

GENDER, WORK, AND CHANGE AMONG SAMBURU PASTORALISTS OF NORTHERN KENYA

Bilinda Straight

INTRODUCTION

Within gender studies and anthropology, a number of authors have suggested that the colonial process and postcolonial capitalism—and, more specifically in the case of developing countries, the increasing importance of cash-based economies—have translated into additional labor burdens for women and their increasing dependence upon men.¹ Some authors have also suggested that such changes have not only widened the gaps between rich and poor, but that the resulting economic differentiation has increased differences (e.g., in labor burdens, prestige) among women within the same society (Stoler 1977, Talle 1988, Ensminger 1987). More recent studies have added several nuances to this assertion by examining women as active partners in processes of social change and by seeking to address the ways in which gender and other forms of cultural meaning have themselves transformed over time and in different situations (Guyer 1991, Warren & Bourque 1991, Wolf 1992, Safa 1995, Mills 1997).² What many of the more recent

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studies share is a critical approach to both earlier and more recent assumptions on these issues and the intention to test these assumptions empirically by examining specific cases. This approach has yielded valuable insights into both the commonalities created by global capitalism and the different permutations possible both within and across societies.

In this paper, I will build upon this foundation by focusing on three lowland Samburu communities in northern Kenya located on a continuum of access to towns and trading centers—three different examples of transformation in process. I will frame my discussion in this paper, not only in terms of the significance of cash-based economies to social change in Samburu society, but also by asking what factors and mechanisms may underlie the ways in which particular Samburu individuals or subpopulations interface with the global capitalist system through their access to centers, and how Samburu identities are differently shaped in the process. I will attempt to elucidate both the ways in which Samburu concepts of age, generation, and gender have been shaping the direction of change in the allocation of labor within the household, and how Samburu concepts of identity and the allocation of labor have been mutually transforming elements of this process.

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The Samburu are a polygynous, segmentary lineage society of herders of cattle and small stock living in north-central Kenya. Power in Samburu society is ascribed by gender and age, as Spencer (1965) explained 30 years ago in his seminal monograph. The sex-gender system has usually been defined as one in which women are rural minors whose labor, together with their children's, is controlled by men related to them as husbands and fathers. According to this view, since their rights in livestock are limited to use-rights, their access to the means of subsistence is contingent upon their relationship to men. Several scholars of pastoralist studies have described the ideological entailments of this system or its socioeconomic implications, or both, particularly with respect to recent socioeconomic changes in pastoralist societies (Beaman 1983; Dahl 1979, 1987; Dupire 1971, Fratkin 1989, 1991; Fratkin & Smith 1994; Llewellyn-Davies 1981; Talle 1987, 1988; Wienpahl 1984).

The Samburu occupy parts of Kenya's semi-arid lands stretching from Mt. Ngiri (below the southern tip of Lake Turkana) in the north to the Uaso Ngiro River in the south and beyond. The lowland Samburu with whom I worked lived in three political subdivisions of Samburu District's Wamba Division (Figure 1): (1) *Lpashie*, located adjacent to the primary town center of Wamba, nestled in the southern foothills of the Matthew's Range; (2) *Ngaroni*, located in the relatively flat area of Ngaroni found halfway between Wamba and Lodungokwe (a smaller center located roughly 40 km west of Wamba); and (3) *Ngare Narok/Ndikar Nanyukie*, two sections comprising a single political subdivision 10 km wide

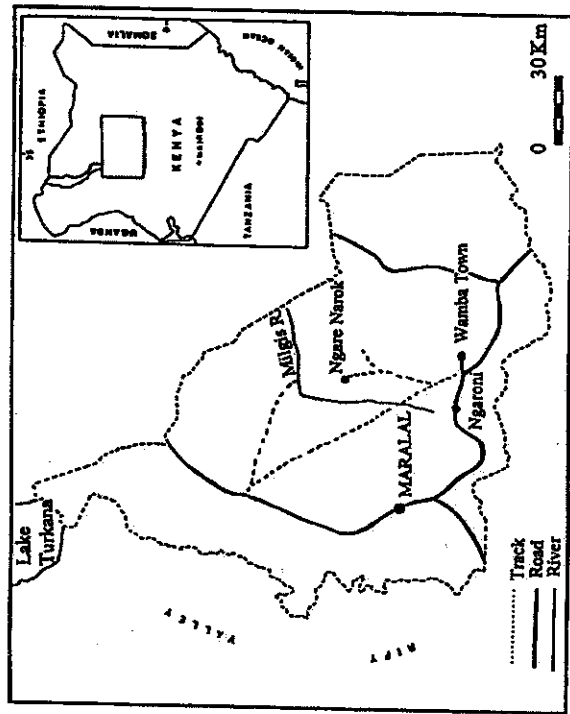


Figure 1. Map of Samburu District, Showing the Three Study Communities

located in the Matthew's Range roughly 60 km north of Wamba at its southern end, and in the hilly scrubland between the Matthew's and Ndotos ranges at its northern end, 75 km away.

The Samburu pursue a livestock economy centered on the rearing of cattle, small stock (sheep and goats) and, occasionally, camels, which is supplemented (to varying degrees) by livestock off-take and trading, wage employment, and other means of generating cash income. Except near towns—where their settlements are closer together and often have small houses of block construction instead of or in addition to the low, oblong houses of Samburu design—lowland Samburu settlements are dispersed. Settlements consist of anywhere from one to as many as 50 houses (or more, when a new age-set is forming), although there are typically between two and five. Smaller settlements are usually composed of one man with his wife (or wives) and children. Larger settlements may contain a patriarch with his adult sons with their wives and children, as well as families of the same clan or friends of the same age-set.

While the household might be said to include a married man, together with his wives and children, production and reproduction of the household is centered around the houses of individual wives and their children. Men are said to own the livestock, but women own the houses and their contents and also have use-rights

in the livestock. Women's inability to sell animals without their husbands' consent should not be overemphasized, since husbands are expected to discuss the sale of animals from a wife's allocated herd with her, and since women themselves frequently succeed in pressuring husbands and male kin to sell animals—to provide for their children's needs or for the needs of natal kin. Women may also acquire livestock of their own when they return briefly to their natal kin after marriage to "get the house" (*keyeia nkaji*).

In terms of pastoral production and household reproduction, a woman is not only responsible for milking (and, occasionally, veterinary care of) the animals in her allocated herd, she also controls the distribution of that milk. It is up to her to strike a balance between the needs of animals (calves) and people, and among the individual members of the household. If she has a surplus of milk after it has been distributed to members of the household, she may sell it or give it away. Besides her rights and responsibilities with regard to milk, a woman is responsible for the preparation of hides and may sell any that are not needed for the house. Men, then, manage the family's total herd and may sell the animals belonging to individual houses, while women manage the daily operations of the house, including the distribution of food. Since a woman's allocated herd will eventually pass to her sons, tensions focusing on herd management and the sale of stock frequently arise between an elder/patriarch, on the one hand, and his older sons and their mother, on the other. Such tensions mean that the household is never a unified whole in any simple sense (Lesorogol 1991, Holtzman 1996).

