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**Tourism, Power and Politics: The Challenges of
Maasai Involvement in Tourism Development**

**A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for
the degree of
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in
Social Anthropology
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Abstract

This study explored the broad issues of power and politics associated with Maasai involvement in conservation-oriented tourism development in Amboseli, Kenya. Central to the study was the analysis of the intricate power interrelationships arising from the dynamic economic and political interactions between local actors and external tourism stakeholders. The study specifically looked at how and on what terms the Maasai were involved in tourism development, the nature of their engagement with outsiders, the initiatives they have undertaken to gain closer control over the organisation and economics of tourism, and the opportunities and constraints associated with this development process. Two case studies were used to analyse the experiences of Maasai communities living around Amboseli National Park (from 2005 Game Reserve): community-based wildlife and cultural tourism. A political ecology framework was used as a lens to understand community conflicts and struggles for political control over tourism-related resources (natural and financial). A multi-sited ethnographic approach featuring participant observation, focus group discussions, textual analysis of documents, and in-depth interviews, was used to collect data over twelve months, with intermittent breaks, between November 2003 and August 2005.

The findings reveal that Maasai involvement in tourism development is a comparatively recent occurrence and is being promoted by the Kenyan government as a management tool to reconcile the interests of conservation and local communities. Despite the potential for tourism to bring benefits for local communities, stimulate local support for conservation efforts, and local development, the study found that due to competition and political rifts between clans, age-sets and on the basis of political allegiance, Maasai had not benefited as much as they should from the immense tourism potential in their area. Rather than empowering the Maasai to take control over tourism and their own development, tourism had facilitated the exploitation of the area's tourism potential by foreign tourism investors and tour operators, the government, and a few local elites. Insights from this study shed light on the wider issues of community power and politics in tourism development, in particular the difficulty of ensuring that indigenous communities are not undermined in the face of tourism's global reach. The study suggests that for the Maasai to realise tourism benefits and support conservation there is an urgent need for social and political justice issues such as equitable distribution of benefits, rights to land resources and livelihoods, and democratic decision-making processes, to be addressed.

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Glossary of Maa/Swahili Terms

Ormeek	Derogatory term for people who dress in Western clothes
Enturuj	Tradition prohibiting <i>morans</i> from eating in front of women
Ol murrani/ <i>moran</i>	Male warriors
Oligalata	Clan
Enkishomi	Sub-clan
<i>Manyatta</i>	Homestead for <i>morans</i>
Enkang	Homestead for married man and his family
Enkaji	Round huts
Iloshon	Territorial section
Enkutoto	Localities
Illiporori	Age-sets
Olyioni	Uncircumcised boy
<i>Mzungu</i>	Tourist

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

ACC	African Conservation Centre
ACWTP	Amboseli community Wildlife Tourism Ltd
AFEW	African Fund for Endangered Species
ATGRCA	Amboseli/Tsavo Group Ranches Conservation Association
AWF	African wildlife Foundation
BCP	Biodiversity Conservation Programme
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
COBRA	Conservation of Bio diverse Resource Area Project
CORE	Conservation of Resources through Enterprises
ESOK	Ecotourism Society of Kenya
FOC	Friends of Conservation
GR	Group Ranch
GRC	GRC
KATO	Kenya Association of Tour Operators
KTB	Kenya Tourism Board
KTDC	Kenya Tourism Development Corporation
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Services
ILRI	International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases
KSh.	Kenya Shillings (US\$ 1= ca. Ksh 70/=; NZ\$ 1= ca. Ksh 47/=)
MTW	Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife
NMK	National Museum of Kenya
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter I: Maasai, Conservation and Tourism - the Kenyan Context

I.0 Introduction

The Maa-speaking pastoralists of East Africa are one of the most famous cultural Others in the world. As Spear (1993:1) suggests, “Everyone ‘knows’ the Maasai”, not least because of the large volume of ethnographies, museum exhibitions, novels, documentaries, tourism marketing literature, blockbuster movies about them such as ‘The White Maasai’. The Maasai continue to attract a high degree of curiosity and fascination in the west, due to their distinctive customs, dress and residence near Kenya and Tanzania’s many game parks, and allegedly for resisting change and adhering to their traditional livestock-oriented lifestyles and culture (Keefe, 1995; Ritsma and Ongaro, 2000; Azarya, 2004). As a consequence of this, and in addition to their ‘aesthetic appeal’ (i.e. traditional dress), the Maasai are internationally one of the most publicised and romanticised ethnic Others. In spite of their reluctance to accept the trappings of ‘modernisation’, Maasai villagers have, in the last few decades, increasingly embraced tourism as a means to diversify and supplement their sources of livelihood, and to spur economic development in their homelands (Berger, 1996; Ondicho, 2005; Southgate, 2006; Honey, 2008). Whilst tourism has created new opportunities for Maasai communities struggling to eke out a living in a climatically hostile environment and amid declines in livestock production, their involvement in the sector has resulted in changes that are having significant effects on their socio-cultural fabric.

The aim of this study has been to analyse the complex and dynamic community power and political interrelationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development. Specifically, it has used Maasai insights and experiences with wildlife and cultural tourism to answer the main research question of how, under what conditions and on what terms the Maasai of Amboseli are implicated in tourism development. The study also examined the initiatives the Maasai have undertaken to enhance their participation in tourism and to gain closer political control over the organisation, economics and socio-cultural effects of this development process. Central to the analysis has been exploration of the opportunities and constraints that emerge from indigenously home-grown tourism initiatives such as cultural *bomas*¹. By examining what the Maasai did in their engagement with tourists and tour operators and the steps they had taken to secure closer

¹ *Boma* is a Swahili word for a traditional Maasai homestead or village.

political control over this development process, in effect, the study would have evaluated the ways in which the Maasai have both manipulated and responded to tourism in order to achieve their own ends.

Field research was conducted in Amboseli, Kenya for one year, with intermittent breaks in between, from November 2003 to August 2005. The research incorporated a multi-sited ethnographic methodology. The resulting data were largely qualitative, stemming from visual documentation, focus group discussions (FGDs), secondary sources, participant observations, interviews and casual conversations with local residents about tourism and its relation to the community. Triangulation and the use of ethnographic data have provided me with deep insights that would have been impossible to obtain using quantitative approaches.

I.I Contextualizing the Research

Kenya's national history and contemporary socio-political situation, though not the focus of this dissertation, provide an important explanatory context from which the broader issues of power and politics associated with Maasai involvement in tourism development and the linkage between the Maasai, tourism and conservation should be understood.

I.I.I Introduction to Kenya and the Local Study Area

The Republic of Kenya is an equatorial country located (4°21N and 4°21S) in the East African region of the African continent. It is bordered by Tanzania to the south, Somalia to the east, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, Uganda to the west, Sudan and Ethiopia to the north, and northeast respectively (see Figure 1). The country covers an area of 582, 650km² (224, 960 sq. miles) and is, administratively, divided into seven provinces and one area: Nyanza, Western, Rift Valley, Central, Eastern, North Eastern and Nairobi area. More than 80% of the country is arid and semi-arid land. This leaves less than 20% of land that can be cultivated without irrigation. It is this small area of high agricultural potential that is home to about 85% of the country's population of 38million people (Kenya, 2010).

Diversity and contrast characterise both its geography and people. Its varied terrain rises from the sea level at the coast to Mt. Kenya (5,199metres) to the east of the Great Rift Valley, and Mt. Elgon (4,321 metres) to the extreme west. The country is bisected by the equator from east to

west dividing it into two almost equal halves and the Great Rift Valley that runs from north to south. The climate varies from tropical along the coast to arid in the interior to cool in the highlands. There are two rainy seasons: the short and long rains; however, this is not evenly distributed throughout the country. Kenya is also well-known for its diverse ecosystem which includes rich endowments in flora and fauna, beautiful sandy coastal beaches, spectacular scenery, and magnificent wildlife. The country's population has a rich cultural mix comprising of 42 ethnic communities each with their own distinctive tribal language, and a scattering of immigrants in the cities. The official languages are English and Kiswahili. With such rich cultural and biological diversity, it is no wonder that after the Second World War, when internal travel and tourism began to expand throughout the developing world, Kenya should seek to become a significant tourist destination (Akama, 1999b).

When Kenya, formerly a British colony, attained political independence in 1963 she did so under conditions and by a path that was the envy of other African nations. Although Kenyans had been involved in a protracted anti-colonial struggle, the country had a sizeable indigenous bourgeoisie, a relatively well-developed transport infrastructure, a profitable export sector, an efficient bureaucracy, a sizeable bourgeoisie, and a record in the spheres of education and public health systems which far surpassed the standards found in neighbouring nations, as well as a growing tourism industry (Kitching, 1980). However, years of economic mismanagement, corruption, escalating violent crime and insecurity, nepotism, tribalism in government, and a burgeoning population, meant that the maintenance of such a remarkable welfare system became an increasing burden only achievable by massive increases in public expenditure (Kibwana & Owiti, 1996; Turner, 2010). This has not only contributed to economic stagnation and hardship for many Kenyans but also made it impossible for the country to address her economic woes

As a result, most Kenyans are very poor. It is estimated that close to half of the population live on less than one US dollar a day. This means a majority of Kenyans have not experienced much development (Wako, 2007). More than 80% of Kenya's population reside in rural areas where they practise small scale peasant farming and are openly reliant on environmental resources for their daily livelihood necessities including food, firewood, water, building materials, medicines, et cetera (Kenya, 2007). As consequence of that, there is considerable human pressure on the land and the natural environment especially in the areas bordering national parks and other tourist attractions. Whilst agricultural communities have made striking advances in educational and commercial fields, pastoralists have tended to lag behind in all spheres of social and economic

development (Hillman, 1994; Ondicho, 2005). Poorest among the rural poor are Maasai pastoralists who due to hostile climatic conditions, loss of their traditional livelihoods and fertile lands to conservation and outsiders, and exploitation and discrimination, rank lowest in Kenya's socio-economic hierarchy (Hillman, 1994; Wako, 2007).

The Kenyan government is today faced with the challenge of having to deal with escalating levels of poverty and unemployment especially amongst pastoralist communities including the Maasai. To help meet this challenge especially in the arid and semi-arid rangelands of Kenya where economic opportunities are scarce, the government has increasingly recognized the need to modernize agriculture and create more off-the-farm opportunities to supplement agriculture and diversify the sources of local livelihoods. In retrospect, tourism is now being promoted as an innovative approach to development particularly in the areas bordering national parks and other rural areas where tourist attractions exist in abundance. In this respect, Kenya's embrace of tourism as a 'passport' to development is similar to other African countries (Brown, 1998; Weaver, 1998; Rogerson, 2007). Maasai pastoralists living in the group ranches adjacent to Amboseli national park provide an excellent case study for examining and understanding these and other issues under investigation.

Figure I Map of Kenya showing national parks and administrative units



Source: Researcher

I.1.2 Tourism, Conservation and the Maasai

Tourism has been praised as a ‘Passport’ to development (de Kadt, 1979a; Rogerson, 2007). It has also been hailed as one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the global political economy. In the same vein, tourism has been identified as one of the leading sources of foreign exchange earnings and job creation in many countries both in the developed and developing world (Buttler & Hinch, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007). Generally, most countries engage in tourism development because of its potential contribution to macro and micro economic development,

conservation of landscape resources, and fostering international peace and co-operation between nations (Hall, 1994; Holden, 2005; Scheyvens, 2007). Kenya also recognizes tourism as one of the most powerful forces for economic development on the basis of the sector's contribution to foreign exchange earnings, job creation, national income and economic growth (Dieke, 2000; Ondicho, 2006; Honey, 2008). The industry is particularly seen to have the potential to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources that form the country's tourism product.

Internationally, "the dependence of tourism on conservation is clear and well known: without conservation there would be nothing for tourists to see" (Boyer, 1984: 134). This is particularly the case in Kenya where tourism and conservation have a long association. Kenya was one of the pioneering countries in East Africa to pass laws sanctioning wildlife conservation (Ouma, 1970; Cheeseman, 2003; Honey, 2008). The first national parks established in the colonial era followed the model of Yellowstone, the world's first national park in the United States of America (Lusigi, 1981; Pearson & Andrews, 2002). National parks and other protected areas are set aside to provide effective protection of natural resources that are indigenous to that environment and form the basic attraction of tourism, as well as the ecological processes that maintain them as natural as possible (Western, 1989; Adams & Hutton, 2007). Wildlife protected areas "were created as much for the promotion of economic development through tourism as much as they were for the protection of landscape" (Hall, 2000: 294). An estimated 10% of Kenya's land area has been set aside as protected national parks and reserves² for conservation of biodiversity (Akama & Kieti, 2003; Norton-Griffiths, 2006). Most of the country's conservation areas are located in the arid and semi-arid rangelands (ASALs) of Kenya on land presently or formerly occupied by pastoralist communities especially the Maasai (Western, 1997; Ondicho, 2005; Honey, 2008). Most of these preserves are also situated in areas that experience moderate amounts of rainfall or around permanent water sources such as swamps and rivers (Reid et al., 1999; Ondicho, 2006). Thus, even if conservation areas occupy a small fraction of Kenya's savannas, they contain disproportionately large amounts of natural resources that are the lifeblood of the Maasai and other nomadic pastoralist communities.

² Based on their land ownership and wildlife status wildlife protected areas in Kenya are categorized into three classes, namely national parks and reserves, dispersal areas and corridors, and non-adjacent areas. National parks and reserves are protected lands for the sole use by wildlife. They are owned by the government and county Councils, but management and conservation of wildlife is the responsibility of KWS. The dispersal areas and corridors are 'unprotected' lands onto which animals from the protected areas seasonally migrate. They act as wildlife 'spill-over' areas thus complementing the ecosystem of protected areas; they are privately owned. The non-adjacent areas are also 'unprotected' privately owned lands that are rich in wildlife but are not connected with protected areas. On account of being rich in wildlife they are an important component of wildlife conservation.

During the process of establishing these wildlife protected areas both during the colonial and post-colonial periods, as in other developing countries, the indigenous communities that had lived in the designated areas were displaced and relocated to other areas without any form of compensation (Ondicho, 2005; Norton-Griffiths, 2006; Adams & Hutton, 2007). Most of the displaced families suffered initial losses in land, homes and food security due to exclusion from critical livelihood resources. Sindiga (1999a) has discussed how prioritizing tourism in Kenya has resulted in the removal of indigenous tribes from lands in order to make them national parks. While these groups are expected to 'perform' for foreign tour groups in the games lodges in the park, they are not allowed to actually live in there or make use of the natural resources within the park. For the most part, the local communities have negative attitudes towards protected areas due to prohibitions around extracting vital forest products, grazing and watering while wildlife from the park forage on Maasai land competing with livestock for scarce natural resources, spreading diseases to livestock, destroying crops, property and sometimes injuring and/or killing livestock and people (Pearson & Andrews, 2002; Ondicho, 2006; Norton-Griffiths et al, 2006; IPAR, 2005). These negative feelings are accentuated by the fact that very little of the money³ generated from conservation and tourism is directed towards social development for the Maasai even though they are the ones who suffer the costs of conservation in terms of forgone opportunity of not using protected land for traditional livelihood activities (Sinclair, 1990; Akama et al, 1995; Rutten, 2002; Ondicho, 2006).

As a result of the changes specified above, revenge is common with incidents of poaching and wildlife spearing/destruction of wildlife occurring to settle scores with the state (Lusigi, 1982; Talbot & Olindo, 1990; Norton-Griffiths, 2000; 2006). Recent increases in human population have put considerable pressure on land and natural resources which a large number of Kenyans are dependent on for survival. A burgeoning population and the drive for economic development have resulted in marginal lands around national parks and game reserves which traditionally served as wildlife dispersal areas being converted into farmland and human settlements. These changes are a considerable threat to the survival of the country's more than 70% of wildlife resources that live permanently or seasonally outside the protected areas (Rutten, 2002; Honey,

³ In Kenya, revenues from reserves are shared between local and national government while those from national parks go to the national treasury, tour operators, and tourism investors (Akama, 1996). Little of the money from tourism and conservation has been directed towards development for the local communities living within the vicinity of wildlife protected areas, the ones directly impacted by the implications of tourism and conservation wildlife management.

2008) and, by extension, tourism which depends on them. The human-wildlife interface surrounding conservation is characterised by a conflicting relationship between human beings and their wildlife neighbours (Pearson & Andrews, 2002; Ondicho, 2006; Hanna et al., 2008). The challenge therefore is for the government to protect and conserve the fragile natural resources upon which Kenya's tourism industry is based while at the same time meeting the needs of the expanding population.

The government has undertaken to meet this challenge. In response to the failure of traditional exclusionist top-down approaches to wildlife conservation, a participatory approach was adopted in the early 1990s as an alternative model to conservation and tourism development in Kenya. This paradigm shift was largely influenced by increased awareness that the success of tourism and conservation depended on the goodwill of the local people (Norton-Griffiths, 2000; 2006). The aim of the participatory approach⁴ is to forge partnerships with communities within the vicinity of wildlife protected areas so as to enhance a conservation agenda while at the same time enabling local communities to derive direct benefits from the presence of wildlife on their lands (Mburu, 2004; Watkins, 2002; Rutten, 2004). This echoes Kiss's (2004: 234) assertion that tourism "can generate support for conservation among communities as long as they see some benefit (maintain a hope of doing so), and it does not threaten to interfere with their main source of livelihood". The state through KWS with financial backing from international donors and international conservation-oriented organisations such as AWF began to encourage and support communities within the vicinity of national parks and reserves to undertake conservation through tourism enterprise development in their communal lands (Akama, 1996; KWS, 1997; Mburu, 2004; Honey, 2008). Transferring commercial and resource benefits from wildlife and tourism to local communities was viewed as one way of providing local communities with diversified economic alternatives at the community level which would eventually reduce the day-to-day pressure livelihood activities place on protected areas and encouraging sustainable resource conservation outside protected areas.

The Maasai people living in the group ranches bordering Amboseli National Park in southern Kenya along the Tanzanian border represent one of the few communities in Kenya that have

⁴ The participatory approach is sometimes referred to as participatory management, co-management, joint management, shared management, and management in partnership; multi-stakeholder management or round table management is a worldwide programme that has evolved since the 1980s as a response to the failure of state and community-based models of managing wildlife and other natural resources to successfully fulfil goals of conservation and meet the socio-economic needs of the local communities (Mburu, 2004: 2; see also Drumm and Moore, 2005).

adopted the participatory approach. Maasai communities here have organised themselves to create income-generating activities revolving around conservation and tourism development including providing camping concessions and exclusive campsites and other low cost accommodation leases, partnerships with lodge and hotel operators, guiding tours, and supplies of goods and services to tourists and lodges. Thus among the Maasai of Amboseli tourism and conservation are inseparably intertwined. Conservation is undertaken to attract tourists and tourists are important because they bring money. This is the essence of tourism. This perception has led the Maasai to embrace community-based conservation-oriented tourism development as an innovative strategy for poverty alleviation and development (Kenya, 1995; Mburu, 2004; Honey, 2008). There is therefore a need to evaluate how community power and political relations have been shaped by the distribution of the costs and benefits of conservation and tourism at the grassroots level. Case studies of *Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary* (KCWS) and Maasai *Cultural Bomas*⁵ tourism are used to illuminate the issues under investigation.

1.2 The Maasai of the Local Study Area

I worked with Maasai communities living in the group ranches around Amboseli National Park. These communities live in small settlements and earn their livelihoods by combining livestock herding with crop farming, wage labour and small-scale businesses. In addition to many of them living at or below the poverty datum line (PDL), they also exhibit high levels of illiteracy and mortality. Despite tourist fascination with their culture which has now become highly commercialised, they face discrimination and exclusion within the Kenyan society. More often than not they are perceived as the antithesis to Kenya's national development – i.e. they are 'people of the bush' lacking every (desired) sign of (economic) development. Their current situation can perhaps best be described as a 'marginalised minority'. As a marginalised community in Kenya's national life and impoverished by the decline of their livestock numbers and deteriorating levels of subsistence due to burgeoning population, hostile climatic conditions and dwindling land sizes, the Maasai are looking at tourism as a potential mode of earning a livelihood.

⁵ an indigenously home-grown Maasai tourism initiative

I.3 Study Objectives

This study has focused on the complex political relationships between the local Maasai community, conservation and tourism, and how this has affected community power relations.

The analysis includes an examination of the following issues:

- How the Maasai have come to be involved in tourism development.
- What the Maasai are doing in their engagement with tourists and other industry stakeholders at the local level.
- How tourism's benefits and costs are distributed amongst the Maasai.
- The initiatives the Maasai have undertaken to gain closer local control over the organisation, economics and impacts of tourism so as to achieve their own ends.
- The complexity of the organisational problems and dynamic power relations arising from this development process.

Research questions arising from the study objectives are:

- How and on what terms are the Maasai involved in tourism development?
- What initiatives have the Maasai undertaken to gain local control over the organisation, economics, and cultural impacts of tourism?
- What opportunities and constraints does tourism provide for local economic development?

I.4 Chapter Summary

This dissertation is divided into ten chapters. **Chapter 1**, the introductory chapter, presents an overview of Kenya, the Maasai and background information linking the Maasai with conservation and tourism development, which provides the context for this study. The following few paragraphs describe the dissertation's other chapters and their functions.

Chapter 2 examines the historical literature on the anthropology of tourism and highlights two key themes which are the political economy of tourism and tourism and social change that have preoccupied the anthropologists in their study of tourism. It also includes a discussion of my chosen theoretical framework informed by political ecology that will serve as a background to my anthropological contribution to the study of tourism.

Chapter 3 presents a discussion of the historical development of Kenya's tourist industry, the structure and main actors in the sector and the contribution of tourism to the national economy which provide the context within which the present study can be understood and findings applied.

Chapter 4 provides a description of selected aspects of the traditional Maasai society and outside influences that are factors that continue to shape the society's current situation. The central theme is that the society has witnessed significant transformations over the last century. These transformations determine how the Maasai are involved in the development process and how they deal with the external forces of change.

Chapter 5 explains the research methodology and methods of data collection and analysis, and how I used them as well as a discussion of the constraints and limitations of the study.

Chapter 6 presents the larger picture of tourism and development in Amboseli. Throughout the analysis Amboseli's relevant wildlife history and more recent transformations are uncovered to help define the current situation of Maasai communities and the circumstances that have drawn them into the global tourism web.

Chapter 7 presents a case study of Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary, a community-based conservation-oriented tourism operation in which the people of Kimana have entered into a partnership with a private investor. The chapter illuminates Maasai experiences with community-based wildlife tourism and the complexities associated with partnership projects involving indigenous communities and outside tourism interests. It also highlights not only how the Maasai have lost potential control over tourism, decision making processes, tourist resources and revenues but also participation in tourism has become a source of bitter conflicts and social tensions within the community.

Chapter 8 presents a case study of Maasai cultural *bomas* tourism, an indigenously home grown Maasai tourism initiative that seeks to put control over tourism and benefits in local hands. The chapter provides a highly contextualised description of how cultural *bomas* have evolved as commercial enterprises, their organisational and management structures, and their activities. The chapter answers the research question that relates to the initiatives the Maasai have undertaken in

order to gain closer local control over the organisation, economics and socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

Chapter 9 provides a detailed analysis and discussion of the benefits the Maasai have accrued from cultural *boma* tourism and the problems that have arisen. The chapter highlights how community power struggles for political control over tourism and benefits, and exploitation by tour drivers/guides working in close collaboration with local elites, have impacted Maasai social relations at the grassroots level.

Chapter 10, the last chapter, presents a summary of the major findings, a discussion of the recurring themes, and highlights the contributions the study makes, and ends with the main conclusions drawn from this study.

Chapter 2: The Anthropology and Political Ecology of Tourism

Tourism is a goose that not only lays a golden egg but also fouls its own nest (Hawkins, 1982).

2.0 Introduction

The travel and tourism industry is a significant global force with profound and multifaceted socio-economic, political and cultural effects in contemporary settings. This chapter presents a review of the literature on the anthropology of tourism and theoretical framework that will serve as background to my anthropological contribution to the study of tourism. Towards this end I have divided the chapter into two main sections. The first section presents a review of the anthropological literature on tourism highlighting some of the main issues anthropologists have analysed in their study of tourism and the types of research undertaken so far. The second section presents political ecology with particular attention to actor-oriented political ecology as the main theoretical and conceptual framework that informed this research. This chapter now proceeds to examine the literature on the shifting priorities in the anthropology of tourism.

2.1 Anthropology and the Study of Tourism

As the global tourism industry's importance and impacts spread to rural and remote areas in developing countries the potential for its study from an anthropological perspective also grows (Burns, 2004). Nash (1995: 179) has observed that, "Any human activity of such magnitude cries out for anthropological analysis". Despite its influence, significance, and bringing into contact people from different cultures on a scale that has never been witnessed in human history, until the 1970s tourism only occupied a marginal position in anthropological research and writings (Graburn, 1980; Stronza, 2001). The study of tourism in anthropology was largely "trivialized and neglected" by anthropologists (Dann et al., 1988: 2). The probable reasons for this state of affairs according to Nash (1996:1-3) include: Firstly, tourism was viewed not only as something petty but also as a topic not fit for academic pursuit. As van den Berghe (1994:1-3 cited in Burns, 2004:6) observed,

Judging by the smirk which the mere mention of tourism brings to the face of my colleagues, most social scientists do not take tourism seriously ... most of my colleagues imply that a professed interest in tourism constitutes little more than a clever ploy to pass off one's vacations as work. ... By now, enough fascinating work on tourism ... has

been produced to document that tourism is not only a phenomenon of gigantic import to the modern world but also one presenting challenging problems.

Secondly, tourists were perceived as exploiters or emissaries of capitalists and anthropologists, as intrepid fieldworkers and ethnographers, never wanted to be associated in the slightest with tourists [exploiters], perhaps to maintain their obsessive monopoly over the 'exotic Other' (see also Nash & Smith, 1991; Burns, 2004). Thirdly, "anthropologists may have been unaware of the extent of tourism and its consequences" (Nash, 1981: 461) particularly in those societies where they tended to carry out ethnographic fieldwork. Tourism was mainly thought to be something that occurred in the industrialised Western nations and not small-scale societies in the developing countries which had long been the focus of anthropological studies (Burns, 2004). Many anthropologists were consequently "actively discouraged from pursuing studies in tourism and whatever work they did was derided" (Crick, 1994: 1).

Despite the initial reluctance to incorporate a tourism perspective in their work, anthropologists have, since 1963 when anthropologist Theron Nunez (1963) published a path-breaking article on weekend tourism in a Mexican Village, embraced tourism as a respectable academic field of anthropological study (Dann et al, 1988). Subsequently, anthropologists have published field-defining articles⁶ mostly after the publication of Valene Smith's (1977) edited seminal volume *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Even though some degree of confusion still persists on what to and not to include in the anthropology of tourism "a whole field has emerged, complete with refereed journals, most notably *The Annals of Tourism Research*, conferences, university courses, and oft-cited seminal works" (Stronza, 2001: 264). Most contemporary authors of ethnographies, general tourism texts and other books often include subsections that could be catalogued under the banner anthropology of tourism. In the last few decades the range and depth of the anthropological literature and research on tourism has not only expanded rapidly but also, is still growing (Burns, 2004). As Nash (1996:4) has aptly observed, "the anthropological study of tourism, though of a comparatively recent date, may now be sufficiently established to permit the identification of past and current trends to begin some critical evaluation and to offer some speculation about the future".

⁶ These include amongst others: Nunez (1989) 'Touristic Studies in an Anthropological Perspective'; Pi-Sunray (1989) 'Tourism and Anthropology'; Nash (1981) 'Tourism as an Anthropological Subject'; Graburn (1983a and b) 'The Anthropology of Tourism'; Smith (1992) 'Hosts and Guests Revisited'; Chambers (1999) 'The Anthropology of Travel and Tourism'; Burns (1999) *An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology*.

I have identified two broad but interrelated themes in the anthropology of tourism that are relevant to my study, namely: the political economy of tourism and, social and cultural change. The literature on these two themes is reviewed in turn so as to highlight how they have contributed to the anthropological understanding of tourism. The next section presents a review of the literature that critiques political economy perspectives on tourism in the less developed countries.

2. I.I Tourism's Political Economy

Despite the original academic representations of tourism being economic, the anthropological analysis of tourism from a political economy angle is a relatively recent development (Crick, 1996). In the 1950s and 1960s tourism was excitedly embraced by newly independent states around the world as a tool for modernising their countries (Scheyvens, 2007), a 'shortcut' to development (de Chavez, 1999); 'manna from heaven' (Crick, 1994:7); 'passport' to development (de Kadt, 1979a; Rogerson, 2007), and means of internationalising their economies and earning income for meeting national development goals (Mann, 2005; Hawkins & Mann, 2007). During this time governments of many poor nations in the third world pursued tourism development with passion because of its enormous potential to earn foreign exchange (Scheyvens, 2007), diversify their export base, attain faster rates of growth by tying themselves to the prosperity of the industrialised Western nations, generate employment and large multiplier effects which could in turn contribute to local development (Graburn and Jafari, 1991; Harrison, 1992; Scheyvens, 2002; Mowforth & Munt, 2008).

Responding to such glaring positive economic predictions, many independent African governments swiftly and enthusiastically picked up tourism development as a means of jumpstarting their economies (Akama, 2000; Dieke, 2000; Mann, 2005; Rogerson, 2007). As Crick (1996: 22) further observed,

Responding to such glaring positive images, many developing countries embraced tourism development without adequate feasibility studies, without any sense of opportunity costs (that is, with no sense of what development might be achieved by employment of resources in alternative ways), and with little planning to integrate tourism into national development more generally.

The new focus on tourism in African development was given considerable impetus in many countries by renewed interest accorded to the industry's potential input of tourism in global

development organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), multilateral agencies such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) (World Bank, 2006; Hawkins & Mann, 2007). Subsequently, these international development agencies and many rich western nations started to encourage and finance tourism expansion in a number of newly independent countries in Africa and in other parts of the developing world through development loans and projects (Stronza, 2001; Mann, 2005; World Bank, 2006; Rogerson & Visser, 2007). Support for tourism hinged on its potential as an invisible export to generate revenue for third world countries to pay off their foreign debts and to foster macro-economic growth and national development along first world lines (Lea, 1988; Harrison, 1992; Johnston, 1999; Holden, 2005). As Srisang (1991: 2) aptly observes,

The World Bank enthusiastically prescribed tourism development as a top economic policy for Third World governments. United Nations specialist agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organisation and governments of major industrialised countries decided to back the World Bank's plan. Before long a new United Nations related agency, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO now UNWTO) was created to promote tourism development.

Tourism as 'smokeless industry' and 'invisible export' was in many developing countries viewed as a 'low hanging fruit' deemed ripe for further development (Rogerson & Visser, 2006). The industry was particularly considered to be not only an easy option for stimulating economic growth (World Bank, 2006; Visser, 2006) but also an easy and cheap industry to develop because it was dependent on resources such as wildlife, sun, sea and welcoming smiles that already existed in abundance and because it required few or no capital investments (Jenkins, 1980; Crick, 1996; Hawkins & Mann, 2007). The industry was also highly favoured because it was one of the few "exports" from the developing countries, unlike the export of raw materials, granted destination countries greater control in setting the prices for tourist services and goods (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Srisang, 1991; Rogerson & Visser, 2006), and was free from trade restrictions such as tariffs, quotas and other barriers affecting most forms of international trade (Honey, 1999; Mann, 2005; Mowforth & Munt, 2008). It was alleged that tourism could allow poor nations to avoid industrialisation and build up a service sector which could promptly and successfully compete in the global market (Crick, 1996; Holden, 2005).

Despite the proliferation of an overwhelming literature in the 1950s and 1960s that stress the economic benefits, in the mid 1970s and 1980s scholars from a diversity of social science disciplines including economics, sociology, development studies, and anthropology began to

question the efficacy of tourism as “a magical” tool for economic development and the desirability of encouraging further tourism development in the developing nations of the world. Subsequently, a great deal of research both in anthropology and in the allied social and environmental sciences during this time was directed at a fuller understanding of the impacts of tourism.

Studies critical of tourism increasingly started to highlight tourism’s the negative economic, sociocultural and environmental impacts. Among the most prominent was Britton (1982) who through his study of *Tourism, Dependency and Development in Fiji* pointed out that uncontrolled tourism growth often leads to over-exploitation of natural and cultural resources and uneven development thus accentuating the visible inequalities between the developed and developing nations. He thus wrote,

Underdeveloped countries promote tourism as a means of generating foreign exchange, increasing employment opportunities, attracting development capital, and enhancing economic independence. The structural characteristics of Third World economies, however, can detract from achieving several of these goals. But equally problematic is the organisation of the international tourist industry itself (Britton, 1982:336).

Studies critical of tourism during this time started to highlight the unequal economic and social impacts associated with tourism (see Bryden, 1973; Turner, 1976; Turner & Ash, 1975; Britton, 1981, 1982). For example, Mings (1978) warned against the ‘boom’ or ‘doom’ approach advising that further research be undertaken on the impact of tourism on ‘development’. A number of governments also started to express increased concern that the rapid growth of tourism led to the development of tourist ghettos and negative economic, social and environmental impacts (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Harrison, 1992). These criticisms were confirmed in the first international seminar on tourism and development co-sponsored by the World Bank and UNESCO and whose main outcome was the publication of de Kadt’s edited seminal book, *Tourism: Passport to Development* in 1979 (Hawkins & Mann, 2007).

The first major criticism was directed at the assumption that tourism was a foreign exchange “gold mine” (Wa Kinyatti, 1980:24; Sindiga, 1999a). It was argued that the international tourism industry was largely owned and controlled by foreign investors and multinational corporations from the developed world and most benefits accrued to these organisations and a few local elites. As Sindiga (1999) aptly states: “the structure, organisation and management of international tourism favours multinational corporations, assuring them a large proportion of the value added to the product being sold and implying a net loss to the host country using public

funds to pay for the infrastructure that allows that product to be accessed". It was argued that a huge proportion of tourism's foreign exchange revenues are leaked back to the developed world through repatriation of dividends and profits on investment, tourism related imports, servicing foreign loans/interest, expatriate salaries, package tours, fraudulent practices by foreign investors, and long tax free holidays after the initial investment, and a high level of vertical integration (Akama, 2000; Scheyvens, 2002). Economic leakage was primarily the result of ownership and control of the tourism industry in developing nations by multinational corporations and firms from the industrialised nations (Mowforth & Munt, 2008). The ownership of chains of businesses including tourist infrastructures such as airlines, hotels and car rentals, and tour firms and the payment of inclusive tour packages overseas meant that very limited foreign exchange receipts reach or are retained in the destination country (Crick, 1996; Sindiga, 1999a; Holden, 2005). In Africa, the imposition of neo-liberal trade policies including free markets, privatisation and structural readjustment programs has not only encouraged the penetration of multinational corporations into the tourism industry but also allowed for further leakages to occur (Nyang'oro and Shaw, 1998; Hawkins & Mann, 2007).

The supposed high multiplier effects of tourism to the local economy were also brought into question (Britton, 1996; Scheyvens, 2002). It was argued that tourism's multiplier effects were minimal in many developing countries. This was especially the case in countries where different economic sectors were poorly integrated (Sindiga, 1996; Scheyvens, 2002, Mann, 2005). As de Kadt (1979a: xi) rightly observed "an earlier simple faith in the merits of economic growth as such has given way to questions about the balance of that growth and the distribution of material benefits". It was further argued that a lion's share of the economic benefits and opportunities created in tourism including employment are often appropriated by foreign investors and firms from the Western world and a few local elites (Crick, 1989; Honey, 1999; Holden, 2005). Loss of local control and ownership to multinational corporations and a few local elites was shown to exacerbate unequal development and to deny destination communities the opportunity to benefit in any meaningful way from tourism (Brohman, 1996; Mitchell & Ashley, 2006b). Thus, tourism's supposed multiplier effects on the host community were no more than an illusion. As Johnston (1999: 3) aptly states,

The theoretical 'trickle down' of benefits seldom occurs; instead, indigenous peoples find themselves shut out of 'public' facilities built for tourists, forcibly moved from their traditional lands, and needier than ever of jobs, however demeaning they may be. At the same time, they are isolated from any information about the industry and its track record that would make effective lobbying or community-driven innovation possible. Essentially, their poverty sustains such tourism.

Tourism was also condemned for being an unreliable strategy for economic development because of its seasonal nature and over dependence on world economic conditions such as oil prices, and the economic situation in tourist generating countries, and the preferential whims of tourists and international tourism marketing agents (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Holden, 2005; Mowforth & Munt, 2008). Thus, host countries and communities had very little say or control over the local tourist industry as foreign agencies are highly influential in deciding which destinations receive tourists or develop as tourist markets and hence benefit from tourism. Turner & Ash (1975) have argued that when outsiders manage the local tourist industry tourism may not only become a form of imperialism but also neo-colonialism (see also Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Smith, 1989). Thus, the power of foreign firms to exert control over touristic and related developments abroad makes “a metropolitan centre imperialistic and tourism a form of imperialism” (Nash (1989: 42). Srisang (1992: 3) succinctly observes,

Tourism, especially Third World tourism, as it is practised today, does not benefit the majority of people. Instead it exploits them, pollutes the environment, destroys the ecosystem, bastardises the culture, robs people of their traditional values and ways of life and subjugates women and children in the abject slavery of prostitution. In other words, tourism epitomises the present unjust world economic order where the few who control wealth and power dictate the terms. As such, tourism is little different from colonialism.

The other criticisms were directed at tourism’s negative socio-cultural spin-offs in destination areas which earlier reviewers had omitted from their works (Britton, 1982; de Kadt, 1979b). The critics argued that rather than promoting economic empowerment, tourism generated new kinds of social problems such as drugs, prostitution, inflation, overcrowding, pollution and environmental degradation in the destination areas (Honey, 1999; 2008; Stronza, 2001; 2007). For example, Rosenberg (1988 cited in Stronza, 2001: 269) found that in a small mountain village in France tourism had contributed to the decline of subsistence agriculture. Although not necessarily disruptive initially, the abandonment of subsistence cultivation became problematic when the influx of tourists slowed down and people found themselves with no means of earning a livelihood. Further, the critics asserted that far from being an industry with low start-up costs, tourism required heavy and expensive infrastructural outlays such as roads, electricity, and piped water (Crick, 1994). Most of this infrastructure is often situated in the environs around the main tourist resorts which are not accessible to a large majority of the locals. This ultimately contributes to increased socio-economic stratification and conflict in the host communities in the destination countries (Stronza, 2001; 2007) where the locals receive only token benefits

often through underpaid labour whereas the local elites using their political influence gain more (Crick, 1989: 317). As Fanon (1974: 14) succinctly points out,

The national bourgeoisie organises centres of rest and relaxation and pleasure resorts to meet the wishes of the western bourgeoisie, such activities are given the name of tourism, and for the occasion will be built up as a national industry ... The middle class will have nothing better to do than to take on the role of manager for western enterprises, and will in practice set up its country as the brothel of Europe".

From the foregoing critiques of the political economy approach to tourism in developing countries, it becomes abundantly clear that tourism-induced changes are not always beneficial to the local communities in destination countries. However, adherents of the industry have argued that the negative effects are 'normal' pains of any growing economy and that, if well managed, tourism could be an important asset for sustainable development in the host countries (Chambers, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002; Mowforth & Munt, 2008). Cleverdon (1979) has argued that for host countries to maximise tourism's economic benefits while at the same time minimising the undesirable impacts, governments must assume greater roles in policy planning, involve host communities in tourism development and control over the tourist industries at the local level. Paradoxically, these propositions assume that local communities need to be taught not only what their needs and interests are but also how they should enter the economy. As de Kadt (1979b: 26-26) states,

For community interests to be taken into account in tourism development, it is essential that those interests be articulated from the time potential projects are identified. That usually means that somehow local people have to be helped to the issues from their point of view, by a process of education and increasing self-awareness...The mass of local community members would then need to be mobilised in active defence of their interests as they had come to see.

Notwithstanding the numerous and varied critiques of the 1970s and 1980s, the decade of the 1990s saw renewed optimism in tourism as a 'catalyst for economic growth that governments would like to attain to meet development imperatives' (Scheyvens, 2007; Visser, 2006; World Bank, 2006). The renewed interest in tourism coincided with the "development industry's global focus on poverty alleviation, as epitomized by the Millennium Development Goals. The poverty alleviation thrust is founded on a consensus among donors that globalization offers a path out of poverty" (Scheyvens and Momsen, 2008:361). Many countries in Africa are increasingly becoming more and more interested in tourism as a source of economic diversification and expansion. Africa is a major recipient of international donor support in tourism (Mitchell & Ashley (2006); and approximately 34% of the World Bank's tourism-related lending (World Bank, 2006a). The World Bank (2006: 2) asserts that tourism offers an opportunity to unleash

shared growth in Africa, not least “because African destinations are growing their capacity to invest and participate in tourism supply chains”. There is, in contemporary times, widespread acknowledgement that given an appropriate policy environment, tourism can contribute effectively to economic and social development, including poverty alleviation (Mitchell & Ashley, 2006b; Rogerson, 2006; World Bank, 2006; Scheyvens, 2007). This optimism is, however, tempered with caution. In the next section I review the anthropological literature on the socio-cultural effects of tourism.

2. I. 2 Tourism and Socio-Cultural Change

The pioneering works in the anthropological study of tourism were deeply rooted in earlier research on culture contact and cultural change (Nash and Smith, 1991). Quintessentially, tourism studies in anthropology were “often serendipitous offshoots from other research on acculturation” (Nunez, 1989: 207). Undeniably, intercultural contact between tourists and hosts and the changes that result from such interactions or ‘acculturation’, has been a universal theme in the anthropological study of tourism (Nash, 1996; Stronza, 2008). Anthropologists have often described tourism as a “laboratory situation” for testing how acculturation occurs when urban tourists representing ‘donor’ cultures interact with host populations in ‘recipient’ cultures (Nunez, 1963: 347). Even though in contemporary times only a few anthropologists use the term ‘acculturation’ because it signifies a narrow and unilineal view of change, acculturation is what many anthropologists fear would happen to indigenous peoples in destination areas with the reach of global tourism in their communities (Erisman, 1983; Boissevain, 1996; Stronza, 2008). Basically, acculturation refers to “a process of borrowing of one or some elements of culture which takes place as a result of contact between different societies” (Burns, 1999:104).

As stated in the previous section, in much of the earlier academic literature tourism was depicted as something that would be used to solve the myriad of economic problems in many developing countries (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Okech, 2008). However, concerns were soon raised about the industry’s induced negative socio-cultural and environmental effects in destination areas. As Erisman (1983: 339) fittingly noted, “beyond economics lies deeper and generally unarticulated fear that the industry’s impact is even more pervasive and insidious, that it will somehow shape and affect in adverse ways the entire fabric [of the host] society”. No wonder that much of the anthropological analysis of tourism in the 1970s and 1980s revolved around the issue of cultural commoditisation and its effects on native and host communities in destination areas (Boissevain,

1996). Cultural commoditisation refers to the process through which destination cultures, arts, crafts, ceremonies and rituals are abbreviated and made more colourful and more dramatic for exploitation as authentic tourist attractions or commodities sold for consumption by tourists (see Cohen, 1988; Greenwood, 1977; 1989).

