakit's (68) story is dissimilar to Thomas's, and yet her reasons for settling down are much the same. She grew up nearby and, once she got married, lived in the homestead of her husband's family. Her household did not have many animals from the start but when her husband died there were only two goats left; thus, she moved to Chemolingot with her children. These days, she collects stones and receives work from the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED). She lives with her son and his family. Looking back, Cheposeten expresses a sense of progress rather than railing against the hardships of her life: "In the last years many things have changed. Life has changed completely from when I was young. Children go to school now. People behave better and there is development in the area." This notion that sedentarization is a catalyst for development and prosperity is a sentiment shared by most Chemolingot residents, both poor and well-off.

Among former pastoralists who settled down due to a loss of livestock, there are also some who, bit by bit, have come into money, often by opening businesses, such as hotelis or dukas. They now belong to Chemolingot's advancing middle class. Lea Sapa (51) is among those social climbers, and a public character of note. She is the only female chief and is involved in many NGOs and initiatives with a focus on the issues of peace and girls' rights. Growing up locally and having married polyga-

mously, Lea recalls the turmoils of pastoral life plagued by violence and cattle raids: “In the beginning we would move, maybe around 1978. Those days there was a lot of fighting between Turkana and Pokot and we were chased to Koloa. Then we came back to live here until now.” After Turkana had stolen her household’s animals, they were forced to develop a new livelihood strategy: her husband took up a job as watchman in Chemolingot and Lea sought work in town as well. She remembers their rocky start all too well: “When we settled in Chemolingot we only had a few goats and some cows at a bigger homestead. Me and my husband didn’t have a job, but some casual work. I was doing the laundry for the dispensary.” After that, she became the Matron of the primary school while her husband attained a position as Chairman of the secondary school. These days, Lea is highly respected throughout the entire community and, having risen to financial independence and social standing from modest beginnings, she has a clear view on the role of women in sedentary Pokot society: “Women are breadwinners of the family. That’s why they have to work together and kick away hunger.”

Interestingly, this sentiment is echoed by Demongole (54), who had herded cattle in the nearby mountain ranges until his animals died from drought and now lives in Chemolingot: “When animals were many, men ruled. But now when money is the new animal women have the whole power and women are everything for the family. They take care of everything.” Demongole is polygamously married to two women. He concedes having had mixed feelings about the new division of labor between the genders in sedentary existence from the outset but has come to terms since then. “In the beginning I didn’t like it. But now I see that it is good. Everyone has their responsibilities and not only the men are looking for food. Mother and father share now all responsibilities”, he says, and emphasizes the economic security afforded by town life: “It is not a problem that in Chemolingot people have less livestock. Now you look for casual work and you have food in the evening.”

Pastoral Household with Sedentary Side Household

The second-largest group among Chemolingot residents are pastoral households with a branch household in town. This group comprises two sub-groups. First, there are many cases where one wife out of a polygamous household – by decree of her husband but usually after joint deliberation and agreement – moves to Chemolingot with several of her own as well as of her co-wives' children to seek casual work there and send their offspring to school. Usually, it is the middle children who accompany her to town. The older ones stay with their father and the other co-wives to take care of the herd until they move out to get married whereupon they are succeeded by their youngest siblings.

Sometimes, though, the strategic decision to establish a side household in Chemolingot also springs from economic plight, as was the case with Mary Chepokaptalei. She settled in Chemolingot as early as the late 1960s and considers herself one of the first residents. Mary moved there by order of her husband after their household had lost all its cattle due a Turkana raid. "My husband had five wives," she recalls. "One was living in Nginyang, one in Kositei, one in Lorwatum and two in Chemolingot, but in different homesteads. We lived in different places, because my husband decided so." Mary founded Chemolingot's first Duka in 1976 and, with her earnings, bought her own livestock.

The second sub-group consists of households where severe marital quarrels – either between one wife and her husband, between co-wives, or both – have led to the decision to part ways and establish a branch household to alleviate tensions. In such cases, the woman who has settled in town is often visited by her husband every two or three months and receives some monetary support if necessary. For instance, he will sell a few goats for her benefit.

Christina Lomada (61), who these days lives in a compound in Chemolingot with her daughter, left behind her pastoral life to escape an unhappy marriage and attend to her faith. "I moved to Chemolingot because of the church", she explains.

I had been to church before, but I felt that all the quarreling with my husband and my co-wives would destroy my faith. When I moved to Chemolingot I saw that people were taking their children to school. I joined church and I decided to do the same and send my children to school.

After separating from her husband, Christina asked the local chief for support. He gave her a bag of corn which she, in turn, used to open her own hotel and fund her children's education.

Female-headed Households

In East Pokot, sedentarization has a female face, and this is nowhere as evident as in Chemolingot's large share of female-headed households. This group comprises all those women who either live officially separated from their husbands or are formally divorced. However, there are also those who simply have no interest in a partner or a classical female Pokot biography including everything that comes with it, i.e., circumcision and polygamous marriage. Thus, the large cluster of female-headed households encompasses a great variety of biographical paths and life choices.

Often, women who run a female-headed household have a pastoral background, and they have children, as is the case with Anna Chewochoi (32). Originally coming from Kositei, she has been living in Chemolingot for about a year. Some years ago, her husband Jonathan disappeared. His family had him declared dead against her will. According to local tradition, his older brother "inherited" her. Anna did not accept this and moved to Chemolingot with her children to support herself. She works as an office manager at World Vision and finances the school education of her children and that of three nephews and nieces. Anna is happy to be able to feed her family, and yet she is more than a little conflicted about her new place of residence:

You have everything in Chemolingot, Sukuma¹³ and schools. In Kositei everything is scarce. I prefer living in Kositei. Life in Kositei is simple. In Chemolingot you have to pay for everything. My children can compare themselves with so many other children and rich people. They say, "I want this, I want that". That's why I sent them back to Kositei on Fridays.

While Anna still has not given up hope of seeing her husband again and longs for married family life, Damaris has no such aspirations. Having founded her own business in 2006 in Chemolingot where she sells vegetables and clothes, Damaris has three children from two fathers and is divorced. She considers herself neither poor nor well-off, but she is economically independent. And she prefers living without a man in her household after her last boyfriend, whom she had supported financially, stole her money, and left her for another woman. Yet Damaris admits that her biographical choices often make life difficult for her in Chemolingot: "so many people are disturbing me right now. They tell me that I should not have divorced my husband. That I cannot stay alone. That I am a bad person. That's why I decided that it is better to go to church because people will not disturb you anymore." Attending church not only provides Damaris with a degree of social protection from those who disapprove of her lifestyle; according to her own appraisal, faith and Chemolingot's Christian community also helped her to overcome alcoholism. "In church I told them everything (i.e., about being an alcoholic). They prayed for me, and I got saved. I am now in church."

Rael Kapkoyoh, who grew up in Tungalbei and lived with her then-husband and her co-wives in the Barpello highlands, is representative of the large percentage of women seeking refuge in Chemolingot from a quarrelsome relationship. "There was not enough food and too many people were sharing the love of one man who had not much," Rael recalls:

¹³ Kiswahili name for collard greens. The main ingredient for *sukama wiki*. One of the most eaten dishes in Kenya, also among the Pokot

I was not happy in my marriage because I was forced to marry him, and I didn't know this man before. I didn't know that he would marry many wives and that we would have so little food. That's why I decided to leave him. There were too many children in this homestead and not enough food. That's why I came to Chemolingot and started my own business (Rael 02.06.2011).

Rael owns a hotel in Chemolingot and makes 500 Ksh per day, and according to her no less than twelve people (including her four children and several relatives) depend on her income. Although Rael's husband did not try to win her back after the separation, she has never officially divorced him either. Like Damaris, running a female-headed household suits her just fine. And although she sometimes misses Barpello's cooler climate, Rael appreciates the opportunities and comfort that Chemolingot has to offer for herself and her children:

I have to say that our living standards have improved so much in Chemolingot. In Barpello we had no development. In Chemolingot we have power and electricity. I could have never had a shop in Barpello like I have now in Chemolingot because the machines would not work in Barpello. (...) If you go to a place where the standard of life is improving, you will also improve. Idleness is not good, and where development is there is less idleness (Rael 02.06.2011).

Employed Personnel

In East Pokot, permanent employment relations are usually state-run, and Chemolingot is no exception. Thus, the very small group of permanently employed residents consists of military personnel, i.e., soldiers, and civil service personnel, such as police officers and hospital nurses – as well as physicians and teachers. Especially the latter two sub-groups constitute an ever-present and highly influential part of Chemolingot's city life since they own most of the larger guest houses, restaurants, and bookstores. Members of this little local elite use their excellent ties to politics and administration for their benefit, for instance, in regard to the allocation of land; importantly, many of them come from impoverished families and used education as a means of social ascension.

At this point, a conceptual clarification seems in order: evidently, the very notion of “elite” is fraught with an abundance of connotations and denotations. Even only among cultural anthropologists, there is a variety of definitions, ranging from broad to narrow. Following Pauli (2019: 13 who references Shore and Nugent 2002:2), I opt for a rather broad definition of elite as a “privileged minority” whose members occupy influential positions in the various social strata of power, e.g., politics, economy, civil society, religion etc. (see Poggi 2001). Two aspects of the concept deserve mentioning: first, elite membership, thus understood, is always a context-dependent ascription. There is no elite as such, there are only elites of a certain, more or less clearly demarcated area or stratum (e.g., of East Pokot, of Nairobi, of Germany). Elite membership in one area does not imply membership in another, even though there may be hierarchical orders between areas (a member of the local elite in Chemolingot is not a member of the elite in Nairobi or Nakuru). Second, other than class, elite is not a merely descriptive category that lumps together persons who have certain properties in common (for instance, regarding income, education, preferences etc.) and share no joint, i.e., collective sense of purpose. Rather, elite is a reflective category in that members consciously conceive of themselves and their peers as members of a group – and in that they purposefully distinguish themselves from others. This sense of purpose combined with a clear in-group/ out-group differentiation as well as a habitus allows elites to pool their resources, pursue mutual goals and strategies and perpetuate the exclusion of non-members via markers such as speaking patterns, culinary tastes, artistic preferences etc. (see Bourdieu 1984 [1979]).

Susan provides a striking example of this group. Growing up poor in Nginyang, she nonetheless attended school and finished with an excellent secondary-school diploma. Now, she works for the Ministry of Education and participates in a number of political and business activities in Chemolingot. With her salary, Susan sustains seven persons, including several orphans, yet she suggests that in Pokot terms she

should not be considered wealthy. "In the Pokot community they conceive of animals as part of wealth," Susan explains.

But I don't have many animals. Some have died because of hunger; some were taken by relatives. You know, our relatives take care of the animals and sometimes they say this one died, and this was taken by Turkana, so you find yourself not having animals. We mostly depend on our salaries and other investments like farming, but not on animals. The few animals we have are just for maintenance. I just want to be recognized as a Pokot (Susan 14.07.2011).

Despite Susan's tongue-in-cheek attitude towards not being "really" Pokot due to their lack of a larger cattle herd, she is highly regarded by the entire community and considered an influential decision-maker.

Florence looks back on a similar career. She, too, comes from a destitute family background. Against her older brothers' fierce resistance, she attended school. Upon realizing that their daughter was bright as well as ambitious, Florence's family supported her education and sent her to college. Now, she is the first female head teacher at the largest primary school in the region and immensely proud of it. Florence is committed to education for all and has opened a rescue shelter for children whose parents do not let them attend school. Emphasizing the value of literacy and learning and her own responsibilities as an educated woman, Florence says: "I realized that life can be so sweet with education. I went to my brothers' homes making sure that their sons and daughters are in school. My eldest brother now has four graduates." She travels every weekend to her home in the region of her husband, who is Tugen.

Samuel Toremor, who is an elder in Karuwen and lives with his wife and nine children in a homestead, shares Florence's outlook on the value of schooling for a changing sedentary life. "Without animals you need to prepare the future of your children and send them to school", Samuel says, and recalls the beginnings of Chemolingot: "It was something very special that people settled down", but with each cattle raid that plagued the pastoral Pokot the numbers settling increased. Samuel, who has

worked in various sectors, as a veterinary officer, police officer, water operator at Chemolingot's borehole, and was influential in the development of the new settlement (deciding where hospitals and schools ought to be build) does not seem to find a single fault with his city: "There is nothing that is not good about Chemolingot", he says, and smiles.

College-educated Young Adults

There is a growing crowd of young Pokot who, after having attended secondary school in Chemolingot, received their college degree from a Kenyan university outside of East Pokot and are now returning. Many of these Chemolingot residents in their early twenties to early thirties have a solid education – but no job. Thus, they crowd Chemolingot's center on the lookout for NGO contract work or, preferably, a government position at a state ministry.

Many appreciate living in Chemolingot again because they relish the company of their former classmates who have gone back there too. However, the (relatively) high living expenses are a cause for concern for Chemolingot's educated young adults. Kositei-born Ann Lokope, who studied social work in Nairobi and now works as a translator for NGOs in East Pokot, puts it succinctly: "You buy water, you buy food, you buy a house. (...) It costs a lot of money." And yet, like most of her well-educated contemporaries, Ann cannot imagine returning to her parents' pastoral life; she feels disconnected from it: "Before, I didn't think that Kositei was boring. I was born at that place; I grew up in Kositei. So, I didn't see that it was boring. But nowadays I am feeling that it is very boring. I think that many people have moved, or I don't know."

Leonard Lomadia (28), the founder of the all-male youth organization Chemolingot Youth Integrated, currently studying Human Resources at Eldorat's Moi University, came to Chemolingot when his mother left her husband and – with him – pastoral life behind. Having bad memories of domestic violence, Leonard looks back at their arrival in town with fondness:

My mother was beaten very much by my father and eventually she left him and went to Chemolingot and worked there for the Full Gospel Church as a maid. That was our happy time. I went to nursery school, the Finnish missionaries gave us clothes and all (...) of us could go to school (Leonard 04.02.2011).

Among his siblings, he was the only one to receive any education beyond primary school, but recalls the financial hardships that came with it:

I got funded by World Vision, (...) Later when I entered high school they gave me 3,000 KSh but the tuition was 9,000 KSh so the family of my sister helped me. (...) My studies suffered because I was always concerned about how to get money for my school fees and after I finished secondary school I couldn't proceed until I paid the final amount. So I looked for work. I taught in primary school on weekends and helped to conduct the census and in 1999 I paid back all the remaining tuition (Leonard 04.02.2022).

After attending AIC Baringo Bible College in Kabarnet and receiving a diploma, Leonard – like many of his contemporaries – returned to Chemolingot, citing tensions with AIC's pastor and a need to "reorient myself". For Leonard, Chemolingot Youth Integrated is a key for facilitating progress via information projects, e.g., on HIV, substance abuse, or pollution, and for staying in touch with NGOs such as Arid Land and World Aid. Being asked about his vision for Chemolingot's younger generation, Leonard has a clear sense of mission: "They should behave well and respect the leaders, or they won't be supported later in life when they need funds or recommendations for positions. They should not be idle and always work on their future."

Taking Leonard's vision into consideration, Blue (32) is what might be dubbed a role model for Chemolingot's younger generation. Being the central assistant and local coordinator for a newly founded organization of expat US-Americans in Kenya seeking to initiate a school project in Akoret, Blue counts among the most influential, successful, and well-connected members of Chemolingot's population. He holds a degree in Community Development and has been working for World Vision for a long time. Hence, Blue prides himself of contacts throughout Kenya and to various *wa-*

zungu (white people).¹⁴ His ties extend to the political domain where he cooperates closely with Akoret's United Democratic Movement (UDM) candidate for member of parliament whom he supported during his electoral campaign. Also, Blue is probably the only Pokot who seeks to open up the region for touristic purposes, having already organized trips by white tourists to local rituals in the past (see below for a detailed discussion).

Downsides of sedentarization

As already discussed in this chapter, the overall assessment of sedentarization processes in formerly pastoral societies is ambivalent among cultural anthropologists and related disciplines. Dramatically changing livelihoods and life paths that emerge in settled society have drawbacks. And Chemolingot is no exception. There are three notable aspects of this "dark side of sedentarization" worth highlighting: a massive increase in living expenses; a greater prevalence of local brews and related issues such as alcoholism and domestic violence; and the emergence of a poor class.

First, the observation shared by almost every Chemolingot resident that town life is expensive is immediately evident. Pastoral life in the bush generates virtually no costs: herders get free water from wells, and they can milk their animals which, in turn, sustain themselves by grazing. In Chemolingot, however, all major aspects of life – such as housing, food, or education – are subject to market economy. Hence, inhabitants must pay rent for their houses, they have to buy water as well as maize and sugar, and they also need to pay school or university fees. Finally, Chemolingot offers far more incentives for spending money than, say, pastoral life. There are bars, hotels, apparel stores, markets and many more places where residents can purchase goods and services for basic requirements – but for luxurious purposes, too.

¹⁴ In Swahili literally meaning wanderers, since the 18th century the word used to describe white people in eastern Africa.

Second, widespread availability of local brews, i.e., busaa and changaa, is a relatively new phenomenon correlating with sedentarization. There are two main causes contributing to this trend. On the one hand, women in Chemolingot are intent on earning money (see also chapter 4), and, with brewing being a “female job” in Pokot culture, often resort to this means of income which does not require specific qualifications or seed capital. Thus, a supply of alcohol emerges which, in turn, triggers demand – because, at the same time, people in Chemolingot are more well-off than they used to be. Many possess disposable income which they use for buying local brews. As a consequence, there is a growing incidence of domestic violence as well as other marital issues such as adultery or quarrels. More than half of the women I interviewed said that they consumed alcohol on a regular basis, and then would get into fights with their husbands or boyfriends. Violence among spouses caused by drunkenness is a regular topic that comes up in conversations around town, and I have witnessed several cases of injuries, such as black eyes or even broken legs. Importantly, the problem of alcohol abuse transcends class boundaries and is not limited to Chemolingot’s working poor. Yet, there are differences: while the latter stick to drinking (the more affordable) local brews and sometimes stay for hours at the local busaa and changaa places where beverages are brewed, sold, and consumed, members of the upper class much prefer bottled beer and wine. The latter are, of course, more expensive, and harder to come by, thus functioning as a signifier of taste and status and cultural capital respectively.

Third, and related to both points above, poverty is a growing social concern in Chemolingot. Being poor in the city is harder than in the bush. While pastoral nomads can rely on their relatives to provide support or gift food, there is often no such network available in sedentary society. Edwin (44), with whom I spoke at length about the effects of socio-economic change in East Pokot, expresses his concern about the interrelation between sedentarization and pauperization: “These days, you find poor people in centers like Chemolingot, Tungalbei, and Churo. People in remote

areas are better off. They have their livestock, and they don't have to be poor and unemployed." This problem is exacerbated by the ubiquitous necessity of cash money. Since cash is needed for most economic transactions in Chemolingot, destitute residents cannot get by simply by borrowing products and goods from neighbors.

3.1 Changing Economies and Stratification

The representation of widely shared, social notions of household prosperity via wealth rankings has been a tried-and-true method in geography and cultural anthropology for decades (see Grandin 1988). And yet it gets into challenging terrain in rapidly changing pastoral environments where established norms and life paths are under pressure (see also BurnSilver 2016); indicators of what constitutes material well-being tend to be both more variegated and contested. Nonetheless, as for the comparison between Chemolingot and Kadingding, establishing wealth rankings yields intriguing insights into how both communities conceptualize affluence and poverty respectively and how stratification has developed since the last inquiries by Bollig (1992a) and Österle (2007). In conducting both wealth rankings, I opted for an approach where participants reflected upon and generated relevant criteria of material well-being while sorting households into levels.

		Livestock	Occupation	Education	No. of HH
1	Indicators of rich households	Many cattle and goats	Husband and wife have good jobs	All children in school; pays school fees for many relatives	2
2	Indicators of Moderately Rich Households	Cattle and goats	Husband and wife have job	All children in school pays school fees for many relatives	3
3	indicators of better than average households	25+ goats	Stable job like soldier; or business like a duka	All children in school	9
4	indicators of "well-off" households	20 goats	Bigger business more than contracts	All children in school	7

5	indicators of a bit poor households	Few animals (goats)	Contracts	At least some children in school	12
6	indicators of poor households	Around 5 goats and no contract	Some small contracts but not goats		9
7	indicators of very poor households	No animals	No jobs		12

18 *Wealth Ranking Chemolingot*

I conducted the Chemolingot wealth ranking with six household heads (three men and three women) who were divided into two groups; I opted for gendered groups since women tend to say hardly anything in mixed group discussions). Interestingly, both groups had nearly the same outcome and participants possessed a clear-cut notion of what makes a household wealthy or poor. The exact meaning of quantifiers like “many” (as in “many cattle”), however, is notoriously hard to pin down. The assessment is always context-dependent. A person who lives in the middle of Chemolingot and has 20 goats is considered wealthier than a person who lives in a pastoral area and has 20 goats. When I asked for a clear definition of “many cattle”, after long hesitation the response I received was that “many cattle” refers to, approximately, over 20 animals, whereas “many goats” constitutes more than 50 animals.

Most importantly, with regard to notions of wealth in Chemolingot, money and the importance of holding a well-paid job respectively have entered the picture since Bollig (1992a) and Österle (2007). In fact, having a job is now considered more relevant than having animals since, in times of drought and/or socio-political unrest, cattle are a fragile commodity. As one interviewee puts it: “A job is better than animals. When drought comes all animals can die. But money you can put into the account and even when there is a drought, it will stay there”. In terms of the relative value of different jobs, permanent positions (e.g., ministerial official, teacher, physician) are cherished most, while being self-employed comes second and, unsurprisingly, contract work is least well regarded. Still, it should be noted that, as viewed by the participants, owning a major and successful business (such as a hotel with many rooms or a carrier

company with several trucks) does in fact “trump” the value of permanent employment.

Despite the tremendous importance of jobs and monetary income, animals are still valued by Chemolingot residents. They confer prestige and a certain social status upon their owners, and they are considered an important economic backup. The lingering social importance of owning livestock is nicely expressed in the following quote by one of my interviewees: “If you have a job and no animals, people will ask you ‘why don’t you have animals?’ You know we have a culture that you always should have animals even when you have a respectable job. It is a rule coming from our great great grandfathers.”

Yet, this view – according to which both categories “owning livestock” and “having a well-paying job” are necessary and jointly sufficient for being called rich in Chemolingot – is far from universally accepted around town. Most residents agree that a steady employment with a high income is sufficient for ascribing wealth and would readily subscribe to the following statement from another participant of my wealth-ranking group: “If someone is having a good job but no animals then he is not poor. The same is when the parents are poor but one of their children has a good job. Every parent wants a child like that.”

Viewed overall, the Chemolingot wealth ranking indicates that livestock ownership has decreased since prior analyses by Bollig (1992a) and Österle (2007) respectively while at the same time social stratification – conceived broadly as the “classification of people in terms of the social distribution of valued things and experiences” (Mills 1963: 305) – has increased. Specifically, the economic gap between Chemolingot residents has grown, with almost two-thirds of the relevant households in the ranking being described as “poor” and only a relative few belonging to either the middle class or the upper class. Importantly, this economic inequality and the resulting inequalities in terms of future prospects of one’s children, communal influence, social

status etc. were not conceived as a sociopolitical ill, i.e., an injustice in need of remedy.

Compared to Chemolingot's multifaceted wealth ranking, that of Kadinding turned out to be rather unidimensional. There, I conducted the wealth ranking with six household heads who ranked all households in the survey. The group found this to be an easy task. They discussed all relevant households at length and how each ranked in comparison to the others. Unlike Chemolingot residents, their focus was on livestock exclusively; indicators such as education, employment, or whether one's children attended school were not discussed. In terms of measuring wealth, a rule of thumb emerged: being a rich person requires a mix of livestock, while a middle-class household may have only (but many) goats.

		Livestock	Occupation	Education	No. of HH
1	Indicators of rich households	30 cattle 200 goats 15 camels			6
2	Indicators of Moderately Rich Households	20 cattle 100 goats 2 camels			6
3	Indicators of better than average households	10 cattle 50 goats			9
4	Indicators of "well-off" households	5 cattle 50 goats			17
5	Indicators of a bit poor households	30 goats No cattle No camels			10
6	Indicators of poor households	15 goats No cattle No camels			15
7	Indicators of very poor households	No cattle Up to 5 goats No camels			12

19 Wealth Ranking Kadingding

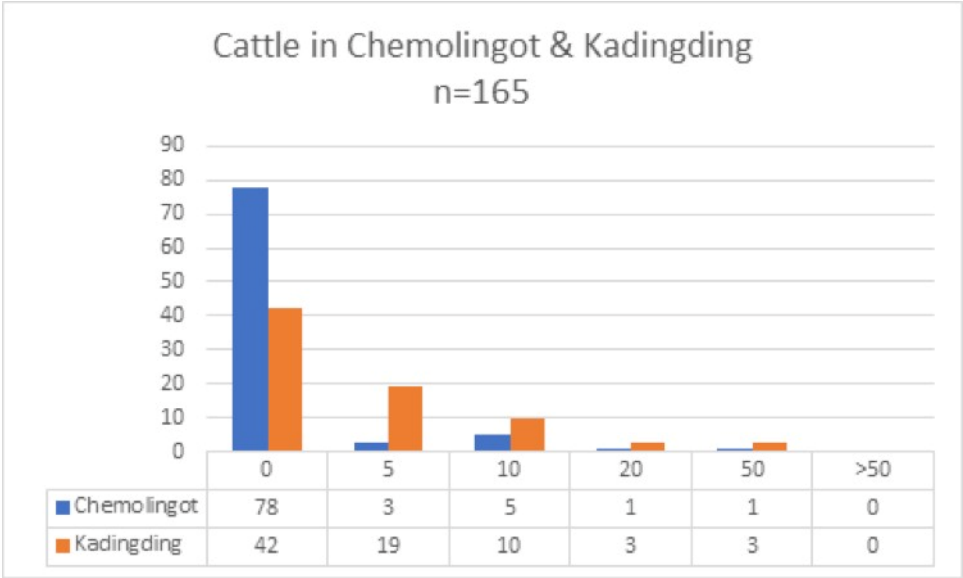
Considering Kadingding's wealth ranking, the first thing, apart from its unidimensionality, which meets eye is the discrete quantification of wealth criteria. Kadingding residents not only agree that, for instance, for a household to be moderately rich requires it having camels, goats, and cattle – but they also concur that there must be at least 20 cattle (as well as two camels and 200 goats). Livestock ownership plays a much more important role in Kadingding's social strata than in Chemolingot.

However, at the end of the wealth-ranking session in Kadingding, I asked the participants whether, theoretically speaking, one could be rich without having any livestock at all. The answer was a resounding "Yes!" by the entire group. If one had a lot of money – for instance, due to a well-paid job – they agreed, one would be rich even without owning cattle or goats. Nonetheless, this notion does not have any impact on people's daily life in Kadingding, and thus was not discussed further.

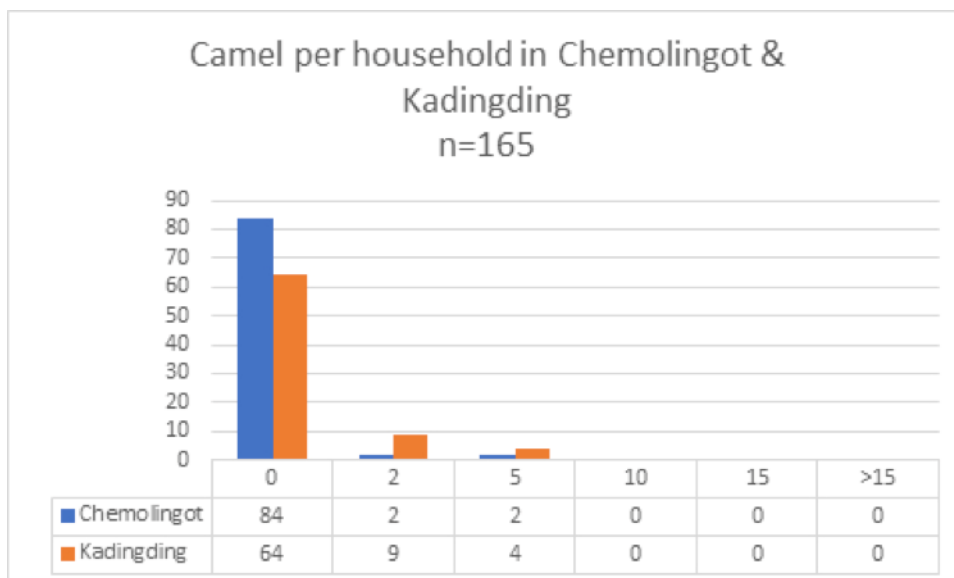
Finally, the wealth-ranking discussion also revealed a remarkable detail about how Pokot in Kadingding conceptualize household prosperity and how they demarcate this notion. Being asked whether a wife’s brewing business would make a family richer or poorer, the group replied that this case did not apply to the ranking in question. The money from the brewing business, they told me, belonged to the wife and not to her husband.

Livestock

The wealth ranking’s outcomes are reflected in the survey, too. Households in Chemolingot have significantly fewer livestock than in Kadingding. In the latter settlement all households possess animals whereas in the former only 73.3% do, and more than a quarter (26.7%) have no livestock whatsoever.

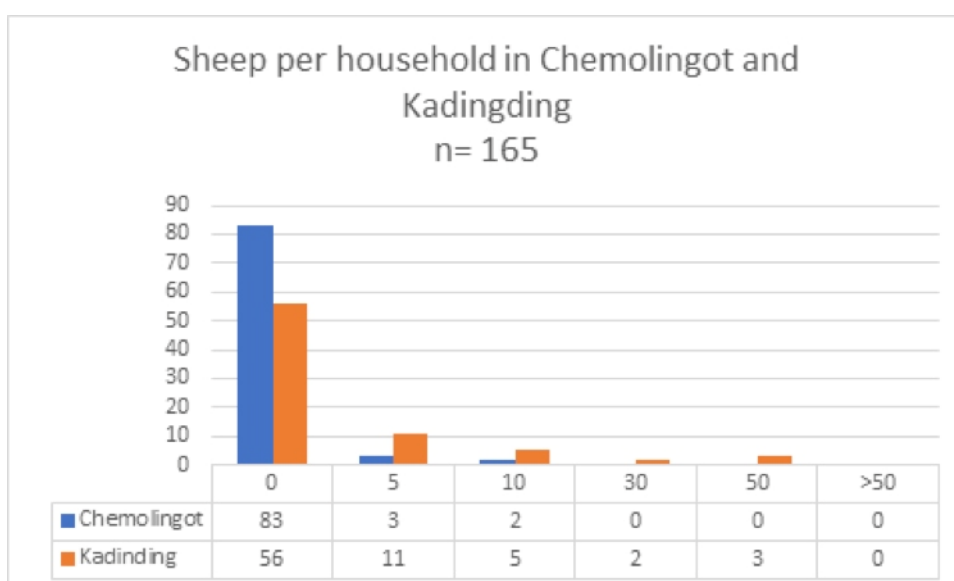


20 Cattle per Household in Chemolingot and Kadingding

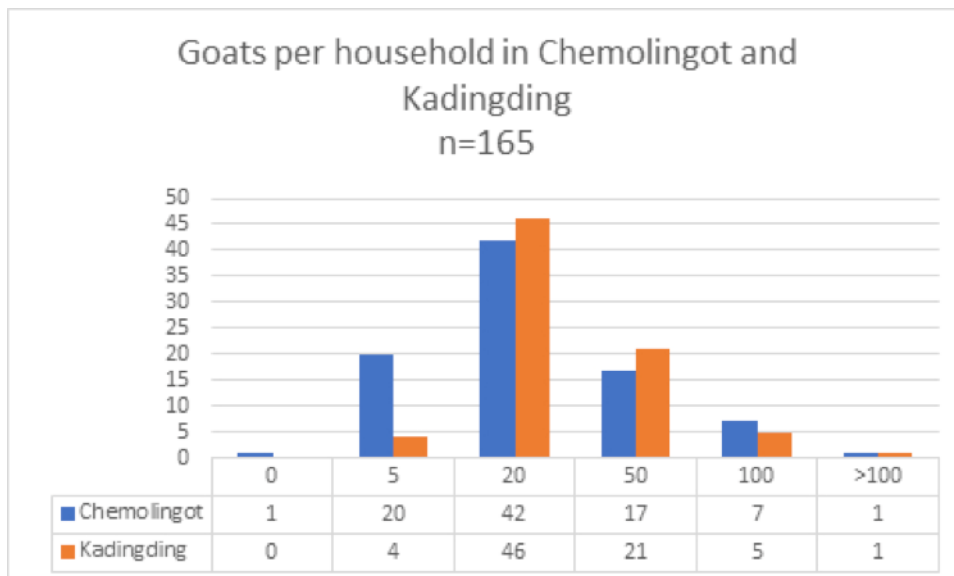


21 Camels per Household in Chemolingot and Kadingding

Taking a closer look at the livestock distribution reveals that Chemolingot residents primarily keep goats; a few wealthy households also own cattle and camels, but these are kept by pastoral relatives in other regions more suitable for grazing. By contrast, in Kadingding every household owns goats, and more than half own cattle too. Sheep and camels are found in only a few households in both regions, and only in small numbers.



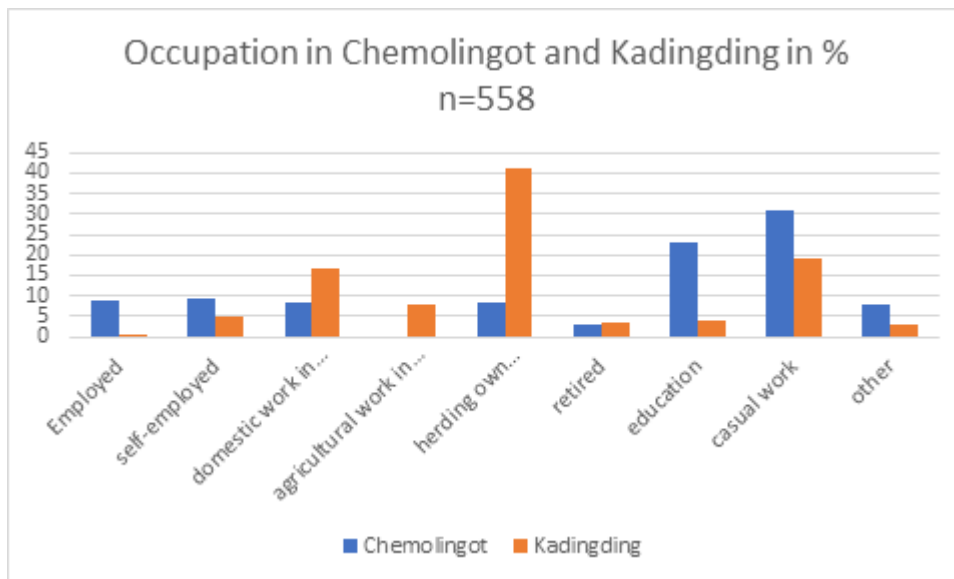
22 Sheep per Household in Chemolingot and Kadingding



23 Goats per Household in Chemolingot and Kadingding

Casual Work

The massively increased importance of jobs and income for the subjective notion of wealth, well-being, and status, which has emerged from Chemolingot's wealth ranking, can be found in social reality too – although, harking back to Berger & Luckman's (1966, 147) famous quote that society consists in the congruence and interconnection between “objective facticity and subjective meaning” to the effect that subjective valuations and intentions become spatiotemporal facts by a process of externalization this can hardly be too surprising. Therefore, in Chemolingot almost 20% of the survey's respondents are permanently employed (mostly in government jobs as teachers, administration officials, nurses, soldiers, or police personnel) or self-employed and have their own business, for example, a small restaurant (*hoteli*) or a kiosk for daily shopping (*duka*). Dukas and hotelis are usually very small and simple, in houses made of corrugated iron (for a more detailed description, see chapter 4). In Kadingding, the same economic group constitutes only 5% of the population.

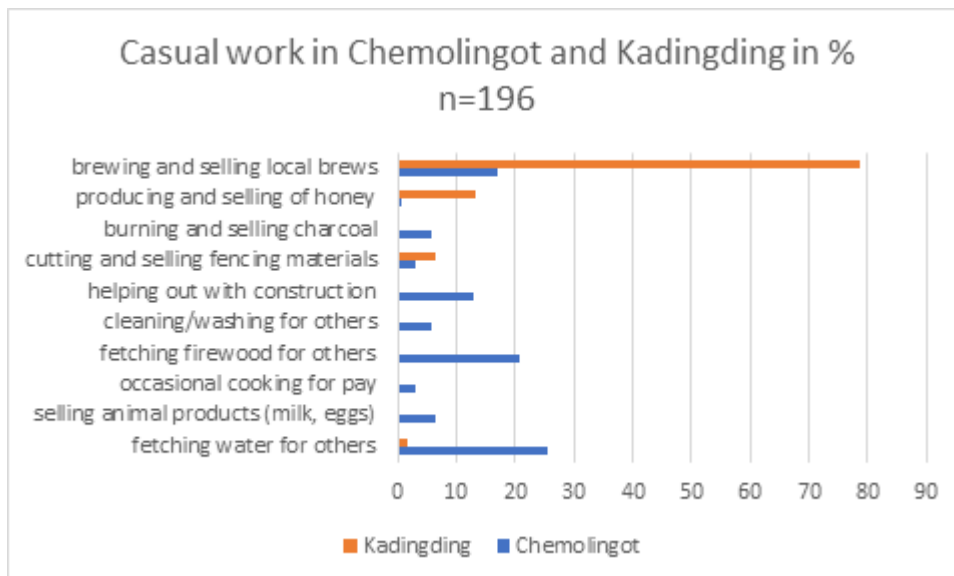


24 Occupation in Chemolingot and Kadingding

Regional differences in the importance of money and employment are also measurable in terms of household furnishings and material belongings: 50 households in Chemolingot have a radio, 30 possess a sofa set, 57 (i.e., almost 50%) own a Western-style bed. This also illustrates the importance of money in Chemolingot because these items can also only be bought with cash. In Kadingding, on the other hand, 45% of the households possess no larger objects whatsoever. Ten households have a bicycle, but only two own a Western-style bed and no one owns a sofa.

The largest share of jobs consists of casual work (in total, it constitutes an even larger share than herding): 30% of all respondents in Chemolingot report regular income from casual work, and in Kadingding no less than 20% of our respondents did so. Casual work is a growth sector in both areas. Though, while in Chemolingot, herding is now only a fringe occupation (8%),¹⁵ in Kadingding 41% of our respondents are still occupied with herding.

¹⁵ Goats, by far the most common livestock species in Chemolingot, are usually simply left to graze without supervision. Therefore, very few people who own goats, even large numbers, would call themselves herders.

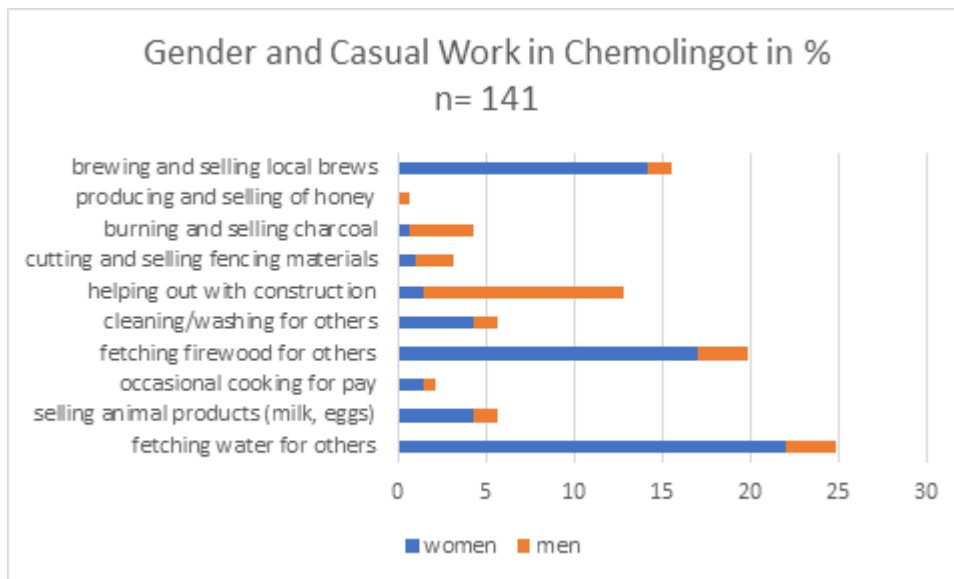


25 *Casual Work in Chemolingot and Kadingding*

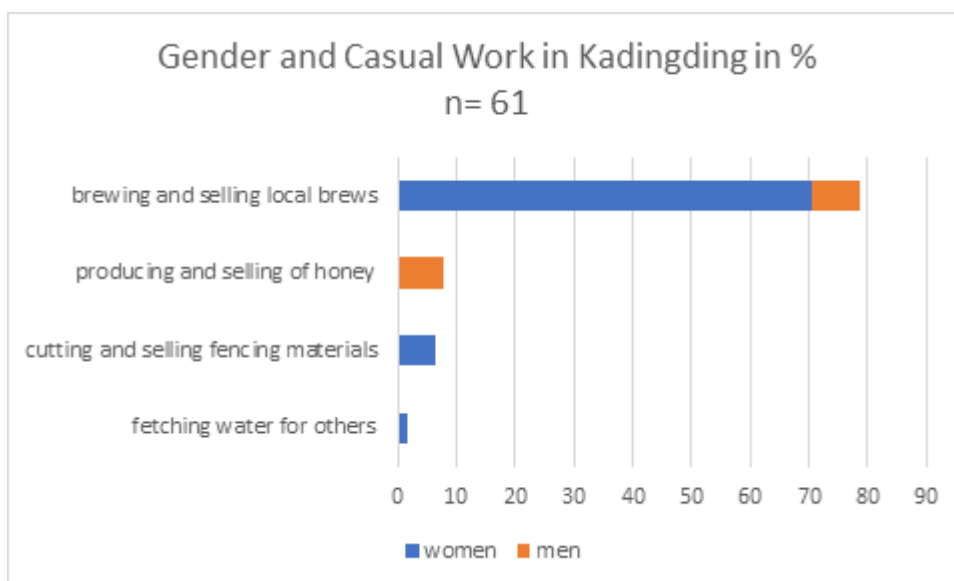
Prevalent types of casual work vary from region to region. In Chemolingot, the segment is highly diversified, comprising services as different as fetching water or firewood, construction work, selling charcoal or animal produce. In Kadingding there are four kinds of casual work in total: the largest share consists of brewing (79%), followed by the production of honey, the selling of fencing material, and the fetching of water. Our survey indicates a mean income per casual work activity of 473.31 KSH per week.

Analyzing the gender distribution reveals that in both areas casual work is primarily women’s work:

Women do almost three-quarters (73.76%) of the casual work in Chemolingot and Kadingding. In both areas the gender distribution is remarkably similar although in Kadingding the relevant proportion of women is even greater.



26 Gender and Casual Work in Chemolingot and Kadingding



27 Gender and Casual Work in Chemolingot

Noticeably, in both areas casual work related to the production of honey is the only activity that is exclusively male. Women, on the other hand, primarily provide services such as fetching water or collecting firewood and, of course, brewing, which is still deemed a feminine type of work. Nonetheless, there are more and more men who are either very poor or have few worries about violating social norms, and who thus join the brewers' business sector.

3.1.1 Economic Strategies

Of course, the Pokot themselves have animated discussions on the phenomena of stratification, the dwindling numbers of livestock, and the growing demand for cash, too. Specifically, they deliberate about the various “strategies” pursued by Chemolingot’s and Kadingding’s residents in dealing with the changing economic environment and its challenges; to better grasp this intra-social perspective, it is vital to take a closer look at these strategies, how they manifest agency, and how the Pokot themselves conceive of them.

Taking the residents’ internal viewpoint into account, we can distinguish between strategies pursued by: (1) young adults, (2) women, (3) the poor, and (4) the rich. Members of all these groups have a variety of well-established paths at their disposal, many of which are overlapping; yet there are also those who search for their niche and seek to realize new ideas.

Young Adult Strategies

As I described before, there is a small but well-educated sub-group of college graduates who live in town and are between jobs. They are constantly on the lookout for either NGO contract work, project funding by national or international institutions or a permanent position on an administrative post. Consequently, much of their strategy revolves around networking, gathering information on funding opportunities and pitching ideas for new projects. Since I have already delved into this issue extensively, I will not go into any further detail.

However, on occasion there is someone from this small crowd who is trying out a novel approach, such as developing the area of East Pokot touristically. The modification of Pokot cultural identity via establishing a tourism sector, which is still in its infancy, is spearheaded by Blue. Using his excellent contact network, he organizes transportation by chartering helicopters and facilitates travel for white tourists to

East Pokot. For a considerable fee, he organizes the performance of local rituals or dances too.

Early on and during an exploratory trip for a newly founded NGO, Blue also brought along a team of documentary movie makers to film a male circumcision ritual, which – or so it was planned – they would later sell to National Geographic’s documentary channel. In preparation, he had made a cash deal of no less than 20,000 KSh with the local elders. Despite extensive preparation, the white guests did not appreciate the ritual and left disappointed. They were appalled that the leaders of the circumcision group, the boys who were last circumcised and now instructing the initiands, were wearing Western clothing rather than traditional garb. They felt that they could not sell this kind of film because it was not “traditional” enough.

For Blue and the socio-economic strategy of identity commodification, this outcome held an important lesson; he commented: “for business (i.e., the staging and marketing of rituals for touristic purposes, A.B.) people have to stay in old clothes. *Wazungu* (Swahili for white people) don’t like to see people in modern clothes.” That is why, these days, he prefers to arrange rituals beforehand, especially for white groups, to ensure that everyone wears traditional clothes and that everything is done the way that meets the guests’ preconceived notions of Pokot culture.

The impact of the touristic monetization of Pokot rituals has been immediate and profound – as I found out myself not long afterwards. When I went to a circumcision ritual in another area two weeks after the incident with the film team, the local elders also expected money from me. Specifically, they wanted the same amount as in the previous case, even though I was only one person rather than a group of eleven. Explaining that I was a researcher and invited by the families involved in the ritual, who had children in the group of the circumcised, was as fruitless as my sincere confirmation that I sought no monetary gain from participating in the event. The elders’

desire to make money off the ritual proved so great that I was refused entry until I had paid 2,500 KSh.