Crucial to an understanding of Samburu social structure is the age-grade organization, which operates through an age-set system. Men in the system are divided into the age-grades of boy, unmarried young man (*moran*), junior elder, firestick elder, and senior elder. Roughly every 14 years a new age-set is formed, which propels the age-grades forward. The new age-set is composed of the newly initiated unmarried young men; the previous *moran* age-set become junior elders, and so on. During the period of fieldwork, Meoli (initiated beginning in 1990) were *moran*, Kiroro were junior elders just beginning to marry, and Kishili and Kimaniki were the most prominent politically (being firestick and senior elders, respectively). The age-set prior to Kimaniki—Mekuri—varied in their political responsibilities and clout, while Kileku were the oldest men alive and, thus, were inactive, being cared for by their children and grandchildren.

The age-set system also has implications for women. Just as men are divided into age-grades based on the age-set system, women can be divided based on marriage and the age of their sons. Thus, a woman's status rises from girl to married woman, to mother of *moran* sons, to mother of sons who are all *moran* or older. Since women typically marry between the ages of 15 and 17, they frequently have their first son initiated by the time they are in their 30s. Even if a woman's eldest son is not yet initiated, there will often be a second wife by this time, and this, too, increases her status. By the age of 55, it is quite possible that all her sons will have

been initiated, and about 10 years or so later, she will be considered so old that all her needs should be met by children and grandchildren.

METHODS

During two years of research in lowland Samburu (1992-94), I conducted time allocation studies in three political subdivisions comprising three communities selected based on their proximity to Wamba town. To insure as representative and unbiased a sample as possible, I worked in all settlements within the political subdivision boundaries of each community I targeted: the remote rural area of Ngare Narok/Ndikir Nanyukte; the more accessible (but still rural) Ngaroni; and Lpashie, a political subdivision adjacent to Wamba town itself (see Figure 1). My intention in studying a remote, an intermediate, and a town area was to examine the significance of centers—town, mission, or school—in configuring or reconfiguring gender and age-based relationships and the allocation of labor. As it turned out (rather unsurprisingly), livestock holdings were negatively correlated with proximity to Wamba town (Table 1). In fact, the correlation was so strong that, for each comparison I offer based on residence, nearly the same comparison could be shown using livestock holdings, instead. I will discuss the significance of this finding shortly.

In conducting research in these three communities, I worked with two to three research assistants at a time, visiting all settlements in each of the three communities at least once a month. I collected time allocation data during these visits for a minimum of six months for each community. At the beginning of the survey, there were roughly 400 individuals (12 years or older) in each of the three communities, and a total of 135 settlements, although the number of settlements moving out of the communities (and feasible visiting range) increased with distance from town, due to the higher degree of transhumance practiced in those areas. From the time allocation data, the analysis I am presenting here is based on 8,444 observations made at approximately one-month intervals over the course of a full year. For statistical clarity, I have extracted the two sample months—one dry season and one rainy season month—which have the most complete data for all three communities. With slightly over 1,100 individuals sampled in each of those months, this procedure yields a sample large enough both for analysis and statistical tests.

In addition to the time allocation data, I collected data on employment, development project participation, formal education, church, and residence histories on all 1,100 individuals in the sample. Later, I cross-checked these data with a subsample of each community, and throughout the period of time allocation, I collected church attendance, development project participation, market involvement, and livestock holdings data each time a settlement was visited. This research design resulted in a profile of such activities over the course of a year for all set-

Table 1. Analysis of Variance for the Significance of Livestock Holdings on Residence, Showing Strong Co-Variance Between Individual Livestock Holdings and Distance from Wamba Town^a

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares ^b	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig of F ^c
RESIDENCE	338140.239	2	169070.119	228.166	.00
Residual	815836.496	1101	740.996		
Total	1153976.734	1103	1046.216		

^a 1,149 individuals were processed. Of these, data for 45 individuals (3.9% of total) were missing.
^b This table shows unique sums of squares, with all effects entered simultaneously.
^c SPSS was used to determine the significance (Sig of F) of individual livestock holdings for residence measured as community's distance from Wamba town. The measurement used differs from the standard error estimate for regression outputs, which uses a linear model (where the best F squared value is 1). Instead, the significance of the relationship between the variables is shown, where the highest significance is the value closest to zero.

tments in the sample and also increased the reliability of the livestock holdings data. Having two to three research assistants visiting each settlement with me made the collection of these quantitative data less time consuming and left time for informal and formal taped interviews on topics relevant to the project's themes. Since we stayed in the settlements of several families in Ngaroni and in Ngare Narok/Ndikir Nanyukie, and since I lived in Wamba town, I was able to form friendships—some of them deep and lasting—with many of the people with whom I worked, thereby gaining the sort of insights that would be difficult or impossible through formal data collection alone.

LIVESTOCK HOLDINGS AND RESIDENCE

Residence is a crucial factor in the construction of Samburu identity and experience. Notwithstanding some restrictions, a Samburu individual or family is free to live in the place of their choosing. Yet, the ecological environment is a limiting factor, coupled with such social structural considerations as patrilocality and kinship and clan ties. Thus, a Samburu man with many goats will likely choose to locate his settlement in a place suitable for their needs; his social network and place of birth are important but not necessarily crucial in his choice. In contrast, a Samburu without any animals must, for the sake of survival, inhabit places where kin networks or alternatives to a livestock economy are available.³

The degree to which lowland Samburu supplement their subsistence by cash means is one of the subjects of this study. In situations like that found in remote Ngare Narok/Ndikir Nanyukie, the Samburu have continued to rely primarily on their herds, with a smaller number of men engaged in wage labor than nearer Wamba town. Access to the goods, services, and employment opportunities found at the main center of Wamba town is a full day's walk away (departing before

dawn and arriving after sunset) from Ngare Narok for a Samburu unaccustomed to walking and who is not burdened by goods or sick children; an individual who is thusly burdened would make the journey in two days. It is also possible to drive to Ngare Narok with a four-wheel drive vehicle, although the final 20 km of track is pitted by gullies, rivers, and treacherously steep hills with poor traction. There is no passable motor road to Ndikir Nanyukie, although some areas can be accessed along a wide path cleared in the later years of British colonial administration.

In comparison, Samburu in rural Ngaroni also rely on their herds but have much easier access to the goods and services of Wamba, Lodungokwe, and even of Samburu District's largest center, Maralal. A major road (unpaved) passes through Ngaroni, connecting Maralal and the Isioto-Marsabit road. Ngaroni residents can walk to Wamba in 2-3 hours, or they can take a bus to Wamba, Isioto, Lodungokwe, or Maralal. There are also two small shops in Ngaroni's "center," stocking the most basic items (e.g., flour, soap), but no health clinic or resident clergy. In contrast to Ngaroni and Ngare Narok, many Samburu living in Lpashie—adjacent to Wamba itself—had left the livestock economy altogether by the time of the research, although they were still ethnically Samburu and would typically say that they would like to acquire more livestock.