One of the dominant voices in studies on cultural commoditisation in the 1970s and 1980s was Greenwood (1977; 1989). In his oft-cited study of *Alarde* ritual in Spain he described “how the festival in the Basque town of Fuenterrabia lost the cultural and symbolic meaning to the local people once it was opened to tourists and marketed like any other commodity” (Stronza, 2001:270). The Spanish government’s attempts to rearrange this nationalistic festival to be performed twice in front of paying tourists so upset the Basque townspeople that they nearly refused to go through it whilst some, as actors, demanded payment. Writing on the tragic consequences of commoditising the *Alarde*, Greenwood (1977: 131) rightly stated that:

The anthropological perspective enables us to understand why the commoditisation of local culture in the tourism industry is so rudimentarily destructive and why the sale of ‘culture by the pound’, as it were, needs to be examined by everyone involved in tourism.

While anthropologists, in their earlier writings acknowledged tourism’s contribution to development, often they argued the case for the negative side (Greenwood, 2004). They portrayed tourism as a bad thing, in fact, a “cancer” (Reid, 2003: 1) and “dynamic force homogenizing societies and commoditizing cultures across the globe” (Bossevain (1996: 11). Tourism can therefore be “envisioned as a form of ‘cultural prostitution’ whereby local people commodify themselves through staged performances and cheap trinkets, thus debasing their ‘authentic’ culture solely to gain cash” (Silverman, 2001: 106). In addition to the *cocacolonization* of native cultures (Nunez, 1989), tourism was also condemned for wreaking “havoc over the face of the social and cultural landscape” (Rossel, 1988: 1) and “for every value transformation under the sun” (Crick, 1989: 308).

The massive influx of rich tourists displaying their material wealth in front of poverty stricken hosts, and penetration of foreign goods and ideas into rural host destinations where local residents try to copy the lifestyles of tourists is linked to the so-called ‘demonstration effect’ (Burns, 2004; Stronza, 2001). de Kadt (1979a: 65) has defined the demonstration effect to include:

... changes in attitudes, values, and behaviours which can result from merely observing tourists. The effect is most easily and frequently seen in the local patterns of consumption, which change to imitate those of the tourists.... a beach ball or a beach

towel, a lipstick or a pair of sunglasses represents a temptation and an invitation to taste the indiscreet, but as yet forbidden, charms of the consumer society.

Anthropological analyses of the 'demonstration effect' support the supposition that tourism was a major force for social and cultural decay (Nunez, 1989; Crick, 1989). The tourist gaze not only influences "the way hosts look, behave and feel" but also leads to a kind of "cultural dependency" where the locals derive economic benefits only by serving foreign interests (Stronza, 2001: 272). Turner and Ash (1975: 129) cynically articulate this relationship in the terminology of "host" and "guest", with the host held to be subordinate and at the mercy of the dominant guest. The guest represents "a form of cultural imperialism, an unending pursuit of fun, sun, and sex by the golden hordes of pleasure seekers who are damaging local cultures and polluting the world in their quest".

Research in Africa confirms that tourism can and does affect native cultures in negative ways. For example, in her study in the island nation of Zanzibar, Gössling (2002) revealed that a breakdown of traditional kinship ties and wasteful use of natural resources occurred when the local people adopted tourist's consumptive lifestyles. A study in the Kenyan coast revealed that local Muslims were reluctant to participate in tourism because they loathed alcoholism, public displays of affection, and wearing of skimpy clothing all of which were habitually practised by Western tourists (Sindiga, 1996b). Mansperger (1995) also found that tourism in Kenya encourages locals to indulge in objectionable behaviours such as prostitution and begging. Jamieson's (1999) study in the Kenyan coastal city of Mombasa found that tourism was responsible for ethnic conflicts amongst local people who competed for particular identities preferred by tourists

Strongly linked to cultural commoditisation is the construction and presentation of native peoples and landscapes as the 'Other' to be consumed by tourists (Urry, 1990; Silverman, 2001; Okech, 2008). The emphasis on distinctive cultural identities and experiences to meet Western tourists' demand for authenticity has, to large extent, contributed to the 'Othering' or rather commoditisation of native cultures (Mowforth & Munt, 1998: 69). In Africa, the "Othering" of the African people as exotic or a spectacle different and removed from the modern/civilised society dates back to the colonial period (Wels, 2002). Keim (2002) and Akama (1999a) suggest that tourism has contributed to the desire to preserve and sustain the West's stereotypical image of Africa not only as a "dark" continent" but also a big jungle where primitive peoples and wild animals coexist harmoniously. Thus, when international tourists visit the continent they

expect the moment they step down at the airport to hear the sound of drums and to see natives rhythmically dancing thus, representing the authentic and quintessential Africa (Akama, 1999b). This construction and classification of Africans as something 'Other' continues to this day.

The search for the exotic and the 'Other' by tourists has been described by MacCannell (1973) as a 'quest for authenticity'. Whilst the quest for authenticity is what attracts tourists to a particular destination, rituals and other cultural products are often modified to fit into their time frames and to meet the needs of the tourism market (MacCannell, 1989). The best example of this is the Crocodile ritual performances of the Iatmul people of Papua New Guinea. Silverman (2001) found that they had been transformed as a result of tourist demand from a three day annual event to a less than 45 minutes drama performed upon the arrival of a cruise ship. Similarly, Gaper's (1981 cited in Stronza, 2001: 272) found that local people in southern Austria were wearing traditional costumes during the tourist season instead of their usual European outfits. Though normally brown, black and white, the costumes were adjusted and a bright red vest added because red looked better and more attractive to tourists. Tourists are thus presented with a staged authenticity (Greenwood, 1989; Dales and Mail, 2001). As Urry (1990:7) observes,

Isolated from the host environment and the local people, the mass tourist travels in guided groups and finds pleasure in unauthentic contrived attractions, gullibly enjoying the 'pseudo-events' and disregarding the 'real' world outside. As a result tourist entrepreneurs and the indigenous populations are induced to produce evermore extravagant displays for the gullible observer who is thereby further removed from the local people.

Borrowing from Goffman's (1959) seminal theories, MacCannell (1973; 1976; 1989) espouses the concept of 'front' and 'back' regions to demonstrate how staged authenticity works. According to MacCannell (1973) the 'front' region refers to the meeting ground for hosts and guests while the 'back' is the place where local people retire to continue with their everyday customary ways of life and routine social interactions. Culture in the front is staged and in the back is real or authentic. Thus, while tourists strive to enter the back regions to experience the authentic, that is, to stare and photograph the natives in their natural state, they are duped to believe that they are moving towards that direction (Glasson et al., 1995). What tourists consider being access into the back region is actually entry into a front region which is often pre-arranged for tourist visits. The local people in most tourism destinations "understand with little ambiguity that tourists travel to their area precisely to see a localised culture". Thus, they "creatively provide information, and design events to cater for tourist needs" (Dahles & Meijl, 2001: 54). By keeping

tourists' focus in the 'front region', local inhabitants are able to "deflect the tourist gaze from private space and activities" in the 'back regions' (Boissevain, 1996: 21) thus shielding their cultures from the potentially harmful effects of tourism.

It is quite clear from the foregoing discussion that cultural commoditisation along with the demonstration effect and construction of native peoples and landscape as the Other to be consumed by tourists and the loss of authenticity are some of the changes tourism engenders in destination areas (Glasson et al., 1995). Nonetheless, a one-sided conclusion of tourism's impact on the 'host' society is unwarranted because tourism has both positive and negative impacts (see for example, Burns, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). As Crick (1994: 8) observes, "For every case where tourism could be shown to reinvigorate craft industries, there was another where crafts declined; for every case where tourist demand stimulated local agriculture, there was another where agriculture suffered, et cetera". Consequently, the earlier criticisms were too extreme as all the negative changes in destination areas cannot convincingly be attributed to tourism alone (Scheyvens, 2002; Stronza, 2001). Tourism is only a convenient scapegoat as negative changes in destination areas would most likely occur even in the absence of the tourist penetration. It must therefore be stressed that tourism is just one of a "whole host of the modern forces of change at work in the less developed regions of the world including mass media, population increase, urbanization, modern schooling, and migration" (Boissevain, 1977: 524).

In her book, *Tourism for Development: Empowering Communities*, Scheyvens (2002:3) has argued that "outright condemnation of tourism in the Third World seems inappropriate" as tourism can also bring definite benefits and "good change". This view has been vindicated in fresh research which re-examines old fieldwork sites. For instance, Valene Smith's (1992), in the preface of the revised edition of her book, *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, admits that research undertaken prior to the second edition reveals that tourism is *not* a major cause of change in most tourist destinations. Most contributors in the second edition have presented a more balanced view of the socio-cultural and economic effects of tourism. Greenwood (2004:102), for example, states that he wrote the article on *Alarde* out of concern and anger, and that today he finds himself troubled by his judgments, because the way they were "researched and delivered" was "professionally self-serving". Cohen's (1992) has also amended his earlier completely negative position about tourism's impact on upland Thai villages to a more positive one. He further argues that in the near future tourism is unlikely to have a negative

impact on these people. Tourism should not therefore, be assumed to have a destructive impact always.

Although a negative view on tourism's impact on host communities informed the work of many earlier anthropological analyses, recent case studies reveal that local people in destination areas are not powerless victims of tourism (Chambers, 1999; Dahles & Veijl, 2001; Scheyvens, 2002). Host communities have been shown to have a good deal of control not only over "the kind of tourists they receive and the form of tourism practised" (Nash, 1981: 462) but also that enables them to creatively turn "impacts" into economic and cultural opportunities (Dahles & Meijl, 2001:54). For example, Adams (1995) has also shown how the Torajan people of Indonesia, as 'ingenious cultural politicians and active strategists', have manipulated both their exposure to tourists and tourism to achieve their own ends. Silverman (2001: 105) also foregrounds the abilities of the Iatmul of Papua New Guinea "to act with intention and strategy", and to exercise creativity in the context of their interaction with tourists.

However, notably absent is "attention to local voices of the human beings caught up in tourism development" (Crick, 1994: 13). As Dann et al. (1988: 22) have appropriately observed: host communities are "shadowy figures" about whose viewpoint we know relatively little. The economic frameworks that have been applied thus far are grossly inadequate because they normally do not ask questions about how host communities perceive tourism, what sense they make of the everyday changes going on around them, and how they understand the behaviour of tourists. Most analyses assume that local people have little or no agency to mediate and structure the terms of their involvement in tourism development (Bruner, 1995; Dahles & Meijl, 2001; Urry, 1990). This study however argues that the Maasai are continuously bargaining the margins of their involvement in tourism development. In trying to find out the terms of Maasai involvement in tourism development and to comprehend the resultant political and power struggles for control over tourism, benefits and landscapes resources, we may have a clear image of who among the Maasai of Amboseli gets what, how and when from tourism. The next section presents political ecology, the theoretical framework used to guide this study.

2.2 Political Ecology

Based on the literature on conservation, tourism and the Maasai cited in Chapter I, and the anthropological theories of tourism in the foregoing section of this chapter, I have chosen

political ecology as an appropriate theoretical and conceptual framework for this research. Political ecology is a diverse interdisciplinary framework that combines “the concerns of a broadly defined political economy and ecology” and is predominantly used in analysing the complex interactions between people and their environment particularly those associated with economic development in the Third World (Blaikie & Brookfield, 1987:17; Bryant, 1992; Byrant & Bailey, 1997; Walker, 2005). Political ecology is especially a powerful framework for explaining “the ideologies that direct conservation, and influence which social actors benefit and which are disadvantaged, international interests that promote particular patterns of natural resource use, and the role of the state in determining and implementing policies that favour interests of certain actors over those of others” (Stonich, 1998 cited in Campbell, 2007:314-315). Typically, political ecology includes analysis of power relations among the different actors that are involved in natural resource management (Stonich, 2000; Watts, 2000). In other words, a political ecology framework provides useful insights for understanding the environmental challenges that people face, the social and cultural factors that shape human responses to environment concerns, and the relationship to political and economic forces operating at the local, regional, national and global scales (Paulson et al., 2003; Campbell, 2007).

2.2.1 Origins of Political Ecology

The origins of political ecology can be traced back to the early 1970s, when anthropologist Eric Wolf (1972) coined the phrase ‘political ecology’ in a critique of ecological anthropology and cultural ecology (see for example Stonich, 1998; 2000; Walker, 2006). According to Jones & Carswell (2004: 204) political ecology “developed from a more narrow perspective offered by cultural ecologists, who paid little attention to the political and social context of environmental changes”. In other words, political ecology has, to some extent, developed as a critique of cultural ecology (Bryant, 1992). Political ecology however did not evolve as a field of study until the mid-1980s when a distinct research agenda emerged from a resurgent Marxian interpretation of political economy (Bryant, 1997; Campbell et al., 2008).

Although widely used by physical and natural scientists, the development of “political ecology” as a discipline of scientific study is closely linked to the works of geographers Blaikie and Brookfield (1987). Borrowing from Wallenstein’s world systems theory, political ecology has embodied a more radical approach that, unlike earlier studies, by politicizing environmental issues and phenomena as well as by linking issues such as “degradation and marginalisation, environmental

conflict, conservation and control, environmental identity and social movement” to the workings of the state and the global capitalist economy (Robbins, 2004:14). Thus, political ecology can be viewed from the standpoint of the First and the Third Worlds.

2.2.2 Tenets of Political Ecology

Bryant (1992) has identified three tenets in political ecology. The first encompasses the “contextual sources of environmental change” such as state policies, bilateral relations between countries, and worldwide capitalism. The second focuses on location-specific conflicts over environmental resources and opportunities arising from protected areas and tourism development. The third touches on the “political ramifications of environmental change” and its effects on the decisions of local resource users as well as socio-economic and political relationships that lead to livelihood struggles (Adams & Hutton, 2008). The struggles between different groups of users for access to and control over natural resources often lead to a politicized environment in which those without power in society are marginalized from participating fully in the decision-making processes about environmental outcomes that affect their livelihoods (see also Watts, 2000; Zimmerer & Basset, 2003; 2006a&b). Blaikie (1998:14) describes this scenario as “the battle of representation” where the environment becomes an arena of conflict between the various actors who seek to satisfy their needs.

For a country such as Kenya, and pastoralist communities such as the Maasai, the natural environment provides critical resources such as grazing for their livestock, medicine, fuel wood, and building materials essential for their day-to-day existence. However, for the government and conservationists these environmental resources are set aside for use as tourist attractions so as to earn foreign exchange for the country and revenues for investors (Akama et al. 1996; Charnley, 2005; Southgate, 2006). Top-down government conservation policies, and by extension tourism, have resulted in the exclusion of Maasai pastoralists from important livelihood resources such as water and pasture within the protected areas which they once accessed freely and also have opened up challenges of conflict with animals from the park (Wilshusen, 2003; Ondicho, 2005, 2006; Neumann, 2005). Thus, “parks and biodiversity conservation involve questions that are at the very core of political ecology such as how the relationship between nature and society is defined and conceptualized, how access to land and natural resources is controlled, and how environmental costs and benefits are distributed?” (Neumann, 2005: 120). The present study seeks to explore such issues with respect to on-going biodiversity conservation in Amboseli and

interactions among various actors and stakeholders involved in natural resource management and tourism development and their effects on community power and political relations among the Maasai.

Political ecology has been used in this study to understand “how natural, economic, and political forces interact to mediate social and environmental change” (Bryant, 1992: 12) and how such changes affect social and economic groups within the same community differently. Political ecology basically presents an integrated causal chain of explanations focusing on environmental change and politics (Neumann, 2005; Adams & Hutton, 2008). Although recent studies do not adopt the chain of explanations, the focus of empirical analysis in a political ecological framework is on external political economic factors such as government policies, practices and position in the international political economy that directly or indirectly leads to environmental change (see for example Stonich, 2000; Robbins, 2004; Campbell; 2007). Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between nature and society, and within classes and groups within society itself (Byrant, 1997:3). Thus, ecological efficacy of participatory approaches to biodiversity protection cannot be understood without consideration of the “politics that produce and are produced by it” or rather the political and economic structures and institutions within which such approaches are embedded (Neumann, 2005: 120). Political ecology therefore aims at assessing the implications of human transformation of natural ecosystems in a politicized environment.

2.2.3 Themes and Approaches in Political Ecology

From the political ecology literature three main themes have been isolated to help guide this study. The first theme is drawn from the political economy. Within the political economy approach society is viewed in terms of the world capitalist system. Politically, local power structures derive their power vertically from macro structures of the prevalent international order. This view does not negate local social and cultural dynamics as critical factors influencing change. Instead, it merely recognizes the importance of external political economic conditions in influencing local conditions. As stated earlier these systems of social inequality are viewed as interwoven with environmental issues. Related to this theme, then, is the concern for considering the dynamic relationships between macro- and micro-level variables. Following some political ecological studies (see for example, Gössling, 2003; Neumann, 2005; Stonich, 2000; Zimmerer,

2006a&b) this dissertation examines how political economy issues of elite and foreign domination, class and social stratification impact on political control over the distribution of tourism benefits.

The second theme relates to the ideological critique of the adverse and rarely considered costs of progress which questions who gains in the development process and at what social and environmental costs (Watts, 2000; Neumann, 2003; Turner, 2004). In line with this critique is a central concern with social and environmental crises which are interrelated and occurring within a context of competition over unequal access to critical resources. The competition for access to and use of natural resources especially land, water and pasture is central to understanding how Maasai involvement in tourism development has impacted their society. The tourist industry is deeply entrenched in state, regional and local political ecologies, thus it does not operate in isolation.

The third theme concerns the dialectic relationship between ecology and society. Tourism contributes directly or indirectly to the preservation of ecosystems in protected areas. Protected areas such as game reserves and national parks are important tourist attractions that generate substantial revenue through admission fees, donations and taxes for the government (Akama, 2003; Rutten, 2004). However, the establishment of protected areas for tourism has often displaced agriculture, pastoralism and other traditional economic activities (Neumann, 2005). In other words, local resource use and practices are driven by forces external to the community. Denied access to natural resources within these protected areas, the Maasai have responded by establishing their own tourism enterprises in order to harness the tourist dollar (Ritsma & Ongaro, 2000; Charnley, 2005). This participation has however engendered various types of conflicts over access to natural resources. The conflicts arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development are also central to this study.

2.2.4 Actor-Oriented Political Ecology

The focus of actor-oriented political ecology is on interests, motivations and power of various actors in shaping patterns of resource access and control. The struggle for access and control over resources is often tied to local political processes (actor-centred politics). Whilst some works emphasise resource control strategies used by the state and capitalist interests (see for example, Stonich, 1993, 1998, 2000; Gössling, 2003), others look more closely at internal community

struggles (Neumann, 2005). Bryant and Bailey (1987) have taken up these debates in their action-centred approach to Third World natural resource politics. The action-centred approach characterises the relationship between place-based and non place-based-actors ranging from the state to communities to multi-lateral and bilateral donors to regional development banks as a means of contextually mapping patterns of resource use and control (Gössling, 2003). As Bryant (1997:10) observes,

At the heart of political ecology reading of the Third World's environmental problems is the idea that the relationship between actors (i.e. states, non-governmental organisations, farmers) and the links between actors and the physical environment are conditioned by power relations.

Third World political ecologists lay more emphasis on explaining the consequences of unequal power relations in human-environmental interactions. These unequal power relations determine who becomes beneficiary or loser of environmental change (Bryant & Bailey, 1997; Robbins, 2004; Campbell, 2007). The emphasis is on understanding the opportunities, constraints, motivations and deterrents that sway the decisions of both individual and group actors to participate in tourism. "The politics of global biodiversity conservation are driven by the concerns of the dominant group of actors: the state, international organisations and institutions and society" (Neumann, 2005: 120). Through the actor-oriented approach, political ecologists are able to investigate the different interests which have been sources of resource and tourism-related conflicts. Turner (2004: 864) argues that, "conflicts can shed light on the divergent interest, powers, and vulnerabilities of different social groups'.

Bryant and Bailey (1997: 39) question the understanding of power that encompasses the material and non-material considerations as well as the apparent fluidity of power itself, which include the diverse ways and forms in which actors seek to exercise control over the physical environment and in which weaker ones are able to resist powerful actors. Third World political ecologists try to explore the unequal power relations of actors in a politicized environment by looking at ways in which actors interact in relation to the physical environment (Gössling, 2003; Walker, 2005; Campbell, 2007). For example, international tourism firms are vastly more powerful than community-based tourism enterprises because they have capital and technical expertise. Because of their potential to generate revenue for national governments, multinational corporations often not only exert great influence on governments but also exert control over natural resources critical for tourism development (Gössling, 2003; Drumm & Moore, 2005). Through concessions and purchasing or leasing land they use their superior economic power to capitalize on tourism

resources (attractions) thereby excluding traditional community users (Neumann, 2005; Zimmerer & Basset, 2003). They can also exert control over the flow of tourists by convincing a given government to develop infrastructure such as roads that benefit areas of their proposed investment. Wildlife-based tourism operators can also exert control over conservation and tourism development policy decisions.

In the above example, the corporation requires considerable collusion from the state, which in turn gives power to the leading groups/classes to reinforce existing economic inequalities and marginalisation (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). The power of the state is often expressed through state natural resource bureaucracies such as Wildlife Conservation Departments, which are often subject to manipulation by the political and economic elite. Not only are rural communities facing off with government agencies, business interests and NGOs, but also within communities there are also significant differences in interests, perspectives and power that need to be explored. There are other actors who might resist such expressions of power, including International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and members of the local communities. These actors also can try to exert some level of control over access and benefits. This is precisely the point of the actor-oriented approach: that the environmental effects of conflict and cooperation between differently powered actors is a function of the interplay between those actors pursuing their own interests. While fewer tourism studies have explicitly utilised political ecology, the analysis of international tourism from a political economy perspective has been commonplace (see Gössling, 2003; Stonich, 1998).

The diverse and conflicting interests of the different actors call for analysis of the wider context in which they bargain or make trade-offs in conflict negotiations and resolution. It is therefore important to recognize that unequal power relations, and so politics, also exist at the local level. As Watts (2000: 267) points out, “communities are internally differentiated in complex political, social, and economic ways”, which means, “We need to be sensitive to the internal political forms of resource use or conservation”. This dissertation argues that community-based tourism involves direct and indirect negotiation amongst multiple place-based and non-place-based actors (stakeholders), who have unequal economic, political and cultural power. There is often a struggle and conflicting interests between and within place-based stakeholders shaped by exogenous factors and local politics. A government or international donor project, for example, represents an opportunity to capture and manipulate additional power resources locally.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on the anthropology of tourism: the political economy of tourism, and socio-cultural change. It has shown that in spite of their initial unwillingness to study tourism, anthropologists have recently embraced it not only as a respectable field of academic inquiry but also as one that deals with real-world issues in many destination areas in the developing world that are central to anthropology. While destination communities view tourism as a catalyst for development and socio-cultural change, in tourist-generating countries it is often viewed not only as a form of escape from the structured life of the industrialised world but also as a search for authentic experiences. In this study, tourism will be used as a lens through which political economy, socio-cultural change and development, and natural resource management issues will be explored.

The chapter has also presented political ecology as the framework that will guide this research. The framework is used to examine the changing power relations between various stakeholders. Power relations refer to those relations between people which revolve around issues of differing values and uses, and levels of access and control over critical resources. Political ecology questions how these power relations change over time. By documenting the political, economic, socio-cultural and environmental dynamics which structure these relationships, this approach allows recognition of the longer term and lesser quantifiable impacts of the tourism development process. Chapter 3 explores the development, structure and role of tourism in the Kenyan economy in order to provide the context for understanding the present study.

Chapter 3: Tourism in Kenya: Historical and Contemporary Contexts

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a general introductory overview of Kenya's tourism industry to act as a contextual background for the present study. To appreciate Maasai involvement in the tourism industry one needs some knowledge of the organisation of Kenya's tourism industry and complex arrangement of services both at the national and local levels. Towards this end, I provide an overview of the evolution of Kenya's tourism industry during the colonial period in the first section and in the second section, a slightly more detailed description of tourism development after independence. The third section describes the country's tourism resources and in the fourth section, I discuss the organisational structure of Kenya's tourism industry. In the fifth section the importance of tourism in Kenya's economy is discussed and a brief summary of the key emerging issues is presented in the sixth section.

3.1 Historical Antecedents

Tourism in Kenya dates back to pre-colonial days and history has it recorded that as early as the 10th century AD, visitors from the Orient, Middle East, and Europe had started coming to the country (Akama, 1996; Ondicho, 2000a). Although many of these visitors were businessmen, their visits also included some form of tourism. However, according to Crompton (cited in Jommo, 1987: 13) tourism in Kenya was instituted during the British colonial period (1895 – 1963) as a 'European hedonocracy', that is, a leisure oriented activity for which only Europeans were equipped culturally, economically, and socially to take part in, and around which they reserved for themselves the right to undertake entrepreneurial activity (see also Akama, 1999). The tourism economy in Africa was basically developed by "colonialists for colonialists" (Harrison 2000: 37 cited in Rogerson, 2007: 361). Illustratively, the birth of tourism in Kenya was closely linked to the activities of resident colonial settlers and European settler holidaymakers from East Africa, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and prospective settlers from South Africa resident in Africa (Jommo, 1987; Ondicho, 2000b).

Starting from 1920 when Kenya was formally declared a British Colony and subsequent improvement of the security situation, overseas visitors started streaming into the country for big-

game expeditions and in search of solitude at the warm and idyllic coastal beaches. Inbound visitors during this time were high ranking government officials, politicians, rich and aristocratic Americans and Europeans, who could afford the time and money for pleasure travel (Cameron, 1990; Irandu, 2004). Notable aristocratic visitors included: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Ernest Hemingway, and US President Theodore Roosevelt, who shot, preserved and shipped to America more than 3000 species of African game that he killed during his one year visit to East Africa (Akama, 1999b; Irandu, 2004; Honey, 2008). These voyages were domestically referred to by the Kiswahili word 'safari', thus bestowing to the tourism lexicon a new vocabulary. These early travellers upon their return home provided detailed stories in travelogues and adventure books of their hunting exploits, something which helped raise curiosity amongst people in the West, some of whom came as tourists (Ouma, 1970; Cameron, 1990; Akama, 1999b).

Increased pressure on the government in the 1940s from an emergent international conservationist lobby to curb further wildlife losses through hunting and poaching resulted in the enactment of a National Park's Ordinance in 1945. This is the piece of legislation that paved the way for the creation of the first wildlife protected areas (parks and reserves) in the country. Some of the wildlife protected areas created during the colonial period include: Nairobi National Park in 1946; Tsavo National Park in 1948, and the Aberdare National Park in 1950 (Irandu, 2004; Sindiga, 1999; Honey, 2008). The composition and shape of Kenya's tourist product and conservation policy were greatly influenced by this Ordinance (Ondicho, 2000b). This was followed by the setting up in 1948 of the East African Tourist Travel Association (EATTA) to market and promote tourism in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (Ouma, 1970; Jommo, 1987). This trilateral cooperation marked the beginning of coordinated tourism development and promotion by the public (government) and private sectors. However, EATTA was disbanded in 1963 because of conflicts over unequal distribution of tour agencies, overseas marketing resources, hospitality, and transport facilities in the member states. Government officials in Tanzania and Uganda were particularly unhappy with the fact that Kenya was more publicised and received a bigger share of tourism arrivals and revenues because the majority of EATTA's members were based in Nairobi (Jommo, 1987; Ondicho, 2000a).

The development of a modern mass tourism industry in Kenya, however, was hampered by lack of facilities, infrastructure, planning and marketing by the government. This bleak situation changed in the 1950s when the the colonial government increasingly started to view the tourism industry as an alternative form of enterprise to supplement the then ailing agricultural industry in

generating the much-needed foreign exchange and employment opportunities as well as to maintain the reputation of the country as an attractive investment location (Sindiga, 199b; Ondicho, 2000a). As Rajotte (1980:13) states,

The colonial administration was quick to perceive the economic potential of tourism. Here was a potentially rapid growth export sector that would both meet the increasing consumer demand in the metropolitan country and at the same time bring foreign exchange that would be used to purchase British manufactured goods.

The foundations for the development of a modern mass tourism industry were laid in 1958 with the creation of the Ministry of Tourism, Forests and Wildlife to formulate and promulgate tourism policy (Sindiga, 1999a and b). The government subsequently started to enact policies and to build infrastructure such as roads and airfields to support tourism development. Despite the momentum that might have been provided to the tourism industry up till the end of 1950s by the government, advances in transport technology especially the jet aircraft, the completion of the Kenya-Uganda Railway which greatly improved internal cross-border travel between the three East African countries, and the gradual development of the hospitality industry, tourism development in Kenya was greatly hampered by the struggle for independence (Ondicho, 2000a; Turner, 2010). The Mau Mau armed rebellion, which led the colonial administration to declare a state of emergency between October 1952 and January 1960, to a great extent dissuaded potential tourists from visiting Kenya. Thus, the colonial period could therefore be viewed as the formative days for Kenya's tourism industry.

3.2 Tourism Development after Independence

Kenya's first post-independence government, anxious to divest itself of its colonial liability, was quick to recognize the enormous potential of the nascent tourism industry. With no major mining projects in which the state could invest and without a dynamic private sector to secure investments, the government realised that the country already had an existing tourist 'commodity' which could be exploited to create jobs, attract investments and earn foreign exchange (Akama, 2002; Ondicho, 2000a). That 'commodity' was the country's unique and magnificent wildlife resources and glittering coastal beaches. Subsequently, the government optimistically picked up tourism as an alternative strategy for economic development. Towards this end, the government undertook to upgrade the existing infrastructure and superstructure as well as invest in new hospitality facilities, to promulgate policies to encourage both local and foreign investments in

the sector, to create additional national parks and game reserves, and to market Kenya internationally as a tourist destination (Yeager & Miller, 1994).

To set the tone for Kenya's future tourism policy, the sector was incorporated into the country's first National Development Plan⁷ (NDP) 1965-1970. Tourism has, ever since, featured prominently in all subsequent NDPs and other policy documents especially in the annual Economic Survey report. Tourism in Kenya was provided further significant impetus in 1968 with the creation of a ministry responsible for Tourism and Wildlife to coordinate tourism policy planning and to regulate public and private sector involvement in the sector (Kareithi, 2003). These and other policy initiatives pointed to the pivotal role the government was going to play in spearheading tourism development. It has arguably been stated that the first post-independence government started on a comprehensive and well-conceptualized tourism policy. However, most of the policies developed have never been implemented (Ikiara, 2001). Despite shortcomings in implementation, Kenya's tourism policy has proved to be crucial for the rapid growth of the industry in the post-independence era.

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s the number of inbound tourists to Kenya increased dramatically (Ikiara, 2001; Ondicho, 2000a). The number of tourist arrivals increased on an average annual growth rate of 10 per cent from 73,400 in 1965 to 676,900 in 1988. The main factor that contributed to the massive expansion growth of tourism between the 1970s and 1980s was political stability, which not only encouraged transnational corporations to make big investments in the tourism industry but also encouraged many tourists to visit the country (Akama, 2002). However, the decade of 1990s unfolding Kenya's hitherto well developed and flourishing tourism industry started to experience troubled times. Trouble started around 1991-1992 when the sector recorded a big slump in the number of tourist arrivals. The sector recovered quickly and attained its peak in 1994 when tourist arrivals topped the 1 million mark. However, yet again in 1995 the industry experienced another slump that lasted until 1999 when the sector started a slow recovery process.

Analysts have so far not been able to single out the causes of tourism and tourist fluctuations in the 1990s. However, some perceptive observers have suggested several factors as the possible causes of the industry's mixed fortunes. These include: the Gulf War in 1991 and politically

⁷ The NDP is the country's main planning document that sets out the broad development policy objectives for the whole country. The NDP traditionally covers a planning horizon of five years.

instigated ethnic violence in the early 1990s that surrounded the events leading to the adoption of multiparty politics, which resulted in several Western countries to issuing travel advisories against Kenya (Yeager and Miller, 1994). Accompanying this was increased competition from other emerging tourist destinations (especially post-apartheid South Africa), insecurity, undiversified tourism products and markets, declining standards mainly in the Hotel industry, and poor and inadequate infrastructure (Kareithi, 2003; Ondicho, 2000a & 2003). Other factors include: negative publicity, crumbling infrastructure, inadequate marketing, declining wildlife populations, poor service, the beach boy problem, poor implementation of policies, and weak policy conception and formulation (Ikiara, 2001; Ondicho, 2003).

In an attempt to regain the sector's lost glory and transform the country into a major tourist destination, a 15-year National Tourism Development Master Plan (NTDMP) for the period 1995-2010 was prepared with financial and technical assistance from the Government of Japan through the Japan International Development Agency (JICA) (Kenya, 1995). The country was divided into eight tourism regions⁸ each with its own tourism development plan derived from the National Master Plan. The Plan emphasised the need to diversify the country's tourism product and to open up new avenues such as adventure tourism, cultural tourism, conference tourism and sporting tourism such as golfing, ecotourism safaris, the Safari Rally, and Cruise shipping among others. Community participation in tourism development was also stressed as one way of encouraging pastoralist communities, especially the Maasai, to adopt wildlife conservation within their communally owned lands. Efforts are also being made to use the country's highly successful athletes to promote Kenya's image as a tourist destination (The People Daily, January, 14, 2000:19).

The Plan's implementation, however, faces a number of challenges. The first challenge is the human resource capacity required to execute this grandiose tourism development plan in an integrated fashion, with a variety of public and private sector stakeholders at the national, regional and local levels. The second challenge lies in the funding of the plan with regard to basic infrastructure, tourism amenities and facilities, products/attractions, marketing and promotion as well as delivery of quality tourism services. The third challenge is with regard to air transportation access into Kenya from overseas markets. Airfares to Kenya are rather high while

⁸ The eight tourism regions are: Central Tourism Region, Western Tourism Region, Coastal Tourism Region, Maasailand Tourism Region, Turkana Tourism Region, Northern Tourism Region, Tana Basin Tourism Region, and Eastern Tourism Region.

capacity and frequency of schedules are low. The last challenge centres on obtaining community support and active involvement in conservation and tourism development.

3.3 Recent Tourism Trends in Kenya

Kenya is currently the top fifth international tourist destination in Africa, a position it lost in the 1990s and regained in 2000. Aggressive marketing and promotion by the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) both in traditional and non-traditional source markets coupled with successful first multi-elections in 2002 which saw the opposition assume the reins of power. Additionally, rebranding of the country's premier national parks and the strengthening of the Tourist Police Unit which led to improved security and the subsequent reversal of negative travel advisory warnings by key source markets particularly the UK enhanced the recovery of tourism. Table I shows that international inbound tourist arrivals in Kenya increased at an annual average growth of about 9.8 per cent from slightly above 1,036, 500 in 2000 to 1,478.9 in 2005. In 2007, the country received 1,816.8 visitor arrivals which reflected a 12.5 percent increase from 1,600.6 in 2006. The sector however recorded a 40% slump in 2008 primarily due to the global economic recession and post election violence in late 2007 which resulted in tourists cancelling their bookings.

Table I Tourism Performance Indicators (2002-2008)

Arrivals	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Holiday	732.6	684	885.6	1,063.1	1,087.4	1,278.5	936.1
Business	86.6	182.1	246.4	206.1	226.2	242.2	109.1
Transit	163.3	219.1	162.2	79,800	137,16	130.9	62.00
Other	19	61	66.5	130,00	149,82	165.2	95.8
Total Arrivals	1001.3	1146.2	1360.7	1,479.0	1,600.6	1,816.8	1,203.3
Departures	1,013.4	1,023.0	1,320.2	1461.0	1578.4	1772.2	1143.1
Length of Stay (days)	8.5	8.4	13	12.3	12.1	11.9	10.4
Hotel Occupancy	42	33.6	37.8	41.3	45.5	-	-
Visits to parks and reserves	1784.1	1575.9	1820.2	2,132.9	2,363.7	2,495.1	1633.9
Visits to museums, snake parks and historical sites	603.1	686.3	699	765.2	594.1	598.6	493.2
International Conferences	115	126	145	186	209	234	232

Source: Kenya, (2009).

Table I - shows that a large percentage of international inbound tourists to Kenya arrive for holidays. Holiday tourists come to the country for pleasure and recreation. The most memorable activities for holiday makers include a wildlife safari and relaxation at the country's idyllic sandy coastal beaches. Kenya's tourist attractions are its excellent wildlife resource, delightful coastal

beaches, magnificent scenery, and admirable climate (Popovic, 1972; Kenya, 2007). Other tourist attractions include animal orphanages, museums, snake parks, historical sites and colourful tribal cultures (Ikiara, 2001; Irandu, 1995). The most preferred tourist attractions in Kenya are the Game Reserves and National Parks (See Table I). However, more than 70% of the overseas visitors come to Kenya primarily to view wildlife in their natural habitats. Despite the country's immense potential for wildlife tourism, most tourists visit only a few famous national parks and games reserves which include Nairobi, Amboseli, Tsavo, and Lake Nakuru national parks, and Maasai Mara national reserve (Akama, 2000). The other wildlife preserves are rarely visited due to inaccessibility and lack of tourist facilities (Kibara, 1994).

An increasing number of international tourists also visit Kenya for business purposes. This is explained as a ripple effect emanating from the strategic position of Nairobi, Kenya's capital city. Most international organisations including the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS - Habitat) and multinational corporations have selected Nairobi as their headquarters for the East African and sometimes African region. Many business enquiries and contracts are made from Nairobi. Additionally, the establishment of regional blocks such as the Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) have stimulated business travel to Kenya. There are also substantial numbers of tourists who visit Kenya when on transit to other destinations. Nairobi is a transport hub serviced by a number of commercial airlines. Many passengers destined to or from African countries will easily obtain connections in Nairobi to other parts of world, thus making it a destination of choice for many travellers on transit. Kenya is also increasingly becoming an important destination for conference tourism. The majority of the travellers originate from a small number of countries. The most important source of tourists visiting Kenya is Europe with Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland, France and the Scandinavian countries accounting for more than half of the total number of overseas visitors to Kenya every year (Kenya, 2009).

3.4 The Structure of Kenya's Tourism Industry

This section will present information on the organisational structure and key stakeholders of Kenya's tourism industry. To facilitate the discussion the stakeholders will be divided into two broad categories, that is, public and private sector organisations as discussed in sections that

follow, and may be direct providers of tourism facilities or services, support organisations, or development organisations.

3.4.I Public Sector

The Kenyan government plays a critical role in all aspects of tourism development including policy planning, supply of infrastructural facilities and setting up the guidelines within which the local industry operates. Within the national tourism organisational structure there are several public sector bodies which play important roles in tourism development. However, the penultimate authority rests with the Ministry of Tourism.

Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife: The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife⁹ - first established in 1968 - is the principal public sector institution responsible for formulating and implementing tourism policy, setting regulations and standards, building and maintaining infrastructure, developing lodges, hotels and other facilities, providing security to tourists, research and training, licensing the actors, and regulating the tourism industry in Kenya (Kareithi, 2003). The ministry's other core mandates include: developing tourism, supporting tourism sector activities, securing regional cooperation in tourism, seeking financial assistance from foreign governments and industry bodies for local tourism development, promotion and marketing of international and domestic tourism aimed at earning foreign exchange and generating employment (Ondicho, 2003; Ikiara, 2001). The MTW also oversees the operations of state corporations whose activities impinge on tourism. State corporations which play significant roles in tourism development include the Kenya Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), Kenya Utalii College, the Kenya Wildlife Services, The Kenya Tourism Board, and the National Museums of Kenya and country councils. Each will be discussed in turn below:

The Kenya Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC): Established in 1965, KTDC's mandates include: provision of soft loans to domestic investors in small-scale and medium sized hotel and lodging facilities and tour operating enterprises as well as curio shops, to provide technical support and advice to local investors in the tourism industry, monitoring the operation of hotels, lodges and other forms of accommodation, ensuring government direct investment in the commercial investments in the tourist industry, facilitating public and private sector

⁹ In 2008 the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife was split into two separate ministries. These gave birth to the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.

participation in the provision of tourist infrastructure and superstructure to boost tourism development, and to spearhead the indigenization policies in the tourism industry (Akama, 2002).

The KTDC was also tasked with the responsibility of managing the operations of the *Bomas* of Kenya, a fully government owned limited-liability company. The company owns a one-stop cultural complex which has a theatre with a seating capacity of 4,000 people. Here performers stage traditional ethnic music, song and dance representing the diversity of Kenya's ethnic composition for the enjoyment of both local and overseas visitors. The main tourist related activity undertaken at the *Bomas* of Kenya is to market the country's cultural resources such as ethnic dances, architecture, rituals, art and craft, with a view to providing entertainment and promoting Kenyan culture (Bruner and Kirshenblatt, 1994).

As the state's investment arm in the tourism sector, KTDC formed a subsidiary company, the African Tours and Hotels (ATH), to develop new accommodation and hospitality facilities and run tour-operating businesses. Apart from developing its own hotels and lodges through ATH, KTDC also acquired substantial equity holdings in Kenya's most prestigious hotels and lodges. These investments have enabled the government to control a sizeable share of the tourism market and to expand tourism infrastructure (Ikiara, 2001; Ondicho, 2003). For instance, in 1992 the government owned (wholly or partially) 32 hotel establishments with 5,760 beds, which accounted for close to 12.8% of all the hotels in the country (Kenya, 1995).

Most of KTDC's entrepreneurial ventures and those of its subsidiary companies particularly in the hotel industry have faced serious cash flow problems (Ondicho, 2003; Ikiara, 2001). As a consequence many of the hotels, especially those considered unprofitable, have been privatized. Most of KTDC's problems have roots, not so much with efficiency or lack of it, but in the government's policy of trying to turn the whole country into a tourist resort. Government attempts to spread the benefits of tourism to hitherto neglected areas, forced KTDC to invest in projects dictated by socio-political exigencies rather than commercial good sense (see Migot – Adholla et al. 1982). Some of the projects for which the state bore the entire burden of building were in zones that had little or no interest for tourists.

The Kenya Utalii College (KUC): The Kenya Utalii College (KUC) (commonly referred to as Utalii College, *utalii* being the Swahili word for tourism) was established in 1975 with the

mandate to train personnel for all cadres of the hotel and tourism sector (Sindiga, 1996, Summary, 1987). The costs of training Kenyan students are met from a training levy administered by the Catering Levy Trustees (CLT), which is 2% of the gross turnover of all hotels and restaurants. The main function of the CLT is to administer the fund and establish, equip, and control institutions that train staff for hotels and restaurants. The government's aim in establishing Utalii College was to train and produce indigenous personnel to replace expatriates in the local tourism industry and to start indigenously owned tourism enterprises (Mayaka & King, 2002). Indigenous control and ownership of small-scale tourism retailing enterprises is expected to contribute to the equitable sharing of tourism revenues and ultimately, the indigenisation of the economy.