Yet, this kind of business acumen – i.e., the monetization of rituals as well as their artificial staging in accordance with touristic purposes – remains controversial throughout the region. Upon hearing of the elders' new admission fee, the head of the homestead where the ritual took place as well as other guests were outraged and considered this behavior deeply inappropriate. Even Blue admitted that this kind of tourism might create a flawed impression of wazungu and the economic potential of tourism. "People might start to think that all wazungu are rich and only throw money around," he said.

Finally, those Pokot youths who do not belong to the small cadre of the college-educated and hence are not on the lookout for NGO or government positions usually pursue work as "herders for hire." They tend to cattle on pastures farther away from their homesteads. While doing so, many of them also partake in livestock raiding. As Greiner (2011, 2013) discusses extensively, the latter activities have changed drastically in the last decades, and these days cattle rustling is often a highly dangerous endeavor fought with modern weaponry, and highly politicized by local statesmen along ethnic conflict lines.¹⁶

Women's Strategies

The primary female strategy for tackling the economic challenges posed by the changing pastoral environment is – as basically everyone in East Pokot concurs – to start a brewing business. Doing so offers a degree of monetary independence, and with the rapid growth of the cash economy there is an ever-growing demand too. I will analyze these women's strategies in detail in chapter 5.

¹⁶ This issue, by itself, is overly complex and deserving of a detailed treatment that would go beyond the scope of this inquiry. Thus, I will not delve into it any further at this point; see, for instance, Greiner (2011, 2013) and Bollig & Österle (2008).

In addition, and as discussed in extenso above, women specifically occupy the casual work sector to acquire cash, engaging in service activities such as fetching water or firewood. Beside these job-based approaches towards dealing with cash-flow scarcities, however, there is another entire area of resource mobilization and communal self-help pursued by both poor and rich residents alike: fundraising and merry-go-rounds. In the following, I shall detail these approaches for both social strata, focusing on both similarities and differences in implementation and social function.

Strategies of the Poor

Resource and community mobilization via fundraising is, in fact, an approach with long-established roots in Pokot society. It precedes corresponding initiatives by NGOs and state agencies and harks back to the notion of "stock friendships" where cattle are circulated among persons without close familial ties to reify norms of generalized reciprocity and, thereby, mitigate economic uncertainties (see e.g. Schneider 1953, Bollig 1993, 1997, 1998, Österle 2007).

Broadly speaking, a stock friendship is a relationship, usually permanent, ritually instituted or affirmed, between adult men who exchange or entrust livestock to each other for care. In cases of need, livestock may be claimed or reclaimed. The decisive factor here is to have as many partners as possible widely scattered and outside one's own group, who, for example, may be less affected by droughts. As Grätz, Meier, and Pelican (2004) demonstrate, such arrangements are hardly limited to East Pokot but rather can be found throughout East Africa; for instance, in Uganda (see Iyer 2021). Stock friendships are special among social institutions, however, insofar as they integrate instrumental concerns (the minimization of economic risk) with moral considerations (the obligation to lend support in case of need without immediate compensation). In terms of ethical theory, they are both "self-regarding" and "other-regarding" (see Neblett 1969). The notion of "friendship" should not be taken too much at face value in this context, though. Grätz, Meier, and Pelican (2004: 20) argue

that by themselves these networks do not imply exceptionally close emotional and personal ties, which is why they dub them “insurance partnerships” (my translation). Importantly, the relevant networks are a function of everyone’s personal acquaintances, thus providing “a way for an individual herder to have a network of persons unique to him and on whom he could depend” (Iyer 2021: 15) Thus, they expand the person’s web of blood relatives via a form of “fictive kinship” (ibid).

In this sense, and following the paths established by stock friendships, women in Chemolingot and Kadingding start fundraisers,¹⁷ for instance, when a death in the family (and the costly funeral) or a family member’s severe sickness are straining a household’s financial situation; in addition, they pursue this approach when school fees are piling up and need to be paid. Importantly, fundraising is a common event in both areas: virtually everyone engages in it, and often. Thus, it is not at all associated with shame or social stigma. During such events, organizers approach all community members, telling them about the fundraisers’ cause, and meticulously documenting the amounts donated. Usually, residents do not need much convincing to get involved and are willing to contribute. They expect, and rightly so, to receive the same response should it be their turn to ask their community’s support. The prevalence of fundraising events indicates the existence of social capital in the sense of Putnam (2000), i.e. as being constituted by informal social networks of trust and cooperation that compensate for lacking state structures.

A second strategy of the poor is that of merry-go-rounds. In contrast to fundraisers, this microfinancing institution (often denoted by the Swahili word “chama” throughout Kenya) – where close-knit participants contribute equal sums on a regular basis and the full sum is paid out to one of the members on each rotation – is not tied to specific causes or occasions. Recipients are free to decide what to with the

¹⁷ It is important to note that there is a fundamental difference between stock friendship and fundraising (also called harambee in East Africa). While in stock friendships livestock are lent, in fundraisings money is given. In both cases, however, reciprocal behavior is expected from the recipient.

payout once it is their turn. Since the 2000s, this instrument, which belongs to the category of “Informal Financial Institutions” (Adede 2007: ix), has been promoted by both international NGOs and the Kenyan government, e.g., via the 2007 Microfinance Bill, which sought to provide a regulatory and legal framework for such practices. In Chemolingot and Kadingding, payouts are often used to either purchase agricultural goods and equipment or, more commonly these days, domestic appliances.

Merry-go-rounds, especially those among the poorer strata of Pokot society, are usually organized by women’s groups and they have a strongly gendered connotation. One male interviewee from Kadingding, whose wife is a regular participant, recalls with a mixture of amusement and condescension:

Merry-go-rounds are quite common. (...) Mostly women do it. There was a time here when men did this too, but they have more important business to do. (...) They don’t have time for small household things. In a merry-go-round, all group members meet each week. They give for example 100 Ksh and the total amount goes to one group member; the following week the same happens but the amount of money goes to another woman. In KDD they meet every Sunday at the trees in front of the shop. They use it mostly to buy cloth and utensils. It is sometimes very surprising. You come home and everything is new. (David 02.02.2011).

As suggested above, the establishment of merry-go-rounds and their intricate connections with women’s groups harks back to NGO activities, as related by Leya:

When Kenya Freedom from Hunger came (in the early 1990s, A.B.) they encouraged us to start a group and work together. In the beginning it was a mixed group, but men are lazy, and we separated since nothing happened. (...) After a while we started a petrol-selling business. But our budget was wrong and there was not enough demand in 1995. (...) After this we did small things like merry-go-rounds. These groups are very good since they benefit you and your family (Leya 17.03.2011).

Both strategies – fundraising and merry-go-rounds – provide women with a measure of economic safety and, hence, independence. The admittedly sparse yet insightful literature on microfinancing instruments in Kenya (Johson 2004, Adede 2007, Bostedt

2021) shows why this is the case: both financing procedures are "short, simple, cheap, collateral requirement is low and social ties are a strong enforcement mechanism", thus ensuring a low default rate. (Adede 2007, 25). Specifically, they offer financial alternatives to those who do not have immediate and easy access to formal bank loans and are wary of the prohibitive rates of money-lenders.

However, this kind of financial autonomy of women in both Chemolingot and Kadingding is troubling to some male residents, who fear for the established social order and the decline of men's social standing. "Women who have money quarrel and divorce," Leonard laments:

There are a lot of divorces. And then they built their own house near the brewing places. Women even buy their own goats. And they even beat men. There is no respect, only shame. My neighbor was once rich, but now he is weak. His wife treats him like he is a visitor. It is not good for a woman to be rich (Leonard: 02.02.2011).

Strategies of the Rich

Interestingly, Leonard's asinine polemics against allegedly new-rich women notwithstanding, the truly well-off households in Chemolingot and Kadingding often employ remarkably similar strategies, but on another level – and with a different purpose. While the poor set up fundraisers and merry-go-rounds to make ends meet and, on occasion, improve their household equipment, the rich often use resource mobilization within their own peer group to expand each other's socio-economic position in the community. Thus, the establishment and maintenance of class-based communities becomes about relations of power and the representation of status.

Chemolingot's prime example of an elite network is the local Community-Based Organisation (CBO) Kiletat, which maintains close ties to AIC. Co-founder Susan Kipuru, who is an active member of Chemolingot's social life, lives in Village Karuwen, but is active a lot in the center where most of her children go to school. Having studied adult education in Nairobi via a stipend from Kenya Freedom for Hunger and

German AgroAid, she returned to Chemolingot to buy a store and a rental house there. Then, five years ago, she and twenty other community members, who mostly work outside of Chemolingot, founded Kiletat as a non-profit and non-governmental organization in accordance with the guidelines provided by Kenya's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. Originally, Susan and her partners established Kiletat to facilitate adequate local nursery and elementary schooling since, in her own words, "conditions at the state schools were too bad and there were too few trained teachers which made a real school education simply not possible." Kiletat's elementary school is now in its fourth year and thriving.

Importantly, however, these days Kiletat is also responsible for managing the local borehole at the behest of the Ministry of Water and providing microfinancing for its members. Susan holds executive responsibility for the borehole, which means, among other things, that she directs two male employees who are operating the borehole and pays for electricity with the revenue from water sales.

Kiletat meets every second Sunday of the month after the Full Gospel Church service at the home of one of the members, who then cooks (or has their employees cook) an opulent meal. All members belong to the local elite and are mostly couples who use these gatherings to trade gossip, exchange business-relevant information, and cultivate their close social ties.

I had the opportunity to attend several Kiletat meetings. One particularly memorable gathering was held in one of the back Rental Houses in Chemolingot Center, which are located right behind the stores. These houses look sparse and small inside, but upon entering, the impression changes immediately. The typical furnishings of a wealthy household are all there: wooden wardrobe, numerous wooden sofa sets, coffee table, some ceramic dishes and, of course, tablecloths and posters of Jesus on the walls. The get-together of about a dozen persons commenced with a stately meal. Three women (casual workers by all accounts) had prepared potatoes with carrots,

goat seasoned in tomato sauce, sautéed offal, ugali and sukuma wiki, and for dessert fresh watermelon. Being a member of Kiletat requires not only the resources to provide a larger crowd with meals that are far above the average East Pokot fare, but also a certain cultural knowledge about being a good host.

Of course, Kiletat is by no means the only influential social club in and around Chemolingot. For instance, Susan alone is a member of two further women's associations, the Siyoyowio Women Group and the Oron Women Group (both groups have also merry-go-rounds with quite high monthly saving rates; Susan bought with her last payout a new water tank that can supply her whole house and family). But what makes Kiletat stand out is the unique combination of their funding authority for education, their control over critical water resources, and the economic and social resources that all members bring to the table. It is no overstatement, then, to say that Kiletat is a local power nexus that controls much of Chemolingot's development.

As mentioned above, Chemolingot's wealthy elite also make ample use of fundraising events as a means of resource mobilization. Leonard and Tiliot extensively reported about fundraisers they organized or participated in. Recently, for instance, the owner of Chemolingot's biggest hotel and restaurant (as well as members of Kiletat) asked for financial help to finish the roof of their private stone house; and one of Chemolingot's most successful businessman asked for money to buy a new larger car for transportation services. In the latter case, 290,000 KSh was raised; the fundraiser himself "donated" 50,000 KSh and his family contributed 100,000 KSh, with the rest coming from guests. Leonard explained that it was necessary for the person seeking monetary support to throw in a larger amount themselves to demonstrate the earnestness of their intent. On this larger scale, merry-go-rounds function as private loan systems for a privileged elite. Everyone with a certain socio-economic standing is required to participate; and it is difficult and frowned upon to withdraw from one's obligations. Around Christmas, I was invited to a fundraiser myself. The family of Hotelis Katupen wanted to build a new family house and, therefore, asked for do-

nations. During my attendance, my assistant was required to participate in the fundraising committee, which implied giving money, too.

Fundraising by wealthy households meets with widespread criticism throughout Pokot society, however. As reported by Leonard and Tilliot, during a fundraiser they helped set up, an altercation occurred. An older, drunken man came by and shouted (in Pokot) "You rich people always help only yourselves!" The attendants tried to silence the man, but he kept shouting. Susan, who works for World Vision, expressed this concern more eloquently and said that she supported fundraising for school fees or funerals, but not if someone wants to build a new house or open a new business. These goals, she objected, should be financed by the people themselves, and they ought not to force others to participate. Despite much resentment on the part of the less wealthy, this strategy of resource mobilization is employed on a regular basis. Interestingly, this disapproval contradicts the above-mentioned sentiment from the wealth rankings according to which Pokot do not find the growing stratification of society ethically worrisome or begrudge others their wealth. Concerns about social injustice that are implicit in the critique of elite fundraising are not (yet) reflected at a more general level.

Private Land

Finally, another economic strategy that falls into the domain of the elite exclusively concerns the purchasing and development of plots in Chemolingot. Although all land in East Pokot is communal land (commonly known as "trust land") and does not belong to private individuals but to the region qua administrative unit, it is possible to rent smaller plots from the regional administration in local centers. To do this, an application must be made to the Ministry of County Council in Kabarnet and a rent is paid annually.

One interviewee by name of Kamama told me that owning plots is a key effort by local elites to drive development. Many consider the region as underdeveloped and

owning plots as a major step towards development: “Having a plot in Chemolingot is like having a shamba in Churo”.¹⁸ In fact, there even exists a development plan for Chemolingot, though some of the details are sketchy. A market is to be established and the center is also to be redesigned. The location for the market has already been selected (West of the main shopping street) and other permanent stores and the like are to be built around it. Store stalls in the market can then be rented, or the sellers pay a regular smaller amount to the Ministry (as is e.g., already the case in Nginyang and Tangulbei). Accordingly, many residents of Chemolingot have a great interest in acquiring a plot near the planned market, in order to be able to build houses there, in which stores or tenants can be accommodated. However, not many residents know about the relevant procedures, deadlines, dates, and requirements (my assistant, for example, was not aware of these points, but she still wanted to try to get a plot) due to there being no official notices. Rather, such information always remains among the elites and does not permeate to outside groups.

The contentiousness of the issue of plot allocation became evident when, during the time of our survey, plots that had already been allotted were re-measured by government personnel to ensure that no resident had taken more space than was allowed. This surveying event illustrates the limits of intra-elite loyalties. The incident was almost tumultuous: several people (mainly women, but some men too) surrounded the surveyors, commented loudly on everything, and also seemed to argue amongst themselves. They fought over areas that had already been assigned but were yet undeveloped. Sometimes, disagreements even turned into violence when some felt that they had been cheated of some of their plot areas. Especially women acted very aggressively and seemed ready to physically fight for every inch of their

¹⁸ Churo is the only region in East Pokot that is genuinely suitable for agriculture due to its higher altitude. It was also the first place where aspirations for private ownership came into fruition. Some members of the local elite own very large plots of land there as do several wealthy households from Chemolingot. They use agricultural equipment such as tractors and plows for tilling and harvesting the fields (Greiner 2013, Greiner & Mwaka 2016).

plots. Later, I learned that many women were not the owners themselves, but were present on behalf of their husbands, most of whom were unable to be there because of their government jobs as District Commissioners. However, two of my informants own plots in Chemolingot and many women say they would like to buy land.

3.1.3 The Impact of Stratification

The comprehensive overview of the arenas of socio-economic change, which I have established in the previous sections, now provides a clear picture: East Pokot's economy is changing – and dramatically so. The pastoral mode of livelihood is in decline while wage labor is on the rise. Especially for women, casual work plays an important role in making ends meet. This development entails a growing stratification with notable differences between rich and poor – in terms of available resources, networks, preferences, and modes of consumption as well as economic strategies – of which everyone is well aware. In purely descriptive terms, Pokot society is divided into a small group of well-educated wealthy individuals and a large group of working poor, and there barely exists a middle class worth mentioning.

Yet, this division does not (yet) translate into actualized social tensions between “haves” and “have-nots”. One reason may be the fact that even in post-pastoral times people stick within their class to tried and true problem-solving mechanisms that, for instance, are based on the traditional notion of stock friendships and probably kinship as well. All corresponding strategies aim to create lasting interlinking connections between individuals and groups which, in turn, generate mutual trust and social capital. It is these networks that help the Pokot navigate through the perils of social change. Just as is the case with stock friendships, merry-go-rounds and fundraising networks are based on the principle that participants are continuously in each other's debt and, hence, can count on the support of their neighbors, friends, and acquaintances.

At the same time, though, due to growing stratification the rich have an entirely different set of means and methods at their disposal, so they can scale up merry-go-rounds, fundraising and comparable endeavors much more. Consequently, they can use them to finance costly, even luxurious projects such as houses, hotels, expensive cars, or motorbikes – and they amass business capital much more easily, too.

As became evident, e.g., in the discussion on communal land rights and plot acquisition, elites use their advantage in terms of administrative, political, and economic knowledge to further increase their margin. Thus, while the poor and the lower middle class (insofar as it exists) require all available resources to maintain their position in society the elite utilize their resource surplus to improve theirs constantly.

Conclusion

Socio-ecological change affects the socio-economic structure in the region. On the one hand, there is a massive stratification of sedentary society marked by a stark division between a small elite of the rich and a large class of the working poor. Despite vast differences between those two groups not only in terms of material resources and connections to political and economic stakeholders but also regarding their preferences in food, beverages or furnishings, there are striking similarities. Specifically, both utilize strategies of community-based social-capital mobilization, such as fundraisings or merry-go-rounds, which, in turn, hark back to long-established notions of stock friendship that are deeply ingrained in Pokot culture. It is these networks of reciprocal trust and obligation, founded in the non-subsistence-oriented exchange of goods or money respectively, that (still) help the Pokot navigate through social change. And yet, as mentioned in the sections above, the difference between those who are affluent and those who barely scrape by becomes evident once again if one considers the purposes to which such similar strategies are directed. While the wealthy expand their position, the poor and vulnerable aim for survival.

On the other hand, there is a vastly increased diversity of life paths, especially for women. These include configurations such as female-headed households and quasi-female-headed households as well as households where women are the main breadwinners. In addition, sedentary life not only offers income opportunities for women, in terms of casual work and also via self-employment or as government employees, but also the possibility of attaining stations of social or economic power. These include leadership positions in civil-society organizations as well as functional and line-management responsibilities, for instance in the management of Chemolingot's local borehole.

This leads us to the third essential insight: the female face of change and sedentarization. During the developments summarized above, women are compelled to take up (greater) responsibility for the economic viability of their households on their own. Without hyperbole, it is women who are the shapers and beneficiaries of change and who seem better prepared to use newly emerging economic opportunities to their advantage. This fact does not only lead to a boost in their self-confidence, to more autonomy and to re-definition of what it is to be a Pokot woman in post-pastoral times. There is also backlash from men who fear not only for their social status and power but also for the long-established social structures – and there are conflicts within relationships and a growing need to renegotiate the distribution of rights and resources, for instance in relation to cattle ownership.

To better understand the female nature of social change and why women specifically seem to be on the winning side of sedentarization, it is imperative to take a closer look at the history of Pokot gender relations, to thoroughly analyze what it means to be a working woman in Pokot society, and, finally, to ascertain the impact of the above-mentioned trends on partnership and marriage. I will undertake these endeavors in the following chapters.

Chapter 4: A Socio-Historical Analysis of Gender Relations in East Pokot (1903-2012)

This chapter analyzes the historical events and processes that have produced contemporary relations between men and women in East Pokot. It focuses on the colonial and post-colonial era since there is hardly any information on the pre-colonial period. I will start with a review of scholarly work on gender and the relation between men and women which depicts Pokot society as patriarchal. The chapter's main part reconstructs colonial politics and development strategies in East Pokot after independence, thereby defoliating a complex layer of socio-political interventions and strategies of resistance and adaptation, as well as internal and external power struggles. I describe a manifold journey which highlights how a complementary gender system transformed into a hierarchical system under colonial control whose hegemony is partly questioned after independence. This chapter narrates the story of how Pokot men were perceived as resistant to change during colonial times, while women turned into agents of change in post-colonial times.

Historical reconstructions in oral cultures without classical history books require a mix of methods and sources. So also in this case: for the pre-colonial period, I rely primarily on travelogues (Höhnel 1894), texts by colonial officials (Beech 1911, Barton 1921), and ethnographies in West Pokot (Peristiany 1951, 1954; Schneider 1953, 1957, 1959; Edgerton 1964, 1971; Conant 1965, 1974, Meyerhoff 1981; Bianco 1991, 1996; Dietz 1987, 1993) and ethnographies in East Pokot (Muir 1985; Bollig 1992, 1995, 2000, 2006; Österle 2007; Greiner 2013, 2016, 2020; Vehrs 2022). In April 2011, I reviewed sources at the National Archives in Nairobi. In June 2011, I studied sources at the District Archives in Kabarnet as well as the archives of the various Ministries and District Offices in Chemolingot. World Vision and Acted opened their archives to me in Nairobi to study the development programs that existed in East Pokot in July 2011. Since colonial programs in East Pokot were not as pronounced as in other parts of

East Africa, I conducted a literature review on the impact of colonialism on gender dynamics among pastoral nomads. Here, the work of Dorothy Hodgson among the Maasai (1999, 2001) was particularly influential. For the postcolonial period, I took an oral-history approach and spoke with contemporary witnesses in East Pokot.

4.1 Historical Representation of the Relationship between Pokot Men and Women

The relationship between Pokot men and women has hardly been in the focus in scholarly work. Two notable exceptions are Elizabeth Meyerhoff's PhD-dissertation (completed in 1981) on "The Socio-Economic and Ritual Roles of Pokot Women" as well as Kjartan Jónsson's (2006)¹⁹ published PhD dissertation on "Pokot masculinity: The Role of Rituals in Forming Men". Meyerhoff seeks to determine the status and position of women in Pokot society by analyzing their property rights, their social relationships with men as wives, daughters and mothers, and their ritual roles.²⁰ Jónsson's study is located within the realm of masculinity studies. His main concern is to understand what constitutes a Pokot man, and more specifically, the rituals a male member of Pokot society must perform to become a fully socially accepted man, and furthermore, how these rituals shape Pokot manhood and male identity. Jónsson is less interested in the relationship between men and women and does not elaborate much on women's role and duties during these various rituals. Nonetheless, he holds the hypothesis that Pokot society is male-dominated:

The Pokot culture is male centered [...]. Women live on men's terms and a good wife is the one who follows the Pokot tradition, is fruitful and gives birth to

¹⁹ The dissertation was published in 2006; however, research was conducted between 1982 and 1995 during Jónsson's time as a missionary in West Pokot. Jónsson 2006: 7–12

²⁰ Meyerhoff's approach is informed by Edwin Ardener's influential claim that women are underrepresented and quite often even absent in anthropological studies since they are a "muted group"; i.e., they have little ability to make themselves heard. Ardener argued that the "male bias" in anthropology is an analytical and a technical problem stemming from the fact that, in most societies, women fall outside the definitions of social systems made by men and thus tend to be invisible (and thus unreadable for anthropologists) Ardener 1975 [1968]. Meyerhoff aims at avoiding a mere record of the male or dominant model by focusing on women.

many sons, is subordinate to her husband and takes good care of the home. She does not quarrel with him and her life and conduct make him proud (Jónsson 2006: 270).

This depiction of a gender-hierarchical society can be found in nearly all publications on Pokot.²¹ Beech, a former District Commissioner of Baringo District (1909-1910), writes that “Women have no liberty, they must do as they are told”. He adds a quote from an elder from Kerüt to illustrate this assessment: “Woman is a property and must do as she is told and all the work” (Beech 1969 [1911]: 33). Schneider gives a similar account: “A woman may be referred to as a ‘cow’, denoting her economic value and she may be called a ‘boy’, indicating that her position is similar to a boy’s, as a laborer and especially a herder” (Schneider 1953: 233). One middle-aged man with three wives tells Edgerton and Conant, who conducted research in West Pokot in the 1960s and 1970s: “I do not want to be troubled by my wives. When they trouble me, I beat them. It is necessary because I rule them; they do not rule me” (Edgerton 1964). They are the first researchers to include women and their point of view in their publications, emphasizing especially the unequal division of labor: “Women, in fact, do almost all the work while men rest, converse, drink beer, discuss economic transactions, and give orders to women and children (Edgerton 1964: 413). By having both the male and the female perspective they conclude that the relationship between men and women is characterized by antagonism: “Women accept these [...], but not without resentment. They often complain that they are ‘treated like animals’ or ‘traded like cattle.’ There is an undercurrent of hostility equivalent to a long-standing armed truce” (Edgerton 1964: 413).²² Women perceive their situation as oppressed and powerless: “We cannot rule men; we can only hate them” (Edgerton 1964: 416).

²¹ All cited studies, besides of Bollig’s and Beech’s works, are based on data collected in West Pokot. Even though the two areas differ in many ways, this literature review represents the situation in East Pokot well as my own observations resemble those made in West Pokot.

²² Schneider also gives accounts of aggression between men and women. He recorded Pokot folktales where independent widows are ridiculed, and a sexually greedy woman is destroyed. He also retells a Pokot version of the Biblical creation story where women are depicted as the objects of hatred by being symbolized as snakes whom Gods enjoins men to kill (Schneider 1967: 286-288; 305; 307-309).

Meyerhoff states that the male perspective and the values held by men are predominant in Pokot society and that women have accepted them as their own ideals: “They [older women] teach young girls to be obedient and follow the patriarchal rules of society” (Meyerhoff 1981: 145).

On these accounts, Pokot men dominate virtually every domain of life: They control economic resources, they treat women as property, they control and rule women’s behavior, they devalue the work and lives of women, and they perceive themselves as superior to women. Pokot women seem economically peripheral and socially, politically, and culturally marginalized, and, although they recognize and resent their unequal relationship to men, they accept and perpetuate male values.

Quite astonishingly, most of the above cited works which assess the subordination of Pokot women include detailed descriptions of female activities, rights, and responsibilities – thereby indirectly challenging their own claims. As Schneider notes himself: “women are not nearly the pawns the men make them out to be. Men, it is true, talk of them as unimportant and women are ritually separated from men on important occasions and are required to perform the most menial tasks. Their destinies, however, are by no means entirely in men’s hands” (Schneider 1967: 284).

Indeed, studies on Pokot convey quite complex roles, rights and relations of women and men. Pokot women are not a homogeneous group. Women’s rights, roles, duties, and influences change over the life cycle and vary according to wealth, marital status, economic activities, and degree of sedentarization. Like that of men, women’s position is constantly changing. They gain increased respect, authority, and power with age. Older women have to be treated with respect by younger men and women and even by their husbands (Meyerhoff 1981: 84–88). Menopausal women are not restricted by pollution taboos (Meyerhoff 1981: 83) and are often asked for advice by younger women (Meyerhoff 1981: 134). As seen above, they play a central role in the

circumcision of girls and are responsible for preparing and teaching the female initiates for married life.

As married women, they have responsibilities regarding the household and livestock production.²³ The day after a wedding, the family of a woman's husband presents to her the cattle and goats she will be responsible for. She will milk these animals in the morning, and the milk shall feed her and her future children. She will be held responsible if there are any livestock missing in the evening. The calves and goat kids will later be inherited by her future sons. As a wife and mother, she is the center of a matrifocal house-property system (Schneider 1979; Hakansson 1989; Oboler 1994) which gives her certain rights over livestock and livestock production. Although most livestock in a family herd belong to the husband, a wife can object if she thinks her husband is mistreating the herd, or disagrees with his wish to sell. As Schneider pointedly notes: "Although men do not like to admit it, it seems that a man is unwise if he tries to dispose of any of his herd without at least discussing the matter with his wife" (Schneider 1953: 322).²⁴

Additionally, a woman can obtain stock as gifts from her husband, her father, brother, and father-in-law, and she may also obtain some of the calves produced by cows given in the bridewealth. She decides which sons will inherit which cattle (Schneider 1953: 321), which emphasizes the central role of the matrifocal unit for production and reproduction. Mothers influence the marriage negotiations of their sons and daughters. Although the public negotiation sessions are arranged by men, who control the marriage agreements, mothers have a strong say in who may be chosen to marry their children, especially their daughters. A bachelor will first approach a

²³ Schneider points out that in agricultural communities a woman can expect more help from her husband since he has few stock to watch. In pastoral areas all heavy work is done by women (Schneider 1953: 227).

²⁴ Whether he eventually follows her wishes is another matter. There are no further technical restrictions. A woman herself cannot, according to Schneider, sell her stock without discussing it with her husband (Schneider 1953: 321).

girl's mother and try to persuade her in his favor by giving her gifts or money. If he succeeds it is understood that she, in turn, will try to persuade her husband, thereby enhancing the bachelor's chances of marriage (Meyerhoff 1981: 41). A mother's influence over the negotiations of her son's marriage is not as strong as it is over the negotiations of her daughter's marriage. However, women often have a considerable influence over their husband's choice of daughter-in-law, by providing information about any girl in question. Out of all of her sons, a mother has the strongest influence over the marriage of her last-born. Because the last-born son inherits the largest portion of his mother's property, the bulk of the bridewealth payments are made from his mother's stock (Meyerhoff 1981: 42).

Through their children, both sons and daughters, mothers gain increased labor power for their household, and ensure security in old age. A mother will most likely move to one of her son's homesteads when she gets older, even when her husband is still alive (Meyerhoff 1981: 165). At her son's homestead she is treated with a lot of respect by her son, her daughter-in-law(s) and her grandchildren, where she is seen as a valued and experienced member of the homestead. She has economic and political influence over and through her sons and she might advise her daughters and daughters-in-law (Meyerhoff 1981: 166). Through motherhood and their close bonds to their children, women play a key role in shaping Pokot society by passing on their values and aspirations. In raising their sons and daughters, preparing them for their adult and married life, and their close relationship throughout adulthood, they are part of the production of masculinities and femininities.

Women's vital role in forming social relations and linking social groups is represented by the *lökötyö*, the mother's belt (Bianco 1991), a cowhide belt worn after giving birth. The belt is decorated with beads with patterns that represent the clan of her husband's family, the clan a woman's procreativity is supposed to support. The *lökötyö* thus bridges the gap between agnatic patrimony and maternal support in manifesting how women establish social relations between two families (as well as two

homesteads and two clans) through marriage and reproduce Pokot culture and society by giving birth.

Women exercise resistance to male disrespectful behavior toward them by ritual forms of collective female action through the kilapat (Edgerton, Conant 1964); and they can exercise spiritual and medical power as sorceresses, midwives, and herbal experts (Meyerhoff 1981; Bollig 1992a).

This rereading of the literature on Pokot presents manifold roles, rights, and activities women play and have. It shows how women exercise recognized ownership rights. It would be generalizing to say that only men control livestock. Women are central in the production of social relations as mothers, wives, and daughters. They influence various form of decision-making. They influence marriage negotiations. In sum, women possess economic, political, social, and cultural powers (Bollig 1992).

To understand the discrepancy between scholarly assessments that women are muted and powerless and the examples of female rights, activities, and responsibilities that these scholars offer in their own studies, I draw on the “myth of the patriarchal pastoralist” (Hodgson 2000), which assumes “that pastoral women are subordinate to pastoral men because of the (supposedly) inherently androcentric nature of pastoralism as a mode of production and an ideology: ‘pastoralists’ are men, and ‘pastoralism’ is an essentially patriarchal system” (Hodgson 2000, 1). There are several reasons which explain the existence of the ‘myth of the patriarchal pastoralist’: first, most of the researchers were men, as were most of their key informants. As a result, the researcher was mainly interested in the male point of view and the key informants presumed to know all essential aspects of a society without considering the female point of view. Secondly, most (earlier) scholars uncritically accepted the “male point of view” as reality, rather than ideology, and repeated and thereby reinforced these androcentric ideologies. And thirdly, most researchers expected to find a male-dominated society and were more easily satisfied in seeing their presuppositions

confirmed (along with the dominating scholarly discourse) than accepting a more complicated and multilayered situation.

This might indeed explain why scholars overlooked women's rights, duties, and responsibilities. However, it would be wrong to deny that men control and can access more power in many areas of life than women. In her analysis of sexual stratification among Nandi agropastoralists of Kenya, Regina Oboler (1985: 294) lists several markers that indicate why Nandi males have more power than females. As the literature review suggest, these markers are also found among Pokot: men make political decisions that women cannot; men are culturally defined as superior to women; men ideally control the means of production; men can abrogate women's rights over resources but not vice versa; and men can physically force women to obey them. Pokot women cannot control the behavior of men in the same way that men can control the behavior of women. Yet this does not explain *why* this is the case. Following the work of Oboler (1985) and Hodgson (1999b; 2001), I will adopt a historical perspective to analyze how colonialism and post-colonial development efforts impacted on the relationship between Pokot men and women and their respective access to power.

4.3 Gender Dynamics under Colonialism

To better understand the differences in the gender relations between the ritual life and Pokot cosmology and the actual everyday experiences of men and women, it is necessary to take a closer look at the historical events that have shaped Pokot society. Hodgson (1999a; 1999 b; 2000; 2001) points out that pastoralist "culture" and gender relations are often portrayed as ahistorical and fixed, thereby ignoring that pastoralist culture and gender relations are the *historical products* of the actions and ideas of men and women in interaction with local and translocal structures and processes (whether neighboring communities, traders, state administration or missionaries). Contemporary gender relations are not inherent to pastoralism as a mode of production or an ideology, but the result of a historically particular constellation of interac-

tions. A central momentum of such a historical constellation is the incorporation of the Pokot into the state system: first during the colonial period and then at independence. In the following section, I follow the argumentation of Dorothy Hodgson (2001) and Oboler (1985) who demonstrate how British colonial politics emphasized new modes of control and authority that favored men. Hodgson points out that two interrelated processes were central to colonial state formation and, at the same time, the constitution of gender hierarchies among Maasai. These two processes were:

[T]he division of the complementary, interconnected responsibilities of men and women into the spatially separated, hierarchically gendered domains of “domestic” and “public”/“political”, and the consolidation of male control over cattle through the commodification of livestock, monetization of the Maasai economy and targeting of men for livestock development interventions. Incorporation into the state system reinforced and enhanced male political authority and economic control by expanding the bases for political power and introducing new forms of property relations. Together, these processes shifted the contours of male-female power relations, resulting in the material disenfranchisement and conceptual devaluation of Maasai women as both women and pastoralists (Hodgson 1999b, 65).

Can we find the same dynamics in the colonial encounter between Pokot and the British administration? The British colonial administration would probably deny this since they concluded that they had “little real influence” on the Pokot (Annual Report 1913: 10). The 1962 Annual Report for Baringo District noted that “in the Suk areas there is little to report and the prevalent resistance to change remains unimpaired”. Schneider also remarked on the nonexistent impact of colonial politics in the Pokot areas: “The marked resistance to European innovations which the Pakot [*sic*] (or Suk) of western Kenya have maintained despite deliberate European attempts to induce change on three broad fronts – political, economic, and religious – presents a challenging problem” (Schneider 1959, 144).

After a short description of the pre-colonial history of the Pokot, I will reconstruct the colonial encounter in East Pokot to reconstruct the colonial policies and their conse-

quences in East Pokot.²⁵ I will focus my analysis on the implications and consequences of the British colonial state on gender relations,²⁶ thereby highlighting two central areas of colonial practice: 1) economic impact, i.e. taxation, trade, monetization and commodification; and 2) political changes through the implementation of indirect rule in East Pokot.

The Pokot are mentioned in traveler reports and documents since the second half of the 19th century, but they had very little contact with Europeans before 1900. The German missionary Ludwig Krapf (1968 [1854]) makes the first known written reference to the Pokot, calling them Sukku, a distortion of the name Suk, which the British Administration used until 1961.²⁷ However, contacts with early travelers were rather sporadic; travelers only gave short descriptions of Pokot encounters (von Höhnel 1894, 2000; Wakefield 1870; Thompson 1885; MacDonald 1899; Austin 1899; Coupland 1939), never, however, mentioning any details of Pokot life. Oral histories are the only resource for reconstructing pre-colonial life in East Pokot. Bollig's extensive research on the early history of the Pokot suggests that the Pokot are a quite recent group (Bollig 1990). They emerged from several different forager, farmer, and agropastoralist communities around the area of Mount Sekerr, Cherangani Hills, Suam

²⁵ The colonial encounter in West Pokot varies widely from its neighboring district in the East. The West Suk District was created in 1918 with its own district administration. Due to the different environment, the British administration tried to implement more agricultural development projects among other things. For a colonial history of West Pokot see Tully 1985; Nangulu 2001; Hendrix 1985; Chaundy 1939, 1948; Totty, Chaundy 1944; Chaundy 1947; Bianco 1992.

²⁶ For the consequences of the Colonial state on intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts see Bollig 1992a, 1990, 1987.

²⁷ There are conflicting references about the origins of the name Suk. Some scholars state that the term derives from Maa and is borrowed from the Maasai (Bollig 1992a: 60; Schneider 1953; Beech 1969 [1911]). Totty and Chaundy believe that the Maasai referred to the Pokot living in the highlands as Suk, "because they carried a 'chok', a short curved bill-hook" Totty, Chaundy 1944: 3. Another origin theory suggests that out of fear of taxation, when a British colonial power asked a Pokot man to which group he belonged, he answered "Suk", which means tree stump in the Pokot language Jónsson 2006: 66; Nyamwaya 1982: 21; Bianco 1992: 74. Upon Kenya's independence, the Pokot refused to continue to use the name Suk, as they considered it derogatory and demeaning of their intelligence, and the name Pokot has been used instead by the administration from 1961 onwards Patterson 1969: 43. According to Kjartan Jónsson, the name Pokot is derived from the word pö-köt, which means escape. Hence, the word Pokot means refugees (Jónsson 2006: 67).

River and Mount Elgon at late 18th century (Bollig 1990: 74; Bollig and Anderson 2016). Earthquakes and hunger catastrophes forced them to migrate and adapt new means of production.²⁸ Archeological findings suggest that through raids on neighboring Sirikwa communities, huge amounts of cattle were accumulated that built the basis for a pastoral lifestyle (Sutton 1981, 1987, 1993). With this new pastoral system, the social system changed as well: generation- and age sets were borrowed from neighboring pastoralist groups, thus, allowing for warlike age sets that would invade Kerio Valley, Leroghi Plateau and Lake Baringo (which constitute the East Pokot District today) by dispossessing Maasai and other groups around the midst of the 19th century. To sum up, the Pokot are not only a very recent group but also only became specialized pastoralists in the late 19th century.

The first government outpost among the Pokot was established in Baringo District in 1903 when G.F. Archer was appointed as District Commissioner and stationed in Mukutani. In the 1920s, the district headquarters was transferred to Kabarnet, even further away from East Pokot. Early on, colonial administrators assessed that the East Pokot area was not usable for either agriculture or commercial animal husbandry; they concluded that “there is little in the district to attract the European settle, and this area may be definitely looked upon as a native reserve” (Hobley 1906: 472) quoted after Bollig (1992a: 59). The colonial district administration focused its development policies in the highlands, while the semi-arid northern areas of the Pokot were mainly affected by demarcations, taxation and indirect rule via chiefs and local tribunals. The territorial boundaries between Pokot, Turkana, Tugen, Njemps, and Samburu were sharply drawn from 1920 onwards (KNA DC BAR 7/1). According to Tully (1985: 83) the fixing between the Pokot and their neighbors disrupted past patterns of migration, dry-season grazing, raiding and alliances, making intertribal raids fiercer than before. This was part of the colonial divide-and-rule tactic to make it eas-

²⁸ Similar processes of pastoral consolidation can be found among Maasai (Galaty 1993, Turkana Lamphear John 1988, Jie Lamphear 1994, and Rendille Schlee 1989).

ier to alienate land for European settlement (Nangulu 2001: 34f.). Colonial administrators tried to interfere and reduce inter-ethnic conflicts and stock theft, mainly between Pokot and Turkana.²⁹ The Pokot relationship with the colonial administrators can best be characterized as ambivalent: Pokot saw potential allies in the British administration in their attempts to stop Maasai and Turkana raiding and invading their area. In 1903, Pokot seniors visited the British administrators to ask for support in an inter-ethnic conflict with Turkana communities (Bollig 1992a: 59). Pokot men feared and respected the colonial police forces for their weapons and strength (ibid. 133). At the same time, they ignored most of the policies for change and development in the region. The District Commissioner summarized his frustration about the failed colonial attempts to incorporate the Pokot into the colonial system in a report in 1939:

The attitude of the Suk towards any change in their present way of living, whether to their advantage or not, is one of complete indifference. They do not wish to cooperate in any policy of rehabilitation, for, as they said at a Baraza at Loruk "when we consider that any change is desirable, or assistance is required we will ask for it." They wish to be left entirely alone (KNA DC BAR 1/3).

Yet, the Pokot had acquired a reputation of being "the most orderly natives in the district" (Annual Report 1911: 6) by always paying their taxes in time and never violently resisting the colonial powers (Patterson 1969: 14). While this can certainly be read as a strategy to avoid more interventions by the colonial powers, it remains unclear how these interventions affected the people living in East Pokot.

Taxing, Monetization, and Commodification

In pre-colonial times, the Pokot used to conduct barter with neighboring Marakwet and Tugen communities to cover their subsistence with millet and sorghum. Oral accounts mention that it was Pokot women who mostly conducted barter. Pokot used to travel to markets in Cheseгон (Marakwet) and Yattia (Tugen), or exchanged

²⁹ As Anderson Anderson 1986 points out, an important incentive for this was to protect European farmers and their belongings who had settled in South Baringo.

goods through interpersonal kinship and friendship networks. Pokot traded milk products, dried meat and goats or sheep, and occasionally cattle (cf. Bollig 1990: 86 for exchange rates). Besides millet and sorghum, they also exchanged their goods for honey to celebrate important rituals and festivities and for spears and arrowheads to guarantee sufficient weaponry.

With taxation by the colonial state, a cash economy evolved in East Pokot. The hut and poll tax was introduced in 1901 in all British administered areas. The British administration started to collect it soon after establishing itself in Pokot land, and it was one of its main activities. The hut tax was payable on all dwelling houses owned by taxpayers who had reached the age of 16 but the age limit was raised to 18 years in 1936 and the Poll tax was payable by all able-bodied men not liable to pay the hut tax. The Pokot did pay their taxes without any resistance (Hobley 1906: 476).

Additionally, trading possibilities increased under the British administration. Somali traders started to regularly visit Pokot areas in 1909. They would exchange cattle for sheep, buy animal skins and introduce and sell maize, sugar and tea to the Pokot or exchange it for cattle and goats (KNA DC BAR 3/5). With the revenues of these transactions, Pokot were able to pay their taxes. Colonial administrators tried to restrict the exchange in order to force Pokot to seek work for money on European farms instead of earning money within the district (Bollig 1992a: 62). While many men from West Pokot, as well as neighboring agro-pastoralists like Marakwet or Elgeyo, had to seek employment on European-owned farms outside of the district (Tully 1985: 96–99), Pokot from the Baringo area could cover their needs for food and taxes by selling cattle. Only very few Pokot men went to work on White farms or out of district towns (Bollig 1992a: 62).

Barter with the neighboring Marakwet and Tugen changed as well after the incorporation into the colonial system. Most Pokot now preferred maize over millet, which they would mainly obtain from Somali traders who brought it from Nakuru or Eldo-

ret. Still, the markets in Yattia and Cheseгон continued to exist, and Pokot would frequently visit those to get honey, cooking utensils, metallic objects, and herbal medicine. Due to the developing cash economy, even more markets developed. Barter was still common; however, money increasingly became the dominant mode of payment (Bollig 1992a: 135).

Taxation, as the main policy introduced by the British colonial state, transformed the social and economic life of the Pokot. First, it promoted the monetization of the area, and secondly, it necessitated livestock sales and thus transformed livestock into commodities. Taxation facilitated the introduction of cash into East Pokot by forcing Pokot men to sell rather than trade livestock. Furthermore, taxation was a gendered policy: it explicitly targeted men as taxpayers.³⁰ Taxation, monetization and trading and the introduction of formal livestock marketing constituted new categories such as “taxpayer”, “household head”, and livestock “owner”, “buyer” and “seller”. Pokot men became the official “owners”, “sellers” and “buyers”, while cattle, sheep, and goats turned into “commodities”. Similar works on colonialism, capitalism, and gender among pastoralists suggest that these described processes circumvented women’s shared and overlapping rights in livestock and consolidated instead men as the sole owners of livestock (Hodgson 2001; Oboler 1985). Taxation, monetization and commodification diminished Pokot women’s economic control and autonomy. Ownership is thus a historical product; a result of “monetization and commoditization of their livestock economies during the colonial and postcolonial periods [which] transformed cattle, in particular, from a shared good in which men and women held overlapping rights and responsibilities into a commodity bought, sold and ‘owned’ by men” (Hodgson 2000: 11).³¹ Monetization and commodification of livestock re-

³⁰ For a similar process see Hodgson’s work on the Maasai (Hodgson 1999b: 58; Hodgson 2001: 69). Maasai men were liable to pay a poll tax for themselves and a hut tax, or “plural wives tax” for “dependent” women, including wives, widowed mothers and married sisters living at home.

³¹ Such an interpretation of the historical dynamics during the colonial state can surely be traced in the tradition of Engels’ famous assessment that women’s social position declined as private property

worked production, consumption and distribution of it and their symbolic meaning. Individual ownership transformed formerly collective belongings into property that was controlled by men.

As I have shown, a cash economy emerged under the colonial administration. Besides taxation, administrators also promoted monetization and commoditization through expanding the structures, opportunities, and incentives of livestock trade, while barter, which was mainly conducted by women, decreased. As a result, the concept of private property emerged, and it became a gendered concept: colonial policies explicitly targeted Pokot men and assigned individual ownership to men. A further look at the colonial practice of indirect rule might clarify why men were primarily targeted by colonial administrators and how these gendered encounters affected the political life in East Pokot.

Indirect Rule

In 1920 the British administration intensified its attempts to establish a centralized political organization for the Pokot through which the colonial government hoped to govern the Pokot on the principle of indirect rule. Although the office of chiefs had been created earlier than this, by appointing *kiruokin*, the pre-colonial “big men” as chiefs and thereby incorporating them into the colonial state system, the District Commissioner concluded in 1910 that these had “little real authority” (KNA DC BAR 3/4). In accordance with the policy being pursued in other parts of Kenya – locations, the equivalent of English counties – were established in the District and a headman was put in charge of each of these. The British administrators found it necessary to create a political organization through which rule could be effected since they concluded that the Pokot, like most communities in Kenya, did not have their own polit-

emerged as an organizing principle for society (Engels 2010). For a more detailed analysis of Engels’ applicability in anthropological gender studies see Sacks 1974; while Dahl looks at Engels’ work specifically from the perspective of a scholar working on and with female pastoralists (Dahl 1987).

ical organization. For this reason, chiefs and headmen were created and locations established.