Wamba town is a small center by Kenyan standards, a fact that is consistent with Samburu District's overall lower level of development and integration with the political economy of Kenya. Indeed, the only paved road in the district is on an escarpment on the Maralal-Isioto/Wamba road. According to a census I conducted in 1992, there were 397 men and women (roughly 12 years old and above) living within the town center itself. There were several small political subdivisions adjacent to the town (including Lpashie), each with a population roughly corresponding to this. Besides a row-and-a-half of shops selling basic goods like flour, sugar, meat, cloth, and sundries (e.g., batteries, flashlights, and soap), there were several "hotels" selling very basic restaurant fare (local Kenyan cuisine) and a couple of small bars. There was no electricity in Wamba town, although there was a piped water supply that varied in output. At the driest times of the year, it was not unusual for people to begin lining up at a single tap at or shortly before dawn, in order to fill their jerry cans with a day's water ration.

The Wamba Catholic Hospital and Mission was a source of health care, employment, and welfare assistance. It also operated a primary school, girls' secondary school, and nurse's training school. Like the development project operating on German governmental funds (GTZ), it functioned in the absence of electricity by means of a generator. GTZ was also a source of employment, as well as community development orchestrated through a cash/food-for-work program. Because of their famine relief, food-for-work, and children's food programs, the mission and GTZ were perceived by the Samburu in Wamba Division as sources of economic assistance. Living in or adjacent to Wamba town made such services the most accessible in times of need.

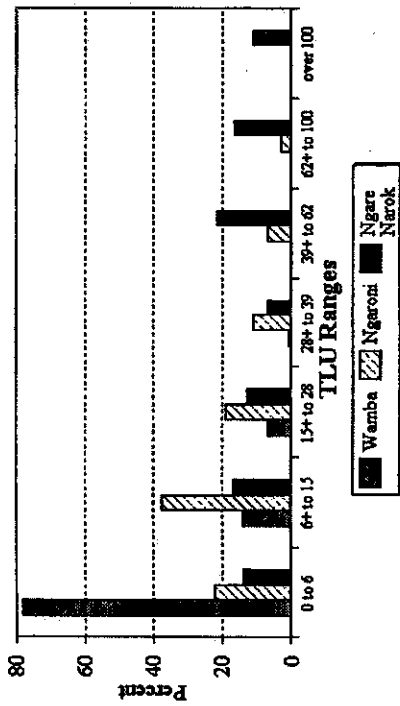


Figure 2. Community Livestock Holdings, Showing Family Herds Measured in Total Livestock Units, or TLUs (1 TLU = 1 cow, 0.8 camel, or 10 sheep/goats)

As I stated previously, livestock holdings and residence were strongly correlated, and the explanation is fairly clear. Many families without animals are becoming sedentarized as they form dependency on the market economy and/or agencies that provide food and monetary assistance (Figures 2 and 3). Those who have a large number of animals often settle far from town centers. It is certainly logical that those with the largest number of animals would prefer to graze them in the best rangeland, which is typically in more sparsely populated areas (away from town). In contrast, those with fewer animals would need access to the means of supplemental support. Finally, those who were essentially stockless would be expected to move to areas where employment, development projects, and Christian missions (with supplemental food programs) offer them incomes and additional assistance when necessary (also see Fratkin 1991).

I would add a caution, however, against too linear an explanation for the high correlation I found between livestock holdings and residence. On the one hand, there are very wealthy Samburu with large herds living in town; on the other, many stockless individuals remain in rural areas and manage to rebuild their herds. To illustrate such exceptions to the data, the number of non-remarried widows—a particularly salient example of a vulnerable class—was not significantly higher for Lpashie than for remote Ngare Narok, even though there were more female-headed households in Lpashie than in either Ngaroni or Ngare Narok due to a higher number of divorced and never-married women with children in Lpashie. The most striking difference between widows in Lpashie and Ngare Narok was that, in the former case, many relied on their own means of support, while in the

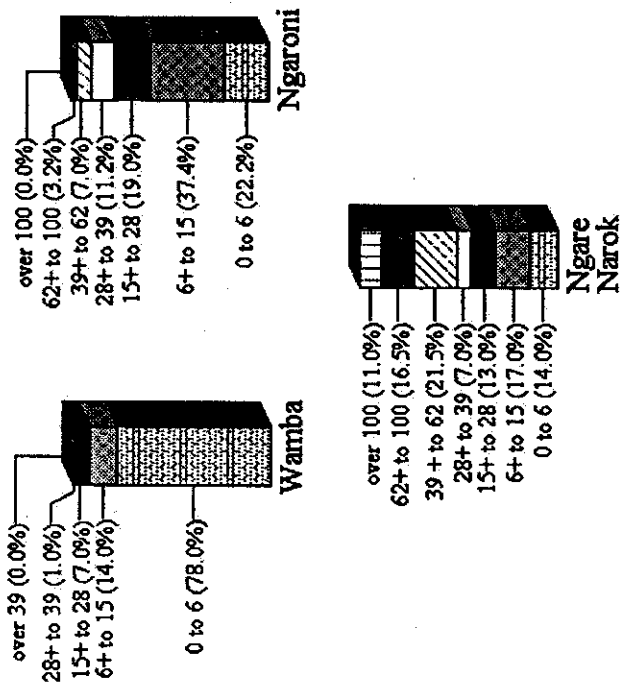


Figure 3. The Distribution of Livestock Holdings by Residence, Showing Herds Measured in Total Livestock Units, or TLUs (1 TLU = 1 cow, 0.8 camel, or 10 sheep/goats)

latter, many relied upon shared animals from sons, husband's relatives, and even daughters' husbands.

Once a man, however, moved his family adjacent to or within a town such as Wamba, whether because of poor management or misfortune, it tended to become more difficult to rely on the support of wealthier kin. Were he to die, his widow might find it impractical (and expensive) to move herself and her children to the home of his or her own male kin. Further, if she was already generating income through employment, hawking, or assistance from the Wamba Catholic Mission while her husband was alive, she might find it more prudent to continue to do so instead of seeking assistance where it might or might not be given. This is exactly what happened in the case of an Ngaroni household in my sample, whose livestock holdings became too small to provide for the household's nutritional needs. Two of the youngest children became so severely compromised that they became first emaciated and then dehydrated from chronic diarrhea. When I offered to help the children, the husband agreed. After a short time (even though I had already

returned the children to their home once they became stable), the husband decided to move his entire family from Ngaroni to Wamba. His wife built a house for the family in a settlement just outside the Catholic Mission compound. Soon, besides seeking occasional assistance from me, they were regularly being supplemented by the mission. Sadly, the husband died a year later. Although the widow had an adult son in another area, she remained in the settlement near the mission because she said she wanted her children to be sponsored by the mission.

In the 1990s, the ease with which individuals moved to town centers in times of necessity was far greater than the ease with which they replenished their stock and returned to the rural areas of Samburu District. This point is of crucial significance in analyzing transformations in contemporary Samburu society, particularly as they affect Samburu identity (or identities).

The process of sedentarization is only one of my concerns here, however, for I am examining residence patterns more broadly. If we consider sedentarization's opposite, the remote area of Ngare Narok/Ndikir Nanyukie offers what appears to be a window into the Samburu past, and one can imagine how Spencer (1965:xx) could say that he "was constantly aware of the administration, but it was at the same time quite possible to almost ignore its existence when collecting case material: it seemed to belong to another world." Yet, the Samburu in Ngare Narok are fully living in the present and, indeed, many of them have traveled to places well beyond Samburu District. Certainly, fewer individuals in this remote area have been formally educated or engaged in wage employment, but those who have done so are the cross-cultural brokers for their families as well as a source of cash income. An analysis based on the assumption that Samburu living in remote areas offer a window into the past is, in fact, a fallacy I would like to avoid. Indeed, what differentiates these Samburu from individuals living sedentary lives in areas close to town is not time, but rather, the subsistence livestock economy and all that it implies.