Since its inception significant progress in human resources development for tourism, especially in catering and hotel operation, has been made. Besides full-time courses, the college also offers in-service courses for people already working in the industry. The college owns Utalii Hotel, which is largely operated by students on practical training. The college also admits students from east, and sometimes central Africa. Today, graduates of Utalii occupy most positions including managerial positions in the country's tourism industry.

The Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS): Established under legislation that came into effect in 1990 after amendments to the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, KWS's mandate was to preserve and conserve wild animals both inside and outside the protected areas, to formulate policies regarding conservation, management and utilisation of all types of fauna and flora, to build partnerships to conserve biodiversity; to develop sustainable nature tourism and maximize the economic returns to the nation and local people whilst minimizing the negative effects; and to enforce wildlife laws and regulations (KWS, 1990). KWS generates its own revenues from park entrance fees and grants from donors, which it uses to run its conservation activities independent of the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife.

The Kenya Tourism Board (KTB): The Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) was established under legislation that came into effect in 1996 to bring the government into a partnership with the private sector. It aimed at revitalising KTDC's international marketing effort for the country following a downturn in the early 1990s as noted earlier. KTB is charged with the responsibility of marketing Kenya locally and internationally; of developing and coordinating tourism promotional and marketing activities; conducting tourist market research, supervision and

coordination of private sector tourism development; and advising the government on policy issues and priorities in tourism. KTB membership is drawn from various public and private sector organisations whose activities impinge on tourism with the former accounting for 65% of the members (Ikiara, 2001; Ondicho, 2003). Its operational fund is allocated from the government's annual budget, but it relies heavily on funds from donors and private sector contributions.

The National Museums of Kenya (NMK): The NMK is the public institution responsible for the management of antiquities, monuments, historical sites and other heritage resources in general. These are important resources for the country's tourism industry.

County Councils: Most of the wildlife protected areas and tourism areas are found within the jurisdiction of different Local County Councils¹⁰. Local councils play an important role in the provision of facilities and services essential for tourism development. For instance, they own and manage the game reserves within their areas and participate in the development of rural/feeder roads and electrification among other things. In addition to encouraging local community groups to take part in conservation and tourism development within their areas, county councils also play a significant role in lobbying for a portion of the tourism revenue to provide infrastructure such as schools, water supply, public health, electricity, roads, and other services to the communities living in or near wildlife protected and tourism areas (Ikiara, 2001).

3.4.2 The Private Sector

There are a number of private sector organisations both local and international which are directly and indirectly involved with the tourism industry. Private sector organisations which include professional associations aligned with a particular public or private sector organisation in the tourism industry represent the interests of diverse groups of stakeholders. Generally, they play an important and active role not only in economic development by employment creation and reducing balance of payment deficits but also in the development of tourism as a national industry. These include the Kenya Tourism Federation (KTF), Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers (KAHC), the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), the Mombasa Coast Tourists Association (MCTA), Kenya Association Air Operators (KAAO), Kenya Budget Hotels Association, the Professional

¹⁰ A council is composed of locals elected after every five years and they are most commonly referred to as Councillors.

Guides Association and the Kenya Tourist Concern (KTC). Many of these organizations, however, are in the tourist business primarily to make a profit from their investments in tourist facilities and services.

3.4.3 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

There is a diversity of local and international conservation-oriented NGOs in Kenya working closely with partner institutions (governmental, donors, private organisations, other NGOs and cooperating agencies, and community-based organisations (CBOs) to promote ecotourism. These NGOs not only play a critical role in capacity building both at the national and community levels but also support communities to establish and manage their small-scale community-based cultural/conservation-oriented tourism businesses. Some of these NGOs include African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), African Conservation Centre (ACC), East African Wildlife Society (EAWLS), The World Conservation Union (IUCN), African Funds for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW) and Ecotourism Society of Kenya (ESOK) to mention but a few. They have been at the forefront organising seminars and workshops for communities living near protected areas to educate them about the virtues of conservation, funding community conservation/development projects and preparing position papers and codes of conduct to guide the sustainable use of natural resources and tourism development.

3.4.4 Community Organisations

In Kenya there are a number of indigenous tourism and wildlife conservation organisations (CBOs) working together and sometimes individually to achieve different goals. The local communities are crucial for the success of nature and culture conservation programmes. The CBOs therefore provide an important avenue for promoting community participation in supporting conservation and tourism development. Membership for CBOs is drawn from various community based/grassroots wildlife tourism and conservation stakeholders including individual or group owners of the land on which wildlife lives. The main goal of CBOs is to generate revenue for the members from wildlife-based tourism and to provide structures through which they can lobby and advocate for their collective interests, particularly on wildlife and tourism issues. These organisations include: GRCs, Co-operatives, Self-Help Groups, Private Land Owners Associations, Wildlife Forums and Trusts.

3.5 Role of Tourism in the Kenyan economy

Tourism makes an important contribution to Kenya's national economy. For a decade, starting in 1987 tourism was the leading single largest source of hard currency and foreign exchange earnings for Kenya after overtaking tea and coffee which, traditionally, had been the leading sources of foreign exchange earnings (Akama, 1997; Ondicho, 2000a). In 1997, tourism was relegated to third position after tea and horticulture became the two leading sources of foreign exchange earnings. However, tourism offset horticulture and finally tea in 2004 to reclaim its position as the country's leading source of foreign exchange earnings, accounting for 20% of the total foreign exchange earnings. Tourism still remains Kenya's largest foreign exchange earning sector, followed by flowers, tea, and coffee (Kenya, 2009).

Table 2 shows that tourism earnings increased from Ksh. 21, 533 million in 2000 to 39.2 million in 2004 and then rising to about 56.2 million in 2006, reflecting an 11.6 percent growth. However, tourism earnings decreased by 19.2% from Ksh. 65.4 million in 2007 to Ksh. 52.7 million in 2008 making this the worst performance in a long time. The dismal performance was occasioned by the post-election violence and global economic recession.

Table 2 Tourism Earning & Economic Indicators (2002-2008)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Earnings in kShs.000 000'	21,734	25,768	39,200	48,900	56,200	65,400	52,700
Hotel Beds	8,182.7	7,765.7	10,030.7	10,845.6	13,003.5	14,711.6	14,233.6
Modern sector employment	1699.7	1727.6	1763.3	1807.7	-	-	-
Wage employment TRH sector	157.5	162.7	168	175.7	-	-	-
% share of TRH	9.2	9.4	9.5	9.7	-	-	-

Sources: Kenya, (2009) and KNBS, (2006)

In addition to foreign exchange earnings, tourism also makes very useful contributions to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) averaging 12% in 2004 (Kenya, 2005). Growth in the sector has multiplier effects which stimulate other sectors of the economy. Multiplier effects are experienced through tourism-induced demand for goods and services in other economic sectors such as car hire companies, handicraft/curio shops, and restaurants (Akama, 2002). Multiplier effects arguably are also felt through the sharing of tourism infrastructures such as national parks and game reserves, airports, hotels and restaurants with other economic sectors. Such infrastructures help to enhance and encourage greater economic diversification as well as macro and micro development especially in neglected areas (Gakahu, 1992).

Tourism in Kenya is also a major generator of direct and induced employment. The available statistical data indicate tourism in Kenya accounts for about 9-10% of the modern wage employment sector. While in 2000, the tourism sector accounted for 1676.8 thousand jobs in the formal employment sector the figure had steadily increased to 1807.7 thousand in 2005 (see table 2) in addition to a host of other indirect jobs in the informal tourism sector. Most of the direct tourism-related jobs are created in the amalgam of Trade in the Restaurant and Hotels (TRH)¹¹ sector and in bars, transport, tourist offices, tour guiding, souvenirs and in other services and recreational activities; induced employment is available in tourism allied sectors such as agriculture, craft industry, music industry, the arts, money and banking, and construction (Sindiga, 1994).

Approximately 80 percent of the accommodation sub sector, which is the major employer and revenue earner in the tourism sector, is located in areas where 10 per cent of Kenya's population live (Akama, 1997). The cities of Nairobi and Mombasa in particular account for 40 percent of the country's hotel industry and for most of the tour operators and tourist transportation sub-sectors. More than half of the country's tourism related jobs are therefore most probably created here. Most of the tourist industry plant is located either in rich urban areas or in sparsely populated arid and semi-arid regions in Southern Kenya, whilst the highly populated rural areas in central and western Kenya get very little income benefits from the tourism sector. The general income effect of tourism consequently is an increase of spatial income inequalities and unequal development in Kenya (see for example, Bachmann, 1988; Sindiga, 1999a; Akama, 2002). Lack of a unified tourism policy on the distribution and supply of attractions and infrastructures, and lack of an organisational framework and capacity for the Ministry of Tourism to effectively coordinate and manage the activities of diverse stakeholders, is a major bottleneck to balanced tourism development in Kenya (Ikiara, 2001).

The scattered, thinly-populated areas of the protected areas do experience some economic impact from tourism too. Approximately 10 percent of the hotel beds in Kenya are found in the game lodges in or around the country's most popular national parks and reserves (Akama, 2002). Most of the formal tourism sector job opportunities created here go to skilled people from outside

¹¹ The statistics available capture tourism as an amalgam of activities in trade, restaurants and hotel (TRH) industries. Travel, a key aspect of the tourism industry, has continuously been omitted when capturing tourism-related data. This has led to a gross under-estimation of the exact contribution of the tourism industry to the GDP. The Tourism Satellite Account project was hatched to correct this anomaly but its implementation is behind schedule.

these regions. Foreign ownership coupled with the speculative nature of foreign capital investors have resulted in tourist visiting only a limited number of destinations which coupled with a growing trend towards all-inclusive package tours means that few tourism receipts trickle down to local communities that bear the costs of living with wildlife on their land (Ondicho, 2005).

Table 3 Hotel Bed-Nights by Zone, 2002-2008

By Zone in '000s	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Coastal Beach	2,171.8	1,269.6	1,883	2273.7	3,228	3768.1	1634.7
Other	108.2	36.5	29.4	29.4	108.6	153.5	118.1
Coastal Hinterland	44.9	60.9	52.9	75.1	83.7	210.5	93.5
Nairobi-High Class	589.8	572.7	793.7	870.9	946.8	1028.4	716.2
-Other	65.7	124.0	194.5	180.5	257.2	302.7	224.5
Central	80.7	143.8	247.8	265.1	300.3	388.9	255.1
Maasailand	135.2	130.4	272.3	361.9	460.9	519.9	31.8
Nyanza Basin	103.7	127.9	167.7	196.7	284.4	246.6	185.4
Western	95.9	97.2	100.8	128.0	167.7	234.4	224.6
Northern	40.9	42.9	48.8	81.2	83.7	86.3	5.7
TOTAL-OCCUPIED	3,436.8	2,605.9	3,791.5	4476.6	5,922.1	6,939.4	3,699.0
TOTAL AVAILABLE	8,182.7	7,765.7	10,030.7	10,845.6	13,003.5	14,711.6	14,233.6

Source: Economic Survey, (2009)

It is worth noting here that since the 1960s the government has pursued a serious policy to indigenize the tourism industry and other economic sectors as well. The government's broad indigenization policy which was first spelt out in Sessional Paper no. 10 of 1965 has also been expounded in several other policy statements and documents¹². The main policy objective of the Kenyan Government in the past has been to maximize net returns from tourism giving due consideration to possible negative economic, social, cultural and environmental implications. The most notable policies include: liberalisation of the foreign exchange regime and the deregulation of the exchange rate, diversification of tourist generating markets and products, emphasis on Eco-Tourism policy, and a privatisation programme. Additionally, the government has put in place a policy that encourages foreign corporations to enter into joint ventures with Kenyans and to issue a proportion of their share capital on the Nairobi Stock Exchange where the shares could be purchased by Kenyan nationals (Swanson, 1980: 208). All these policies and others have had a positive bearing on the continued expansion of the country's tourism industry.

In spite of the government actively pursuing an indigenisation policy in tourism, the process has generally tended to proceed at a pace dictated by overseas tourism investors (Kareithi, 2003).

¹² Tourism policies have included: infrastructure development policy, policy on sustainable tourism, Training policy, pricing policy, policy on public and private sector participation and partnerships, marketing and promotion policy, tourist security policy and revenue sharing, among others.

This is because most tourism and hospitality facilities are owned and controlled by firms and financiers from the West (Jommo, 1987; Ikiara, 2001). Foreign investments are particularly strong in large-scale capital-intensive tourism infrastructures such as hotels, tour operators and travel businesses (Akama, 2002; Ikiara, 2001). About two thirds of the country's gross tourism receipts are not only leaked back to the industrialised nations as payments to expatriates, servicing of foreign loans, or tourism related imports such as alcoholic drinks and safari vehicles, but also through inclusive tour packages sold overseas (Sindiga, 1999a; Akama, 2000). Furthermore, a high degree of vertical integration in Kenya's tourism industry, especially in the ownership and management of foreign-owned tourism and travel facilities coupled with the practice of subcontracting internal flights and car rentals to local subsidiary companies, eats into the sector's foreign exchange revenues (Sinclair, 1990).

Many indigenous Kenyans tend to own small firms that are often subcontracted by multinational tour companies at very low contractual fees (Akama, 2002). As a result they receive only insignificant amounts of the tourism revenue (Sinclair, 1990). Thus, the effects of the indigenisation policy have not been felt in the tourist industry as they have in the agricultural and industrial sectors (Migot-Adholla et al. 1982). The indigenization goal in tourism has been achieved insofar as local investors - particularly the political elites and government - undertake joint ventures with private foreign investors. Many of the locally owned tourism enterprises such as curio and souvenir businesses are not only undercapitalised but also are run by inexperienced entrepreneurs hence making it difficult for them to effectively compete with foreign firms.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has provided a general appraisal of Kenya's tourism industry in terms of its historical and contemporary contexts. It has also highlighted that the public and private sectors have played important roles in fostering its expansion. Hospitality facilities are concentrated in a few geographical locations and, in spite of shouldering the costs of conservation, local communities in these areas receive only token benefits from tourism and conservation. These communities, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 6, play important roles in supporting conservation, an avenue through which the private sector stakes its claim on the tourism industry. Chapter 4 presents a detailed description of the Maasai in terms of their social, cultural and political organisation and how their lives have been transformed by the forces of change.

Chapter 4: Maasai Cultural Landscape and Colonial Influences

4.0 Introduction

Chapter 3 has presented a review of the organisational structure and policy environment of Kenya's tourist industry which provides the contextual basis for focusing on the Maasai community. This chapter aims to provide a situated description of selected aspects of the traditional Maasai society and the different forces of change that are factors that continue to shape the society's current situation. The central theme is that the society has witnessed significant transformations over the last century. These transformations pose complex challenges to the Maasai's socio-geographical, cultural, economic, and political reality. These challenges, in one-way or another, determine how the Maasai are involved in the development process and how they deal with the external forces of change, including wildlife conservation and tourism which is the subject of chapter 6.

The first section of this chapter presents a short description that provides glimpses into the socio-historical context of the Maasai people and salient features of their social, political and economic organisation. The second section offers a discussion of effects of past external forces of change including European settlement and administration, Christian missionary and Western education activities, land ownership and use, and the commercial economy on the current situation of the Maasai.

4. I Maasai Social Structure

This section contextualises the Maasai people in terms of their socio-historical background, demography and homeland in Kenya. The section will draw on a selection of the literature written by authors from a diverse array of social science disciplines.

4.1.1 Socio-Historical Context

The Maasai are an indigenous ethnic minority group of people living in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. Traditionally, these Maa speaking people were composed of two groups, the

Iloikop (kwavi) and the *Ilmaasai* (Spencer, 1993). The former were sedentary agro-pastoralists whilst the latter were transhumance pastoralists. In contemporary times, the Maasai are numerically the second largest pastoral group in Eastern Africa after the Somali. Whilst their exact origins are unknown, the Maasai are thought to be related to the Nilo-Hamitic linguistic speaking peoples from North Africa that migrated south along the Nile River in the late first millennium A.D. into present day Kenya before some of them moved to northern Tanzania in the 15th century A.D (Galaty, 1993). They ended up inhabiting a large territory, relative to their numbers, that stretched from north of Lake Turkana in what is now southern Ethiopia through Kenya to Kibaya, in modern Tanzania (see Figure 2). This region is generally congruent with the Great Rift Valley and its flanking plateaus and plains (Ole-Dapash, 1997).

Colonial and post-colonial appropriation of their ancestral lands by the government to create room for European settlers, national parks and game reserves confined them to an area covering roughly 60,000km² in northern Tanzania and approximately 39,618 km² in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania (Coast, 2002). It is an irregularly-shaped area, extending from roughly latitude 1 to 6 degrees south, between longitude 35 and 38 degrees east. The territory a large majority of the Maasai in Kenya occupy today is known as Masailand which encompasses Narok, Kajiado, Trans Mara, and Loitokitok districts (see Figure 2 for details on the location and extent of Masailand, past and present). Although the Maasai are often depicted as a homogenous ethnic group of people, they also exhibit some minor but very critical differences between clans and sub-clans especially in the manner they conduct customary ceremonies and prepare their decorations and dress. However, similarities in socio-economic organisation and lifestyles between members of the different clans outweigh the differences. A detailed discussion of these similarities and differences, however, is far beyond the focus of this study. In the next section I provide a discussion of Maasai social organisation.

Figure 2 Map of Kenya showing Maasailand¹³ in 1900 and today



Source: Researcher

4.1.2 Maasai Social Organisation

Maasai social organisation was traditionally united and divided by both vertical and horizontal principles (Hodgson, 2005). The Maasai society was divided into patrilineal descent groups comprising of moieties (*orokiteng* of the black cattle and *odomongi* of the red cattle), clans (*olgilata*), and sub-clans (*enkishomi*) that shaped the rules of marriage, descent, inheritance, conflict resolution and compensation (Galaty, 1979; Hodgson, 2005). These vertical groupings

¹³ Whilst Maasai lands extend into northern Tanzania, the map only highlights relevant features within Kenya.

were cross cut by male age-sets (to be explained further below) that united men of similar ages (and divided men of different ages) into a common, uniquely named group based on the period in which they were circumcised (Hodgson, 2005). Generally, age and gender were important determinants in the allocation of social responsibilities, roles, and rights and to different categories of community members (Hodgson, 1999a).

Traditionally, Maasai social organisation rested on three complementary support systems: family and kinship networks, the local structure of camps and neighbours, and the age-set system. Family and kinship networks upheld the household and its reproduction whilst the local structure of camps and neighbours linked households together and promoted the cooperative exploitation of pastoral resources. On the other hand, the age-set system together with descent provided the basis for wider social organisation through which community affairs were managed (Spencer, 1993). The household, which comprised a nuclear family of husband and wife or wives and children, unmarried sons, married sons and their wives, the husband's mother (if her husband was dead) and other dependants, formed the most elementary unit of social organisation and production (Hodgson, 2005). The household was where the sharing of the means of production (including cattle, grazing lands, water and salt) and the production of livestock products such as milk, hides, meat and blood took place. Hence the family was the basic unit of production and reproduction in the pastoral praxis (Rigby, 1988).

Maasai were characterised by virilocal residence patterns (Hodgson, 2005). They lived in large clan-based homesteads or *bomas*. Typically the homestead contained between 6-12 stockowners and their families and herds. The stockowners were normally people who traced ancestry to a common forefather, and usually cooperated over grazing and herding decisions (Spencer, 1993). There were two types of homesteads: the "*enkang*" and the "*manyatta*". The "*enkang*" was built for a married man and his family with room for the family to grow whilst the *manyatta* was built for unmarried warriors who lived with their mothers and sisters (who were allowed to have lovers amongst the warriors) (Coast, 2002). A thick circular fence of thorny shrubs, which served to keep away the threat of wild animals or human intruders, normally surrounded each homestead. Along the inside of this fence were small, round huts "*enkaji*", small pens for small stock and calves and an open area for communal activities (in the day) and the cattle (at night) – (see photo 10).

The Maasai were polygynists (Spencer, 1988). Every married woman usually resided in her own hut or “*enkaji*” at the edge of the “*enkang*” either on the left or right side of the husband’s cattle entrance (Coast, 2002). Once a woman got married she had the responsibility to build a house or rather *enkaji* for family and any dependants under her care (Spencer, 1993). Such a house was constructed using sticks that were fastened together with vines and plastered with cow dung and mud (Homewood & Rodgers, 1991). Houses were the domains of women and they exercised a high degree of decision making authority and autonomy not only in household affairs and finances but also over access to and use of their homes even by their husbands. However, in some instances, men also shared the responsibility of deciding domestic affairs (Talle, 1999).

Homesteads are in turn grouped together into larger settlements or neighbourhoods. A neighbourhood was a cluster of homesteads, usually within a kilometre or so of each other and normally centred on a well, watering hole or other source of water. Neighbourhoods were in turn grouped into territorial sections (*iloshon*), which comprised a number of smaller “localities” (Spencer, 1993). Although membership varied over time, each neighbourhood and locality had a core of people who resided there permanently and communally controlled enough wet and dry grazing, salt and water resources to support their livestock populations in normal times (Rigby, 1989). The locality was what the Maasai considered their home area or where one belonged and had a right to live. To join another locality one required permission from the other residents (Galaty; 1993).

The Maasai are a patrilineal society and descent was traced through the man’s line (Hodgson, 2005). A child belonged to the clan of his father and remained a member for life whilst outsiders were ritually incorporated into the clan. The patrilineal clan organisation was very important in the wider social and political organisation of the Maasai. Cattle of clan-mates had the same basic brand (with each person adding his unique identifier). Clan-mates had very strong mutual aid obligations. For example, if a man died young with no brothers, his clan-mates were required to help raise his children and tend his cattle. If a Maasai became impoverished through drought or other misfortune, his clan-mates were bound to help him rebuild his stock. Clan-mates helped in marriage negotiations, obtaining the necessary bride price, and were the locus of settlement of disputes. Although women were excluded from the age-set system they had full recourse to their own clan-mates when in difficulty such as in cases of wife battering (Grandin, 1991).

The patrilineal clan organisation and the male age-grade system handed control over the means of production and labour to household heads usually married men. These men also claimed authority over their wives, sons and daughters, and over the livestock they obtained through inheritance, raiding, natural increase, and payment of bride wealth for their daughters (Talle, 1988). However, women and men shared responsibility in deciding household affairs, whilst elder men (often in consultation with their wives and senior women) managed the life of the homestead. Male dominance was repeatedly reaffirmed through rituals connected with the age-grade system and occasionally through ritual events intended to ensure general well being. This provided for gender inequality in social relations (Talle, 1999).

The bond between husbands and wives centres on livestock (Almagor, 1978). Women provided fertility to reproduce children and men provided livestock for the maintenance of their families. Within the traditional social organisation women were tied to the domestic sphere and the village in a way that men were not: collecting firewood, fetching water and milking the cattle (Spencer, 1988; Hodgson, 2005). In effect, women took immediate responsibility for livestock at night, whilst men maintained overall responsibility and especially when the herds grazed away from the village in daytime, which could sometimes take weeks at a time. This division of labour appeared to give women a subordinate role within the gender relations (Talle, 1999).

4.1.3 Maasai Political Organisation

Politically, Maasai society is divided into numerous autonomous political sections (*oloshon*) and localities (*enkutoto*) (Spear, 1993). Members of each territorial section, who often cooperated in the appropriation of pasture, water and salt licks, formed a unified administrative and political structure that collectively owned a fixed geographical territory and took part in common social, ritual and economic activities (Spencer, 1984). A significant aspect of Maasai political organisation was the division of society into a series of age-sets ("*illoporori*") and age-grades for males (Spencer, 1993; Hodgson, 2005). As Galaty (1983:362) aptly observes, "the system of age-organisation constitutes the basis for local political assembly". The Maasai age-set system was a central feature of Maasai socio-political organisation (Almagor, 1978), and in many cases, was more important than clanship in determining one's friends and close associates (Tignor, 1976). The age-set system not only provided a means of establishing a powerful standing army and a formal transition of individual males from one clearly marked social status to another but also provided for an organised exercise of at least some political authority and a means of establishing

social contact; even some sense of tribal unity and cohesion over a wider range than would otherwise be possible (Beattie, 1964). The respect of age gave rise to members of the senior grade constituting more or less informal councils of elders whose importance in decision-making was backed by sanctions. It was the elders who communicated with the ancestral spirits, upon whose goodwill the well-being of the whole group was dependent, since they were intermediaries between the group and the supreme spiritual being. In essence, age-sets functioned to support the creation of social order by ordering relations amongst different ages and creating links that cut across the boundaries of kin groups, providing the individual with an even greater range of people to call on for assistance. Seniority in age did not translate to dominance in control of resources. However, senior elder age-set had the primary responsibility for the traditional administration in Maasailand (Hodgson, 1999a).

Each named age-set occupied a position in the formal hierarchy of age-grades. The specific functions of each age-set were ordered in authority and influence within a framework of rules of appropriate behaviour such as sexual access, dietary regulations, the timing of marriage and procreation, and male rights and responsibilities (Spencer, 1993). While both genders were involved in the age-sets and age-grades the system was formerly ritualized only amongst males (Hodgson, 2005). Every uninitiated youth (*olyioni*) was circumcised and girls underwent clitoridectomy as the initial rites of entry into the formal structure of the age-grade system and womanhood respectively (Rigby, 1989). Different age-grades were distinguished by their clothing, hairstyle, decorations, greeting style and nomenclature (Hodgson; 1999b).

Men in the Maasai society pass through three main stages or age groups: boyhood, warriorhood, and elderhood (Grandin, 1991). Maasai boys worked as herders until their circumcision (sometime in their teens) when they become warriors (*ol-murrani* or *morans*), which was the first politically meaningful age-set. They then established themselves in “*manyattas*” or warrior homesteads (Tignor, 1976). Their basic duties included herding livestock, defending the community from external aggression, raiding their neighbours for cattle and material wealth, and learning the art of governance that they would utilise later on when they became elders. Living in the *manyatta* with their mothers and young girls, the *moran* developed a strong sense of group identity and loyalty, which remained with them the rest of their lives (Spencer, 1993).

The *morans* served between 5 to 15 years as junior warriors after which they graduated to senior warriors. They then broke up the *manyattas*, got married and settled down to domestic life with

most of the prohibitions of *enturuj* being relaxed (e.g. not being allowed to be seen by women whilst eating). As the *morans* moved up the ladder to senior warriorhood, senior warriors turned into junior elders and junior elders converted into senior elders, the latter then moved into the elevated position of retired elders (Rigby, 1989). Elders acquired enhanced political and moral seniority when the age-set that replaced them as *morans* was in turn replaced by a new age-set. It was the responsibility of the elders to kindle a fire that ritually brought the new-age set of *morans*, two age-sets below their own. The elders were the “fire stick patrons” of *morans*, with a present power to bless or curse them (Galaty, 1993). Generally, the elderly people were the custodians and guardians of Maasai culture and teachers of history, law and cultural unity, which they passed on to the *morans* at meat eating ceremonies, and amongst warrior camps (Spencer, 1993). The cultural identity and unity of the Maasai was embedded in the correct performance of age-set rituals, particularly those involving the *morans* (Rigby, 1989).

Politically, the Maasai society is a gerontocracy that is, a society in which power was essentially in the hands of the older men. Men’s political power as mediators in clan and community conflicts increased with age reaching the pinnacle when they became senior elders (Hodgson, 1999a). Basically these senior elders, who held secular power and authority over their juniors, were essentially the supreme source of political authority (Spencer, 1984). The senior elders met in council with representatives of different age-grades, sections and clans, exercised judicial, legislative and executive powers in making important decisions that touched on issues such as timing of rituals, location of new homesteads, access to pasture and water, when to shift camp or raid for more cattle, settlement of clan and inter-clan disputes usually over marriage, bride wealth, control of children, livestock thefts and so on (Spencer, 1993; Hodgson, 1999b). The elders normally arrived at decisions through consensus and their ability to sanction behaviour rested, ultimately, on their ability to bless and to curse (Talle, 1988). Cursing was a fearsome and rarely used power, but the inherent possibility evoked conformity (Rigby, 1989). The retired elders, on account of their wisdom, were often approached to give advice on crucial matters affecting their clans and the community (Tignor, 1976).

Women, just like men, gain power and respect within the community as they became older. As children, girls help their mothers with household and childcare duties (Talle, 1999; Hodgson, 2005). As mothers they performed domestic duties including cooking and home care, and as they grew older their authority increased whilst their workload decreased especially once their sons got married. As mothers-in-law they managed their daughters-in-law and often they met with other

older women to discuss their concerns and adjudicate disputes (such as disagreements between co-wives or mistreatment of children) and occasionally to take collective action against certain moral transgressions. They were, however, excluded from public decision-making (Hodgson, 2005).

4.1.4 Maasai Economic Organisation

Maasai economic organisation was based on subsistence livestock herding (Spear & Waller, 1993). The livestock of the Maasai consist of cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys. Sheep and goats were useful for their meat especially during the dry season when cattle no longer gave adequate supplies of milk. Donkeys were used for transport. Nevertheless, the greatest value was attached to cattle because of their significance in the Maasai community's economic, social and cultural life. Maasai culture was characterised by the so-called "cattle complex": because subsistence, kinship organisation, politics, religion, folklore, personal identity and worth all centred on cattle (Netting, 1977).

Cattle are so important that they were not only treated with the same respect accorded family members but also numbers were more highly valued than cattle quality (Fratkin, 1994). The cultural love for cattle was deeply rooted in Maasai social and cultural life. Cattle besides providing the essential milk, blood and meat (source of food), were strongly tied to status (prestige and honour) within the community (Ondicho, 2005). By virtue of the role of cattle as wealth and in some cases as currency, cattle played an important role in the fulfilment of cultural obligations such as marriage (as bridal wealth), ritual sacrifices for spirits of the ancestors, and in legal disputes (e.g. payment of debts and compensation). Cattle not only served to cement, legalize, validate and enhance social relationships but also they were exchanged/ loaned to foster stock-partner and patron-client relationships (Hodgson, 1999).

The family is the stock holding group with the responsibility for allocating herding labour and rights in the consumption of livestock products. Rights of disposal of the herd rested on the stockowner, usually the household head (Galaty, 1993; Hodgson, 2005). Depending on how, from whom, and by whom livestock was first acquired, wives and husbands sometimes shared overlapping rights in livestock. Husbands often transferred the rights of ownership for a certain amount of cattle to the wife to cater to her household's subsistence needs including milk and hides or to hold them in custody as inheritance for her son/s (Hodgson, 1999a). But generally it

was the men who had the rights of control whilst a woman, although with some influence on the use of animals assigned to her household, only enjoyed usufruct rights to livestock (Talle, 1988).

The daily activities necessary for pastoralist production and security of the household and homestead were organised by age and gender. While men were responsible for livestock herding, women tended sheep, goats and other small stock including calves and sick animals. The milking of cattle and sometimes sheep and goats in the morning and evening was done by women, who were also responsible for the sharing milk with other family/household members and visitors (Talle, 1988, Hodgson, 1999a). Additionally, women were in charge of processing of animal skins from which the Maasai derived their clothing, sleeping skins and hides for sale in the market. Young uncircumcised boys usually herded and watered cattle; the *morans* guarded animals from attacks by wild-animals and people from raids by their neighbours. The elder men were largely responsible for conflict resolution and making major decisions especially regarding when to go to war and when and where to graze and water their livestock (Hodgson, 2005). All able bodied household members worked together not only to enlarge their households and herds but also to guarantee the success of production and reproduction.

Maasai lifestyles and livestock management were characterised by seasonal migratory movements. Several families congregated to form a homestead whose members cooperated in the allocation of local resources, provision of local defence, coordination of herding, labour and food sharing; scheduling access to watering and pasturing points, and in organizing themselves for higher order meetings, rituals and combat. In addition to the daily herding movements, homestead members conventionally oscillated between the wet and dry season pasture areas (Galaty, 1993). It was common practice for herders to move freely with livestock within their tribal territory and to replenish their herds by raiding those of their neighbours.

A fundamental characteristic of the Maasai pastoral economy is its concept of land use. Land was seen as communal territory with primary rights vested in a particular family, clan or age group. Land was shared with newcomers after they had obtained the necessary permission from elders to use its resources including water, pasture and salt licks (Monbiot, 1994; Ondicho, 2005). In theory all herd owners had access to the range as long as they abided by the restrictions on use formulated by the council of elders. Despite virtual egalitarianism in the access to resources, in practice, certain areas were restricted (Grandin, 1991). Key resource areas such as forests, highlands or permanent water points were restricted for use during part of the year, and herders

had to negotiate access to pasture when they wanted to move (Lesorogol, 2003). The use of territory was governed by social and political conventions set by elders, and respected by all, to reduce risks associated with the unpredictable climate of the semi-arid plateau. It was difficult to cross sectional or clan boundaries even in drought times and some watering points were owned by an individual clan or sub-clan by virtue of their having dug or cleaned the well (Campbell, 1993). This “ownership” was not to the exclusion of others but rather only implied first rights to the water, otherwise access was rarely denied.

The maintenance of the Maasai’s specialised form of subsistence pastoralism largely depended on the role of women as traders. Due to hostile climatic conditions the Maasai were often not self-sufficient in their subsistence livestock production hence they depended on women for the supply of supplementary foodstuffs from the market (Galaty, 1993; Hodgson, 2005). Foodstuffs such as legumes and grains were obtained from markets where Maasai women bartered their products mainly hides and beadworks with neighbouring agricultural communities, particularly the Kikuyu (Talle, 1988). Maasai women were also involved in barter trade with the caravan traders from Mombasa who passed through their territory supplying them with foodstuffs, hides, milk and livestock for provisions in return for cloth, beads, tobacco, glass, and copper (Spencer, 1988). These women not only created extensive and active trade networks but also played an important role in initiating the Maasai community into regional and global commodity markets and commerce. As a result, the Maasai were able to sustain their specialised system of livestock production (Hodgson, 1999).

This section has shown that Maasai social organisation was based on family and kinship networks, the local structure of camps, neighbours and the age-set system. The age-set and age-grade provided the basis for political organisation, the allocation of labour and reproductive resources. Resources including land, water, salt and pasture were communally owned and shared by all people. Although adult men and women shared common objectives, they exercised a great deal of autonomy in their pursuits and mobility. The pastoral system of production was geared towards subsistence and was often supplemented by limited foodstuffs obtained from markets and barter with neighbours. These attributes profoundly shaped Maasai lifestyles and culture.

However, since the advent of British colonialism in the 1890s Maasai society has undergone drastic transformations that have had immensely disruptive impacts on their livestock-oriented culture and lifestyles. The present conditions of the Maasai cannot be understood without

examining the factors responsible for these historical changes. In the following section I make a brief examination of those historical factors that have shaped contemporary Maasai culture. Attention to these factors will help us to understand why some Maasai systems broke down or were modified over time, and how the Maasai have come to be in their current state.

4.2 External Influences

Since the 1880s when the Maasai first came into contact with renowned explorer Joseph Thomson, one of the earliest Europeans to visit Maasailand, complex and overlapping cultural processes and material formations have shaped the Maasai's present conditions (Coast, 2002). The Maasai society has experienced momentous transformations in response to a whole range of external factors and influences, including colonial administration, economic and social development, Western education, Christianity, and land alienation. These influences have affected the Maasai and continue to shape their responses to the forces of modernisation including tourism, as detailed in subsequent chapters. The focus of the next section is on these external influences of change and how they have continued to shape Maasai life to the present.

4.2.1 Influence of the Colonial Administration

The history of Kenya as a political entity dates back to 1895 when the country was declared a protectorate under the British sphere of influence. In 1920 the name of the protectorate was changed to Kenya, the present name of the country (Padmore, 1969). British colonialism in Kenya, as elsewhere in Africa, wanted to incorporate the country into the capitalist system and to exploit its economic potential, whilst guaranteeing the citizens security and improved wellbeing. Subsequently, the colonial authorities sought to gain control over the peoples of East Africa on the pretext of bringing them peace, health, happiness, and other benefits of 'civilization' (Knowles & Collet, 1989).

However, soon after establishing the colony Kenya, the British colonial administration discovered that the warlike pastoralist Maasai, who occupied vast arable lands in the Rift Valley, were a great barrier to their ambitions to bring the peoples of East Africa the "gifts" of civilisation, peace and good government (Waller, 1976). Maasai warriors, *morans*, who often raided other Maasai and neighbours for cattle and raided trade caravans and railway parties, also posed serious

military threats to British agendas and ambitions for turning the country into a decent, well ordered, and economically progressive colony (Willis, 1999). As Lugard observed, “The warlike instincts of the Maasai, moreover, render them at present an obstacle to peaceful development, and a terror to the more industrious and agricultural tribes around them” (1893: 417).

Although the British abhorred the Maasai’s “menace” of cattle raiding and seemingly meaningless wanderings and movements, they lacked the military power to put a stop to such practices (Waller, 1976). Haunted by the images of the Maasai as dangerous warriors and uncontrollable nomads, and fearing that military action against the Maasai would threaten their grip over the newly acquired protectorate, the British administration decided to build an alliance with them (Knowles & Collet, 1989). As Bachamman aptly states, “during the nineteenth century the Maasai were feared all over East Africa and even the British colonists preferred to be good friends with the famous warriors” (1988: 190). Accordingly, Waller (1976:536) states, “The British were anxious to tap the military prowess of Maasai *morans* to strengthen their hands in conflicts with the tribes”. Eager to impose authority and control over the peoples of East Africa, the British sought help from and used the fierce Maasai junior warriors in joint military incursions of recalcitrant tribes such the Nandi and Kikuyu (Tignor, 1976). In tapping the military strength of the *morans*, Maasai men allied themselves with the British to raid “legally” for livestock to rebuild stocks lost during the triple disasters of pleuro pneumonia, rinderpest, and smallpox (Rigby, 1989).

The military alliance was, however, a brief one as the British stopped the joint military incursions soon afterwards. This reversal of policy was an expression of the colonial administration’s anger at Maasai *morans* for refusing to take in plantation work (commodity production) and to fight alongside the British in East Africa’s Anglo-German Conflict. Furthermore, there was fear that joint military expeditions would “strengthen the *morans*’ predilection for raiding” (Rigby, 1989: 428). To contain the imagined threat of the *morans*, the administration set out to limit their military capabilities through punitive military incursions, disarming them and disbanding *manyattas* where plans to “raid and oppose government policies” were allegedly made (Rigby, 1989: 424). Other aspects of *moranism* considered inimical to social change and orderly government, such as the carrying of distinctive “white spears” used in battle, were prohibited. Eventually the entire institution of *moranism* was banned, rather ineffectually (Willis, 1999). These developments greatly undermined the relationship between the government, Maasai

especially *morans*, and elders whom the administration sought to work with in transforming their society.

The banning of *moranism* constituted a considerable challenge to the Maasai economy and particularly to the warrior age-set whose main function was to raid for livestock and protect their community from the raids of others (Tignor, 1976; Knowles & Collet, 1989). The *morans* lost the means of raiding, through which they accumulated sufficient livestock for their future marriages and economic independence. The enactment of a Stock Theft Ordinance, which empowered the state to fine stock raiders ten times the value of stock stolen and in certain circumstances to compel the family or even part of the tribe to pay the fine, not only complicated things for the *morans* but also seriously challenged the entire Maasai economy and polity (Tignor, 1976; Rigby, 1989). The outlawing of cattle raids and the imposition of punitive collective fines under the Collective Punishment Ordinance of 1913 for any infringements by the *morans* burdened the elders, who as the wealthier segment bore the brunt of the communal fines.

For administrative purposes, Maasailand, like elsewhere in Kenya, was divided into districts, which were in turn divided into counties and locations, separated by rigid boundaries (Little, 1998). The creation of boundaries and the establishment of the Outlying Districts Ordinance prohibited migration outside their localities and foreclosed the Maasai frontier ethic (Sindiga, 1984). The official policy was to discourage the Maasai from having contacts with people in the scheduled areas. Permission to leave was issued under strict regulations and on legitimate business outside. As elsewhere in Kenya, local elder men were selected to serve as chiefs or headmen in their communities. The chiefs [state civil servants] were detailed to maintain order, supervise and ensure that government directives were carried out in their areas of jurisdiction. They were also given powers to issue orders restricting the manufacture of African liquor and holding of drinking bouts, the cultivation of poisonous plants, the carrying of arms, and any conduct likely to lead to riot. In addition they collected taxes and recruited labour for the white plantations (Hodgson, 2005). The chiefs also sat in native councils as representatives of their communities and in native tribunals, which heard and decided cases at the local level. The chiefs had considerable authority over the native councils that overshadowed even those of the elders (Ghai & McAuslan, 1970). This drastically undermined the traditional bases of authority particularly for clan elders who customarily enjoyed considerable political prestige and power as mediators between the colonial state and the communities.

Nevertheless, Maasai chiefs, although willing to hold office, were not involved in the recruitment of labour and implementation of developmental projects as were Kikuyu chiefs. Maasai chiefs held office with ill-concealed hostility and were distinctly unenthusiastic in their cooperation with the British (Tignor, 1976). Many of them displayed no interest or even shunned the local government established by the British and made little use of the native tribunals especially for criminal cases. They only held office with a larger agenda of deflecting British pressures for change and preserving as much of Maasai tradition as possible (Tignor, 1976). The positions, however, did give the chiefs new layers of power and authority to collect taxes, enforce livestock decisions and codify customary law and as representatives of their communities. As mediators with the emergent state, the chiefs were able to exploit their new duties and responsibilities to assert their political will over the people (Hodgson, 1999).

4.2.2 Influence on Land ownership and Use

At the onset of British colonialism the Maasai occupied a large territory that stretched from Menengai, eastwards to Laikipia and Kinangop and southwards to Nairobi (the present day capital city of Kenya – Refer Fig. 2) (Tignor, 1976). In an effort to acquire fertile land for European settlers, the British colonial government manipulated the Maasai, who were recovering from severe drought and disease epidemics, into signing a treaty in 1904. This treaty, which transferred the Maasai's prime grazing lands in the central Rift Valley to the colonial settlers or white highlands, also established two Maasai reservations, one in the north and the other in the south (Lindsay, 1987). However, strong European greed for more land resulted in the signing of a "Second Maasai Treaty" seven years later. The whole of the Northern Reserve was ceded to colonial settlers to be used for plantation agriculture and livestock ranching. Subsequently the Maasai were forcefully evicted to a slightly enlarged Southern Maasai Reserve (Waller, 1976).

The two treaties marked the beginning of a long and unjust process of dispossessing the Maasai of their lands and "packaging" them into new and differing forms of ownership and use (Collet, 1987). Boundaries were set up to separate European ordered and privately owned farmlands from the Maasai's communally owned "wilderness". The consolidation of Maasai into one reserve namely the Southern Maasai Reserve with inadequate pastures and water effectively denied the community access to their former productive rangelands, and critical dry season pasturing and watering points, which were crucial to the proper management of their pastoral system (Sindiga, 1984). Further Maasai lands were appropriated and incorporated as National Game Reserves,

owned by local county councils, in which some traditional land uses such as collecting resin, firewood, human settlements, livestock herding and watering were not allowed. In spite of losing more than 60% of their prime lands, and the disruption of their traditional spatial and ecological order and seasonal use of pastures and water, the Maasai continued with their traditional nomadic pastoralism, which was strongly constrained by legislation confining movement within their own reserve. This restriction on their seasonal movements created an enduring mistrust of the colonial government that strengthened the Maasai's resolve to retain communal ownership over the remaining land resources and dependence on pastoralism (Homewood, 1995).