In 1923, Native Tribunals (NT) were established in each location. These were composed of elders who were constituted as judicial authorities with power to pass sentence for minor offences. A legislative branch was added in 1925: the Local Native Council (LNC). This Local Native Council was composed of the chiefs and one elected member from each location while the District Commissioner served as the president. Furthermore, a police force was established to support the governing body of the chiefs. Thus, the colonial state had established the three branches of British government in East Pokot – in accordance with its policy throughout Kenya. Judicial and executive powers were separated: chiefs and headmen collected taxes and reported crimes and offences, while the Native Tribunals prosecuted internal crimes and offences. The chiefs had no power to judge and were not members of the court. From the 1950s onwards, the Local Native Council focused on fixating customary law. The customary system of law favored compensation for prosecution of perpetrators. Now all compensations had to be renegotiated. The British Administration attempted to standardize compensations for criminal offenses. In the case of adultery, for example, it was determined that the adulterer had to give six cattle and six sheep to the husband and additionally slaughter his favorite ox for the *kokwö*; a fixed compensation that is applied up until today and known by all Pokot under the Swahili term *sita sita*. However, the Pokot refused to accept and respect this imposed system. The Pokot mostly avoided the new administrative institutions; instead, they preferred to consult customary strategies to solve conflicts in front of the *kokwö*. Pokot frequently contradicted and insulted chiefs and British administrators during public meetings (Schneider 1959: 51).

However ineffective and unsuccessful indirect rule may have seemed to the British at times, it affected the Pokot on several levels and shifted the relationship between men and women tremendously. The implementation of indirect rule extended the

authority and control of men, especially elder men, over junior men and women. It gave certain men new rights and responsibilities as representatives of their communities, including the authority to collect taxes, enforce livestock decisions, and codify customary law. Through the implementation of indirect rule, a new domain emerged where men could mediate their own interests with colonial administrators as well as debate and decide on central policies affecting the Pokot community. This political domain gave power to men within the colonial system but also among the local community.

As with taxation, indirect rule and the political domain were gendered. The encounter between Pokot and the colonial state was exclusively male; women were completely absent from it. Colonial administrators only interacted with men and only appointed men for positions within the colonial state. The gendered nature of the indirect rule can be partly traced back to the Pokot customary expected spatial separation of women and men in public meetings. It would have been regarded as disrespectful for Pokot women to interact with colonial administrators. But this gendered separation did not only happen because of Pokot customs on respected behavior; it was also a consequence of the gendered nature of the colonial administrators themselves who assumed that Pokot gender relations would resemble the British ones at that time. Thus, colonial administrators perceived women as powerless and disassociated from public decision-making processes, assuming that they were mainly responsible for domestic tasks – even though no clear domains of “political” and “domestic” existed. Hodgson pointedly reconstructs four assumptions of the colonial administrators:

first, that distinct “domestic” and “political” domains existed; second, that they were spatially segregated; third, that the spatial distinctions between the boundaries of homesteads as “private” domains and more communal spaces as “public” reflected and expressed qualitative differences between the types of power exercised in each domain and fourth, that “political” authority was primarily exercised in the public sphere and conversely that the domestic sphere entailed primarily “private” affairs. In sum, administrators assumed that whatever men

were doing must be “important” (and, conversely, what women were doing was “unimportant”), thus men were aligned with the public/political sphere and women with the domestic/private (Hodgson 1999b: 57).

Despite the British administrator’s frustration with their (lack of) impact on the Pokot and their perceived failure to bring change to the area, the colonial state transformed life in East Pokot fundamentally: colonial politics affected the economic and political domains especially and the gender relations in general. Taxation promoted cash economy, individual property rights and a commodification of livestock. By assuming that Pokot social relations resembled the British at that time, colonial administrators perceived Pokot men as the only agents in the economic domain. Only men were targeted as taxpayers, livestock owners or sellers, thereby diminishing economic competence and rights of women. In the same vein, British administrators only interacted with and only appointed Pokot men for positions within the indirect rule system. In both cases, a new male-dominated domain emerged (economic and political), where men gained power and control, while replacing and ignoring women’s former influence and autonomy over livestock and within decision-making processes. Former often spatially separated but complementary relations between women and men transformed into a hierarchical gender system where men had more power than women and often gained control over them. At the same time, the analysis of colonial politics also demonstrates that gender relations are a historical product. Gender relations are not inherent to a mode of production but always a result of complex historical dynamics.

Resistance against Christianization

During the colonial period Pokot women and men resisted attempts of introducing education and Christianity quite actively. The first mission was founded in Nginyang by the African Inland Mission (AIM) in 1948. The first missionary, Tom Collins, built a church and started a primary school. However, he struggled to convincing Pokot men and women to join the church or send their children to school. Using the colonial apparatus, chiefs were ordered to send children from pastoral

families to school – with little success. Only a few people would send children voluntarily and the colonial administration had hardly any power to force them to.

Instead, Pokot men tried to discourage Collins from pursuing his activities by performing rituals of resistance by taking pens from pupils to bury them next to Collin's house, thus demonstrating their disrespect for his presence and his actions (Österle 2007: 239). Pokot felt more and more frustrated and threatened by the "power of the pen" (Hodgson 1999a: 140) and the colonial attempts to influence, change, and dominate their everyday lives. In only three months, Lukas Pkesch (Arsusu),³² the leader of the messianistic anti-colonial movement *Dini ya Msambwa* (in Pokot better known as *Dini ya Msango*) had 300 followers in East Pokot in 1940, a striking contrast to the efforts of the AIC and Tom Collins. The *Dini ya Msambwa* movement promised its adherents "vitality, increased flocks and herds, and freedom from European control" (Bianco 1996: 25). *Dini ya Msango* emerged in western Kenya and spread first to West Pokot and later to East Pokot (cf. Wipper 1977; Buijtenhuijs 1985), leading to the dramatic events of the "massacre of Kolloa" where 300 Pokot men and women clashed with a small party of administration police on an April afternoon in 1950. Although neither group had planned to fight (the Pokot had been singing when confronted by the police; the order to fire was twice countermanded), 33 people were killed and another 50 were wounded. Among the dead were three European officials and an African police corporal.³³ As a result, 8 Pokot were hanged, and 123 were prosecuted for being members of an illegal organization. The Pokot had to give five thousand cattle to the British administration as a redemption amount. Interestingly, the money from the cattle sales, combined with compulsory imposition labor of

³² Alongside Lukas Pkesch, Chemosops lead and taught Pokot women within the movement. *Dini ya Msango* attracted men and women who revolted side by side against external oppression by colonial forces. Chemosop played a very important role in the movement and was at least as important as Lukas Pkesch (Österle 2007: 238pp).

³³ The massacre was initially known as the "Baringo murders" (Bianco 1996) and later as the "Kolloa Affray" (Muir 1985), and is today commonly referred to as the "Kolloa massacre" (Bollig 1992a; Österle 2007).

Pokot men, was invested in several development projects. The British administration interpreted the massacre as a sign for a need to “develop” the area: right after the massacre, airstrips at Nginyang and Kolloa were constructed, as well as a health center at Nginyang and a dispensary at Kolloa, and a permanent bridge across the Kerio river to Marakwet was built (Muir 1985). Ironically, the Pokot experienced more development in infrastructure after Kolloa than they had ever during the colonial period. This was intended to show the power and authority of the British government, to demonstrate that European ideas were better, and more successful, than that of *Diniya Msambwa*.

The movement resented not only the colonial administration but formal education and Christianization as well. Right before the Kolloa massacre, the gathered Pokot joined to bury the pen together. (Wipper 1977, Bollig 1992b; Bianco 1996). Shortly after Kolloa, the missionary Tom Collins did in fact leave East Pokot – thus acknowledging the failure of the evangelization of the Pokot.

It was not until the mid-1960s that missionaries returned to East Pokot, this time with a different approach: after Kolloa, missionaries dismissed evangelization strategies based on preaching. Like the government, missionaries now assumed that the Pokot wanted (and needed) to be “developed” – to have *mandaleo*. Missionaries, the new Kenyan state, and development agencies agreed that development means (and is signified by) Pokot wearing Western-type clothing as well as having access to medicine and formal education (Muir 1985).

4.4 Women as Agents of Change in Post-Colonial Times

In 1957, the first government primary school started at Nginyang – and slowly but steadily more schools were built in various centers of the area. Two Finnish nuns founded a Full Gospel Church of Kenya (FGCK) mission in Kapedo. They built and operated a school and a dispensary, and distributed food in times of drought and crisis. FGCK expanded to Chemolingot in the 1970s, opening a church, a school and a

dispensary as well, and eventually founding the first secondary school in the area. In the 1970s, the African Inland Church (AIC), Anglican Church of the Province of Kenya (CPK), and later the Roman Catholic Church (RC) established missions and churches in Maron, Barpello and Kositei. Besides school-related and medical projects, the Christian organizations started several development projects: CPK founded a polytechnic in Nginyang with the support of Freedom from Hunger (Germany); they also attempted to settle destitute families on land suitable for cultivation. The Catholic Church started several food-for-work schemes in 1976, which later extended into a mobile Clinique and the East Pokot Agricultural Project (EPAP), Catholic Diocese of Nakuru in 1978. In the 1980s, Freedom from Hunger, World Vision and Red Cross started to work in the area.³⁴ Christian organizations cooperated with development agencies and the Kenyan government, all of whom shared strategies and goals in developing the area, i.e. focusing on medicine and hygiene, the introduction of agriculture, livestock veterinary services, food distributions, access to water as well as construction of dams, and food security (Österle 2007).

The projects and programs were gendered.³⁵ Similarly, the colonial administration, churches, NGOs, and the government assumed that Pokot life was structured by two gendered domains: the “public domain” of the men where livestock and political-decision-making processes were negotiated, and the “domestic domain” where women were responsible for all tasks relating to the homestead and childrearing. However, unlike the British administration, they did not confine their development efforts to the public domain but attempted to target women and the domestic domain as well. On the one hand, this presumption reinforced male property rights and their positioning as “buyers”, “sellers”, and “owners” of livestock. Veterinary train-

³⁴ Although neither of these development agencies worked continuously in East Pokot. In the highlands around Tangelbei and Churo ACTED and Action Aid run programs from the early 2000s onwards, ACTED is currently applying for funds to continue their food-for-work programs in the lowlands around Chemolingot and Nginyang.

³⁵ This assumption is based on an analysis of the programs of World Vision and Acted in East Pokot. Both organizations kindly granted me access to their archives.

ings and rangeland-management projects only addressed Pokot men as participants, again ignoring women's daily tasks and responsibilities in taking care of livestock and livestock products. On the other hand, many projects now specifically addressed women. Churches, NGOs, and the state identified women as mainly responsible for tasks and decisions concerning hygiene, medicine, water supply, and childrearing. Women subsequently participated in workshops on various topics, they were trained to become community workers and health facilitators and started to engage in food-for-work projects. Many of women's duties and responsibilities were officially acknowledged. They were not only addressed as part of Pokot society, but as central protagonists in changing and developing the area.

The focus of interest shifted from regulating livestock and political decision-making processes as the core aspects of triggering development to targeting the overall well-being of the members of Pokot society. Women were identified as primarily responsible for providing and securing their families' well-being. Whitehead coined the phrase "maternal altruism" to refer to the ideology that women are "naturally" predisposed toward nurturing and self-sacrifice by their identities as mothers and wives (Whitehead 1981; see also Kabeer 1994: 132–133; Schroeder 1999: 8–9). Development projects were based on the assumption that any income or knowledge generated by women would produce benefits for a broader social circle. "Virtually all income in women's hands... is devoted to household and family expenditures, reflecting the socially ascribed roles of women in meeting daily welfare needs" (Jiggins 1994: 200) quoted after Schroeder (1999: 9).

Development projects in East Pokot not only increasingly targeted women, but they also changed, quite literally, the social and physical landscape of East Pokot. Churches, offices, and food-distribution centers were built in the emerging centers. To receive training or food supplies, women and men had to travel to these centers. In particular destitute women or families decided to settle near the centers if employment was available. Through income as health workers or community facilitators,

women were able to support their families. Especially widows were attracted by these possibilities since they enabled them to live independently without the need to re-marry (Muir 1985, pp. 69–70). During a devastating drought in 1983/1984, women remained at homesteads or moved near the centers with camels, goats and donkeys, while men migrated to Turkana areas with cattle. Women received food supplies from the government, Freedom from Hunger and World Vision. These food supplies altered the consumption patterns of the receiving families. Maize, *posho*, and *githeri*, a meal of maize and beans, became integral parts of the everyday diet. Instead of two meals per day, one in the morning and one in the evening, families who received food supplies could afford to have a midday meal as well. As a result, women near the centers, who often lacked livestock and were perceived as poor by their pastoral neighbors, gained weight during the drought season (Muir 1985: 45–46, see Holtzman 2009 for similar changes of consumption among the Samburu).

Through these food supplies, and cash-income opportunities, Pokot men and women started to become more welcoming to missionaries and churches than during colonial times. More and more women and men joined churches and became baptized. However, women were more willing to join a church than men and constituted the majority of the church members; (this has not changed to this day, still women make up the vast majority of Christian congregations throughout East Pokot, see Chapter 5). For one thing, women interacted more frequently with church representatives and were more often exposed to Christian values and ideas than men since food supplies were only handed out to women as they were seen as the primary caregivers of the family due to the “maternal altruism” paradigm. For another thing, Christian representatives assumed women to be subordinated to men, thus they did not demand that women renounce customary Pokot beliefs (e.g., male and female circumcision, *sapana*) completely. AIC, FGCK and CPK churches did not and do not allow their members to circumcise girls or boys to go through *sapana*. However, as pastors and church members of all churches in East Pokot unanimously told me: if a person has

already gone through these rites and presents himself with a sincere intention to join a church, then he or she can join. Similarly, if a man has married two wives before joining the church, it is permissible as he must support them and cannot divorce and neglect his responsibilities. But if he marries a second or third wife after joining a church, he has to leave the congregation. By contrast, if a woman's husband is marrying another wife, she is not criticized since it was not her decision to make.

Thus, for women it is much easier to combine Pokot and Christian beliefs since there are no Pokot institutions preventing them from joining a church. Men, however, are faced by several obstacles if adopting Christian beliefs. As mentioned before, *sapana* is an essential part of becoming a Pokot man. A man who did not undergo a *sapana* is thus not regarded as a social adult. Other men will not regard him as a full member of society. He is not allowed to participate in discussions and decision-making in the *kokwö*; he must sit quietly on the side. Most male church members are pupils or graduates of one of the local schools, who all have a church affiliation who are expected to attend church service. However, I never saw a Pokot man in a customary Pokot outfit at any church service, but always pastoral women in customary dress.³⁶

Ethnographic Present

Besides church services and the above-described development projects, Christian organizations encouraged women to start women's groups throughout the area. These groups are mostly merry-go-rounds. Meeting weekly, the members each contribute 50 or 100 Kenyan shillings to be given to one member of the group, who often use the money to buy kitchen utensils and clothing for their children. Other groups try to start cash-income projects, often in collaboration with development projects. In the late 1980s, German Freedom from Hunger started such a cash-income women's group in Chemolingot. Lea, who was a founding member of this group, proudly told

³⁶ Dorothy Hodgson's account of the church of women (Hodgson 2005) describes gendered attraction of Maasai to the Catholic Church in Tanzania.

me about the activities of the group: in weekly meetings, women discussed what kind of cash-income project they wanted to develop. The group visited similar women's projects in Samburu areas and southern Baringo to see different ideas and opportunities. All members of this group were also members of the Full Gospel Church, which facilitated the constitution of the group.³⁷ Within these groups, women are responsible for business and decision-making. As a group, they can formally approach governmental institutions and NGOs for financial assistance. Women are encouraged to generate their own income and to manage it independently, often denying women's competence in dealing with business and money matters. However, women are very proud about their accomplishments and the things they bought from the acquired money. They regard the money obtained through merry-go-rounds as theirs and are not willing to share it with their husbands.

Women's groups mainly target illiterate, unemployed, destitute women. At the same time, Christian organizations, government officials and NGOs have been trying to increase girls' schooling rates. More schools opened after independence, and more Pokot joined – partly attracted by food supply and school money. However, in 1985 fewer than 10% of all pupils were girls (Ministry of Education East Pokot, 2010). All Christian organizations, NGOs, and governmental institutions promoted education, and especially education for girls. All development actors supported boys and girls financially throughout their education, partly up to a college degree. As Sister Rebekkah told me during an interview in March 2011, development representatives therefore paid attention to supporting men and women, since they believed that successful male and female role models were needed to show the advantages of education. Indeed, most of those supported during their education returned to East Pokot and started projects to advertise the need for more education and social change. All

³⁷ The group started a gas-distribution business. It ran for three years but was eventually shut down due to financial problems. Former members claim that many husbands demanded women to give them a share of their income instead of reinvesting it into the project.

women activists, who are currently trying to strengthen the opportunities for action of women, were supported by such scholarships. Since female circumcision and early marriages had been identified as the main cause of low schooling rates of girls, two rescue centers were opened in the area to support girls who ran away from their families when they were expected to get circumcised and eventually married. Additionally, education efforts were not reduced to children and youths: In the 1980s, the Full Gospel Church started evening classes to alphabetize adults; it was mostly women who attended, however.

As I have shown, a shift in the development paradigm occurred after independence, making women the center of many development efforts. Women were now recognized as the primary caretakers of families, who were subordinated by men and Pokot culture. Churches, NGOs, and government institutions offered a variety of programs and projects to support and strengthen women's activities. Women participated in women's groups where they learned to generate cash income, they were trained as health workers, and encouraged to receive formal education. As a result, women also became the symbol of development. Christian organizations and government institutions especially promoted the idea that Pokot remove their customary dress and start covering their body with Western style clothing. Particularly women, with their striking bead collars, earrings, and hairstyle, experienced persistent attempts to convince them to change their attire. All churches distributed (and still distribute) second-hand clothing throughout the area. Two often-recited stories document the pressure on women to adopt Western clothing:³⁸ in official speeches, the "backward" meaning of the customary female dress is often mentioned, and men are asked to buy their wives new Western garments. In 1979, when President Moi was visiting Kapedo on the Pokot-Turkana border, he singled out four young girls in his speech who were members of the addressed crowd. Two of them were Turkana,

³⁸ I was told these stories several times. They are well-known by Pokot, and women and men know about and tell them.

dressed in school uniform; the other two were Pokot in customary attire. The two in Western-type clothing were portrayed as smart and as exemplars of the way forward, while the latter two were seen as dirty and holding back development. A couple of years later during a women's group meeting, a FGCK female leader in Western attire publicly accused two female attendees in customary dress of holding back the development of the Pokot women. The church leader associated Western clothing with development, while the accused women replied that their customary attire came from their wealth and work. Churches and most women's groups expect their members to remove their customary dress in order to participate. Pokot women also report incidents of soldiers ridiculing their appearance when visiting markets in Marakwet or Tugen areas. Pokot songs mention the external pressure on women to remove their customary beads and attire as well:

Kaplalech fought. Men fought.
They were prosecuted. Kaperur fought.
The terim were cut. The lökötyö were cut.
The beads were cut and burnt.
Yes, men fought the battle of nyayo,
Until they gave their local guns³⁹
(Muir 1985: 53)

The song expresses worries that Pokot customary beliefs might be suppressed by external pressure. However, many women also embrace these changes, especially their new identity as agents and symbols of change. In conversations with me, they proudly describe their tasks in the church and in NGO programs. They emphasize in conversations with me how they are changing Pokot society through their activities – especially in terms of decreasing circumcision, educating girls, and reducing child marriages. Men are much more skeptical toward these new developments. Many

³⁹ Kaplelach and Kaperur refer to generation sets. The terim is a woman's wedding bracelet. Lökötyö is a decorated leather belt worn by young mothers.

refuse to buy their wives Western clothing. Some fear that clothes and group participation might give women a sense of power which could encourage women to question male authority.

To sum up, post-colonial development politics identified women as an integral part of everyday Pokot life. Although they shared the colonial assumption that Pokot society is divided into a public and a domestic domain, thus reinforcing male economic and political rights over those of women, they did not reduce their policies to economic and political activities. Instead, projects and programs targeted women as the main caretakers for childrearing, water and food supply, and medical care. Post-colonial (development) politics were driven by the idea that development can be measured by levels of education, medical access, food security, and an openness to Western culture (signified by Western clothing). Since women were responsible for these areas of life, symbolizing Pokot culture through their attire, they received extensive trainings and support. Women gained access to food-for-work programs, income-generating projects, education, medical training, and new social spheres, with no or only a few Pokot men present. Women welcomed these programs. Unlike their male counterparts, women participated willingly in many of the projects. The presented data suggests that women were less constrained by Pokot beliefs than men. Since they had no official decision-making rights, they also could not be excluded from them. While men had to fear a loss of influence and power (individually within Pokot society, but also as a group), women gained access to new domains that were not controlled by men by engaging with development projects.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the actors as well as the processes of change and continuity over a period of more than 100 years in East Pokot. It reveals the complexities and contradictions that organize social relations in any group and demonstrates that gender relations are a result of dynamic, heterogenic, and fluid social relations.

Under the British colonial system, taxation, monetization, and commodification reworked the production, consumption, and distribution of livestock. Collective ownership transformed into individual ownership rights that were mostly held by men, thereby ignoring women's influence and rights over livestock. Indirect rule constituted a new male exclusive domain: the political. Women subsequently lost their influences and autonomy in decision-making processes. Even though the colonial administrators assumed that they did not change the area, their actions and policies transformed the relationship between women and men into a hierarchical system. After independence, development programs specifically targeted women since they were perceived as the main caretakers of their families. Women welcomed this new attention since it offered new areas of influence and autonomy after the colonial period. Although men's control over livestock and public decision-making processes remains mostly unchallenged, women's small cash income and active encounter with the state calls the hegemony of male dominance into question. Development projects identified women as the agents of change of the "domestic" (or household-related) sphere.

As the literature review on Pokot gender relations demonstrated, women were never completely muted or powerless. Social and historical events shaped the social dimensions and social relations of Pokot everyday life as much as Pokot men and women shaped those dimensions and relations by welcoming or resisting these changes. Pokot are a community of change. They evolved out of the need for change and became pastoralists only quite recently. In the next chapter, I will analyze how the current transformations of the Pokot and of their pastoralist lifestyle impact on various aspects of the relationship between men and women.

Chapter 5: Working Women: Money, Conflicts, and “Lazy Men”

Men are not taking care of anything. They do not fetch water, they don't give water to the cattle or goats, they don't fetch firewood, they do not provide food, they do not cook food, they are not looking after the family. It's the woman who has to take care of everything even if she is pregnant. A woman has to do everything at once. You might see a pregnant woman even looking after the animals while fetching water (Christina Lomada 08.23.2011).

The working world in East Pokot has changed dramatically in the last decades. Most pastoralists have diversified their production from “pure pastoralism” to a “mixed economy” (see Chapter 2 and Bollig & Österle 2013). In this chapter, I will demonstrate the impact of these socio-economic transformations on the gender relations in East Pokot. Work for money is an important part of this economic diversification. The work opportunities for both women and men are changing; however, women engage much more often in casual work than men (see chapter 2). The long-established division of labor between the sexes is overturned by the socio-economic transformations happening since the 1990s, especially regarding the new dynamics of gender and social class.

I will therefore analyze the ongoing transformations, the emerging practices, and the discourses surrounding them, as well as the underlying concepts of labor allocation. In a second step, I will take a look at the differences between women who work for money to highlight their motivations and obstacles to work for money. Thirdly, I will reflect upon how conflicts between men and women are caused by these new socio-economic dynamics.

5.1 Cash Income and Gender Relations

With informal-sector employment on a steep rise throughout the entire developing world, the impact of cash-income opportunities on established gender relations and the division of labor between the sexes in (post-)pastoral society has become a key

research question for cultural anthropologists and economists alike – as well as for development cooperation (e.g. Smith 1999, Kipuri & Ridgewell 2008, Hasan 2018). The relevance of these issues is evident given that, by now, most of the casual work is done by women and, indeed, the largest share of women in the labor market engage in some kind of casual work (Sikana & Kerven 1991, Little et al. 2001). Broadly speaking, the array of available income sources ranges from the commodification of pastoral production and natural-resource exploitation to service market integration (Nduma, Kristjanson & McPeak 2001). Women often commercialize activities which, heretofore, exclusively made up their reproductive tasks within the pastoral household, e.g., milking livestock, fetching water, cultivating produce, cooking, cleaning, and crafts.

There is truly little controversy among scholars about whether the “feminization of low-skilled labor” (Hasan 2018: 144) and the entry of women into the market economy, who were previously occupied with household tasks only, affects their socio-economic status and relationship with men. The answer is a resounding yes. The assessment of what exactly these changes consist in and whether they are, normatively speaking, for the better is an entirely different matter, however. The main divide concerns the question of whether a new kind of socio-economic autonomy and intra-household bargaining power for women emerge with their new economic role; the notion of autonomy is broadly conceived, i.e., autonomy is a power resource for resisting demands placed upon oneself, for instance, by husbands or elders, and leading a life in accordance with one’s own preferences and values.

In her study on Pakistan’s Cholistani pastoral nomads and the experiences of Cholistani women with casual work, Hasan (2018) draws a mostly negative conclusion. She emphasizes the reproduction of male patterns of authority in the labor market where household heads establish themselves as intermediaries between their wives and the demand side, and she underscores that women tend to lose their support networks due to the double bind of reproductive and productive tasks. Similarly,

Haile (2008), who conducted research on female firewood sellers in Somalia, sees little evidence for an improvement in women's social status coupled with the rise of social work. Yet, she detects some increased complexity in the relationship between husband and wife due to the additional income sources, which result in "delicate negotiations and power play" (ibid 37) about household expenses and the control over resources.

Similarly, Sikana & Kerven (1991:21) focus on the changing effect of cash income on social structure, noting that "new opportunities for labour [...] compete with or substitute for the traditional roles assigned on the basis of gender and age". The "changing value of male versus female labour in pastoralism" (ibid 26), a consequence of women becoming important breadwinners for their households, however, does not yield the same results for all: while women from well-off families tend to derive an improved social standing, financial autonomy and a new skill set (managing financial assets, negotiating prices etc.), poor women, they argue, end up being disadvantaged, cut off from their social ties and more vulnerable (see also Kipuri & Ridgewell 2008: 7ff).

An overview of the pertinent academic literature suggests that the lynchpin of the connection between women engaging in casual work and them attaining socio-economic autonomy consists in having (at least partial) budgetary authority over the money they make (see also Sikana & Kerven 1991: 21f.). For instance, Smith (1999: 140) reports: "[p]astoral Rendille and Ariaal are more inclined to believe that selling produce makes women obey elders less, mainly because women in Songa can more easily control their own money and work for themselves instead of for their husbands as compared to women in the Reserve." Yet, he adds that despite women's position to spend the money they have earned as they please, they are still economically limited. They are expected to use their money to take care of their children (food, clothing, school fees) and their husbands, too. It is by no means a stretch to consider this constellation a hotbed of conflict between the sexes.

5.2 “Lazy Men” and Disrespectful Women

Right at the beginning of my fieldwork in East Pokot, after about six weeks of getting to know the area and the people, I was sitting down in a shady corner of the court of the biggest hoteli in Chemolingot. I had spent the morning introducing myself to the local authorities at a nearby village and had started to make a list of women groups in the area. While the afternoon heat was burning, I decided to enjoy my chai and prepare some interviews for the evening. Soon, familiar faces asked to join me. Edward, the principal of the local secondary school, Ruto, the Assistant Chief of Chemolingot (Centre), and three nurses (two women and one man) from the hospital were joining me. I had met them all before, while visiting (doing the rounds around) the local administration to introduce myself and my project. Now, sitting together in this informal setting of a local hoteli, they started to question me in greater detail about my project. They wanted to know why I had come there and where I was coming from, and, most importantly, why I chose a place like that to do my research. I tried to answer them as best as I could – stressing that I had read a lot about Pokot men, rituals, and livestock herding, but much less about the everyday life of women and men together – and that I would love to learn more about these things.

I was familiar with these kinds of questions. Every time I introduced myself and my project, men and women in the area wanted to know why I had come there and why I wanted to study them. That happened to me in Kadingding when introducing myself first to the elders and then to the women, and the same questions were asked by the District Officer, the Chief, and basically everybody. Ruto interrupted me: “Ah,

what do you need to learn about that? It is very easy! Pokot men are lazy. Women are doing everything here. Men do nothing.”⁴⁰

This comment startled me. I had never heard anything like that during my stay and my previous visit. I asked him what he meant and if the others would agree with such a statement. And, indeed, all bystanders were rather amused about my surprise. Agnes, one of the nurses, even started to laugh, and said “have you not seen all these men sitting around in the villages doing nothing? Pokot men are the laziest of all.”

She referred to the ongoing changes in East Pokot: sedentarization in East Pokot is spreading; customary household structures with a male head of the homestead who distributes tasks to his co-wives and children are less and less common. In settlements, it is commonplace that women are the main wage earners. They seek employment as household assistants, fetch water and firewood for money or start small businesses like brewing or local shops. More than 80% of the sedentarized women over 14 engage regularly in casual work. Even in still-pastoral settings, household transformations are taking place. More and more women have small brewing businesses. The revenue belongs to the women and has to be used to provide for the needs of them and their children. Men often struggle to adapt to these new surroundings; many are unemployed and depend on their wives’ income. And indeed, “Pokot men are lazy” was a sentence I would hear many more times – from women and men of all ages. I would participate in women’s group meetings where men were referred to as “being lazy”. I would sit in church services where priests warned men not to be lazy and inactive. And I would conduct many interviews with women who stated that they had to work since their husbands would not earn any money or give any support.

⁴⁰I should note that my interest lies in exploring intra-Pokot discourses on men and laziness and not in assessing whether Pokot men are lazy. Apart from the fact that “laziness” is a methodologically fuzzy concept with little analytical value, to say the least, I urge my readers to avoid the trappings of stereotyping. There is a long and dismal history of the “lazy men” trope of rural Sub-Saharan Africa throughout European literature; see Whitehead (2000).

One of them is Chemarian, a brewer also works as a cook in a hotel; she openly complained not only about her husband's lack of initiative but also about the social structure, which she considered deeply unfair: "Women were always doing more than men, fetching water, working their asses off. Men, on the other hand, are the head of the whole family and don't work. Still, they make the big decisions." Chemarian was deeply disgruntled about the decision-making inequality between both sexes and especially about her husband's budgetary authority, exclaiming: "If I bought a goat my husband could sell it. This is unfair!" Her friend Chepotiot, joining the discussion, wholeheartedly agreed with Chemarian's view about an unfair distribution of burdens and rights between the sexes, adding somewhat morosely: "It was always like this. Women have to work more because they have to feed the family. They have to struggle because the men aren't giving anything to them."

After the above-mentioned afternoon conversations, I started to ask for more information regarding the discourse on "lazy men" in interviews and conversations. Nearly everybody I talked to was familiar with the trope of the lazy Pokot men. But not all would agree. Many women defended men decidedly. These women argued for the exact opposite. They described their husbands as hard working, as the head of the family who keeps everybody together and takes care that nobody is left behind. And these stories resonated as well with my observations during my research. Every day I encountered hard working men who did all kinds of work – assisting their communities and families.

But when I was asking the men about men and laziness, I would also encounter frustration and anger directed towards women. While I was having dinner with Arupe, a married man and father of six children who had lost all his livestock during the last drought and was now depending on the income of his two wives, he told me that "Women today are destroying Pokot culture. They are disrespecting men." When I asked him what he meant by this, he explained to me that women nowadays act arrogantly and disrespectfully. The money would go to their heads. They would only

seek confrontation with their husbands. And indeed: divorce rates are high, domestic violence is increasing and birth rates are decreasing (see Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion). Many men, as well as many women, would tell me that women, rather than men, are the ones to blame for these changes. They would neglect their families, thus causing disruption and social conflicts.

This narrative is not unfamiliar to people outside of East Pokot. It mirrors, in many ways, the public debates in Western countries about the impact of female wage labor on family values, stability of the nuclear family, and the “right” upbringing of children. The distribution of household chores among men and women is contested and causes domestic frictions (see Ochs & Kremer Sadlik 2013 for a detailed discussion). According to a Pew Research Center analysis published in May 2013 (Wang et al. 2013), four in ten American households with children under age 18 now include a mother who is either the sole or primary earner for her family. Couples in which the wife earns more report less satisfaction with their marriage and higher rates of divorce – thus concludes the paper.

However, despite these parallels, there is one major difference between the situation in East Pokot and the debates in many Western countries: There is not a clear distinction between reproductive and productive work among the Pokot. Among the Pokot the household is in most cases the main reproductive unit, but also the main unit of production and consumption. The Pokot believe men and women to have separate roles and responsibilities.⁴¹ However, these separate roles do not correspond with the traditional Western notion according to which men support family and household

⁴¹ It is important to note that the sexual division of labor is not a static, ahistorical given. The division of labor alters as the size and composition of household units varies over the family life cycle and the availability of familial labor power changes (Moore 1986: 116pp; Deere et al. 2013: 252)

economically while women take care of the children and household chores like cooking and cleaning.⁴² As Henrietta Moore (1986) stated about the Endo:

Within the household men and women perform complementary roles. The division of labor delineates tasks and duties which both husband and wife undertake to form a joint project or unit for the production of foodstuffs, the maintenance of household and herds and the rearing of children. Marriage is explicitly stated to be a joint undertaking, with shared responsibilities (Moore 1986: 119).

5.3 Cultural Narratives and Social Realities of the Division of Labor

In the following, I will expound on the division of labor among the Pokot, and how this is necessary to understand the above-mentioned conflicts.

In addition to conflicts about how working women affect Pokot society, there is also a significant diversity of working tasks that women and men are responsible for. The complex division of labor among the Pokot became especially apparent in 120 semi-formal interviews I conducted with men and women of various ages in Kadingding and Chemolingot. In addition to questions about marriage, parenting, and what it means to be men and women, I asked what it was people regarded as the work responsibilities of men and women, and whether those differ from each other.

Overwhelmingly, the people I interviewed stated that there were pronounced differences in work obligations: the man's job is to manage and herd livestock, especially cattle and camels, while the job of the woman is to cook, collect firewood, and draw water.

There was a variety of responses, with many men and women calling attention to the important role of women as "head of the family" who work hard to have a proper family and homestead for instance, but the consensus was unmistakable in terms of

⁴² See for an example of a gendered work division that resembles the outside work/household – public/private chores distinctions: Guttman 1996.

the ideals enunciated by both women and men. For men: “to take care of the livestock,” “support the children,” “feed the wives and children.” For women: “take care of children,” “take care of and respect husband”, “care for the children and husband,” “cook food,” “maintain the home.”

Though I was more interested in who actually did what and less concerned with who ought to do what in the opinion of the person I was interviewing, and though the main purpose of the survey was to prompt freewheeling discussion about work and gender relations, it was very revealing as it demonstrated that ideal behavior and actual behavior are two distinct features of a society.⁴³

This verbalization of the nature of the division of labor masks many aspects of the differing activities of each sex, but, most importantly, within the terms of its own definition it does not reveal that women also build housing and milk goats, camels, and cattle. The variety of tasks men and women perform every day became apparent when I handed out a written list with 85 tasks.⁴⁴ For each task, the informants were asked to state if men, women, or both would do it.

To my surprise, going through this rather long list of work activities proved to be a very engaging and informative endeavor – for me as well as for my interlocutors. I was worried that the list would be too long and the interviewees could get bored. On the contrary, it sparked a lot of discussion on the different kinds of work men and women do – and what is a norm, an exception, or a taboo. On several occasions, an interviewee would ask bystanders for their opinion, originating a spontaneous group discussion, thus demonstrating the complex division of labor that is hidden behind

⁴³ Compare to Hochschild and Machung (1989) who describe with regard to childcare in working-class families in the United States how ideals do not necessarily correlate exactly with practice.

⁴⁴ The items on the list were gathered over a course of six months. I initially started to write down activities that I perceived as being important everyday activities. In a second step, I showed my assistant and other interlocutors this list and asked if I should add tasks or remove any. I additionally followed six women for one full day each and documented their activities. If they were married, I would also document the activities of their husbands and/or ask about their daily tasks.

the narrative that men are primarily responsible for the pastoral production and women look after the children and the homestead responsibilities. The following table summarizes the main findings.

	Women	Men	Women and Men
Reproductive Work	Cooking for family		
	Washing clothes		
	Washing a child		
	Fetching firewood for family		
	Fetching water for family		
	Building traditional house		
	Building mud house		
Work for Homestead Production	Milking a goat	Slaughtering a cow	Ploughing shamba
		Slaughtering a camel	Weeding shamba
		Marking a cow	Harvesting shamba
		Marking a camel	Slaughtering a goat
		Herding cow	Slaughtering a chicken
		Selling a cow	Marking a goat
		Selling a camel	Milking a cow
			Milking a camel
			Herding goat
			Herding camel
Work for Money	Brewing and selling changaa	Selling animals professionally	Selling vegetables
	Brewing and selling busaa	Building a stone house	Owning a duka
	Fetching firewood for money	Producing honey	Selling in a duka
	Fetching water for money		Burning charcoal
			Selling honey

			Selling field products
			Building an iron sheet house
			Work as Teacher
			Work as Assistant Chief
			Selling tobacco
			Selling clothing
			Selling goat
			Working for an NGO

28 List of Tasks of Women and Men

Firstly, men and women have a lot of different duties to fulfill. And secondly, these tasks are not as fixed as the social narrative suggests. Both men and women have to contribute to the household for production and consumption. As many anthropologists have demonstrated: female labor is an essential part of pastoral production (see e.g., Dahl 1987).

While women are responsible for most of the reproductive tasks, (e.g., cooking, washing, fetching firewood and water) they are also responsible for milking the animals in the morning, overseeing the goats, and – if the homestead cultivates a shamba – hoeing, sowing, weeding, and harvesting crops and vegetables. Then again, even if it is uncommon for men to carry out or even assist with reproductive tasks at the homestead, all men know how to cook, fetch firewood, and wash their clothing. As Lodinyo confided to me while going through the list of tasks:

Washing, cooking, taking care of children, that is women’s work. But I can do all these women things., I know how to fetch firewood and cook, I can even wash my own clothes. I learned it when I was alone in the bush with the cattle. I still do it when I am away, and no woman is nearby (Lodinyo 13.12.2010).

Similarly, it is accepted that widowers or single fathers do all the necessary reproductive work at home. John, who is a widower in Chemolingot with three young children, supports his family by fetching water for the district commissioner and working as a cook for several hoteli. When I asked Blue one evening if that was not unusual for a Pokot man, he told me: “Why do you ask that? He must feed his chil-

dren. Shall he let them starve? A Pokot man takes care of his family. And when there is no wife, then the father has to be the mother for the children as well.” Likewise, women are generally very involved in the work of pastoral and household production. Every morning they milk the livestock. They are often primarily responsible for the care of the goats and kids.⁴⁵ When the husband and homestead head is away, the (eldest) wife – unless an initiated elder son is present – oversees the pastoral responsibilities and can also decide to sell or slaughter a goat.

Thirdly, the narrative disguises the importance of work for money for most families. For most, if not all households, pastoral production is not the only resource to support their everyday needs. Many households are not even capable anymore of nourishing their families by only relying on livestock. Work that generates money is common – for both women and men where many people do not have livestock anymore.

The list of tasks in table 33 is representative of the most widespread ways of earning money for work. These tasks require different levels of skills and knowledge. For permanently employed positions, education, instead of gender, determines the available jobs as well as the amount of one’s income. Men and women who never went to school and possess no language competence (speaking, reading, writing) in English or Kiswahili are only able to perform casual work. A secondary-school degree or even higher education, on the other hand, qualifies one for permanent positions with the government (ministries, schools) or with NGOs. Another source of income can be self-employment, as owners of a hoteli or a duka. Although no formal education is needed for such activities, all men and women who operate their own shops or res-

⁴⁵ Animals, especially goats, are also frequently looked after by uninitiated children, or left to roam free. Whether children are assigned these tasks very much depends on the individual family, the age of the children, and what other work the adults must do. Children are a crucial part of the labor force, but their tasks also tend to be assigned on the basis of gender. Boys hardly have to assist in cooking and taking care of younger siblings.

restaurants at least went to school for a couple of years, learning basic English or Kiswahili, and math skills.

While a secondary-school or college degree is required for all permanent positions (as teacher or governmental employee), the gender of a person is not an essential criterion for gaining a position. Women and men are more or less equally represented as teachers, nurses, and public administrators. The same can be said for workers in local restaurants and shops. On the other hand, the kind of casual work a person does is greater influenced by the sex of a person. Brewing and selling busaa and changaa, the local brews, are exclusively female tasks. Österle (2007) describes one man who tried to brew and sell changaa but stopped shortly afterwards because he was ridiculed by brewing women as well as male customers and could not sell enough to make a living. I did not meet one man who produced or sold busaa or changaa. Many times, I was told (by men and women) that it is just what women do – and that the brewing women would not allow a male competitor, nor would anyone buy from him, nor is it something a man is supposed to do. Similarly, fetching firewood or water for money is mostly done by women. Men do sometimes buy water from the borehole in Chemolingot and carry it to their nearby houses. However, they do not carry the water containers on their back like women do but use a wheelbarrow or motorcycles. Furthermore, these men are either not yet married or widowed. However, even unmarried men usually buy their water from women who will deliver it to their homes. Again, there are only male cattle traders,⁴⁶ and usually men burn and sell charcoal.

Nevertheless, casual work (just like permanently employed positions) does not simply reproduce the gendered division of pastoral labor. Customarily, elder women perform as midwives when a child is born at a homestead, while in the local hospital in

⁴⁶ Although women might buy or sell goats individually, but never professionally. However, even permanently employed women will use a male representative to buy or sell cattle or camels.

Chemolingot both men and women are nurses and help to deliver. While only women build traditional huts, men usually build iron-sheet or stone houses for money.

Despite all these opportunities for both women and men, women engage significantly more often in casual and semi-casual work than men. To understand why this is the case and to examine the dynamics of working women (and their impact on everyday life), I will analyze the reasons why women start to engage in work for money in the next part.

5.4 Women as Breadwinners

Why do women engage more often in work for money than men? During an interview about her life, I asked Chepesange why she started to sell vegetables three years ago.

I have to feed my children. I don't have goats. I don't own anything. I have to work to have food. I need money to send my children to school. I have to do something. That's why I asked my brother to give me some money to start my own vegetable business (Chepesange 10.05.2011).

Working for money is nowadays the norm in East Pokot. Of all families in my survey, 92% had at least one household member having some form of cash income. This is a staggering 80% increase compared to Bollig's (1989) data. Money is becoming even more important. The patterns of consumption have changed (Holtzman 2009). Families do not only eat food from pastoral production but desire beans, maize, ugali, and sugar. Since agriculture is only possible in some areas of East Pokot (Greiner et al. 2013), most families have to buy these products regularly. Commodification and a monetary economy have penetrated the whole area. An increasing enrollment in school means school fees and additional expenses for supplies and uniforms. Clothing tastes and style preferences have changed as well. Most men and women – pastoral as well as sedentarized – own and wear at least some Western-style

clothes.⁴⁷ Money is needed to travel outside of East Pokot (to visit a hospital) and to buy construction material for iron sheet or stone houses, and money is also needed to buy and operate cell phones, which are becoming more and more popular.

When Bollig (1989) made an inventory of household goods, he noticed that only a few households owned industrially produced objects like cups, bowls, or containers. In 2011, I compiled household inventories of 20 homesteads (10 pastoral, 10 sedentarized) and every household owned several industrially produced items, which had been bought for money.⁴⁸ Coupled with this is a shift in the importance of money for assessing wealth. Livestock has lost its dominant position as a wealth-indicator of a family. Indeed livestock, especially cattle, are still very prestigious, but money, and by association the people who earn money regularly, are esteemed as well. I once asked Lonyangadomo, a pastoralist with one of the biggest herds in the Kadingding Paka area, what he thought about Pokot who would work as a teacher or nurse but not own any cattle or goats:

Ah Anja, they are rich! Their cattle are the shillings they have. And this money is smart cattle. Money is in your account. It is there in the rainy season, and it is there in the drought season. The money stays the same, it even gets more every month, while the cattle and goats die. These people are rich. (Lonyangadomo 11.12.2010)

There are two ways of acquiring money: selling livestock or working for money.⁴⁹ Nowadays, the majority of Pokot households try to do both. As demonstrated for many other pastoral groups in Eastern Africa and beyond, economic diversification is a widespread risk-minimization strategy (Dyson-Hudson 1980, 1999, Sperling &

⁴⁷ Pastoral women tend to combine Western clothing with traditional beats.

⁴⁸ All households owned dishes, cutlery, and cups, as well as plastic containers. Many households also have plastic chairs, radio, and metal boxes for storage. Furniture is becoming an object of prestige and can be found in stone houses of employed and educated families.

⁴⁹ Pastoral products (e.g., milk) are hardly sold by families in my survey. Honey production is becoming a current way for young men to earn money. However, this is new and supported by development agencies (ACTED had a big honey campaign in 2008-2010), therefore I am categorizing it under casual work.

Galaty 1990, Bollig 2006, Bollig & Österle 2013). In East Pokot, too, most families cannot be called “pure pastoralists” (Sperling & Galaty 1990: 73) anymore (see Greiner 2021 for a discussion on pastoral identities). Either to gain additional income or out of pure necessity, many families use different strategies to meet their needs, and very often this means having at least one family member work for money. There are regional differences, however. These concern the questions of who works for money, why somebody works for money, and what somebody is doing to earn money.