WOMEN, LABOR, AND TIME IN THREE COMMUNITIES

The continuing relevance of the subsistence livestock economy to understanding differences in all three of the lowland Samburu communities I studied is borne out fairly clearly in comparing how women spent a typical day in each community during the period of research (1992-94). Besides the fact that it was not uncommon for women near Wamba town (Lpashie) to wash their own and their children's clothes before beginning the day's other work, women would typically begin their days fairly similarly, by milking animals (if there were any) and preparing tea. After breakfast, however, women's lives could differ markedly, depending upon the number of animals they had at their disposal and on their access to towns or other centers. Thus, whereas rural women in Ngare Narok or Ngaroni might leave to

fetch water, later herding small animals that remained close to the settlement, their town counterparts would probably have a piped water supply or a water supply closer to home. Often, the rural women would leave the settlement early to go to jobs in town or to carry out hawking businesses. Indeed, many women living near or in town were forced to pursue wage employment or other income-generating activities in order to offset the problems associated with having too few or no animals for subsistence. Both Wamba town and Ngaroni offered women access to cooperative organizations sponsored by the Catholic mission or GTZ. In the case of Wamba women, this access sometimes provided the means to essential income for women with neither livestock nor husbands. For Ngaroni women, its blessings were more mixed, as we shall see in examining the time allocation data.

While women near town might work or earn money through market activities sometime after breakfast, then, Ngare Narok women would typically return from getting water to put some food on to cook, check on small stock, or rest briefly. If they had many goats, they (together with their children) would milk them at mid-day, after which they might offer the children a mid-day meal. After this, they might visit with neighboring women for awhile, go to the nursery school to listen to the catechist or to sing with other women if they lived close enough, nap, or work on productive projects such as beadwork, scraping hides, or making calabashes. At some point in the afternoon, Ngare Narok women would collect some firewood if their supply was low and, by late afternoon, animals would need to be milked again and an evening meal prepared.

Ngaroni women, in contrast, spent a comparable amount of time as Ngare Narok women in livestock-related responsibilities but were burdened with the additional chores, relating to the reproduction of the household, created by having more children in school, as well as by the additional income-generating opportunities available. Many Ngaroni women chose to belong to the Catholic women's group cooperative and were, thus, required to sell goods at the women's *duka* (shop). Even those who did not belong to this cooperative might be selected and then elect to participate in the food/cash-for-work program operated by the German development agency in the area (GTZ). Often, in addition to these activities, Ngaroni women would be responsible for cooking food for the children at the local nursery school. While all of these activities provided women with additional social networks, which they welcomed, they also translated into increased workloads.

For the most part, then, Ngare Narok women were found fully engaged in herding operations and home obligations, and Ngaroni women were engaged in a more diverse spectrum of activities, often balancing herding responsibilities with participation in cooperatives or other means to generate cash income. Women in Lpashie (near Wamba), in contrast, spent little or no time in herding activities but continued to fulfill domestic responsibilities associated with the reproduction of the household as well as engaging in a wide variety of income earning pursuits. I will explore the implications of this observation below, in the context of a full examination of the time allocation data—for men and boys as well as for women and girls.

Table 2. The Significance of Residence, Age, and Gender on Leisure Time

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig. ^a	R	Exp(B)
Community ^b			61.8794	2	.0000	.2067	
Wamba	.7850	.1001	61.5482	1	.0000	.2097	2.1925
Ngaroni	-.3189	.1004	10.0916	1	.0015	-.0773	.7269
Age category ^c			91.4647	5	.0000	.2453	
Age (1)	-1.0463	.1548	45.6908	1	.0000	-.1796	.3513
Age (2)	-.8803	.1922	20.9761	1	.0000	-.1184	.4147
Age (3)	-.2187	.1541	2.0142	1	.1558	-.0032	.8036
Age (4)	.4537	.1375	10.8938	1	.0010	.0810	1.5741
Age (5)	.1584	.2798	.3205	1	.5713	.0000	1.1717
Gender ^d	-.5919	.1606	13.5895	1	.0002	-.0925	.5533
Constant	-.1381	.1249	1.2233	1	.2687		

^a SPSS was used to determine the significance (Sig) of residence, age, and gender for leisure. The measurement used differs from the standard error estimate for regression outputs, which use a linear model (where the best R value is 1). This table shows the significance of the relationship between the variables, where the highest significance is the value closest to zero.

^b Ngare Narok is the constant.

^c Age categories are: (1) Kiroro men (ages 30-45) and women under 32 years; (2) Kishili (ages 45-60) and Kimaniki (ages 60-75) men and women ages 32-54; (3) Mekuri men (ages 70-85) and women ages 55-64; (4) Kileku men (ages 85 and older) and women ages 65 and older; (5) unmarried boys (12-15) and girls ages 12-32; and *moran* (men ages 15-32). There is overlap in some age-sets due to variation in the length of time elapsing between the onset of circumcisions. *Moran* began to be circumcised in 1990, Kiroro in 1976, Kishili in 1960, Kimaniki in 1948, Mekuri in 1936, and Kileku in 1921.

^d Females are the constant.

THE CASH ECONOMY AND SHIFTING PATTERNS OF LABOR ALLOCATION

In the 1990s, there were at least three different versions of the lowland Samburu economy, although individuals in all three continued to identify themselves as Samburu and, indeed, continued to share many of the more obvious features anthropologists have reported for Samburu society. Thus, all Samburu in the study continued to rely upon age-grades and the age-set system as indicators of men's roles (and the prestige associated with each) and referred to the centrality of livestock to their identity as Samburu. Likewise, they continued to cite marriage (in terms of the bridewealth system), female initiation (clitoridectomy), and having children (particularly in terms of the prestige afforded by having *moran* sons and the assistance provided by daughters) as essential stages in women's lives. An examination of labor allocation in the three communities I studied illustrates clearly, however, the critical significance of residence for Samburu daily routines.

I suggest two ways of understanding these residence-associated differences and their implications for gender and Samburu identities. One way is to treat Ngaroni

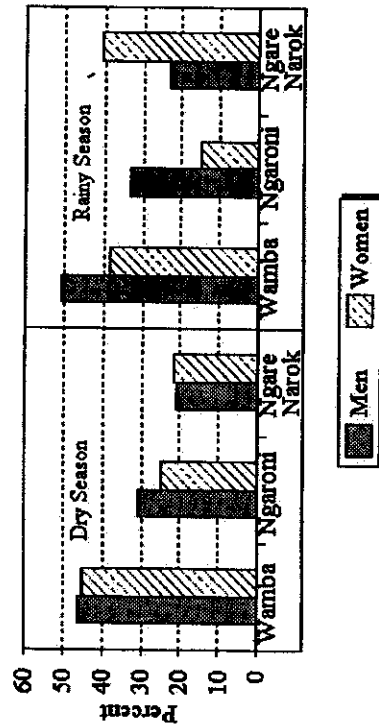


Figure 4. Leisure by Gender, Residence, and Season (Men = all males ages 12 and above. Women = all females ages 12 and above.)