4.2.3 Commercial Economy

The goal of the British colonial government in Kenya was to build an agricultural economy by the acquisition of cheap labour from indigenous populations (Clayton & Savage, 1974). The Maasai however were reluctant to take up wage labour in the plantations and suspicious that the British would deprive them of more land or infringe on their common control of the land that remained to them (Waller, 1993). The colonial administration, subsequently, saw sedentarisation, conversion into agriculturalists and destocking as the best ways of exposing the Maasai to the civilizing influences of religion, education and market economy (Monbiot, 1994)

Whilst the goal was sedentarisation and conversion into agriculturalists, the colonial government initially did not do much to change the Maasai's social, economic and political systems (Waller, 1993; Monbiot, 1994). However, after the enactment of a Development Act in 1929 which followed the Great Depression in the 1920s, previous policies that preserved traditional forms of commerce, production, social and political organisation were dismantled. Subsequently, earlier efforts to monetarize and commoditise livestock and land in Maasailand were intensified by the colonial administration (Rigby, 1992). The integration of the Maasai into the commercial economy was achieved through the imposition of taxation, formalization and expansion of livestock marketing and trading infrastructure.

The British colonial administration, anxious to increase its revenue, introduced taxation for all adult African men. All men were required by law to pay poll and hut taxes for themselves and a plural wives tax for all dependent women living at home including wives, widowed mothers and married sisters. Taxation was used as the main tool for achieving various government policy objectives such as persuading the Maasai not only to sell livestock but also to treat it as

commodity. In addition to reducing livestock numbers and by extension soil erosion, taxation was supposed to encourage monetization (Hodgson, 2000). The payment of taxes in cash actually facilitated the introduction of a commercial economy into Maasailand as the Maasai were forced to sell rather than trade livestock (Hodgson, 2001b). As Baxter (1931 cited in Hodgson, 1999: 50) stated when opposing a government plan to collect taxes in kind e.g. using cows,

It is a retrogressive step and would militate against the chances of success of my present policy of education in the use of money. The Maasai must learn to use money and learn soon. His need for money to pay tax is a main incentive at the moment to induce him to bring his cattle to an auction where he sells for cash and is introduced to the mysteries of competition in price.

In order to formalize trade and encourage monetization, trading centres and government sponsored cattle auction centres were set up within the Maasai reserve (Little, 1998). These centres grew into small markets where an expanding exchange of goods between sedentary cultivators and nomads took place. The markets created an exchange economy that made inroads on traditional methods of exchange, beyond the dreams of the colonial government. In addition, a campaign was started to educate the Maasai in the value of money and the need to replace their traditional barter system with money (Hodgson, 1999; Willis, 1999). As part of the campaign the Maasai were told that their cattle were vulnerable to many diseases, drought and lack of pasture and water, and predators, whilst money was not prone to these risks. The Maasai were encouraged to keep smaller herds of productive livestock and to convert the remainder into cash money (Baxter, 1931). Although the policy did not lead to any rush of cattle sales, the imposition of taxes and fines for cattle theft and disorder did force some cattle sales.

Schemes were developed by the colonial government to control the sale of sheep and hides, which were the most common form of 'currency' in the barter trade. The sale of these items was allowed to take place at regular auctions only where cows were also sold. Gradually, shops with provisions of tea, sugar, maize and tobacco, cloth, beads and enamelware made inroads on traditional methods of exchange, which were in turn undermined by the restrictions placed on pastoralist movements and by the forcing out of all itinerant traders who threatened the existence of such shops. To support these trade centres and encourage the sale of livestock a total ban on barter trade was enforced.

All these changes reduced the ability of women and young men to own or make claims over resources. Existing cattle resources were individualised into private property of older men whilst

opportunities for women and young men were curtailed by the restrictions on trade and cattle raiding. With limited territories, young men gradually began to practice some form of agriculture whilst others took up wage employment often as cattlemen in European ranches (Talle, 1988). Thus, there developed a division of labour amongst the Maasai in which some members of the family were nomadic herders, sedentary cultivators or wage labourers. Young men who had taken up wage employment competed with their elders in the kind of individualised accumulation their elders had begun to pursue. Incipient conflicts of class were accentuated by generational conflicts, for all young men found that accumulation was more difficult for them than it had been for their fathers.

4.2.4 Influence of Christian Missions and Western Education

Although the Maasai were in contact with Christian missionaries from a comparatively early period, it was only in the 1950s that the first full-time missionaries began to live and work in Maasailand (Hodgson, 2005). This was rather late in comparison to other areas of Kenya. The missionaries had paid relatively little attention to the Maasai because of linguistic barriers, the extremely poor transportation infrastructure which made many areas inaccessible, human resource allocations to more densely populated areas such as the Kikuyu highlands, and nomadic lifestyles (Tablino, 2004). In addition, the enduring stereotypes of the Maasai as “unredeemable savages” delayed the possibility of early missionary work (Hilman, 1966 cited in Hodgson 2005: 108). Most missionaries had a general belief that the Maasai were not fit for Christianity because of their culture and lifestyles, which thrived in pagan practices such as polygamy, raiding and stealing cattle. As Gogarty (1927:68) states, “to evangelize the Maasai is a problem for they are nomads and the wildest tribe”

Although many Christian missions were represented in Kenya it was the Church of Scotland (CSM) and the African Inland Mission (AIM) that first claimed a sphere of influence in Maasailand (Tignor, 1976). The Maasai welcomed these missionaries and others after them, with open arms, as they did with strangers. The missionaries then alienated some of the remaining best Maasai lands on which they established mission stations, each with a plantation farm, church and sometimes a dispensary. Eager to establish a nucleus of Christian converts to serve as examples of the moral and material benefits of Christian life, the missionaries invited a few Maasai families to come and live at the mission stations. These families, which formed part of the early converts, worked on mission plantations in exchange for weekly allotments of food and clothing and in

return for lessons on catechism, basic literacy and agriculture (Hodgson, 2005). The missionaries believed that successful plantations would have a radiate a civilizing and christianizing influence into the heathen countryside that would arouse the interest of potential converts (Tignor, 1976). They also hoped that subsequent generations of children born to the initial converts would become the nucleus of African clergy (Kieran, 1971 cited in Hodgson, 2005:73). In retrospect, it seems that people who lived at the mission stations were put under very strict rules of moral and social behaviour. For instance, they were required to wear European clothes and not to take part in “heathen rites and practices” such as witchcraft, divination, sexual immorality, and female circumcision, and were to avoid smoking, drinking intoxicating liquors or wearing traditional clothing such as skins, rings and beads (Kieran, 1969 cited in Hodgson, 2005: 141; Tignor, 1976: 127). Most Maasai strongly resented these strict missionary dictates.

In spite of strenuous efforts, the missionary enterprise in Maasailand was a failure. As Phillips (1936 cited in Rigby, 1981: 98) wrote, “the centre of missionary activity (amongst Maasai) is at the station of Syabei (Narok), which is under the African Inland Mission, but considering the number of years that the society has been at work amongst the people, the results are deplorably small”. The Maasai bluntly rejected Christianity and evangelization activities because of the perception that missionaries were collaborating with the government and settlers to steal their land. The missionary’s support and use of forced labour in their plantations, sedentarisation and commoditisation was proof of their claims (Rigby, 1981). As Sorrenson states, “missionaries welcomed European settlement in the belief that settlers, by introducing improved methods of cultivation and employing labour, would assist in the civilizing process” (1968 cited in Rigby, 1981: 123). This was further complicated by the requirement that, before baptism, converts renounce their traditional ways of life, which the missionaries considered barbaric, primitive and irreligious, and vow to embrace Western religious ideals fully, which to a larger extent clashed with Maasai traditions (Tablino, 2004). The missionaries believed that their cardinal mission in Maasailand was to “save” as many “pagan” souls as possible and expose them to Western forms of modernity, civilization and religion, which they presumed to be superior (Hodgson, 2005). This rejection of Christianity was a radical setback to the development of the missionary enterprise in Maasailand.

Education in Maasailand, like missionary activity, started equally late relative to the other parts of Kenya. The first schools in Maasailand were established in an attempt to use education as a means of evangelizing the Maasai. This largely emanated from a realisation amongst the

missionaries that it was impossible to preach the gospel directly to Maasai. The missionaries believed that it was easy to educate children, who unlike their parents, were still relatively unshaped by their culture and customs, to become “proper” Christians who would eventually preach and spread the gospel in their communities (Donovan, 1978 cited in Hodgson, 2005: 118). They opened standard schools at their mission stations where a basic curriculum of reading, writing, math, science and religion was offered and “bush schools” at mission outstations where rudimentary literacy and maths were taught (Hodgson, 2005). Although the missions shared the goal of government schools, which were established later, to educate Maasai boys to become teachers, clerks and lay preachers (Carr-Hill & Peart, 2005), their main goal was to produce “qualified boys to work for the church” (Hodgson, 2005: 118). Stauffacher admits “amongst the recalcitrant Maasai ‘education’ was the best way for effecting conversions” (1927 cited in Tignor, 1976: 122). The missionaries thus became the chief purveyors of Western education in Maasailand and schooling one of the leading features of missionary work (Carr-Hill & Peart, 2005).

Efforts to recruit Maasai children to school were, like Christianity, bluntly resisted (Rigby, 1992; Neckebrouck, 1993). Maasai elders were reluctant to permit schools to be built, and sent their least favourite or youngest and most dispensable sons in terms of labour needs to school under intimidation from the state (Tignor, 1976; Hodgson, 2005). Maasai elders were very distrustful of the motives of the colonial officers and missionaries, and viewed education and Christianity as ways of robbing them of their sons forever. The Maasai believed that “a man would not be both a Maasai and Christian” (Hodgson, 1999c: 765). The difficulty to get Maasai children to school has continued to the present. Maasai parents were happy that the government and missionaries did not force them to send their girls and daughters to school because they saw education as being geared towards working for foreign masters (Rigby, 1981). Western education was, however, enthusiastically seized by other communities in East Africa and a few Maasai men. A small number of Maasai men were consequently educated, some of whom, became influential political leaders, teachers, development workers, priests and ardent advocates of Maasai education.

The first Maasai men to accept Christianity and to undertake missionary education were derogatorily and contemptuously termed *ormeek* (Hodgson, 1999b). *Ormeek* is a pejorative Maasai word for educated or baptized Africans who wore Western clothes, spoke a foreign language such as Swahili and/or worked in government (Hodgson, 1999b). Many of these

people were not considered true Maasai as they had not gone through the essential age-grading ceremonies, had few cattle and eked out a living through agriculture, which the traditional Maasai despised (Rigby, 1981; Hodgson, 2005). They were men of low traditional standing in the community and included those who had left during the hard times to seek refuge amongst the Kikuyu and had married Kikuyu women (King, 1971) often at the prompting of missionaries who were anxious that their converts marry Christian women. Even though widely discriminated against within the Maasai society, *ormEEK* became powerful in the colonial (and later postcolonial) political structure (Hodgson, 1999b).

As the Maasai began to clearly understand the links between Christianity, capitalist penetrations, and domination by the white settlers and the colonial government they became more lethargic, if not hostile, to Christianity and education (Rigby, 1989). They increasingly became more attached to their traditional ways of life particularly circumcision which played an important role in instilling loyalty to tribal traditions. For instance, when the circumcision period for boys in school approached they were given two to three months leave to go and participate. However, when they returned to school they became reluctant to perform tasks expected of students after lessons, particularly if the work was that assigned by the Maasai to women or natives of “inferior” tribes, such as building and digging respectively (Tignor, 1976; Hodgson, 2005). This resulted in high levels of absenteeism and desertions from schools and only a few remained active Christians once they left school (Tignor, 1976).

In 1963, after independence, the government nationalised all mission schools and assumed greater roles in education. This greatly changed the nature of missionaries’ work and interactions with the Maasai. The missionary’s work became to convert a few individuals, establish a church for them and then leave them to take responsibility for their own finances, discipline and authority for their congregations (Hodgson, 2005). However, the mission stations remained focal points in their missionary endeavours, which included a wide range of activities such as the provision of social welfare and medical services. The contemporary missionary influences are thus products of dynamic processes of give and take between the Maasai and the missionaries set within the shifting political, economic and social contexts of the time.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has highlighted two main points. Firstly, I have shown that prior to the advent of British colonialism the Maasai were transhumant pastoralists. However, since the advent of British colonialism, the society has undergone significant transformations. Propelled by the notion that Maasai pastoral production was destructive to the environment, irrational, inefficient and a backward way of life, the British colonial administrators and Christian missionaries made attempts to discourage it in favour of sedentarisation and conversion to cultivation. In so doing, the colonial state set out to change a production system, without much success, that they did not fully understand.

Secondly, in this chapter it has been pointed out that the colonial regime introduced and imposed a money economy on the Maasai. By restricting the Maasai to a single native reserve, suppressing and criminalizing cattle raiding and *moranism*, imposing taxes and punitive collective fines, all paid in cash, the doors were open to a completely new concept of economic production and resource sharing. These changes set in motion processes that have transformed the Maasai's pastoral production system into an organised market activity. Gradually, with capitalist penetration and commoditisation, the Maasai started increasingly to see land and cattle as commodities that would be bought and sold for the self-enrichment of individual herders. By radically altering the traditional pastoral system of production, the penetration of colonialism and capitalism not only set in motion transformations that continue to haunt the Maasai to this day but also to shape their social, political and economic systems. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the methodology and the methods used to collect data for this research project.

Chapter 5: Research Setting and Methodology

Fieldwork is a process as well as a series of encounters, and whilst there may be many revelatory fieldwork experiences, those revelations come to us slowly and methodically (Shore, 1999:26).

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of my research setting and methodology. The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section outlines and defines my research site. The second section provides an introductory overview of Amboseli in terms of how I got there and my initial impressions. The third section describes my research focus, methodology and methods used for collecting the desired empirical information. In the fourth section, I offer a personal reflection on my experiences of doing fieldwork among the Maasai of Amboseli in Kenya from my position as a Kenyan anthropologist. The limitations and constraints of the study are presented in the fifth section and, in the sixth section; a discussion of how the data analysis and presentation was done is offered and then followed by a brief chapter conclusion in section seven. The section that follows provides background information to the research site.

5.1 My Introduction to the Research Setting

In spite of Kenya being my home country, when I first arrived in Amboseli for the fieldwork stage of this research my reaction was probably the same as many tourists. After a four hour drive from Nairobi, Kenya's capital city, and encountering the strikingly tall and slender fabled Maasai pastoralists swathed in red *shukas* and holes in their ears guarding their livestock herds, and after passing through hundreds of kilometres of dry rangelands, I remember thinking I was somewhere in the wilderness. The people looked 'traditional' and their homeland very remote. I remember regretting having picked this place and society as my research site. The absence of electricity and running water and the fact that I could not use a mobile phone or listen to fm radio made me realise that I was in a nonfamiliar world¹⁴. I certainly did not think I was near a major international tourist destination. There was no sign reading "welcome to Amboseli" or even directing tourists to places to 'eat or sleep'. If I hadn't asked for directions from the friendly

¹⁴ In 2004 Celtel extended its network coverage area to Amboseli and in 2005 Safaricom also did the same. So it is now possible to use mobile phones in Amboseli. Similarly, some of the fm radio stations that have been set up in Kenya since 2004 now cover some parts of Amboseli.

people I came across, I might have kept on travelling. Of course, I knew that there was Amboseli, a National Park, and the possibility of going for a game drive excited me.

For first timers like me, getting to Amboseli requires small bits of fortitude and strength but mostly perseverance. This is often what is required to get anywhere in Kenya. The roads, which are sometimes wonderful, are in other places mere patches of potholed tarmac and/or gravel. The journey to Amboseli begins in Nairobi, a crowded and fast paced city of about three million people. From there, the road winds southwards across the Athi Plains, via Athi River and Kitengela townships, through Kajiado (the district headquarters and administrative unit covering the Amboseli region) and Namanga into ANP. The tarmac road up to Namanga, which lies on the border post between Kenya and Tanzania, is well served by regular public transport. However, there is no public transport to Amboseli from Namanga so access is difficult without private transport, preferably a four-wheel drive vehicle. In Namanga there are several luxuries for a road weary-traveller, including a post office, petrol station, several hotels and endless stalls selling Maasai handicrafts amongst other things. It is a great resting spot before tackling the 60km of bumpy and heavily corrugated road into ANP.

Alternatively, Amboseli can be accessed via Emali on the Nairobi-Mombasa road. This 228km road is tarmac up to Emali but the 70km stretch from Emali to Iremiito gate is badly dilapidated, corrugated and potholed. Access from the Coastal city of Mombasa is mainly on a 202km gravelled road through Tsavo West National Park entering the ANP via Kimana (Olkelunyiet) Gate. There are two airstrips which provide air access, one located within ANP and the other at Amboseli Sopa Lodge (formerly Kilimanjaro Buffalo Lodge) in Kimana group Ranch, 20km from Kimana gate. Most tourists, however, approach Amboseli from Namanga. Along the road from Nairobi to Namanga, particularly after Kajiado town, on either side of the road are a series of curio shops and trading centres which share several features. They are built of a mixture of timber and iron sheets, with a few made of bricks. The businesses of these trading centres are varied but the vast majority of the shops stock a similar array of products, which include: basic staples of Kenyan village life such as salt, soap, wheat and maize flour, dry legumes, sugar, tea leaves and cooking oil. In front of these shops, the owners sometimes have a table with fresh produce, mainly vegetables such as onions, cabbage, potatoes and bananas. Although most curio shops stock Maasai handicrafts, some also sell non-Maasai artefacts. Most trading centres typically have several butcheries, bars, barber shops and a few more specialized businesses that sell farm implements, new and used clothing, and veterinary and human medicine.

Beyond Namanga town as the road to Amboseli winds up and down the expansive Olgulului Oularashi group ranch, it passes through open grasslands and bush lands, which look inhospitable during the dry season. Indeed, if a car were to break down or run out of fuel in the midst of these grey plains and in the absence of the ubiquitous tourist vans, one may have to walk a long distance dodging wild animals here and there before coming to a house or place to get help. The general topography of the land is characterised by low hills, which roll out of mountains. Occasionally, Maasai youths are encountered herding livestock along the road and there is wildlife either crossing or grazing adjacent to the road. Just outside the Meshanani gate to the right are shops from where Maasai men and women launch their curio hawking businesses that target tourists waiting to be cleared before entering the park.

A short distance into the park a huge dustbowl engulfs the road especially during the dry season. This dustbowl keeps one wondering whether wild animals really do exist or survive here. During the heavy rain season, this stretch of the road, which lies on the basin of the now extinct Lake Amboseli, is often flooded making access to the interior of the park near impossible. After a few kilometres the landscape suddenly changes to savannah-like grasslands and hundreds of wildebeests, antelopes, warthogs, zebras, elephants and occasional buffalos may be seen grazing together in harmony. Before approaching Ol Tukai, a built up enclave, on the left hand side of the road is a lush green swamp which forms a permanent watering point for wildlife and on the right hand side is a brown, dusty desolate wasteland. The difference is unbelievable.

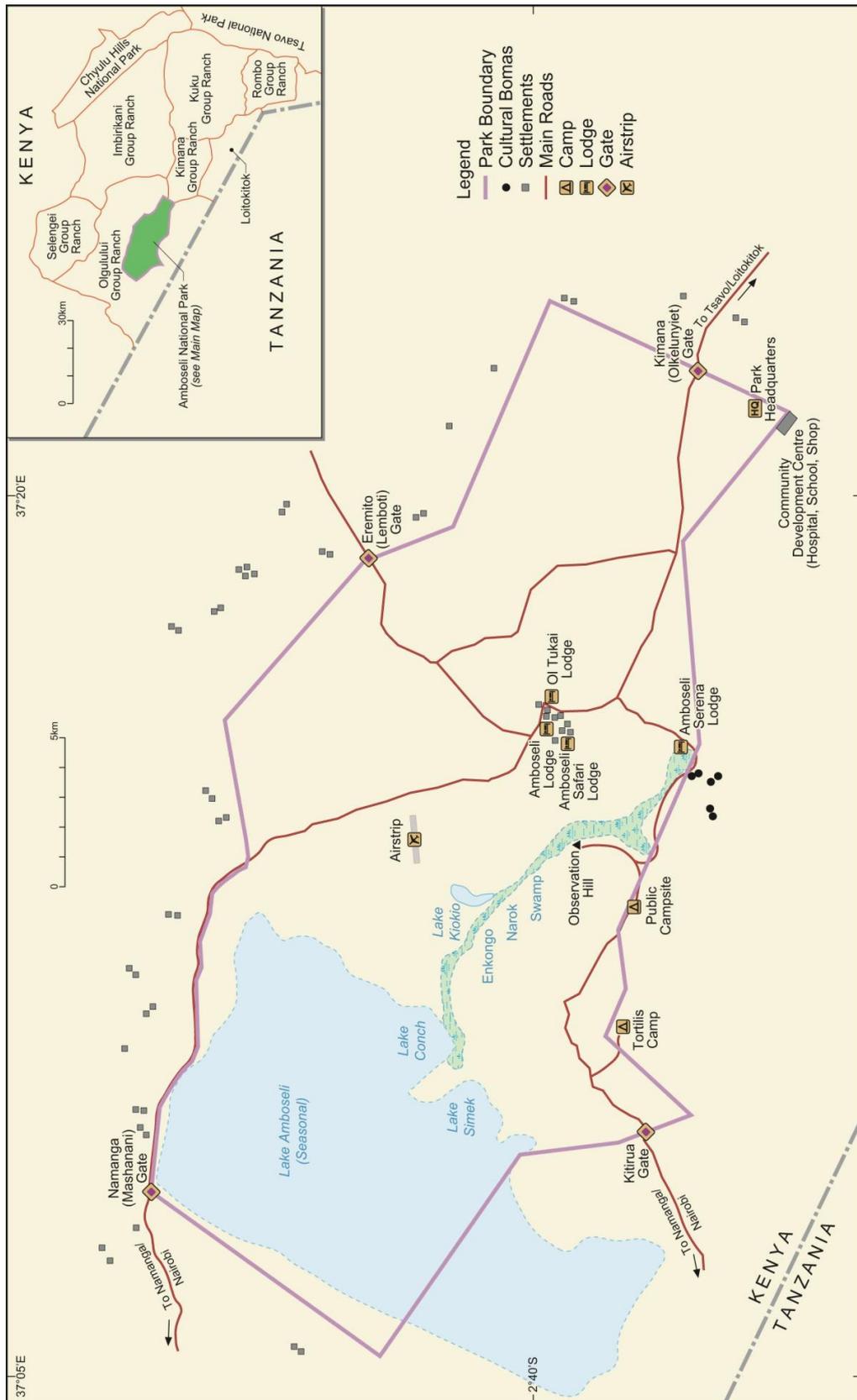
The Ol Tukai enclave is the park's main commercial zone and tourist destination. It is centrally located in the park on a piece of land owned and managed by the Kajiado County Council. The main constructions include two game lodges (Ol Tukai and Amboseli Safari Lodge) and Kilimanjaro Safari Club that was abandoned in 1992 after El Nino rains destroyed it. In addition to the lodges, there are also residential quarters for lodge staff and tour guides/drivers, kiosks, two pubs and a petrol station under construction at Ol Tukai Lodge. Other constructions include the living and operational quarters of the African Conservation Centre (ACC), Amboseli Research and Conservation project and the Amboseli Elephant Research Project as well as the dilapidated family country house which is operated by a local Maasai as a combined bar, shop and hotel.

From Ol Tukai the road winds eastwards to Kimana (Olkelunyiet) gate. After about 6km, a branch of this road leads to Amboseli Serena Lodge (ASL). The lodge is located inside the park, some 12kms away from the Ol Tukai zone along the southern edge of the park and Enkongu Narok swamp. Just next to Kimana gate are the park headquarters, composed of an office block, a workshop, residential houses for staff and a self-catering guesthouse. From the Olkelunyiet gate the road then traverses the Kimana Tikondo GR and links the Emali-Kimana-Loitokitok and the Mombasa-Tsavo-Amboseli roads. The journey by car from where these three roads converge, to Loitokitok town (a distance of about 10km), presents the observer with a view of sedentary homesteads surrounded by horticultural fields on both sides of the road.

Several nucleated sedentary settlements have sprung up close to the park boundary and especially at the main entrances. The growing numbers of settlements around the park have been exacerbated by the cultural tourism industry, which is mainly based on cultural *bomas*. The initial charm of the cultural *bomas* is that they appear to be authentic traditional Maasai homesteads occupied by families, giving the impression that little or no change has taken place in Maasai lives. To me many of the adults I encountered on my way, wearing their traditional red shawl, or *shuka*, that is emblematic of Maasai identity, appeared to fit the scenario well. Many adults also wore simple shoes, cut from old tires and fastened on to their feet with rubber straps, and men carried spears and clubs, the ceremonial emblems of their status. I judged most to be poor pastoralists. At least that was my first impression. The place did not strike me as being unique or important in touristic terms or in any other way. But clearly, someone new to an area cannot speak with much authority.

With time I learned that my first impressions of the Maasai and their landscapes (both natural and cultural) were sometimes incompatible with the reality on the ground. Amboseli was not in the middle of the wilderness but, on the contrary, it is a popular tourist destination and the cultural *bomas* near the park were 'strategically' positioned to capture tourist business. Accordingly, not everyone there would be so quick to say they are poor. Many believe it is a place of opportunity. Today, I am able to see the faults in the early judgments I passed. Maasai, like many other Kenyans, have unique experiences to share. From time immemorial Amboseli has been constantly changing; and the changes that have taken place can best be told by the Maasai, the people who have always lived there.

Figure 3 Map of Amboseli National Park and research sites



Source: Researcher

5.1.1 Location and Context of Research Site

The research site is situated in southern Kenya along the Tanzanian border and across the lower northern foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Loitokitok Division formerly of Kajiado District¹⁵ in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya. Loitokitok District covers an area of 6, 356.30km² km and a population of 95,430 in 1999 (Kenya, 2001). The District is divided into one national park, seven Maasai group ranches, and several private ranches. The seven group ranches are: Kimana Tikondo, Olgulului Ololarrashi, Kuku A, Kuku B, Imbirikani, Selengei and Rombo, and one national park that is ANP (see Figure 3 map of research site). Most of the district is characterised by arid and semi-arid climatic conditions, low and unreliable rainfall ranging from 300 to 500mm per annum, open grasslands and lightly bushed savannas (Western, 1982a). Water is therefore a major constraint to development. However, the region is dotted with several swamps fed by melting snow from Mt. Kilimanjaro (Reid et al., 1999). These wetlands, most of which are located inside ANP, are the region's main source of permanent water.

Loitokitok district is one of the most important ancestral homelands for the Kenyan Maasai. While a large majority of the local inhabitants are Maasai pastoralists, there are also people from Kenya's agricultural communities, the majority recent migrants living in the district. The population of Amboseli is very unevenly distributed, with vast areas unpopulated. The major areas of population concentration occur in the well-watered lowlands, shopping centres, along tourist spots and towns. The main economic activity for a large majority of the local residents is livestock production. However, irrigation and rainfed crop farming predominantly by non-Maasai, and tourism are also important economic activities. It is estimated that over 90 percent of all the people in this area directly or indirectly depend on natural resources found in the ecosystem for their livelihoods.

Fieldwork was conducted in Kimana Tikondo and Olgulului Ololarrashi group ranches both of which lie adjacent to Amboseli National Park. The two group ranches exhibit similarities in terms of environmental features, population composition, economic activities and lifestyles of their inhabitants. However, they differ in terms of size, population density, and land ownership. Kimana Tikondo group ranch, unlike Olgulului Ololarrashi, has been subdivided into individually owned parcels of land and each of the member families given title for their portion. Group ranches are discussed further in Chapter 6. Figure 3 presents a map of Amboseli National

¹⁵ Loitokitok Division was elevated to a District in early 2007.

Park showing the group ranches, tourism points and facilities. My respondents were drawn from local residents mainly Maasai though a few non-Maasai people were also involved in the study as detailed later in this chapter.

Bordering the two group ranches is Amboseli National Park. ANP is not only one of Kenya's smallest national parks but also is one of most popular wildlife viewing spots and heavily visited parks in the country (Reid et al., 1999; Rutten, 2002). In a bid to win space for wildlife, KWS has in the last few years initiated and supported projects that involve local communities in conservation and tourism development. In response, Maasai have started to accept wildlife onto their communal lands as an alternative land use (Kiyiapi et al., 2005) and to embrace community-based conservation oriented tourism development as a form of commercial enterprise (Ondicho, 2005; Rutten, 2004). Maasai involvement in tourism development has, however, had both positive and negative effects on community power and political relationships as discussed in Chapters 6 to 9. In the next section, I offer a brief introductory overview to Amboseli in terms of how I got there and my initial impressions.

5.2 Choice of Research Focus and Locus

The choice of the topic for this dissertation stemmed from a general interest in tourism as a catalyst for development which I developed whilst teaching a course on the Anthropology of Tourism at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and Institute of African Studies¹⁶, University of Nairobi. While my fascination with this topic developed over a long period of time, my interest in the socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism among the Maasai arose in 2001 when I accompanied a visiting American professor on a conducted tour of Elangata Waus and Kilonito ecotourism projects in the Central Division of Kajiado District. From this trip it dawned on me that the Maasai people living near the country's premier wildlife parks and tourist hotspots rank amongst the lowest on the socio-economic ladder. This prompted me to question why, with so much tourism going on around them, the Maasai continued to lag behind in development and, why so little ethnographic research focused on tourism's impacts on the community. I therefore decided to base my PhD research on the socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism among the Maasai.

¹⁶ The new name for the Institute of African Studies is now Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies.

Originally, I intended to conduct my fieldwork in Elangata Waus and Kilonito. However, when I presented the proposal to my supervisors at the University of Nairobi, where I briefly enrolled for doctoral study, they suggested that I shift my fieldwork site to Amboseli. In their view I would learn more about tourism's impacts in Amboseli because of the long history of tourism in the area. When I moved to New Zealand and subsequently enrolled for doctoral study at Massey University, I decided to go to Kenya to base my dissertation research on tourism's socio-cultural and economic impacts on the Maasai in Amboseli.

During the course of my fieldwork as the research evolved through discussions with different community groups and actors I shifted the focus of my study from examination of tourism's socio-cultural and economic impacts to the broad issues of power and politics associated with Maasai involvement in tourism development. This mirrored not only the most pressing issue within the research communities but also the most relevant research topic, given resource and other limitations. This involved scaling up the research to examine the dynamic and intricate power interrelationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development. Restricting my research to this local power dynamics, I ended up focusing on how competition for political control over tourism benefits had contributed to conflicts and divisions within the Maasai communities in Amboseli. Overall, the study focus and research strategy did not change dramatically. I was able through the fieldwork period to carry out research that was topical and of significance.

The dissertation which is one of the core products of this research provides an in-depth and layered description and particularly positioned understanding of community-based tourism as a case study of indigenous people in the face of rapid tourism development. The tone of the dissertation is very much a political assessment of community power relations and the problems associated with local involvement in tourism development. The politicized depiction of the problems associated with Maasai involvement in community-based tourism development is drawn from extensive narratives of local informants and respondents. I have used direct quotes from my field interviews throughout the dissertation together with observations of specific incidents to support my main arguments.

5.2.I Choice of Suitable Research Methodology

The choice of a suitable methodology is vital in any research project because “methodology influences everything from the researcher’s choice of topic to collection and analysis of findings and to the way in which the research results are made known” (Scheyvens, 1995: 90). However, the cultural uniqueness of the Maasai and the unfolding developments in tourism that directly affect them provide numerous challenges to the researcher. These challenges are complicated by the fact that there is no one ‘best’ way of conducting research amongst indigenous peoples such as the Maasai who are in the throes of stupendous developments in a developing country where the effects of modernisation (including tourism) are unclear. Even though some guidelines exist, the question still remains: Which is the most suitable methodology for undertaking research involving native peoples such as the Maasai? The choice of an appropriate methodological approach for this research was particularly complicated by the reality that,

It is often difficult to get information about the Maasai from the Maasai themselves. Being ultra-conservative and suspicious, the Maasai appear to regard with mistrust anyone who is pointedly interested in them... Their answers are affected by attitude... A good example is the Maasai who interpreted for an American anthropologist who spent several months living with the Maasai... After the anthropologist left, the interpreter joyously told people how he had misled the American who had carefully written down the tall tales he had interpreted to him (Talbot, 1964: 116).

Kitchin and Tate (2000:34) have observed that “it is difficult to provide a foolproof guide as to how to design your research strategy ... there is no way to conduct research - no magic or pervasive formula”. Much of the research design and decisions about the suitable research techniques are dependent on the researcher’s intuition and creativity. This is because even if the researcher makes prior arrangements on what to do, what to focus on and which research methods to use in data collection, during the course of fieldwork he/she may discover that plan is not operable as envisaged or suitable (Creswell, 2003). Thus, the choice of suitable research techniques is often done in gradual response to the changing social circumstances and developments within the fieldwork setting.

Given Talbot’s assertion and the fact that there is no blueprint on how to do culturally sensitive research, I was left to choose between qualitative and quantitative methods. The nature of my study which takes a socio-political angle necessitated the use of qualitative methodology. “Research may involve understanding of social phenomena in ways that do not require measurement and quantification ... the nature of the phenomena themselves may rule out

quantification” (Abercrombie et al. 2000 cited in Brewer 2000:1). I felt that ethnography¹⁷ which is one of the leading qualitative approaches in anthropological research was the most suitable methodology for this study. “Ethnography is a scientific approach for discovering and researching social and cultural patterns and meanings within a community, institution, or cultural group. The Researcher’s goal is to understand a social phenomenon, in this case tourism by observing its effects directly and by assigning importance to the residents’ views” (Schensul et al. 1999 cited in Cervey, 2005:11). Ethnography is particularly useful for,

the study of people in naturally occurring settings or “fields” by methods of data collection which capture their social and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner without meaning being imposed on them externally (Brewer, 2000: 6).

The fundamental advantage of ethnography is that, unlike a survey in which a quantitative researcher undertakes short intervals of research gathering information from a large, representative sample of respondents (Chambers, 1983), the researcher lives and participates in the daily activities of the research community. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:1) observe,

ethnographic research involves the ethnographer becoming resident amongst the research participants and participating overtly or covertly, in their daily activities for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said and asking questions - in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.

Ethnographic research therefore minimises the failings and biases of a detached quantitative researcher and, through participant observation, permits the ethnographer to observe, learn, experience and comprehend social phenomenon and events in the same way and from the perspective of the research subjects, the people who ‘live them out’. The ethnographer is therefore able to capture an inside view of the situation from a multiplicity of dimensions and thus, gain a deeper understanding of how people organise their lives, respond to situations and what they value in life. This also allows the voices of the research participants to be heard in the final research report through extensive direct quotes (Veal, 1997). What is of interest in ethnographic research is therefore the ethnographer’s presentation of ethnography to the reader (or viewer) from the informant’s point of view. As Van Maanen (1982:103) aptly states, “At the heart of

¹⁷ The term ‘ethnography’ is used in anthropological and tourism literature to refer to both a type of data or information and methods of data collection that give rise to qualitative data. As Atkinson and Hammersley (1998:110) have pointed out, the “definition of the term ethnography has been subject to controversy. For some, it refers to the philosophical paradigm to which one makes a total commitment whilst for others it designates a method that one uses as and when appropriate”. Ethnographers do the ethnography and then write ethnography, or in other words, ethnography is both the product of ethnography and process of ethnographic research (Coast, 2001).

ethnography is good or ‘thick’ description, typically obtained through immersion in the everyday life of the people under study”.

5.2.2 Anthropological Fieldwork

The ethnographic approach implies an extended period of fieldwork with the ethnographer living in the research community and “collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1). In my proposal I wrote that I intended to conduct classical anthropological fieldwork, where I would live with a Maasai family. However, once my fieldwork commenced I realised that the research communities were scattered within a large geographical area, and if I were to grasp the dynamic power and political interrelationships arising from the involvement of these communities in tourism development, then I could not limit my focus to one location.

Fieldwork for my dissertation was conducted in Kimana Group Ranch between November 2003 and December 2003, March and May, 2004, August and October, 2004¹⁸ and in Olgulului Olalarashi group ranch from January to August 2005. In the course of my fieldwork I lived in three different places. During my first round of fieldwork, I lived for one month in a rented room at Kimana Shopping Centre. In the second month, due to security concerns,¹⁹ I moved and boarded in lodgings at Loitokitok town. In the second and third rounds, I lived in the same lodge in Loitokitok. In the final round, during the eight-month field session where I researched the cultural *bomas*, I briefly lodged at the Driver’s quarters in Amboseli Serene Lodge before the management offered me free accommodation at the Staff quarters.

With the help of a guide from the community I was able to travel extensively within the research sites. My days consisted of visiting various locations either in my project car or public transport and then walking along the foot-trails in the community. On my way to destinations or villages as planned for the day I paused to talk to as many villagers as time could permit. I also visited various institutions including schools and churches where I talked to several people including different tourism stakeholders and villagers from diverse social and geographical settings. Much of my time was spent talking to people in open conversations, hanging out to listen and observe,

¹⁸ Data collected between August and October 2004 was lost through theft from my project car in Nairobi and therefore this period has been omitted

¹⁹ Three incidents of carjacking were reported on the Emali-Loitokitok road about five kilometres from the shopping centre and two or so incidents of violent robbery were reported in Kimana during the same month.

and participating in daily activities as will be detailed in the section on data collection. My association with various tourism stakeholders from within and outside the Maasai community affirmed the enormous knowledge base and skills that existed within the research communities. Working with all these groups of actors permitted me to solicit multiple perspectives, to gain a deep understanding of my research participants, to learn from them and see things from their perspective.

The adoption of a 'multi-sited'²⁰ ethnographic approach permitted the exploration of community-tourism relations in locations displaying greatly diverse tourism conditions but within the same geographical area. The research was conducted in two locations experiencing different types of tourism but affected in the same way by shifts in conservation and tourism policy. A multi-sited ethnographic approach permitted me not only to cover the depth and diversity of the issues under investigation but also to gain a broad understanding of intraregional differences and similarities in their experiences with community-based conservation-oriented tourism development. This brought me to a realisation that the 'field' is not necessarily only one site but rather is a mixture of different sites and areas, events and situations. According to Shore (1999) the 'field' is something that is constantly changing and evolving through shifting situations. In hindsight, all the people I met in the different places I lived, and worked, the offices I visited, the conversations I had with different stakeholders all constituted my field. I was therefore in an actual sense never out of the field as "the field" is given a reality by the researcher through his/her research subjects (Holliday 2002:43).

5.2.3 The Fieldwork Experience

After about seven months in New Zealand and fulfilling the requirements for my provisional enrolment as a PhD candidate²¹ at Massey University I was set for the fieldwork stage of my dissertation. As time approached for my departure, I was extremely excited about the prospect of going back to Kenya and to see my first-born son, born while I was in New Zealand. Since I was returning home I did not suffer from the 'pre-departure-disorders' often experienced by

²⁰ George Marcus' concept of 'multi-site fieldwork' is based on the understanding that global processes have local implications; thus many of the processes studied by anthropologist take place at various sites at once. So instead of working along geographical lines, the anthropologist is practically moving around with the topic studied (Engebriksen 2002:235).

²¹ I gave a seminar on my research topic at the School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University on March 28, 2003 in fulfilment of the requirements for provisional enrolment as a PhD student. Thereafter I applied to the Association of Social Anthropologists of New Zealand for a peer review of ethics for my research project. This was done on the 8th of May 2003 after which I travelled back to Kenya to undertake fieldwork.

fieldworkers who plan to visit a foreign country. Rather, I was looking forward to returning 'home' to do fieldwork, although the research site and its residents were not familiar to me. I arrived in Kenya on 7th May 2003 and spent the first six months in Nairobi doing preparations such as obtaining a research clearance permit²² (See appendix 5 & 6) and gathering materials and equipment for on-the-ground fieldwork. During this time I also visited various libraries and government offices²³ in a bid to obtain information on existing and ongoing research and the range of available published literature on my topic. Looking back at my effort to get as much information on my topic as possible before 'going to the field', it strikes me that 'data' is not necessarily something one collects from one source. Rather, it evolves out of a process of learning and understanding which builds on itself through casual conversation and everyday events.

The first time I went to Amboseli - on 3rd November 2003 - coincided with my first contact with the field. On my way there I stopped at Kajiado District Headquarters to notify the area District Commissioner and District Education Officer about my research project, furnish them with my itinerary and present to them a copy of my research clearance permit. This is a standard government requirement for doing research in Kenya. I had to do the same with District Officer, Chief, Assistant chief²⁴, GR officials and other community leaders. In practice they respected my research permit and this enabled me entry into the research sites without much ado. However, once on site I had difficulties choosing a suitable location where to start my fieldwork. The difficulty in choosing a place to study my fieldwork was compounded with problems of gaining entry into the research communities. However, my problems were solved when I met a former student of mine at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, a local, in Loitokitok town. When I explained my reasons for coming to Amboseli he invited me to attend with him a chief's baraza²⁵

²² It is a government requirement that all researchers working in Kenya obtain a research clearance permit from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (now Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology).

²³ I visited Utalii College, University of Nairobi and KWS libraries in Nairobi and government offices including the Ministry of Tourism headquarters, the Kenya Tourism Development Corporation, Tourism Board, and Kenya Wildlife Services in Nairobi. I also talked to several people who included scholars, government officials, researchers and tourism enthusiasts.

²⁴ There are five levels of administration below the central government. These are: Province (Provincial Commissioner); District (District Commissioner); Division (Divisional Officer); Location (Chief); Sublocation (assistant chief) and for Maasailand (GR executive committee) the Provincial and District Commissioners are appointed directly by the President, whilst the Divisional Officer, Chief and Assistant Chief are recruited through the normal government procedures. All these officers are often referred to as Provisional Administration and they wield a considerable amount of political and administrative power over decisions of the development committees which are within their areas of jurisdiction. The Administration has spearheaded numerous development projects in Maasailand including conservation, subdivision of group ranches, and promotion of education.

²⁵ Baraza is a Swahili word which literally means a community meeting in which members discuss local development concerns and other local issues.

where he would introduce me to the community. He was attending the meeting in his capacity as a development worker with an international organisation operating in the area.