More people work for money in towns like Chemolingot, where 93% have at least one family member who works for money. For many households, pastoralism is an ideal rather than an economic reality. Of the surveyed households, 28% do not have any livestock at all, while 72% have fewer than 20 goats. In the Kadingding/Paka area, pastoralism is still the economic norm. All surveyed households own livestock and attempt to cover most of their needs with pastoral production. But there too, nearly half of participating households have at least one family member who works for money. In both areas, most individuals who work for money earn small amounts of money (less than 1,500 KSh per month) through casual work (72% in Chemolingot; 95% in Kadingding). Interestingly, most of these individuals who work for money are women – in both areas. Of the casual workers in Chemolingot, 78% are women; the figure is even higher – 89% – in Kadingding/Paka. Furthermore, women do casual work on a regular basis, while many men do so only seasonally or occasionally. This is connected to the nature of many casual work possibilities. Brewing, fetching water and firewood are the most common casual practices (combined 80% in Chemolingot; 89% KDD), all three are basically only done by women. Collecting stones for construction work, on the other hand, is mainly done by men, but there is only demand a few times a year. Burning charcoal or assisting in hoteli and duka is a task that is equally performed by men and women in Chemolingot, while mostly women do it in Kadingding. In short, casual work is primarily women’s work (see chapter 2).

But why is casual work first and foremost women's work? I put this question to Father Mutua from the Catholic Church in Kositei, which runs several small community-development projects to generate cash-income possibilities.

I don't know Anja. I started many projects to generate income for the community. But only women come. I offered them possibilities to build a new church, to help to build the new school, but no man was really interested. The women come and work very hard. They built a bakery and now they sell chapatti and mandazi. But the men, Anja, I don't know. They come at the first day and then they never show up again. Especially with the young men, but they just don't want to. They are only interested in livestock. They go raiding before they would even consider working for money (Father Mutua 30.01.2010).

Indeed, many men cannot imagine doing casual work. However, they do not refuse to work for money per se – rather they fail to see any work opportunities, as the case of Temonyang demonstrates. Temonyang is in his early 20s and living in a small settlement near Chemolingot. He has no goats or cattle. His father died when he was very young and did not leave many animals to Temonyang's mother, who was his father's third wife. He went to school but dropped out after a few years. His older sister is brewing and the sole breadwinner of the family – where he lives with his younger brother and mother. He mostly accompanies his agemates during the day, wandering around. He cannot get married, yet. I asked him:

A: Why are you not working to earn some money?

T: Aaaah, what shall I do? There is no work here? I don't have any livestock. What shall I do? There is nothing I can do.

A: Why don't you help Chelima [his sister]? Or start to find some work in town, assisting at the ministry offices or going to the missionary?

T: That is women's work. A Pokot man cannot do these things. We are cattle men. We are not women

(Temonyang 05.02.2010)

The cultural narrative that men are pastoralists (and warriors) while women take care of the children and homestead offers much more flexibility to women than men when the pastoral system fails. Women are defined as mothers and wives, as caretakers of the family. By earning money with casual work, they do not neglect these duties and responsibilities but rather transfer these to a transitioned socio-economic

environment where pastoral production is not the only way to make ends meet anymore. They basically continue to fulfill the same expectations: they feed the children and take care of the family by earning money to buy food and clothing and to send their children to school. The narrative that previously masked the diversity of women's work is now facilitating their transition to a new livelihood based on cash income. However, men face much more difficulty in adjusting to a new livelihood of a "mixed economy" (in the sense of Dietz 1987:13). They cannot fulfill the cultural narrative of men as pastoralists anymore. A wealthy man is a Pokot who has stock, and children; but it is through stock that a man acquires prestige. Starting to earn money by doing casual work means two things at the same time for men: 1) abandoning the life of a livestock herder and by association the prestige of the symbolic capital stock; 2) doing duties that are seen as women's tasks like fetching water and firewood or brewing changaa or busaa, tasks that a Pokot man would never do, according to the ideals of society.⁵⁰

Many Pokot men are trapped in the cultural narrative of the "pure pastoralist". They can neither find adequate work nor replace their lost symbolic capital stock. Temonyang explained his conundrum to me: "I am old enough to get married but I cannot marry because I have no cattle, I don't even have goats. I cannot start a sham-ba because there is no rain. I cannot work because there is no work. So tell me, what shall I do?"

⁵⁰ Bourdieu calls such anomalies of adaptation in situations of rapid social change "hysteresis effects" (Bourdieu 1977: 83). In cases of rapid social change, dispositions, which were adapted to the social conditions under which they were formed, may be "out of phase" with the social conditions under which they must function. Bourdieu's most extensive analysis of dispositional lag is contained in his study of colonial Algeria in the course of its adjustment to an imported and imposed money economy. Largely because of the massive rural clearances carried out during the war, Algerians endowed with economic and temporal dispositions oriented to a traditional agrarian economy were uprooted and suddenly forced to confront an urban money economy. But dispositions "do not change in the same rhythm as economic structures," and the period of transition and readaptation generated much confusion, "as if these societies were not contemporary with themselves," as well as great hardship for those groups whose dispositions were most closely oriented to the traditional economic order and who were thus least well equipped to adjust to the demands of the emerging money economy (Bourdieu 1977: 4-5).

The most common explanation offered by men and women of varying ages in East Pokot as to why women are now working for money is “because they have to.” What they usually mean is that in numerous families it has become economically necessary for at least one member of the household to have paid work, and, in many cases, this family member is a woman. Women who engage in wage labor are anything but a homogeneous group. They differ in the forms of activities they conduct, in their socio-economic background, and in their level of education – and their reasons *why* they work for money differ as well.

Work for money is not just a choice but a necessity. It mirrors the socio-economic landscape of East Pokot. What you can do and what you cannot do is in a large part determined by the available socio-economic resources. “Women working for money” is an umbrella term, disguising the different working worlds of women. In the following, I will provide a short typology of women working for money to demonstrate the heterogeneity of women and their activities in East Pokot.

5.4.1 Casual Work

As I have illustrated earlier, casual work is widespread (see chapter 2). In Chemolin-got, it constitutes the most common occupation (30% of our survey’s respondents reported regular income from casual work) and the second-most common one in Kadingding (with 20% after herding at 41%). In both areas, around three-quarters of casual workers are women. Although all women would agree that they do casual work “because they have to” to make ends meet, the reasons *why they have to* are not the same. Women who do casual work can be distinguished into three different groups: very poor sedentarized living households; female-headed sedentarized households; and women in pastoral households which have diversified their economic strategy.

Poor Sedentarized Households

Beatrice came every morning to my house in Chemolingot to fetch water and in order to clean the offices of the nearby ministry of agriculture. We soon became friends and would often talk about recent events in the area that I might have missed while I was in Kadingding. At the time we met she was 34 years old and lived together with her five children and her husband in a small iron-sheet house in Chemolingot. “Why did you start working as a cleaner?” I asked her during one of our conversations. Beatrice replied:

My husband left his job at the Catholic missionary without anything and he couldn't find a job in Kositei. There are no contracts in Kositei. We were doing nothing there. We moved to Chemolingot because we thought that we could find small contracts here. It is a mixed center here. You can fetch water for someone or other things. My neighbor told me that they are looking for a cleaner – that is how I got this job (Beatrice 07.05.2011).

Beatrice's husband, who was working at the mission as a guard, was fired after he repeatedly arrived late and drunk to work. Beatrice did not work for money in Kositei since her husband's salary could provide for the whole family. Since they have lived in Chemolingot she is the sole breadwinner. She gets around 400 KSh per week for cleaning the building every day. Her husband has not yet found any paid work. When I asked her if she rather preferred her husband to have a job, she told me: “He cannot find a job. I would like that he works. I tell him that he has to look for something but until now he does not work. It is not good for him.” Beatrice takes pride in supporting her family, “My children are happy that they get milk every day. I usually decide how to spend the money. When I get the money, then I buy the food or whatever is needed.”

Like Beatrice, many women in Chemolingot start to work for money to feed their family. They often move to Chemolingot with their families after they have lost their livestock due to recent droughts, raids by neighboring communities or mismanagement. Chemolingot, as the district headquarters, offers good infrastructure and a lot

of cash-income possibilities. In fact, however, these cash-income activities are much more easily available for women than for men. Public offices and richer families are in demand for people who clean their facilities and provide for water and firewood. As shown before, men are reluctant to do those tasks, which are generally associated with women's work. Therefore, women often become the sole breadwinners of the family, while men struggle to adapt to the sedentarized working environment.

Female-headed Sedentarized Households

I recorded the following in my field notes after a morning walk in early February 2011:

When I was walking through Chemolingot this morning I could not stop thinking that it appears to be a women's town. Everywhere you go, you see women. I counted twenty women who were carrying water containers. All the small vegetable stalls that run along the main road are run by women. And on my way back home I passed the chief's office where a group of women was registering for a new work for money program. Is Chemolingot a women's town? (Field Notes 04.02.2011)

Indeed, Chemolingot has a high percentage of female-headed households (27.5% of the surveyed households in Chemolingot are female-headed). These households consist mostly of a widowed, divorced, or single woman and her children. These women moved to Chemolingot to find work here when they had no other means of supporting their children. There are also a lot "quasi-female-headed households",⁵¹ too. This term either describes a small percentage of women whose husbands are working outside of East Pokot (as soldiers, guards, policemen) and only return to visit for a few times a year but regularly send money remittances to support their families; or women who are married to husbands who continue to live a nomadic life in the more remote areas.

⁵¹ See for a comparable case of absent herd owners in Namibia Schnegg, Pauli & Greiner 2013.

Especially the number of households who are part of the second group is increasing in Chemolingot. Most of these women moved to Chemolingot to be able to send their children to school and to be closer to health facilities. It is common that they also bring along children from their co-wives who have remained with the homestead head. These women are not divorced, although they are sometimes estranged and separated from their husbands.⁵² Their husbands might visit them on a regular basis, sometimes bringing sugar or some money. This is, however, not enough to support these households the entire time. Fetching water and firewood or selling honey are common cash-income activities. However, brewing is the most ubiquitous and widely discussed activity of them all, which is why it deserves some in-detail discussion.

The most common types of home-made brews are changaa (spirits) and busaa (cereal beer). Changaa is a mixture of sugar, sorghum, fried fermented cereal, and flour. Everything is mixed in a large barrel, a smaller pot is placed on top, and a lid is placed on top of that. The barrel is placed on a fireplace and in two to three hours distillation takes place to produce a high-proof alcohol with an ethanol percentage ranging from 18 to 53% (Papas et al. 2010). Busaa contains the same ingredients but is not distilled. It has a significantly lower ethanol percentage, well below 10%, and is sweeter.

During an interview, Cheplake, who is a local brewer, describes her reasons for moving alone to Chemolingot:

I moved to Chemolingot in 2008. We did not have enough livestock at home. There was no food. I decided to move with my children because here is work. I started to fetch water and firewood. And with the money I earned, I started my own brewing business. I can send all my children to school and provide them with a better life (Cheplake 15.06.2011).

Cheplake primarily brews Busaa since she has young children and wants to be home in the evenings: "I just make Busaa because it is finished early, and you can go home

⁵² See the next chapter for more details on divorce (*kilakat*)

after that. If you do Changaa it takes until midnight to sell everything because people start drinking changaa later.” She brews Busaa usually once a week, earning 200 to 300 KSh a week. When I asked her what her husband thinks about it, she said: “My husband likes that I am doing it. Every time when he comes to visit me he finds the children happy and healthy. Food is here, even if it is not much, and they have something to eat. Now he is happy. He sees that it was right for me to move here.”

The way that growing alcohol production and consumption is changing society is controversial and regarded with ambivalence (see also chapter 2). A little while after the interview, Cheplake and I joined another group of Busaa drinkers. A local man by the name of Kamama got involved in a discussion about unlicensed brewing. He explained to them that it was illegal and led to violence and possible jail sentences.⁵³ Cheplake argued back loudly and asked what else she should do, explaining that she needed money for the survival of her family and did not like excessive consumption either. However, she felt that the state could not prohibit her only source of income. During this conversation, all those present listened with interest and began to laugh aloud repeatedly at the brewer’s quick-witted comments. Yet Kamama’s views are hardly a minority position. Hoteli owner Rael fondly remembers a time before brewing became ubiquitous, too.

There was not such a love of alcohol before. Those days people did not have any money to buy those things. They were not working and earning money, so they were not able to buy alcohol. Nowadays you can get your salary and you can just drink it away because it is your own money. Nowadays someone can choose to do whatever he or she wants with his or her own life (Rael 19.04.2011).

Interestingly, brewers are not ill-regarded by the Pokot per se. Even though there is an undeniable stigma associated with brewing, most people I have interviewed (except for the region’s small and wealthy elite who prefer to drink bottled beer any-

⁵³ This is, of course, correct. Kenya’s colonial administration prohibited the production of traditional beers as early as 1903. Ever since then, efforts have been made by Kenyan governments to curb illicit brews, though to negligible effect. In fact, regulation is rarely enforced, and consumption is steadily on the rise throughout the country (Muregi 2017).

way) still praised the women's initiative to become economically independent, considering them business-minded and enterprising. This does not prevent a certain degree of self-loathing on the part of several women. Chemosur, a resident of Chemolingot's Natutur district and mother of four, started brewing in 2000 to cover her children's school fees. "But I don't like it," she admits. "Alcohol is not good. I'd prefer to be a tailor and to make clothes. My husband is making stones. We don't have other incomes."

Unlike poor sedentarized households, many of the pastoral women who are brewing choose deliberately to move alone to a center to work for money. The reasons for this decision might vary (quarrel with co-wives, problems with husband, food scarcity). However, they all share the belief that they and their children will have a better life and future than they had before. All women state that they want to enable their children to go to school and find a job with a stable salary. Declining livestock numbers as well as the new prospects of a sedentarized life with access to education, health facilities, shops, and boreholes attract many women into leaving their husband's homestead and move to a town. Husbands will usually not object if the woman is able to support herself and the children. Starting to work for money offers a independent life, away from husband, co-wives and relatives.

Single mothers, widows, or divorced women have a similar motivation when they decide to move to a center. Anna, a young widow, and mother of four, explained to me why she moved to Chemolingot.

When my husband died, I was forced to marry his brother. You know these Pokot cultures; they force you to do things. Women have no rights. We are just objects. We are goats. I had to move to his place to live with him and his wife. And he stole all my goats and the last camel I owned. That was mine, Anja. It belonged to Merkow and me. But when he was dead, his brothers took everything and did not leave me anything. I was staying at his place, but his wife was mistreating me and he was mistreating me. I could not stay there. I left with my children and left my goats behind. I tried to get them back, but he says that I can only have them when I live with him. But I can't Anja! I can't. I prefer to live here

and be poor than being with this man. I rather work than being a slave to this man (Anna 25.06.2011).

Anna had no trouble finding work in Chemolingot and supported herself, her children, her mother and the children of her brother. She is working as a cleaner for World Vision and makes around 2,000 KSh per month. Centers offer resources to live independently on an economic as well as individual decision-making level. Single mothers who live separated from their children's fathers often dread moving back to their families. They fear the social stigma, they worry about being married off by their fathers, and they often don't want to leave behind the infrastructure that centers have to offer.

Pastoral Women

Casual work is not only a phenomenon of the centers. Many men and women not only rely on pastoral production but diversify their economic activities. This is not a recent development. Bollig reports of men and women who rely on casual work, sometimes called "ten-cent-jobs", in times of drought (Bollig 1994: 141). He points to a gender and class dimension of casual work: those men who start to make money by producing and selling charcoal, becoming cattle traders, or selling veterinary products belong to the very poor. Women who start their own brewing businesses, on the other hand, come from big wealthier households who can afford to spare a worker.

Although casual work is not restricted to times of drought and crisis anymore and can be found year-round, this gendered aspect of casual labor still holds true. Still, men who look for cash income have limited possibilities in Kadingding/Paka. Sales opportunities for charcoal are few, as well as the demand for construction workers, especially compared to the centers with offices and wealthier families. Women, however, have cash-income opportunities year-round. Women sell busaa and changaa

daily, several women have small hoteli, and in the weekly market on Friday, women come from the whole area to prepare and sell brews and food.⁵⁴

While the overall practices of women working for money are similar to those at the centers (brewing, selling food), their reasons for doing them differ. Women often do not work for money “because they have to” but rather their husbands encourage them to do it, contrary to the common narrative. Chepsukun explained to me how she started to sell changaa at the market in Kadingding:

My children are now big. There is no big task for me in the homestead anymore since all children are grown up. And my husband is not bringing enough food. During the last big drought, I had to go to Nginyang to fetch water. When I asked him for some money so that I could buy food, he told me that I should start brewing so that I can buy myself food or go to a hoteli when I am in town. He sold a goat for me and gave me 300. For 200 I bought unga and 100 Soghum. For the containers I asked the other women to give it to me for one day and that is how I started. I was seeing how the other ladies were doing it. So I just did what they did (Chepsukun 27.05.2011).

The phenomenon of men encouraging their wives to start brewing for money (or to prepare and sell food in a hoteli) is more than just a risk-minimization strategy. It is a symptom of a change of social cohesion. The homestead is not necessarily one social and economic unit anymore; to wit: I conceive of a household as a socio-economic unit if and only if there is significant spatial connectedness of all members (at least partially throughout the year) and all activities are financed via a singular budget which, in turn, the household head supervises (on occasion in consultation with his wives). Now, though, it is often men who consider themselves responsible for the livestock, while women with their own (even though small) income are responsible for ensuring that their children have enough food and anything else they need.

⁵⁴ The merchants selling tobacco, veterinary medicine, clothing, shoes, and other products are mostly not from the Kadingding/Paka area. Rather, these are professional merchants who travel every day to a different market in East Pokot to sell their products.

A homestead, then, comprises several semi-independent units of a wife and her children. These women have their own budgets but also the responsibility to take care of their own needs. The homestead head is still responsible for the pastoral production and allocates the necessary tasks to homestead members. However, if his wives have their own cash-income sources, he does not have to sell goats to buy food or household and children's supplies. When I talked with Chepsukun's husband about this, he told me: "I gave her the money to start her business. Now it is her responsibility to take care of the food. I don't care what she does with the money. But she cannot just come and ask me for more money. I gave her enough." It is hard not to draw an analogy with a severance payment for a former employee or a lump-sum settlement between former business partners; there is a formal economic quality to this abscission of social ties that indicates that, indeed, their household has ceased to exist as a singular unit.

Working women ease the burden of a homestead and the pressure to cover all needs with pastoral production. They also reduce the responsibilities of the homestead head. By encouraging his wives to work for money, a lot of budgetary quarrels he has with his wives will stop. And finally, it leaves him with more money at his disposal that he can spend to buy more livestock, a cell phone, medicine, a radio, or beer from one of the female brewers at the market. But they also weaken the social ties. Chepsukun is sharing one homestead with her husband and her two co-wives. She makes around 200 KSh per week, which is enough to buy sugar and maize meal for her children and her. Yet many women with a regular income move away from their husband and co-wives. They do not necessarily move to the center or far away, but they do seek not only budgetary autonomy but also spatial independence (often due to conflicts with co-wives and husband; see settlement and marriage chapter for more). Like the poor sedentarized households, the homestead is often divided into geographically scattered independent household units consisting of a mother and her children, which are regularly visited by the homestead head. Many of these female-

centered household units are semi-sedentarized. They do not accompany the herd but operate their business at the nearest borehole in the dry season.

These short depictions of women doing casual work have demonstrated that 1) female casual work is common in East Pokot; and 2) the reasons for doing casual differ substantially. In the centers, one group of women does casual work out of economic necessity: often as the sole breadwinners of their families. Some women, mostly widows, single mothers or women who prefer not to live anymore with their husbands, chose to move to the center specifically because of the casual work opportunities. The small cash income provides just enough money to support themselves and their children. In the more remote areas, men are often the driving force who encourage women to start a business. Women are, to a substantial extent, able to support their children and themselves on their own, thus defusing the stresses for the homestead head linked to pastoral production.

It is hard to trace the origins of casual work in East Pokot; studies and reports from the last 30 years have all documented, although to a varying extent, the presence of casual work (Bollig 1994, Österle 2007, Greiner, Vehrs & Bollig 2021). Accounts from other groups suggest that the spread of casual work is encouraged by the emergence of centers as well as progressive sedentarization (Hjort 1979, Odegi-Awuondo 1992). Offices and shops need cheap labor to run their business, while permanently employed residents are willing to pay for previously domestic services like fetching firewood and water.⁵⁵ The higher demand for casual work correlates with an increas-

⁵⁵ I agree with this analysis. If you compare the demand for casual work between Chemolingot and Kadingding, it is striking that in Kadingding there is hardly any demand for hiring people to do domestic services. Most households have enough people to do these tasks. The only opportunities for casual work (besides of running a hoteli or brewing) offer two permanently open duka, who sometimes hire women to fetch water or men to construct new buildings. Another source of sporadic small cash-income can be work-for-money development projects. During my stay one such project was carried out by ACTED (cleaning waterhole), giving 25 men 400 KSh for cleaning a waterhole, a task that took around two weeks to complete.

ing demand for domestic services and indicates an increasing stratification in the centers (as substantiated by the survey, see chapter 2); as well as transforming social ties and socio-economic units in the remote areas.

Cash income provides these women with money to buy food and clothing, as well as to pay for their children's school expenses. Therefore, it offers many women a certain degree of (financial) autonomy. At the same time, they are more socio-economically vulnerable due to having to fulfill more duties and responsibilities, and often cannot rely anymore on support from their husbands or relatives in times of crisis.

Following Alwang, Siegel & Jorgensen (2001), I conceive household vulnerability as the inability to manage risks adequately, proactively or reactively, e.g., illness, violence, loss of income, hunger, that threaten the household's overall well-being. Vulnerability obtains, hence, due to a lack of risk management assets (precautionary savings, social networks, livestock etc.) that can be allocated before or after a negative event. Unsurprisingly, vulnerability thus understood is intricately connected, both extensionally and intensionally, to poverty.

Thus, it is vital not to romanticize casual work as the vehicle for social change. Casual jobs are hard work without making much profit. Women who fetch water for money have to carry the water containers filled with 10 liters of water several kilometers from the river to a customer, getting paid 50 or 100 KSh for 10 liters of water (depending on the season). Women (and men) who are doing casual work rank among the poorest in East Pokot. They might be able to buy food, but not much more. Casual work does not provide enough money to afford clean water, private school education, or professional health services.

5.4.2 Working Women and Social Class

It is important not to reduce women's work to casual work. Many women, primarily in the centers, are self- or permanently employed. They own shops, they work as

teachers, they sell clothing, they are nurses, they coordinate relief food distributions. Professional working women are an important and normal part of life in the centers.

As I have mentioned before, the type of work a person can do in East Pokot is not so much culturally regulated as dependent on education, financial resources, and skills – and only to a much lesser degree on the sex of a person. Accordingly, 23 of the 44 business in Chemolingot are run by women. The biggest primary school in Chemolingot (and the district) has a female principal, and over a third of all teachers at the two primary schools and the secondary school are women. Women who own a big duka or a well-running hoteli are well-known, highly esteemed, and respected. They are part of the local elite. They are just about all married to very successful men who have businesses or permanent employment as well.

These women illustrate how social class in East Pokot is nowadays determined either by economic resources or education: Chepesange, or Mama Lina, owns the second-biggest hoteli in Chemolingot. She employs two cooks and four kitchen and service assistants. Mama Lina's hoteli serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner – selling approximately 150 meals every day. She is married to one of the oldest and wealthiest businessmen in Chemolingot who has a big duka right next to her hoteli. Together they have seven children; the eldest three all go to university. She started the hoteli ten years ago:

I used to work in one of my husband's shops but I wanted to have my own business. I had saved some money and he would assist me in the beginning as well. I just bought everything I needed and started to cook. I had two girls who would assist me in the beginning and from there my hoteli was growing (Mama Lina 09.04.2011).

Mama Lina went to school for three years. She cannot speak English, but her Kiswahili and her math skills are very good. She dropped out, got circumcised and married her husband. Like all businesswomen in Chemolingot she wears Western-style clothing. She and her husband are active members of the Full Gospel Church. When I

asked her if her husband had encouraged her to start her own business, she had to think for a while before she would answer the question.

I think the reason why I started was not so much my husband. I think it was because I learned that I can do it and how I can do it. At that time Kenya Freedom from Hunger was having this project here. They would come to our church and tell us about projects for women. They had this group where they would teach other women how to start a business, how to take care of customers, how to take care of the finances. I think it was a petroleum business. One time they invited our whole group of church women to a trip to see Samburu women do business. And I think that is when I learned that women can be businesswomen too. I was assisting my husband, but the children were small, and I just did not think about it. But when I learned about and saw other women doing it, I realized that I wanted to have my own business (Mama Lina 09.04.2011).

Like Mama Lina, most women who are now successful businesswomen or have permanent employment were at one time part of NGO or church programs. Since the 1980s, several NGOs and churches have focused their activities on women. They encouraged women to start their own businesses and provided many women with scholarships for their school education (for more details see history chapter 2). Besides the financial support and the transmitted knowledge about self-employment and business skills, they introduced the idea of work for money – especially women working for money. Women were much more willing to engage in cash-income activities than men and participated in training for basic business skills and management. Even though none of these businesses is still operating, these programs nonetheless showed women and men that entrepreneurship is a cash-income opportunity for women, and how it could be achieved. All self-employed women I talked to had participated in or still knew about these programs.

But motivation and knowledge about self-employment is not enough. To start and run a business successfully (even during the rainy season when buyers are less frequent), owners need starting capital. Self-employment is not only about business skills, but also about financial means. Like Mama Lina, many businesswomen started their businesses with assistance from their husbands. This is only an option for peo-

ple who are already wealthy (either in terms of livestock or money. Only women and men who are already part of the elite can afford to open and run a big duka or a big hoteli. The economic elite is thus reproducing itself (for a comprehensive discussion on elite reproduction see chapter 2).

But livestock or monetary assets are not the only indicators of social class. Education becomes increasingly relevant for the elites, as well as the whole area. All well-paying permanent job positions require higher education. Here too, NGOs and church programs had quite an impact on East Pokot and working women, and the structure of social class.

Most of the teachers, nurses, or public administrators have received scholarships from churches and NGOs to facilitate their education. It is only recently that people have started to value schooling, both in terms of its instrumental value, i.e., for attaining well-paid job positions and conferring social prestige, and as an end in itself. Nearly all members of the educated, economically successful elite in East Pokot have a very poor background, coming from families who were willing to send their children away to school. Wealthier pastoralists needed their children to assist with the pastoral production; sending a child to school was synonymous with being poor and only having a small herd (for an extensive analysis of the changing attitudes towards education see chapter 5).

Susan, who is working for the Ministry of Education, was only able to attend school because World Vision supported her after her father had died. She surpassed everybody at school, having the best results in the exams for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) of the whole district, which gained her another scholarship – this time to a secondary school in Kapedo. “I was so happy. Everybody was so proud of me. First, I was afraid that I would not be able to go there because it was so expensive. But World Vision stepped in and paid for my school fees. My mother gave me some money for travel and food, but it was not much.” Besides education, exposure

to life outside of East Pokot is an experience that many of the local elite share. Having interacted with people from all over Kenya, seen and lived in cities like Nairobi or Nakuru, and experienced the markets and goods changed the perspectives of many. Shop owners travel to Nakuru and bring new goods to East Pokot; pupils introduce gadgets like cell phones and computers when they return, and they also bring the latest ideas and values.

Susan is highly active in the community. Her main objective is the education of girls. She managed two projects that went to more remote communities to demonstrate the importance of girls' education. Susan describes her mission as follows:

I have to show these Pokot, us Pokot, how important it is to send girls to school. All this FGM, all these early marriages, all this has to stop. They don't value girls here; I want to change that! I learned so much in school. I could only go to school because other people helped me. That is what I am doing now with my work. And this is also why I sponsor girls I know privately (Susan 16.06.2011).

Susan has recently finished a bachelor's degree in psychology. Her thesis analyses how Female Genital Modification affects girls psychologically. The results from this study enter directly into her work at the ministry of education when developing current ideas and programs.

Many women who were sponsored by World Vision, or other organizations, share Susan's enthusiasm and willingness to become involved socially. All women I talked to sponsor education of children of neighbors or relatives; many are part of local development initiatives to further education and infrastructure in the area. The different programs and scholarships not only shaped the future of many women but also the vision of their future. Local ideas of gender equality, working women, and women's rights are probably connected to these new opportunities that women were offered. I do not claim that NGO workers and church officials convinced women that they were oppressed; I want to suggest that through these programs women were able to learn about and experience new activities, and they gained new perspectives

which enabled them to reflect on their lives and introduce ideas of change in the area.

Susan, as well as many other educated women, feels the obligation to “give something back to the community.” She explains: “I am a role model for women in this community. I need to live a good life that inspires other women to follow my example.” Being a role model is not limited to professional life. For Susan, as for many other members of the local elite, it also means being married monogamously, living a Christian life, and abstaining from alcohol (local brews and imported). Susan’s husband works as a District Officer in southern Kenya and returns every three or four months to their home in Chemolingot. It is particularly important for both of them to be active members of the community. Together they own one bookshop and a duka, both managed by Susan. They go to church together and counsel young members of the community.

Christina is one of the women that Susan counsels regularly. She has recently finished her diploma in early childhood education in Kapedo and has now returned to East Pokot in the hope of getting a teaching appointment soon. Christina did not return to her parents’ homestead in Koloa but lives with her sister’s family in Chemolingot. “Why should I go back to Koloa? There is nothing I can do there. There are no jobs, no electricity. Chemolingot is a center. I hope to get at least a contract here to support myself a little bit”, she tells me when I asked her why she decided to live with her sister. She knows Susan from her days as a pupil at the secondary school in Chemolingot. She sees Susan as an example. “Susan is a rich and strong woman. She has a big house, she is married, has a respectable job. She is highly successful. I want to have a life like that in my future.” With the help of Susan, Christina works as a temporary assistant for a local NGO. She assists non-English-speaking Pokot translating official documents.

Christina is one of many younger women with a high-school, and, increasingly, a college education. They moved to the centers to go to school and are reluctant to return to the rural homesteads of their families. Many have lived for some time in Nairobi, Nakuru or Kapedo during their college education. Most of them aspire to work with NGOs or the government. "Education will change this community. People will learn and see that they cannot continue to live like that in the bush. They need clothing; they need to send their children to school. That is the only way development will come to this area," says Christina by way of explaining why she decided to become a teacher, voicing opinions shared by many among the educated youth. This young generation wants to bring change to the area, by which they mean more shops, more development programs, more schools, and more work opportunities. Of the women and men under 40 who went to or currently go to college, 84% chose a program that is related to developing the area (community development, social work, education, accounting). These women emphasize their own important role during these times of change. They see themselves as mediators between the pastoral livelihoods of the more remote areas and the sedentarized livelihoods in the center. They support younger relatives in getting an education, they assist their relatives when translations are needed, and they try to introduce modern technologies to the area. Some have asked their families to sell livestock as starting capital for a business. Christina plans to ask her brother-in-law for a loan. She wants to buy a computer to offer computer courses for the community. "I don't know when I will get a teaching position. This can take years. I need to do something. And they are not paying me well at Kimarot. I could make much more if I had my own computer."

Sedentarization and stratification have promoted a new social class that is determined by education and economic means. A local elite, consisting of educated and (often) wealthy women and men, shapes the life in the centers. They are beneficiaries and intensifiers of the stratified labor system. Owners of shops and restaurants hire uneducated women (and men) as shop assistants and servers and waiters. All em-

ployed women can only attend work because they pay young women (or distant relatives) to take care of their children and household chores while they are at work. Only because there is such cheap labor can the elite afford and organize their way of living.

5.5 Working Women and Marital Conflicts

In the next part, I will demonstrate that marital conflicts tell us a lot about the conflicting values and expectations caused by women working for money.

One morning, Beatrice did not come to my house to fetch water. We had a loose appointment to continue our conversation about her life in Chemolingot. Since I had no other plans, I decided to walk to her homestead, a 20-minute walk away. When I arrived, I first could not find her there either. One of her neighbors told me that she went to the hospital for some treatments. I started to get worried and went straight there. When I found Beatrice, she was in treatment for a laceration on her head and a mild concussion. When I asked her what happened she did not say anything. Later some other women told me that her husband came home and had beat her up under the influence of alcohol.⁵⁶ A few days after the incident, Beatrice told me what had happened:

I was at home sleeping when my husband came home. It was extremely late. I asked him where he had been, but he refused to answer. Then he started to be terribly angry and shouted at me. He told me that I am a bad wife. He wanted something to eat. It was so late and the children were already asleep. He told me that I would not be a wife because I would not prepare food for him. He said that I would hide money from him and that I would treat him badly and that he needed to discipline me (Beatrice 21.05.2011).

⁵⁶ In Pokot, people usually do not share their personal troubles; it is much more common that neighbors or friends will communicate private information (see for a similar case in Indonesia; Röttger-Rössler 1993).

Beatrice's experience with domestic violence is not an exception. Physical and verbal abuses happen quite frequently between spouses (poor and rich alike), especially when a woman has a cash income. Beatrice had a rocky relationship with her husband. Disputes always revolved around money. Beatrice, who is the only person providing money for the household, would buy food and other necessities for the household. Her husband wanted to have access to the remaining money, doubting that she spent it all on food. She refused to give him any money, assuming that he wanted to buy local brews. "I don't have much money. We need the money for food and school supplies. I cannot allow him to buy changaa with it. If I don't give him the money, he gets angry."

Budgetary matters are the cause of most conflicts between married and unmarried couples. Most arguments concern the ownership and decision-making power regarding how money should be spent. Men want to have full sovereignty over the household budget, while women refuse to hand out their earned money. "It is my money. I have earned it. I buy food and send the children to school. I will give something to my husband but not everything. What if he spends it all? Then I have nothing left," Beatrice explained to me.

Men do not feel respected by their wives. They fear that their position as head of the homestead is threatened when their wives are the main breadwinners. Under the colonial administration, livestock was transformed into a male commodity. Money, instead, does not have any gendered connotation. Women as well as men can earn money. That, however, does not prevent spousal conflicts. Without a herd and without any cash income, men can neither "take care of the livestock," nor "feed the wives and children," as the ideal of a head of the homestead demands.

A different argument concerns the role of women as wives and caretakers of the family. Many husbands in Chemolingot criticize what they see as many women not providing enough for the family because they are away working. They do not "take

care of children,” they do not “take care of and respect their husband”, nor do they “cook food,” or “maintain the home”. Many Pokot men argue that women are disregarding all their duties and responsibilities.

Here we revisit the core dilemma of the lazy men and disrespectful women allegory from the beginning of this chapter. Many Pokot, men and women, would tell me that the problems came with the brewing business. Women had to start to work when their husbands had lost their livestock. Many women would start their own brewing business, selling busaa and changaa to men. These men started to care only about alcohol and not about work anymore. This vicious circle of brewing suggests that female brewers are in a paradoxical situation. On the one hand they have to brew alcohol to feed their families; on the other hand alcohol poisoning the male spirit and eliminates any chance that men can find work, thus, women are facilitating and even causing the idleness of their own husbands.

This explanation has its flaws. Firstly, it is misogynistic and blames the social problems mainly on the women. Secondly, it omits important realities: 1) Alcohol is a problem for both men and women in East Pokot. Drinking is not a men’s thing. Women drink frequently as well. Drunken women are quite common, in the centers and the more remote areas (for literature on degendering alcohol see Österle 2007 for Pokot and Guttman 1996 for Mexico). 2) Women practice a variety of cash-income activities. Brewing is one of many. However, conflicts on budgetary matters happen in most households where women are the main breadwinners – independent from their cash-income activity. 3) With or without alcohol, men struggle to find jobs (see previous discussion).

Furthermore, it depicts only one argument between couples but ignores other conflicts that erupted with women who work for money. Many women complain about greedy men. But these women are not so much talking about men that are unwilling to share their income (although that happens as well); more often women would

complain that their husbands did not support them and their children anymore since they started to earn money. Chemelsaw, who moved to Chemolingot to send her children to school, sells vegetables. Her husband makes a living from pastoral production with his other two wives, near Akwichatis. She criticizes her husband's behavior: "My husband does not give me anything. When he comes to visit me, he brings nothing. If I ask for some money or some sugar, he refuses to give me anything." Chemelsaw feels neglected by her husband. In her opinion, he has the responsibility to support her and not to let her struggle alone in Chemolingot. Many men, however, feel no obligation to support their wives, even if they would have the means through pastoral production. Purity told me his perspective: "Why should I give my wife any money? She can feed herself now. She has her own money. I gave her the money to start her business and I am not even asking her for anything."

I suggest that to understand the analogy of the "lazy man" and the "disrespectful woman" it is necessary to look at the key social values of *tekotön*, respect, and *chomnyogh*, love. *Tekotön* and *chomnyogh* are not clearly defined but entail a loose set of norms and expectations regarding how Pokot men and women should behave. I asked 122 men and women how they show *tekotön* or *chomnyogh* in their everyday life.⁵⁷ People would tell me that you show it by specific greetings to elderly men and women, by respecting your parents, staying faithful to your husband or wife, always telling the truth, following the advice of the elders, and treating your children well. When I asked them specifically how husband and wife would show *tekotön* and *chomnyogh*, people said that wives "have to follow their husband's advice," "not argue with their husband," "make sure everything is good at the house," "not disagree with their husband," and "make always sure that the children and husband are happy and not hungry." Husbands are supposed to "make sure that the family has eve-

⁵⁷ For similar values among the Maasai, see Hodgson 1999: 124; the article also inspired this question during my research.

rything they need," "treat their wife fairly," "do not punish her without reason," and "make good decisions for the family."

All these values are closely related to the narrative of the division of labor which I presented at the beginning of this chapter. Here too, ideals and values apply to social relations in a pastoral economy. Here too, the idea of women working for money is excluded. Women working for money destabilize the social value system by adding new social realities that are not covered by the existing ideals. Husbands expect their wives to "make sure everything is good at the house," while they provide for the economic basis of the family. When a wife is starting to earn money, while the husband does not, he cannot make sure anymore that his family "has everything they need." If a wife is challenging his budget sovereignty, he perceives this as disrespectful behavior, as indicating that women are disrespecting his role as head of the homestead. Simultaneously, women feel that men are no longer providing for the needs of the family, and are thus disrespecting their responsibilities. Women working for money adds a new variable to the equation of an ideal relationship that questions the duties and responsibilities of men and women.

This also becomes apparent when considering those households where there is less open conflict: wealthy and sedentarized households. When pastoral women start to work for money, they are often encouraged by their husbands to do so. Here, the men mostly have a stable herd that can feed their family. The economic activities of their wives do not threaten their position as the central economic figure of the household. What conflicts do arise usually do so if women accumulate some money from brewing. If a woman, for example, is buying her own goats at the market, pastoral men often enforce their position as head of the homestead, and thus as owner of the herd. When Lodinyo's wife claimed that three goats were owned by her because she had paid for them, he went and sold those goats immediately, using the money to buy changaa and get drunk. He explained his actions as follows: "All livestock

belong to me. I make the decisions. She can ask me to consider to sell or not sell a goat – but in the end, they are mine – and I make the decisions.”

Similarly, there is hardly any public conflict between spouses of the elite in Chemolingot. Here, the husbands have permanent job positions as well, and/or own profitable shops. They do not have to fear that money-earning women could threaten their position since they have a very stable economic background and enough means to support their families if needed. In both cases, men’s position as heads of the homestead is not threatened. They can provide for the family, with their livestock and their salaries. Moreover, the consequences of spousal conflict are much higher for wealthy pastoralists, as well as wealthy sedentarized Pokot. Pastoralists will lose important labor power that takes care of many tasks of the pastoral production, while wealthy sedentarized Pokot can lose the respect of the community, and thus their socio-political influence. A divorce would come close to a social stigmatization, contravening Christian values and their exemplary function.

Women working for money do not cause distress per se. Conflicts arise when the social realities are not covered by the social values anymore. Customary role models can no longer be applied when women’s economic power increases while the men’s decreases.

Conclusion

The existing notions of “lazy men” and “disrespectful women” are an example of what Gramsci calls a “contradictory consciousness.” Contradictory consciousness is a descriptive phrase used to orient our examination of popular understandings, identities, and practices in relation to dominant understandings, identities, and practices (Gutman 1996: 14). For instance, with regard to the practices of women earning money, many are aware of the image of the “disrespectful wife.” Yet, the beliefs and practices of many do not accord neatly with this monochromatic image. Many Pokot – women and men – are impressed by the work of women. Many praise female wage

laborers for their work ethics. You often hear the statement: “Women are now the head of the homestead and the head of the family. They earn money and cook for the family.” The same is true for men. Not all men are perceived as “being lazy.” Men who lost their livestock but try to seek alternative ways of economic stability (by using education, migration, self-employment) are respected by their wives and the community, even though they might not fulfill the dominant understanding of ownership and economic power.

However, the occurrence of the trope of the “lazy men” is also a critique of the cultural narrative of the gendered division of labor. The quote from the beginning of the chapter entails the sentence “Women have to do everything.” The transformation of the working world and its social structure in East Pokot has also caused a re-evaluation of the division of labor. Naturalized gendered tasks and responsibilities became visible through female cash-income activities. These new female practices bring the allocation of labor into question and open the floor for debates on the workload of men and women and how duties must be divided.

How these debates affect marriage and other sexualized relationships will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: The Meanings of Marriage: Being and not Being Married

I decided to get circumcised to find a husband. Anja, I am in my twenties. I am old! I don't have a job. I don't have a husband. I don't have any children. And the pastoral men don't want to marry me because I am educated. That's why I decided to get circumcised. And now I can get married to all men. I am ready to get married and start a family. I don't mind if I'm the first or the third wife. (Chepotoi 07.06.2011)

I met Chepotoi when one of my interviewees, Chepesange, took me to visit her niece in the circumcision huts. When we arrived, I was first introduced to “the elderly women” who were present to teach the girls about their duties in adult life and marriage. They told me that one in the cohort was not like the others and that I should meet her. She was older, and would speak English just like I did.

I walked to the group of circumcision graduates who were gathered in the shades. Chepotoi stood out among her peers simply by virtue of being several years older, i.e., in her early twenties rather than in her teens. But that was not the only fact that made her special. Unlike the other young adults, Chepotoi had graduated from Chemolingot Secondary School; by all accounts she was an educated woman who spoke English fluently. However, after graduation she had not received any college funding (due to her grades being below average) or found a job. Also, no man had visited her parents to ask for her hand in marriage. Pastoral Pokot, she explained to me, considered her too educated, and other men had not been interested either. Thus, with no college prospects, no income and no fiancé, Chepotoi had sought a new future for herself. Therefore, she was here. Being circumcised, she reasoned, would allow her to marry into a pastoral household eventually, thus providing her with a definitive place and a life path in Pokot society.

Leaving the circumcision area, I gave three women a ride in my car back to Chemolingot. Ann, my assistant (with a college education) and the three pastoral women (without any form of education) discussed Chepotoi's decision with much fervor. All of my passengers agreed that Chepotoi's decision was unheard of and “somewhat

crazy”; becoming circumcised this late in life and after receiving a secondary-school education was something that you just did not do in East Pokot. In fact, they could not name a single similar incidence. Chepotoi’s choice, it seemed to them, amounted to throwing away her education and invalidating her prior achievements in life. In addition, the issue of practical feasibility loomed large: how would she accommodate to her new position and how would she get along with her co-wives?

Still, Chepotoi gave me cause for reflection. It is too easy to dismiss her story as an anomaly and an odd case that does not allow any generalization. Rather, it poignantly illustrates the two different female life models and life cycles respectively – one pastoral and one influenced by Christianity and education – that are in effect in East Pokot’s changing society. They generate friction and challenges, but as I will show, also opportunities for women forcing them to navigate an increasingly complex system of social roles and expectations, especially regarding the institution of marriage.

Marriage and being married is at the core of both life cycles. Hence, it is of the greatest importance to understand the notion of marriage in East Pokot and how it is affected by the socioeconomic, cultural shifts detailed in previous chapters.

6.1 Pastoral and Non-Pastoral Life Cycles

There are two distinct life cycles⁵⁸ in effect throughout East Pokot that delineate female biographies: 1) a *pastoral life cycle* which is structured via the four Pokot age categories as they apply to women; and 2) a *non-pastoral life cycle* which is shaped by an educational and career path as well as by the Christian church. In what follows, I will first sketch the pastoral life cycle, and then the non-pastoral one.

⁵⁸ There is no uniform definition of the term and the use of the concept of life cycle in the social sciences (O’Rand and Kracker 1990). In the literature, however, they are used very congruently: with defined phases (stages), temporal development (maturity development) and often generation (reproduction). I understand life cycles as an ideal type of a development path from which many alternatives develop and branch off.

The pertinent age categories relevant in the above sense break down for women as follows:

1. Tipin: young girls before initiation
2. Chemeri: female initiates during their seclusion period
3. Mrar: women before the birth of their first child
4. Kor: women after they have given birth
5. Kokon: old women (often referring to women past menopause)

By comparison, the age categories for men are the following:

1. Karachinen: boys before they are initiated
2. Tiyos: male initiates during their seclusion period
3. Moren: young and middle-aged men
4. Poi: old men or elders

As is evidenced by juxtaposition, for both age categories the respective circumcision initiation rites play a pivotal role; but in addition, for women it is marriage and subsequently the occurrence of giving birth that structures the set. Unlike the age categories for men, those for women are based on their sexuality and procreative powers. Importantly, the pastoral female life cycle is relatively fixed or rigid; to wit: it does not permit major variations in the succession of phases.

Let us delve into the pastoral female life cycle and its phases in greater detail. Phase 1 constitutes early childhood. In this phase, differences between the sexes in terms of gender roles are not yet salient; just like boys, girls are expected to help care for the cattle, and goats are often left in their care. However, gradually they are encouraged to focus on supporting their mother in household chores, thus, becoming acquainted with reproductive tasks.

Phase 2 is marked by the circumcision which constitutes the end of childhood and beginning of adult life respectively. It is usually between the age of twelve and 15 that teenage girls ask their parents' permission to become circumcised. During the

subsequent week-long healing and seclusion period of the young women, suitors approach their parents who, in turn, assess their respective adequacy. Once both parties reach an agreement on the bride price, the newly circumcised woman is introduced to her soon-to-be husband, possibly as early as immediately after the circumcision graduation ceremony.

Phase 3 is characterized by the contract of marriage and entry into married life. The corresponding ideal of marriage is polygamous. In their new role as wives, women are expected to bear children, take care of the livestock allocated to them by their husband, and perform household tasks such as building huts, preparing food etc.

Phase 4 commences with the incisive event of motherhood. In this stage of life, women enter their function as heads of family.

Phase 5 is usually marked by the onset of menopause. When their own children have grown up one by one, women begin to establish their own households away from their husbands; often, they join one of their adult sons and live out their later years with them as highly respected household members whose advice is sought and cherished. It is usually the youngest wife who stays with their husband to care for him in his senior years until his death.