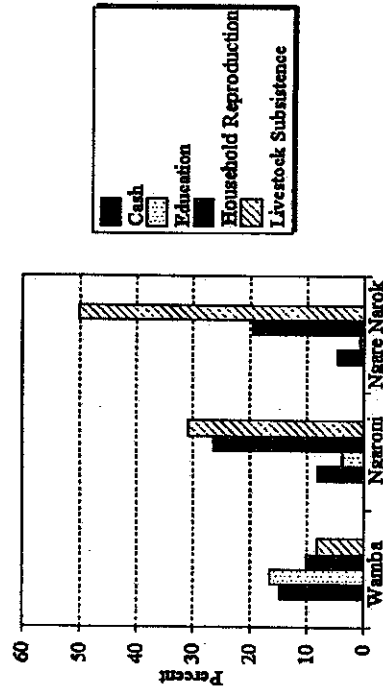


Figure 5. Dry Season Productive Activities, by Residence

as a transitional zone between livestock husbandry (Ngare Narok) and the cash economy (L-pastie) (see Rothstein 1985, Minge 1986). This view allows us to analyze the how and why of residence-associated labor differences. Another way is to examine cultural conceptions of gendered identities as they shape and are shaped by modes of subsistence and residence.

While somewhat tautologous, the first approach allows us to make sense out of the stark differences among women in the three communities, and between men and women within Ngaroni (a "transitional" zone). Taking leisure (time spent *not* working) as a convenient measure of labor differences, I found comparisons by residence, age, and gender to be highly significant (Table 2). Figure 4 shows per-

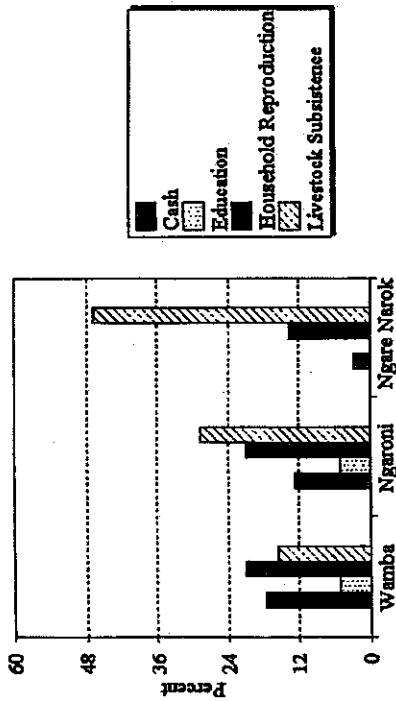


Figure 6. Rainy Season Productive Activities, by Residence

percentages of individuals observed in leisure activities by residence, gender, and age. Figures 5 and 6 show residence-associated differences in productive activities without regard to age or gender. Tables 3-8 show age-stratified and gender-stratified differences for leisure and productive activities. I found the most striking differences in production, reproduction, and leisure in Ngaroni, where I would argue that the livestock subsistence and cash-based economies coexisted in a proportion that resulted in the sort of labor burden on women that many researchers have consistently found in colonial and postcolonial transitional economies. Ngaroni women, in particular, were the most diversified in their productive activities, while much-needed children's labor was lost to education.

The importance of the loss of children's labor for household reproduction and herding activities is clear if we consider the percentages of children observed in these activities during the rainy-season month I have used for this paper, when Lpashie children were on school holiday (Tables 3 and 4). (Percentages of people at school at the time of the time allocation spot checks are shown in Table 5.) Both older boys and older girls worked more than in the dry season—the boys primarily in livestock activities and the girls in household reproduction—although the boys had substantially more leisure. It is interesting to note, however, that Lpashie married women still had less leisure time in the rainy season than they did during the dry season, probably due to the combined factors of livestock being home, more produce being available (to sell), and more family members being present to care for (making the school holiday a mixed blessing). For Ngaroni and Ngare Narok households (with higher average livestock holdings), a loss of children's labor for school enrollment equal to that found in Lpashie would have a greater impact. Higher school enrollment was also associated with greater leisure time. Averaging

Table 3. Household Reproduction: Age- and Gender-Stratified Residence-Associated Differences, by Season—Shown in Percentages of Individuals in Each Age/Gender Category Observed in Household Reproduction Activities^a

Age/Gender ^b	Dry Season			Rainy Season		
	Wamba	Ngare Narok	Wamba	Ngare Narok	Ngare Narok	Ngare Narok
Boys	0.0	1.88	0.0	10.3	0.0	0.0
Girls	12.1	20.5	8.69	35.59	29.4	12.19
Moran	3.2	2.4	1.5	3.2	0.0	0.0
Married Men 1	7.69	0.0	7.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Married Men 2	0.0	0.0	4.5	2.3	0.0	2.6
Married Women 1	27.5	62.29	54.9	33.3	58.0	37.5
Married Women 2	17.1	51.1	47.69	29.5	34.5	36.5

^a The total number of individuals surveyed in the dry season was 1,033. The total number surveyed in the rainy season was 913.

^b Boys = aged 12 and older (up to approximately 15). Girls = aged 12 and older (up to approximately 19). Moran = Meoli (aged approximately 15-30). Married Men 1 = Kiroro age-set (aged approximately 30-45). Married Men 2 = Kishiti age-set and older (aged approximately 45 years and above). Married Women 1 = less than 32 years of age. Married women 2 = aged 32 and older.

Table 4. Livestock Subsistence: Age- and Gender-Stratified Residence-Associated Differences, by Season—Shown in Percentages of Individuals in Each Age/Gender Category Observed in Livestock Subsistence Activities^a

Age/Gender ^b	Dry Season			Rainy Season		
	Wamba	Ngare Narok	Wamba	Ngare Narok	Ngare Narok	Ngare Narok
Boys	14.7	62.2	75.5	34.4	61.2	85.0
Girls	13.6	51.28	78.2	16.9	50.0	58.5
Moran	14.5	41.46	64.6	14.75	55.8	76.78
Married Men 1	0.0	25.0	55.55	18.1	16.66	47.8
Married Men 2	8.6	27.6	52.27	9.3	4.4	12.5
Married Women 1	0.0	18.0	17.6	0.0	14.0	39.47
Married Women 2	0.0	10.0	18.46	8.1	11.9	7.69

^a The total number of individuals surveyed in the dry season was 1,033. The total number of surveyed in the rainy season was 913.

^b Age categories are given in Table 3, note b.

the two seasons together, I found that a greater percentage of girls and boys were observed in leisure activities in Ngaroni, where school enrollment was increasing (with leisure at 21.6% and 17.46%, respectively), than in Ngare Narok, where school enrollment was lowest (with leisure at 18.8% and 12.35%, respectively); and in Lpashie, where school enrollment was highest (with leisure at 23.6% and 35.85%), than in Ngaroni. (These are the mean averages of figures shown in Table 6.) In contrast, women's labor burden was greater in Ngaroni than in either Ngare Narok or Wamba (Table 7). There was less contrast between the percentages of

Table 5. Formal Education: Age- and Gender-Stratified Residence-Associated Differences, by Season—Shown in Percentages of Individuals in Each Age/Gender Category Reported Attending School during Spot Check^a

Age/Gender ^b	Dry Season			Rainy Season		
	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok
Boys	52.9	15.0	4.0	3.4	24.49	0.0
Girls	42.4	2.56	0.0	1.69	2.9	0.0
Moran	12.9	12.1	0.0	13.1	6.9	0.0
Married Men 1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Married Men 2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Married Women 1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Married Women 2	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0

^a The total number of individuals surveyed in the dry season was 1,033. The total number surveyed in the rainy season was 913.