When we arrived at the baraza the meeting was still on and I was allowed to join in upon request. Towards the end I was given a chance by the area Chief to introduce myself to the villagers and to explain to them about my research project. Before accepting my request to work in the community, the chief asked me to assure the villagers that I could not distort facts like one American lady who, after doing research there, wrote that the Maasai ate elephants. The villagers viewed that assertion as an insult since the Maasai do not eat game meat. After giving them my assurance and promising to send a copy of my final research report to the community the villagers accepted me and my plan. Since my research required travel to different villages where I was not well known, the chief appointed one man to guide me through the community and to introduce me to the villagers and to occasionally translate²⁶ for me. The appointed guide was fluent both in Kiswahili and English. While I was concerned about the effect the guide's presence would have on responses, there was no alternative; I needed someone to guide me through the community.

My fieldwork was by and large smooth save for a small incident which occurred in the first week of fieldwork at the *cultural bomas*. The incident involved a clique of tour drivers/guides who, suspecting that I was a government spy investigating their corrupt deals of demanding bribes for delivering tourists to the *boma*, spread rumours that I was a devil worshipper. Working in cahoots with their stooges in the *bomas* they persuaded villagers not to cooperate with me and not to provide me with any information as I would use it to harm and "expose" them (meaning the drivers' exploitation of the villagers). In some instances, these tour drivers/guides demanded that I be expelled from the *cultural bomas* on the pretext that tourists were complaining about my presence. Certainly they were suspicious of me, a Kenyan but non-Maasai, in a way they could not had I been a foreigner. When this rumour was first broken to me by one of my informants I became confused and could not discern how I was supposed to respond or conduct myself. This disturbed me a lot and the anxiety to see whether the community would respond in my favour or not created very stressful moments for me. As Kotsi (2007: 11) has noted, "Fieldwork had an effect on me and I too had an effect on it. The anthropological research is not done independently of the researcher and it is not possible that the anthropologist observes from the outside. I was included every moment".

²⁶ Though a large majority of the Maasai people speak that language, there are also others who are not fluent.

This incident not only introduced me to diverse insights because it was part of the environment I was studying but also brought me to a realisation that through such conflict situations the anthropologist discovers many things that he would never have found out in normal circumstances. In retrospect, this incident generated a rich source of data. The fact that it was the research participants who told me about the rumour gave me the confidence that I was at least accepted into the community. My immediate response was to get more involved in the villagers' daily activities such as herding cattle, attending community meetings, and transporting villagers in the project car to the dispensary for treatment, and to participate in *boma* marketing - all of which facilitated the deepening of my relationship with the villagers. Through my participation in community life I was able to gain a more situational understanding of the Maasai and to make sense of their everyday life actions especially as they related to tourism. In developing close relationships, I felt I was able to build a rapport with potential research participants and for them to gain confidence in me. I was therefore able to obtain data that may have not been revealed if I had kept a distance or a barrier between us.

Photo 1 Researcher tending sheep



Source: Researcher

Photo 2 Eating meat with *morans* in the Bush



Source: Researcher

Photo 3 Researcher (top right) on public transport



Source: Researcher

Photo 4 Transporting a sick child to a health clinic at ASL



Source: Researcher

I felt greatly honoured when I saw several villagers welcome me into their homes, act in my favour, identify with me, and take time to answer my questions. Without their support my fieldwork would have been impossible. Thus, it was important for me to build positive relationships with the local residents so as to work in their community without being stigmatized. I was conscious throughout my fieldwork period that if I wanted to gain access to informants and their knowledge, I had to create rapport to help in building a bridge between me and them. I was always willing to cooperate with community leaders and to join the villagers in the places where they worked daily and to act as cheerfully and helpfully as I could in all our interactions. The distance between them and myself was quickly overcome as they realised that I posed no danger and was therefore somebody the villagers could trust, consider with familiarity, and with whom they could share information and their knowledge about their community and its relation to tourism.

Once I had the confidence and visible support of the villagers and their leaders, many more doors were opened to me. I was gradually accepted and warmly received wherever I went within the community. However, some time elapsed before most of the villagers had a clear grasp of my research project. Once the 'ice' was broken, many villagers became freer with me. They started asking me many questions relating to my life in Kenya and New Zealand. They were especially interested in knowing more about my personal life such as marital status, size of my family and why I chose to study them and not any other people, how long the research would take, who was funding me and who owned the project car I was using, whether they would see the results, how the study could benefit them and why I was studying when I am already old. The most curious question was: "and you have only one child who will 'eat' all the wealth you are making from all these studies?" At first, I was surprised by their questions but answering them candidly and in detail strengthened our relationship and consequently, they became increasingly comfortable with my presence. After their curiosity was satisfied they were forthcoming with stories and information. I came to accept that my researcher role was that of a learner and information provider only when participants asked for advice. Through those relations I was able to build up my ethnography.

5. 3 Data Collection

As already stated I felt that I would get a greater understanding of the subject under investigation by collecting both primary and secondary ethnographic data and flexible application of multiple ethnographic methods of data collection at a particular time, place, event or situation. Both primary and secondary data were collected using the methods described below.

Participant observation: In participant observation, data is collected through a combination or any one of those mechanisms used in daily life: listening, participating and questioning, which includes casual conversations, in-depth individual or group interviews and questionnaires (Silverman, 2000). Such an approach is useful for getting an 'inside' view of the situation as the participant observer often resides with the people under investigation for a length of time, participating in their routine lives, speaking their vernacular language and collecting whatever information is of relevance to the research question. The method is particularly "well suited to a dramaturgical perspective because it enables researchers to capture the range of facts from the mini-movements to the grand gestures of people under study" (Adler and Adler, 1994:38).

In my research I employed this approach to observe the local people and their community setting, their living and welfare conditions as well as their encounters with tourists. Where circumstances permitted, I actively participated in a wide variety of daily routine activities such as herding, fetching water, taking sick villagers to the health centres, attending church services, *bomas* and community meetings, celebrations, rituals and ceremonies as well as actual tourist-oriented activities. While on a few occasions the locals might have been aware of my roles as an observer and researcher, particularly when they were asked for interviews after specific events, in many instances they might not have been conscious of my presence. In this way I was able to observe participants closely, at times taking an active part in discussions and at other times remaining silent as an observer. This largely depended on the activity that was being performed and the situation in which it was performed. For instance, whilst on the one hand I would participate in *boma* marketing, on the other hand, I would not participate in singing and dancing for tourists.

I recorded all of my observations, sometimes on the spot (if this could be done unobtrusively) and always afterwards. Every evening I documented in as much detail and accuracy as possible my entire daily experiences and observations. Careful note-taking resulted in the accumulation of a veritable mountain of recorded observations. My engagements as both a participant and non-participant observer contributed an enormous amount of learning on my part in addition to enabling a critical reflection on the part of my research participants. These research activities enabled me to gain critical insights into the diversity of local perspectives on tourism.

Visual documentation: In a somewhat larger focus, I photographed and videotaped Maasai performing tasks or events I thought had a strong bearing on my study. Photographing both cultural and natural attractions, interactions between villagers and tourists, arrangements when attending meetings and serving tourists, villagers doing daily routine activities and villagers donned in their traditional garb performing cultural events such as song and dance or selling souvenirs to tourists and so forth. Whenever I went back to Nairobi I processed my films and brought back printed photos to share with the villagers. The study and sharing of these photos provided me with the opportunity to ask people short questions about particular issues not clear to me, to pursue further meanings, and things to look for during actual life situations. Discussions of the images in the photographs helped to gain more knowledge about the ethnographic context in which I was working. Some of the photos that I shot in the course of

my fieldwork have been used in the dissertation to provide a practical depiction of the issues discussed.

Interviews: Much of the data were obtained by exploring and discussing various topics with informants. A large part of these informal conversations can be defined as 'ethnographic interviews', which are interviews where the researcher lets information emerge without necessarily using pre-determined questions, pen or paper (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). The flexibility of this approach made it easier to do spontaneous on the spot interviews such as when I casually asked villagers to explain some behaviour or activity. Almost all my informal interviews revolved around issues emerging from my observations. In this way I was able to explain discrepancies between verbal claims and actual behaviour. In asking on the spot questions in a face-to-face manner, I tried to shape my questions in such a way as to induce my respondents to express themselves with their 'natural' easiness and to answer questions instinctively and without any restraint. As a result, I was able to probe further issues emerging from the interviews that I considered appropriate to respective interviewee/s. More often than not most respondents in my study were not only prepared to be interviewed for any length of time but also gave the impression that they were very open and honest.

I also carried out formal interviews using unstructured open-ended questions (see appendix 7) which were modified as the research progressed to meet new agendas that emerged in the research process. As a result, formal interviews became my primary method of gathering information. I arranged to interview people after I had told them what I was doing. Before the interview session I introduced myself explaining that I was carrying out research in their community on tourism for my dissertation. I also explained in brief but clear words the objectives of my study, showed the respondents my research clearance permit, and assured them that the information they gave me would remain confidential and that their identities would not be disclosed. I also made them aware that their information may be used for publication but their personal names would be removed from the published material. Then, I verbally asked for their informed consent (see appendix 5) before engaging in data collection. I stressed to the participants that they were free to pull out of the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable or to seek clarification from me if something was unclear to them about my project. This was done in a way conforming to the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research and Teaching Involving Human Subjects* of Massey University and *Association of Social Anthropologists of New Zealand* (see appendix 3 & 5). Throughout the study I was conscious of the rights of my research participants.

A total of 25 individuals were interviewed in Kimana Tikondo group ranch and 40 in Olgulului group ranch. The respondents were drawn from a wide range of stakeholders including Maasai villagers, tour drivers/guides, politicians, civil society, development workers, government and non-governmental organisation's officers, researchers and so forth. Each of these actors affected the opinions and views of the Maasai towards community-based conservation and tourism in a variety of ways. Most interviews took place in informal settings, in a face-to-face manner using a limited number of predetermined questions as a guide whilst allowing respondents to answer questions freely and spontaneously. The interviews were conducted in Kiswahili, Kenya's national language and lasted between 30 - 60 minutes depending on the volubility of the respondent. Questions were modified particularly after shifting my research site to the cultural *bomas* to incorporate emerging issues and drop irrelevant ones, for instance those about the community sanctuary. The semi-structured interviews usually consisted of one meeting but there were a few people with whom I was able to establish rapport and return after the initial interview for more casual conversations.

The interviews were tape-recorded and some information noted down in a field notebook. Most informants were tolerant of the tape recorder and notebook, and actually, some were delighted to be tape-recorded. However, a few were not willing to be tape-recorded and/or to have any notes written in their presence. I always respected their wishes. Most of the questions posed to respondents referred to specific topics and issues considered relevant to the person or group being interviewed. In some cases, their responses changed my views and alerted me to look for aspects I had previously overlooked. This allowed new learning and priorities to emerge that I could not have envisaged in advance. Situating myself strategically within a complex network of local and non-local actors I was able to gain deep insights into the intricate power relationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development.

My effort to type my daily observations and experiences on my laptop often revealed new information, understandings and questions which sometimes could be developed into more semi-structured and focused topic-oriented interviews. The interviews yielded different perspectives about local tourism which added to my understanding of the complexities, problem and dynamics of Maasai involvement in community-based tourism development. I always accepted individual views and opinions, whether strongly reflective of, or differing from, majority opinions. Differing opinions and views were highly valued for the insights they provided into the

diversity of perspectives on the complexities of the power relations arising from local participation in community tourism development. However, I realised that if the interview was too formal – if I was taking notes - I would receive shorter answers and maybe more ‘correct’ responses when caught up in note-taking. In retrospect, I think my effort to document the whole conversation made me incapable of taking control over the interview situation. In spite of this shortcoming, I gathered a vast amount of data and excerpts from my field sessions are prominently featured throughout the sections presenting the findings of the study.

Focus group discussions (FGDs): Typically, FGDs bring together five or more people who share similar experiences or concerns or socio-cultural backgrounds to talk about a specific issue (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). The FGDs are usually conducted with the help of a moderator in an environment or setting that permits participants to engage in a relaxed manner in lively discussion for one-two hours. In this study I organised six such FGDs at three commercial cultural *bomas*. The chairmen of the three *bomas* assisted me in the mobilization of groups of between seven and ten persons with men and women in separate groups. The FGD participants were assembled to represent a cross-section of various interest groups within the community. There were therefore two FGDs in each of the three *bomas*, one each for women and for men. Because of the living arrangements in the commercial villages, two FGDs were held under a tree and four in a classroom in the nursery schools within the village.

The FGDs started with the researcher making a brief speech detailing the nature and objectives of the study, giving assurance that the information generated could be kept confidential and clarifying any issues that were not clear to them. In three FGD sessions I was a discussant and in the other three I was a note-taker while one villager who I had thoroughly briefed took the role of a discussant. However, where I was the discussant, note-taking was compromised. The discussions focused on issues I considered to be pertinent to my research topic. The meetings with women however were held with the help of a male translator mainly because most Maasai women - unlike men - do not speak Kiswahili. This in one way or another affected the discussion. In addition, when they are together they shy away from using Kiswahili and prefer to use their native Maa language. The discussants could often participate in long discussions in Maa but translate the same to me in only a few words. Interruptions by people who would just walk in the middle of a discussion, then insist on staying to listen or to make contribution was a common problem in all the sessions. Generally, the FGDs did not yield any new data.

Document study: I collected information from various secondary sources on and in the area. These included brochures, written media, policy papers, manuals, files, maps and research reports. These documents were reviewed with the intent of gaining statistical data and policy information from KWS, provincial, and national levels. In the next section I reflect on my own fieldwork experiences in Kenya from my vantage position as a native anthropologist working at home.

5.4 Positionality and Reflexivity

The postmodern critique of ethnographic fieldwork raises the question of how to deal with 'Subjectivity' in qualitative research. Researcher self-reflexivity - understood as showing one's personal values, assumptions, feelings and biases to the reader by writing reflexive accounts of what actually occurred during the research process - is often said to be the 'best' way to manage subjectivity (Holliday, 2002; Shore, 1999). The way the fieldworker positions himself/herself in the field and in relation to the research subjects and topic arguably influences not only the final outcome of any study but also what counts as knowledge and how that knowledge is produced (Creswell, 2003). Projecting oneself in the ethnographic text and being truthful about the experiences encountered during fieldwork is therefore a critical component of qualitative research.

Kenya is my home country and I have lived there my entire life with the exception of a few overseas trips. Thus, going to do fieldwork there I assumed that I possessed the connections with and understanding of my research people and their culture. In this respect one would argue that I fit well to the oft-used definition of 'native anthropologist' i.e., a 'third-world native' doing research in his own world (Davis, 1999). For that reason too, I describe myself, in this research context, as a native anthropologist. My positioning as a native anthropologist gave me the impression that I was different from the tourists visiting Amboseli. However, my positioning was one of much difference, in that, though I shared a national identity and a national language with the research participants my tribe was different from theirs, my cultural practices and beliefs were somewhat different, and my native language different from the Maa language. In the course of my fieldwork I realised that I had a double identity which rendered me a *halfie*²⁷ anthropologist, neither exclusively indigenous 'insider' nor exclusively stranger 'outsider'. While this double

²⁷ The term *halfie*, introduced by Karin Narayan (1993) indicates people with mixed identity that belong to two cultures. This situation is created either by an economic emigration, by an emigration for educational purposes, or due to the origins of the parents.

identity helped me in various circumstances during fieldwork, I also discovered the merits and demerits of my positioning as a native anthropologist.

The postmodern discussion on reflexivity which stresses the importance of maintaining distance between the ethnographer and his/her research subjects renders the distinction between insider and outsider necessary (Onyango-Ouma, 2003). Those doing anthropology at home are considered insiders and thus their capacity to keep distance is often compromised. However, during this research I realised that we can experience a multiplex of identity depending on how we position ourselves and where the people we study position us. Despite positioning myself as an 'insider' my research participants still saw me as an outsider on the basis of my tribe. They used these attributes to designate me either as an insider or outsider depending on the situation, place or activity.

My positioning as an insider gave me unlimited access to all the research sites and settings including the spoken and unspoken world. I was able to gain access to people's homes on a daily basis which permitted me to have an 'inside' perspective of my participants. My positioning as an outsider gave access to all the spaces reserved for tourists and outsiders. I was allowed to freely interact with tourists in the cultural *bomas* and exchange ideas with them about tourism in the community and possibilities for improvement thus enabling me to have an 'outsider's' perspective of the community. These privileges could have been curtailed had I not been able to switch between the two identities. Narayan (1993) has suggested that focusing on the quality of relations with the research people rather than fixity of the dichotomy between insider and outsider would be valuable to the anthropological enterprise. Relationships are complex and shifting in different settings to the extent that, depending on the situation, one person could be an insider in one context and an outsider in another.

Before I began my fieldwork I was aware that my Gusii tribe had, for a long time, been involved in cross-border inter-ethnic land clashes with the Maasai of Narok District and I knew that this kind of relationship could create some anxiety. I made a conscious decision to proceed with great care by adapting to local sensitivities. However, honestly speaking, initially I was worried because I did not know how much the frosty relationship between my tribe and the research community could influence the way I could be received. During fieldwork sometimes I would feel uncomfortable in some situations such as when people mentioned the clashes between my tribe and their tribesmen. However, as the study progressed I discovered that there were many people

from my tribe, in fact including some from my own village, who had bought land and were living with the research participants. I realised during this study that critical analysis of social and interethnic relationships in a fieldwork situation has much to reveal about Self and Other, sameness and difference, and the role of history in shaping present encounters. This knowledge and understanding helped me to make sense of the rewards and difficulties associated with a positioning that is not quite insider or outsider.

Growing up in Kenya, as a child, I distinctly remember the stereotypical jokes that were often made about the Maasai. As an adult, I had Maasai classmates and later students and neighbours. These interactions coupled with images obtained from Kenya's electronic and print media as well as from my readings in social anthropology in various ways shaped my own perceptions about the Maasai. Reading the history of the Maasai alerted me to the oppression and marginalisation of the community from the colonial times to the present. My knowledge of the stereotypical touristic images of the Maasai as 'primitive' and 'exotic' people, to some extent influenced my decision to focus my research on them. I can say that I went to the field full of biases and beliefs about the research community. However, I also went to the Maasai communities with an open mind, ready to learn. I put my prior images and views on the community aside and listened to what my informants had to say about my topic. Listening to them provided me with another dimension of how I view the Maasai at present and their relationship with conservation and tourism. I learned to reflect on the issues discussed to circumvent personal prejudices from exerting influence over the data collected. I have made every effort to present the views, opinions, thoughts, and suggestions of my research participants as a true and unbiased manifestation of what was researched.

It was during the time of writing the ethnography that I started to have flashbacks of my field experiences. My knowledge of the Maasai's long history of (mis)representation and marginalisation made me feel humble when tackling the task of representing the Maasai. In representing the Maasai I realised that I was torn between the obligations of the discipline and loyalty to my informants. Very often one is forced to speak to the discipline rather than the people who are "merely viewed as fodder for professionally self-serving statements about a generalised 'other'" (Narayan, 1993: 672). There is an ever-present demand to contribute to the discipline, and in the process, disciplinary demands are prioritised over the voice of the people. Possibly, like every anthropologist, I committed some errors but I have tried to the best of my

ability to conduct reciprocal fieldwork where participation has hopefully had some positive effect on my research participants.

5.4.I Study Constraints and Limitations

One of my main limitations was the dearth of statistical data and information on community tourism such as income, employment and salaries, and number of visitors to the cultural *bomas*. Just like in many other developing countries, in Kenya most tourism-related statistical data and other information are on macro issues often generated by government ministries at the national level. Such information is therefore of little help to a study on micro issues such as this one. The lack of statistical data is closely linked to the inaccessibility of statistical and other data classified as 'confidential' such as salaries, financial statements, and so forth. This kind of data was very difficult to obtain from the relevant institutions including local governmental departments, non-governmental (NGOs) and, tour operators, lodges and campsites. In the prevailing circumstances, I had to use unreliable and sometimes, unsubstantiated statements from villagers, lodge and development workers. Thus, I had to start from scratch in gathering fresh information and data within the limited fieldwork period. However, because this study area embraced a very large constituency, both geographically and thematically, it was not possible to cover all the commercial tourist enterprises in the Amboseli and their range of activities.

I also experienced financial constraints, which were compounded by the hospitalization of my wife, son and father at different dates, and my having to seek treatment for my own sickness while in the field. On one return visit to Nairobi my personal effects including my passport and part of my research work were stolen from the parked project car. In an attempt to replace the documents I travelled back to New Zealand to renew my return visa, which was nearing expiration. The need for money to pay for the costs of travel and redoing the fieldwork became burdensome. In addition, I experienced transport problems. The lack of a good transport network in the area was a major limitation in accessing certain areas within the research communities. This in a way limited some of the information captured; for instance, I was unable to reach as many non-commercial villages in Olgulului as I would have wished. As a result of the poor transport network in Amboseli, I had to use different modes of transport including public transport, project car and walking. All these problems made it difficult for me to complete the study within the planned timeframe.

Retrospectively, because of these disruptions and my effort to get as much information on my topic as possible, it strikes me that ‘data’ is not necessarily something one collects in a single day. Rather, it evolves out of learning and understanding and is a socialization process, which builds on itself. I remember a meeting I had with my supervisors in which I expressed my frustrations and concerns that my research was not progressing as well as initially anticipated and that I was not getting “quality” data. They encouraged me to soldier on by pointing out that it normally takes time for an ethnographic project such as mine to shape up. Their words were the truth. I came to realise that discovery is not a rushed thing. Whenever I returned to the field, I made it my priority to seek an update of key developments during my absence, which I properly documented and followed up on where necessary. In this respect, the findings of my study were not affected unduly by the disruptions.

5.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

Because I used multiple methods to collect data and therefore have different types of data, I used multiple methods for data analysis. I had three main sources of data: from my interviews and from documentary and visual sources. Documentary data was subjected to content analysis, while photos were sorted out according to specific themes; some have been included in this study to support certain assertions made in the text. Interview data was analysed in some detail, as explained below.

The first step in data analysis was transcription of the tapes recorded during my formal interviews with various respondents as detailed under the section on data collection. Next, I printed the notes and gave each interview a unique identifier based on the respondents. I read through each interview multiple times until I began to recognize patterns. I then physically marked and labelled sub-themes based on my initial research questions on the printed interview notes. Then I coded each interview, writing short, summarizing phrases in the margins within each topical sub-theme, using the same terms and phrases for each interview. Coding then allowed me to create a table listing respondents, topic headings, and the codes, or themes, from each interview for each topic. The table I thus created served as a quick reference that I could consult to see patterns in responses across respondents, how particular interviewees responded to particular topics, and to see how a particular response or perspective was presented amongst respondents. In this dissertation, I will either reference a trend or pattern I found in the data, or cite particular respondents using pseudonyms.

The method employed in preparing the research report is similar to that applied in the presentation of ethnographic accounts that includes personal observations which are substantiated by quotations from my informants and other participants. In most cases, names of actual participants and the institutions have been omitted to provide anonymity. In all cases, the quotations that I have used in this dissertation have been taken directly from my interviews. I have tried as much as possible to present my quotes in the verbatim words of the research participants. In some cases the original words may have been lost in transcription and in others words added or omitted to promote readability. However, the original meaning or intent has been retained in order to represent the voices of my informants and other participants in the community.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a discussion of the fieldwork setting and methods used in gathering data from the participants as well as my positioning and experiences of doing fieldwork in my home country. Triangulation and the flexible application of the research methods at a particular situation, place, time and event yielded multiple perspectives and voices, which I have used throughout the dissertation. In relation to the ethnographic research objectives of this project, I made it my priority to represent the diverse perspectives of my research participants. Rather than a specific locale as the subject of the study, the research endeavours to exemplify the shifting of an ethnographic subject to a 'political site' in which multiple locations, communities, stakeholders, interests, and histories converge. I see this research as very much within the framework of an ethnographic project, and the dissertation as an ethnographic description of the politics of community-based tourism amongst the Maasai. The next chapter looks at the contemporary situation of the Maasai and the larger picture of how they have come to be drawn into the global tourism web.

Chapter 6: Tourism, Conservation and Transformation in Amboseli

6.0 Introduction

This chapter attempts to uncover the larger picture of tourism, conservation and development in Amboseli and the circumstances that have drawn Maasai pastoralists into the global tourism web. Understanding tourism in this way requires some consideration of the historical context of Amboseli and the broader socio-economic and politico-environmental forces of change acting in the area. Unwrapping Amboseli's conservation and tourism history is vital because the park overwhelmingly shapes the lives of the local Maasai pastoralists. The analysis of contemporary transformations is also important. Generally these transformations have acted as the push and pull factors that have swayed the Maasai into tourism development. The materials presented in this chapter combine information obtained from primary and secondary sources.

The chapter is organised into four parts: In the first section I provide a brief description of Amboseli in terms of its location and its conservation/tourism history. The second section focuses on Maasai involvement in tourism development. In the third section I analyse recent transformations that have taken place in Amboseli and how they have motivated Maasai engagement in tourism development. In the fourth section, some conclusions are drawn.

6.1 Amboseli National Park

Amboseli National Park, the core of a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve, is, as stated earlier, one of Kenya's smallest national parks. (Refer to Figure 3 map showing Amboseli National Park). Notwithstanding its small size it supports a high density of wildlife including 56 species of large mammals and 215 bird species making it one of the world's most Important Bird Areas (Bulte & Stringer, 2006). Without heavy dependence on the surrounding Maasai lands, the park cannot on its own sustain its characteristically large quantities of wildlife independently. Wildlife roams in and out of the park seasonally in search of pasture and water (Reid et al. 1999; Rutten, 2004). During the dry season (January to February and June to October) wildlife congregates around the swamps in the park, which are fed by subterranean springs originating from Mt. Kilimanjaro. As noted earlier these swamps are the region's main source of permanent water. During the wet season (March to May and November to December) the herbivores

(elephants, wildebeest and zebras) often disperse to the surrounding areas in search of pasture. This seasonal migration to the dispersal areas is essential for the continued existence of wildlife and the park (Reid et al., 1999; Western, 1982b).

Photo 5 Wildlife near Ol Tukai enclave in ANP



Source: Researcher

Photo 6 Elephants in ANP



Source: Researcher

I.1 Management History

The current Amboseli National Park is a vestige of the 27,700km² Southern Game Reserve created in 1906 by British colonial administration, in recognition of Amboseli's unique habitats and wildlife resources (Reid et al. 1999). This area was more or less equivalent to the Southern Maasai Native Reserve established to confine the Maasai, who had earlier been moved from their expansive grazing lands in central and northern Kenya to create room for European settlers (Coast, 2003). Though the Maasai were allowed to continue herding their livestock in the reserve and to co-exist with the wildlife as they had done for a long time, all hunting within the reserve

without a licence was prohibited (Reid et al, 1999; Rutten, 2002). It is worth noting here that the Maasai rarely kill wild animals except for ceremonial purposes such as when young warriors spear a buffalo, elephant or lion to show their bravery.

In 1948, a piece of land measuring 3,260km² was carved out of the original Southern Game Reserve and set up as Amboseli National Reserve. Despite being allowed to continue carrying out their traditional livelihood activities in the reserve, this was seen by the Maasai as an onslaught on their territory (Western & Wright, 1994). The reserve was administered by the Royal National Park Trustees (an independent trusteeship funded both by government and private donors). However, in an attempt to 'improve' Maasai attitudes towards wildlife reserves and to support the government's conservation activities, the management responsibility of a newly renamed Maasai Amboseli Game Reserve was transferred to Kajiado County Council²⁸ in 1961 (Rutten, 2002). To effectively protect the reserve's wildlife resources and further its tourism activities, Kajiado County Council set aside 78km² of land as a stock-free zone in the reserve. However, initiatives to set aside 200km² as an exclusive wildlife sanctuary were dropped after encountering strong opposition from the local Maasai (Western, 1982a & b). Similar efforts by the Council to set up 518km² as a restricted game reserve were thwarted by the local Maasai.

Nonetheless, a Presidential Decree in 1971 declared that 518km² of land should be used only for wildlife conservation and tourism (McNeely & Miller, 1984). The boundaries were delineated in 1972 and officially proclaimed a national park in 1974. Rutten (2002:2) reports that "the Maasai again protested using every political lever they had". As a response to Maasai protestation, the park was reduced to 392km² roughly being the current size of the park. The Kajiado County Council was also permitted to retain control of 160 ha of land around the Ol Tukai enclave, to collect rent from the two game lodges in the park and to receive a fraction of the entry fees (Lindsay, 1987; Rutten, 2002). The boundaries of the newly created wildlife reserve were marked out and the place gazetted as government land in 1972. Subsequently, the government banned all human livelihood activities in the sanctuary, thus "depriving the Maasai user and access rights to the water, pasture, and natural resources in the park" which was traditionally one of the most important dry season refuges for their livestock (Rutten, 2002:9). This generated controversy over livestock watering rights in the park. In acknowledgement of the hardships the park could cause to the local Maasai pastoralists, the government suspended the

²⁸ The Council is expected to use revenue earned from the park to undertake rural development projects in the area, which benefit local communities.

ban until 1977, when alternative water sources were provided outside the park (Lindsay, 1987; MacNeely & Miller, 1984).

For slightly more than a decade (1976-1989) the park was administered by the Wildlife Conservation and Management Department within the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife. This responsibility was transferred to a newly formed and semi-autonomous Kenya Wildlife Services in 1990, which is today the custodian of Kenya's wildlife and biodiversity resources (Barrow et al., 2001). Unlike its predecessor, KWS was allowed to generate its own finances and to run its budget and activities independent of the parent ministry. In this respect, as noted in Chapter 3, KWS had incentives that its precursor lacked. Just like other national parks in the country, ANP has since 1990 been administered by KWS as a self-regulating entity with its own operational budget and development programmes (KWS, 1991).

The park, however, was unexpectedly demoted into a National Reserve²⁹ in 2005. The relegation in effect turned over the park's management and revenues once again to Kajiado County Council and the local Maasai³⁰. As the original land owners and custodians of wildlife, the Maasai were happy to have ownership of the park revert back to them. However, most local and international conservation organisations not only castigated the decision but some conservationist lobbyist groups³¹, filled a case at the High Court seeking to reverse the decision. It is hard to speculate on the court's final verdict and its eventual effects on conservation, tourism, and Maasai development. In the interim the status quo remains, courtesy of a court injunction that blocked the transfer of the park to Kajiado County Council. The main argument by the lobbyists is that the government's order was illegal and contrary to the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, none of which was complied with. The Maasai on their part argue that the creation of the park was illegal and by giving it back to the Maasai, the government was in effect redressing one of the many injustices perpetrated against the community. A Maasai Civil Society

²⁹ The difference between National Park and Reserve is that a national park is owned and funded by the central government whilst the KWS undertakes the management responsibilities on behalf of the government. On the other hand, a national reserve is owned and run by the local county councils, the ones covering the areas in which they are established, for the mutual benefit of the local communities. Often they receive partial government funding and management. The rules and regulations for reserves are more flexible regarding human activities within their boundaries, whereas conservation and tourism are the only activities within parks.

³⁰ On September 29, 2005, the Kenyan president Hon. Mwai Kibaki took measures to "downgrade" Amboseli from a National Park in a process called "de-gazetting". The degazetting order was issued through a gazette notice by Hon. Morris Dzero, Minister for Tourism and Wildlife (Daily Nation, 30 September, 2005).

³¹ Conservationist groups that have challenged the downgrading of the park include the East African Wildlife Society, Youth for Conservation, the Centre for Environmental Legal Research and Education, and the Born Free Foundation. The high court subsequently suspended the resolution contained in the Kenya Gazette until the suit is heard and determined.

activist termed the action by the conservationists a ‘divide and rule’ strategy to create a rift between the Maasai and undermine their solidarity” (Daily Nation, October 1, 2005). Metemei Ole Dapash a leading advocate of Maasai rights argued that,

The opposition by the conservationist groups is motivated by greed and lack of vision ... the return of Amboseli to the Maasai is less illegal than the economic, environmental, and human rights violations perpetrated by the tourism industry against the Maasai and nature. What the anti-Maasai campaigners fail to understand is that it is not the decision to return Amboseli to the Maasai that is illegal; rather, it is the original decision to transfer the management of Amboseli to the then Wildlife Conservation and Management Department in 1975³² (Daily Nation of 14th October 2005).

The delisting was closely linked with the re-introduction of multiparty politics in the early 1990s which forced political parties to make alliances to gain, maintain and control power. In Kenya’s ethnic-based political culture this meant courting tribes through their leaders to support parties that promise to cater for their ‘interests’. This new political dispensation has given communities powers to lobby the government for allocation of more development resources to their homelands and to bargain for political favours from the government in return for political support. The delisting was seen as a political manoeuvre to have the Maasai support an upcoming referendum on a newly-proposed Kenyan constitution (East African, 29 October, 2005). As David Western, a former KWS Director, observed in an article he wrote in one of Kenya’s daily newspapers, “every other national park and reserve risks being erased on a political whim at a moment’s notice”. The delisting clearly illustrates the role politics can play in determining conservation priorities (see Gibson, 1999 for a discussion of how politics influences conservation policy in Africa). Paradoxically, a provision in the constitution which the Maasai were being induced to support stipulated that once the new constitution came into effect the management responsibility for all national parks and game reserves in the country would revert to state control. The politics of tourism in Amboseli, however, cannot be clearly understood without some consideration of the effects of the park on Maasai pastoralists.

6.1.2 Effects of the Park on the Maasai

The creation of the park and subsequent eviction of the people without compensation (Western, 1989; Ondicho, 2006) did not go down well with the Maasai who were also deprived of access

³² Metemei Ole Dapash call those opposed to the degazetting move “anti-Maasai” and asks what legal or constitutional process did Kenya’s first President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta follow when he used Executive fiat to declare Amboseli a national park? If Kenyatta’s order was legal and constitutional, why isn’t Kibaki’s? (Amboseli no Disaster waiting to Happen, in Daily Nation 14th October, 2005).

and user rights to critical livelihood resources, mainly water and pasture in the park. Loss of access to critical natural resources is said to create community resentment towards tourism development (Stem et al., 2003; Kiss, 2004). Maasai irritation towards the park largely emanates from fact that while they and their livestock are banned from entering the park, wild animals³³ from the park are allowed to wander freely and to forage on Maasai land, thus competing with livestock and people for scarce land and range resources, transmitting diseases to livestock and destroying property, including homes and livestock, and injuring and/or killing people ((Ecosystem, 1982; Western, 1982a; Reid et al, 1999). Furthermore, few of the revenues generated from wildlife tourism in their territory are allocated for local development (Akama, 1996; Ondicho, 2006). Talbot and Olindo report that in anger and frustration, the Maasai started to spear wild animals (see also Stevens, 1997:46; Ondicho, 2006).

In an effort to placate the Maasai and win their support for the park and its conservation activities, the government made several promises to them. These included: supply of adequate water on their group ranches in return for keeping livestock outside the park; annual monetary compensation for the 'opportunity costs' of tolerating wildlife in their lands; direct economic benefits through the establishment of tourist campsites and wildlife viewing circuits; trophy hunting, wildlife cropping/culling on their lands; payment of wildlife utilisation fees; development assistance in terms of infrastructure such as schools and dispensaries; and a portion of the gate receipts to Kajiado County Council (see Lindsay, 1987; Rutten, 2002; Ondicho, 2006).

In fulfilment of the promises, several boreholes were rehabilitated and a pipeline constructed to provide alternative-watering points outside the park. While in the first few years, which also coincided with periods of higher than normal rainfall (Lindsay, 1987), these watering points functioned well, regular breakdowns caused many of them to operate only sporadically (Rutten, 2004). In recent years most of these water points have ceased to function altogether, forcing the Maasai to sneak periodically into the park to water and pasture their livestock herds (Western, 1982a). The other promises, however, were either inadequately or never fulfilled at all. The trophy hunting fees were paid for three years only and grazing fee compensation lasted for just four years (Lindsay, 1987; Rutten, 2002). On the other hand, wildlife culling was never done and wildlife utilisation payments were stopped after five years, yet this was one of the major

³³ An estimated 80% of the wildlife in the Amboseli ecosystem reside permanently or seasonally in the dispersal areas on communally and individually owned Maasai group ranches (Ondicho, 2006).

potential sources of direct income to the local Maasai. The wildlife viewing circuits in Olgulului Olalarrashi group ranch, which was one of the most affected by the park and its wildlife, were never constructed, thus denying the locals a potential source of income (Lindsay, 1987).

The implications of the park and the government's failure to honour its promises to the Maasai become clear when one considers that both human, wildlife and livestock populations have increased tremendously in recent years. This has exerted a lot of pressure on Amboseli's fragile ecosystem and wildlife resources (Cheeseman, 2003; Pearson and Andrews, 2005). In fact, water is a major source of conflict between Maasai pastoralists and park authorities. Photos 8 & 9 shows villagers and livestock queuing for water at Injeckta, one of the watering points established outside the park. Furthermore, the erection of fences and the institution of trespass laws have disrupted livestock movements and adjustments to the changing climatic conditions (Reid et al., 1999; Rutten, 2004). As a result herders have to make long detours in order to access other resources such as livestock markets and dipping services thus endangering food supply, which negatively impacts local livelihoods. The Maasai complain that trespassers are either shot on sight or caught and prosecuted and some are fined or jailed and their livestock confiscated by park authorities. Such behaviour constrains the relationship with local communities (Ondicho, 2006).

Photo 7 Water is a source of human - wildlife conflicts



Source: Researcher

Photo 8 Villagers queuing for water at Injeckta water tank



Source: Researcher

The creation of the park in their homeland, together with land use restrictions favouring conservation and tourism interests, has noticeably undermined Maasai well-being by imposing serious limitations on their traditional livestock-oriented subsistence livelihoods (Cheeseman, 2003; Ondicho, 2005 & 2006). One example of the ever increasing cost of conservation and tourism to Maasai pastoralists and cultivators is that they cannot defend themselves or their property from destruction by wildlife as the law does not allow any form of harm against wildlife (Pearson & Andrews, 2005). “The Maasai are thus reduced to guarding crops and livestock, beating drums and lighting night fires so that someone else may make a profit from tourists willing to view and photograph an animal that local opinion would wish dead” (Akama, 1996b:12). The hardships are not adequately counter-balanced by assistance from the park to meet pastoral objectives nor are they mitigated by tourism benefits (Berger, 1996; Ondicho, 2005). However, in recent times Maasai attitudes towards wildlife conservation and tourism may be slowly changing in positive ways, courtesy of the two new conservation policies discussed in the next section.

6.1.3 Shifts in Conservation Policy

The government of Kenya through the Kenya Wildlife Services has since the 1990s pursued a radical approach towards wildlife management. The proposals for this new policy framework are contained in the ‘Zebra Book’ which spells out KWS’s biodiversity and wildlife conservation and

development programmes for the period 1991-1996 (KWS, 1997; Mburu, 2004). Below I discuss two of KWS's policies that are deemed relevant to this study, i.e., the revenue sharing scheme, and participatory conservation and tourism development as detailed below.

Revenue Sharing: The KWS, the park's management authority, in 1990 initiated a revenue sharing scheme with the local Maasai communities. Under the scheme the park authorities annually cede 25% of the park's gross income to the local Maasai communities (Western, 1997; 1990; Mburu, 2004). In practice, each of the seven group ranches in the larger Amboseli ecosystem, and in spite of their geographical and population size, receive a fixed one million Kenya shillings (circa US\$12, 500) annually. This money is meant to compensate the Maasai for wildlife related costs, to help build trust and a sense of ownership among the Maasai of wildlife resources (Mburu & Birner, 2002; Mburu, 2004). This funding is channelled through GRCs to support community development projects such as boreholes, medical costs, schools and bursaries for school fees. This money, however, rarely reaches the intended community projects and/or beneficiaries because it is often misappropriated or diverted through various administrative mechanisms operating at the GR management level (Berger, 1996; Cheesesman, 2005).

Although the government's main goal is to direct some of the park's benefits to the local people, the revenue sharing arrangement has not lived up to local expectations (Gakahu, 1992). There is, generally, a feeling amongst the Maasai that the money received from the revenue sharing arrangement is too little when compared to the park's gross annual income. The Maasai argue that they often do not have adequate information regarding park revenues and whether or not they are receiving the proper allocations from that revenue (Mburu, 2004). The Maasai do not know how the 25% figure is computed, since, under the revenue sharing programme, KWS exercises discretionary power in deciding who in the community gets what amount from the park's revenues (Mburu & Birner, 2002). The general feeling was that the non-financial and infrastructural benefits from the park are not sufficient enough to cover the essential needs of the local Maasai or rather to offset all the opportunity costs incurred as a result of hosting wildlife on their lands. As Sindiga (1999b: 123) aptly states, "The current revenue-sharing programme has failed to compensate the producer, that is, the individual land owner in the dispersal areas". Revenues generated from the park (Maasai soil) are locked behind the rangers' booths and shipped to the government treasury in Nairobi for 'appropriate' distribution whilst the Maasai continue to languish in poverty" (Ondicho, 2005: 70).

Participatory Conservation and Tourism Development: Kenya is among the first few countries in the Eastern Africa region to embrace the participatory approach to biodiversity conservation and tourism development (Southgate, 1996). While participatory conservation has since the mid-1980s been extensively used in many countries, particularly in the developing countries, as a substitute for the 'state-controlled top-down approach' to conservation (West & Brechin, 1991), this is a comparatively recent development in Kenya generally and Amboseli in particular. Generally, the goal of participatory conservation is to reconcile the otherwise intractable conflicts between conservation and development (Southgate, 1996) by encouraging communities living near wildlife protected areas to undertake conservation as a commercial form of tourism enterprise (Mburu, 2004). Such tourism projects have the potential to offer tangible benefits and to respond to local development needs, thus providing the incentives for communities to stop converting ecologically valuable landscapes and tourist attractions into other uses such as pasture or agriculture (Western et al., 1994).

KWS has initiated, and continues to initiate and support, pilot projects that promote participatory conservation and tourism development in the areas adjacent to the country's wildlife protected areas (Mburu, 2004). Amboseli represents one of the few places in Kenya where the participatory approach was first experimented. The implementation of community participation in Amboseli was a government response to the threats and complications to conservation brought about by increased human-wildlife conflicts, poaching, and imminent subdivision of the group ranches around the park (Rutten, 2002; Cheeseman, 2002). The involvement of the Maasai in conservation and tourism development was one of the long-term strategies adopted to reduce human-induced pressures on the park and win back some space for wildlife in the adjacent group ranches (Rutten, 2002; Mburu, 2004; Mburu & Birner, 2002). However, the question as to whether Maasai involvement in community tourism has succeeded in merging the competing and often conflicting interests of the diverse actors still remains. The shortcomings that relate to the implementation of the community participation approach in Amboseli are explored further in Chapter 7. In the following section I examine how the Maasai have come to be involved in and to embrace tourism development as an alternative tool for local development.

6.2 Maasai Involvement in Tourism Development

Any analysis of the power dynamics and interrelationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development and the resultant community struggles for political control over tourism

resources (money and natural) cannot be complete without first considering how the local industry in Amboseli has evolved over time. This is because tourism was a prime motivating factor for the establishment of the park in the first place and conservation policies have overwhelmingly continued to profoundly influence the lives of the Maasai. I therefore start by examining how tourism and the concept of Maasai involvement have evolved in Amboseli.