By comparison, the non-pastoral life cycle is basically the same for both men and women. To put it differently: there is no specifically female non-pastoral life cycle among the Pokot. In addition, and in contrast to the pastoral life cycle, the latter does permit variations in the succession of stages. Even though the sequence sketched below constitutes an ideal type that is referenced in discourse among the Pokot, it is possible for someone to pass the relevant stages in a different order or, indeed, not to pass some of them at all.

The phases that are pertinent for the non-pastoral life cycle are as follows:

1. Early childhood

2. Primary school enrolment

3. Graduation

4. Career entry

5. Marriage

6. Retirement

As mentioned above, the type of life cycle is essentially determined by a person's school career, which, in turn, is shaped by church institutions, qua sponsors, and subsequently by that person's professional career.

Let us now consider the six phases in greater detail. Phase 1, not unlike in the pastoral life cycle, is characterized by the young child being involved in household activities (chores, taking care of livestock etc.) and given ample time to play and roam freely. It is noteworthy that a non-pastoral life cycle may well commence within a pastoral household depending on whether the child's parents decide to send their offspring to school. A significant step within this phase consists in the child attending nursery school which, throughout Kenya, follows the Anglo-Saxon model of incorporating kindergarten and pre-school educational elements. Commonly, children attend nursery school until they are between six and eight years of age.

Phase 2 commences with the enrolment in primary school, which the child usually attends for eight years. As regards the quality of primary school education and subsequent job prospects, there is a marked difference between schools in regional centers such as Chemolingot and Nginyang and those in more rural areas like Kadingding where you have one teacher for the whole school. Importantly, simultaneously with the attendance of school a strong link to Christian religion is established in that virtually all schools are funded and operated by ecclesial sponsors. By default, then, a child who attends school also attends Mass once a week – even though baptizing itself is uncommon.

The decisive event of Phase 3 is the primary school graduation ceremony which the young adult attends between the ages of 14 and 16 and which is explicitly conceived as an alternative to or, rather, a substitute for pastoral circumcision rituals. In regard

to non-pastoral girls, it is decisive whether or not they become circumcised. If they decide in favor of circumcision, then, nowadays they are opting de facto out of the non-pastoral life cycle. In past decades it was different, since back then many girls were also circumcised during school holidays and returned after the break. In the last ten to 15 years and especially with the prohibition of circumcision, this has changed. My interviews with parents, school officials, and local authorities leave very little doubt that schoolgirls today are no longer circumcised and that it is only pastoral girls who receive circumcision. This is all the more interesting since circumcision constitutes the passage into womanhood (see above). Circumcised women make fun of uncircumcised ones and often call them children (*tipin*). Older and middle-aged women told me that they have therefore then decided to become circumcised, because they did not want to be a child. Schoolgirls and young women today do not share this concern. For instance, Glaedis, who is 18 and attends Chemolingot Secondary, told me:

When I am back in the bush sometimes, they will mock me and say that I am Tipin and they are Mrar. But I do not mind. That is just what they believe. They don't know anything other than their life. I know that I do not need to be cut to become an adult. I go to school. I go to church. I hope that I will perform well and graduate so that I can go to college and find a good job (21.05.2011).

There are still rescue centers in schools that take in girls whom their parents want to become circumcised but who refuse this step. However, there is little need for this type of institution these days as it has become common for schoolgirls to remain uncircumcised (at least in established and more prestigious primary schools in centers like Chemolingot or Nginyang) and for pastoral girls who do not attend school to get circumcised.

Events that mark a class's graduation are festive affairs with music and solemn speeches. This occasion has community-wide importance: grades are published in local newspapers to great interest; they determine the graduates' further educational prospects, with the year's best being eligible for more prestigious secondary schools.

Secondary education, which is optional, takes another four years, and final grades matter notably both in terms of admission to university and colleges and public funding. There are only a few graduates from East Pokot, though, who make it to a district secondary school or even a national secondary school; far fewer still are admitted to state universities. The vast majority attend so-called tertiary colleges, which are vocational schools, many of which train their students to become teachers or nurses.

Phase 4 is marked by a person's career entry. As detailed in chapter 2, young, educated Pokot prefer government jobs, given the fact that the Kenyan state is the region's primary and best-paying employer. Those who leave school after their secondary education e.g., aspire towards becoming police officers, soldiers, or nurses. Those who hold a tertiary degree look for positions as teachers or civil administrators or seek employment with an NGO. However, in the case they do not gain permanent employment from the outset, many content themselves with temporary contracts and paid work e.g., for developmental initiatives to bridge the timespan until they land a job.

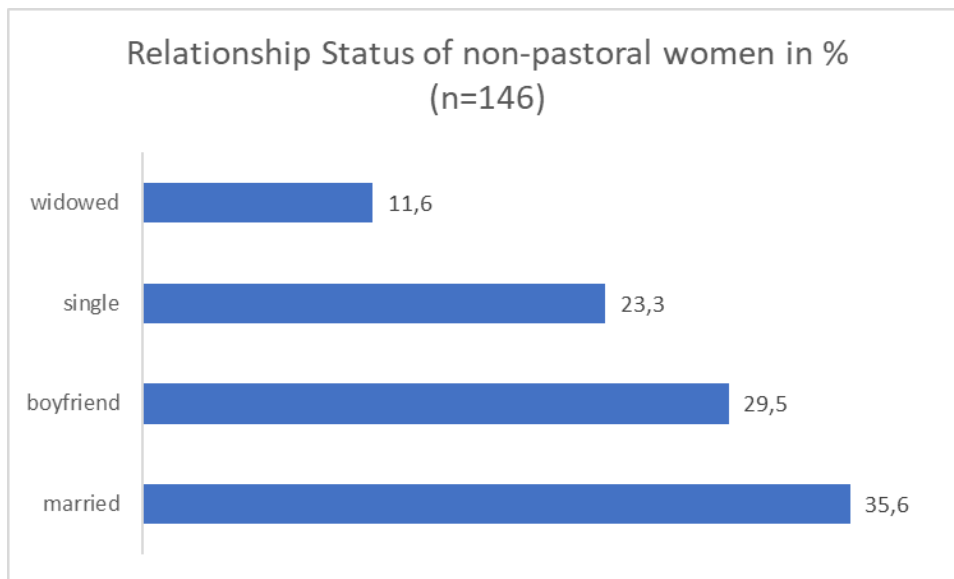
Phase 5 commences with a person getting married. In the non-pastoral life cycle, marriage is something that men and women envisage once their professional life is "on track" and they can sustain themselves with their job income. The ideal of marriage tied to this life cycle is that of monogamy. Usually, a woman will marry her boyfriend from her school days, a fellow student from college, or a co-worker. The wedding itself comprises the handing-over of the bridewealth together with one's parents in a traditional pastoral ceremony and, possibly, a Christian consecration later on. Just as in the pastoral life cycle, the ideal of married life consists in having many children. Often the married couple will employ relatives with a pastoral background to take care of their children and household, thereby providing the financial resources for their kin's education.

As regards phase 6, retirement and old age, there is not much to be said in regard to the non-pastoral life cycle just yet. The reason is simply that there are not that many well-educated retirees in East Pokot since the respective life cycle is a more recent phenomenon that is tied to the socio-economic and cultural changes in the last decades.

Both life cycles – the pastoral and the non-pastoral – coexist in East Pokot. It is noteworthy, too, that they are not categorically distinct or mutually exclusive in the strictest sense. Rather, they denote two regulatory ideals from which real-life biographies may deviate to some degree or, indeed, display overlaps. Nowadays, pastoral families seek to diversify their economic base by sending some children to school and raising some pastorally.

As regards the interaction between both cycles, it should be noted that there is no designated possibility for women to actively switch from the non-pastoral life cycle to the pastoral one, as Chepotai's case shows. Her life choice is very rare. In fact, the women with whom I spoke in my car ride back from the circumcision ritual had never heard of a similar case. It does happen quite often that girls drop out of primary school to become circumcised or that they get pregnant and never return to school. But with graduating primary school and especially with entering secondary school, it is expected that women persevere and stay in the non-pastoral life cycle; and the women in question usually do not want to go back to a pastoral life either, it being a very different form of existence than the one they have got to know and appreciate.

Thus, there is a combination of factors in play that facilitate the trajectory of attending school and later on getting a job, both in terms of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic social pressure. What happens more and more, though, is that women abandon the pastoral life cycle and orient themselves towards the ideals of the non-pastoral one. For instance, this includes women who are leaving polygamous marriages because Christian values, which they endorse, forbid them from polygamy or those who do not want their daughters to become circumcised like them.



29 Relationship Status of Non-Pastoral Women

Average age at marriage of women (n=311)

Pastoral	16.8
Non-Pastoral	19.5

30: Average Age at Marriage of Women

Average number children born per women (n=311)

Pastoral	7.6
Non-Pastoral	4.2

31: Average Number Children Born per Women

Despite crucial differences between both life cycles, one should also take heed of notable similarities. Chiefly, both cycles acknowledge being married and having many children as the hallmark of a flourishing, well-lived life. This ideal is strongly influenced in the non-pastoral life cycle by the Christian notion of a romantic relationship between man and woman at eye level; nonetheless, there is among these strata the widespread understanding, found in the pastoral life cycle as well, that one has to respect one's husband and must follow his directions (at least in public) given that he is the authoritative decision-maker.

However, educated Pokot women, who partake in the non-pastoral life cycle, marry much later and more rarely. While 84% of pastoral women over 14 stated that they were married, only 35.6% of non-pastoral women have tied the knot. Furthermore, non-pastoral women marry later in life than pastoral women (19.5 vs. 16.8%) and they also get fewer children on average (4.2 vs 7.6%). To elucidate the causes behind this startling disparity it is imperative to take a closer look at the various phases and details of relationships between man and woman. I will therefore take a closer look at the ideals of marriage and the relationship between husband and wife, as well as the beginning, duties and expectations, and endings of marriage.

6.2 Anthropological Conceptualizations of Marriages in Sub-Saharan Africa

For close to a century, the social institution of marriage has played a pivotal role in anthropological theory-building and research on Sub-Saharan African societies, and with good reason: kinship and marriage are conceived as the key for unlocking all aspects of social life since the conjugal union constitutes the foundational building block of society and its main reproductive unit (McDaniel & Zulu 1996). Given this central importance, then, anthropological theorizing on marriage in Sub-Saharan society – to wit: its form, function, structure, development etc. – has not been homogeneous or unidirectional. Rather, it has taken place (and continues to do so) within a multipolar field of competing methodological approaches and respective normative premises. To better grasp and utilize the conceptual resources provided by this vast discourse, I am following Pauli (2019) in distinguishing between four schools of thought that provide focal points for sorting the literature. These schools and the succession in which I shall briefly delineate them do not form a chronological order of academic inquiry; rather they constitute a network of intersecting approaches with differing core themes.

The first such school worth mentioning is the structural functionalist approach, harking back to British social anthropology (Radcliffe-Brown, Forde 1987 [1950]), which

highlights marriage as a timeless, stable institution that reproduces social structures (see Borneman 1996: 220): it “legitimizes” children, establishes new ties between households (and corresponding social capital), generates reciprocal rights and obligations between the sexes in a solidary union and so forth. On this account, marriage throughout Sub-Saharan Africa is virtually universal – everybody gets married eventually, irrespective of social standing, character traits, physical ailments etc., and a life without marriage is deemed an anomaly in and of itself (Antoine & Nanitelamio 1988). Yet, despite the bold claim regarding the universality of marriage, this does not mean that marriage itself is unchanging. Quite the contrary, as Pauli (2019: 28) succinctly summarizes: “Marriage develops through different stages involving successive prestations (in general bridewealth in the form of cattle, payments, gifts, services) exchanged between the groom’s and the bride’s kin groups.” In this context, marriage is not so much conceptualized as a fixed, irreversible state of being but rather as a process whose direction is, to a certain degree, even reversible or can be stopped. In short, while this school of thought does indeed hold that social structures are invariably rearranged and reproduced via marriage, marriage itself, though a stable institution, does permit variations and a degree of procedural fluidity.

By contrast, the second paradigmatic school of thought is based on the opposing claim that African marriages and family bonds are caught in a downslope of decline and destruction. Rather than highlighting conjugal union as a permanent, indelible fixture of Sub-Saharan society, relevant theorists suggest that as a consequence of “cultural contact” (Hunter 2007: 694), i.e., colonization, as well as socioeconomic disruptions affecting the Global South, such as monetization, urbanization, Christianization, or migration, the social fabric that ties together kith and kin is irreparably weakened. Specifically, the substitution of livestock-based marriage payment with cash payments, it is argued (see Burnham 1987), devalues the social capital that is generated by such types of exchange and, in virtue of this effect, undermines the existing systems of reciprocal obligations that, heretofore, had been held together by

the institution of marriage. On this account, then, marriage qua social institution is constantly under pressure from destabilizing sources – with especially dire consequences for women and their social standing and means of autonomy.

The third school of thought that is deserving further discussion takes up the above-mentioned diagnosis of a fundamental shift affecting the institution of marriage throughout Sub-Saharan Africa yet does away with the strongly normative judgment. Instead of telling an evaluative narrative of marriage's regrettable decline, relevant theorists (e.g., Barnes 1952; Bledsoe 1980; Comaroff 1981) confine themselves to stating a society-wide shift from "traditional" marriage to "modern" marriage. The latter is associated with a number of notable phenomena, namely

the decline of polygyny and the rise of monogamy; the monetization of bridewealth and the commercialization of gender relations; an increase in the number of children born out-of-wedlock; and an expansion (or loss) of female autonomy and changes in household structures, especially an increase in female-headed households." (Pauli 2019: 30).

Furthermore, social change as it affects marriage is not conceived as a universal phenomenon but as a variegated process bearing features depending on the cultural, socioeconomic, and political framework in which it occurs. In the same vein, theorists following this line of thought acknowledge that phenomena of change may yield both opportunities and risks for women – the former consisting of e.g., attaining greater economic independence or having the choice to stay single; the latter comprising, e.g., a curtailment of autonomy or additional burdens arising from the pressure to earn money via wage labor. Yet, it is argued, there is no structural determinism at play here that predefines actions and outcomes. Instead, women are deemed to have a modicum of wiggle room to navigate the process of change via negotiation and strategizing, emphasizing their autonomy as shapers of marriage and the rights and obligations entailed therein (Parkin & Nyamwaya 1987; Bledsoe & Pison 1994).

The fourth and final paradigmatic school of thought under consideration emphasizes the plurality and dynamic nature of African marriage (Cole 2004; Cornwall 2002;

Helle-Valle 1999; Johnson-Hanks 2006, 2007b; Lewinson 2006; Masquelier 2005; Spiegel, Watson & Wilkinson 2005). The central thesis states that the notion of marriage does not permit a singular exhaustive definition, characterized by necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, but rather constitutes an umbrella term subsuming various forms of relationship that share a family resemblance. This has to do, among other things, with the practice of polygyny and its various transformations that continues to persist despite a growing pro-forma predominance of monogyny. As Pauli (2019: 35) observes, the

continuity of polygyny is also connected to the procedural character of marriage, the second characteristic of African marriages that renders a definition of the institution difficult [...]. Marriage in many parts of Africa is a long, ambiguous process rather than a discrete single event established by a legal, ritual or economic transaction.

In this context, relevant theorists note that unlike in Western society, the property of being married in Sub-Saharan Africa is a fluid construct that does not assume binary value (married/unmarried) but rather degrees or grades. As a consequence, the seemingly trivial question of whether or not someone is actually married may leave room for ambiguity and interpretive leeway depending on the discourse in question.

The academic literature various schools highlight seemingly inconsistent features of Sub-Saharan marriage in discourse and practice, such as conceptual conflicts between particularity and universality, stability and decline, ordering via social structures and individual autonomy, and so forth. Yet, this impression is by no means cause for concern but, instead, accentuates factual contradictions surrounding the lived institution of conjugal union. As we survey the relationship configurations in East Pokot, both in the pastoral and non-pastoral life cycles, we shall encounter explanatory elements from each of the above-discussed schools of thought which, in their entirety, provide insights for unlocking the meaning of marriage and relationship in a changing society in East Pokot.

6.3 Beginnings of Marriage

In the following, I will analyze both life cycles in comparison with a focus on the notion of marriage and other long-term relationships and take stock of similarities and differences. In terms of analytical structure, my inquiry considers (1) beginnings of marriage and other long-term relationships, (2) duties, rights, and possession within marriage, (3) ideals of marriage, and finally (4) conflicts and endings of marriage. As will become evident, all these interrelated aspects reflect the comprehensive socio-economic and cultural change that pervades Pokot society.

6.3.1 Boyfriends and Girlfriends

“It is normal to have a boyfriend. It is very rare to marry a boyfriend.”(Chepete, 27 10.06.2011)

This sentence by Chepete sums up premarital relationships in East Pokot. Pre-marital relationships between the sexes in pastoral Pokot society comprise both platonic friendships and sexual relations. This basic fact holds for both the pastoral and non-pastoral life cycle. In fact, young women and men socialize often and spend time together chatting and gossiping. However, the significance and potential biographical importance of boyfriend-girlfriend relations as well as the duration of this type of relationship phase varies greatly between both settings.

In the pastoral life cycle, this is a rather short stage in early youth which ends with a girl’s circumcision and subsequent marriage. When I sat down with Chepusa in Kad- ingding to talk about her wedding and married life, she looked back on her boyfriend with fondness:

Chepusa: “I had a boyfriend before I was married, before I even went to the circumcision hut. He was a neighbor. We grew up in the same area. I have known him since I was a little kid. We would meet in the bush and at dance nights. I really liked him.”

Anja: “Did your parents know that you had a boyfriend?”

Chepusa: “Of course not,”

Anja: “Why?”

Chepusa: "That is not something you talk about with your parents. The father and mother are not supposed to know. You meet with them in secret, only your friends know." (Chepusa: 24.05.2011)

Although the parents are not supposed to know about premarital relationships, there is no general taboo on premarital sex in pastoral Pokot culture either. And, indeed, it does occur rather frequently. All the women and men I talked to had had romantic relationships before they got married. However, as Chepete said in the opening statement above: it is very rare to marry a boyfriend. There is a prevalent sense among young pastoral (and non-pastoral) Pokot women that getting married is an ineliminable part of one's life, and that you do not marry your first boyfriend. The only exception is if they become pregnant by him before circumcision. In this event, there is strong expectation on the responsible father-to-be to start marriage negotiations with the pregnant woman's family. As Elijah told me: "When a man has fathered [*sic*] a girlfriend and he does not intend to marry her, all men will stop talking to him. We will not recognize him in the kokwö until he talks to the girl's family." I only encountered a very few cases where a pastoral woman got impregnated before her circumcision. Most girls get circumcised around the start of their menstrual cycle and get married soon afterwards. Premarital pregnancies occur much more often in romantic relationships in non-pastoral Pokot who go to school and do not get circumcised.⁵⁹

Non-pastoral boyfriend/Girlfriend

The main reason for more out-of-wedlock pregnancies among non-pastoral women consists in the age at which women are getting married. Table 32 shows that non-pastoral women getting married are on average three years older than pastoral

⁵⁹ I did not encounter romantic relationships between pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot in my field research. What often happens is that a relationship is ended or interrupted because one part of the relationship, the boyfriend or girlfriend, is sent to the school. The relationship then continues during the school vacations. In case of a pregnancy, in about two-thirds of the cases I documented, the woman breaks off her education. Schoolboys who have impregnated a pastoral woman usually first finish their schooling and marry her afterwards.

women. And if you look only at women with a college degree you get an average age of 23. Hence, non-pastoral women usually have more boyfriends and for a longer time. Premarital (or nonmarital) relationships play a significantly bigger role.

Similar to the pastoral setting, non-marital relationships are not taboo. However, girls are expected to keep them private and hidden from parents, school, and church officials. Premarital sex is an entirely different topic. Most first romantic relationships develop in primary school. Having sex before marriage (and thus during one's school career) is strongly discouraged by teachers and church ministers. Both institutions, school and church, have two arguments: 1) Christian faith does not allow for premarital sex; 2) premarital sex puts you at risk of getting infected with AIDS.

What these two justifications do not show, however, is the true consequence against which officials warn (especially) women. Edwin Riamanguar, the head of the secondary school in Chemolingot, explained it to me like this:

We have all these campaigns to save girls. We have campaigns against circumcision, against early marriages. We address the parents. But when we want to advocate girl-child education then we have to talk to the pupils. We need to talk with them about safer sex. Once a girl is pregnant, I cannot do very much. I can offer her parents that she is welcome to return to school. In most cases, however, she will drop out and marry the father of the child and she will not return to finish her education (Edwin 08.02.2011).

In fact, most school dropouts in late primary school or early secondary school are girls who got pregnant from their boyfriends.⁶⁰ To put it pointedly, having a boyfriend is a risk – for one's school career and, by extension, for one's job prospects and economic autonomy. As is the case in the pastoral life cycle, pregnancy often entails marriage between the young woman and man in question, although there is no universally binding social requirement to do so. Especially when the couple are young adults, they might decide to start a household and cohabit without getting married.

⁶⁰ Source: Ministry of Education in Chemolingot 2010

Despite these risks, 30% of the non-pastoral women in my survey stated that they currently have a boyfriend, and the vast majority met their boyfriend in school. Catherine remembers the start of her first relationship:

Catherine: We were together in secondary school, and we went both to the Anglican Inland Church. He started to send me letters. I felt very happy. We met after school and things started to get more serious.

Anja: Did you ever talk about getting married?

Catherine: It was not the right time. We didn't reach the time to talk about marriage and family. I was still young. I knew that I still had a way to go. I still had to finish secondary. So, to talk about marriage is wrong. Because I still have a long journey ahead. (Catherine 19.05.2011)

Given the length of a young woman's school education and the subsequent job search, the boyfriend-girlfriend phase often continues into their 20s. Young women's reluctance to get married earlier than that is not only based on the strong urge to first complete their education and attain permanent employment. It has also to do with the prevalent ideal of marriage as such insofar as it is tied to having children, although all women I talked to plan on having children in their lives. Many non-pastoral women fear that it will be not possible to complete education after having given birth. Hence, many of my interviewees told me that they are very careful to not get pregnant from their boyfriends.⁶¹ Catherine and Leonard ended their relationship shortly after Catherine moved to Nairobi to start her college degree in Social Development. Through a mutual acquaintance, she met Patrick, who lives in Churo with his family. He is studying to be a teacher. When I asked him if he would like to marry Catherine, he said: "I pray to marry her one day. As soon as we have finished our education, we plan to get married."

In fact, many schoolgirls want to marry their boyfriends (and many schoolboys want to marry their girlfriends), being driven by a romantic ideal of an exclusive, equitable

⁶¹ Most use condoms. There are also contraceptive injections available in the hospital, but they have a reputation of being unhealthy for the woman. When the partner does not want to use condoms, most state to practice coitus interruptus.

love between one man and one woman. "I believe in love Anja. I know when I meet my future husband. I chose my husband. Nobody can make this decision for me," Roda (17), who is in her last year of secondary school, told me. It is exactly this attitude that is shared by many secondary-school and college graduates. The ideal of a romantic pure love is perpetuated by Christian churches, which seek to instill in both boys and girls an appreciation of monogamy. In the many church services I attended, I often witnessed sermons about the special relationship between man and woman, the connection that both share throughout their lives and how the marriage between the two implements the Word of God and how the two will live a happy life with their children as God intended.⁶²

Like pastoral premarital relationships, boyfriends and girlfriends are kept as a secret. Even though Leonard and Catherine had been in a quite serious relationship for nearly three years, they never talked about this relationship with their parents. Catherine told me: "Why should I introduce him to my parents? That would be embarrassing for my parents and for me as well. The first time they will meet him is when he visits them to ask my father to marry me." Only they themselves and their peers know about such relations; they remain exclusively within the domain of young adults.

Non-pastoral women strive to finish their education and to choose their partners for themselves. They enjoy their relationships with their boyfriends because they are at eye level and there are no differences in terms of power. Nonetheless, all pupils and college students want to get married. I had an afternoon break with a group of secondary-school graduates where we got to address the difference between boyfriend and husband; Jessica explained to me: "There is a big difference between having a boyfriend and a husband. A husband treats you like a wife, he can beat you and quarrel with you. But a boyfriend is your equal, and he can never say that he is big-

⁶² Romantic ideals from TV shows or magazines hardly play a role since neither is available. If radio is listened to, then it is mostly in the form of Christian stations with music and preaching.

ger than you. You can make jokes with your boyfriend and have fun, but you must respect your husband. He is much bigger than you are.” Damaris added that “everything that a boyfriend does for you is voluntary, he does it out of affection. However, a husband must support you, he has to make sure that you are living comfortably, whether he likes you or not.”

Exactly this conundrum of wanting an equal relationship and a supportive, responsible husband makes the journey into marriage quite challenging for many non-pastoral women.

6.3.2 Getting married

The process of getting married is the same for pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot. All marriages start with three consecutive phases: negotiations, the wedding ceremony, and the founding of the new household. The demographics might differ between pastoral and non-pastoral couples – pastoral women usually get married soon after their circumcision, while non-pastoral women marry in their 20s – but the rituals and ceremonies are basically the same. Although all non-pastoral Pokot are members of a Christian congregation, Christian wedding ceremonies are unheard of in the lowlands.⁶³ I will therefore first describe the marriage practices in East Pokot; and subsequently analyze the ways in which non-pastoral and pastoral experiences – as well as influences on the marriage process – differ.

As soon as a man has completed initiation and accumulated enough stock (or wealth in case of non-pastoral Pokot) to pay bridewealth, he can marry.⁶⁴ The only restriction regarding age-sets and marriage, is that men of the same *asapantin* (age set) should not marry each other’s daughters.

⁶³ However, Christian church weddings are becoming more common in the highlands of East Pokot around Churo and they quite regularly take place in West Pokot.

⁶⁴ This varies in relation to the wealth of individual families, the number of sons in a family and so on (for example, the only son of an older wealthy man will marry young).

There are three alternative ways of getting married in Pokot: through *negotiation*, where the marriage and bridewealth are discussed and agreed upon beforehand by the two families involved; through *capture*, in which the bride is captured and taken by force; and through *elopement*, where the couple take it upon themselves to run away together secretly. The two latter methods usually only occur when attempts to obtain a wife through negotiation have failed, but if either of these methods is successful, the husband is obliged to begin bridewealth negotiations as soon as possible after the bride has reached her husband's home.

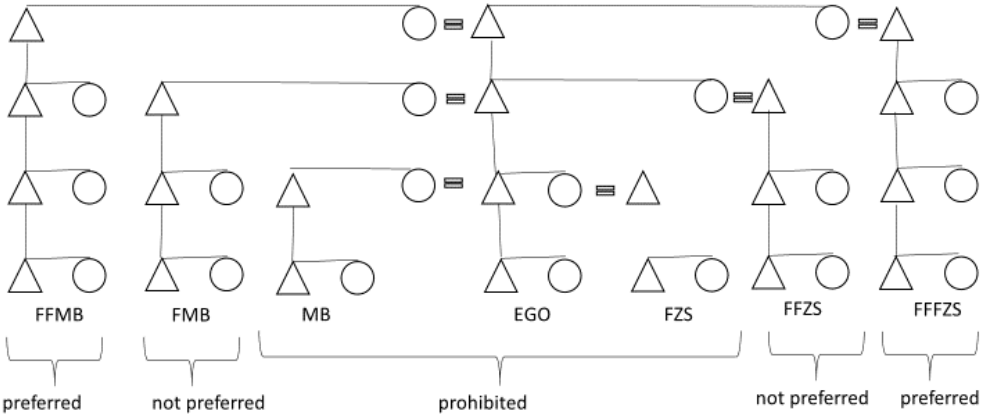
Bridewealth negotiations are of the utmost importance because they establish the legality of marriage, and thereby confirm a commitment of socio-economic support between the two families involved. Once an agreement has been reached by the two families, and the bride has been taken to her husband's home, the couple are legally married. In a very general sense, the wife-receivers remain in debt to the wife-givers as long as the woman in question fulfills her duty as a wife, especially that of producing children. Marriage gives a man certain rights regarding his wife and her economic and reproduction capacities, and gives a woman, and her family, various rights and privileges with regard to her husband (see a detailed description of stock friendships in Pokot society in chapter 2).

Marriage Prohibitions and Preferences

The first consideration of a suitor's eligibility concerns his age set and kinship relations, rules about which are adhered to strictly. As mentioned above, fathers of the same age set (or *pun*) cannot marry each other's daughters. Marriage is not allowed between members of the same patrilineal clan either. Furthermore, an individual (man or woman) may not marry members of his mother's brothers' patrilineage or his father's sisters' sons' patrilineage. Marriage is not prohibited, but at the same time it is not considered desirable with members of a person's father's mother's brothers' patrilineage or father's father's sisters' sons' patrilineage. Marriage is not only allowed, but actually preferred, however, with members of a person's father's

father's mother's brothers' patrilineages and father's father's father's sisters' sons' patrilineage. In short, the ideal marriage is said to be between two patrilineages where there was a successful marriage at least three generations back (Meyerhoff 1982: 62-65).

The following diagram illustrates the range of lineages which are prohibited, not preferred, or preferred as marriage partners:



32: Pokot Marriage Preferences and Prohibitions

Marriage is rarely allowed with members of an individual's FFZS's patrilineage or FMB's patrilineage but may take place if an alternative spouse cannot be found. Finally, it is not considered right for man to take more than one wife from any one patrilineage.

One effect of these marriage prohibitions and positive and negative marriage preferences is to create a well-defined network of kin for each individual (Bollig 2006). It is interesting to note that the regulations concerning the distribution of bridewealth also define and help to maintain the same network of kin, as will be seen below.

These marriage prohibitions pertain to both pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot, as Alice (26) told me: “When I was in school and I met someone I didn't know, I would immediately find out where he was from, who were his parents, what was his clan, did we have connections and so on. Everybody does it. You just want to know.” However, non-pastoral Pokot come from all corners of the region, in some cases even beyond the region, so there are rarely conflicts with the rules.

Once the eligibility of a prospective groom has been established, other factors are then taken into consideration. A common response by men and women when asked what they look for in a groom, is *kot*, meaning “mouth”, and implying that a man should have a good character and be able to act and speak well in public. However, in reviewing the negotiations that occurred during my fieldwork, the most important considerations seem to have been wealth. A father often accepts the suitor who can pay the highest amount of bridewealth for his daughter. This may be outweighed, however, by other factors such as the parents’ desire to have at least one of their daughters living close by. When the daughter is on a non-pastoral trajectory and currently attending school or college, the family might try to contact the daughter (e.g., through a brother) to find out if the daughter knows this man and would agree to this union.⁶⁵

Through the giving of brides and, conversely, the payment of bridewealth, marriage establishes long-term commitments and obligations between two extended families and, in a broader sense, between two *korok* – neighborhoods. Because of the rules of exogamy and the fact that patrilineages, or sections of patriclans, are localized, men have to seek wives from outside their own neighborhoods.

⁶⁵ As described later in this chapter

Marriage by Negotiation

When marriage is arranged through negotiation it is considered ideal, and usually agreed upon during the negotiations, that the groom will bring a portion of the total bridewealth to his affines on the night he comes to take his bride home, and then pay the rest in installments over the years.⁶⁶ Agreements reached during bridewealth negotiations are often broken, mainly because of circumstances involving the bride and groom rather than their families. The Pokot themselves recognize this and specify it as being the main reason why bridewealth is paid gradually over the years. Marriages are very fragile during the first few years and are infrequently dissolved. Most pastoral women do not know their respective future husbands. They meet them shortly before the wedding ceremony and move to their homesteads right after. They live with a family they do not know in an environment they quite often have not been to before. Especially in marriages with an exceedingly large age gap, newlywed women often try to run away in the first year. Parents try to convince them to return. However, in cases where the bride is not able to adjust at all, the marriage might be dissolved. Nearly all married pastoral women I talked to had struggled to settle into their new lives.

Chepotiot (36) who was married right after her circumcision at the age of 15 recalls her wedding day:

Chepotiot: I met my husband on the day we got married. The father will show you the person you will marry and that is the day you will get married. I didn't feel anything when I saw my husband for the first time. I married him because my father had given me out to his family. You have to respect your father.

Anja: Would you have preferred to marry someone you know?

Chepotiot: Before my wedding I was thinking that it is better to choose your own husband. But then my father married me off. I was not happy with this strange

⁶⁶ The role of the groom in marriage negotiations is the same for pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot; they follow exactly the same protocol.

person. I was very depressed; I did not love him. I only stayed because I had to respect my father's decision.

Anja: Did you try to run away?

Chepotiot: No, I was very upset in the beginning, and I missed my family. But I got used to this place and to my husband. Now I am part of his family and I love and respect him. Look around. Everybody here married this way and now everybody is happy (Chepotiot: 07.06.2011).

The bride's family knows about the difficulties women face transitioning into marriage. Since they have an interest in the marriage lasting (and hence the bridewealth transactions as well), they encourage their daughter to respect their wishes and to stay married. When a daughter runs away from her new husband, they will bring her back. If she returns over and over again, the father will consider, in close consultation with the mother of the bride, dissolving the unit, especially when they have concerns about the safety of their daughter. Chepochesor recalls the brief marriage of her oldest daughter:

Nakapeli married a man much older than her. He already had three wives and wanted a fourth. He came to my husband and asked to marry her. He was a very wealthy man, there was no need to refuse. After the wedding Nakapeli moved to his homestead in Kapello. But she ran away after a few weeks and returned to our homestead. Her father told her that she had to go back. I told her that she has to respect her new husband. When he came to pick her up, we told her to stay with her husband. After some weeks she returned again, and then again. My husband was very angry. I was afraid that she would hurt herself. I said to my husband that she will not stay with this man. She will eat poison rather than stay with him.⁶⁷ The next time she returned we did not send her away (Chepochesor 23.06.2011).

When I talked to Nakapeli, she related a very similar story about herself.

I did not like this man [her husband A.B.]. He was very old. I did not want to stay with him. I was afraid of him." (Nakapeli 28.06.2011).

⁶⁷ Pokot women threaten to poison themselves as a last resort in unhappy marriages. I never accounted a case of actual poisoning— but I have heard of many cases where women threatened to poison themselves.

Since then, she has stayed with her parents. Such aborted marriages also fall under certain social rules: importantly, when the bridewealth is returned, a different potential husband can come forward to ask for marriage negotiations

For this reason, both parties agree that, before final payments are made, it is important to see whether the husband is reliable and able to provide a secure domestic unit; whether the newly married couple will stay together and, in particular, whether the woman will stay with her husband; and whether the woman is able to produce her husband's children. If any of these conditions are not fulfilled, it could cause the breakup of a marriage, but the circumstances vary considerably from case to case. A marriage is less likely to break up as more bridewealth is paid and as more children are born.

The fact that it usually takes a man a long time to pay off his bridewealth debts, for whatever reasons, has the effect of strengthening the alliance between his kin and that of his wife. The outstanding debt keeps the man and his kin obliged to his wife's kin, and therefore willing to help them should they ever be in need. As long as good relations exist, and some bridewealth has been paid, the wife's kin, in turn, are more willing to help their son-in-law while some bridewealth payments remain outstanding, for that will ensure that these payments will eventually be made.

When initiating marriage negotiations, a suitor will brew beer (approximately KSh 50, i.e., 0.5 € worth) and he and his close male relations and neighbors will take this to the home of the girl he wishes to marry. In most cases the actual negotiations are finally carried out by the fathers of the prospective bride and groom, although other patrilineal relations are also involved. If the father of either party is not alive, a senior member of his patrilineage (preferably the father's brother) should represent him at the discussions. Usually, the only occasion when matrilineal relations are involved is at the marriage negotiations of the last-born daughter, when the mother's brothers have the right to claim all the bridewealth. Although the mother and bride

and their close women neighbors are sometimes present at the negotiations, they are supposed to remain quiet and let the main “public” agreement be arrived at by men.

A Pastoral Woman's Influence in Negotiations

Although it may appear from the public negotiation sessions that men arrange and control the marriage agreements exclusively, this is not the case. Mothers have a strong say in who may be chosen to marry their children, especially their daughters. The control and influence of a mother and daughter, whether individually or in cooperation, is not articulated and admitted publicly. Privately it is recognized and generally accepted, however, that if a mother and/or daughter do not agree with the father’s choice, the marriage will not be successful. “When a man wants to marry one of my daughters, I will discuss it with her mother. I will make the decision in the end, but I respect her opinion,” Demangole told me. He has three wives and seven daughters – two are already married.

A mother’s private influence over her husband and her daughter is also generally recognized and regarded as important in marriage negotiations. This is borne out by the fact that a bachelor will first approach the girl’s mother and try to persuade her in his favor by giving her token gifts or money. If he succeeds it is understood that she, in turn, will try to persuade her husband, thereby enhancing his chances of marriage. It is also known that, should the father go completely against his wife’s choice, she will surreptitiously advise her daughter to get rid of the undesired husband when the daughter runs back to her parental home after marriage. A mother’s influence over her daughter is also extremely strong, and she may use her influence to persuade her daughter to agree with her choice of a suitable spouse even if this goes against her daughter’s wishes. A mother’s influence over her daughter stems from the close contact they have with each other. Throughout her daughter’s childhood, a mother teaches her daughter all the domestic tasks she should know, and they work together on these tasks as long as the daughter remains at home. Through this pro-

cess, the mother also builds up her authority with respect to her daughter and has a great deal of influence over her.

A mother's influence over the negotiations of her son's marriage is not as strong as it is over the negotiations of her daughter's marriage. However, women often have a considerable influence over their husband's choice of daughter-in-law, by providing information about any girl in question. Of all her sons, a mother has the strongest influence over the marriage of her last-born. Because the last-born son inherits the largest portion of his mother's property, the bulk of the bridewealth payments are made from his mother's stock. In the words of Chepsimatia, "If my child [the last-born son A.B.] decided to just go by himself [i.e., decides to go with his male relations and settle the negotiations independently of her wishes A.B.], if I do not give out the stock, what will he do?".

Another important aspect of a woman's influence over the success of her son's marriage is her role as a mother-in-law. If a woman does not agree with her husband's choice of a daughter-in-law, she can make things extremely difficult for her son and his wife. The mother and daughter-in-law have to work together on a daily basis doing many subsistence tasks for the homestead. It is a recognized fact that the mother-in-law is in the position of authority in the homestead, and she can cause endless trouble for the new wife and/or use her influence over her son to cause discord between the newly married couple. A good illustration of how a mother-in-law can break up a marriage was the marriage of Cheposiya. She married a man whose previous two wives had run away, possibly also because of his mother. He was an only son, and his mother was very possessive of him, and insisted that he eat in her house. She also gossiped with him about his wife, accusing her of misbehaving. This caused many quarrels between Cheposiya and her husband. Nevertheless, Cheposiya stayed some five years and bore two daughters, but then, after a final violent quarrel, she fled to her parental home. After this, because of his mother, Cheposiya's husband announced that he never wanted another wife.

An uninitiated girl, on the other hand, has little chance of influencing the outcome of negotiations as regards her own marriage. She may, and frequently will, however, cause a great deal of trouble once she has been brought to her husband's home (as we have seen with Nakapeli's example), if she does not want to remain his wife. On the part of a prospective groom, he can terminate negotiations whenever he likes. This is what David did when he came to discover that his prospective father-in-law was a "person of stomach," i.e., a greedy person who tried to get as much as possible from his daughter's various suitors.

A non-pastoral Woman's Influence in Negotiations

Anja: "Did your father ever want to marry you off to someone?"

Anna: "Yes. He wanted me to be married after my graduation from my circumcision, but I refused and told him that I want to choose my own husband. He was very angry and that's why he refused to pay for my school fees. However, he never asked me again (Anna 19.06.2011).

Non-pastoral women have a substantial influence on their own marriage negotiations. They have a say in *whom* they marry, *when* they marry, and even *if* they marry at all. With their formal education and their more advanced age, they have the confidence and the habitus to persist to be a part about decisions of their future.

Anna's (32) opening quote recalls the time when her father wanted to marry her after her circumcision. Anna grew up in a pastoral setting as the daughter of the second wife of a very wealthy Pokot man. His father had six wives and many children. The chief asked her father to send one child to school, and Anna was selected. "I enjoyed school so much. The only thing I did not like was that everybody was calling me a child when I was back home. So, I decided to get circumcised." She intended to go back to school after her graduation ceremony. However, her father had already negotiated with a suitor. When Anna refused the marriage, her father stopped funding her school education forcing her to drop out of Secondary School. But he could not force her to marry the man. She later met her future husband at work at the medical center in Kositei and lived with him until he had enough funds to go to her father

and ask to marry her. “My parents accepted it because they knew that we lived together and maybe they saw that we were happy together. And even if they say no, I would have still stayed with him. There was no possibility for them to refuse.”

Non-pastoral women have the expectation that they make the decision of whom to marry: the groom must convince *them* that he is a good partner and *not* the father. It is only with her assent that he can go to the father to start the negotiations.

Non-pastoral women meet their partners at school or college, or later at work. The partners are often of the same age, or only a few years older than themselves. Non-pastoral marriages start much later than pastoral ones. Women are usually in their 20s; therefore, they have usually already experienced some (sometimes long-term) relationships. The timing of marriage is not defined. There is only the ideal of timing, to wit: after successfully completing education and starting professional life. In reality, some women never finish secondary school, others get pregnant before the end of their education, still others cannot find a job. Therefore, the age of marriage varies greatly.

To better grasp the dynamics of starting a marriage for non-pastoral Pokot, let us take a look at Florence’s case, which illustrates how a woman can shape her marriage and bridewealth negotiations to meet her needs:

Florence is 36; she is the principal of the largest primary school in East Pokot and also the first woman to ever head this school. She comes from humble pastoral origins: her father died early, and her mother deliberately moved to Chemolingot to send her children to school. Nevertheless, her brothers tried to marry her off several times, hoping to use the bride price to start a large cattle herd. By the time she finished primary school, her brothers had already arranged a bride price with a pastoral man. However, she hid with relatives in Marakwet until she could go to the prestigious Secondary School in Kabarnet where children from all over the district with different ethnic backgrounds studied together. During vacations she always had to work in construction and as a school clerk to earn money for the school fees.

Eventually, Florence's perseverance changed things between her and her brothers. After her secondary form 1, a man visited her family to ask her brothers to marry her, offering 20 cows and 76 goats. Instead of agreeing to the offer, her brothers suggested that she stay away for the time being and avoid the suitor. Florence recalled:

My young brother came and told me that there are a lot of people at our home, drinking, who brought a lot of animals. I said it is not for me. Then my mother came and told me that there are the same people who came before and now they are coming officially and want you to marry. I told her: Mom, I am not ready now. I want to go to college so that I can assist you. [...] I will not marry someone who is not my choice." (Florence 30.05.2011).

Both Florence's mother and her brothers accepted and supported her choice, thus paving the way for her to pass an exceptionally good secondary school exam and gaining acceptance at teachers' college. However, this still left Florence without any money to afford to go to college. While staying with her family, trying to save money, Florence kept in touch with a former classmate from secondary school who was Tugen. He kept writing to her and telling her that he would like to marry her. Florence remained skeptical. She did not want to lose her independence, and failed to imagine how she could pursue her studies as a married woman:

I was afraid to get pregnant and that I would never finish college with a child. However, he made me an offer: When you marry me, he said, I will pay for your college education. I listened to him and understood that he really wanted me to strive. I told him: "Thank you for your offer. I believe in your words. I will marry you. Let us make a deal. You pay for my first year of college and then let us marry" (Florence 30.05.2011).

Florence's savvy negotiations were to make sure that her suitor's proposal was not an empty promise. Her husband-to-be agreed and worked out the details with Florence's brothers. They eventually got married during her first break from college; then, after giving birth to her first daughter in the second year and taking a short break, Florence finished her degree the year after. These days, Florence's husband is a policeman in Mombasa while she works in Chemolingot and travels on weekends to the family's farm in South Baringo.

Importantly, Florence's case illustrates that educated women in East Pokot have much more agency and options when it comes to shaping the beginnings and forms of long-term relationships and how to align them with their own career plans. Rather than being a passive object of marriage negotiations, she negotiated her own bride price and used the funds herself to attend college. As it turned out, the fact that her suitor was Tugen (and not Pokot) did not present a problem either. To satisfy formalities, he gave some cattle. However, since Tugen keep milk cows which cannot live in the semi-arid environment of the lowlands in East Pokot, the animals are staying at her relative's home farm in Tugen.

During the entire process, Florence was confident and certain about the fact that it was her who made the decisions about her marriage rather than her family. She led the negotiations by herself, using her marriage to fund her college education.

Also, Florence's case shows that girls with a pastoral background are usually still assigned to the pastoral life cycle during primary school, which becomes evident by the fact that their families often try to marry them off once they have reached a marriageable age. Only with her academic success in secondary school did her brothers reach the conviction that Florence's schooling could be a (monetary) advantage for the whole family – and then they even protected her from possible pastoral partners and blocked marriage negotiations. Finally, non-pastoral women have additional opportunities regarding the selection of their husbands that pastoral women do not have; in Florence's example, it is extraordinary that she marries a Tugen man. Marrying someone who is not Pokot is extremely unusual for women, and unthinkable in a pastoral context.⁶⁸

Only in formal terms is the process of initiating a marriage the same in both life cycles: both in pastoral and in non-pastoral settings the husband must start official ne-

⁶⁸ On the other hand, it is not uncommon for Pokot men to marry women of the neighboring ethnic groups, e.g., Tugen, Turkana, Marakwet.

gotiations with the bride's family. However, non-pastoral women influence the negotiations, and most importantly they make the active decision to marry or not to marry a suitor.

Marriage by Capture and Elopement

Marriage by capture, *kichutot* (to pull, or be pulled), occurs when a man decides to enlist the help of a group of friends from his neighborhood to go and take a woman, by force, from another neighborhood with the intention of making her his wife.

Marriage by capture usually occurs at a large public ceremony where more than one community is involved. It is always prearranged, sometimes between the abductors only, sometimes between the abductors and the woman's defenders, and sometimes even with the woman herself. Although marriage by capture is sanctioned by the community, the woman will always scream and put up a struggle, no matter what the previous arrangements may have been, as it is considered shameful if the bride-wealth negotiations have not been concluded prior to the transition of a woman to her future husband's home.