^b Age categories are given in Table 3, note b.

Table 6. Leisure: Age- and Gender-Stratified Residence-Associated Differences, by Season—Shown in Percentages of Individuals in Each Age/Gender Category Observed in Leisure Activities^a

Age/Gender ^b	Dry Season			Rainy Season		
	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok
Boys	23.5	20.7	12.2	48.2	14.2	12.5
Girls	18.4	25.6	10.8	28.8	17.6	26.8
Moran	40.3	7.3	16.9	40.9	6.9	7.1
Married Men 1	36.4	37.5	18.5	45.4	50.0	43.4
Married Men 2	73.9	59.5	38.6	67.4	73.3	44.7
Married Women 1	50.0	13.1	21.5	38.8	8.0	45.0
Married Women 2	67.1	33.3	29.2	40.9	19.0	48.0

^a The total number of individuals surveyed in the dry season was 1,033. The total number surveyed in the rainy season was 913.

^b Age categories are given in Table 3, note b.

married men observed in leisure activities in the three communities—with the greatest difference observed being in Ngare Narok (Table 7)—even though the time they spent in various productive activities differed enormously (see Tables 3, 4, and 8).⁴

Clearly, Ngaroni women had a comparable or even larger labor burden associated with reproducing the household than their Ngare Narok peers (Table 3), while a comparable percentage was observed in livestock-related activities (Table 4). In addition to this, Ngaroni women engaged in cash-earning activities in both seasons (Table 8). Lpashie women, with few or no livestock responsibilities, were observed in leisure activities more than either Ngaroni or Ngare Narok women in the dry season (Table 6) and more than their Ngaroni peers in the rainy season

Table 7. Comparison Between Married Men's Leisure and Married Women's Leisure, Shown as Mean Average Percentages for Both Seasons and Age Categories^a

	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok
Men	56.28	55.08	36.30
Women	49.20	18.35	35.93

^a For breakdown of married age-categories and seasons, see Table 6.

Table 8. Wage Labor and Cash Activities: Age- and Gender-Stratified Residence-Based Differences, by Season—Shown in Percentages of Individuals in Each Age/Gender Category Reported at Work for Wages or Engaged in Cash-Generating Activities at Time of Spot Check^a

Age/Gender ^b	Dry Season			Rainy Season		
	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok	Wamba	Ngaroni	Ngare Narok
Boys	8.8	0.0	2.0	3.4	0.0	0.0
Girls	10.6	0.0	0.0	11.86	0.0	0.0
Moran	19.35	31.7	13.8	19.67	27.9	10.7
Married Men 1	30.76	37.5	11.1	36.36	27.7	4.3
Married Men 2	13.0	6.38	2.2	20.9	15.55	2.6
Married Women 1	20.0	3.27	1.9	27.7	8.0	0.0
Married Women 2	12.85	2.2	1.5	14.75	15.4	0.0

^a The total number of individuals surveyed in the dry season was 1,033. The total number surveyed in the rainy season was 913.

^b Age categories are given in Table 3, note b.

(Table 6). (Figure 4 shows leisure for children and adults combined.) While an extraordinary percentage of Lpashie women were observed in wage labor and other cash-earning activities (comparable to and even greater than men in Ngaroni and Ngare Narok; see Table 8), the conveniences of town life (e.g., closer access to fuel and water) and the lack of livestock more than made up for the relative loss of children's labor to school.

In the case of married men (all ages), lower average livestock holdings (meaning reduced livestock labor requirements) were balanced by increased participation in wage labor and other cash-based productive activities (Table 8). Thus, married men's leisure (Table 6) increased gradually with reduced livestock holdings, so that married men in Lpashie tended to be observed in leisure activities more frequently than either their Ngaroni or Ngare Narok peers. As a result, while there is greater labor inequity based on gender (using leisure as a measure) in cash-based Lpashie than in livestock-based Ngare Narok, by far the most gender imbalance was found in the transitional community of Ngaroni. In fact, leisure time was so evenly balanced between Ngare Narok men and women that, during the rainy-season month, a greater percentage of girls and women than boys and men were

observed in leisure activities (Figure 4). The age-stratified comparison (Tables 3-8) shows that the difference was largely due to girls' reduced livestock responsibilities in that month. This finding was most likely due to the fact that Ngare Narok *moran* and boys return from the cattle camps in the rainy season, when the total herd is brought together.

Ngaroni, then, is a transitional community (or zone) between primary dependence on livestock husbandry and a cash-based economy. In the Samburu case I am offering here, this change in subsistence strategy has translated into an increasing labor burden for women, who have diversified their economic strategies without losing livestock responsibilities, and which has been exacerbated by the loss of some children from production due to school attendance.⁵ I would argue, in fact, that most of the recent studies of northern Kenyan pastoralists have tended to focus on rural pastoralists in transitional areas like Ngaroni, yielding the somewhat grim results reported concerning women's labor *vis-à-vis* men's. Louise Sperling (1987) and Elliot Fratkin (1989) in particular have examined labor patterns through quantitative time allocation studies—Sperling (1987a) did not focus on Samburu and Fratkin among the Ariaal. Although Sperling (1987a) did not focus specifically on gender, her findings reflect the widely accepted position of age and gender inequality among East African herders, with adolescent boys and girls spending more time working than any other group and adult women working more than adult men.⁶ Fratkin's (1989) findings were similar; he reported that married women enjoyed 64.8 percent of the leisure time of married men.⁷

Turning now to the second approach to understanding residence-based differences, I will elucidate the cultural implications of the labor differences I have just examined. First, however, I will digress briefly to contextualize the discussion with a description of generational changes in Samburu wage labor participation and Christian self-identification.