6.2.I Evolution of Tourism in Amboseli

Amboseli has attracted a variety of adventure seekers and tourists from as early as 1885, when Joseph Thomson, the first European, arrived in the area and published his explorers' travelogue. In this travelogue he gave a detailed account about the excellent and numerous wildlife herds he saw during his travail in the northern part of Mt. Kilimanjaro, present day Amboseli (Rutten, 2002:2). During the colonial period (1895-1963), Amboseli was an attractive location for adventure seekers who included resident Europeans and a few international visitors on big-game hunting expeditions (Ondicho, 2000c). The place was particularly preferred by game hunters for its remoteness and abundant wildlife (Akama, 1999a & b). However, the overall development of tourism was inhibited by lack of infrastructure and hospitality facilities.

The first major step to cultivate Amboseli as a modern tourist destination took place in 1950 with the construction of a camp in the area to offer accommodation to the growing number of tourists. Shortly afterwards, the Royal National Park Trustees started to charge an entry fee for all vehicles entering Amboseli (Rutten, 2002). While these developments marked the first step towards the institutionalisation of wildlife tourism, it was not until the 1960s that Amboseli started coming into the limelight as a national and international tourism destination. During this time tourism grew rapidly and by 1968 revenues from Amboseli amounted to 75% of Kajiado County Council's annual income, giving the Council the first tangible economic interest in the park and by extension, tourism" (Western, 1982a:2). However, the Council had limited experience in managing a reserve suffering from progressive deterioration partly due to increased sport hunting.

After a noticeable decline in wildlife populations, this area was protected as a national park in 1974 and subsequently tourism to Amboseli started to gain momentum. As a result of increased marketing efforts, development of modernised accommodation facilities, and improvements in the region's transport infrastructure, Amboseli became one of the most popular wildlife safari

destinations in the country for international inbound tourists in the 1970s. However, the park has also seen many fluctuations over the years with the largest occurring in 1977 when disputes between Kenya and Tanzania over tourism led to the closure of the common border³⁴ between the two nations (Homewood and Rogers, 1991).

Today, Amboseli is one of the most popular and visited parks in Kenya, accepting more than 25% of tourists with respect to the total number of park visits (see Table 4). This is mainly because of its proximity to Nairobi, Kenya's capital city, easy accessibility, and an abundance of diverse natural habitats and wildlife species there including the 'Big 5': elephants, rhinoceroses, lions, leopards and buffalos. In 2005 the park generated US\$ 3.5 million of which 80% was derived from tourism. The park is required to pay 50% of their excess income to the national treasury to support conservation in non-profitable parks. Tourism has become a dominant economic activity in Amboseli thereby rationalizing a strong focus on wildlife conservation. There are luxurious game lodges and campsites in Amboseli which cater for tourists³⁵.

Table 4 Visitors to 10 top Parks and Game Reserves, 2000-2008 ('000s)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Lake Nakuru	229.8	193.6	257.0	-	-	-	-
Maasai Mara	231.1	233.0	240.0	285.2	315.5	312.0	59.6
AnimalOrphanage	254.5	205.3	239.4	257.8	227.9	264.8	284.5
Tsavo (East)	152.8	119.2	158.5	180.1	223.3	237.1	110.9
Amboseli	92.0	54.7	101.6	126.2	130.9	134.8	21.2
Heller's Park	87.0	99.9	101.2	100.8	128.4	140.9	135.2
Tsavo (West)	76.3	62.6	92.7	105.7	130.9	134.8	21.2
Nairobi	90.4	71.3	92.5	99.9	101.8	93.0	91.8
Nairobi Safari Walk	114.4	66.3	88.0	127.5	170.8	205.8	202.1
Lake Bogoria	18.7	64.7	64.7	65.7	68.7	64.9	50.8

Source: Kenya, (2009).

³⁴ Border crossings between Kenya and Tanzania were resumed in 1984.

³⁵ There are three game lodges inside the park, that is, Amboseli, Ol Tukai and Amboseli Serena Lodges. Those located outside the park include: Amboseli Sopa and Kimana Lodges in Kimana Tikondo Group Ranch, 7km and 15 km east respectively from the Olkelunyiet/Kimana gate (KWS, 1990). A single campsite is located on the southern edge of the park, whilst seven others are located in five Group Ranches that surround Amboseli National Park. There are also two community wildlife sanctuaries, Kimana and Eselenkei, and several individually or communally owned conservancies and cultural centres, which provide additional facilities for tourists.

6.2.2 The Nature of Tourism in Amboseli Today

The bulk of the visitors to Amboseli in contemporary times are international tourists on an all-inclusive packaged safari tour of the park. Most of these tourists visit Amboseli between July and August (dry season) or between December and March (the rainy season). Typically, they visit Amboseli as part of an 8-10-day wildlife safari on the southern Kenya safari circuit³⁶. On average they spend two days in the park viewing wild animals, taking photos and enjoying the scenery. While a large majority of visitors to Amboseli arrive by way of four-wheel drive safari vehicles or vans, a small but growing minority also arrive on a local flight. These tourists will most likely stay in any of the three game lodges inside the park or the other three outside the park. The less typical visitor will most likely camp in a Maasai-owned and operated campsite or one of the many tented camps leased to foreign investors (Nzioki, 1994). After visiting Amboseli, they will most likely head off to another national park along the southern safari circuit which culminates in the Coastal beaches in Mombasa.

Photo 9 Tourists viewing wildlife in the park



Source: Researcher

Visitors to Amboseli are also likely to visit one of the *cultural bomas* outside the southern boundary of the park to experience Maasai culture. In the cultural *bomas* visitors meet Maasai villagers, experience their culture and village life, take pictures, and sometimes purchase their handicrafts as will be detailed in Chapter 8. Many of those tourists who visit a Maasai cultural

³⁶ The southern safari circuit includes visits to Maasai Mara game reserve, Tsavo East and West National Park and Mombasa's coastal beaches.

boma will inevitably also go on a nature walk or camel ride³⁷ around the community accompanied by a Maasai *morán*. According to Charnley (2004), nature walks are an excellent enterprise for Maasai *morans* because they require the same set of skills as livestock herding: the ability to walk long distances, detect and avoid predators, and a good sense of direction. Their understanding of the local landscape, vegetation and wild animals makes them admirable guides for walking safaris. Tourists are excited to walk amidst wildlife in the ‘wilderness’ and for many of them this is an experience that they will have fond memories about for their entire life (DeLuca, 2002; Charnley, 2005). Thus, cultural *bomas* provide an official interface between the resident Maasai and the tourists.

The park entrance fee in 2005 for foreign tourists was US\$40 for adults, US\$20 for children and US\$10 for a student per day. The revenue generated from entry fees and other tourism activities is spent by KWS to support conservation and community development initiatives in Amboseli and the surrounding areas. While funding for ANP operations comes almost entirely from tourism-related revenues, donor support also contributes significantly to specific conservation or community development projects. The rapid growth of tourism within Amboseli, especially in the early 1990s, was exemplified by uncoordinated and unplanned development (Nzioka, 1994; Rutten, 2004). Over time, the park’s carrying capacity has been exceeded and this has resulted in congestion in key wildlife viewing points such as the Observation Hill. Due to carrying capacity constraints, the Kenya Wildlife Services has undertaken certain deliberate measures such as increasing the entry fee in order to dissuade tourists away from the park to community sanctuaries and other ecotourism sites in Amboseli (Nzioka, 1994; Ondicho, 2000c). The next section discusses how the Maasai have come to be involved in community-based tourism development.

6.2.3 Getting Started in Tourism

Though Amboseli has a long history of tourism development, traditionally much of the tourist attractions, activities, and facilities, are almost exclusively centred in the park. Until the 1980s no efforts were made by the government, conservationists and industry players to either involve the Maasai or draw their attention to the potential economic benefits that they would enjoy from wildlife and tourism within their communities (Berger, 1993; Rutten, 2004). That is to say, the

³⁷ Mirage Camel Adventures is run by the former secretary general of Olgulului Olalarrashi GR and its offices are located near the community campsite.

Maasai community had no experience with tourism either as hosts or entrepreneurs. Furthermore, tourism was not one of the many recreational activities in their culture, and in fact, the Maa language, just like other native languages spoken in Kenya, has no word that comes close to describing tourism.

Thus, it came as a huge surprise in the late 1980s when *mzungus*³⁸ on self-drive safaris started to frequent Maasai homesteads around the park. Prior to this time, the Maasai had very limited direct contact with outsiders, particularly tourists from the Western world. As a middle-aged male respondent recalled, “It was unusual to encounter or see *mzungus* coming to visit our village We actually had very limited interactions with them” (Isaac, personal communication, 2005). Thus, on the few occasions when tourists appeared in Maasai homesteads or met with villagers it was a major source for panic and suspicion. I asked a male resident how they responded to such an encounter, and he replied: “Whenever the *mzungus* stopped their vehicles near us all we did was just simply to run away. We were not used to them like we are nowadays” (Koitee, personal communication, 2004).

Since direct encounters and interactions with *mzungus* were a novel experience for the Maasai, I asked some villagers, “What did you think of these *mzungus* when they first arrived in your homesteads?” The most common response was that they had come to grab their remaining land and landscape resources. This speculation was to a large extent fuelled by colonial and post-colonial land alienations that took away prime Maasai lands to create room for ANP and settlers from outside the community. An elderly man in Kimana remembered their impressions:

We all initially thought that our land had either been sold or the government was planning to take it away from us and give it to the mzungus. I heard many people say the mzungus would be given our land; . . . of course, the rumours were not true but that is what we felt at that time . . . There was a lot of fear and suspicion within the community about the government’s motives. I have evidence to that effect because I was there and I heard it myself (Mengatii, personal communication, 2004).

When the first *mzungus* appeared in Maasai villages most people were frightened by the gadgets they carried like binoculars and cameras. Many of the villagers were scared that the *mzungus* would use these devices to harm them. These fears to a large extent stemmed from a local belief that to some people “human bodies are transparent” (Monbiot, 1994:112). The Maasai describe these people as ‘having eyes’ which they use to see through other people’s bones, blood and guts. If people ‘having eyes’ harbour any resentment towards the person they gaze upon, his/her vital

³⁸ *Mzungu* literally means white person in the Swahili language but it is often also used when referring to tourists.

organs will be affected. In order to neutralise the effects they might be perpetrating, those considered by other Maasai to have eyes are required to spit whenever they 'see' someone. Monbiot (1998:1) in his article titled: People with Eyes: Why the Maasai came to believe that tourists have the evil eye, states:

As western medicine began to spread through Kenya, the Maasai heard that there was a machine used by foreigners to see people's bones and guts. Long exposure to its rays, they learnt, could make people ill or even kill them. When foreigners then arrived in their villages and, without asking, stared at them through their cameras, the Maasai equated these one-eyed machines with the X-rays they had heard about. They concluded that the tourists had deliberately endowed themselves with eyes. Seeing that the tourists never spat when they took a photograph, some of the Maasai assumed that they were intentionally doing them harm.

Some Maasai have ever since been resentful of tourists and photography however, they could not dare attack those tourists for fear of government reprisals. Even though the Maasai no longer equate cameras with X-rays, they still remain resentful towards photography. This is just one of the impacts of tourism on the Maasai which may not be easily observable.

Although the presence of *mzungus* in Maasai homesteads did not generate any violent hostilities, it did, as already noted, create a lot of confusion and suspicion especially about *mzungu* motives. The presence and behaviour of tourists totally frightened most villagers, many of who avoided direct or close contacts lest the *mzungus* harm them. Two different cultures and worlds were colliding and, to varying degrees, the experience was peculiar to both parties. A women's group leader aptly captured these sentiments when she recalled,

When tourists first arrived in our villages we did not know how to relate or even talk to them. Even the tourists themselves did not know how to talk or relate to us. We had very limited interaction and communication with each other (Sipei, Personal communication, 2005).

From this unpromising beginning, then came 'The Parks beyond Parks' programme which was initiated by the KWS with the primary objective of bringing some of the benefits from wildlife tourism to the local population. Under this programme, which also sought to introduce a community-based social component to the country's park management policies, local people were allowed to start small scale community-based tourism enterprises and projects including tented camps and other tourist activities in areas bordering national parks (Rutten, 2002). With support from KWS and donors, the Maasai of Amboseli have established several community-based conservation-oriented tourism projects as a form of commercial enterprise. Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary, which is the focus of Chapter 7, represents one of the best examples of such

an initiative. The other local home-grown Maasai tourism initiatives include the cultural *bomas* discussed in Chapter 8. The next section focuses on recent transformations that have helped to define the current state of the Maasai.

6.3 Recent Transformations

The dynamic power and political interrelationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development are hard to decipher without some knowledge of the recent transformations in Amboseli. These transformations have acted as levers and pulleys driving the Maasai community into different directions and ends. These important aspects of the social trajectory are however often totally ignored or forgotten in social research. In most cases they work behind the scenes and therefore, cannot easily be recognised without some effort. This is particularly true of remote and less developed research sites such as Amboseli. This section will illuminate recent transformations that mark the beginning, if not at least, the marked acceleration of circumstances that have driven the Maasai into embracing tourism as a tool for economic advancement.

6.3.I Socio-demographic Transformations

The most evident transformation that has taken place in Amboseli is population increase. The Maasai population, and indeed Kenya as a whole, has dramatically increased in the past four or so decades as a result of improved access to public health, education, sanitation, high birth rates and plummeting death rates. The population of Amboseli had risen from 154,906 in 1969, to 241,395 in 1979, before jumping to 771,805 in 1999³⁹ (CIA World Factbook, 2008). As already stated, the Amboseli region was traditionally inhabited almost exclusively by the Kisongo Maasai. However, people from other Kenya communities, the majority of them recent immigrants seeking access to arable land, also live in the area.

Many other changes that are visible in the region have accompanied population growth. The Amboseli region was generally an expansive and thinly populated remote area until quite recently. Throughout the first decades after independence, when Kenya's rural economies and infrastructure underwent rapid change and progress, Amboseli was largely ignored and/or neglected by the political establishment of the day. Thus, the region lags behind in terms of

³⁹ Population census in Kenya is held once in every ten years. The most current one was held in 1999.

socio-economic development. Large parts of Amboseli even in contemporary times lack basic amenities including adequate health services, piped water, telephone or electricity services and schools. People have to walk long distances to access social services and amenities - where they exist (Wako, 2007).

Most parts of Amboseli were inaccessible until relatively recently, and thus, many parts and communities have remained largely untouched by the forces of modernisation. However, owing to the abundance of attractions such as wildlife which are very much sought after by tourists from the West, the government has established a road network to provide easy access. Road access has not only enabled an increasing number of tourists to visit the area but has also improved the mobility of the inhabitants thus contributing to the expansion of local commerce. Now, all-weather murrum roads link the most important tourist points in the region, and seasonal dirt roads and irregular public transport serve the remotest areas. Most of these roads, however, are completely impassable throughout the rainy season, and even during the dry period only four-wheel drive vehicles can access them. Scores of Maasai youth now own bicycles or motorcycles and a few own other vehicles, which carry people and produce from the villages to markets and administrative centres, and enable them to access markets and other public services such as health care and schools. These changes in transportation have, of course, encouraged the expansion of shopping centres such as Kimana, which have greatly increased contact between town and country and between different Maasai communities.

The traditional settlement patterns in which groups of Maasai families lived in scattered temporal homesteads, destroyed when residents moved to new pastures, have drastically changed. Today, an increasing number of the Maasai people live in sedentary homesteads owned by individual families. Many of these new settlements are concentrated around water points, high agricultural potential areas, near urban centres and rural shopping centres, along the major roads (especially along tourist routes) and adjacent to the park, in addition to other tourism areas. Better-built sedentary homes, some equipped with solar panels, generators or even electricity, and some with piped water are now increasingly becoming a common feature of the local landscape. Some of these projects have been funded by international donors, religious, and/or supplemented by non-governmental organizations and the state through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). An increasing number of Maasai villagers now own and listen to radios, communicate on mobile phones and use other electronic gadgets such as television sets and cameras.

6.3.2 Land Tenure and Use Transformations

The Maasai have in the last decades developed a cooperative land tenure system which is formally recognised as 'group ranches' (Hannah, 1992). The GR system was initiated in the 1960s as part of a donor-funded land reform programme in Maasailand. As noted earlier, seven such group ranches exist within the larger Amboseli ecosystem, which encompasses Amboseli National Park. The fundamental feature of the GR system was the replacement of the Maasai's traditional communal system of land tenure with joint ownership of land demarcated by officially known borders (Kimani and Pickard, 1998; Kiyapi et al., 2005). Groups of families were allowed to jointly register land under a freehold title, managed by a committee of elders elected annually. In contrast with the past, movements and grazing of individually owned livestock are restricted to one's own ranch. The intent was to use land tenure registration as a plank for the intensification and commercialisation of Maasai pastoral production systems (Lesorogol, 2003).

The GR concept was eagerly embraced by the Maasai as a means of preventing further appropriation of their land to create room for wildlife protected areas and intrusions from agriculturalists. The acquisition of land title deeds also meant they had a legal document that could be used as collateral to obtain bank loans which could be utilised to develop local infrastructures including construction of cattle dips, drilling boreholes and improving the breeds of their livestock. However, the GR system has created more problems than it has solved. The monopolisation of group revenues and decision making powers by an emergent minority class of local elites has engendered various types of conflicts and struggles amongst GR members (AWF, 2005). For instance, although Maasai lands were supposed to be jointly registered, a legal provision in the Group Representatives and Land Adjudication Act of 1968 allowed individuals to apply for private parcels of land during registration of group ranches. Corrupt GR officials and a few local elites manipulated this legislation and registered prime parts of their ranches as privately-owned individual ranches. Many of these individual ranches are now either leased to private companies or individual entrepreneurs based outside the region. Others have been divided and sold either as lots or plots mainly to non-Maasai, both large-scale commercial and small-scale immigrant farmers, or used as collateral for bank loans (Coast, 2002).

There has been considerable tension over security of land tenure in the group ranches engendered by disagreements over new member registrations, informal allotment of land to unauthorised persons, and misappropriation of group revenues. These are some of the many challenges that

have pushed GR members to demand for the subdivision of their group ranches into individual holdings (BurnSilver and Mwangi, 2006). While the original goal was to restrict subdivision to the wetter parts suitable for settled farming, the process was in due course extended to include the dry rangelands. Individual land ownership is viewed by the Maasai, even if not adequate enough to sustain them, as something at least safer (Monbiot, 1994, Kimani and Pickard, 1998).

The outcomes of land subdivision in virtually all group ranches are very similar: poorer herders are allocated smaller pieces of unfertile land whilst the influential elders (the elite) are given large portions of the best land (BurnSilver and Mwangi, 2006). The most common trend is for the title holders to either sell the entire piece or fragment their plots and then, sell a portion often to non-Maasai people who immediately convert them into arable land. Unused to buying and selling in cash, Maasai villagers are conned by rich businessmen, some of whom, are their own elders (Monbiot, 1994). This hasty sale of land has not only driven many Maasai into landlessness, especially women and the youth, but also increased encroachment by agriculturalists into their remaining grazing lands. Whilst individualisation of land tenure removes the possibility of further appropriation, in practice subdivision has provided new avenues through which more land is prised away from pastoralist control (Homewood, 1995). The resulting sub-divided parcels of land are too small for pastoral production which requires large parcels of land, thus, pushing many a Maasai into further marginalisation (Hillman, 1994; BurnSilver and Mwangi, 2007).

Beyond the loss of economic viability and rapid marginalisation, the consequences of land subdivision among the Maasai run deeper. Once land is allocated or sold, the new owners sometimes erect fences around that land. The first fences are often put up around critical resources such as water points and swamps to avert free access. The next places to be fenced off are open grassland or bush land in order to thwart access to non-owners and wildlife (Coast, 2002; Ondicho, 2005). The privatisation of land ownership and the subsequent establishment of fences restricting each family to its own parcel of land have brought dramatic changes to Maasai pastoral land use. Loss of access and user rights over critical range resources is detrimental to both wildlife and community members without tenure rights. The new concept of individualised land tenure and resource management has not only weakened traditional communal ownership and usage of land resources but also presents a major threat to wildlife conservation and, by extension, tourism (Kimani & Pickard, 1998; Lesorogol, 2003). This situation has accentuated

fierce competition and conflicts amongst different resource users, that is, people, wildlife and livestock.

The current land use in Amboseli can be divided into five subsystems of land and natural resource use: a smallholding zone, individual ranches, irrigated land, group ranches, and a wildlife protected area. The small holding zone is fertile farmland located on the northern slopes of Mt. Kilimajaro, which was originally subdivided for the Maasai. These small farms produce maize and beans but they are now cultivated by non-Maasai people. Individual ranches combine livestock production with farming while irrigated plots produce more than 75% of the horticultural products sold in the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa. The Maasai tend to rent their irrigation plots to private companies or individual entrepreneurs based outside the region as a source of income, although many are starting to cultivate it themselves. Therefore, there is less room for grazing especially during periods of drought, which greatly endangers food security (Homewood & Rodgers, 1991). As a result, the Maasai have gradually started to view land and not livestock as a resource for individual self-advancement.

6.3.3 Political Transformations

Land tenure changes have greatly altered the basis of the Maasai's social, political and economic systems. The concept of group ranches managed by an executive committee elected periodically by all members to discuss and make joint decisions on behalf of their communities, was new to the Maasai when it was introduced in the 1960s. In addition to the new leadership structures, were concerted efforts by the state to install young educated Maasai into governance positions (Berger, 1996). Such positions bequeath the holders with considerable authority to control access and user rights of land and other natural resources such as pasture within the GR borders. The GRC is legally empowered to make decisions on which land is or is not to be used for grazing or cultivation and who has user rights over natural resources. Membership in the GRC, therefore, confers significant power and authority.

This new resource management structures have altered traditional systems of governance, which bestowed such powers on clan and community elders (Arhem, 1985). Thus, the traditional age-set and clan system has been weakened and, practically, forced to adapt to the modern/Western way of living. The authority to decide who is eligible to become a ranch member and either grant or deny permission to use land now lies with an elected GRC and not the traditional clan elders.

With time, GRCs have not only tended to replace the traditional power structures based on the age-grade but some have also tended to become corrupt and autocratic (Kimani and Pickard, 1998). The power of traditional clan elders to make key decisions regarding the use of land resources, especially pasture, has been severely undermined and what was once described as an egalitarian society is now highly stratified (Hillman, 1994; Ondicho, 2005). The usurpation of the elders' powers by the elite and the inequitable sharing of land resources have fuelled tensions and conflicts that now characterise the everyday life of the Maasai. These conflicts have engendered a situation in which various community interest groups come into a head-on collision, thus slowing the pace of local development.

6.3.4 Economic Transformations

The Maasai in Kenya, as already noted, have generally stayed outside the mainstream of development by maintaining their livestock-oriented lifestyles. However, frequent droughts, declining land productivity and diminishing accessibility to land in recent decades, means that the Maasai can no longer support themselves from subsistence nomadic pastoralism alone. Economic diversification has become necessary, and to some extent, the Maasai have taken a leading role in diversifying their sources of livelihood to include other economic activities. Some of the means and methods of diversification embraced by the Maasai include schooling, wage employment, self-employment, labour migration, farming, commercial ranching and tourism. Increasingly, many households now combine livestock herding with one or more other economic activities to complement their sources of livelihood (Kareithi, 2003).

Increasing numbers of Maasai children now go to school as a new way to buffer the increased risks they face and efforts are being made to encourage the Maasai to send more children to school since "School education is said to be the means to modernize the Maasai" (Berger, 1993: 22). Indeed, many Maasai people now view education as the gateway to a better livelihood, since it brings new horizons and aspirations. Political support for educational development among the Maasai is strongly linked to its potential to open the doors to wage employment (Carr-Hill & Peart, 2005). The elite are the people who run the group ranches and represent the community in various regional and national political and development forums. Generally, education provides the Maasai with new opportunities to expand family incomes and participate in Kenya's national life.

The Maasai, especially the elite, have also slowly started to cultivate crops, thus changing from a purely pastoral to a mixed agro-pastoral society. Today, sedentary agro-pastoralism appears to be gaining popularity and it is spreading in the higher rainfall areas around the slopes Mt. Kilimanjaro and around Loitokitok, and also along river valleys and swampy areas. The main crops include maize, beans and vegetables. As noted earlier, farming involves mostly people from other Kenyan communities. In spite of these socio-economic changes, the Maasai economy is still largely based on semi-nomadic subsistence pastoralism. Over 70% of the population derives its livelihood from livestock production, which accounts for about 60% of the labour force (Ntiati, 2002). The main livestock reared are cattle, sheep and goats, whilst the main livestock products are meat and milk. Although livestock production is largely subsistence orientated, it does respond to market demands for live animals, milk, meat, hides and skins. This economic diversification implies a significant shift away from livestock-based production. However, much of the diversification is actually within a more commercialised form of an animal-based economy.

6.4 Summary

This chapter has shown that the Maasai were never properly consulted before the creation of ANP and their protestations were not heeded. Prior to the 1990s most wildlife conservation and tourism activities were concentrated inside the park. However, as part of KWS's efforts to safeguard the survival of the park and to further conservation, a revenue sharing and a participatory approach to natural resource management is being implemented in Amboseli. These policies allow the Maasai to derive direct benefits from the park and tourism development as an incentive for them to conserve wildlife outside the park.

Three points are highlighted in this chapter. Firstly, new demographic, economic and other pressures have resulted in various changes to the Maasai pastoral economy. The Maasai are no longer merely pastoralists, 'people of cattle'. They now undertake tasks that have no apparent connection to the pastoralist ideal in any meaningful sense. Secondly, the shrinking of pastoral grazing lands engendered by individualisation of land ownership and rapid expansion of the tourism industry threatens Maasai livelihoods. Thirdly, the Maasai have recently started to partake in tourism both as a survival strategy and also as an alternative form of economic enterprise in order to make ends meet in their climatically hostile environment. These issues will be articulated further in the next two chapters. Chapter 7 uses Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary as a case study to expound Maasai experiences with community-based wildlife tourism.

Chapter 7: Maasai Involvement in Wildlife Tourism: A Case Study

7.0 Introduction

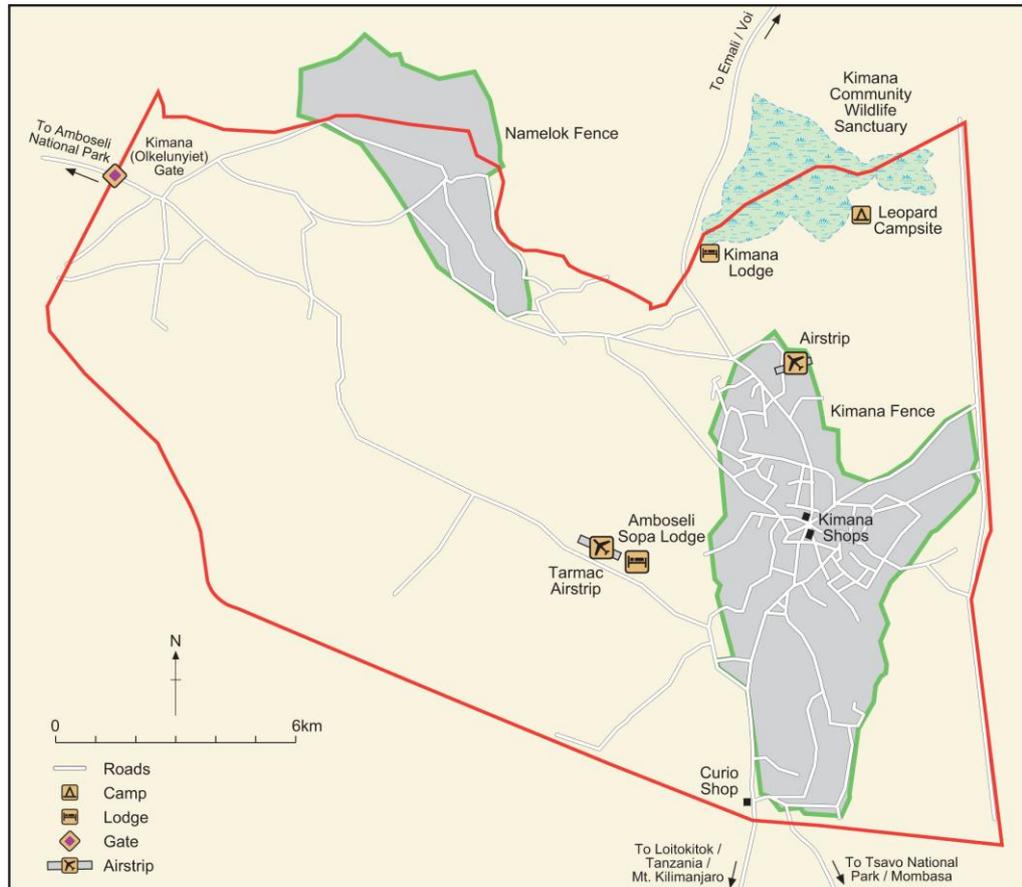
This chapter presents a case study of a community-based conservation-oriented tourism operation in which the Maasai of Kimana have entered into a partnership with a private investor to exploit the commercial advantage of their communal land which lies in close proximity to Amboseli National Park. The case study is used to illuminate the complexities of partnerships involving indigenous communities and external agencies in natural resources management and dynamic relationships arising from Maasai involvement in tourism development. The chapter concludes that a great deal of Kimana's tourism potential has not materialised and the local people of Kimana have not benefited from tourism as they should because of wrangles between various community interest groups.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section one presents a brief description of the case study followed by a detailed exposition of the main motivations for the establishment of the Sanctuary in section two. The third section offers a situated analysis of the structural problems that the Sanctuary has created for the Maasai community. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion.

7.1 Case Study: Introduction

Situated beside a watering point for animals migrating between Amboseli and Tsavo National Parks, Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary covers 40km² (4200 ha or approximately 17% of the 25,120 hectares Kimana Tikondo Group Ranch which is jointly owned by 845 Maasai families. Figure 4 presents a map of the Kimana-Tikondo GR showing the location of the community Sanctuary. Kimana GR is situated 15km east of Amboseli National Park on the northern foothills of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Similar to other ranches in Amboseli, Kimana is encompassed by a wide variety of habitats varying from swamps (see shaded areas in Figure 3) and natural springs such as the Kimana Tikondo stream and savannah plains to Acacia tortilis woodland. The area also contains a high concentration of diverse and free ranging wildlife and bird species. The following section discusses how the idea of establishing Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary came about, the level and terms of local involvement, the opportunity costs and the effects on the community.

Figure 4 Map of Kimana GR showing the location of the community Sanctuary



Source: Researcher (2008)

7.1.1 Driving Forces

Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary was set up in 1996 as a donor-funded Conservation of Bio-diversity Resource Areas (COBRA) project. The idea of establishing a wildlife Sanctuary in Kimana was mooted by the KWS in 1992 against a backdrop of increased human-wildlife conflicts, poaching, and the imminent complications brought about by the sub-division of the group ranches around the ANP (Rutten, 2002; Mburu, 2004; Honey, 2008). The subdivision, fencing and conversion of group ranches into privately owned farmlands was considered to be a threat to wildlife and tourism. It was against this background that KWS initiated negotiations with group ranch members concerning the possibility of creating a community wildlife Sanctuary at the Kimana swamp which lies on a very important wildlife corridor (Buysrogge, 2001; Rutten, 2004; Southgate, 2006). Wanting a more detailed presentation, I asked a Warden in the park how the project started and he stated,

The Kimana swamp is generally a very beautiful place with lots of wildlife. The people wanted to subdivide and cultivate the swamp but KWS advised the locals that this would lead to the swamp drying up and vegetation withering. So we advised them to set-up a mini-Amboseli to attract fee paying tourists. We attached their community scouts to the park and they worked with our rangers... They (community scouts) could see how much money KWS was getting. Then, they asked themselves, 'but we have the same wildlife in our midst; why not also make money from them?' (Ruto, personal communication, 2004).

The proposal was first presented at a GR meeting in 1992, by a former GR chairman, a well-respected community elder, assisted by the park's Community Warden. As a warden in the park told me, "We told them that the Sanctuary would belong to them and benefit them economically" (Ruto, personal communication, 2004). As the idea of establishing a locally owned community-based wildlife Sanctuary began to spread, community opinion was divided over the wisdom of having such a project on one of their most important dry season watering and grazing land. This project not only generated a lot of confusion but also social divisions within the community between proponents and critics. Generally, many people and particularly the older members of the community, who remembered how the government had failed to keep its promise of providing livestock watering points outside the park in the 1970s, very strongly opposed the proposal (Rutten, 2004). As a local primary school teacher told me,

The proposal was at first strongly resisted and opposed. We had negative attitudes towards wildlife and tourism. We thought that KWS was going to take away our land and then we lose access to the water and pasture resources within the Kimana swamp. We also thought we were not going to benefit from the proposed Sanctuary because tourism was mzungu business and just for a few rich individuals. Then another challenge was, we only thought of tourism as the national park. So the general feeling was that if we accepted the Sanctuary project then Amboseli national park would be extended into Kimana group ranch. Many of us already knew the dangers of national parks like the killing of livestock by wild animals. So being a basically livestock oriented community we thought our cows could be killed and we would starve. Initially, there was a lot of resistance within the community. However, after a lot of persuasion the project gained a lot of support locally and eventually, it succeeded (Sitonik, personal communication, 2003).

When I asked the people how the Sanctuary eventually succeeded, it was explained that Kenya Wildlife Services targeted a few locally respected community elders and some 'elites' with their new ideas. The elites, it was explained, are people who had at least completed their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE or 12 years in school) and are proficient in the English language. Such people not only hold more than one position of power within the community but also rise to be the decision makers regarding development projects and several other local issues. As one local high school graduate told me, "here in our village there are only a

few men who can read and write and often they occupy all the decision-making positions within the community” (Parpai, personal Communication, 2004). These were the people the Kenya Wildlife Services used to convince the community that the Sanctuary was going to benefit all the GR members. Another local resident echoed a similar sentiment when he told me:

I strongly feel that the Sanctuary eventually succeeded because of the Community Warden’s wisdom. He sought the help of a few highly respected elders and elites to convince the other community members to accept the idea. These elders and elites eventually managed to convince the people that they were all going to derive economic benefits from the Sanctuary. That is how tourism started here (Koitee, personal communication, 2003).

The proposal was widely discussed by all community members in a series of participatory meetings. Both young and old men and women were courted either as individuals or groups to support the project. These community-wide consultations elicited mixed feelings ranging from downright confusion to fear of the potential negative socio-cultural changes that tourism could engender. Local elites were therefore instrumental in swaying public opinion and influencing the overall direction of the project. As one leading local women’s leader stated, “Initially, I was cynical; however, after the importance of wildlife conservation and the potential benefits that we could accrue from tourism in the proposed Sanctuary were explained, I realised it was worthwhile supporting” (Eunice, personal communication, 2004). A ranger at ANP remembered how tourism gained a foothold in Kimana:

Actually it was the park’s Community Warden who started it. He came to the community one day and told us if we set up a wildlife Sanctuary at the Kimana swamps we could actually draw some economic benefits from the wildlife there. Initially, many people rejected the advice because they thought the government was going to take away our land as it did with ANP. So we thought they just wanted to take away the swamp and we are not even going to benefit from it. But of course a group of about six community elites joined him and persuaded the people. (Olempaa, personal communication, 2003).

As part of this process, KWS arranged and sponsored a small number of influential community leaders and elders to a study tour of successful community wildlife conservation projects. As a middle-aged male resident stated,

The people here did not know much about tourism and its potential until KWS introduced it to us. Some of our leaders were sponsored by KWS for a trip to Narok to visit Olchoro Orua wildlife conservancy (near Maasai Mara). They also visited other areas: Shimba Hills (Mwalungaje Elephant Sanctuary) and Laikipia (John, personal communication, 2005).

The findings of the study tours were reported and deliberated upon in a GR meeting. In the meeting it emerged that the community's biggest fear was that "one day the government would come and take away the Sanctuary from the land owners as it did with Amboseli claiming wildlife is a national resource so the state must be in charge of them" (Ole Ntiati personal communication cited in Smith, 2001:1). This not only creates uneven power relations between communities and conservationists but also enables park authorities to control wildlife and the local people. Such asymmetrical power relations often lead local communities in developing countries into distrusting the objectives of state and park authorities (Picard, 2003; Mowforth & Munt, 2008).

KWS's early decision to stay at a distance helped to reassure the people of Kimana that the government had no designs on their land and that they owned the process. As one male resident quipped 'even though the shadow of KWS was not far away it was empowering to feel in control of our own development and to participate in deciding the future destiny of our community'. Whilst the Community Warden and other representatives attended community meetings and provided technical support they did not directly participate in the public decision-making processes. The proposal was slowly accepted after the community was offered other incentives which according to Mburu and Birner (2002) included: Firstly, the promise to erect an electric fence to reduce human-wildlife conflicts and to minimise crop damage and livestock losses to wildlife outside the Sanctuary. Secondly, a community Sanctuary reduced the chances of ANP being expanded to Kimana and further alienation of Maasai lands. Thirdly, there was a promise that livestock would be allowed into the Sanctuary during hard times. Fourthly, a government ban on all forms of cultivation in the wetland may have also motivated the local people to accept the idea of a wildlife Sanctuary. Fifthly, there was increased awareness that the Sanctuary had the potential not only to attract donations but also to stimulate economic development locally. For instance, the park's Community Warden had told the GRC that various donors had already given funds to support the Sanctuary project (Mburu, 2004; Rutten, 2004).

The major motivation for the members to accept and support a wildlife Sanctuary in their midst, however, was the desire to receive economic benefits. The Sanctuary project was found appealing because of the potential of the Kimana swamp, if protected as a tourist attraction, to generate direct tourist income for the villagers. Each of the member families was promised an annual dividend paid from the entrance fees, lease fees from the three campsites and one game lodge in the Sanctuary, and a certain percentage of tourist bed nights. Some money could also be retained

for joint community development projects such as a school and dispensary and a revolving loan scheme (Rutten, 2004; Honey, 2008). So whilst the concept of local participation in community-based wildlife conservation and tourism development was both novel and strange, the possibility of making money was enthusiastically welcomed. In fact, without the promise of money a community wildlife Sanctuary would not have made sense to the people of Kimana whose main source of livelihood, livestock production, heavily depended on the swamp. This depicts a conservation philosophy based on money.

With the promise of money on the horizon the Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary was born. This marked the first time that the Maasai were drawn into conservation-oriented tourism development. As one resident recalled, “to be honest it was a very rough beginning. We never had any direct practical experience with either tourism or conservation ... we even didn’t know our role in the whole process and how tourism worked so we just waited to see the outcome. People never believed it could come to pass” (Onetu, personal communication, 2003). Trusting that the community was going to benefit, the project got underway. The KWS undertook an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Kimana wetland to determine the potential effects and find out if the planned Sanctuary was the most suitable land use for the area. According to Irigia (1995 cited in Rutten, 2004: 12) the EIA report did not provide a conclusive verdict other than suggesting that “if the proposed Sanctuary offered more economic benefits than cultivation then the Maasai would no doubt discourage cultivation”. Further, the report envisaged that unless upstream irrigation was stopped the swamp would dry up, human-wildlife conflicts would increase and building of more campsites than the existing ones would bring adverse ecological impacts.

As noted earlier, the Sanctuary project was developed with financial backing from several international donors including USAID, WB and Kenyan government. In addition to these donors, a large number of other stakeholders including conservation-oriented NGOs, researchers and volunteers provided infrastructural, material and technical support. For instance, in 1997 the European Union sponsored the construction of a 61km game-proof fence around the western edge of ANP. The Friends of Conservation (FoC) and The Amboseli Community Wildlife Project (ACWP) helped in planning, designing and organising the construction of the required infrastructure including the gates, and also supplied uniforms for community rangers and entrance-receipt books (Gicharu, 1999 cited in Rutten, 2004: 13). In addition to employing a manager and paying salaries for the Sanctuary’s staff, KWS also helped with construction of a

road network in the Sanctuary, toilets and staff quarters, and training for seventeen game rangers and seven wildlife scouts from the community.

With the basic infrastructure in place the final step was to attract tourists. Towards this end, the Sanctuary negotiated a deal with a private tour operator to build a luxury lodge in the Sanctuary and channel tourists to the area. The owners of neighbouring lodges: Kilimanjaro Buffalo (now Amboseli Sopa Lodge) and Kimana Lodge, both owned by Kilimanjaro Safari Club, together with the three leased tented camps within the Sanctuary were to assist in marketing the Sanctuary internationally. Additional overseas exposure and marketing was provided by a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) documentary recorded in the Sanctuary. For the local market, marketing was done by Abercrombie and Kent (A&K) under a commission arrangement with the Sanctuary (Gicharu, 1999 cited in Rutten, 2004: 14). In marketing, the Sanctuary had a tremendous advantage due to its close proximity to the ANP. The entry fee into the Sanctuary was fixed at US\$ 10 per person, which was considerably lower than the US\$ 27 per person charged by ANP at that time. It was anticipated that lower entrance fees would attract visitors from Amboseli National Park.

When the Sanctuary opened its doors for business in February 1996 it attracted an overwhelming amount of media coverage both locally and internationally as the first genuinely community owned and run wildlife Sanctuary in East Africa. In recognition of its significance to conservation efforts, the government and its international partners hired a Royal Ballet to present an especially choreographed production in the opening ceremony (Rutten, 2002). For its pioneering and exemplary work in community-based wildlife conservation the Sanctuary was granted the prestigious British Guild of Travel Writers' 'Silver Otter' award in 1996, the first ever to be awarded in Kenya (Southgate, 2006). The Sanctuary's success stories were flashed to media houses around the globe and the future looked even more promising for the people of Kimana. For the people of Kimana the sanctuary not only formed the dividing line between the past and the present but also was one of the greatest and most significant developments that ever took place in the history of their community. Even today, 1996 is remembered as the landmark year for the people of Kimana's involvement in community-based conservation-oriented tourism development.

Shortly after its official opening, the Sanctuary began attracting *mzungus* (KWS, 1997 cited in Rutten, 2004: 14). The people of Kimana were amazed to see tourists flock to the Sanctuary.

Many villagers could not believe that this same old wetland they had grown up with and took for granted had brought the inevitable. This was surprising, considering that tourism was something they had watched since ANP was created, but they had not been directly involved with in any way. People could have never guessed that *mzungus* would pay money to visit Kimana. I asked residents, “Did you believe that tourists would ever come and pay to see animals in your ranch?” The common reply was simply, “the truth is that we honestly didn’t know that could happen”. Within a short period, Kimana put itself on the international tourist map and tourists quickly became acquainted with the Sanctuary, apparently unaware of the latent controversies that surrounded its establishment or the larger political and ecological context in which tourism and conservation in Amboseli are situated.