The actual "capturing" happens very quickly. The woman is usually picked up physically and speedily rushed helter-skelter some distance away. When she has been subdued, she walks the rest of the way to the groom's home, flanked by the group of his men friends from the neighborhood. When she arrives there, the groom's mother should promise her a goat to persuade her to enter the hut, and another goat to persuade her to eat. If these promises are made, they will probably assist the groom's family in convincing the woman to stay. These promises would also be held in the groom's favor at the eventual, later, stage of negotiating with her parents. However,

it must be taken into account that marriage by capture is the forcible abduction of a woman, and, on occasion, she is forced into the groom's hut.⁶⁹

According to Pokot men, the groom and his neighbors have the right to compel the woman to stay for at least two to three days, unless her parents come to retrieve her, in which event she must immediately be released. If the groom manages to make her stay with him, then he should brew beer as quickly as possible and take it to her parents' home within a few weeks. At this point, the agreement between the two families about the amount of bridewealth is usually settled quickly. In most of such cases, the agreement involves a promise from the groom's family that they will pay bride-wealth at a later stage, after the couple have stayed together and produced children.

The amount of "force" used to keep a captured woman at the hut of the groom, is not much greater than the normal guarding of a new wife when she is brought to her husband's home after the completion of bridewealth negotiations. A woman can almost always manage to run away if she has a violent dislike for the man. If she does run away to her parental home, her parents will probably not assist the groom because there has been no previous agreement made between them. However, in some cases, bridewealth negotiations begin when the groom goes to "retrieve" the woman he captured. If an agreement can be reached because of such negotiations between the two families, then the groom may later "take his wife home".

In a pastoral setting, marriage by capture is rarely a woman's first marriage. In all cases I recorded, all the women concerned were either widows, had run away from a previous husband, or had been "chased" away by a previous husband. During my stay, Nakapeli (whose dissolved marriage to a much older man I have discussed above) was captured during a dance night. This event was a scandal. Everybody in

⁶⁹ Conant (1966:514) describes marriage by capture as including "abduction, confinement and enforced intercourse", and goes on to refer to the act as "sanctioned rape" (ibid.). I have also been told, mostly by men, that enforced intercourse can occur because of marriage by capture. However, from the case examples I have recorded, it appears that marriage by capture usually takes a far less violent form, and women are often in agreement with their abductors.

the area was talking about it for the next few days. As it turned out, the man who was responsible for capturing her was a neighbor. A friend of Nakapeli explained to me a few weeks later: "He is not rich. His family does not have enough animals to get a wife. By capturing Nakapeli, he forced the father to negotiate, and the father has to accept his offer even if it will be only a few goats."

Marriage by capture is recognized as an alternative form of marriage by the Pokot. However, it is important to realize that marriage by capture often takes place on the spur of the moment as a spontaneous decision, mainly because an eligible woman happens to be in the area at the time (visiting her parents, at a ceremony, etc.). Men appear to take the chance of capturing a woman as a means of obtaining a wife quickly. If after capturing a woman there are no immediate protests from her relations, then the couple is considered married as long as the man takes some beer to his affines, thereby confirming his intentions.

For non-pastoral marriages, marriage by capture is an option when there are complications in the marriage process and the husband wants to accelerate things. It is used to persuade the bride rather than the bride's family: Susan, whose case I have touched upon in previous chapters, is married to a District Officer who is also Pokot. He asked her parents for their approval to marry her after she had finished secondary school. Both had attended different national secondary schools in Eldoret. Susan's parents welcomed the marriage proposal since they considered her suitor who, by then, was already a District Officer, a very prestigious husband.

Susan, however, did not agree, at least initially:

Of course, I had a lot of objections. I was just completing my course and they were saying that I will be taken directly after my graduation. But I told my father that: no, no, no I am not going. So, he accepted, and I was able to go home for one month. When I was at home, he [the suitor A.B.] and his family would come and try to persuade me, but I said no. [...] We had a lot of talks, and he did a lot of persuasion. He was sending so many people, he came himself, he did send many presents [laughs]. Ooooooh, he sent me watches and many other small tokens (Susan 08.05.2011).

Eventually, however, Susan's resistance waned, which, among other things, had to do with her marriage becoming a *fait accompli* arranged by her parents and the family of her suitor; she remembered a decisive talk with a female cousin who worked at Kenya's Central Bank: "She told me: Susan, you have to accept. The animals have already been brought home. These people finalized everything. They were only waiting for your okay. But even if you refuse, this thing has been finalized." Realizing that her suitor had convinced everyone – except for her, that is – she gave in to what she perceived as the inevitable. However, things turned out to be more complicated. With both being devout Christians, though in different churches – her in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) and him in the Full Gospel Church – their pastors sought to have a say in the eventual wedding ceremony, too. The ensuing discussions (which I shall return to below in greater detail) created significant delay. As Susan recalled, "things were complicated with our churches and my father was getting mad about the holdup." Being annoyed with the proceeding's slow pace, Susan's father suggested that she simply let herself get "captured" to speed things up. Everything went according to plan and her fiancé eventually started the bridewealth negotiations soon after. Susan has been living together with him ever since.

Elopement is another form of alternative marriage and is used instead of marriage by capture if the couple decide themselves that they want to marry each other. Such a course of action is usually kept secret between a woman and her lover, with the possible involvement of a few accomplices. I have not heard of any non-pastoral couple who eloped. Instead, they just cohabit, without many objections from family.

In pastoral settings, elopement often occurs when a woman attempts to elope with her lover on the evening of completing the last stage of her initiation to avoid an arranged marriage by the parents. If the couple does manage to get away, the man will have to face the woman's parents almost immediately. In most cases, the very next morning the woman's father will come with a group of his male relatives with the intention of taking his daughter away by force. It is extremely unlikely that the pro-

spective groom at this point could persuade her father to let him stay “married” to his daughter. Only if doubts had been raised during previous bridewealth negotiations about the suitability of another suitor, or if the daughter had expressed a violent dislike for another suitor chosen by her parents and had vowed continually to run away until she was allowed to stay with her lover, is it likely that the father would allow the couple to stay together.

Elopement is very similar to marriage by capture, save that the woman decides with the man about the course of action and goes with him eagerly and secretly, and therefore with no need to scream and struggle. Because the woman agrees to go with the man, there is no necessity to persuade her with promises of gifts of stock to enter the hut or take food. Nevertheless, the groom’s family will often perform the normal marriage customs as a means of showing their support for and welcoming the “bride”. Irrespective of whether the woman’s father retrieves her or not, her prospective husband must bring beer to the home of her parents a short time after elopement. Negotiations then take place and, once an agreement has been reached between the two families, the couple are considered to be legally married.

Wedding Ceremony

The prototypical Pokot wedding is a lush ceremony: the bride is bedecked with white ostrich feathers and her groom wears a garb emblazoned with many-colored beads. The ceremony takes place at the homestead of the bride’s family where, once seated, the couple has to face east where the sun rises. At the beginning, the groom’s family fetches milk from their homestead and puts it on the foreheads of every attendee. Once this is done, the father-in-law-to-be says the ceremonial words to the groom: “We have given you our daughter, take care of her. She is good and healthy” while to his daughter he proclaims: “Go and stay there, live peacefully. You are not a child anymore.” Then, the groom hands a stick to his betrothed so that she has the strength to walk to his family’s homestead. An old and one young lady accompany her to her destination. Upon arrival, the bride is presented with numerous goats as a

token of esteem, although, in fact, they remain in the possession of her husband-to-be. It is only late at night that the couple is permitted to enter the groom's hut to consummate their marriage. The next morning, the woman receives a wedding bracelet and, by dint of putting it on, she is officially married.

This description was given to me by Elijah – a 52-year-old assistant chief and hobby historian of East Pokot. Upon contrasting this description with my records of weddings, however, it is noticeable that nearly all weddings mirror parts of this ideal, but few took place exactly like this. On the one hand, there are cases of elopement and marriage by capture that skip the ceremony entirely. On the other hand, the ceremony does not have the importance of a circumcision graduation or *sapana*, which is why participants may change or omit elements depending on who is present at the wedding and how far away the husband's homestead is located.

Non-pastoral weddings either adhere to elements of the above-mentioned procedure – or they do without a formal ceremony altogether. The reasons for this are manifold: as in the case of Anna, some have already been living together before the wedding, others already have children together and the wedding only turns the relationship into a legal marriage. In most cases, the non-pastoral women in question do not live at their parents' homestead, which is why the groom goes to the household for the negotiations, but the bride does not then go to the parents' homestead for a wedding ceremony. I have recorded the history of 18 non-pastoral weddings, of which seven had a classic Pokot wedding ceremony.

Christian weddings have not yet become an alternative to Pokot ceremonies, even though all non-pastoral Pokot are Christians and church representatives are keen on officiating weddings in the region. When I checked the church registries of the six churches in Chemolingot, Kositei and Nginyang, I found records of only two church weddings in total. To better understand why a church wedding is not an attractive option for non-pastoral Pokot, even though they are very devoted Christians who

attend church service weekly, let us have a look at Susan's conflict of interest with the church during her wedding preparations:

Susan, whose marriage by capture I have highlighted above, mentioned some "complications" with her church. Being a member of the Anglican Church since childhood, she had given in to marrying a husband who was a member of the Full Gospel Church, and considered switching to his congregation. However, both of their pastors tried to convince their respective members to stay at their church and, on top of that, have a Christian wedding. Since both were very well-known and respected community members, the pastors expected that a church wedding of such a prestigious couple could start a trend of Christian weddings throughout East Pokot. However, neither family was interested in a Christian wedding, as Susan recalled: "It was not important to me to have a church wedding. And neither was it for my husband or his family. The Pokot wedding is the real wedding. The exchange of the animals is what makes it official. Not the church." When Susan's husband sealed the deal by marrying Susan via capturing, the officials of both churches were offended. "We did not go to church for some time, to respect the situation," Susan said. "We did not feel welcome anymore. After a while, I started to become an active member of Full Gospel and even a chairperson of the women's fellowship. Five years ago, we had a church blessing for our marriage to show our devotion to God."

To round up the previous observations, the official marriage for pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot alike is directly connected with the exchange of the bride price. By contrast, the wedding ceremony itself plays a secondary role for the non-pastoral Pokot. Nonetheless, I suspect that, similar to the neighboring highlands and West Pokot, there will be more church weddings in the future to provide non-pastoral Pokot a ritual of their own for this important union between man and woman. For the foreseeable future, though, a resource transaction between the two families will remain the basis of the marriage bond.

Payment and Distribution of Bridewealth

Pokot tend to perceive the payment of bridewealth as a long-term payment of a continuing debt. During various interviews, they often compared it to a stock friendship (see chapter 2), in which a close bond is formed between two men when one of them gives the other a steer in exchange for a cow; because of the greater value of the cow, the receiver remains indebted to the original owner, and eventually his sons (as long as the cow has reproduced), and repays him with a number of calves and goats over the years. Interviewees often explained to me that a woman is like a cow and the bridewealth is comparable to the goats and calves the stock associate must pay after his cow has reproduced.

As this analogy indicates, Pokot associate bridewealth principally with a woman's ability to produce children. The payment of bridewealth also confirms a man's rights over the labor contribution of his wife and their children. Another aspect which men and women emphasize as important is that the payment of bridewealth is a necessary reimbursement to a woman's parental family for having "fed" their daughter over the years, as well as being a kind of compensation to that family for the loss of a laborer.

The bridewealth for well-educated women is comparatively higher. Ogola (56), a pastoralist with three wives and 17 children, told me:

Of course I get more bridewealth for my educated daughters. I paid so much school fees for them to get a good job and make good money. When a man comes and marries her, he will get a very good match. She will earn money and pay for many things. I expect that he pays me for that education (Ogola 26.04.2011).

De facto the bridewealth varies greatly and depends on the wealth of the husband's family. It starts from a few goats up to 40 goats, 20 cattle, and, if possible, one or two camels. It is rather common that bridewealth transactions for educated women include money. As Ogola explained to me: "I paid for her tuition with cash money, and I want to get this money back when she gets married. She will bring money to the

husband's family because I have sent her to school. So, his family has to compensate me in kind."⁷⁰

The actual payment and eventual distribution of bridewealth confirms an acceptance of socio-economic obligation and commitment between the two kin groups involved, and by extension between the kin groups within, and between, two different neighborhoods. The reality of how much bridewealth is paid, and to whom and when it is distributed, depends on the socio-economic actualities of each family, and there is a great deal of variation from case to case. Although a high bridewealth, which includes large livestock, is preferred, the total amount of the bridewealth is open to negotiation and is not fixed or governed by a particular ideal.⁷¹ There is, however, a clearly articulated ideal about how the payment and distribution of the bridewealth should be made. This is as follows: the initial payment should be made when the groom comes to take his bride home. At this time the groom should bring one ox for the father of the bride, and one cow with a suckling calf for the mother of the bride so that she does not feel "sad in her stomach at the loss of a daughter".⁷²

The next installment of the bridewealth should be made after the couple's first child has been born, and before the next child has been conceived. This installment may be shared out by the bride's father among his brothers and half-brothers (sons of his father by other wives). Further installments should continue to be made over the years until about three-quarters of the original agreed-upon amount has been reached. The bride's family will usually cease to demand further bridewealth at this

⁷⁰ The amount of money paid as bridewealth varies as well. I have recorded payments starting from 10,000 up to 60,000 KSh. There was no case where only money was paid. A transaction of livestock has always taken place.

⁷¹ Fixed bridewealth is found among both pastoral groups, such as the Samburu (Spencer 1965), and mixed agricultural groups, such as the Hamar (Lydall/Strecker 1979).

⁷² This is an interesting example of the recognition by Pokot (men and women) of the close relationship which exists between mothers and daughters. According to H. Kuper (1950: 95), a similar situation exists amongst the patrilineal Swazi and, at marriage, the mother's care and affection are recognized in the special gift of stock, known as the "wiper away of tears", which the groom gives the bride's mother.

point, especially if relations between the two families are positive and if the groom has provided economic assistance and support when his in-laws wanted or needed them.

6.3.3 Not getting married: Singlehood, Cohabitation & Being Semi-married

Even if all women indicate that they want to marry, it is noticeable that a large proportion of non-pastoral women do not marry. In the survey, 23.3% of women over 14 said they were single and 29.5% said they had a boyfriend, i.e., more than half of all women over 14 with a school education (52.8%). The distinction between being single and having a boyfriend is not really clear-cut, though. Some women tend to describe themselves as single when they live alone even if they see a man regularly. Others state in such a case that they have a boyfriend. In the following, I will highlight exactly these ambiguities. Certainly, some of these women will marry in the course of their lives, but the statistical facts described above – i.e. the large percentage of unmarried women – are very visible in daily life. Female-headed households and couples living together unmarried are an integral part of the of Chemolingot and Nginyang. I repeatedly encountered women who had children but lived alone: young female students who talked about their boyfriends and had no concrete plans to marry.

I shall explore the reasons and consequences of this high percentage of unmarried women with educational backgrounds. Unmarried women can be divided into three groups: 1) women whose boyfriends are too poor to marry, 2) women whose partners would not make good husbands, 3) women who enjoy their freedom and autonomy. Let us take a closer look at these three groups.

Women Whose Boyfriends Are Too Poor to Marry

The overall pool of eligible bachelors is small to begin with. An educated woman strives for a partner who has at least the same level of education (a woman with a college degree looks for a man who has a college degree or higher as well). In addi-

tion, he should have a stable income and job, Christian faith, as well as an ambitious and exemplary lifestyle. The latter means that he is not drinking (local) brews, not sleeping around, and is supporting his family and relatives financially and so forth.

The number of men who meet these criteria is limited. Not many men throughout have finished school or received college education. Even fewer have a regular income. There are just not many regular jobs in East Pokot. However, even if men have a good education and a job, often they still struggle to meet the expectations. Since the majority of school graduates come from a poor family background, their families cannot support them much with livestock for the bridewealth. Though the parents of educated women expect an even higher bridewealth for their daughters who have gone to school and college for years. This conundrum leads to a delay of the wedding as well as an increase in childbirth out of wedlock.

Catherine and Patrick, whom I have introduced in the subchapter on boyfriends, did not marry after their college graduation. Catherine moved to Chemolingot to look for a job, while Patrick returned to his mother's homestead near Churo. "We have not gotten married yet. I must find a job first to be able to support a family. I cannot go to her parents empty handed," he explained to me. Patrick currently assists his older brother in running the family farm. He has no prospects of getting a job or inheriting money or livestock from his family. When I met with Catherine before I left to return to Germany, she told me that she was expecting a baby from her boyfriend. She was very happy about her pregnancy but, in her view, that did not change her relationship status: "Patrick and I do not plan to move in together. He continues to stay in Churo and I will continue to live here in Chemolingot. I hope that we are able to get married soon. But right now, I don't know what will happen."

In principle, pregnancy without a marriage certificate is not frowned upon. However, if Catherine and Patrick were to separate, then it would become almost impossible for Catherine to marry another man. Few men marry a woman who already has a child with another man. In most cases, the bride's parents also accept a very small

bridewealth once a child is born, in order to create stable and safe living conditions for the child.

Women Whose Partners Would Not Make Good Husbands

Many women I have talked to seem unsure if they are married or have a boyfriend. I didn't really understand this at the beginning. Repeatedly in interviews, women switch between the denotations "boyfriend" and "husband". In the beginning, I thought it was because the category of boyfriend did not really exist and, consequently, people referred to steady partners as husbands.

However, a conversation with Jessica gave me a whole new perspective. Jessica is the youngest daughter of Leah, the female Elder in Chemolingot. Like all her siblings, she went to school – until she became unexpectedly pregnant in secondary school:

In Form 4 I faced difficulties for the first time in my life when I got pregnant. I came home and delivered and then I went back and sat for my examination. That was the beginning of problems in my life. After finishing I came home and took care of my baby and I decided: if God has chosen this man for me, I have to be faithful and serve with this man alone. Because he had promised to marry me. He was my first boyfriend. I never wanted to destroy my name. I never wanted to have such bad behavior that people could say bad things about me. I had to respect myself and that's why I said, if this is the person God has chosen for me, let me do it. Then he came with his parents and they came and asked my parents to marry me. They accepted. I went and stayed with the man. Sometimes I enjoyed staying with him, but sometimes I felt that life was very hard (Jessica 01.06.2011).

Jessica regrets getting pregnant so early in life and not being able to attend college. She is unhappy with her partner who has alcohol problems and no income. She regularly borrows money from her parents. When I met Jessica for the first time, she told me that she has a boyfriend. But when we talked about her relationship in consecutive conversations, she sometimes referred to him as her husband. When I asked her if she is married to him, Jessica laughed and told me: "You know Anja, my parents did a trick. He came to my parents and asked to marry me. But my father never asked for the animals. So, it is not really official. We are married and we are not married."

Jessica meets all the criteria for being married in East Pokot: she lives with a man, they have children together, the child's father has conducted bridewealth negotiations with her parents. But still, her parents apparently have no interest in legalizing the marriage by conducting the exchange. The reason is that he does not meet the Pokot expectations of a good husband: he drinks, he can't feed his family, and he doesn't make any effort to further the household. In short, he is not a good husband. By not exchanging bridewealth, Jessica's parents made it very easy for their daughter to break the relationship.

Again and again, I met women who were in similar situations and called their partner sometimes boyfriend and sometimes husband. These women usually had their children out of wedlock and lived together with their children's father in one household. But the men are not reliable partners. They are unemployed, they often drink too much, they do not contribute to the household income. And the women in such relationships strongly want their partners to change their behavior.

As Damaris put it: "A boyfriend is different from a husband. Everything a boyfriend does is voluntary. But a husband has to support you. He has to make sure that you are living comfortably." Until recently, Damaris also lived with her boyfriend, with whom she has two children. She owns a kiosk in Chemolingot.

We were living from my business. I started the business with the money I made from some contracts when I came here. When I was selling the vegetables, we lived off my money. He was doing nothing; he was just idle. I told him that he should start selling things, but he said that he doesn't have any shop or cow. He came from a poor family. I accepted that. He was not a working man. It was like it was and I was alright. I had my business, and I was doing everything in the household, cooking, washing and all these things – and he was doing nothing (Damaris 14.05.2011).

When Damaris found out that he was seeing another woman, they had a fight and he moved to his lover's place. As in the case of Jessica, Damaris's ex went to her parents and told them that he would bring some bridewealth. But he never returned with any livestock. "We never got officially married. When you live with a man and no

bridewealth is given, you can just leave and the parents will say nothing,” she mused. This experience has cured Damaris of any enthusiasm for marriage: “I want to stay alone with my children. Men are trouble. I don’t need any man in my life.”

Damaris is not an exception. Rather, her attitude is very common among non-pastoral women – as becomes evident in considering the next section.

Women Who Do Not Want to Get Married

Why should I get married? I bought three cows. I manage a bar. I have money to take care of my mother and to send my children to school. I do not need a husband. And I really do not need the trouble that comes with a husband (Regina 28.06.2011)

Regina is the manager of the biggest and most popular bar in East Pokot. She is expecting her second child. She has a boyfriend but does not intend to marry him and does not live with him. Her firstborn daughter is from an ex-boyfriend with whom she does not stay in close contact. Regina is very open about the fact that she does not seek a husband. She enjoys the freedom and autonomy she has right now. She can make all the decisions on her own. “If I was married, I would have to follow the decisions of my husband. I could not work in a bar at night. I would have to give him my money and he would decide what to do with it. I could not have my own animals.”

Women who already have children, are widowed or have separated from their partners prefer their lives without a man. They have often had bad experiences – domestic violence, cheating, no financial support from former partners – and they do not see any advantages in a relationship with a man either. In addition, a new partner would want children of his own with them, while he would not accept her children from a previous relationship and in some cases would treat them worse than his own. Alice, who is divorced, has three children and works for an oil company, explained it to me like this: “I don’t want to marry again. I do not want to give birth anymore. I have everything I need. I have peace right now and I do not want to have trouble. A husband means trouble. So, no more husband for me.”

The examples have shown that only a small portion of non-pastoral women are able to tread the ideal life path which includes having a husband, children, well-paid job etc. There are neither enough jobs for all nor enough well-educated and suitable partners.

It is noticeable that many women are ready to give up marriage. None of the women with whom I have spoken, however, even considered the option of not having children. Therefore, many women take the path of having children out of wedlock and raising them as single mothers. This is also socially accepted, although not very respected. However, some female and male interviewees with whom I spoke professed to have great respect for single mothers, while others disparaged them: "That lady [referring to a single mother A.B.] is important for the community. A lady who takes care of herself without relying on a husband is like a man, she is a good lady," said Kibaki when I asked him what he thinks about single mothers. Timothy saw it a bit differently: "For a widow it [living with one's children and without a husband A.B.] is good. But not being married and having children is not good. There are too many men around and having children from different men is bad."

In this context, it is essential to also take note of the impact of class differences with the group of non-pastoral Pokot on relationship statuses. Women who have a non-pastoral background from the outset, i.e., whose parents did not live pastorally to begin with, and have an above-average school education also have much better prospects in finding a husband. They are better connected with non-pastoral families and attract more non-pastoral suitors who are well-off and successful. The case of Susan, whose father worked as one of the first Pokot for the Kenyan government and sent all his children to school, is exemplary in this regard. The fact of her family background certainly helped to spotlight Susan as a potential love interest and "wife material" to a young Pokot DO.

Non-pastoral Pokot with poor secondary-school and college degrees have a much harder time finding a suitable partner. This is so because the market of potential

partners with equivalent educational qualifications and jobs is very small. To find a partner who also has the resources to pay the bridewealth on top is even more unlikely.

At the same time and in virtue of their social status obtained through education and via promotion by churches, they also enjoy a lot of independence from the classic expectations of a Pokot woman: i.e., early marriage, circumcision, deferring to the father's choice of partner and so forth. Many women, even if they do not become immensely successful in terms of their job search or economic prospects, still relish the fact that they can go their own way. They are very happy to have their children and to be able to raise them without having to coordinate with anyone else – as is evidenced by the testimonies of Damaris and Rachel; later on, we shall see that they have this in common with separated and divorced women.

Pastoral women do not have these options at all. They marry earlier than their non-pastoral counterparts and submit to the decisions of their parents. Pastoral women can create spaces for themselves in which they adapt certain strategies and reasonings of non-pastoral women – as we will see later in the chapter.

6.4 Expectations and Duties

The husband/wife relationship is the most important relationship defined by sex in Pokot. The relationship forms the basis of the household and the production unit and, as such, is the foundation unit of the society. The relationship between the spouses, however, is less clearly defined than other relationships based on kinship and age (although there are of course degrees of manipulation in the kinship and age system). A person is actually born into a kinship network, and their relationships are defined with particular members of that group (his parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.) and to a degree with others outside it. Relationships based on age are also clearly defined and, as a person gets older, they naturally move up in their position of seniority and status. Although a number of social rules exist, there is no exact speci-

cation of when a person will marry, how the relationship between husband and wife will be conducted, or whether a person's spouse will remain with him or her. None of these factors is absolute, yet for Pokot society to continue it is essential that couples marry, women reproduce, and social fathers are defined to have heirs who can support the homestead and take care of the livestock.

But of course, there are many rights and obligations involved in being married: to begin with, marriage gives a man the right of exclusive sexual access to his wife, whereas a woman has to share her right of sexual access to her husband with any other wives he might have.

More importantly, marriage gives a man special rights over the children born by his wife. All these children are said to be his, and belong exclusively and inseparably to his patrilineal clan. In the event of separation or divorce, when a man's young children go with his wife to live elsewhere, whether with one of her relatives or with a new husband, the children remain members of their father's clan. A woman has rights in all the children she bears, whoever their father(s) might be. These children are said to be hers but do belong to her clan. As we have seen before, both a man and a woman have rights in the bridewealth of their daughters, and both are responsible for providing their sons with livestock (and or funds) so they can get married and begin a new domestic unit.

Marriage makes a couple mutually responsible for their joint and separate economic welfare. In pastoral and in non-pastoral marriages they have to make sure that all children have enough food and that the family thrives and develops economically and socially. Wives are expected to produce children: an essential source of labor to the household (in pastoral families) and to ensure the continuity of the family (non-pastoral families). To remain married a man is obliged to pay at least some of the bridewealth his affines ask of him whenever he is able to do so.

In my conversations with men and women about a successful marriage, it became very clear that there is a fixed set of ideals for a good marriage, but also shared ideas about rights and responsibilities for husbands and wives. These differ in part between pastoral and sedentary Pokot, but to a large extent there is also a shared basis on what constitutes a good marriage.

6.4.1 Two Ideals of Marriage: Pastoral-Polygamous and Christian-Monogamous

When it comes to the crucial questions of what makes a marriage go well and what constitutes a flourishing marital relationship there are, unsurprisingly, two competing paradigms in play throughout East Pokot: the traditional polygamous ideal that is (still) almost ubiquitous among pastoralists – and the monogamous, Christian-influenced ideal which is gaining ever more traction among sedentary Pokot.

The former ideal essentially conceives of marriage as a family enterprise for the management – i.e., upkeep, cultivation, and expansion – of a herd and the enlargement of a household via procreation. The business metaphor is apt in that, very much like a traditional company, the institution of marriage is a hierarchical structure with the husband on top as “head of the house”, as many of my interviewees phrased it, and his wives as “heads of the family”.

Among pastoral Pokot, a man usually marries his second wife once he has at least two children and his herd is growing in size. Consequently, polygamy is as much about optimizing livestock and household management as it is about the prestige of being able to afford having various co-wives. In my sample, the average pastoral household consisted of two wives. But among well-off pastoralists seven to nine co-wives are not unheard of.

In this capacity, the male head is responsible for ensuring harmony and a certain balance between his wives – in terms of showing affection, the allotment of resources, and the allocation of household tasks. The notion of fairness and of treating all his

wives equitably, i.e., avoiding to “play favorites”, figures prominently in Pokot discourse on exemplary marital relationships. Given his familial chief management position, it reflects poorly on a man in Pokot society if there is strife among his wives; quarreling undermines his authority.

De facto, though, most married men do have a favorite wife and, as a consequence, she and her children are treated better than the rest, e.g., by receiving more food and attention. Beatrice, for instance, emphasized how different married life is for a favorite wife in comparison to those who are liked less: “When a husband has three or four wives, he will mistreat some. He will not be fair to all wives. He has favorites, and when you are the one who is not his favorite, then you live a very unfair and unhappy life.” This distinction manifests itself linguistically: “tingan” refers to the woman who is loved more and “sosa” refers to the wife less loved.

There is no consensus among Pokot as to whether or not it is less prestigious to join a household as a second (or third, or fourth etc.) co-wife than to establish a new household together with one’s husband. In fact, the whole matter is as contentious as the institution of polygamy itself. Chepotiot, who is the second wife out of four wives and has eight children, holds a clear opinion: “It makes a big difference which wife you are. The first wife is everything in the family. I would have preferred to be the first one. Then I would own everything and would have the full love of my husband.” This view, however, is contradicted by Chepokreny, who hails from Kadingding: “My husband has six wives and I’m the third, but it doesn’t make a real difference which number you are. It [i.e., the woman’s status and her relationship with her husband] only depends on how you behave.” The latter seems to be a more widely shared, though not ubiquitous, view. The underlying notion is that a woman’s social standing within a polygamous household specifically and in society more generally is not a function of their “rank” in the temporal ordering of marriages but rather of a multitude of factors such as her contribution to reproduction of the household, and her alacrity in taking care of the children, caring for the livestock etc. Hence, the

question of who the “favorite” wife of a man is permits no unidimensional answer. At the same time, though, interlocutors from both sexes have expressed the view, time and again, that often it is a man’s last and, therefore, youngest wife (as well as the first wife) who receives the affection and benefits, both monetary and in terms of food and other resources.

This also has consequences for the respective children as a councilor from Kositei put it quite frankly: “Men love some of their women more than others. The ones who are loved more don’t send their children to school. The ones who are loved less do send their children to school because they won’t inherit [anything from their father A.B.]. However, fate will turn around and the woman who sent their children to school will in the end be better off than the *tingan* woman.” With this statement, he also referred to the fact that today’s educated elite from East Pokot mostly come from poor and difficult backgrounds (and thus possess significant import as role models for both pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot).

Florence, whose father had seven wives, emphasized the view that quarrels and spatial separations in polygamous households are a more recent phenomenon, indicating that many pastoral husbands can no longer fulfill the role of head of the household properly:

In our community they value people living in one place together to strengthen the family. But nowadays, aaah, nowadays anybody can live wherever she wants. This is one of the things people start to forget about. But our family was a very strong family. And the old man was very strong, he didn’t want anybody to separate. When we were together, we lived together to cement the unity of the family. When you see families separating, that is weakness, that is how we were told when we were young. When your family is separating it shows that the father and his leadership are weak. But when you are a strong man, the family will just live together (Florence 30.05.2011).

The hierarchical relationship between husband and wife (or wives) that is constitutive of pastoral marriage is manifested in linguistic conventions, too. Husbands usually call their wives *monechan*, “children”. This convention is most probably a means to reinforce the role of the wife as subordinate to her husband. During several inter-

views, women conceded that the notion was somewhat derogatory, but they also emphasized that this was a term of endearment and not meant in a bad way. Importantly, one interlocutor added, it was a phrase that members of the local elite use, too. In church, for example, one would hear a man ask another “where is your daughter?” thereby asking about his wife. Chepai put it succinctly: “Men and women are not equal. This is what marriage is all about.”

The normative structure of pastoral Pokot marriage does not prescribe a joint social life shared by husband and wife, nor a continuous exchange via conversations beyond the management of the household. When asked what kind of relationship obtained between husband and wife, Rachel put it like this: “In Pokot, men and women have separate lives. They don’t spend much time together. When there is a man who is always staying with his wife, other men will come and beat him up because he has to stay with them and not his wife.” Even if the “beating up” part should be considered with a pinch of salt, this quote underscores the distinct social spheres in which both sexes operate once they are married. This impression is echoed in Gladis’ observation, too: “There are many rules on how to behave in public for husband and wife: they don’t greet each other. When a man meets his wife in public in a group, he greets everybody but her. Husband and wife greet each other through having sex. Women should not eat when a man is around, and they should not drink in front of him. That would be disrespectful, and you would be beaten. In the morning a woman gets many duties from her husband and when she is not doing what she is supposed to do that is very disrespectful.”

I have had ample opportunity to witness the dynamics of gender hierarchies in pastoral marriage firsthand. During my research stay, the assistant chief of Chemolingot, Kamama, invited me to his homestead. I asked him on the way there with whom he lived together, to which he replied that he lived there alone. When we actually arrived, though, I met a homestead full of women and children. As it turned out, he lived there with his wife, two sisters, his own children, and his nieces and nephews.

When I asked him why he said that he lived there alone, he started laughing. He had thought that I meant other men with whom he shared the homestead, and therefore had not mentioned his sisters and their children.

To better grasp the internal viewpoint among pastoral Pokot on polygamy – and the controversies surrounding it – it is essential to take stock of the benefits that Pokot themselves associate with it. One slogan that I came across time and again both when engaging in interviews and witnessing discussions was: “many animals need many hands!”, the notion behind this claim being, of course, that the very *telos* of the pastoral household, which is directed towards an ever-growing herd, practically demands polygamy.

Importantly, there are proponents of polygamous marriage among both sexes. For instance, Chepsokun, who is the third wife out of five, freely conceded that having co-wives “can make the work so much easier because people assist each other.” Also, there seems to be a very keen sense of cultural identity among many Pokot and the role that polygamy, presumptively, plays therein. John Muye, who had asked his first wife for her express consent to marry another woman (and received it) said to me that “being married to many wives represents wealth and having so many children and so much livestock that two people just can’t manage it on their own. Thus, I want to marry another wife. It’s part of our culture.”

And yet, the institution of polygamy is heavily contested throughout East Pokot, too. The major points of criticism – both from persons who live within marriages with more than one wife and those who do not – concern the financial challenges associated with it, especially in times of socioeconomic change, as well as the emotional turmoil that often comes with several women having to “share” one husband and, finally, the view that it advantages men over women. Mike told me: “Among the Pokot, it’s not a bad thing [to have more than one wife, A.B.], but for me nowadays, with this economy, it is hard to have many children. Who will pay for school fees, food and shelter? Our grandparents had many animals and many children. But we cannot

afford all of that anymore.” The financial difficulties associated with a large household are also emphasized by Blue, who mockingly observed another man who was married to no less than five women: “That person just wants to be poor. So many wives and many children, he cannot take care of them all!”

Interestingly, a change of perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of polygamy and a multi-faceted view is often associated with education, as I found out, for instance, talking to Edwin and Blue. “Before I was in school, I thought it [polygamy A.B.] was good.” Edwin explained to me, adding: “Now I know that it is hard to educate your children. It is expensive! It is not like before. There are not enough goats for too many children and wives. [...] People and children are poor and will have a bad life.” Upon hearing his discussion partner’s opinion, Edwin opined for a nuanced assessment: “There are many advantages of having several wives: it is comfortable because the husband simply gives orders to the huts of his wives and supervises the work while the sons do the work. Also, it improves his standing in the community. However, on the downside, there is a lot of quarreling, jealousy and even violence among the women.”

Undoubtedly, there is a certain sentimental longing among a few sedentary Pokot men for a prestigious pastoral marriage with many wives – and yet, even most of those few concurred that this was not a feasible endeavor and was fraught with too many difficulties. However, the vast majority of sedentarized Pokot want to be married monogamously. These educated and Christian Pokot (men and women alike) reject polygamy wholeheartedly. Marriage for them is – completely in accordance with Christian values as they perceive them via church sermons – a unity between a man and a woman who meet at eye level.⁷³ At the same time, the vast majority of

⁷³ I shall not pursue the question whether this ideal of married life, broadly conceived as a monogamous and equal relationship between man and woman based on romantic love, is indeed in correspondence with Christian orthodoxy or even with the values preached by Christian clerics throughout East Pokot. Rather, I am only concerning myself with the reception of those Christian values among the Pokot and the impact of this reception on notions of marriage.

poor sedentary Pokot do not esteem polygamy either. For them, it bears a negative connotation, and they associate it with backwardness and the various conflicts detailed above. In turn, pastoral Pokot often look almost pityingly at those who are living a sedentary life in a monogamous marriage. Where the latter see a livelihood unaffected by the dangers of drought, raids and starvation the former see only a deplorable lack of livestock and poverty. From that viewpoint monogamy does not appear as a voluntary choice based on Christian values but rather as a regrettable necessity born out of hardship and a lack of resources.

Returning to the normative notion of monogamous marriage, there is a strong association with the ideal of a “perfect couple” who makes all key decisions together. They are living according to Christian values, attending weekly church services together, funding an excellent education for their children (and close relatives), and contributing to their community. I often asked my interviewees to describe a good marriage, and the answers always always resembled a very similar ideal; as Catherine put it: “You are together with your soulmate. You can make stable plans with your family. [...] You can plan the future for your children.” Beatrice added: “They [the married couple A.B.] live peacefully, they love each other and their children. They will talk about everything and agree on all future projects. The children will prosper. Everything is well.”

Importantly, livestock as well as its management does not play a significant role in this relationship model. Some families, like Susan’s, still own livestock to ensure their standing among the pastoral Pokot. But many others have virtually no livestock and do not want any. Instead, their focus is on attaining permanent employment, gaining monetary income, and advancing the educational prospects of their offspring.

Of course, the above-sketched notions of marriage in the non-pastoral life cycle constitute only an ideal, too. Many married couples do not live together. Since most have government jobs, e.g., as teachers, police officers or soldiers, they are deployed Ken-

ya-wide. Therefore, most married couples see each other only once or twice a month, sometimes even less.

Likewise, the relationship is certainly not always at eye level. The pastoral normative paradigm that one should treat one's husband with respect applies to monogamous couples as well; in fact, there is a palpable collision between the long-established gender hierarchy on the one hand and the notion of equality of man and woman within relationships as it stems from the reception of church sermons. Therefore there are often quarrels and arguments when a wife deigns to criticize her husband's actions.

Infidelity is strongly taboo, too. Christian values, especially the Sixth Commandment, which preachers throughout East Pokot regularly call to mind, leave no room for interpretation in this regard. However, incentivized by long-distance relationships, there are many affairs. Numerous men have out-of-wedlock babies in addition to their families. This is an issue that generates much frustration for their wives, but also certain consequences for the husbands. Husbands caught having an affair are barred from worship for several months. Once a few weeks have passed, they are expected to repent and seek conversation with their pastor. And only after this atonement are they allowed to participate in church life again.

Being publicly excluded from congregational life is a very embarrassing and undesirable occurrence for men. Not being able to live up to the high moral standards of Christian monogamous marriage, and thus also failing as a role model, comes at a high social cost – especially for members of the local elite. Nevertheless, there is a prevalent view shared by both pastoral and non-pastoral men throughout East Pokot that it is virtually impossible to remain faithful as a man. “I want a lady who loves me even when I am not there. Men cannot be faithful, this is in our nature”, said Mike, who works as a soldier in Nairobi and returns only once a month to his family in East Pokot.

Polygamous and monogamous marriages can very well exist in parallel in East Pokot. This is possible because they are based on two different ideals: polygamy is based on pastoralism and, more specifically, the pastoral mode of production as well as the labor needed for it. Monogamous households, on the other hand, do not live pastorally and, therefore, have no intrinsic need for so many household members. On the contrary, a marriage with more than one wife and a correspondingly larger number of children does not seem affordable from this economic perspective. Monogamous marriage is post-pastoral insofar as it is not based on the premise that livestock and the pastoral way of life constitute the highest good. Instead, it is built around the teachings of Christianity as well as on the importance of education and gainful employment.

Nonetheless, polygamous and monogamous marriage in East Pokot also have important value sets in common. Specifically, the family is deemed the most important unit: husband, wife, and children. Furthermore, respect forms the basis of all relationships. Of course, the arrangement of life in the two forms of marriage is different. However, the two ideals are non-conflicting. They are two different paths of life in a divided world with divided values. Therefore, participants in the respective life cycles maintain a sense of understanding of the other ideal which, in turn, facilitates exchange and discourse.

Turning Christian-Monogamous

Finally, it bears mentioning that a shift from one ideal of marriage to the other –from the polygamous to the monogamous – is possible in principle. All cases I have encountered are married women in polygamous marriages who turn to Christianity and leave their polygamous homesteads as a consequence. I met Chepsukun when I was visiting the market in Kadingding. She was roasting a goat and I was a happy guest at her hoteli. We started a conversation and she told me about her life. “I am married, my husband told me recently that he plans to marry a second wife.”

Chepsukun was very upset about the plans of her husband. "I don't want him to marry another wife. I go to church every week in Nginyang. I walk there every Sunday. In church they say that it is bad to be married to more than one wife. So why would he want to do it?" Chepsukun struggled to accept the wishes of her husband. She had started to go to church when she visited school for some years. She had enjoyed going to church a lot – especially the songs and the sermons – and continued to go to church even after she dropped out of school: "The father says very smart things. He tells us that we should not drink. That God loves us all. That the union between husband and wife is sacred and there can only be one wife and one husband." when Chepsukun's husband married a second wife, Chepsukun could not accept sharing a home with her. She asked her husband to allow her to move to Nginyang where her brother and other relatives live. When I visited Chepsukun in her new place, she was very happy: "this is my new home. I live here with my three children. I go to church every week and I am a member of the local church group. God has helped me so much."

Christian churches are a common sight in even the more remote areas of east Pokot. and basically, every Pokot has had contact with Christian religion. but this does not mean that all pastoral Pokot directly convert enthusiastically to Christianity. It is rather that the Christian belief systems can be a support for women who are struggling with their current situation (marriage, satisfaction, life choices). Irene was very unhappy in her marriage. She was the third of four wives. Her husband had few livestock and there was much quarreling at home. "It was not a good life. I was very unhappy. My husband was beating me, and the children were hungry." When did she decide to move away? "It was enough. We had a big fight, and I was very upset. I moved here [Chemolingot] because I knew that the church could support me and that I could ask for food and for money for the school feed." Women feel accepted and understood by the church and the church officials. The church offers exchange and networks with peers with women's groups and church activities. They offer

guidance and arguments when their husbands and relatives are upset about their decision, as Damaris illustrated to me:

Damaris: I went for the first time to church when I was young. But when I was married, I wouldn't go to church until last year. I started to go to church again when I divorced my husband. It helps me because so many people are disturbing me right now. They tell me that I should not have divorced my husband. That I cannot stay alone. That I am a bad person. That's why I decided that it is better to go to church because people will not disturb you anymore. These are Christians who leave you alone. And people don't disturb me anymore. And if they disturb me, I can say: I am a Christian. I don't do things like that anymore. In church I told them everything. They prayed for me, and I got saved. I am now in church.

Anja: How do you have to behave to be saved?

Damaris: You have to worship God and Jesus. You have to behave so that you show him that you are saved. You are not allowed to drink, no sexual contact, no bad words, behave in a good manner, no abusing others (Damaris 02.06.2011)

The Church and its values give guidance for women in a new autonomous life as well as helping them to navigate in a post-pastoral habitat. Cheplina (42) said:

"I started going to church two years ago. I decided that I must change my life by going to church. I left taking alcohol so that I can have time with my children. I wanted to stop all my bad habits, drinking, misbehaving, coming home late, sometimes without feeding the children. So I decided that church might be something to hide yourself, not to be interested in those bad things anymore. That's why I joined church. You know, I drank changaa and busaa before. But I stopped drinking when I joined church. I like church because it is a shield. You can hide yourself there. You cannot see bad things outside. You stop to quarrel with others. It is like an umbrella. I like the teachings in church. They say that we should not quarrel with others. I think that is very good and right. The Church assisted me in bad times. I used to wake up very early in the morning and I would leave my children without cooking for them, without preparing even a tea for them and I would come very late like 8 or 9. Now I wake up early in the morning and I say: Thank you God that you have pulled me away from this bad behavior"⁷⁴ (Cheplina 11.06.2011)

⁷⁴ The appeal of Christianity (especially Pentecostal Congregations) among Pokot women is very similar to the analysis of the gendered encounters between Maasai and Missionaries as described in Hodgson's (2006) "the Church of Women".

6.4.2 Ownership

“Women possess nothing. When your husband dies, you cannot say that it is my animal. When you get something from your father you cannot say it’s yours. If you do, your husband will bewitch the animals and then they will all die“
(Cheplina 11.06.2011)

Ownership is a hot-button issue throughout East Pokot. Women of all ages and with various educational backgrounds all bemoan the fact that Pokot women do not have any rights of ownership and come away empty-handed regarding inheritance. Most would initially transfer Llewelyn-Davies’ (1981) claim about the Massai to themselves, i.e., that “there is continual opposition between men on the one side, who are potential property owners with dependents having full rights in themselves, livestock and human beings, and women on the other side, who are permanently dependent on men and never acquire full rights in themselves, livestock or children. Although [...] women have various rights and responsibilities, they, together with livestock and children – constitute a man’s wealth and are given away in marriage as if they were passive objects of property to be transacted between men”.

However, the situation is not quite as simple, and this is fully recognized by Pokot men and women. Women have various possibilities and rights as well as access to livestock and money: from initiation onwards, young men slowly begin to accumulate property over which they obtain full ownership rights only when they marry (usually five to seven years later). Until a man is married, his father has ultimate control over his livestock. It is only when a man establishes his own household, particularly once a man moves with his wife to their own home nearby, that he finally gains full ownership rights and control over his livestock.

A woman is promised livestock on her graduation from circumcision, on the night she is taken as a bride from her parental home, when she is first promised livestock by her own parents, and later by the relatives of her husband. From each of these promises, after initiation and upon marriage, women usually ask for and receive a gift of only one stock animal (usually one female goat) from their parental home.

Once a man is married and brings his wife to his home, his father and mother divide their herd, separating their own stock from that of their son. Aside from the two or three goats or sheep which belong to their son, the parents will give him and their daughter-in-law additional goats on account of their future children.

However, a woman does not have full ownership of the animals which she has been given by her family or her husband. Essentially, a woman only has usufruct rights to the stock, plus the right to transmit it to her children, either upon their marriages or as inheritance after her own death. When men and women speak about the stock given to a woman at marriage, they invariably say that she is “shown” different livestock rather than that she is given these animals. To distinguish the livestock that a woman has more control over, Pokot call them the stock which “she and her children will eat”: the right to consume or dispose of livestock indicates one’s rights of ownership.