SHIFTING CONCEPTIONS OF SAMBURU IDENTITY

In the 1930s and 1940s, when Protestant (Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society) missionaries first began proselytizing in Samburu District, Samburu responses were often negative. As one Samburu minister, Samuel, related to me in December 1993, family members of the few Samburu who stayed at the missions for any length of time thought them crazy or "dull-witted" (*kemada*) and actively attempted to retrieve them. Western clothing held negative connotations, and Samburu living at the mission often changed back and forth between Western and Samburu clothing more than once in the course of a day. By the 1990s, in contrast, a large number of individuals in all regions identified themselves as Christians, even though many conceded that they never went to church. Indeed, the meaning of conversion is a complex issue in itself, but what an increase in Christian self-identification does indicate is an acceptance of Christianity as compatible with Sam-

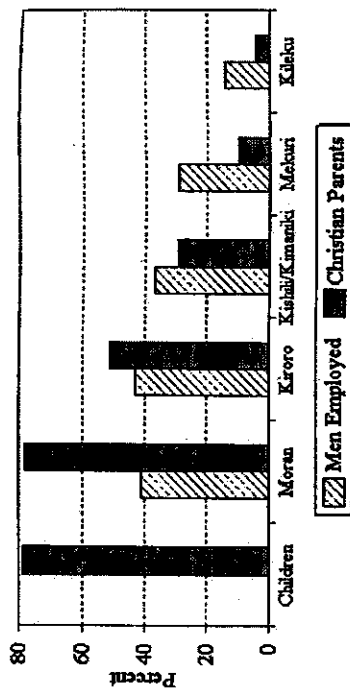


Figure 7. Generational Changes in Wage Employment and Christianity (Except in the all-male *moran* category, girls and women are also included in the "Parents Christian" bars. Ages of the women included are: *Kiroro*, under 32; *Kishili/Kimamaki*, 32-54; *Mekuri*, 55-64; *Kileku*, 65 and older.)

buru identity. Figure 7 documents this change by showing the percentages of Samburu men and women in the sample as a whole who identified their parents as Christians. In cases where the parents were alive, these data were cross-checked. A similar change is evident in the case of wage labor (Figure 7); the number of men who have participated in wage labor is greater with each succeeding age-set (also see Sperling 1987a, 1987b; Holtzman 1996).

Increases in Christian self-identification, school enrollment, and wage labor participation demonstrate a dynamic sense of what it means to be Samburu. Given that the incidence of all three cross-cut residence and livestock wealth, it seems clear that lowland Samburu in the 1990s found all of these choices and activities to be compatible with Samburu identity. Clearly, while the Samburu in Wamba have been forced by necessity into dependency on the cash economy, the Samburu in Ngaroni and Ngare Narok have found themselves maneuvering to strike the best balance culturally between livestock and cash-based strategies. Insofar as livestock trading has added a cash value to all livestock, the cultural meanings and values attached to livestock have been transformed, as well (Talle 1988). It is perhaps those in Ngare Narok (and the wealthy, political elite in Lpashie)—with the highest average livestock holdings—who have been in the most advantageous negotiating position, or who have at least had the greatest number of options. However, while drastically reduced livestock holdings may have limited their choices, precipitating their move to town initially, once there, most women and men in town prefer to live where water, fuel, and such things as maize meal and cloth are most accessible. It is these Samburu—the majority of whom speak Swahili and an increasing number, English, as well—who refer to Samburu such as those in

Ngaro Narok as *leresaab* ("of the reserve," meaning rural, "bush," or remote areas), while those *leresaab* sometimes refer to Samburu in town as *mzungui narok* (black Europeans). Samburu identity is increasingly plural. What has happened to the *meaning* of women's and men's labor in the course of becoming town Samburu (or *mzungui narok*) is the question to which I will turn now.

LABOR TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE SEX-GENDER SYSTEM

In the beginning of this paper, I mentioned that, in the Samburu livestock economy, women are responsible for milking and the distribution of food. Men, in turn, are responsible for herd management, some herding, and heavy work such as digging wells and building fences around the settlement. While women's responsibilities in the provisioning and distribution of food to members of the household have readily translated across differing permutations of the Samburu economy, men's responsibilities have not made a smooth transition to accommodate the economic changes I have been describing. That is, changes in the mode of production have not radically altered women's responsibilities in reproducing the household. In straightforward terms, in the 1990s, Samburu women in Lpashie continued to be responsible for feeding and caring for their children, even while men struggled with the means to enable them to do so. Although men without livestock could (and did) continue to enjoy respect in the community—particularly if they were employed or engaged in other means of income generation—women who were inadequate providers for their children's nutritional needs bore stark criticism from others in the community, both men and women alike. Thus, it was quite possible for an Lpashie man to earn cash yet contribute only a small portion of it to his family's needs, while his wife was expected to use the bulk of her earnings to provide for her children's nutritional and school needs.

A decreasing dependence upon husbands for subsistence needs is evidenced by women's self-reporting of the gifts they gave and received over the course of a month. For this survey, my research assistants and I asked all women we found home during the monthly time allocation spot checks questions about the gifts they had given and received during the past month, and the number of times they had attended church and other meetings. Women in all three regions reported receiving gifts from sons, husbands, and natal kin, but women in Lpashie (married and unmarried) reported receiving gifts (including cash and livestock) from natal kin more frequently than women in Ngaroni and Ngaro Narok. With the number of women in the Lpashie employed labor force approximating that of men, an increasing number of Lpashie women were providing for their children's needs solely through cash means and local forms of welfare assistance, while also cooperating with female kin and friends in times of need. While respondents (male and female) were almost unanimous in asserting that women ought to marry (a point of

consistency with Samburu patriarchal tradition), few begrudged women any means whatsoever necessary to provide food for their children. Indeed, men in all three regions indicated that the cash women earned should be spent on their children's needs first and foremost, and this was true regardless of whether they believed that women should decide what to do with their earnings or that their husbands should decide. In contrast, most men thought that it was up to them how to spend their cash, and many did not even mention family needs. This finding is largely in consonance with other studies of shifting gendered labor patterns, particularly in the context of the market (see, e.g., Clark 1995). Here, it indicates the value Samburu attach to women's food provisioning responsibilities, while at the same time suggesting a gap in men's responsibilities which has not been filled in the transition in modes of production (see Kopytoff 1994).

Examining the time allocation data without attending to Samburu concepts of gender, then, yields a rather incomplete picture of transformations in labor and of what it means to be Samburu. Lpashie women have more leisure than women in Ngaroni, yet their sphere of responsibility has widened considerably. Ngaroni women, as well as Ngaro Narok women, on a smaller scale, have willingly sought opportunities to generate cash income for themselves. In both areas, control over the cash they earn is contested—existing as it does outside Samburu livestock production and established patterns of authority and meaning—and, thus, women usually succeed in using it as they wish, much as employed *morani* do. Yet, while the relative absence of livestock holdings necessitates Lpashie women's use of cash for household consumption, some women in Ngaroni and Ngaro Narok are able to use much of the income they generate for personal consumption, as long as the amount remains small and the family's livestock holdings (and remittances from employed sons) remain sufficiently high. Ngaroni women may work the most overall, then, but ironically, Samburu women (and men) in Lpashie are in a transitional zone with more radical implications for cultural conceptions of gender responsibilities than that which Samburu in Ngaroni (and to a lesser extent, Ngaro Narok) have been negotiating.

In some ways, Samburu women have managed to keep their sphere of influence and source of cultural prestige intact in the move to "town," while men and women alike have been struggling with what it means to be a Samburu man in town. Integration into Kenyan national culture and political economy provides a partial answer to the question of men's identity, even as increasingly fixed notions of ethnicity and escalating levels of interethnic violence render the process of integration problematic.

CONCLUSION

Town centers, with their greater access to supplemental sources of subsistence, represent a *fin de siècle* refuge for pastoralists whose livestock holdings diminish through drought, disease, poor management, or just plain bad luck. In times of

necessity, pastoralists in the past tended to seek refuge with other ethnic groups, specializing for a time, for example, in agriculture and fishing or in hunting, gathering, and beekeeping (Bonte & Galaty 1991, Sobania 1993, Spear 1993). While ethnic identities were somewhat fluid, pastoralists like the Samburu might be assimilated permanently by these other groups, but many other Samburu would acquire livestock as soon as circumstances allowed.