In spite of the initial opposition, the people of Kimana enthusiastically threw their support behind the Sanctuary and many villagers started to exhibit positive attitudes towards wildlife and tourism. Instead of spearing wild animals, they protected them as a valuable economic asset that needed everybody’s care. Everything looked promising for the inhabitants of Kimana GR particularly as tourists continued to flock into the Sanctuary - for it had an appeal of its own. Walking around the Sanctuary was both a natural and cultural experience since a cultural *boma* at the periphery of the Sanctuary satisfied the needs of tourists interested in Maasai lifestyles. Instead of competing with the national park the Sanctuary complemented it perfectly well. Generally, the motivation behind the establishment of the community Sanctuary was government quest to protect and conserve the fragile wildlife resources of ANP. Community participation in income-generating opportunities in tourism was just a bait to achieve conservation goals. In spite of the project being conceived by KWS many local Maasai strongly believed that it was they who initiated the project. In any case, they were the recognised owners of the Sanctuary.

7. 2 Case Study Analysis

During the first two years the Sanctuary had the full support of the whole community behind it and the future looked great. However, after these two short years the euphoria that marked the inauguration of the Sanctuary dissipated and negative reports replaced success stories. In the next section, I provide a detailed analysis of the Sanctuary’s performance in the areas of management, staff relations, and finances. The analysis will seek to show that the negative reports were closely linked to community power struggles for political control over the Sanctuary’s revenues.

7.2.1 Management Issues

Soon after the Sanctuary's inception a situation arose where the Kimana people became doubtful of the GR committee and KWS's style of management and also fading project support. KWS had from the beginning sought to control the operations of the Sanctuary. Towards this end, it (KWS) worked with the GR treasurer and secretary, excluding the illiterate chairman and other members (Knegt, 1998 cited in Rutten 2004: 14). "Over the intervening years, GR members were consulted only twice: during one Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) meeting and one annual general meeting when the decision to establish the Sanctuary had been made" (Rutten, 2004:14). The twin issues of representation and responsibility were not seriously addressed by KWS, yet they affect operational issues such as openness in financial management and decision making (Muthiani, 2001 cited in Rutten, 2004:14). As one local resident stated,

The trouble was that KWS had a different agenda from that of the community. KWS was only interested in securing more land for wildlife and preserving natural habitats for wildlife use. When they realised that without our lands, wildlife from the park will not survive, they decided to do something to keep us sweet and entice us to support their conservation efforts in the park (Lekanaiya, personal communication, 2004).

A local management board was appointed by the GR committee in 1998 to take over the Sanctuary's management responsibility which had been relinquished by KWS. The board was theoretically supposed to handle all administrative and financial affairs. However, in practice the board had only a ceremonial role because of the GR committee's refusal to transfer the management responsibilities to it as originally agreed. This unwillingness to cede management powers to the board became a contentious issue locally. In fact this is one of the clearer manifestations of power struggles for political control over the Sanctuary's revenues. Some board and community members began to voice serious complaints and suspicions about corruption in the handling of the Sanctuary's finances. The GR committee was criticised for failure to pay dividends and spending group money without consulting the board and GR members and collusion with outsiders to defraud the landowners. The management board later on resigned over major disagreements with the GR leadership on the Sanctuary's management (Muthiani 2001 cited in Rutten, 2004). One former Councillor expressed his opinion in this way,

Initially, we didn't know the amount of stealing that was taking place in the Sanctuary. However, some educated Maasai amongst us have recently started to ask questions. The greed and dishonesty of the GRC members has now come out in the open. We have seen some of our own brothers collude with outsiders to steal from us. They are also talking to their relatives and slowly the people are awakening. People are right now talking about

the amount of corruption going on there. To some extent people have started to vet seriously people seeking management positions in the GRC (Kipaa, personal communication, 2004).

Poor marketing by the three campsite concession holders and neighbouring game lodges may have to a large extent contributed to the Sanctuary's dismal performance. In practice, each of the three concession holders had attempted to play each against the other in an effort to keep control over the Sanctuary (Kanene, 2002 cited in Rutten, 2004: 15). Additionally, a poor working relationship between the community and the concession holders was also a contributing factor. Unfortunately, with no proper mechanism for co-management of the Sanctuary and conflict resolution, differences over cattle-grazing areas and resource harvesting further complicated the relationship between the locals and the concession holders. Lease fees were always either in arrears or not paid at all, and in spite of demands by the GR committee for payment (Rutten, 2002). Nobody in the community knew how much they earned since they never declared their occupancy rates and income. Although GR members demanded a review of the statements of account both for the Sanctuary and the concession holders this was never undertaken or given and no adequate solution was immediately found.

In an attempt to revive the erstwhile success story, the GR committee in 1999 made a move to find a private investor to manage the Sanctuary. Towards this end, the GR committee informally approached various tour companies operating in the area including Abercrombie and Kent (A&K), African Safari Club (ASC) and the Kilimanjaro Safari Club with a view to leasing the Sanctuary to them (Buysrogge, 2001 cited in Rutten, 2004:16). However, only A&K and ASC showed interest. Most GR members preferred A&K which offered flexible terms about grazing and the collecting of resources inside the Sanctuary but the GR committee opted to lease the Sanctuary to ASC. During negotiations with ASC the landowners were told that only the original 2,720ha (6, 793 acres) would be leased out. However, after the signing of the lease agreement it emerged that the land involved was 14,000 acres. The size of the lease land had certainly been extended deceitfully without the knowledge of all GR members (see Rutten, 2004). As one local teacher stated,

The level of illiteracy in our community is very high. Once you have a group of men and women who cannot read or write it is quite easy to manipulate and abuse them. It is very easy to con them because they do not know how to negotiate contracts and to manage modern enterprises. Illiteracy and ignorance really puts our people in a disadvantaged and vulnerable position (Kilelu, personal communication, 2003).

The general opinion within the community was that the GR committee was bribed to accept the ASC's offer and terms. The fact that the GR committee signed the lease contract without informing and consulting with the members gave credence to these claims. ASC was criticised for conniving with the GR committee to steal from the people of Kimana. The Kimana people perceived ASC as acting to deny the community control and access to the Sanctuary and tourism activity. The community believed that foreigners had abrogated the responsibilities of the GR committee in running the Sanctuary. The failure to pay dividends and advertise the leasing of the sanctuary led to the conclusion that an underhand deal to swindle the members existed. Some respondents suggested that local elites were to blame for the problems that emerged. Meitamei Ole Dapash, the Executive Director of the Maasai Environmental Resource Coalition (MERC) has stated that,

In Kenya today it is impossible for poor to benefit from tourism and wildlife in their lands. As long as political elites and government bureaucrats have an interest in the tourism you cannot stand in their way. They have greater monetary and political power, so whether or not all the Maasai are involved in tourism it will not make a difference. To be very specific, some of our own people have seen the potential and in the process have tried to get to the mainstream of the tourism industry. And in the process of that they have compromised quite a lot. They have compromised the interests of their own people, compromised the interest of the environment, and the entire region. Some of our own people are to blame for what's happening today (Ole Dapash, 1999:1).

After ASC signed the lease agreement, KWS's involvement was maintained at a lower level and only a few GR members were directly involved in resolving grazing conflicts and financial management (Mburu, 2002). The leasing of the Sanctuary demonstrated a conflict of interest over the management responsibility between the various stakeholders. Each of these stakeholders had their own interests they wanted to further. These competing and often differing interests of the Sanctuary's main stakeholders were the cause of many intriguing social conflicts, power struggles and political controversies over benefit sharing. The external tour operators and investors sought to make profits whilst the government through KWS and other conservation organisations sought to conserve biodiversity as a source of earning foreign exchange. These objectives differed from the subsistence needs of the Maasai people.

7.2.2 Staff - Management Relations

The main motivation for supporting the Sanctuary was the promise that it could create employment and training opportunities for the people of Kimana. While this did not engender any problems, when ASC started running the Sanctuary it did. Despite the agreement with ASC

that most of its staff would come from Kimana only a few low-waged seasonal unskilled and manual jobs such as those of security guards, rangers, porters, casual construction workers and cleaners were available to a few people from Kimana. Most skilled positions such as those of managers and drivers were filled with employees transferred or rather sourced from ASC's Mombasa premises (Buysrogge, 2001 cited in Rutten, 2004: 18). As one Councillor observed, "Our people have limited access to well-paying skilled jobs in the Sanctuary. Well-paying jobs are certainly out of the reach of our people" (Saïre, personal communication, 2005). A local manager at the community campsite further confirmed this assertion when he stated,

Sadly, we have very high rates of unemployment amongst our people because of their generally low levels of education. Tourism generates only seasonal unskilled jobs for the Maasai. However, what our people need are more skilled and secure full-time jobs (Nkadayo, personal communication, 2005).

Most of the local employees in the sanctuary whom I talked to told me that they were unhappy with the employment situation in the Sanctuary. The general feeling was that employment opportunities including those that did not require any special skills or formal education were given to outsiders who just dressed like the Maasai. The most cited examples involved the positions of cleaners and watchmen. Many interviewees claimed that non-local managers often deny the Maasai employment opportunities by hiring people from other Kenyan communities. As a local primary school teacher stated,

The Maasai have been denied job training and employment by the tourism lodges here ... many locals have not been employed in the tourism facilities here because managers often judge the Maasai to be incapable of advanced training. I feel this is a form of discrimination against the Maasai in their own soil ... The Maasai people are fully capable of job training and employment; they just need to be given a chance" (Raphael, personal communication, 2005).

In the view of Maasai staff in the Sanctuary the so-called skilled jobs were tasks that many ordinary villagers could perform. Many villagers also lamented that it was not easy to be employed at the Sanctuary due to the requirement for one to obtain a letter of recommendation from the GR officials. However, such recommendations were selectively given to clansmen and friends (Rutten, 2004). This means that not only do people from some clans dominate employment in the Sanctuary but also jobs are available to only a minority of the residents and not necessarily the poor. I asked one Lodge manager why the Maasai were not employed in the game lodges in Amboseli and she responded,

The Maasai lack the required skills because many of them drop out of school early ... they are incapable of advanced training ... they are only suitable for security and menial jobs which require the same skills as guarding their livestock ... the Maasai are unreliable

people because they come and go as they must attend to their livestock herds and many wives (June, personal communication, 2005).

The other important issue that came up during discussions with local employees was the lack of security of tenure. They stated that managers from outside the community held problematic views about Maasai staff such as they were lazy and unreliable. These views rendered their relationship with Maasai staff difficult. Because of hostility and mistrust between the Maasai employees and the expatriate managers, some Maasai staff had resigned or lost work as a consequence. As one Maasai who had lost employment as generator operator for the electric fence stated, “In most cases the Maasai are hired and fired by word of mouth as they were never given any chance to enter into a formal employment contract like other employees from outside the region”. This means that the employment agreement with Maasai was very loose, thus giving the employers the advantage of dealing with the local employees in a way which suited them, not Maasai employees. Generally, working conditions were tough especially for the Maasai who were tasked with the responsibility of keeping away wildlife from the camps. I was told that those local employees who raised or attempted to raise any complaints were either fired instantly or suspended without justification. Without any support from a trade union or employment organisation many are left to serve at the mercy of the managers.

Most Maasai employees in the resort on a casual basis lamented that they were not only paid low salaries compared to employees from outside the community and never received any payment or benefit from their employers during the off-season, but also were denied permission to attend obligatory customary activities and events such as funerals and ceremonies. In cases where such permission was granted, a deduction was made from their meagre salaries for the days when they were absent. In such an environment small problems became magnified and tension was heightened with the Maasai, who felt that they were being treated unfairly in their own territory.

7.2.3 Finances, Benefits and Leadership

The initial investment for setting up the Sanctuary and its infrastructure was vast and could not be met fully through donations. A business plan drawn up by KWS for the Sanctuary estimated that Ksh.9 million was needed for capacity building and infrastructural development. KWS pledged Ksh 6 million hoping that the balance would be obtained from the Sanctuary’s profits (Muthiani, 2001 cited in Rutten, 2004: 13). Although the KWS financed infrastructural developments in the Sanctuary to the tune of Ksh. 4.2 million, this was far below what it had

pledged. Relative to the initially projected annual earnings based on estimated financial investment costs, the capital spent and the time needed to begin profitable operations were considerably underestimated. This gap and the other financial and accounting confusions resulted in negative repercussions upon the villagers and also their relationship with the GRC and foreign investors.

The Sanctuary's budgetary deficits were attributed to lack of transparency and accountability in the GR leadership. While the money collected from entrance fees by the Community Game Scouts was handed over to the GR treasurer, nobody within the community knew how these funds were spent. This money, which amounted to Ksh.1 million in the first year, was supposed to be put in a bank account and then distributed to members at the end of every year minus management costs. Over and above this the GR was to be paid a certain share of the nightly bed lodging rate received from tourists. This fee per visitor night was supposed to be invested in the construction of a school and clinic and to support other special community projects and the running of a small 'soft' loans scheme for members (Knegt, 1998 cited in Rutten, 2004: 15).

The GRC was censured for lack of transparency and accountability as well as for running the Sanctuary as their personal property (Mburu, 2004). As one resident aptly put it, "the GRC members are doing business for themselves. That is why they are building new houses and buying cars" (Onetu, personal communication, 2005). Whatever actual income was generated from the Sanctuary it was difficult for the villagers to comprehend because of the high operating costs. The people of Kimana could see foreign tourists visit and/or stay at the campsites and lodge in their Sanctuary but no profits in terms of direct dividends were forthcoming as expected and promised. As one Kimana ranger lamented: "we are now very annoyed and tired that the economic benefits from the Sanctuary that we were promised have not materialised ... we have grown impatient ... if we are to realise any benefits we need change at the top" (Sakuda, Personal Communication, 2005). The only people in Kimana, who had so far claimed any profits from the Sanctuary, were the group ranch officials. Otherwise, a lion's share of the Sanctuary's revenues was garnered by foreign tour operators and the government.

In many ways the Sanctuary and tourism had created a mind-set of anticipation. Thus, the failure to deliver economic benefits became a major source of increased social conflicts and power struggles within the community for political control over the Sanctuary's revenues. By the time of this study many local people had become not only restless and desperate but also lamented the

positive decision they had made a few years earlier to set up a wildlife Sanctuary in their most important remaining dry season livestock refuge. The enthusiasm that greeted the Sanctuary at its inception had by the time of this study dissipated and the people of Kimana had lost their goodwill towards the Sanctuary. Some villagers claimed that they had lost faith in their leaders and that they felt cheated or even misled to support the Sanctuary project. They even hinted that loss of access to water and pasture in the Sanctuary had contributed to poverty in the community. They accused their own leaders of being responsible for the mess. As one local member of the Kimana Game Scouts Association explained "... a general low opinion of the community is to a certain extent justifiable as the group ranch committee responsible for running the Sanctuary did shoddy work" (Ole Saina, personal communication, 2005). In the next section I will shed light on how political and power relations, induced by external interest groups within the community, affected the smooth operation of the Sanctuary.

7.2.4 Political Interference

The management of the Sanctuary was often mired in controversy. Competition for political control over tourism revenues and the decision-making processes impeded the smooth operation of the Sanctuary. These power struggles as previously discussed revolved around the issues of inequitable benefit distribution and loss of access to natural resources within the Sanctuary, mainly water and pasture. Shortly after ASC took over the operations of the Sanctuary it erected signs warning the Maasai that the land had been designated 'private' property and that they were to stay clear as trespassers would be prosecuted. "The large number of spear holes and scratches concealing the word 'private' on the signs provides evidence of local feelings" (Southgate, 2006: 84).

These negative attitudes were manifest in 1999 when a severe drought forced the people of Kimana to re-enter the Sanctuary to water and pasture their livestock. This angered ASC who demanded that Maasai livestock be kept out of the Sanctuary to the consternation of the already distressed pastoralists. As one older resident stated,

Livestock holds significant meaning to us Maasai people. Livestock is our cultural and economic lifeline and must be recognised as such. ... We are more interested in using our fields for livestock herding. The Kimana swamp is our most important dry season refuge and therefore our livelihood (Saire, personal communication, 2005).

The issue of access and user rights of natural resources within the sanctuary and mismanagement of the Sanctuary became a major rallying point for group ranches elections that were held in 2002. Even though prior to this time group ranch elections were held after five years, they rarely reached the mandatory quorum to make the results legally binding (Southgate, 2006). This is because elections were something that the Maasai traditionally never used or practised. One elder stated, “Many of our people do not understand the meaning of GR elections”. This shortcoming was exploited by government bureaucrats who handpicked young educated individuals and installed them into GR leadership positions. Politicians and bureaucrats have manipulated these young leaders into illegally allocating them community land in return for patronage and a share of the benefits.

Kimana’s GR leadership received increased attention after the 2002 national presidential, parliamentary and civic elections. Due to internal political pressures emanating from the ascendancy to power of a new regime and the general disillusionment with the mismanagement of the Sanctuary, GR elections became the focus of the people of Kimana. The GRC which was elected in 1993, through crooks and hooks, was able to stay in office till 2002 when the opposition’s National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) defeated the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the party which had ruled the country since independence. Formerly powerful people in the KANU regime also lost their seats, and consequently their power to influence GR elections (Mburu, 2004). This political change at the national level paved the way for GR elections which were long overdue. Through a combination of clan politics within the community and national party politics, the then incumbent committee whose members were allied to KANU was voted out. The local parliamentary seat for Kajiado South Constituency was won by the Honourable Geoffrey Parpai (now deceased), who later became a powerful Minister in the NARC government. Through a vertically integrated patron-client hierarchy he helped his political cronies to take up key leadership positions in Kimana and other group ranches in the constituency. The establishment of a clientele within the group ranches leaders was necessary for the consolidation of his political power base.

The main result of the shift from communal to individual land ownership was the GR committee’s loss of status and authority. However, the GR leaders sought to be recognised as the main authority for the tourism venture and thus they refused to cede management power over the Sanctuary. The GR committee abrogated for itself the powers to make decisions on the Sanctuary’s revenues, planning and utilisation of the natural resources within it. The foreign

partners had aimed to run a tourist business for commercial profits without the impingement of local control. The GR committee, on the other hand, was interested in controlling the Sanctuary for prestige and socio-political reasons, which was not in line with the business-oriented joint tourism venture. The GR committee, unfortunately, lacked the know-how of 'Western' business administration practices, which are necessary for the running of an international tourism resort. Thus, the GR committee's purpose for doing business represented in tourism differed from the basic conceptions of the foreign partners.

When I began my fieldwork in Amboseli, campaigns for a by-election to replace the deceased local Member of Parliament were beginning to take shape. The by-election which was held on Wednesday 19 November 2003 had attracted ten contestants representing different political parties. The main contest, however, was between the ruling coalition's NARC party and the official opposition KANU. For close to three weeks, campaign rallies were held in the vast Kajiado South Constituency to canvas for votes. The rallies were addressed by political party leaders, many of whom circulated in the constituency in four-wheel-drive vehicles and light aircraft, exhorting the electorate to vote for their candidate. Young and old men and women dutifully attended these rallies and politics became a popular topic of discussion locally. In many cases, it was obvious who would vote for which party and old political arch-rivals meticulously ignored each other. Although many people grieved over how party politics had polarised the community, nevertheless they felt that this was an important part of life.

I had the opportunity to attend three or so of those rallies in which tourism emerged as one of the themes around which political parties crystallized their rivalry and campaigns. It is worth to note here that in Kenya political parties revolve essentially around personalities and patronage, and therefore ideologically they are literally similar. As Saitoti, a university student cynically stated,

NARC and KANU are interrelated parts of the same elite seeking a chance to partake in eating the national cake. The promises to help us are rhetorical; their main agenda is to 'eat' and to further their selfish and narrow political interests (Saitoti, personal communication, 2003).

Whilst during the campaigning politicians used tourism as a symbolic weapon for political contest and although they expressed different viewpoints, they did not oppose it. Rhetorically, all parties deplored the marginalisation of the Maasai from tourism revenues earned in their land. KANU blamed the government for impoverishing the community, by selling their birthright -

land, wildlife and culture - to outsiders, who reaped immense economic benefits at the expense of the Maasai. To the contrary, NARC promised to improve facilities in the constituency, especially the road network in order to attract more tourists and hence earn the Maasai more revenues. In addition to these promises, political party stalwarts donated money to support various community projects and handed out t-shirts enshrined with party emblems and other 'goodies,' including cash, in order to sway the electorate in favour of their candidate.

The by-election was eventually won by the NARC candidate, the youngest of all the contestants, and a second year Bachelor of Computer Science student at the University of Nairobi. A clear indication of how a young and well-educated man can take up an important and influential leadership position that was traditionally reserved for the older members of the community. Although the contest appeared too close to call, the main deciding factor for the eventual winner was clan affiliation. The winner hailed from a numerically larger sub-clan. Whilst age-grade and age-set affiliations traditionally formed the basis for co-operation and sharing of resources, the clan has in modern times become a major avenue through which political alliances and support are harnessed (Southgate, 2006). Clans are more often than not used by politicians not only to build a pool and network of supporters within the community but also to further their own economic interests. Generally, clanism has a detrimental effect on Maasai development.

Trying to understand the intricacies of Maasai politics, I was alerted to the 'workings' of clan and party politics and how this affected community power relations and perspectives on several issues including tourism. I came to Amboseli with a rather naïve understanding about the level of Maasai political engagement. However, experiencing and learning more details, I discovered a community that was highly informed and politically sensitive. I also discovered a community that was highly polarised along clan, age, gender and party lines. This political and clan divide is not only well rehearsed in GR leadership contests but also in other activities that require collective effort. The best example was the struggle over the rights to serve at the GR cultural *boma*. The bone of contention was that only people from one clan were benefiting from the *boma* through direct sales of handicrafts to tourists. Many of the villagers I talked with expressed their dissatisfaction with the former GR chairman and his clansmen, the majority of who served in the *boma*. This provoked people to demand for equal representation and indeed a decision was taken to allot each clan equal slots in the *boma*. While this goal had been achieved, similar representation, however, has not yet been achieved in the GRC and other arenas.

The struggle for political control over the Sanctuary's revenues has not only split the community into various clan factions but also intensified intra clan rivalries and conflicts. These intra-clan rivalries cannot be easily noticed from the outside but they are in fact a major problem among the Maasai (see for example Southgate, 2006). The rivalry between the different clans has been exacerbated by party politics. The clans are competing against each other instead of working together as a group to achieve common aspirations. The rivalry between clans is not a new thing, as it has existed amongst the Maasai for centuries (Southgate and Hulme, 1996). While traditionally water and pasture were the main sources of conflict between clans, inequitable participation in tourism and benefits has in contemporary times become a major source of inter and intra-clan rivalry. These rivalries pose a serious threat to development initiatives which transcend clan boundaries. There is no quick solution to the problem and it will also be a setback to other forms of economic development.

7.3 Conclusion

The case study has highlighted the dangers of partnership projects, between indigenous communities and outside tourism investors and wildlife conservationists, invented at the KWS headquarters but disguised as a local initiative at the community level. It has also been shown that with the exception of foreign tour operators, the state and a few local elites, the majority of the local people have not benefited in any meaningful way from community-based conservation efforts in the sanctuary. The struggle for political control and equitable benefit distribution has engendered social conflicts and political rifts the community. These conflicts have weakened the capacity of the Maasai to exert political and commercial control over environmental resources and tourism benefits. Chapter 8 presents a case study of Maasai cultural *boma* tourism, a local initiative through which the Maasai have sought to exert closer control over the organisation, economics and impacts of tourism, in order to keep control over their lives.

Chapter 8: Maasai Cultural *Bomas* Tourism: A Local Initiative

8.0 Introduction

Chapter 7 showed the complexities associated with partnership projects between local communities and outside tourism interests. The chapter highlighted how the Maasai have not only lost potential control over tourism, tourist resources and revenues to foreign investors but also a sense of ownership. Rather than partnerships engendering mutually beneficial relationships with control firmly vested in local hands, tourism has become a source of bitter political struggles and conflicts within the community. This chapter will shift attention to cultural *boma* tourism, an indigenously home-grown initiative by the Maasai to exert commercial control over their cultural heritage and harness it for the tourist dollar. This chapter answers the research question that relates to what initiatives the Maasai have undertaken in order to gain closer local control over the organisation, economics and socio-cultural impacts of this development process. Specifically, the chapter presents a highly contextualised description of how cultural *bomas* have evolved as commercial enterprises, their organisational and management structures, and their activities as well as the ways in which the Maasai have both manipulated and responded to tourism in order to achieve their own ends. In the following section, I provide background information to the case study.

8.1 Background to the Case Study

Since the 1880s when travelogues by explorers Fischer (1884) and Thomson (1885) introduced the Maasai to western imagination, the community has featured prominently in advertisements and commercials that promote Kenya internationally as a tourist destination. Contemporary Maasai pictures particularly of *morans* juxtaposed with wild animals and their livestock grazing in harmony are used on the Internet, brochures, post cards, and electronic media to portray Kenya as a kind of ‘primitive paradise’ where man and beast coexist peacefully, unaffected by the many changes taking place around them (Akama, 1999a; Bachmann, 1998; Monbiot, 1998). Maasai pictures also don the most unlikely publications, from textbooks (for example Todaro, 1999) to institutional reports (for example LSHTM, 1998) to websites such as WorldBank (www.worldbank.org/aids-econ/). Additionally, Maasai cultural props have for a long time now been and are still being used to welcome, entertain and farewell inbound tourists (Keefe, 1995;

Mutahi, 1991). The Maasai and their culture are, therefore, not only one of the country's most important tourist attractions but also an asset for the tourism industry. As Azarya (2004: 957) aptly states,

... Maasai are prominent objects of tourism attention because the area they inhabit is also very rich in wildlife and is relatively accessible (not too distant from big cities, airline links, etc). The great numbers of visitors flocking into Maasai inhabited areas do not come to see only, or primarily, the Maasai. Their attraction is mainly to the wildlife and a visit to the Maasai is combined with a more general safari in the African savannah.

When tourists from the West visit Kenya they also want to see the Maasai, experience their culture, photograph and film them in their traditional regalia, purchase Maasai-made souvenirs, and postcards adorned with Maasai photographs to remind them of their encounter with this 'exotic' community (Bachmann, 1998; Azarya, 2004).

This romanticised attitude is evident still in the tourist's fascination with everything Maasai, their ornaments, their artefacts, and the plethora of picture books, ethnographies, and wooden sculptures (made by other Kenyans) depicting Maasai men and women in stereotyped poses, features, and clothing (Dorsey, 1997: 23).

In the last few decades the Maasai have also been at the front line in the development of so-called Maasai cultural tourism. Maasai cultural tourism incorporates experiences that revolve around cultural *bomas* located on the periphery of wildlife protected areas and along the main tourist-driving routes in Maasailand (MacGaret, 2007; Ritsma and Ongaro, 2002). The Maasai have sought to take advantage of the existing transport infrastructure, the abundance of tourists visiting wildlife preserves in their territory, and their powerful - albeit stereotypical - images to promote and enhance their involvement in cultural tourism (Mutahi, 1991, Monbiot, 1994). Maasai involvement in tourism contributes significantly to the diversification of their sources of livelihood and survival as livestock production, traditionally their main subsistence activity, declines.

Some local and international tour companies in Kenya include a visit to a Maasai cultural *boma* in their all-inclusive tour itinerary. However, in other instances tour drivers, who double as guides, are bribed by the villagers to deliver fee paying tourists as will be detailed in Chapter 9. Most tourist lodges in Amboseli have tried to create a deliberately Maasai ambience in their facilities besides running Maasai cultural events in the evenings within their premises in order to give their guests a chance to experience Maasai culture (Keefe, 1995, Bachmann, 1998). While most tourists to Amboseli seek wildlife related adventures, a significant proportion of these tourists also visit one of the Maasai cultural *bomas* located on the periphery of the park as a

supplementary attraction (Ritsma and Ongaro, 2002). Within this context, the supposed attractiveness of Maasai lands and culture to tourists is considered to assist the development of Kenyan tourism.

8.2 Description of Cultural *Bomas*

As stated in Chapter I, a cultural *boma* is 'a model village' built like a true Maasai customary homestead, but not occupied by ordinary families. Maasai entrepreneurs who want to put up their cultural artefacts for direct sale to tourists usually set up these model villages as tourist attractions and commercial enterprises (Charnley, 2005; Ritsma and Ongaro, 2002). Whilst such cultural *bomas* might appear to be part of the 'natural' Maasai landscape they are in fact purpose-built commercial villages intended to attract visitation by fee paying tourists. Such villages give tourists the chance to meet the Maasai on their own terms and to learn more about their exotic culture, to photograph them in their traditional costumes and perhaps, purchase some of their carefully designed handicrafts (Bachmann, 1998; Mutahi, 1991). This means that the Maasai play a dual role in the tourism industry: firstly, as entrepreneurs and managers of their own enterprises, and secondly, as objects of the "tourist gaze" (Urry, 1990). They not only offer cultural entertainment to tourists but also willingly display themselves to be photographed and observed as an additional tourist attraction to the wildlife in the park. This explains the first observable impact of tourism on the Maasai - they suffer from the preference given to wildlife.

A typical commercial cultural *boma* contains between 20-30 dome-shaped, sun-baked round huts encircling a cattle enclosure and the whole surrounded by a thorn tree fence - (see Photo 10). However, virtually all the researched commercial *bomas* were in the process of building new huts behind the existing ones in relatively expanded compounds to accommodate the ever-increasing number of villagers entering the tourism business (see Photo 14). This means that the new cultural *bomas* will contain anything between 30 and 50 huts. Even though the original intention was not to construct a permanent dwelling, these commercial *bomas* are now inhabited permanently by Maasai families from the same group ranch - often the one covering the area where they are situated. Cultural *bomas* cater mainly for the international tourist market, although a few domestic tourists also visit them, as part of a supposed learning experience about how other Kenyans live.

Broadly speaking, commercial cultural *bomas* in Maasailand can be categorised into three types. The first type comprises private cultural *bomas* which take the form of small businesses held by individuals or families. They are mainly situated near established tourist routes or resorts and they are often used as a draw card to other businesses such as lodges and curio shops. The second category comprises partnership cultural *bomas*, which are owned by group ranches. These *bomas* have entered into long term arrangements with foreign tour companies to deliver tourists whilst selected community members generate revenue for the GR through entrance fees and earn income for themselves from selling artefacts to tourists either directly or indirectly through middlemen or agents such as relatives and friends. The third category, which is the most common and the focus of this study, comprises co-operative cultural *bomas*. These types of *bomas* are developed informally on the periphery of a national park/game reserve or along a tourist route as commercial enterprises and are run by the local people according to their own priorities. Many of the members ordinarily reside in the *boma* and regularly undertake tourism related activities.

Although the tourism industry Licensing Act requires all tourism related enterprises to secure a licence annually, cultural *bomas* are not formally recognised for licensing purposes. Instead, they are registered as a community self-help income generating projects at the District Social Development Office. This registration, however, does not give the *bomas* legal status or any recognisable rights and duties under the law. Registration basically demonstrates one of the ways in which the government is trying to exert control and influence over *boma* tourism. Since the *bomas* are commercial enterprises it would be expected that they embrace a business form and be registered under a company law or an act exclusively dealing with cultural *bomas* or tourism. However, this has not been the case. Thus, registration is meant to give *boma* tourism a sense of recognition by the state and hence legitimacy to operate.

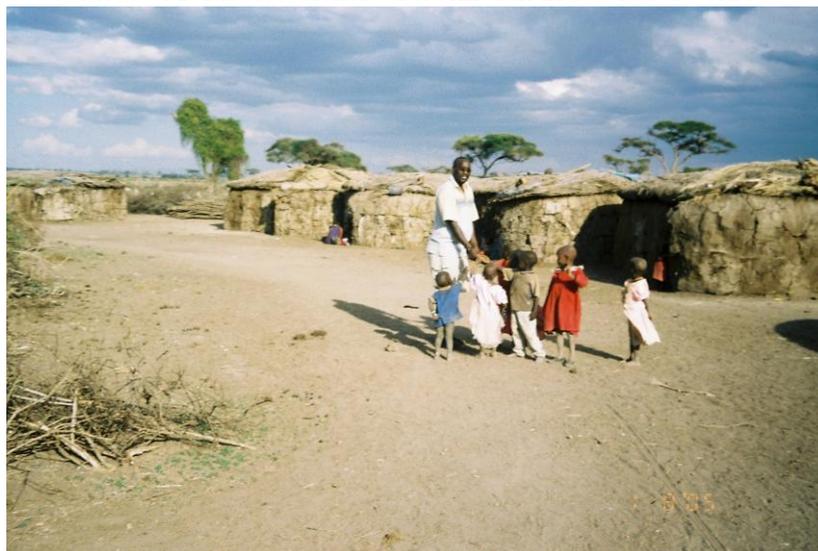
Photo 10 A morning view of an ordinary Maasai cultural *boma*



Source: Researcher

On the southern edge of ANP there are six cooperative cultural *bomas*, namely: Olasiti, Oltome, Enkongu Kankerre, Oltiyani, and Enkong Narok. However, the last one is largely dormant, just like Olkelunyiet and Ol donyo Oiborr in Kimana group ranch. These *bomas* are situated within a radius of three kilometres from each other. The closest to the park is located 2.3 kilometres away from Amboseli Serena Lodge. My observations are largely based on fieldwork in these commercial tourist *bomas* and several other non-tourist/commercial *bomas* within the group ranch.

Photo 11 The researcher with children in a cultural *boma*



Source: Researcher

Photo 12 Livestock inside a Kraal in a cultural *boma*



Source: Researcher

8.2.1 Origins of Cultural *Bomas*

The exact origin of cultural *bomas* as commercial tourist enterprises is largely unknown. However, the expansion of cultural tourism in the African continent has been closely associated with the growing popularity of safari tourism especially in the second half of the last century (Wels, 2002). Anecdotal accounts suggest that the first *boma* in the Amboseli region was established at Ol Donyo Oiborr in Kimana Tikondo GR in the late 1980s. The *boma* which lasted for about five years spawned an organisational model that numerous other communities around Amboseli National Park adopted. The potential for the development of cultural *bomas* as commercial tourist enterprises became apparent when a growing number of tourists from the Western world on self-drive game safaris started visiting Maasai homesteads near the park. As one British tourist told me,

When I first came on a self-drive safari of the ANP in 1983 I also visited a Maasai homestead on the edge of the park. The homestead we visited then contained fewer huts and people, many of who were old men. ... As we drove into the homestead we saw people scurrying away from our vehicle. ... We requested permission to visit the homestead and we were not charged entrance fees as was the case today. I remember the villagers gave us a flywhisk and club as gifts ... People then were not willing to be photographed and one had to obtain permission from the elders first before taking any photos (Jeff, personal communication, 2005).

I asked several respondents how they reacted to these first tourists. A GR chairman recalled,

We did not know much about tourism when the first tourists started arriving in our homesteads. They would simply drive in and then start walking around the compound,

asking women to pose for them to take photographs and in return they would provide a gift or purchase locally manufactured handicrafts particularly the beads and bracelets that women adorned. Many people disliked these intrusions on their personal lives and found the behaviours of these tourists offensive (Letureshi, personal communication, 2005).

Another elderly man, who remembered these early encounters with tourists, explained to me that the behaviour of tourists entering their homesteads without permission was deemed rude and offensive especially when the new guests talked directly to women. As you know “our culture does not permit strangers to enter our homesteads without permission and for male strangers to talk to our women in the absence of an elder or age group chief” (Mengatii, personal communication, 2005).

Some of the older residents I interviewed who remembered the earlier situation, stated that soon after the arrival of the first tourists Maasai youth, women and newly circumcised young people who had realised that they would make some money from tourists started to hang out at Observation Hill or stand along the safari routes within Amboseli to sell their pictures and beadworks to passing tourists. As a GR chairman stated,

These behaviours of these young people were culturally disturbing ... tourists often took pictures from the comfort of their moving vans without asking or paying ... This roadside method of participating in tourism was associated with disgraceful practices like begging from tourists, stripping to be photographed and spending time away from crucial chores (Letureshi, personal communication, 2005).

Many of the older men I interviewed stated that the illicit activities by women, young people and tourists not only posed serious dilemmas but also elicited divided opinion within the community. Some villagers, particularly the youth and elites who had increasingly become aware that tourists valued their culture and lifestyles, felt that tourist visits were useful because they earned them extra income. However, others - especially the elderly - felt that tourism took away labour from livestock herding which in turn disrupted the daily rhythm of community life. Unfortunately, the community had little ability to control the illicit activities and inappropriate behaviour of these tourists and villagers. Community members were particularly infuriated when one local elder who had travelled out of the area told them about the existence and circulation of a photo of a nude local Maasai woman he had happened to see while on a trip outside the region. The demeaning photo was allegedly taken by one of the tourists, who had visited the region. As one elderly woman stated, “It was distressing watching our children come back in the evening with very little money ... however, we couldn’t stop them because we honestly wanted them to earn money to buy food for the family” (Monica, personal communication, 2005). This expression

implies that people were forced by economic circumstances to engage in tourism development. As one Councillor told me,

We realised that without organisation it was difficult to control the inappropriate behaviours of these tourists and for our people to benefit from them. That is what prompted us to get together to discuss respectable ways to sell our culture and how to benefit from tourists without compromising our dignity (Saire, personal communication, 2005).

Many community-wide meetings were held to discuss the best way to sell Maasai culture and minimise the negative impacts. After wide consultations it was agreed that one separate permanent cultural *boma* be constructed for tourists away from their traditional homesteads. The founder chairman of Enkongu Narok cultural *boma*, the first to be established in Olgulului Ololarrashi GR on the southern edge of Amboseli National park, explained,

We saw that if we sold our culture in an organised way it could benefit us. We saw tourists come to our villages and then we realised that they had an interest in our culture but the old people did not want tourists. This prompted us to sit down together with the leaders of the day and elders to deliberate the best way to sell our culture. We then agreed to build a boma specifically for tourists ... we saw it as a better way to sell our culture because when tourists used to visit our homesteads they would find old men drunk. This did not augur well with us so we saw it better to protect our privacy. So we decided to have a better setting so that culture could be sold formally ... we needed a special boma made for tourists. When you expect visitors you will definitely make preparations on how to welcome them (Daniel, personal communication, 2005).

Local elites who had seen commercial tourist *bomas* elsewhere were instrumental in advocating for and in the creation of a pioneer tourist *boma* in Amboseli. The pioneer *boma* was basically set up not only to earn the Maasai some form of cash income but also to shield them away from the tourist intrusions and to ensure a positive image of the Maasai was presented to visitors. As one current *boma* chairman and founder member of the pioneer *boma* stated,

Some of us had seen tourist cultural bomas in Narok and later we saw others in Samburu and Laikipia when we went there for seminars and study tours organised by KWS and AWF ... We came back and organised workshops and meetings and told our people about what we had seen and learned. We told them that selling beads and curios was as good as selling cattle (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005).

Although the idea of establishing a commercial *boma* appeared strange, they accepted and embraced it. However, many people were (and some still are) reluctant to participate directly in tourism. As one Councillor said,

We organised a meeting where we gathered all people who were interested in the tourist business. People were excited to show our culture and happy that tourists could learn something from us because they didn't know much about us (Saire, personal communication 2005).

The development of cultural *bomas* as a commercial tourist enterprise was later supported and encouraged by conservation-oriented organisations including the Kenya Wildlife Service and African Wildlife Foundation among others. Support from these organisations was in line with the prevailing global conservation paradigm which was also amplified in Kenya's new national policy which stressed the importance of promoting local participation in community-based conservation-oriented tourism development as already discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. As the Park Warden told me, "If our conservation efforts are to succeed we must involve the Maasai in tourism benefits. It is essential that we encourage and support their participation in tourism development". KWS's support for cultural *boma* tourism was basically hinged on the rationale that earning direct income from cultural *boma* tourism would not only give the Maasai incentives to conserve wildlife but also would diversify the available tourist attractions thus broadening Amboseli's overall tourism appeal.

The pioneer cultural *boma* was constructed around the mid 1990s just four kilometres from the southern boundary of the park. As the founder chairman said, "I started the pioneer *boma* at Enkongu Narok which has given birth to all these others" (Letureshi, personal communication, 2005). The original *boma* was started as a cooperative with membership comprising of only men. One founder member claimed,

There were four of us who initiated the first boma. We realised that we could not do anything without money. So we agreed that those who wanted to become members pay a registration fee. Many people registered and we got enough money for building the boma. We decided to build the boma near the park so that tourists would not have to travel long distances to access it, and also so that we could get quick help from KWS when required (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005).

Other *bomas* were built afterwards to cater for the increasing number of tourists. The mushrooming of cultural *bomas* offering the same products and cultural experiences, however, has contributed significantly to the endless power struggles for the political control over benefits, business competition and rivalry as well as the problem of "driver exploitation" discussed below. The location of cultural *bomas* in one area provides confirmation of the highly centralised and controlled spread of tourism and its benefits geographically.

Even though women were not actively involved in the development of the original *boma*, they exclusively conducted the core business of selling beadworks and other artefacts to tourists. One elderly woman who sold beadworks in the *boma* (now a wholesale curio dealer) explained to me

that when she started selling beadwork at Enkongu Narok “One could virtually charge any price on an item and still find enough willing tourists to buy it. Tourists were willing to pay any price we asked for our items and sometimes even give a tip” (Kayso, personal communication, 2005). Profit margins at that time, with only a few dealers in the trade, were over 100%. However, as a result of “too much supply chasing too little demand” prices and profit margins are now on the decline, she claimed. As a result of competition occasioned by too many people joining the business the downward trends are likely to be a common feature of cultural *boma* tourism in the near future.

With time, and in an attempt to diversify the core offerings of the *boma*, *morans* were hired to entertain guests whilst others served as guides for nature walks around the community. Being the only *boma*, it attracted high levels of visitation to the extent that at times it was hard to cope with demand. Industry players such as tour drivers and guides also played an important part in helping to stimulate tourist interest and to deliver tourists to the *boma*. As tourists flocked to the *boma* the potential for promoting indigenously owned and managed cultural tourism enterprises in Amboseli became a reality. Many residents claimed that the *boma* was generally very successful since it generated a vast amount of income for the members. Some philanthropic tourists, touched by the plight of the Maasai, assisted to sink a borehole and donated money towards the construction of a primary school within the vicinity of the cultural *bomas*. As economic benefits started to materialise, a small but increasing number of local people became interested and started to engage in *boma* tourism development.

Though largely dormant, this *boma* has entered into a longstanding arrangement with two international tour operators each delivering Japanese and American tourists directly to the *boma* once a year. Households in this *boma* tend to derive more economic benefits from the purchases of curios, entrance fees and tips than those *bomas* without similar arrangements. This is because they do not have to bribe tour drivers/guides and due to an excellent working relationship with the community these operators sometimes purchase crafts beyond their own immediate needs and then sell them abroad, and later returning with the profits for the community. These two tour operators also support various community development projects such as buying textbooks for the local primary schools and uniforms for needy pupils. In addition, they also give cash donations to other community projects including water projects. In the following section, I shift my attention to the organisational structure of cultural *bomas*.