Married men, on the other hand, have full ownership rights in their own stock, for they not only have usufruct rights and the right to transmit their stock to their children, but they also have the right to dispose of their livestock as they wish through exchange, and to meet various social and ritual obligations such as payment of fines, gifts to stock associates, bridewealth installments, contributions to public ceremonies, etc. Furthermore, a man’s right to dispose of stock in exchange also extends to his wife’s livestock.

However, a husband’s right over his wife’s livestock is qualified by the strong obligation to take his wife’s wishes into account and is limited in a number of ways. Or as Lomoler puts it: “On the first day of marriage when the wife is brought to the family of the husband, she is shown her animals in the boma. She cannot sell any livestock without asking husband. But her husband cannot sell without asking either.” Therefore, the handling of the livestock resource is a frequent topic of dispute between married couples; or as Lodyno put it:

Women can have their own goats. They bought it or received it as a present. The husband is happy when she gets her own goats because the herd is growing. But if he wants to sell the animals then the wife often wants to quarrel with the husband. Then the husband gets angry and sells everything! So he doesn't have to see the animals again! What shall the woman do? Or you tell her: just give the animals to your mother! I don't want to see them anymore! (Lodyno 22.03.2011)

Lodyno's quote sums up the points of contention in pastoral households quite well: many women feel that livestock do not really belong to them and perceive this as unfair. Men feel that the women are overstepping their sphere of influence and denying them their authority as head of household if they want to dispose of the cattle resource. And it is precisely this form of conflict that is increasing due to the growing number of female brewers. The female brewers in particular are enraged by the rules of ownership. Lodyno has two wives, one of whom brews and sells busaa. In principle, he approves of their activities. His wife had asked him if he could give her money for the acquisition costs, and he gave it to her. But by this point, the situation has started to bother him: "My wife gets arrogant. She sells the busaa and has some money and now she thinks she can talk to me disrespectfully. 'I don't have to do what you say. I don't care about your animals. They can die or you can sell them. I can feed my own children,' she says. I do not accept such behavior in my house." After a heated argument, Lodyno's wife has fled to her parents. Lodyno says that he will come back for her eventually, but that she should first learn that this is no way to behave towards one's husband.

I had the chance to talk to Lodyno's wife Cheporukuchu separately. She was quite bitter about the situation: "I bought myself a goat. My husband can sell the goat but he has to ask first. If you refuse, he will beat you or sell it anyway."

I asked her whether she thought that things are changing throughout East Pokot. But she remained skeptically: "In Pokot nothing has changed for women. Women can't still own anything. When you buy a goat, it is not yours, it is your husband's. That is not good. You cannot slaughter a goat without asking a man."

Many pastoral brewers share this frustration. On the one hand, they earn money with which they buy food and clothing for their children – and, therefore, are no longer supported by their husbands. When they buy goats with their own money, these animals become part of the family herd and they no longer have autonomous access to them. Cheporukuchu cannot imagine returning to her husband. “Women can own animals. But if you live with your husband, you must ask him before you sell an animal. if you live alone, you can just sell without asking anybody.” Cheporukuchu is not an isolated case. Many women choose to live separately from their husbands. Brewing gives them the material resources and the status of living autonomously, including the option to decide what to do with their own resources. The money to buy the brewing starter kit they get partly from their husbands – and partly they ask their parents for support. It is this hard-gained economic independence that reinforces the sense of injustice when their husbands claim ownership of livestock that these women have bought.

Kama Maria, an older Pokot woman, explained this predicament to me: “They say the goat is yours only, but a man sells it. They call it yours only.” Earlier when I had asked her if she could sell the goats given to her at marriage, her response was: “Sell them? What will we eat? What will we give the child? We will milk them and get the milk only.”

This example shows the initial response women have when asked about their general rights over stock. Women will invariably say that men “own” the livestock, thus reiterating the accepted or dominant social view. Only when a woman is asked specifically about her allocated stock does she become adamant about the rights she has over her livestock. The above example also reinforces the accepted idea that a woman is not only responsible for herself, but for “her house” – in other words, herself and her children. The wealth women obtain is not for themselves individually but for their children. Because of this, women are tied to their homesteads and to their hus-

bands, but on the other hand, they also have power due to their property rights over their sons and their wives.

It is beneficial for a man, both economically and for his social status, if he takes his wife's interests into account. This way he gives himself the chance to work with her and their children towards building a prosperous domestic unit or household. If a husband does not take his wife's interests into consideration, she can take various actions to persuade him to do so: a woman can make her husband's domestic situation intolerable (by refusing to cook or fetch water, or by using sorcery, etc.); she can return to her parental home; and, finally, if she has the support of male relatives who can put the case forward on her behalf, she can take her husband before the council of elders.

Therefore, it is also important to many husbands not to decide over the heads of their wives, but to involve them in decisions that affect them. Lomery, who is married to three wives, clearly sees himself as the head of the household who can make all decisions for the family. However, he knows how important it is to take his wives' wishes seriously: "My wives and I decide together. Even today my wives came and asked me if they could sell a goat to start a women's group. Each of them needs 500 Ksh. We will discuss it tonight." Even if Lomery enters into a dialogue with his wives, clearly, it is them who must go to him and ask him questions. It would be unthinkable that they should sell a goat without asking him – or that Lomery would ask his wives for their opinion before buying a goat.

The degree to which a woman can influence her husband's decisions over use and disposal of livestock varies depending on which stock are in question, and on the nature of the relationship she has with her husband. A woman's relationship with her husband changes as the years go by. In the initial years of marriage, and so long as the children are still young, the husband normally manages his wife's stock together with his in a single herd, and therefore he has a significant say in the management and disposal of her stock. In later years, a woman will probably separate her

herd from her husband's, as well as relying on the support of her adult sons, who help her in negotiations with her husband over the management and disposal of her stock. In a way, the wife's dependency on a male to access livestock shifts from her husband to her sons.

This connection between sons and mothers becomes immediately clear on the subject of a widow being inherited: when widows are still young (and with young children at that) and in their reproductive prime, which makes it likely that they will have more children, they are inherited by the eldest brother of their deceased husband to prevent them from marrying a man from another family and having parts of the herd passed into a new family. However, no widow wants to be inherited by her brother-in-law. Instead, they commonly do not accept him, and run away. The relevant type of relationship is unstable to say the least. Because of this, women feel deprived of their own inheritance and stake their claim to live alone with children and livestock.

In pastoral households, however, this is usually only possible when the children are older, and the women are also older (and it can no longer be assumed that they could be married by another man). Then the women become caretakers of the livestock for their sons. Chemkan Tuaret (75) explained this rule succinctly: "You can inherit because of your children. You cannot be separated from your children. So, you inherit." Chemkan raised her seven children as a widow and describes to me that she made all decisions together with her adult sons and was accountable to no one. "When my husband died, and I inherited the animals, I had to ask my sons when selling and they had to ask me." Interestingly, men see the situation differently. They also describe widows living together with their children and having their share of the livestock. For them, however, the mother is only a proxy as long as her sons are not yet grown up and married, as Kokurio describes: "A woman will inherit through her children. The children will officially inherit all animals (even if they are very young) and the woman is taking care of the animal for her children."

The specific wording “she inherits through her children” is something that I have from men time and again. The viewpoint, implied therein, stands in stark contrast to the perception by pastoral women themselves who, like Chepate, claim: “A wife cannot own animals when their husband is alive. But when the husband dies, then you get his animals. I did. I have my animals now. I live with my sons. The animals are for my children. No one can sell them without asking the others. They belong to all of us.”

Ownership in non-pastoral Settings

The fewer livestock there are, the more the clear gendered claims to ownership change. Or as Damaris said to me, “When men lose their animals, women have more power.”

The masculine focus of claims to ownership for male Pokot is livestock (and land in the highlands, see Greiner 2017⁷⁵). In non-pastoral families with few or no livestock, however, this claim does not carry over to other types of property or to money. This means that many of the non-pastoral couples are, and indeed have to be, in close communication and coordination when it comes to their expenses. Chepate lives in Chemolingot with her husband and their five children together. She collects water and firewood, while he collects stones for World Vision from time to time, but basically has no regular job. Chepate summed up their joint decision-making as follows: “We own five goats together. We decide together what to do with them. He asks me and I ask him.” One could almost say that the poorer the families are, the more equal are ownership and decision-making power about their common property.

But of course, it is not quite that simple. Even in non-pastoral monogamous families, husbands usually insist on full ownership of all decisions concerning livestock. And in most non-pastoral households, full ownership is, indeed, given to the man. But

⁷⁵ Though land ownership is mostly male-based. He describes a case where men want to dispossess a widow from a land plot, based on the claim that only men can own land. In the end, the woman resists successfully and can keep the plot.

women find it very difficult to accept this: "The animals are not really yours. Your husband can always sell without asking you. No one will listen to your quarrels," Leah, who is married monogamously and lives Chemolingot, told me. They have about 50 goats that graze freely in Chemolingot. Leah told me that she cannot freely dispose of the goats, and her husband regularly sells goats for alcohol without agreement, thereby using wealth which she would rather use to educate her children and neighbors. She complained frequently, but this only caused quarrels: "I am angry because he sells the goats to go to the brewing field. Why sell the good goat that we could use to pay for education or buy things for our children? But he sells it and drinks the money away. No, I don't like it." Non-pastoral women I have talked to see no good reason why it should be only their husband who can decide what to do with the animals.

Interestingly, full ownership refers only to livestock ownership. Money can be owned by women, and they can dispose of it freely. "But women can own money. Your husband will ask you for money when he knows that you have some. But then you just give him a small amount. What's in the borma belongs to the whole family, but that money is only yours," Leah expanded. Women who earn money – whether through casual work, self-employment or permanent employment – have full ownership over it. They can dispose of it as they wish and are not accountable to their husbands (as long as the basic needs of the family are met, and everyone has enough to eat and is provided for). And since in Chemolingot (and many other centers in the lowlands of East Pokot) it is mainly the women who earn money, they have full ownership – while many men are dependent on the generosity of their wives. If they are in need of money, they go to their wives and ask them for it.

The symbolic meaning of livestock is also present among non-pastoral men. Damaris summarizes this as follows: "Pokot men only value animals, nothing else. They don't value the money you have earned. They are not interested in money, only when they beg you for it." Both ownership and decision-making power over livestock are im-

portant to non-pastoral men, too. Therefore, in order to be recognized in the community even very wealthy Pokot with influential government positions own cattle herds, which are taken care of by relatives, as they fear being perceived as weak without livestock. As one candidate for the national parliament explained to me, he lives with his family in Nairobi and only comes to East Pokot regularly for election campaign purposes: "I have cattle and goats. I don't know how many. The young boys, relatives of mine, take care of it around Silale. It is not a business decision. It is quite expensive. The cattle die or they get raided and then I have to buy new stock. But it is important for me that people know that I have cattle. That I am a full Pokot. So that they can trust me and vote for me."

Married couples do not talk about their income. No one knows how much the other has at his or her disposal. This is the same for poor households as for wealthy ones. Therefore, no one knows exactly how much the other has available; however, this is a strategy, as Leah also described above, that especially women from households with few resources use. When their husband asks them for money, they give him a small amount – thus fulfilling his request without losing their autonomy. Nevertheless, conflicts often arise when it comes to money. Men ask for more money, but women don't want to give them more than merely necessary. Couples complain when one of the partners has taken their share (or even money set aside for the family) to buy local brews and has drunk the money away. Also, many men complain that they do not get enough money from their wives because the latter withhold it. Thomas, the husband of Beatrice, who works as a cleaner for local administration in Chemolingot and is the main breadwinner, tells me that they regularly argue about money: "When we fight, we fight about money. I want my share of the money. She gives me too little. It is not fair. I need more money." Beatrice has a different view: "We only have the money I earn. We need to buy food for the children. We need to pay the school fees. I give him money when he asks for it. But he always wants more and more and more. But there is not more."

In local marriages, there are also clear divisions of property by gender. Susan and her husband, who is a DO working in another region of Kenya and, therefore, is in Chemolingot only irregularly, have clearly arranged their finances and possessions. Each of them funds their primary residence. Susan pays for all expenses in Chemolingot, repairs and other relevant purchases relating to their house, and she pays for all living expenses for their joint children, employees, and relatives who live on the property. They fund the school fees together and discuss who is obliged to pay which singular fee specifically. In addition, they both have separate businesses and projects. Susan has complete freedom over the money she earns: "I own a bookstore, a kiosk, and a residential house in Chemolingot." She bought the houses and manages them and the staff by herself. In our conversation she complained that these businesses are not attributed to her, but to her husband. "I own the business and the housing on paper. But the Pokot will say that my husband owns it all. They call it Nakoro's [husband's name] bookstore, Nakoro's house. They would never refer to my name when talking about the business."

Non-pastoral women can own and buy plots, bank accounts and businesses, but when they are married, ownership is attributed to their husbands. Still, for Susan, there is a clear difference in terms of property rights between pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot women: "Women in Pokot cannot own any animals. When you are married you get animals to milk but you cannot slaughter or sell them without consulting your husband. When you are educated, you can own money, plots, bank accounts, chicken." However, non-pastoral married women, just like pastoral women, do not have full ownership of livestock: "Educated women cannot own cows and goats. The husband will give them away without asking the wife. Even my husband could do it. And what would I do? Nothing!"

However, it is not the case that no women own livestock in East Pokot at all. Unmarried educated non-pastoral women buy their own cattle without anyone being able to stake a claim in their stead. For example, my assistant bought three goats from her

salary and plans to buy more. Many of the female-headed households keep goats and chickens that they bought with their own money without anyone being able to dispute them. If there is no husband, they automatically have full ownership over the animals. This would not be the case for married women who also bought the goats with their own money. Here, the animals would be assigned to the husband's herd, and he would also have the last word about their use, as already written above.

Rachel, who is the manager of the Bar Motherland in Chemolingot, even bought a cow:

I wanted to have a cow for my children. I have several goats at my mother's home. I just went to the market in Nginyang and bought the goats. I told my brother that I wanted to buy a cow. My brother went with me and assisted me in buying it. And now it is mine. [...] I never heard of a woman here who owns a cow. [...] In the past women could not own anything. Today educated women can own things. But wives cannot. It is difficult with animals and women are not supposed to own land. That's why my brother came with me to the market (Rachel 09.06.2011).

Ownership is an excellent example of how social transformation is taking place in East Pokot: the pastoral status quo according to which only men have full ownership is changing through the new sources of income for women, the right of ownership for money, which is also possible for female Pokot. Since women have more money income than men, poor men especially become dependent on their wives and have to ask them for money. In particular, educated non-pastoral women can afford and own many goods and properties: they open businesses and buy laptops, telephones, water tanks etc. At the same time, the ownership of livestock remains gendered, even in non-pastoral marriages. With the rise of unmarried women living alone (and not with their fathers or brothers), a vacuum is created that allows women to also buy (albeit not directly, but with male relatives as intermediaries) and own livestock themselves. It remains to be seen whether such developments will spread to married pastoral and non-pastoral women.

6.5 Conflicts & Endings

“What has increased a lot in the last few years is divorce. Many women nowadays divorce their husbands, but I don’t know why. Many women today want to stand by themselves and not anymore be ruled by men” (Ruto, Assistant Chief of Chemolingot 11.12.2010).

I was told again and again that with sedentarization and the advent of working women, there would be more and more marital conflicts and also separations. More and more marriages would break up, and more and more married couples would live apart. In Chemolingot, I also noticed very early on the high numbers of women living alone (and/ or separated). However, when I began documenting the Marriage Histories of pastoral and non-pastoral marriages, I very quickly noticed that pastoral marriages in Pokot were also much less stable than I had been told.

The first years of a marriage in Pokot are very unstable to begin with, as the husband and wife adjust, or fail to adjust, to one another and their new circumstances (comparable to what Fortes describes as “experimental marriages”, 1949:84). So far as the formal and officially acknowledged ideal is concerned, there are no recognized strategies or alternative ways for women to get out of marriage. As Siwaryeng, a young unmarried pastoral man, told me: “Women have no power when they are taken to their husbands’ homes. If they try to run away, they will be beaten.” In practice, however, a new wife usually runs back to her parental home and complains to them about her betrothed. Sometimes a woman simply refuses to stay at her husband’s home from the minute she is brought there. A new wife who has openly expressed her dislike for her husband is usually guarded by the women and men of the compound (or possibly close neighbors) for the first few days after her arrival. Nevertheless, she will most often manage to get away more than once and create a general disturbance through her actions.

It must be remembered that it is not only women who do not choose their husbands, but also men who do not freely choose their wives. A young man is dependent on his parents and close kin to give him the property to pay bridewealth, and, as a result,

the latter have a strong say as to with whom he may begin negotiations. But more importantly, marriage is seen as a relationship and commitment between two kin groups, and not simply between two individuals. It would not be worthwhile for a kin group to force their “son” to marry a woman whom he had a violent dislike for, as they would probably lose their entire bridewealth payment if the marriage failed. Although it is far easier for a man to obtain a legal divorce in Pokot than it is for a woman, legal divorce is extremely rare. A legal divorce is known as *kilakat* – literally to open or break (probably referring to the untying of a woman’s turum, her wedding bracelet). For a man to obtain a formal divorce from his wife he must take the case to kokwö, the neighborhood council of elders. If the elders agree that a divorce should take place, then the two families are blessed, and the division of property is decided by the elders. At *kilakat* a man either relinquishes all claim to his bride-wealth (if the woman has produced a child), or the elders decide that at least some of the bridewealth must stay with the wife’s kin, because of the trouble of trying to retrieve it from various relations. It is very difficult for women to obtain legal divorce in Pokot, because they have to persuade their male relatives to present their case for them at the council of elders.⁷⁶

Kilakat is a last resort in a marriage conflict, and there are very few cases. In pastoral settings, I was only told of two cases when *kilakat* was supposedly performed, and I do not know of any case of legal divorce which occurred when I was in the field. From what I have been told, this only occurs in cases of impotence, if the man or woman has become ill or mad, and possibly if the woman is known to break the taboo of handling food when she is menstruating. In non-pastoral settings, I documented five divorces during my research. In all five cases, there were several instances of mediation (by relatives, the church, chiefs, elders) and it took several weeks until the divorce was finalized.

⁷⁶ I will review some divorces initiated by women later.

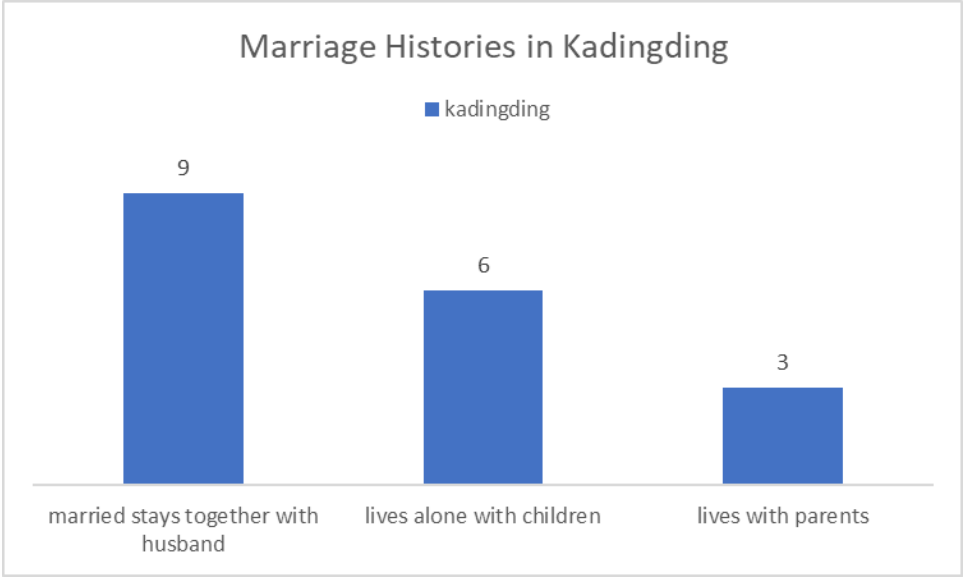
It is far easier, for both men and women, to obtain a de facto divorce than a divorce de jure. De facto divorce occurs frequently, and initially only involves a separation of the couple: either a husband chases his wife from his home, or a wife decides to run away from her husband. In such case the legalities of marriage, and the ownership rights of property, are left far more ambivalent and can usually be settled between the two (or three if a second husband is involved) kin groups concerned (for example, I know of many cases where the husband got back all his bridewealth from his affines, even though it should have remained with them because his wife had given birth to his children).

Among pastoralists, an interesting fact concerns the frequency with which de facto divorce occurs, especially considering the public male ideal which states that, as wives have no real social power to shape their relationships, they are obligated to stay married to their husbands. I recorded a total of 40 marriage histories in detail, 22 in Chemolingot and 18 in Kadingding. Out of a total of 40 women more than half were not living full time with their husbands (9 in Kadingding, and 14 in Chemolingot), while the other 17 were still living with their husbands, although there were often difficulties involved in these marriages.

I will review some of the more salient details of these statistics here, but it should first be clarified that only two of these marriages are extremely recent, the rest involving women who have, in most cases, borne at least two children and can, therefore, be expected to stay with their current husbands. I will not review all the negotiation and bridewealth transactions which have occurred in these marriages, but only point out that there is no direct correlation between the amount of bridewealth paid and the stability of the marriage. Bridewealth payments were in no case completed and there was always more due.

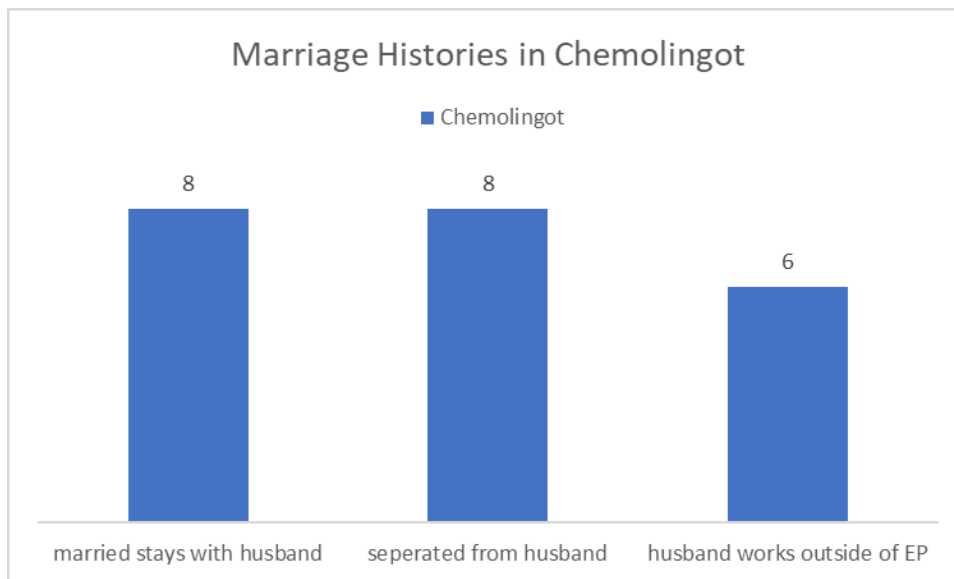
Let us first look at Kadingding. Nine women have stayed with their husbands. From this total only seven women married their husbands and stayed with them without

further complications; all these men married when they were fairly young, and some of the marriages are between men and women who were lovers before the women were initiated. Nine women do not live with their husbands anymore. Some moved to Chemolingot or Nginyang (4), others stayed in different pastoral areas (2) and three moved to their parents' or brothers' homesteads.



33: *Marriage Histories in Kadingding*

In Chemolingot, there are only eight out of 22 documented marriages where men and women are living together as husband and wife. Eight women live separated from their husband (most husbands live in pastoral areas with at least one other wife). Six women have husbands working outside of East Pokot; these wives identify as being married. The husbands visit every other month for a weekend on average, making the wives de facto female-headed households most of the time.



34: *Marriage Histories in Chemolingot*

From the above figures it is clear that the male ideal according to which women stay with their husbands is far from the reality. Out of all 17 women who have separated from their husbands (I do not review here the cases with husbands living outside of East Pokot), I know of only two cases where the man “chased” away his wife. In the other 17 cases, the wife initiated the separation and decided to move away.

Men are usually not interested in separation. They do not get bridewealth payments back and do not want to lose contact with children (and access to the labor force). Therefore, the usual male tactic in conflicts is to ignore the woman and her needs and thus provoke the woman’s reaction.

6.5.1 Reasons to Separate

As similar as the statistics on separations are in pastoral and non-pastoral marriages, so are the reasons for separation. The separations I recorded were due to infidelity, constant quarrel, mismanagement of money, mismanagement of livestock, quarrel with co-wives, abuse of alcohol, and a husband’s unwillingness to support his wife and children.

Separating from one’s husband, i.e. moving away from the shared homestead, happens quite often and is fairly easy and informal. Chepoksang, who lives separated

from her husband and her co-wives, told me: “There was so much quarrel at the homestead. I was not enjoying my life. I told my husband that I wanted to move to Chemolingot. He gave me five goats and I left with the five children living here with me.”

Quarrel with one’s co-wives or husband is certainly the most frequently named cause of separation. Many women also state that there is not much love between the spouses. It was an arranged marriage, so I didn’t have anything to say about what I wanted. I had to marry him,” Rael told me, detailing the various causes of conflict that plagued the union from the outset:

I did not want him to marry more wives, because we already did not have enough food for all of us and lived in a very small place. He didn’t have many animals and just was not paying much dowry to the families. Every wife had only a few goats to take care of. [...] There was not enough food and too many people were sharing the love of one man who had not much. I was not happy in my marriage because I was forced to marry him, and I didn’t know this man before. I didn’t know that he would marry many wives and that we would have so little food. That’s why I decided to leave him [...] and came to Chemolingot and to start my own business. [...] My children were already big then. My last born had just finished class 8. [...] My husband never tried to win me back. We never talked to each other after that. But we are not officially divorced (Rael 27.06.2011).

Rael’s case is one of many. Husband and wife get married, do not enjoy living together and separate after a couple of years. The wife moves away, and the husband does not try to bring her back. Both parties live separately without interacting anymore.

In some cases, the strained relationship turns violent. “My husband was beating me. There was no peace in the family. There was always quarrelling. I went to my brother to live there and now my life is much better,” Chepolina elaborated. “Do you plan to return to your husband’s homestead?” I asked. “No. I will not move back to this home. I want to build my own house in the future. I want to have my own duka and buy animals for myself and my children.”

Women can return to their parents’ homestead or move to one of their brothers’ homes. Nowadays most women, especially when they already have their own chil-

dren, prefer to live on their own. They move to the centers where they find more income opportunities and their children have better schooling (and school funding) options.

As in Chepolina's marriage history, beatings in marriage are not taboo. But the extent and cause of castigation must be justified. Physically disciplining a wife is acceptable to some extent if she does not follow established rules (e.g., infidelity, lack of respect, talking back to her husband). However, the increasing consumption of alcohol also leads to an increase in domestic violence. As a result of intoxication, simmering conflicts tend to escalate. Men and also women hit each other, and get into fights with partners or alleged new partners; (for an excerpt of the registered cases of domestic violence in Chemolingot see figure 35). Both elders and chiefs in Chemolingot and Kadingding report an increase in the number and extent of domestic violence incidents and escalating marital conflicts.

A special case of the common case of separation consists in separation after a young widow got married to her brother-in-law. As detailed before, to prevent a widow who can bear further children from marrying a new husband from a different family, it is quite common that her brother-in-law "inherits" the wife. Anna, for instance, dropped out in Secondary School and married her husband Jonathan and gave birth to their three children. When he died in a car accident, she was inherited by his elder brother. "Then the brother of my dead husband married me. I gave him one child. But that man is not my husband. I did not stay long with him, maybe eight months. I don't like to look back at that time. It was not life." Anna moved to Chemolingot and found a job as an office assistant for a local NGO. Now, she supports her four children and several relatives.

Domestic Violence Cases in Chemolingot

Source: Chief's registry June 2011. All names are anonymized.

18.8.2009: John Kituda 39: husband wants divorce because of **adultery**. Family was called,

wife wants to stay, family agrees. No evidence only rumours. So, he could not divorce because family did not agree. Marriage improved later.

7.9.2009: Chepokamoi Purity Moris 22: wants a **divorce**. She burnt down house in dispute. Husband wanted then divorce and refund. Family disagreed & forced them to work on relationship. Now she suspects that husband **cheats**. She threatens to kill his girlfriend.

19.10.2009: Chepomopory Nakol 30& Chepkogh Lotikipuro 28: 1st wife is separated from husband. **Threatened to kill 2nd wife** because husband is hers and she also wants child support. Husband accepted and now pays for children.

4.11.2009: Man and woman stayed together like husband and wife. She threw him out. He refused. They **fought and injured each other**. They have since separated.

8.12.2009: Damaris Kopuyet: Divorced husband, 2 children. **He suspects her of misbehaving**.

4.11.2010. Son wants share from mother. She refused. He threatened him.

2.4.2010. Two women beating each other after one **caught the other with her husband**.

20.4.2011: She wanted divorce because he **has many girlfriends**. Brought one of his girlfriends to the homestead. She felt ashamed. "How can he have an affair when I am there?" He accepted his mistake.

35: *Cases of Domestic Violence in Chemolingot 2009-2011*

6.5.2 Divorce

Spousal separation is more common in pastoral marriages than in non-pastoral marriages. Of course, marriages are not without conflict either, and relationships do shatter. In all cases I have documented, the woman (or the family of the woman) initiated the divorce negotiations. All of them stressed that they wanted a clear severance and a fresh start, i.e., and not being officially tied to their former husband anymore.

While in pastoral settings, the most common mediators in marital conflicts are parents and close relatives, in non-pastoral settings, the church plays an important role. Couples seek marriage advice when they have problems conceiving, are fighting a lot, or have alcohol-abuse issues. As we will see in the following examples, non-

pastoral couples make use of a variety of mediators, institutions, and legal systems to negotiate and dissolve a marriage. This illustrates how interwoven the pastoral and the non-pastoral everyday experiences are in such cases.

In the following, I want to review two very prominent divorce cases:

Alice's Divorce

Alice is one of the most well-known and educated women in East Pokot. She is one of the few women who have gained a bachelor's degree from Uganda. However, her love life did not proceed in a straight line. She was a very good student and went to the secondary school in Marigat. She had an affair with a teacher in Marigat and got pregnant in Form 4. Later, she completed secondary school with a final note below average. Not able to attend college, she worked for the medical clinic in Barbello where she met her future husband. They got married and Alice gave birth to their first child. Alice always planned on going to college. The local pastor promised to pay the tuition for nursery school. Her husband, who had dropped out of secondary school, refused to let Alice continue her education. "My husband wanted me to get a circumcision rather than attending college. We were quarreling a lot and I was so angry." Alice never considered getting circumcised and rejected this idea wholeheartedly. When Alice was pregnant with the second child, the domestic problems grew. Her husband impregnated two other women. When everything came out, they had a big fight in which he threatened Alice both verbally and physically. That night Alice left him and decided that she wanted a divorce. She delivered their second child at her father's place. During a short reconciliation phase, she got pregnant from her husband for a third time but they separated shortly afterwards. She built her own house and moved there with her three children. Looking back, she concluded: "I know it is better to be a single mother than his wife."

However, getting a divorce was not that easy. Alice recalled:

When I wanted to divorce my husband, even my father said to me: "You must learn to be patient. You have to learn to respect your husband. You cannot just

do what you want. When you say you want to go to college you cannot just do it. You can only do it when your husband says so and allows it" (Alice 02.07.2011).

Thus, Alice did not get a divorce immediately. She applied for a bachelor's degree in rural development at the Makerere University in Kampala and was accepted. Her two older children stayed with one of her sisters and her last-born with her mother.

During her studies in Uganda, her husband claimed that she had an affair with another man in Barpello. He wanted to bring the case to the elders to be fined with *sita sita*,⁷⁷ the official penalty for infidelity:⁷⁸ if a man and another man's wife are caught in an act of infidelity, they are sentenced to six strokes with a whip or cane. In addition, the man has to pay six cows and six goats to the wife's husband for compensation.⁷⁹

Upon hearing of these allegations Alice was dumbfounded: "When I heard that I went to my parents and told them: 'This guy is still following me. I am having my life. He is already married to two wives now, but he does not even allow me to be seen with a friend'." Alice's parents then started the procedure for an official divorce and sent her husband's parents. First, her father-in-law was only willing to agree on the condition that the bridewealth was returned and both children went to live with his family. However, Alice's father refused, saying: "How dare you ask for the animals? The animals are not supposed to be returned because you already have children. According to the custom the children will remain yours forever, so you cannot ask for the animals."

⁷⁷ Although *sita sita* is the Swahili word for six six, I never heard of a similar legal custom in other regions of Kenya. I could not find any information on the origins of this penalty.

⁷⁸ Infidelity happens quite frequently in East Pokot. However, no woman has ever admitted to me that she cheated on her husband or partner. Although men are prosecuted for infidelity with a married woman, a woman will never admit to being unfaithful to her husband.

⁷⁹ I documented several cases of *sita sita*. In none of the cases were 6 cows and 6 goats paid. Much more often, the penalty is based on the available resources and ranged from a few goats to very high fines.

When things between both families were settled, Alice and her husband were supposed to do a cleansing ceremony to signify that he would not follow her anymore and she would not follow him either. Alice's husband never showed up for this ceremony, though. Eventually, her parents informed the elders and chief that the divorce was official, and he had no claim to her anymore.

Alice feels free and is not shy to admit that she has boyfriends: "I visit Barbello with my boyfriend. I have my life now. I am not afraid to meet my ex-husband or his family." However, these days, she enjoys her freedom and has no intention to ever get married again.

Susanna's Divorce

The divorce of Susanna was a highly public marital drama that took place during my research stay in East Pokot. Susanna and her husband are both well-known community activists and are highly respected. Susanna works for World Vision and her husband is the head of the farmers' association.

Both were well known for supporting different political parties and politicians, and sometimes even supporting other candidates than their own spouse. For instance, when her husband ran for the presidency of the farmers' association, Susanna publicly supported another candidate. As was well known to many, Susanna's marriage did have some problems. Susanna told me that they went to church council a couple of times after a big fight – and there were rumors that her husband had at least one child out of wedlock.

One night Susanna was seen in a hotel in Nakuru with another elite man from Chemolingot by relatives of her husband. They posted it on Facebook and accused her of cheating, which turned the whole occurrence into a highly public drama that entertained East Pokot for a few months. Susanna denied the accusations and insisted that she went to the hotel with a friend since there was no transport back to Chemolingot and she was afraid to stay alone in the hotel room.

Not buying Susanna's explanation, her husband's family informed the police and the elders of the incident. The police interrogated Susan and let her go without any legal consequences, and she was never questioned by the elders. Susanna only heard through other relatives that the accused adulterer, her acquaintance, was fined and had to pay the sita sita.

When I talked to Susan she was outraged about the situation and that her husband had not talked to her but had planned all of the above-mentioned steps with his family. It especially angered her that nobody had involved her and that a sita sita could mean, for her, that she would be beaten with a whip in public.

Susanna decided to take action on her own: "I am not going to accept the ruling of the elders. I am going to the chief and demand a court where I can present my case," she told me. And indeed, Susanna organized a meeting with the DO and the chief that functioned very similar to a court. Her decision not to accept the elders' ruling but to appeal to formal government institutions instead was a first in East Pokot and, theretofore unheard of. The meeting itself was public, and half of Chemolingot was in attendance. All involved parties were invited to present their position. Her husband had the right to speak first. He accused her of infidelity. After him his brother who had sen her and the other man in Nakuru took the stand. Then, Susanna presented her point of view. After three hours of hearing all sides of the story, the chief ruled that there was no evidence for one side over another. "Go back home and talk to each other. Come back tomorrow. If Susanna confesses, then sita sita has to happen."

Susanna and her husband did not talk that night, or the next day. His relatives tried to convince the accused adulterer to pay the sita sita anyway. He refused. Susanna told me that her husband paid a man who was associated with witchcraft to use a sickness spell on her. Susanna's family suggested starting divorce procedures. She was reluctant in the beginning. "I refuse to move out of the house with my children. It is MY house. I bought the plot, built the house. I paid for EVERYTHING!" In the

end, a divorce was negotiated between the two families and finalized. Susan moved with her children into a rental house in Chemolingot.

Alice and Susanna's cases show the multitude of mediators that are involved in a conflict resolution: parents, relatives, church officials, elders, chiefs, and district officials are all part of the negotiation process. Women struggle with customary Pokot institutions such as the council of the Elders since they have no option to present their side of the story. Governmental offices and institutions like that of Chief or DO as well as courts, on the other hand, strike them as more neutral and objective and, therefore, more sympathetic to their concerns.

Taking the different cases detailed above as well as the comparison between both life cycles – the pastoral and the non-pastoral – into account, it stands to reason that marriage conflicts are similar in both settings. By and large, marriage itself appears to be a far less stable union throughout East Pokot than people commonly think and say. Specifically, spousal separation is both easy and rather “normal”, i.e., common practice, in the pastoral sociotope. In the non-pastoral setting, on the other hand, the legal institution of divorce is increasingly gaining traction. When it comes to the adjudication and resolution of marital conflict, the difference between both life cycles becomes stark: while pastoral couples (and their families) turn to elders and their rulings, non-pastoral women tend not to accept customary rulings (anymore) when they do not have an option to make their voices heard. They use governmental and legally formalized processes instead, and they resort to churches whose representatives act as mediators similar to functions fulfilled by elders.

At the end of the day, though, family and relatives are in the majority of cases the most important and trusted advisors when couples are having marital problems; this holds for both life cycles. Considered comprehensively, the social framework for dealing with marital conflicts – in terms of options for resolutions as well as exits and pursuing alternatives – is highly dynamic. Especially women, pastoral and non-pastoral alike, have (and had) many options, with new ones emerging and becoming

more prevalent. For instance, women these days may live by themselves (and with their children) in urban centers – and not with their kin. This opens up the possibility of living autonomously and without having to defer to their husbands or male relatives.

Conclusion

I commenced this chapter by taking stock of the pertinent literature on marriage in Sub-Saharan African societies. At first glance, this overview of the various schools of thought structuring academic discourse and reflecting anthropological perspectives on conjugal union presented us with a heterogeneous, even contradictory picture of marriage – oscillating between permanence and change, decline and ubiquitousness, reproducing established social structures and being shaped by the participating persons, women specifically, who are using strategic resources to alter their positions.

However, reviewing the meaning of marriage in East Pokot, as I have approached it by contrasting both the pastoral and the non-pastoral life cycle of women, many of the above-mentioned observations and contradictions hold true. Most importantly, marriage is and continues to be an important – if not *the* important – social institution. Getting married and having children is considered a key element of a flourishing successful life among both pastoral and non-pastoral Pokot. However, while the former adheres to the ideal of polygamous marriage, the latter endorse monogamy, influenced by Christian values. And the differences do not stop – quite the contrary: women who partake in the pastoral life cycle marry early in life and commonly bear many children; non-pastoral women, on the other hand, marry much later (not uncommonly in their later twenties) and have fewer children. Also, boyfriend-girlfriend relations play a much more important role for them because such ties may well outlast their teenage years and many a boyfriend is a prospective husband later on.

The two different life cycles are linked to specific habitus. For nomadically living Pokot women, the key biographical experiences of the pastoral lifecycle apply, while the majority of sedentary women follow the non-pastoral life cycle events. The paral-

lel existence of these two habitus also results in more “cracks in the social structure” that give women opportunities for new practices and thus agency. It is not that women can arbitrarily help themselves to design their biographies as they please. Pastoral women are linked to the institutions and the “structure” of the nomadic mode of living, and the same is true for the choices of sedentarized women. But the parallelism of new institutions also creates more contradictions, new points of reference (cash income, autonomy, decision-making power) that did not exist before.

Turning to the beginnings of marriage, there is a stark contrast between both life cycles too. Young women living pastorally are usually assigned their husband, who has been selected by their parents. Those who are living non-pastorally have the liberty to choose their spouse for themselves – though many do encounter massive problems in finding the right one, i.e., a man who is (at least) their equal in terms of education, professional success, social standing etc. Some of those women, however, not only learn to embrace their status as singles but also cherish the independence that comes with it. This contrast carries over to marriage negotiations, i.e., the bargain about and eventual fixing of the bride price. Non-pastoral women enjoy much more autonomy in this regard – if they are educated. Interestingly, though, the wedding ceremony in both settings is similar. And even though most (if not all) non-pastoral Pokot hold to Christian faith, they have no interest in a Christian wedding officiated by a minister, either.

Looking at the quarrels that plague conjugal unions, there are vast similarities between pastoral and non-pastoral settings, too. Such causes include infidelity, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, the handling of household resources and the (mis)spending of money. Importantly, though, Christian values and the ideal of marriage that is conveyed through sermons provides women (especially those in a non-pastoral life cycle) with socially accepted cause and reason to leave behind their marriages. Indeed, marriages are and have been breaking up in both life cycles, even though the processes of uncoupling differ. In pastoral settings, women who are dis-

contented with their partner will usually just separate from him, and genuine divorces are a rarity. In non-pastoral settings, things are the other way round: separations are uncommon, and if women want to sever ties with husband, she does so by getting a divorce, which prevents further claims (on assets or children) on his part.

Despite noticeable differences regarding the way that marriages are initiated and lived between both life cycles, in both cases they are still relations between the sexes that are characterized by a power imbalance. In pastoral marriages this imbalance is evident and entrenched by the fact that women have basically no possessions; they have no opportunities for attaining any due to property- and inheritance-rights restrictions. In addition, their standing within the social institution of marriage is one of subservience to the household head, who has the final (and often only) say on matters of production, mobility, the marrying of offspring etc. Non-pastoral marriages are also very much shaped by the notion of respect that a husband is owed by his wife and the fact that women are still prevented from owning livestock or land. Yet, there is a greater demand for equality by the respective women which, in turn, leads to marital conflicts. Importantly, the autonomy of women within conjugal unions – especially in terms of economic resources – depends on whether or not household wealth is quantified over livestock. If it is, marriage holds very limited autonomy for them. However, once money becomes the main unit of prosperity and women themselves attain sources of income, a plethora of opportunities emerge for them; they can buy houses, means of production, daily goods, and services etc. Damaris's sweeping claim "When men lose their animals, women have more power" may be a generalization, but it rings true regardless.

Conclusion

The thesis analyses what effects the increasing sedentarization in East Pokot has on society in general and women specifically, and how the latter react to the new socio-economic circumstances, and thus how these women again re-transform Pokot society. Summing up the insights of my inquiry into women and social change, I would like to present the main statements of the thesis, situate them within the existing research literature on pastoralism and women, and review how the thesis can contribute to the Theory of Practice and the agency concept.

Changing pastoral Realities

Social change is indeed occurring throughout East Pokot – and it is inherently tied to the process of sedentarization. Progressing at various levels of speed, depending on whether one considers, for instance, urban Chemolingot or pastoral Kadingding, there is nonetheless a fundamental transformation of the entire social structure taking place that is affecting individual biographies but also modes and means of production, as well as lifestyles, family and relationships concepts, societal norms and values, and the allocation of material and immaterial power resources between genders. In the course of its gradual transformation into a post-pastoral society, East Pokot is becoming more and more stratified with the emergence of a small, wealthy and educated elite, whose members share a commitment to Christian values and maintain close networks, and a settled poor class whose members barely scrape by. Yet the various strata of society pursue remarkably similar approaches of social-capital mobilization in these uncertain times, revolving around fundraising and merry-go-rounds – the specific exercise of which, importantly, harks back to long-established practices of Pokot stock friendships.

My work is not the first to look at change in the region. Michael Bollig has been working in the region since the 1990s and has since shed light on many facets of Pokot society, including intra- and inter-ethnic conflict (1992), risk management (1994, 1997, 1998, 2006), and rituals (2000). Matthias Österle has dealt with the diver-

sification of the pastoral economy (2007). Clemens Greiner's work focuses on ethnic conflicts (2013) and land use (2017). Hauke-Peter Vehrs (2022) looks at socio-ecological change. The aforementioned authors have published together on land use (Greiner, Vehrs, and Bollig 2021) and socio-ecological transformation (Bollig, Greiner, Österle 2014). My work joins these works on transformation in the region and complements them by looking at social and cultural change in roles and institutions with a particular focus on gender.

My work here also contributes to the literature around sedentarization of pastoral nomads in (East) Africa, which describes a threat to the nomadic pastoral mode of production in many regions (Catley, Lind, and Scoones 2013). Much of the literature is concerned with the reasons for the displacement of nomadic pastoralism. Reasons cited include marginalization by colonial and post-colonial governments (Scoones 1995) and the embedding of pastoral societies in a centralized economy (Anderson and Broch Due 1999, Devereux 2010, Livingstone and Ruhidini 2013). The literature on pastoralists' sedentarization and diversification is extensive (Fratkin 2001; Little et al. 2001; McCabe, Leslie, and DeLuca 2010), with quite different facets of pastoral change – from nomadic to semi-nomadic to sedentary and highly diversified.

The studies focus a lot on the causes of sedentarization (drought, conflict and famine). Described advantages are food security, resource ownership, and human security. The disadvantages presented are impoverishment, worsened child nutrition, and the deterioration of social support systems (Fratkin and Roth 2005). Many ex-pastoralists move to growing cities and commercial centers and engage in a wide variety of economic activities (Fratkin and Smith 1995, Smith 1998, Brockington 2001). My work here builds on two recent approaches: first, studies that examine the new role of women spearheading non-livestock activities and the link between livelihood transformation and changing gender relations (Wangui 2014). Second, with my study, I fill the research gap described by Caravani (2018), in that mostly all casual work activities of pastoralists are considered as a homogeneous entity without ana-

lyzing exactly who is doing casual work and in which contexts, why, and with what consequences. My work here makes a novel contribution in the analysis of production and power in relation to gender and class.

The sedentarization of pastoralists is a charged topic. A large number of the studies cited see sedentarization as a loss of a preservable form of production. In these studies, sedentarization (and de-pastoralization) is linked to poverty and marginalization. On the other side of the continuum of pastoralism literature are voices such as that of Greiner (2020), who calls for the term pastoralism to be abandoned as an analytic framework, as it cannot describe the diverse reality of groups nor cover the heterogeneity of class, gender, economic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

I position my work outside of this dichotomy. My work begins with the analysis that more and more Pokot are becoming settled and that the mobility patterns of nomadic Pokot are also changing in terms of decreasing frequency and radius. In this work, I do not undertake a normative evaluation of this finding (rather, it is an empirical fact that is the basis of the analysis) but examine the extent to which it affects gender relations and how practices expand and change and how new structures and habitus emerge.