The contemporary situation is more complicated. The Samburu lost prime dry season grazing lands during the colonial period, and they continue to lose land to game parks, group ranching schemes, and—in parts of the highlands where cultivation is possible—to agriculture. Unfortunately, while much of Samburu District is unarable land and, thus, best suited to livestock subsistence strategies, the loss of the most versatile land (dry season grazing land that also has agricultural potential) makes it increasingly difficult for many pastoralists to rely on their herds. Thus, while it was often possible in the past for individuals to replenish their herds after seeking refuge in non-pastoral communities, reduced dry season grazing lands and the vicissitudes of capitalism and the Kenyan political economy have rendered it extremely difficult for stockless Samburu to replenish their herds and move away from towns.

Yet, market dependency has not made victims out of Samburu pastoralists. Rather, Samburu identities have been actively transformed in the cultural context of the town centers. Town centers have been evolving among Samburu pastoralists through a dynamic process of negotiation as the Samburu have struggled to reconcile fixed town centers with their identities as pastoralists.⁸ On the one hand, the result is that the meaning of such things as wage labor and formal education have been reconfigured since the colonial period; on the other, it has resulted in Samburu identity being multiple. Perhaps this latter effect also occurred in the past, when Samburu sought refuge with non-pastoral communities, though such transformations are not as accessible in the oral and written histories available to us.

While the colonial legacy and contemporary Kenyan political situation have combined to fix ethnic distinctions (with sometimes volatile consequences), the Samburu seem to be responding to present political and economic circumstances with flexibility and creativity—even broadening the reaches of their ethnic identity. New vocabulary is one example of this expanded identity, as in the case of the labels used by "Samburu of the reserve" and *mzungui narok* (black Europeans) to refer to each other, even as these groups agree that both are Samburu. At the same time, terms such as *mzungui narok* seem to suggest a proliferation of border identities concomitant with transitional lifestyles.⁹

In terms of these border identities I have been discussing, I would argue that, unlike other Samburu border groups, *mzungui narok* are meaningfully *linked* to a place—town centers. However, they are not *confined* to a place, since the features of town—wage labor, education, and the market—are at once concentrated in centers and dispersed. Thus, even a Samburu "from the reserve" can become *mzungui narok* through higher education and extended participation in wage labor. From

this perspective, both terms reflect tension on the part of many Samburu as they attempt to come to terms with current socioeconomic changes. Whether the current features of *mzungui narok* will become unmarked within Samburu identity remains to be seen, as does the degree to which Samburu identity will be transformed in the context of fixed town centers and the market. Nevertheless, it seems clear that border identities are a continuing and fundamental part of the Samburu ethnic landscape, even as participation in the livestock economy and certain features of the social organization associated with it remain the quintessential benchmarks of Samburu identity.

The term *mzungui narok* is but one dimension of Samburu border identities and transitional economies, however, as I have described them here. In working through the time allocation data I collected for each region, I showed how Samburu concepts of gender come into play as the Samburu attempt to reproduce their social order amidst what many pastoralist scholars have described as widespread socioeconomic changes. In comparing Ngaroni and Ngare Narok men to those in Wamba, for example, I suggested that Samburu culture has not so far provided an adequate framework for translating male roles in the context of a mixed (or even a pure cash) economy; in contrast, cultural expectations of women have readily translated across economic lines. The implications of this are evident in the increased labor burden for women vis-à-vis their male family members, as men are challenged to find ways to fill up the leisure time resulting from having few or no animals to manage, while women continue the work of reproducing the household in addition to their productive participation in the cash economy.

It will be interesting to monitor the continuing transformation of gender role expectations for Samburu whose reduced livestock holdings lead them to rely almost wholly on the alternatives offered by the cash economy, as well as the shape of pastoralism in less accessible regions with higher average livestock holdings. What I hope I have begun to make clear is that the question of whether the Samburu will eventually become a society entirely comprised of pastoralist "haves" and famine-relief-dependent "have-nots" underestimates the resilience that Samburu have demonstrated through decades of drought and costly land tenure changes. While I am in basic agreement with other East African pastoralist scholars who suggest a somewhat bleak future for the Samburu, both the time allocation and qualitative data I have offered here suggest that there will probably be several different solutions to the problem of subsistence. Recent pastoralist scholarship has shown the complexity of the interethnic trade and partnership network in the years immediately preceding the colonial period; we would do well to assume a comparable degree of economic diversification for the Samburu in the 1990s.

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NOTES

1. Examples in this genre are too numerous to cite, but essential readings include Boserup (1970), Hafkin and Bay (1976), Van Allen (1976), Leacock (1980), Rogers (1980), Bay (1982), Bossen (1984, 1989), Charlton (1984), Dube et al. (1986), Robertson and Berger (1986), Leacock and Safa (1986); Creevey (1986), Talle (1988), and Moore (1988).
2. This attention to the politics of difference represents a point of convergence between economic approaches to anthropology and gender, on the one hand, and feminist analyses from the humanities and anthropology's "literary turn," on the other (see Scott 1988, Alarcon 1990, de Lauretis 1990, Gordon 1991, Hooks 1991).
3. In the 1990s, women continued to follow their husbands in most cases—the most notable exceptions occurring in some town situations.
4. A note is in order concerning *moran*, since they sometimes appear to have the least leisure time. *Moran* were the most problematic for the time allocation study; they were cited as engaging in livestock production when their absence from their family's settlements while engaged in herding in distant cattle camps or migratory wage labor meant that they may or may not have been actively engaged in productive activities at the time of the spot check. In the case of Ngaroni, *moran* participation in both the cattle camps and migratory wage labor compounded this bias. Since most married wage laborers were employed locally, this problem was largely limited to *moran*.
5. See Lesorogol (1991), who predicts a similar phenomenon and calls for empirical research to substantiate it.
6. It is also interesting that she found adolescent boys and warriors to be devoting significantly more of their time to work than did their female counterparts, thus highlighting the importance of marriage—when she found the opposite with married women, who spent more time in productive activities than their husbands.
7. He also found both wealth and livestock specialization to be significant. Wealthier households and large-stock specialists worked less, while poorer households and small-stock specialists worked more (Fratkin 1989).
8. Although I have stated that the British introduced these centers in Samburu District, I am not implying that towns or centers are peculiarly Western. Rather, I am pointing out that, in the specific case of the Samburu, permanent centers combining trade, medicine, and administration were a British intervention. In contrast, Samburu "centers" were mobile and transient, arising for specific ritual or political purposes.
9. I use the term "border group" here to refer to people, such as the Dorobo and Lkunono Blacksmiths, who are both insiders and outsiders to Samburu society. They are at its margins either because they represent a fully or partially assimilated ethnic group (Samburu *litorrobo*) or because of caste distinctions based on trade (blacksmiths). In both cases, the individuals with whom I worked maintained an uneasy acceptance of the latter groups as Samburu, even as they were constantly aware of their different status within Samburu society (see Herren 1991; Kratz 1981, 1986; Kratz & Klumpp 1993). For other work on border identities, see Alvarez (1995), Gupta and Ferguson (1992).

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