At the same time, pastoralism is a central concept in my work. For the Pokot – nomadic and non-nomadic, employed or farming, across all genders and classes – pastoralism is the unifying-identity reference point. It is the common ground, the origin of where you come from and what you are proud of. Similarly to the situation with the Maasai (Hodgson 1990), culture becomes an identity-forming form of capital that is consciously cultivated and appreciated. This manifests in several Pokot initiatives that aim to preserve the Pokot Culture, e.g., the “Tiaty Centre for indigenous Knowledge” founded by two very influential members of the Pokot elite, Brian Krob and Susan Nakoro. For the men and women I have spoken and worked with, it is clear that Pokot are pastorallists (even though they may not themselves be nomadic

or living with the pastoral mode of production). Pokot have a pastoral identity that unifies and connects old and new existing Pokot habitus.

Practice and Agency

Among the Pokot, the face of sedentarization is female. Women are simultaneously drivers, shapers and beneficiaries of the transformative processes taking place in East Pokot. They (and not their men) are the ones who surge towards urban centers to explore new sources of income that emerge due to the rise of cash economy and casual work. And they are the ones who increasingly leave behind pastoral life – and pastoral marriages specifically – to escape from what they often perceive as an unjust curtailment of their rights to socioeconomic self-determination. For them, settled life holds a promise that they can become their family's breadwinners, have possessions of their own, and gain refuge from intra-marital quarrels. Thereby, they are establishing, for instance, new types of family units such as female-headed households.

Unsurprisingly, this striking overall tendency generates friction. Men who, due to their social roles being fixed in terms of herders and warriors, have a much harder time adjusting to the dawning new socio-economic reality, perceive the emergence of female breadwinners and the growing demand among Pokot women to engage in more equitable relationships as a threat to their status as heads of households. This is the point where the confrontational trope of "lazy men" and "disrespectful women" enters the picture. The occurrence of this trope is a critique of the cultural narrative of the gendered division of labor. Naturalized gendered tasks and responsibilities are becoming visible through female cash-income activities. These new female practices bring the allocation of labor tasks, decision-making privileges and social power into question and open up the floor for debates on the workload of men and women and how duties must be divided. Underpinning this confrontation is the multi-faceted influence of organized Christian religion in East Pokot with its focus on monogamous marriage and its declared mission of empowering women to become educated and, as a direct consequence, economically independent

I intentionally focus on the agency and practices of women in East Pokot. In the sense of what Sherry Ortner described with her research program of theory of practice, I focus on the everyday interactions that shape life and social relations and build the foundation of the whole society. In doing so, I build on work that explores agency in the transformation of pastoral systems (such as Caravani 2018, Scoones 2020, Hodgson 2000).

Women are taking advantage of a gap created by the socio-ecological transformation in the established pastoral structure, as pastoral livelihoods alone are insufficient for many to provide for the whole family. Men in this situation are bound and restricted by the existing structures and pastoral habitus. These clearly dictate that livestock ownership, above all else, constitutes economic and cultural capital – and that gainful employment is tantamount to giving up status. Women's sociocultural roles are not fixed to the same degree, and are they are thus able to engage in a new practice of working for money (e.g., through brewing alcohol or casual work).

New institutions, such as Christian churches and schools, generate new impulses and increase the choice of practices – thus a parallel structure with a new habitus steadily establishes itself: the educated, Christian sedentary Pokot. New biographies emerge, and new economic perspectives become available through education. Furthermore, the timing and context of demographic events change (e.g., marriage and giving birth), social, ecological and cultural forms of capital are transformed (with money replacing cattle as the prime economic resource, and fixed huts with sofa sets and Western-style beds becoming a marker of status).

With the changing of Pokot society, more and more practices become available to women, such as taking up paid work, refusing marriage offers, or moving away from their husbands. And in virtue of exercising this wider range of agency, women are again contributing to the constant evolving of existing structures. For instance, it is now common practice for educated women to choose their own spouses, and pasto-

ral women have established, through the repeated practice of brewing alcohol as a source of income, a new economic independence that allows them to make decisions autonomously from their husbands.

This change in structure and practice can also be measured at the macro level. The declining numbers of polygamous marriages, the older age at which women marry, and the decline in the birth rate (especially among educated women) provide evidence of the kind of transformation that I have demonstrated at the individual level. These demographic transitions among the Pokot are a clear indicator that a profound change is indeed taking place. (Johnson-Hanks 2008).

In Bourdieu's sense, there are currently two dominant habitus in effect among the Pokot: the classical pastoral one, and the newer one which is characterized by sedentary life, schooling, and Christianity. However, these two habitus are not in conflict with each other, but they affect different domains and have different entry criteria (livestock husbandry in the former and formal education in the latter). All Pokot know and accept the two habitus and they can also use them to establish new practices in their respective structures – as the examples of social reciprocal exchange relationships of fundraisers and women's groups borrowing from the principle of stock friendship show.

Power and Class

The female face of sedentarization is fragmented, or rather, it is Janus-faced. Social change is not a universal success story for Pokot women – if such a sweeping normative statement were even sensible to begin with. Rather, a woman's opportunities and capacities to exploit the advantages offered by the rupturing of the male-centric pastoral order depend on a variety of factors. These include their level of education and their economic resources as well as their social and biographical starting conditions. For instance, in social settings where household wealth is (still) quantified exclusively over livestock, women possess few to no levers for exercising economic

power due to gender-based ownership restrictions. It is only when cash income and immovable properties come into play that women have a chance to catch up with men. However, there are also risks for women associated with sedentarization and social change in the above sense such as pauperization and the dissolution of the extended family's support networks – as well as the twofold burden of earning the household income and fulfilling all reproductive domestic tasks too. The dark side of sedentarization with its side effects of increasing alcoholism, domestic violence, and polarization between the “haves” and the “have nots” is very much present in social discourse.

Nowhere do the intra-societal differences that mar East Pokot become more salient than in the institution of marriage. Here, we witness an arena of contestation not only between two ideals – i.e., polygamy, associated with pastoralism, versus monogamy, associated with post-pastoralism – but also between men and women who are increasingly bargaining about familial rights and obligations. Here, a woman's chances of influencing the parameters of married life hinge on her willingness to break with long-established expectations of what it means to be a Pokot woman and launch new practices. Yet even those women who pursue a path of their own choosing towards relationships are facing new challenges: being well-educated and economically independent dramatically reduces the pool of suitable partners, and for many there is still a difficult choice between either being a successful jobholder or a married woman who takes care of her children. In addition, marriage remains – even for the privileged few who freely negotiate the terms of conjugal union – an institution of power asymmetry where women are expected to display deference to their husband (at least publicly) and where transgressions, such as infidelity, are treated differently depending on the transgressor's gender.

Pokot transformation has also resulted in a new social division of labor between the sexes, as well as between the newly emerged classes. There are highly disparate welfare levels and differences in access to socio-economic opportunities and resources

(both among the pastoral and the non-pastoral Pokot). The failure of the pastoral system and the newly established employment sector (e.g., schools, ministries, hospitals, NGOs, military, police) to jointly provide adequate conditions of social reproduction – due to there being too few animals, low agricultural production, not many regular job opportunities etc. – means that with casual work and self-employment new modes of production emerge to provide food and satisfy other basic needs. Also, this situation offers ample opportunities for those few who are already well-off to further increase their wealth. Thus, a rich elite has been able to reproduce and accumulate new capital and other assets through the construction of stores, bars, and restaurants by using the cheap labor supplied by the working poor. The need to engage in casual labor (or low-wage labor in some cases) to earn money for food has created unequal relations of production between the classes.

This is also evident in the differences in gender relations within each class. While among the elite, gender relations in marriage are certainly not equal, they are characterized by women's greater autonomy and personal agency to pursue their individual plans and projects. Among the poor sedentary Pokot, however, marriage conflicts are exacerbated by poverty (cf. the work in India by Kabeer 2005: 1992). Worries about food and pressure from school fees, as well as often heavy alcohol consumption, lead to many (frequently escalating) quarrels. Goods, however, belong to both spouses in both poor and wealthy families. In pastoral polygamous marriages, there is a notable and more pronounced power imbalance between husband and wife. The husband alone owns the means of production – the livestock – and can also make almost all decisions about it alone. Husbands encourage their wives to start earning their own money though, to pay for their own living expenses. However, this does not give women any advantages or say over household decisions.

Many of the phenomena that accompany social change with respect to women throughout East Pokot seem all too familiar. The conundrum of women's double burden to both generate substantial income for their household and to be a nurturing

and loving primary caregiver is well-known to Western societies too. Even the surrounding discourses and narrative stereotypes are congruent with those in, for instance, Europe or the United States: the husband who does not lift a finger at home, the nagging wife, who is always going on about one thing or another – those are all tropes that seem to carry an almost universal force. The same holds true, to a certain degree, for the above-mentioned challenges of the “marriage market” faced by educated women who are hard-pressed to find a suitor at eye level; marrying “downwards”, i.e., a man whose class and/or educational background is at a lower level, is as inconceivable for most Western women as it is for Pokot women.

As in East Pokot, there is an ever-growing number of single mothers who contend themselves with raising their children on their own, despite facing adverse socio-economic conditions. Those in turn who do get married say their vows later in life – especially if they are educated and on a successful job trajectory. And marriage is still, in the West as in East Pokot, often a relationship marked by power asymmetries and an unequal distribution of benefits and burdens: it is women who take up part-time jobs to care for their children and allow their partners to pursue their careers. The commonalities in the experiences are an important reminder that Western societies, just like the women and men in East Pokot, are currently in a process of transforming gender relations. Climate change and its accompanying external stressors call into question the future viability of pastoralism as a form of livelihood and mode of subsistence. Pokot – and especially the Pokot women – are facing rapid societal transformation. Their strategies to deal with these changes demonstrate that change – of institutions, habitus, individual expectations, and desires – is a necessary part of resilience.

The ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit of many women whom I have met and their willingness to make ends meet in the face of adversity is nothing short of remarkable. If we utilize a broad notion of agency that encompasses the capacity to re-shape so-

cial organizations, roles, and norms so as to better accommodate future challenges, then these women embody agency, indeed.

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Appendix: Questionnaires

<p>RESILIENCE, COLLAPSE and REORGANISATION in Social-Ecological Systems of African Savannas</p>														
		<p>Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology University of Cologne Albertus-Magnus-Platz 50923 Köln Germany</p>												
RCR Questionnaire Baringo		Page 1												
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>My name is ... I am working for a research project hosted by the Universities of Cologne and Bonn in Germany in cooperation with Egerton University and National Museums, Kenya. The aim of the research project is to better understand transitions in East Pokot/Baringo with particular reference to changing human-environmental relationship. To better assess these changes, we use this questionnaire. Your homestead was chosen randomly to participate in this survey. This is why we kindly ask you to assist us filling out this questionnaire. All data will be treated confidentially. It is for research purpose only!</p> <p>With this questionnaire, we will ask questions on your homestead, your family members, livestock, agriculture and on economic activities. As mentioned before, your homestead was chosen to participate in this survey. By homestead, we refer to all persons living together in a given structure (KAW). Please ask me to explain if you do not understand any of the questions I am asking you. Remember: All data will be treated confidentially, your name will not be attached to any data collected in this survey. Can we begin now? Thank you very much for your cooperation!</p>														
A BASIC INFORMATION														
1000	INTERVIEWER NAME													
1005	INTERVIEWER ID													
1010	HOMESTEAD-ID (INTERVIEWER CODE + CONSECUTIVE NO.)	1015 REGION												
1020	FINAL HOUSEHOLD ID => ASSIGNED BY P.J.													
1025	DATE													
1030	TIME STARTED	1035 TIME ENDED												
1045	WHO RESPONDED TO THE MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE FILL IN PID FROM CENSUS SECTION													
1050	INTERVIEW COMPLETE	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 - YES</td> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td style="width: 45%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 - NO</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 - YES			2 - NO								
1 - YES														
2 - NO														
1055	REASON FOR INCOMPLETE INTERVIEW													
1060	INTERVIEWERS ASSESSMENT OF INTERVIEW	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 - DATA ARE RELIABLE</td> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td style="width: 45%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 - DATA ARE UNRELIABLE</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 - DATA ARE RELIABLE			2 - DATA ARE UNRELIABLE								
1 - DATA ARE RELIABLE														
2 - DATA ARE UNRELIABLE														
1065	COMMENT ON PROBLEMS: LIST QUESTION NUMBERS WITH DOUBTFULL INFORMATION													
1070	LANGUAGE USED FOR INTERVIEW	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 - SWAHILI</td> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td style="width: 45%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 - POKOT</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">3 - ENGLISH</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">4 - OTHER (SPECIFY)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 - SWAHILI			2 - POKOT			3 - ENGLISH			4 - OTHER (SPECIFY)		
1 - SWAHILI														
2 - POKOT														
3 - ENGLISH														
4 - OTHER (SPECIFY)														
1075	GEOPOSITION OF HOMESTEAD	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;"></td> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 2px;">ELEVATION: Meter</td> </tr> </table>		ELEVATION: Meter										
	ELEVATION: Meter													
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>IMPORTANT CODES: USE 999 => DON'T KNOW/REFUSED TO ANSWER USE 888 => QUESTION NOT APPLICABLE</p> </div> <p>USE THIS SPACE FOR ADDITIONAL NOTES:</p>														

HH-ID		DATE	Page	2
B1 Household Composition and Migration				
What are the names of all persons usually belonging to this homestead? Exclude casual visitors.				
IF UNSURE, <u>ONLY</u> THOSE WHO USUALLY SLEEP HERE ARE CONSIDERED HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS. INCLUDE THOSE, THAT HAVE BEEN LIVING IN THE HOMESTEAD FOR THREE MONTHS OR LONGER OR ARE EXPECTED TO STAY AWAY FOR LESS THAN THREE MONTHS. OTHERS HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED AS VISITORS AND NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY!				
ALWAYS START WITH THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD => IF FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLD, CHECK IF THE MAN IS <u>USUALLY</u> LIVING HERE AND IF ONLY TEMPORARILY ABSENT (SHORTER THAN 3 MONTHS), ENTER MAN AS HOUSEHOLD HEAD.				
1300	1305	1310	1315	
P-No	FULL NAME	sex (M/F)	Relation to Head USE CODE	
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
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21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
1320	Does any member of this homestead (including the head!) have children living outside East Pokot? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE ANSWER, IF YES, USE MIG-ROSTER (B2) AND COLLECT DATA APPROPRIATELY	yes no	remember to use B2! go directly to B3	
INSTRUCTION: READ COMPLETE LIST AGAIN AND PROBE: Have you missed any other person, e.g. elderly persons, school children, keporiok (herders)? Have you missed any people who are expected to be away for less than three months from the time of leaving? IF YES: ENTER THEIR NAMES IN THE ROSTER				

IF THERE IS NOT SUFFICIENT PLACE TO FILL IN ALL PERSONS; CONTINUE ON EXTRA SHEET									
1300	1325	1330	1305	1365	1310	1315	1350	1355	
P-ID	IS THIS PERSON ANSWERING FOR HIM/HERSELF?	IF NO, COPY ID OF RESPONDENT FROM SECTION B1	What is the full name of the person not living in the homestead? COLLECT ALL NAMES FIRST AND THEN CONTINUE WITH 1320	What is (NAME's) current place of residence	Sex (M/F)	What is (NAME'S) relation to hh-head	What is (NAME'S) exact year of birth	What is (NAME'S) approximate year of birth	
	1 = YES 2 = NO			IF NO MAJOR CITY; USE PLACE NAME + LOCATION + DIVISION		USE CODE	YEAR	use event calender	
M1									
M2									
M3									
M4									
M5									
M6									
M7									
M8									
M9									
M10									
M11									
M12									
M13									
M14									
M15									

PROVIDE PERSONAL INFORMATION FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERSONAL NUMBER AS PROVIDED IN SECTION B1										
PERSONAL-NO	1325	1330	1350	1355	1360	1370	1380	1400	1405	1410
	IS THIS PERSON ANSWERING FOR HIM/HERSELF?	IF NO, COPY ID OF RESPONDENT FROM HOUSEHOLD ROSTER	What is (NAME'S) year of birth	What is (NAME'S) proximate year of birth	What is (NAME'S) place of birth	What is (NAME'S) ethnic group	What is (NAME'S) marital status	What is (NAME'S) religion?	What is (NAME'S) highest level of education	At what age did (NAME) finish education?
	1 = YES 2 = NO		YEAR	use event calendar	PLACE NAME + LOCATION + DIVISION	USE CODE FROM MANUAL				Use X if still schooling
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										
16										
17										

COPY: HH-ID		DATE		Page 8	
C General homestead information					
Q	Question	Answer	Tick	Skip	
"Now we come to a section where we ask you general questions about your homestead. Please remember: (if you do not understand any question, ask me to explain!)"					
2006	What is the name of place, sublocation and location this homestead is located in?	PLACE NAME: SUBLOCATION: LOCATION:			
2009	What is the homestead head's clan name (Poko: ilo)?	CLAN			
2010	From which lineage (Poko: omin)?	LINEAGE			
2015	From which generation class (Poko: jin)?	GENERATION SET			
ASK THE FOLLOWING 3 QUESTIONS (2017, 2018, 2040) TO MALE HEAD OF HOMESTEAD ONLY (IF AVAILABLE) AND CONTINUE WITH Q 2020 THEREAFTER					
2017	To how many women is the head of this homestead married?	NUMBER OF WOMEN:			
2018	Are there any other homesteads with co-wives / wives located elsewhere?	1 - Yes 2 - No			
2040	If yes, how many are there?	NUMBER			
ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTION (2019) TO FEMALE HEAD OF HOMESTEAD ONLY (IF AVAILABLE) AND CONTINUE WITH Q 2020 THEREAFTER					
2019	Do you have a husband living elsewhere who is married to several women?	1 - Yes 2 - No			
2020	Which market are you usually going to?	PLACE NAME: SUBLOCATION: LOCATION:			
2025	What is the main language spoken in this homestead?	1 - Swahili 2 - Pokot 3 - Kisuyu 4 - Turkana 5 - Somali 6 - Njemp 7 - Tugen 8 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2045	Which of the following answers best describes your homestead? READ ALL OPTIONS, OF NONE FITS, USE OTHER AND/OR SPECIFY IN QUESTION 2055	1 - Permanently settled 2 - Permanently settled with moving cattle camps (e.g. Aeporok) 3 - Homestead that completely moves in the dry season 4 - Part of sedentary homestead that temporarily moved for better grazing (e.g. Aeporok) 5 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2055	PLEASE SPECIFY HOUSEHOLD TYPE IF NECESSARY				
2060	For how long has this homestead been located here? FILL IN EITHER YEARS OR MONTHS OR TICK OPTION 2	1 - YEARS OR MONTHS 2 - Ever since I can remember			gsm 2200
2065	Where was this homestead located before?	PLACE NAME: DIVISION: LOCATION:			
2075	What was the main reason for leaving your former place of residence? READ ALL POSSIBILITIES, UP TO THREE ANSWERS POSSIBLE	1 - Not enough grazing/water for livestock 2 - Bad conditions for agriculture 3 - Raids and violence 4 - Quarrels with neighbouring homesteads 5 - Resettlement/evacuation by government 6 - Loss of livestock 7 - No food 8 - Scarcity of water 9 - Bad government infrastructure (e.g. health, schools, governmental services...) 10 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2080	What was the main reason for choosing your current place of residence? READ ALL POSSIBILITIES, UP TO THREE ANSWERS POSSIBLE	1 - Relatives living at same place 2 - Better grazing 3 - Better place for agriculture 4 - Better job opportunities 5 - Better schooling 6 - Better health care 7 - Availability of food 8 - Availability of water 9 - Better governmental services 10 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2200	Are you living on family property or do you rent the dwelling?	1 - Family property 2 - Renting 3 - Other (SPECIFY)			gsm 2210
2205	If yes, how much do you pay per month?	KSh/MONTH			
2210	Material of the floor in main house? RECORD INFORMATION, IF UNCERTAIN ASK	1 - Earth / sand 2 - Mud 3 - Cement / stone 4 - Other (SPECIFY)			

HH-ID		DATE		Page 9	
C General homestead information					
Q	Question	Answer	Tick		Skip
2215	Material of outer walls of main house? RECORD INFORMATION, IF UNCERTAIN ASK!	1 - Mud 2 - Tielgo 3 - Timber 4 - Corrugated iron sheets 5 - Bricks / stone / cement 6 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2220	Material of the roof of main house? RECORD INFORMATION, IF UNCERTAIN ASK!	1 - Corrugated iron sheets 2 - Traditionally thatched 3 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2225	What is the homestead's main source of water for drinking and cooking?	1 - Piped water/tank inside homestead (private) 2 - Borehole, well (public, free of charge) 3 - Dam (public, free of charge) 4 - River/lake (public, free of charge) 5 - Buying water 6 - Other (SPECIFY)			
2230	Does the homestead have electricity?	1 - yes 2 - no			2240
2235	If yes, since when?	YEAR			
2240	Does this homestead have ...? READ WHOLE LIST AND TICK APPROPRIATE ANSWERS	1 - Radio 2 - Television 3 - Computer 4 - Electric refrigerator 5 - Stove (gas) 6 - Solar panel 7 - Sofa set 8 - Western bed 9 - Bicycle 10 - Motorcycle 11 - Car 12 - Bank account 13 - Fishing boat 14 - None			
D Farming: Livestock					
"Now we are coming to a section, where we ask you information about your livestock. Please remember: if you do not understand any question, ask me to explain!"					
3000	Does this homestead own any livestock?	1 - Yes 2 - No			3000
3005	If yes, which of the following animals do people in this homestead own and how many? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE ANSWER FOR EVERY TYPE OF ANIMAL	1 - Cattle 0 < 5 < 10 < 20 < 50 > 50 2 - Cattle 0 < 2 < 5 < 10 < 15 > 15 3 - Sheep 0 < 5 < 10 < 30 < 50 > 50 4 - Goats 0 < 5 < 20 < 50 < 100 > 100			
3010	Where do you graze the majority of your livestock? AROUND HOMESTEAD INDICATE WITH [H], IF ELSEWHERE, WRITE DOWN DIVISION, LOCATION, SUBDIVISION	1 - Cattle 2 - Cattle 3 - Goats			
3015	How can you describe the pasture on which you are grazing your cattle? READ LIST, ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - communal 2 - Leasehold (paid) 3 - Private (self-owned) 4 - Public (government) 5 - Unclear / don't know 6 - Other (SPECIFY)			
3020	Who is <u>mainly</u> herding your goats and sheep? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Paid worker 3 - They graze by themselves 4 - Neighbor / friend / extended family			3020 3020 3020
3025	If homestead members, please tell us their names	PIPS OF HH-MEMBERS			
3030	Who is <u>mainly</u> herding your cattle? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Paid worker 3 - They graze by themselves 4 - Neighbor / friend / extended family			3040 3040 3040
3035	If homestead members, please tell us their names	PIPS OF HH-MEMBERS		PID	
3040	If <u>neighbors / friends / extended family</u> are involved in one of the above mentioned tasks (QUESTIONS 3020, 3030), how do you usually compensate them for their help? READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Assistance with the same task 2 - Beer 3 - Farm products (e.g. maize) 4 - Money 5 - Animals 6 - Food 7 - Other (SPECIFY)			

HHID		DATE		Page 11	
D Farming: cultivation, continued					
Q	Question	Answer	Tick	Skip	
4045	Where did you get the seeds from? READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Purchasing 2 - Given for free by NGO / Government 3 - Own cultivation (own certified seeds) 4 - Given by neighbors, friends, relatives 5 - Other (SPECIFY)			
4050	Who is mainly doing the clearing of your fields? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Casual labour 3 - Neighbors / friends / relatives		g/m	4060
4055	If homestead members, please tell us their names	PIDS OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS			
4060	Who is mainly doing the ploughing of your fields? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Casual labour 3 - Neighbors / friends / relatives 4 - Tractor		g/m	4070
4065	If homestead member, indicate their PID(s)	PIDS of HH-member:			
4070	Who is mainly doing the weeding on your fields? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Casual labour 3 - Neighbors / friends / relatives		g/m	4085
4075	If homestead member, indicate their PID(s)	PIDS OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS			
4080	If neighbors / friends / relatives are involved in on of the above mentioned tasks, how do you compensate them usually for their help? READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Assistance with the same work 2 - Beer 3 - Food 4 - Money 5 - Share of the harvest 6 - Other (SPECIFY)			
4085	Who is mainly taking the decision when and what to grow? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE. IF HOUSEHOLD MEMBER INDICATE PID	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) -----> 2 - Husband living elsewhere 3 - Other (SPECIFY)		INDICATE PID:	
4090	Who is mainly taking the decision what to do with the harvest (selling, keeping etc) ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE. IF HOUSEHOLD MEMBER INDICATE PID	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) -----> 2 - Husband living elsewhere 3 - Other (SPECIFY)		INDICATE PID:	
4095	What are you mainly doing with your harvest? MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Use for own consumption 2 - Selling			
4100	How did you learn to cultivate? READ LIST, ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Participation in agricultural extension/NGO -programmes (e.g. Worldvision, Kenyan Freedom L. Hunger) 2 - Instructions by friends/neighbors/extended family 3 - Copying other farmers 4 - Other (SPECIFY)			
4105	Did you buy any agricultural machinery or tools in the last 12 months?	1 - Yes 2 - No		g/m	4120
4110	Please specify what you have bought				
4115	How much did you pay in total?	KSh			
4120	Did you sell any agricultural products in the last 12 months?	1 - Yes 2 - No		marked with g/m	4085
4125	What did you sell and how many bags? READ LIST, NOTE DOWN THE AMOUNT IN KG SOLD IF KNOWN. MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	TYPE OF CROP 1 - Maize 2 - Millet 3 - Cow peas 4 - Green grams 5 - Beans 6 - Sorghum 7 - Other (SPECIFY)	yes	AMOUNT SOLD KG KG KG KG KG KG KG	
4130	Where did you sell most of these products? READ LIST, ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Locally to friends, neighbors, family 2 - Market 3 - Other (SPECIFY)			

HH-ID		DATE		Page 12	
D Farming: cultivation (garden)					
Q	Question	Answer	Tick		Skip
4500	Did this homestead grow fruits or vegetables in the last 15 years (like sukuma wiki, cabbage, mangoes...)?	1 - yes 2 - no			gr/m 5000
4505	If yes, what did you grow in the last growing season READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Sukuma wiki 2 - Cabbage 3 - Water melons 4 - Pumpkins 5 - Bitter leaf 6 - Potatoes 7 - Pineapp 8 - Mangoes 9 - Pilipili 10 - Onions 11 - Tomatoes 12 - None 13 - Other (SPECIFY)			
4510	Where do you grow them? READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Home garden 2 - On the shamba 3 - In a project garden 4 - In a greenhouse 5 - Other (SPECIFY)			
4515	How do you use them? BOTH ANSWERS POSSIBLE	1 - Use for own consumption 2 - Selling			gr/m 4525
4520	If you have sold it, how much did you earn in the last 3 months?	KSH			
4525	Who is mainly taking the decision when and what to grow? ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE. IF HOUSEHOLD MEMBER INDICATE PID	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) —————> 2 - Husband living elsewhere 3 - Other (SPECIFY)			INDICATE PID:
4530	Who is mainly taking the decision what to do with the harvest (selling, keeping etc) ONLY ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE. IF HOUSEHOLD MEMBER INDICATE PID	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) —————> 2 - Husband living elsewhere 3 - Other (SPECIFY)			INDICATE PID:
4535	Who is doing most of the work in the garden?	1 - Homestead member (incl. interviewee) 2 - Casual labour 3 - Neighbors / friends / relatives			gr/m 5000 gr/m 5000
4540	If homestead member, please tell us their names	PIDS OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS:			
E Other economic activities: income generating activities					
"Now we come to a section where we ask you questions about your economic activities. Please remember: if you do not understand any question, ask me to explain!"					
5000	Were you or another member of this homestead involved in any of the following activities in the last 12 months? READ LIST, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE	1 - Fetching water for others 2 - Selling animal products (milk, eggs) 3 - Occasional cooking for pay 4 - Fetching firewood for others 5 - Cleaning / washing / domestic work for others 6 - Casual work on shamba (clearing, weeding etc) 7 - Rent out houses 8 - Helping out with construction 9 - Cutting and selling of fencing material 10 - Cash-for-work (e.g. ACTED, Ministry of Youth) 11 - Burning and selling of charcoal 12 - Producing and selling of honey 13 - Brewing and selling of local brews 14 - None 15 - Other (SPECIFY)			gr/m 5050
5005	Please tell us who is doing this and estimate how much he/she earns per time unit COPY PERSONAL NUMBER (PID), NUMBER OF ITEM (5000), INCOME PER TIME UNIT BY USING M=MONTHLY, W=WEEKLY, D=DAILY. CONTINUE ON FRONT PAGE IF MORE THAN 6	1 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT 2 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT 3 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT 4 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT 5 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT 6 - P-ID ITEM NO KSH TIME UNIT			

HH-ID	DATE	Page	13
E Other economic activities, continued			
Q	Question	Answer	Skip
9010	How many member of your homestead were employed in NGO programs within the last 10 years?	NUMBER	
9015	Does any member of your homestead receive a retirement pension?	1 - Yes 2 - No	9015 5025
9020	If yes, who? How much does he/she receive per month?	1 - P-ID MONTHLY KSH 2 - P-ID MONTHLY KSH	
9025	Did your homestead receive any assistance from people living outside East-Pokot in the last 6 months?	1 - Yes 2 - No	9025 5040
9030	How many people did send you something?	NUMBER	
9035	What did they send in the last 6 months?	1 - MONEY, KSH 2 - Other (SPECIFY)	
9040	Did your homestead support any persons living outside East-Pokot, for example school children, in the last six months?	1 - Yes 2 - No	9040 5055
9045	How many people did you support?	NUMBER	
9050	What was the approximate value of things and money that you sent in the last 6 months?	Ksh	
9055	Was this homestead entitled to receive any relief food in the last 12 months?	1 - Yes 2 - No	
9060	Was this homestead entitled to receive any relief food in the last 3 years?	1 - Yes 2 - No	
9065	Did any member successfully apply for CDF money in the last 3 years?	1 - Yes 2 - No	
F Future prospects			
<i>"Now we have nearly reached the end of this questionnaire. Thank you for your patience. We are only left with questions pertaining to your future plans and to your opinion."</i>			
9000	Are you planning to move your main homestead to another location? (CHECK: NOT SEASONAL MIGRATION)	1 - Yes 2 - No	9000 6050
9005	If yes: where are you planning to go? NOTE: LOCATION, SUBLOCATION, DIVISION		
9050	Do you support private title deeds in your area?	1 - Yes 2 - No	
9055	Please give us the reason for your opinion		
<i>We are now at the end of our questionnaire. Thank you very much for your participation! Do you have any questions, remarks or comments?</i>			
9000	NOTE DOWN COMMENTS OF INTERVIEWEE IF APPLICABLE		

INDIVIDUAL WOMEN QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE: _____

HOMESTEAD ID _____

ID INTERVIEW _____

PID RESPONDENT _____

NAME OF RESPONDENT _____

YEAR OF BIRTH RESPONDENT _____ HIGHEST EDUCATION _____

TION _____

9008	What kind of work do you do at the moment to make money?			
9009	Who mainly decides how the money you earn will be used?	Myself Husband Respondent & Partner jointly Someone else; SPECIFY:	01 02 03 04	
9010	Do you personally own any animals?	YES NO	01 02	→9040
9020	How did you get them?	Bought them from my own money Given by husband Given by parents Other:	01 02 03 04	
9030	Can you sell them without asking permission from anybody?	YES: We discuss it jointly in the family That's not my decision to make Have to ask; SPECIFY WHOM:	01 02 03 04	
9040	Are you married monogamously(1) or polygamously (2) , divorced (3) , living separated (kepesho kei) (4) , widowed (4) , single (5) or do you have a boyfriend (6) ?	Code: _____ If 5/7 (not married, boyfriend) →9100		
9050	How old were you when you got married?	AGE		
9060	Do you sometimes quarrel with your husband?	YES NO	01 02	
9070	Can you tell me about what?			
9080	If widowed/divorced: Do you want to remarry?	YES NO	01 02	
9090	Why?			
9100	If single/boyfriend: Do you want to get married in the future?	YES NO		
9110	At what age would you like to get married?	AGE		
9120	Do you sometimes drink Busaa or Changaa?	YES NO	01 02	
9130	How old were you when you got circumcised?	AGE: Not Circumcised Not yet, plan to do	01	

		it later	02	
9140	Do you want that you daughters get circumcised?	YES NO	01 02	
9150	Can you tell me why?			

B WOMAN'S REPRODUCTIVE HISTORY:

9200	How many children would you like to have in your life? IF TOO OLD: WOULD YOU HAVE LIKED	NUMBER: Up to God/Non-numeric	77
9210	Are you pregnant now?	YES NO	01 02
9220	Have you ever given birth?	YES NO	01 02
9230	Have you ever had a pregnancy that miscarried, was aborted, or ended in a stillbirth?	YES NO	01 02

“Now I would like to record the names of all your births, whether still alive or not, starting with the first one you had.”

NO.	What name was given to your (first/next) baby? FIRST NAME & SURNAME	Is (name) a boy or a girl? 1=Boy; 2=Girl	When was (name) born?	Is (name) still alive? IF NOT , when did (name) die?	Why did (name) die?	What is (name)'s father's name?***	How many years did (name) attend school? IF SCHOOLING: X	Where does (name) most of the time live?	What is (name)'s occupation?	Is (name) married? Yes=1 No=2
	9300	9310	9320	9330	9340	9350	9360	9370	9380	9390
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										

*** IN CASE THE MOTHER DOES NOT WANT TO GIVE THE FATHER'S NAME; GIVE THE FATHER A NUMBER (FATHER 1, FATHER 2, FATHER 3 etc.) AND CHECK AT EVERY FURTHER BIRTH IF FATHER 1 (FATHER 2, FATHER 3 etc.) IS ALSO FATHER OF ANY OTHER CHILD

Questionnaire: Normative Order

Today I would like to talk with you about some of your opinions and thoughts you have regarding a good life. There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in what YOU think, in YOUR opinion. Everything you tell me is confidential and your name will not be used in my work.

Name: _____ Year of Birth: _____
Marital Status (if married: dowry!) _____ Children: _____
Highest Education: _____ Mobile: _____
Occupation: _____ How much do you earn? _____
Who decides how money is spent? _____

General Questions:

1. What do you wish for your future? If you could have everything you want in your life: everything you can imagine (where you would live, how you would live, what kind of work you would do, what kind of husband you would have, if you would have any children) how would your life look like?
2. When you look back in your life, what was most challenging in your life? What was hard for you in your life?

Relationship

3. What do you expect/wish from your husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend?
4. What could be a (good) reason to leave a husband/ boyfriend?
5. What could be a (good) reason to leave a wife/girlfriend?
6. What do you think about divorce?
7. What is your opinion on women who raise their children without a man (single mothers)?
8. What do you think about a woman who has a boyfriend?
9. What is your opinion on a man who is married to many wives (polygamously married)?
10. What is your opinion on a man who is married to one wife (monogamously married)?
11. What is your opinion on circumcision of women? Have you circumcised your own daughters or do you want to do it? FOR MEN: Would you marry a circumcised woman? A not circumcised woman? Why?
12. What do you think about a man who is cheating on his wife?
13. What do you think about a woman who is cheating on her husband?
14. What do you think what is a good way how a relationship between a man and a woman should start?
15. What do you think when a woman refuses a new wife of her husband?
16. What do you think about a family where husband and wife are not anymore living together but are still married? What could be the reasons?
17. What do you think when you see a man beating his wife?
18. What do you think about a woman that gets pregnant before marriage?
19. What do you think about a man who has impregnated a woman but refuses to marry her? How do you call such a person? What will happen to him? The woman?
20. What do you think about a woman that has sex before she gets married?

Raising children

1. Would you send all your children to school or only some? Explain why?
2. What are reasons to send your children not to school?

3. What are reasons to send your children to school?
4. How do you call people who went to school?
5. IF NOT ALL CHILDREN: How do you choose which children should go to school? Do you send boys or girls to school? Why? How is the relationship between children who went to school and children who didn't? Do some of your children who went to school complain that you did not send them?
6. Are they any different than people who did not go to school?
7. How many children should a mother have? How many boys/girls?
8. How old should a woman be when she is pregnant for the first time?
9. What do you think when you see a mother or father beating his/her child?
10. What do you see when you see a man playing with his child?

Pokot Society

11. If you could change anything in this Community. What would you change?
12. Do you agree or disagree: Pokot men are lazy. Why?
13. Are women like children?
14. Can women own property like goats or money in Pokot society? What do you own? Do you share this property with anybody else or is this just your own?
15. Can women inherit? Have you ever inherited anything? IF WIDOW: What happened after your husband died? Did one of his brothers want to inherit you?
16. What is your opinion about female brewers?
17. IF FEMALE BREWER: How did you start? How did you get the money to start your business? How often do you brew? How much money do you make with it? What do you do with the money? Is your husband getting any of it? Do you quarrel with your husband about the money?
18. About male brewers? Do you know any male brewers?
19. What do you think about women who go and earn money by fetching water or firewood for others, selling vedges?
20. IF CASUAL WORK: How did you start? What do you do? How much money do you make? How do you spend it? Is your husband getting any money? Do you sometimes quarrel with your husband about the money and how it should be used?
21. What do you think when you see a woman selling an animal on a market?
22. What do you think when you see a woman buying an animal on a market?
23. What is your opinion on male circumcision?
24. What is your opinion on a man who is not circumcised?
25. What is your opinion on a man who didn't undergo Sapana?
26. How do you call people who don't have animals?
27. What do you think about a man who does not own any animals?
28. What do you think about a woman who does not want to get married?
29. What do you think when you see a woman in a traditional full Pokot Outfit?
30. What do you think when you see a woman who is not wearing any Pokot Outfit anymore but used to wear it (as you can tell from the holes in her ear?)
31. Can women be leaders like Elders, Councilors or Chiefs?
32. What do you think when you see a family where the women is working (even only casual work) and the men is not having any income?
33. What do you think when you see a woman wearing trousers?
34. What do you think when you see a group of boys and girls sitting together, talking and laughing?
35. What does *Tekotön* meant to you?
36. How is *Tekotön* shown for example between husband to wife, wife to husband, father to son, son to father, older man to younger man, younger man to older man, women to other men, men to women, mother to daughter, daughter to mother, between siblings, mother to son, son to mother, daughter to father, younger woman to older woman?

37. What does *Arasi* mean to you?
38. What does *chominyogh* mean to you?
39. What does *Ptakalian* mean to you?
40. Some last questions to ownership of animals:
Are there any animals you own, you can sell, slaughter or give to a friend or relative in need?

	Husband	Wife	Other
Goat			
Goat decide to sell it			
Goat decide to slaughter			
Goat give to friend/ relative			
Cow owning			
Cow decide to sell it			
Cow decide to slaughter			
Cow give to friend/ relative			

The biographic interview guideline

Today I would like to talk with you about your life experiences and memories. For me it is very important to understand the joys, sorrows and happiness that have happened in the lives of women in East Pokot. I would like to tape what you are telling me. If I only take notes I am missing too much of what you say. Everything you are going to tell me I will treat confidentially. Is it alright to tape? I am very grateful that you take the time to tell me about your life.

Thank you very much!

Let us start with some **BACKGROUND** questions

What is your complete name?

When where you born? Where were you born?

Did you ever go to school? If yes, how many years of schooling do you have and where did you go to school?

How much money do you have per month?

How many people have to live from that money?

Do you consider yourself rich or poor compared with other people here?

Since you have settled down do you think your life has improved? In what respect?

What is your religion?

Very good; Now we will start to talk about your lifehistory!

To begin: Could you describe your life so far in your own words?

1. CHILDHOOD

- What is your first memory?
- Could you describe for me how your life was when you were a child?
- With whom did you live together?
- Was there anybody you were especially close to?
- How important was your mother/father/grandparents/siblings at that point in your life?
- Were there people you absolutely did not like? Whom and why?
- Did you have to help in the household? With what and at what age?
- Did you play a lot? What did you play and with whom?
- Did you ever have fights with your parents? About what?

SCHOOL

- Did you go to school?
- Did you want to school go to school or not? Did your parents want that you go to school? Did all your brothers and sisters go to school? Did you envy the ones who went to school?
- Where did you go to school?
- Did you like school?
- Did you stay at a hostel? If yes – did you like that?
- Did you have friends at school? Girls or boys?
- Do you still have contact to these school friends?
- Was there a teacher you were close to?
- Do you think a girl should have as much education as a boy?
- When did you stop going to school? What happened?
- Where did you live after school? What did you work? Who supported you/ did you support?

2. ADOLESCENCE

- In your mind when do you think did you stop being a child?
- What is the difference between being a child and a teenager/adult?
- How was it when you got your menstruation for the first time? How old were you? Did you know what was happening? With whom did you talk?
- Are your friends or your family more important to you?

3. Circumcision

- are you circumcised?
- Who decided that you got circumcised? Can you describe me the whole process? Did you feel different afterwards?
- Are your sisters circumcised?

- Do you feel your relationship to your sisters who are/aren't circumcised is in anyway differently?
Are they different?

- do you want to circumcise your daughters?

4. Economic Activities

- What do you do for a living?

- Did your parents/husband/teachers talked with you about what to do?

- How come that you started brewing/fetching/selling?

- Who is deciding what to do with this money?

- Do you sometimes have fights with your husband about it? Sometimes with your co-wives?

- Would you like to do something else?

- What do you own in the moment? Is there anything that belongs only to you? (Money, animals, house, utensils)

- If you buy a goat from your own money can you sell it without asking your husband?

- Have you ever inherited anything?

5. Religion

- Do you go to church? To which one?

- When did you start?

- Why did you start?

- What do you like about the church?

- are you going together with your boyfriend/husband or is it something you do alone?

- Do you get there advice for your own life?

3. PARTNERS

- How many boyfriends did you have?

- Do you currently have a boyfriend or a husband?

- When did you have your first boyfriend?

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR EVERY PARTNER

- Where did you meet him? How old was he?

- What did you like about him? What did he like about you?

- Does the group he belongs to matter to you?

- How did the two of you get along?

- Did he support you? Or you him? Did he drink? Smoke? Did he ever beat you? Did he have other women? Did you have other partners beside him?

NETWORKS REACTION

- What did your parents/grandparents, say about him? Did you introduce him to them?

- And what about your brothers and sisters? Did they like him?

- And your friends?

- Where did you live? Together at his mother's house? Your parent's house? Separate? How often did you see each other?

SEXUALITY

- How long did you wait until you slept together?

- Did you talk about anti-contraception?

- Did you talk about STD or HIV?

- When was it the very first time you took anti-contraception? Why?

-Did you tell anybody that you are taking anti-contraception?

MARRIAGE

- Were you happy at that time?

- Did you talk about marriage?

- Did he want to marry or you? Is it important for you to be married? Why?

- Did people treat you differently after you got married?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of being married?

- For you daughters – do you want them to marry? Why?

IF MARRIED: Are you still happy about being married?

- Describe me how it happened that you got married? Did you know him before? Did you want to get married?

- How much dowry was paid? How was it distributed? Who negotiated about the dowry?
- Are you the only wife of your husband or does he have more? Do you like that your husband is married to one/more wives? Did you ever talk with him that he should not marry more than one wife?
- How are you getting along with your co-wives?
- Are you happy in your marriage? Is your husband a good husband?
- Did he ever had an affair with another woman or fathered another child? How did you react?
- Did you ever think of leaving your husband?

CHILDREN

- Do you have children together? How many?
- How did it feel to become a mother? Where did you give birth? Did you know what would happen? Who told you? Were you scared? Who helped you?
- Did the people (who?) treat you differently when you had a child?
- Did you plan to get pregnant?
- How did he react when he learnt that you are pregnant?
- Did your boyfriend/husband help you with the children? With the household? Who helped you?
- What do you want and wish for your children?

DECISIONS

- Who is making the household decisions? (Money, Children)
- Can you make independent decisions (movement!)

END

- How did the relationship end? What happened?
- After splitting up – does he still support you? The child/children? In what form?
- How long did you wait until your next boyfriend?

(THEN ALL THE PARTNERQUESTIONS FOR ALL PARTNERS)

AFTER ASKING ABOUT ALL PARTNERS:

- What would be the optimal partner for you? Could you describe the ‘man of your dreams’?
- And what qualities should a good woman have?
- What makes a man/a woman not attractive?
- How important is the outer appearance?
- What do you think of an older man dating a younger woman? Older woman a younger man?
- When a partner leaves for some time is it acceptable to look for someone else until the partner comes back? From what time up is it acceptable – some days? A month? A year?
- What is a typical/ideal family to you?

REPRODUCTION

- What is a good age to get a first baby? For a woman? For a man?
- Relation between age at first birth and age at marriage? When good marriage age?
- How many years should be between two births? Why?
- How long after a birth should a woman stay in the house? Difference boy/girl?
- How long should a woman wait to have sex after a birth?
- How long should a woman breastfeed?
- At what age should a baby start eating?
- With what do you start?
- If a woman is again pregnant, should she continue to breastfeed?
- How many children are a good number to have? For a woman? For a man?
- How many girls? How many boys?
- Which anti-contraceptives do you like, which don't?
- At what age should a woman stop getting children?
- At what age should a man stop getting children?
- Death of a child worse than death of an adult? Why?
- Infertility – if someone cannot get children others don't accept that person?
- Is it important that a woman has children?

4. MIDDLE AND OLDER AGE

- When did you become a grandmother for the first time?

- How do you feel about this? Was it a good age to become a grandmother?
- Did you take care of any grandchildren? Why and for how long?
- How would you say did your life change now that you are a grandmother?
- What is the difference between being a grandmother and being a grandfather?

5. OTHER QUESTIONS

Now that we have talked about your children and partners I would like to talk with you among other questions about your religion and the places you have lived at.

- How important is religion in your live? Would you change to another church?
- Where did you live after school? What did you work? Who supported you/ did you support?
- How would you describe your financial situation?
- Do you sell anything? Do you have a farm? Do you have animals? Do you have a garden?
- Whom do you support since when? Who is supporting you since when?
- What do you think about beating children?
- Will you (or have you) inherit something? - From your children – who will inherit what?
- What do you think the future will bring for you?

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