8.2.2 Organisational Structure

The management of cultural *bomas*, just like group ranches as discussed in Chapter 6, is vested in the hands of an executive committee comprising of a chairman, treasurer, secretary and committee members. Unlike the GRC, *boma* officials are elected at the end of every year in the annual general meeting. The responsibilities of the executive committee include handling all day-to-day social, financial and administrative affairs of the *boma*. Each *boma* also has two to three elderly men (aged 50 years plus) who function as advisors, reconcilers and a source of wisdom, though their influence is very much watered down compared to the *boma* officials who exercise executive powers. *Boma* chairmen, in particular, wield considerable powers in arranging tourism, marketing and benefit distribution. Although theoretically the committees are supposed to be elected annually, in practice, some *bomas* have operated with one or no election for more than five years. As one *boma* chairman boasted, “I have been the chairman of this village for seven years. I have never been opposed. I came in as interim chairman and to date I am the chairman. We have never held elections” (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005). This failure to hold elections regularly has created a leadership crisis in many cultural *bomas* as discussed in Chapter 9. Elections are often not held because the chairman, as the *boma* initiator, recruits the members and hence all serve at his mercy and those who try to oppose him are thrown out.

To establish a cultural *boma* the initiators (usually two or more persons) have first to consult with the GRC and the local chief. These initiators have to find a group of people who they can team up with to construct a *boma*. The group then chooses a suitable location upon which to build it. As one current *boma* chairman and long time tourist entrepreneur said,

We first find out the number of members who want to establish a boma. We then forward our request to the GRC to grant us authority to build a boma in a specific area. The GRC will write a letter indicating that our proposal to set up a boma has been approved. We then use the letter to apply to the District Social Development Office for registration (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005).

Although theoretically any GR member can seek consent to establish a *boma*, in practice, political and social connections greatly influence who is given authority to initiate a new *boma*. Often individuals with strong political and clan networks within the GR machinery are the ones who most easily obtain permission to set up new *bomas* when and where they want. These self-appointed individuals also end up forming the *boma* executive committee. This has resulted in the concentration of cultural *bomas* in a small geographical area and in the aggregation of *boma*

tourism in the hands of a few influential individuals with access to the GRC and political connections. Consequently, tourism in Amboseli has become an entangled network of friends and partnerships which at the same time are a source of bitter competition and rivalry between various community groups as discussed in Chapter 9.

Once the requisite consents are given, the interim executive members of the proposed *boma* then apply to the District Social Development Office for registration. Before a registration certificate is granted the group must theoretically fulfil certain conditions,

The group must submit an application form, minutes of the group's first meeting attended by at least 20 members, a registration fee of Ksh. 1,000 and a constitution or bylaws to govern the group's operation and a list of the interim officials. In addition, the objectives and activities of the group must be spelt out. Once all these requirements have been fulfilled officials from the DSDO's office then meet with the group and vets them. If the group's application is in order, a certificate is issued (Kangaroo, personal Communication, 2005).

Once the registration process is completed and a certificate awarded, the group is free to start construction of a cultural *boma* at the site approved by the GRC. Normally, building starts with the erection of a fence around the construction site with thorny tree branches, and then women construct huts around the inside of the fence. Recently, a new trend whereby originators hire other Maasai to construct the huts is taking shape. Once construction of the huts is complete the initiators then invite other people, often their relatives and friends, to join them in the tourist business. As already noted, membership is drawn from a diverse range of social elements including age, gender, education, political orientation, clan and religious affiliation and economic status, from different localities but within the same group ranch. There are also a number of people who commute daily to the commercial cultural *bomas* to sell their curios and dance for tourists. Some interviewees claimed that even those who live permanently in the commercial *bomas* have second homes where their kin reside and where they keep their herds of livestock. Membership is generally free. However, some *bomas* have recently started to charge a nominal registration fee for new entrants. The structure of daily lives of the residents of the cultural *bomas* is presented in the next section.

8.2.3 The Daily Rhythm of Life in the Cultural *Boma*

During the day around the cultural *boma* one encounters men, women and children attired in the traditional Maasai regalia which are also emblematic of their identity. When not serving tourists,

women are engaged in cleaning and maintaining the enclosure, doing beadwork and other domestic chores. The men sit around in groups to play “aqua” (a traditional game played by arranging pieces of stone into holes drilled on a wooden board, Photo 17 shows Maasai elders playing *ajua* under a tree), listen to the radio and engage in storytelling. The women pretty much do the same when not otherwise engaged. To the contrary, *morans* have a tendency to come and go in small groups of two or three, sometimes more. They ‘hang out’ for a while, talk to the women and elders and then wander off to the kiosks and bars set up in the informal settlements⁴⁰ around the *bomas*. The presence of *morans* in the cultural *bomas* is a recent development. Otherwise, traditionally, they were required by custom to live in a secluded *boma* in the bush. Though the struggle for survival is harder in the low tourist season and during periods of prolonged drought, I observed a pace of life that is generally leisurely and decidedly unpressured.

The cycle of the day in the cultural *bomas* more or less follows the rhythm of herding. The day starts with livestock being let out of the *boma* for grazing. Young livestock are kept separately near the homesteads so as to preserve their mother’s milk supply. These milking cows are brought back at sundown at which time the women milk them. Most households or families often combine their herds and graze in turns. In this way a large majority of the villagers, particularly the *morans* who are traditionally the herders, remain behind to serve tourists.

Photo 13 A shanty village near the cultural *bomas*



Source: Researcher

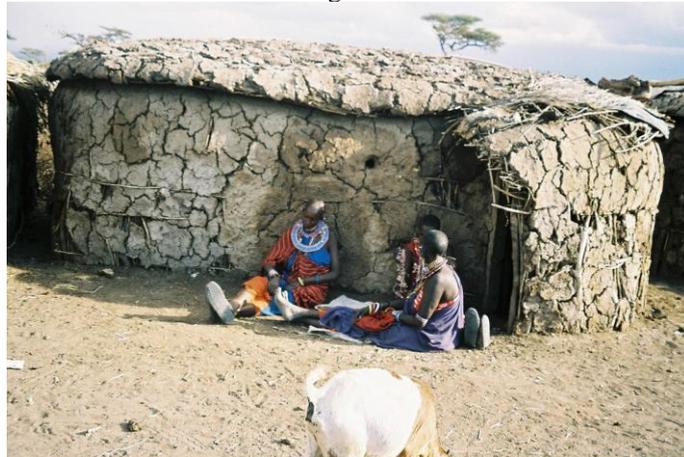
⁴⁰ In Amboseli there are many informal settlements that have sprung up along tourist roads and adjacent to the main tourist points including ANP, KCWS, and lodges. The settlements have been developed by the locals in order to earn some income from the tourism and passing tourists. In these pubs one encounters Maasai men drinking beer and whisky, enjoying roast meat and flirting with the maids and prostitutes who serve there.

Photo I4 Women constructing new huts in a *boma*



Source: Researcher (2005)

Photo I5 Women relaxing outside a cultural *boma* hut



Source: Researcher

Photo I6 Women doing beadwork in a cultural *boma*



Source: Researcher

Photo 17 Elders playing ajua under a tree near the *bomas*



Source: Researcher

Boma residents usually perform several functions during the day such as singing, dancing and selling handicrafts to tourists. In addition to serving tourists during the day the villagers are involved in several other economic activities such as livestock herding, petty trade, currency changing, vegetable vending and guiding tourists on nature walks around the community to mention but a few. It is worth noting here that much of the money earned from tourism and all these other activities is used to procure more livestock (some of which are kept away from tourists and tourist routes) and considerable effort is devoted to caring for them because as indicated earlier they are considered a wealth and status symbol amongst the Maasai. Most of these activities are in one way or another directly or indirectly linked to tourism. Whilst the selling of artefacts and dancing and singing is the responsibility of both genders, women exclusively undertake beadwork production. Traditionally, Maasai women are known as designers, makers and decorators of elaborate and striking beadwork.

During the tourist season (July to August and December to March), one encounters at the main entrances to the three game lodges in the park (Amboseli Serena, Ol Tukai and Amboseli Lodges) groups of *morans* idling away time or chasing tourist vans in an effort to win business for their *bomas* (see Photos 18 & 19). Others line up along the roads leading to the *bomas* where they try to wave at the drivers to either stop or to direct the drivers to their *boma*. I once witnessed one *moran* almost being dragged by a tourist van he was running after: he sustained injuries. Even though occasionally they distribute basic leaflets in the lodges, advertising and marketing is accomplished throughout the day by word of mouth and it mainly targets tour drivers on whom the *bomas* depend as a source of tourists. I observed *boma* marketers squander

money meant for bribing tour drivers/guides to bring tourists to their cultural *boma* on drinking. Since there is no follow up they still continue to operate and to seek greater access to tourism benefits. One Councillor expressed his opinion regarding *boma* marketing in the following manner,

There is one thing I consider bad and harmful to the image of the Maasai. They go to the lodges to do marketing. Sometimes I consider it a security threat for people to be following tourists up to their rooms in the lodges where they are supposed to be relaxing all in the name of marketing. A better marketing strategy would be making available brochures at the lodges so that once the tourists know about the cultural bomas they can be assigned a tour guide to deliver them without causing congestion and chaos in public places in the name of trying to attract tourists' attention (Saire, personal communication, 2005).

The evenings are generally quiet times although *morans* are given to communal singing and dancing. However, no such evening celebration takes place if the pattern of normalcy has been disturbed, such as when an animal has gone astray during the day's grazing. The best dancers and singers from each *boma* are hired to perform for tourists every evening at the lodges in the park. The respective lodges provide them with transport both to and from the lodges to avoid being killed by roaming wild animals. Groups of *morans* also often hitch a lift or walk to the lodges in the evenings to market their *bomas* to tour drivers/guides. The other men usually spend their evenings either at home with their families or in shanty bars, drinking or socialising with friends.

All the commercial *bomas* have formulated strict rules and codes of conduct to govern the day-to-day lives of their members and which must be 'adhered to' at all times. As one resident explained, "Everybody in the cultural *boma* is required to adorn his or her traditional attire throughout the day" (Motto, personal communication, 2005). With the exception of *morans* who plait their hair and decorate their bodies with red ochre, men generally wear solid red cloth and sandals as well as carry knives sheaved to the loin and a spear or club. Women ordinarily wear solid red cloth, beadwork and sandals. Displays of any items that reflect modernity such as sunglasses or cell phones are not allowed in the presence of tourists. Consequently, such items are often taken off and concealed from tourists. As one female resident told me, "Villagers are not supposed to scramble or crowd around tourists when selling their curios at the *boma* market" (Sango, personal communication, 2005). Those who breach these rules are often fined or expelled depending on the nature and intensity of their infringement. In the following section, I focus on the process of receiving tourists within the cultural *bomas*.

Photo 18 *Morans* 'hunting' for tourists at Ol Tukai Lodge



Source: Researcher

Photo 19 *Morans* chasing a tourist van on a village route



Source: Researcher

8.2.4 A Tourist Walk Through a Cultural *Boma*

The procedure for receiving tourists in all the existing cultural *bomas* is the same. Tourists who visit the *bomas* are organised groups who stay in the game lodges inside the park and they are interested in a wildlife safari but also require some additional activities after the morning (6-9am) and before the evening (4-6 pm) game drives. Upon arrival outside the main entrance tourists pay an entry fee of between US\$10 and US\$20. Entry fees are sometimes charged per person and other times per tourist van or waived at the whim of the *boma* chairman. After payment the visitors are entertained with Maasai welcoming songs and dances. The villagers/performers form

a long line with men usually on the right hand side and women on the left and dance to their own singing. The male dancers synchronically jump up and down flexing their knees and bobbing together in unison. The performances are done in a manner that gives tourists the impression that the Maasai were dancing for themselves and they chanced on them. This lasts for a few minutes and then tourists are asked to squat down for a Maasai prayer. Photo 20 shows tourists squatting for a Maasai prayer. More song and dance is performed after the prayer, as the guests are ushered into the *boma* compound.

Inside the *boma* a cultural lecturer who doubles as a community guide takes over control in taking visitors on a guided tour in and around the *boma*. Larger groups are normally split into smaller groups and each assigned a lecturer. The guide (in English) starts by greeting the tourists saying, "Welcome to ... Maasai cultural *boma*, I am the son of the Chief". Some lecturers try to catch the tourists' attention by greeting them in different foreign languages. The lecturer then quickly gives a brief talk on selected aspects of Maasai culture and lifestyle such as social organisation, history, food, medicine and living arrangements as the tourists are taken on a guided tour of the *boma* compound. Some lecturers do no more than repeat sentences they have learned by heart and they carefully avoid answering questions about other topics which may betray their superficial knowledge of English. As one *boma* guide told me,

I have not gone to school but I know just a little English, which I use to communicate with tourists. You know with tourists you just need to explain in a few words e.g. this is an elephant; these stones are from Mt. Kilimanjaro, as long as you are sure of what you talking about there is no problem (Mekanika, personal communication, 2005).

The main responsibility of the lecturer is to select interesting features of Maasai culture and interpret them to form a coherent informative narrative that appeals to tourists' imaginations. The successful lecturer is one who has good proficiency of the English language and answers clearly all the questions asked by tourists. The content and length of the lecture often depends on the interest of the visitors. However, some of the presentations are sketchy and somehow distorted. As one lecturer confided in me,

We do not tell them the truth. Like we tell tourists that all the villagers share the proceeds we get from tourism equally when in essence everybody earns his/her own money and spend it according to his or her wishes. Again we tell them that we only eat meat, drink raw blood and milk but of course we also eat vegetables, fruits and other foods. We also tell them that we do not seek medical treatment in modern hospitals when we actually do. In addition we tell them that we are nomadic pastoralists but nowadays we are also leading sedentary lifestyles and practising farming. So there is so much we do not tell them (Thomas, personal communication, 2005).

Typically, tourists are summoned to take pictures at certain spots within the *boma* in the course of the conducted tour of the homestead. Some tour drivers/guides accompany their guests throughout their stay in the *boma* and whenever necessary they correct mistakes made or fill in gaps relating to any information they deem vital but omitted by the host lecturer. The tour culminates in the middle of the *boma* where tourists are exposed to diverse facets of Maasai lifestyle including a warrior lighting a fire by rubbing with two hands a dry stick on a log of wood, and displays of traditional medicine and so forth. Photo 21 shows tourists listening to a cultural lecturer giving a talk on Maasai herbal medicine, which is on display. During this time guests commonly chat with the villagers and hand out gifts to them including candy and pens among other things. Although some of the Maasai have been to school and speak good English and Swahili, those who cannot speak English shy away from direct interaction and rarely talk with tourists. During song and dance performance times the Maasai often remain aloof and mute unless one is giving a lecture to tourists. Generally, language barriers inhibit interactions and communication beyond the typical tourist transactions. As already noted elsewhere, the quest to communicate with tourists was one factor influencing Maasai youth to go to school.

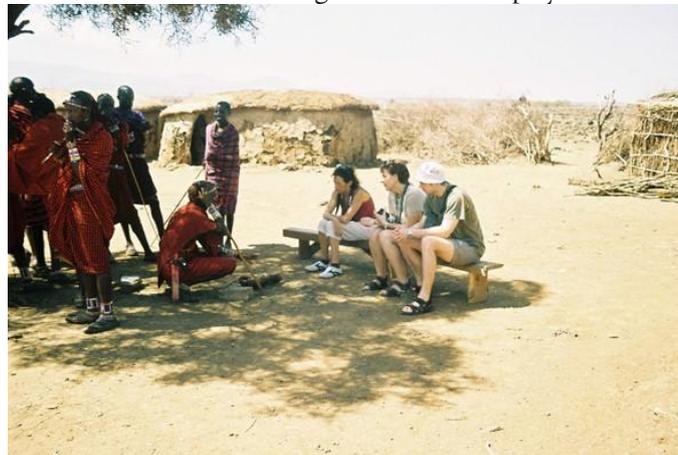
Following the display of Maasai medicine and lifestyles, guests are taken on a conducted tour of one hut. Typically, in each *boma* there is always one hut set aside specifically for display to the visitors. As a standard procedure tourists are encouraged to enter the hut to see the setup inside, since this is important in understanding Maasai social organisation within the *boma*. Photo 22 shows tourists outside a Maasai hut which is on display for them to enter and see how the interior is set up. Whilst some tourists do not even attempt to peer inside, others do enter. Often the village guide takes them through the various rooms in the hut with brief explanations on who does the construction, the types of materials used, and the functions of each room. Although the huts are normally too dark inside to see anything, some tourists still take pictures of the interior setup of the huts.

Photo 20 Tourists squatting for a Maasai prayer



Source: Researcher

Photo 21 Tourists listening to a talk on displayed artefacts



Source: Researcher

Photo 22 Tourists visiting a hut in the *boma*



Source: Researcher

Guests are then led to the *boma* ‘market’ which is an open-space behind the *boma*, where women and men display their handicrafts, beadwork, and other artefacts for sale to tourists as souvenirs. This market is always set up in the morning before the arrival of tourists and it closes after the

last group of tourists has left. The goods are arranged in an orderly fashion on a blanket. The sellers normally stay behind their wares, leaving the central arena for tourists to walk through, whilst making their purchases. Most of the handicrafts sold to tourists at the *boma* market are manufactured locally by both men and women.

Handicraft sales are a major source of direct income on which an increasing number of villagers depend for livelihoods. The influx of tourists to the *bomas* has not only created a ready market for handicrafts but also boosted production. Even though some handicrafts are manufactured locally some of those sold in the cultural *bomas* are imported from the Maasai market in Nairobi. However, these imported handicrafts are also sold in several other outlets including lodges, hotels, and roadside curio vendors at comparable or more competitive prices. Outside merchants supply non-Maasai artefacts such as Gusii and Akamba soapstone and woodcarvings respectively which are also popular with tourists. There is no hard sell or hawking, no price tags or signs - the sellers just stand behind their wares and wait until tourists approach them. Whilst tourists may pick items from different vendors, due to foreign language barrier, they deal with only one person who negotiates the price on behalf of the owners. Whereas this centralised selling mitigates the language barrier it has also opened a new avenue through which dishonest multilingual individuals steal from illiterate villagers - particularly women - by cheating on the actual price offered for their items. The money is handed over to the *boma* officials who then pay each person for the items sold less 10% or 20% commission on total sales which is collected at the whim of the *boma* chairman and/or officials.

Towards the end of a *boma* visit guests are usually invited to visit the *boma* nursery school. Each commercial *boma* runs a nursery that serves as an additional tourist attraction and a bait to gain more money from tourists. As a local teacher in the village primary school observed,

I realised that the nursery schools were there only as a means of attracting tourists. They do not follow any syllabus and are not formally registered, like other schools, with the Ministry of Education. Children are not taught anything they just sit around. But when a tourist vehicle shows up they are called to class. There was one time we were walking around the villages and I was shocked when I saw children being called back to class at 6 o'clock to entertain late evening tourists. When we had a meeting I threatened to close them. That is when they accepted to send the older children to this school. The younger ones were left there to continue attracting tourists. They use these children as a means of earning money (Raphael, personal communication, 2005).

One of my friends in the cultural *bomas* confided to me that the nursery schools are meant to confine the kids to a central place where they will not have the opportunity to beg for sweets or

money from the tourists. “Begging really upsets some tourists,” he added. I observed that whenever villagers see a vehicle approaching their *boma*, children are quickly rounded up and herded to the *boma* nursery. As one local Councillor confirmed, “The real aim of starting a nursery school in each *boma* is to make money. They use the children and nursery schools as tools for soliciting for money from tourists”. It is worth noting here that there are many older Maasai children not attending school but instead serving tourists in the *bomas* perhaps to make easy and quick money. As a former GR secretary told me, “Several children have been influenced by the money tourists give them to drop out of school. Unless urgent measures are taken there is no future for children in this region”.

During visits by tourists to the nursery schools children are made to recite the alphabet, count numbers and often to sing for tourists. The lecturers tend to emphasise that the Maasai want their children to study but they face many challenges including lack of proper learning facilities. This is done in anticipation that the tourists might be sympathetic enough to the plight of these young children and make generous donations to support their education. Some guests make instant donations whilst others hesitate and ask the community guide for advice but he is often not willing to make suggestions and he simply says, “It is up to you”. He only stresses that any donation received is for the whole village. Sometimes tourists pledge to send donations at a later date and at this point addresses are exchanged and promises made to keep in touch. However, even where donations have been forthcoming there has been little progress to improve the structures and learning. As one Australian tourist told me,

In 1997, whilst visiting this boma for the second time I donated some US\$ 1000 to help the community build a nursery school for their children. However, I was surprised that to date no school has been built. Why do these people lie that they want good schools for their children to learn and yet they misappropriate donations for such projects? I was disappointed that when the boma chairman to whom I gave my donation for the school saw me he just disappeared to the back of one of the huts and sent someone else to receive us to the boma (John, personal communication, 2005).

Occasionally, activities such as natural walks around the vicinity of the cultural villages, the bleeding of a cow (to extract blood as a food source) and group photos are staged for tourists on request and at an extra but agreed fee. Charges for these activities go directly to the individuals providing such services. Towards the end of a *boma* visit a farewell song and dance is staged as the visitors are walked back to their vans. At this stage, tourists are allowed or prompted to join in the dance and take more pictures. After spending anything between thirty minutes to two or three hours for the entire visit the tourists and their driver are ready to leave. At this point some

visitors give a tip to the *boma* guide/lecturer either for himself or for all *boma* members to share. However, these monies are often appropriated by *boma* officials and never get to the ordinary villagers. The tourists shake hands with the village guide and other villagers put their cameras away and get into their vans and leave. In the next section I argue that although symptomatic of the commercialisation of Maasai culture, cultural *bomas* still manage to present to tourists authentic cultural experiences.

Photo 23 Tourists in the Cultural *Boma* market



Source: Researcher

Photo 24 Tallying the cost of artefacts selected



Source: Researcher

Photo 25 Camel rides - a new tourist activity



Source: Researcher

Photo 26 Children being taken to a *boma* nursery school



Source: Researcher

Photo 27 Tourists joining the farewell dance



Source: Researcher

Photo 28 Villagers dancing in a wedding ceremony



Source: Researcher

8.3 Commercialisation and Authenticity of Cultural *Bomas*

When questioned why they participate in tourism most Maasai claim they do it for money. Cultural *bomas* therefore represent a strong example of the commercialisation of Maasai culture. As one Kenyan journalist once noted “The Maasai ... have learned that there is a dollar in being merchandise.... So they turn out in front of their *manyattas* as if in Hollywood. For a dollar the tourist can both see this creature of the wild and photograph it (Mutahi, 1991). Commoditisation as noted in Chapter 2 is arguably one of the undesirable cultural effects of tourism (cf Greenwood, 1989). Some of the international tourists visit a Maasai cultural *boma* to quench their thirst for authentic cultural experiences. I therefore asked tourists if they considered their visit to a Maasai cultural *boma* to be an authentic cultural experience. Many answered “No” and qualified their statement by suggesting that what the Maasai were showing to them was not real. As one tourist noted “When I visited a cultural *boma* for the first time I thought ‘Wow I am in Africa; this is cool’. But later I found out that what I saw was not real; the *bomas* were just set up for tourists” (Joakim, personal communication, 2005). Rose, an independent traveler, stated, “We visited a Maasai village, though we were told it was a traditional village, we later discovered it was only five years old. I guess it was totally faked” (Rose, personal communication, 2005). As one British tourist on a repeat tour of the *bomas* narrated,

A lot has changed since my first and second visits to this cultural boma. Changes are visible everywhere right from the lodge to the village. I encountered Maasai morans scrambling for tourist vans at the lodge ... I see there are more cultural bomas serving tourists and they now have people to guide guests through the village ... he spoke fluent English ... he told us that he could charge us a small entry fee, which he claimed would be used in the construction of a school so that Maasai children can obtain education ...

he took us through an elaborate program, which included song and dance culminating in an open space behind the huts where they sold curios to us. This was in contrast to my previous visits when I asked villagers to sell the beads they adorned to me. So you can see there is total change. I think in the next 50 years Maasai culture could not be in existence. The Maasai are increasingly being exposed to western lifestyles and this will eventually suffocate their culture (Jeff, personal communication, 2005).

Maasai cultural *bomas* are presented to tourists as authentic native homesteads fully occupied by families and a cattle enclosure full of cow dung and flies just like any traditional Maasai homestead (Ritsma and Ongaro, 2002). Borrowing from Goffman's (1959) dichotomy, MacCannel (1973; 1989) explains this in terms of front and back regions. The front region is a meeting ground for tourists and the locals while the back region is where natives retreat to and assume their normal daily lifestyles after their encounters with tourists. MacCannel argued that what tourists often experience is the front region as they seldom get a glimpse of the back region. In subtle ways cultural *bomas* represent interesting forms of front regions. Tourists are made to think that they are experiencing the everyday community life of the Maasai when in actual sense the atmosphere in the *cultural bomas* is set up in advance purposely to satisfy the needs of fee paying visitors. In an actual sense visitors are offered 'staged authenticity'. Harry, a British tour guide who brings tourists to Kenya twice a year, observes:

Tourists who visit a cultural boma for one or so hours don't get to see a lot of Maasai culture. .. The kind of culture that the tourists see is a staged drama to entertain them. Behind the drama is a reality. Any activity by the Maasai is greatly valued by international tourists because it brings great pleasure to them. However, they rarely get to see the authentic Maasai culture but only a commercial reflection of it. I think it is great value (Harry, personal communication, 2005).

The following three examples will illustrate how staged authenticity works in the cultural *bomas*. The first example is an incident that I witnessed in one of the cultural *bomas*. A group of American tourists on a conducted tour of the *boma* came across a sick woman sleeping on a mat in front of her hut. When one tourist inquired what was wrong they were told she was sick. The tourist asked if she had taken any medicine and she responded negatively through the *boma* lecturer. One of the tourists took some pills from her bag and handed them over to the sick woman. Before the tourist could even utter a word the sick woman called out to another woman in one of the huts and requested her to bring water. Once the water arrived she proceeded to swallow the pills. The tourists were amazed not only that she took unprescribed pills but also that she already knew that the pills were medicine and would be swallowed with water. They were even more astonished that the medicinal herbs, which they had seen and had been told a few minutes earlier were the main source of local medicine, had not been administered to the woman.

The reality was that the activities offered in cultural *bomas* represent a staged front region put on for the amusement of tourists. In other words, the Maasai were acting as primitive people to satiate an “imperialist nostalgia” (Bruner, 2001: 889).

The second example concerns the songs and dances that the Maasai performed for tourists at the cultural *bomas*. I observed that the songs and dances performed for tourists were markedly different from the ritual songs and dances which the Maasai perform during their ceremonial or ritual situation. I saw men and women huddle together in a circle and dance spontaneously for longer periods than when performing for tourists. When dancing in a ritual situation there is little desire to be recognized. However, in a tourist situation dancers are happy to be singled out, and instead of leaving the dance arena, they wander around waiting to be photographed. As one local journalist observed, “Traditional dances ... are tailored to titillate the tourist and not to bring out the cultural fullness that is part of them ... because that is what tourists want to see” (Mutahi, 1991). The symbolic content is reduced when a dance is performed daily as a form of entertainment for tourists thus eclipsing the customary uses, for example, as a media for passing on societal traditions from generation to generation in addition to reinforcing traditional norms and beliefs.

The souvenirs produced by the Maasai for the tourist market have also undergone several radical changes in response to tourist demand. Souvenir producers have tended to avoid complex traditional styles and are now concentrating in the production of simple and cheap figurines such as belts and necklaces with the Kenyan flag, cow skin cell phone and passport holders to name but a few which are not only easy to sell but also popular with tourists. These changes mean that the Maasai are learning new skills which ultimately may lead to the neglect of traditional styles and skills. One local curio dealer claimed that competition (and the desire to increase profits) had led to mass production of curios that tourists were likely to buy. Producers were, in other words, motivated by nothing more than the tourist dollars. The manufacture of tourist souvenirs is an obvious reflection of Western cultural demands catalysed by the expansion of cultural *boma*-based tourism. There is so much competition that villagers were selling souvenirs too cheaply which meant that a value was not placed on the effort and time invested in their manufacture. These examples provide good illustrations of the negative effects of cultural commoditisation among the Maasai.

In this study I argue that there are sensible reasons why the Maasai present a staged authenticity to tourists in the cultural *bomas*. One of the reasons is that some tourists do not have the time to wait for somebody to be circumcised or get married to experience the authentic ceremony or ritual. Thus, staged authenticity is presented to tourists who just want to have a quick glance of Maasai culture. The problems of difficult travel, time and money and social problems (actual ceremonies and access) are solved by staging dances at the cultural *bomas* in Amboseli. However, since these activities are performed by the Maasai in their homestead it can be argued that they still serve the same function they did traditionally, that is, to entertain and educate both tourists and the locals. As one *boma* chairman told me,

We have full time cultural guides that explain about the nuances and interesting aspects of the culture. They are in the boma all the time to answer any questions about Maasai culture. ... They get into seeing the material aspects of our culture and architecture. They can see how cows are milked, how their blood is drawn. They can get the whole village life, basically in a nutshell. They can go as deep as they wish. It's entirely up to the guest, but the whole village is actually there to assist in exposing people to this (Leboo, personal communication, 2005).

The cultural *boma* case study has made it clear that the Maasai are not helpless victims in the face of tourism's 'impact'. They have a great deal of control over tourism through their ownership and management of cultural *bomas*. In other words, the Maasai have manipulated tourism to achieve their own ends. In spite of the notion that tourism brings about a type of assimilation of capitalism, the conversion of local culture into a consumable tourist attraction plays a significant role in reinforcing the Maasai's unique cultural identity. Their involvement in cultural *boma* tourism presents a rare opportunity for the Maasai to educate tourists about their unique and exotic ways of life. This confirms McDonald's (1997:31) assertion that people can use cultural commoditification "as a way of affirming their identity, of telling their own story and establishing the significance of local experience".

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the Maasai have turned their homesteads into commercial tourist enterprises in order to capture tourist dollars that have eluded them for many years. Local ownership and control over cultural *boma* tourism not only offers better prospects for genuine community participation in tourism development and benefits but also has the potential to stimulate economic development. The business of tourism is increasingly becoming a way of life for the Maasai. The opportunity to earn a living without having to leave their native villages and

without having to abandon their traditional way of life altogether made it more attractive for the Maasai. The study has also highlighted that cultural *boma* tourist attractions are an important permanent feature of the tourism landscape in Amboseli which is connected to existing nature/wildlife-based safari tourism activities. Cultural *bomas* form part of the well-developed tourist facilities (lodges and campsites) and unique Maasai attractions.

The chapter has also provided insights into what the Maasai are doing in their engagement with tourists and tour operators and the activities they are undertaking in an effort to benefit from their participation in tourism. This chapter has shown that the Maasai creatively provide information, design events and furnish entertainment to cater for tourist needs in their cultural *boma* tourist enterprises. These activities are explicitly designed to deflect the tourist gaze from private space and activities. However, without proper organisation it may not be easy to control the pace and face of Maasai cultural tourism which is one of the remaining viable sources of livelihood for the Maasai. Chapter 9 discusses the opportunities and constraints associated with cultural *boma* tourism and how they have affected the Maasai.

Chapter 9: Opportunities and Constraints in Cultural *Boma* Tourism

9.0 Introduction

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 have shown that tourism has become a major source of livelihood and cash income for the Maasai of Amboseli and those tourists are dependent upon the Maasai for the supposed authenticity of the spectacle they pay to watch. However, assessments of cultural *boma* tourism in Kenya offer contested viewpoints as to its successes and failures. Most assessments agree that cultural *boma* tourism has brought opportunities and constraints, with some people emphasising the former and others the latter. This chapter discusses these intersecting viewpoints by outlining the benefits of cultural *boma* tourism and then exploring the problems that have arisen. Following this discussion I assess these viewpoints in the light of each other, and argue for a more situated understanding of how political wrangles and power struggles in *boma* tourism have impacted on the Maasai. Overall, the chapter will draw on a political ecology perspective to discover what opportunities and constraints tourism has provided for Maasai economic development.

The chapter is composed of six sections. The first one explores the opportunities and benefits associated with cultural *boma* tourism whilst the second section describes the constraints. The third section briefly discusses the socio-cultural impacts that cultural tourism has brought to the Maasai community. The fourth section presents a case of overt conflict to illustrate the social disruption that tourism has caused the Maasai. The fifth section focuses on attempts to regulate cultural *bomas* tourism and in the sixth section I present a brief conclusion. I begin by examining some of the opportunities that tourism has created for socio-cultural and economic development amongst the Maasai.

9.1 Opportunities in Cultural *Boma* Tourism

The socio-economic benefits derived from cultural *boma* tourism by the Maasai include revenues, employment opportunities and the provision of social services. The participants were asked to explain the benefits they had accrued from tourism and the extent to which these benefits had contributed towards the improvement of local livelihoods. Further enquiry was sought from my

informants to establish the various activities in which the Maasai engaged in their bid to capture tourism benefits. The benefits identified in this study include the following:

Income and employment opportunities based on existing skills: One of the oft cited economic contributions of the tourism industry to the destination area is employment generation (cf. Bryden, 1973; Crick, 1994; Johnston, 1999; Mathieson and Wall, 1982). This study has revealed that tourism had only generated a few employment opportunities for the Maasai in the formal sector. However, a host of job opportunities have also been created in the informal tourism sector for the locals especially in the manufacture and sale of curios. Several new income generating activities such as bicycles/motorbike taxi business, currency laundering, petty trade, the sale of firewood and charcoal, foodstuffs, washing tourist vehicles, prostitution, and guiding were associated with the spread of tourism. These activities though not wholly institutionalised as separate trades have created a host of local job opportunities through which some villagers not only earned tourism related income but also enhanced their livelihoods and the local economy.

Photo 29 Washing Tourists' vans - a new activity



Source: Researcher

The most important aspect of tourism's integration with Amboseli's economy is that it has also extended economic opportunities to residents in non-tourism villages and/or people not directly involved in tourism. This has been accomplished largely through improved markets for handicrafts and agro-pastoral products. Tourism has enhanced local markets in two ways: First, meeting local residents' demand. A sizeable number of local residents are now fully engaged in both the formal and informal tourism sectors and they no longer have the time to tend livestock

and grow their own food. They rely on income earned from tourism for the purchase of foodstuffs and basic necessities and in some cases, livestock. The income earned from tourism was spent within the community thus creating a multiplier effect in Amboseli⁴¹. Most residents of the non-commercial villages I talked to indicated that they were well aware of this multiplier effect although they did not refer to it as such. A farmer in Namelok said, “The people in the cultural *bomas* often buy my produce with the money they earn from tourists. So in this way I too am benefiting from tourism”.

Tourism can lead to increased income at the community and household levels. It also provides supplementary income through revitalising local businesses such as local arts and crafts which is a positive aspect in that it provides extra income to villagers (Sharpley, 2002). Although traditionally the Maasai did not make handicrafts for sale they now produce for the tourist market basically to supplement their diminishing herds with market goods as a means of earning a livelihood. Tourism has not only helped to raise the international reputation of Maasai souvenirs but also a resurgence in the local handicrafts industry has occurred. This dissertation argues that even though *boma* tourism may not generate a significant amount of income to individuals or households due to its seasonal nature and high leakages, the supplementary income earned plays an important role in improving local livelihoods. The income earned from the sale of curios for instance was reinvested in livestock purchases thus contributing to a rise in the standard of living especially for poor families. Tourism had created a ready market for locally manufactured artefacts and handicrafts and boosted their production. Villagers are able to sell slightly larger quantities locally to tourists and retailers at better prices compared to the past. The income earned had provided opportunities for households to increase their expenditures on food and other basic necessities hence leading to improved living conditions.

Greater employment opportunities for youngsters and women: Tourism has also generated new and greater employment and income earning opportunities for Maasai youngsters and women. While women were previously dependent on their husbands for basic necessities and their role was limited to the domestic sphere, with the development of cultural *boma* tourism they now play very important roles both in the public and private domains. They undertake most of the

⁴¹ Mathieson & Wall (1982) define “Tourism Multiplier Effect” as “a situation that occurs when tourists buy local product or handicrafts, the vendors will in turn pay their suppliers who will in turn pay local pastoralists for their livestock and produce, who in turn use the money for something else. Thus the original expenditure is ‘multiplied’ throughout the local economy”. The multiplier effects continue as the tourist money circulates within the country until the money eventually “leaks” from the economy through imports.

work related to *boma* tourism such as hosting tourists and cleaning and the manufacture and sale of curios. Many of these women are drawn into tourism because it offers them hours of work that are flexible and easy to combine with domestic chores. This allows them to have a job and to also contribute to family income without having to leave their homes. As a female informant in one of the *cultural bomas* stated,

I have always worked out in the fields fetching water and doing housework. Now with cultural boma tourism I've created a job for my children and myself. They work with me so they do not have to go outside the home or the area to find a job (Jane, personal communication, 2005).

Yet a local teacher observed,

Most of the women involved in beadwork production do not have any formal education. Hence, it is difficult for them to obtain employment in the formal sector. Tourism however, has made it possible for them to become self-employed and to generate income that has enabled them to live better lives without having to travel great distances from their communities to access customers for their beadworks (Raphael, personal communication, 2005).

Most women who are involved in bead and handicraft production for the tourist market are without formal education and they cannot easily find employment in the formal sectors. The income from the sale of artefacts is shared between family units and individual households, where it promotes income diversification and improves livelihoods. Thus, the status of Maasai women was increasingly improving in some areas due to their active role in tourism related income generating activities. Tourism has particularly opened up opportunities for women to run their own curio businesses from which they earn income that they manage according to their wishes. Others have formed 'merry-go-round' women's groups for saving money to purchase their own livestock and cushion them against hardship during the low season. This has resulted in the women being able to contribute to household food security.

Boma tourism has given us another useful source of cash income which has been very positive especially for us women. Even though this income is small it allows us to buy food and other basic needs necessities for ourselves, our children and families, something we could not do previously (Jedidah, personal communication, 2005).

The income earned from tourism has enabled women to take up wider public and family roles thereby increasing their capacities and reducing their vulnerabilities. Tourism had not only made it possible for Maasai women to develop entrepreneurial skills but also to achieve economic independence through their participation in the commercial economy. Female informants said that their self esteem has increased with *boma* tourism. They highlighted the fact that receiving monetary compensation has improved their view of themselves and increased their personal

satisfaction. They also noted that tourism brings them into contact with tourists and suppliers which improves their communication skills and makes them feel good and proud of themselves. This dissertation argues that whilst participation in tourism supports gradual empowerment and decreases their degree of subordination in society, these women did not necessarily gain political power.

Young members of the family especially the *morans* also carry out activities related to tourism such as entertaining tourists, *boma* marketing, nature trail guiding and offering interpretation services to tourists, for which they receive payments. This has a positive effect in encouraging young people to stay and work at home instead of emigrating to towns in search of employment. Many villagers I talked to indicated that before the advent of *boma* tourism community youths were migrating to Mombasa and Nairobi in search of opportunities to earn an income to cushion their families against drought induced hunger and starvation. Many respondents in the cultural *bomas* stated that tourism had lured many youths back home and that people who otherwise might have left to look for jobs in town now continue to live in the community. Comments such as the following help to illustrate this point: "... Many youths are now coming back home to work in the cultural *bomas*. .. Some of them are doing very well here because they have a lot of tourism experience" (Saire, personal communication, 2005). "I used to perform for tourists at Tiwi Lodge in Mombasa... it was hard to make ends meet ... I decided to come and work in the cultural *bomas*. I am happy with the income I am getting from tourism" (Koitee, personal communication, 2005).

Working in tourism, especially performing for tourists, has enabled these youths to acquire a new status within the community. A majority of the youths in the cultural *bomas* expressed happiness for the opportunity tourism had given them to perform their culture. "Tourism has forced me to learn and remember my culture ... and if cultural *bomas* are closed, many of us will not have interest in our culture ... eventually it will disappear" (William, personal communication, 2005). *Boma* tourism has increased the young people's interest in improving their skills in matters related to business and enterprise management thus giving tourism a sense of continuity. By virtue of their role as cultural lecturers, the prestige and political power of the youth had also increased because of the amount of control they exerted deciding the overall direction of tourism within their community.

Provision of infrastructure and social services: The study reveals that the Maasai have benefited through development of infrastructure financed from tourism income. Most commonly mentioned were schools, health clinics, churches, and veterinary services. For example, the only school in the vicinity of the cultural *bomas* was constructed with donations and assistance from tourists, KWS and local tour operators. Photos 30 and 31 show tourists presenting a classroom and uniforms they had donated to pupils in the community. Further developments relating to road and transport services have improved access to external markets in what had been a remote area. Although set up exclusively for tourists, telephone and transport services were also shared with the local people hence they were of conspicuous benefit to the community. Other facilities such as staff canteens, bathrooms, televisions and recreational facilities, such as the pool tables in the game lodges, were being shared with the Maasai thus allowing them to enjoy the benefits that accrue from the presence of tourists. These shared facilities were a service and benefit to the community.

The provision of social services was another way in which the Maasai had drawn benefits from tourism. Some interviewees stated that the presence of tourists had contributed to the improvement of various social services that the locals also enjoyed. Using revenues from tourism the villagers have invested in educational facilities and some tourists and local NGOs now provide bursaries for children who otherwise would not be able to afford schooling. These services include the sponsoring of local students to high school, college and university for further education. Other services included provision of financial and technical assistance for rehabilitation and general development of schools, water boreholes, health and veterinary services. For instance, the boreholes at Olasiti, Enkong Narok and Oltiyani cultural *bomas* were donated by tourists. These boreholes have not only reduced competition between livestock and wildlife for this critical resource but also reduced the community's vulnerability to drought-related disasters. The general levels of hygiene especially in the cultural *bomas* have improved as a result of tourism. In some cases tourists had donated medicine for the treatment of common ailments such as malaria thus contributing to better health status for the Maasai. Communal benefits not only extend throughout the community and involve nearly everyone but also contributed to increasing positive attitudes towards conservation and tourism.

Enhancing local capacity: The study reveals that some community members have received training through village workshops, seminars and study tours organised by KWS, AWF, NGOs and church organisations working in the area. Such study tours and training sessions have

increased the capacity of the Maasai to run tourist enterprises and to carry out collective activities in tourism development. Thus involvement in tourism has enabled Maasai entrepreneurs to gain prominence in their community. With considerable help from NGOs and church organisations and some government departments and through their participation in tourism, the Maasai have acquired new management skills which have allowed them to define common objectives and aspirations. They have also gained considerable knowledge in liaising with both public and private sector tourism stakeholders on a range of development issues. This greater knowledge combined with their enhanced organisational capacity has not only helped increase the self-confidence of the Maasai to pro-actively work with outsiders but also to strengthen their relations with the neighbouring communities. As a result cultural *boma* tourism is increasingly gaining greater appreciation among government policy makers and the tourism sector.

Photo 30 Tourists donating a classroom



Source: Researcher

Photo 31 Tourists giving local children uniforms



Source: Researcher

Cultural preservation: As noted in Chapter 2 the negative impacts from tourism on indigenous people are much discussed in the tourism literature (see for example, Mathieson and Wall, 1979a; Stronza, 2001). Less studied are the opportunities that tourism can provide in raising internal and external awareness of an indigenous population's skills and aspirations. While it may sound paradoxical, selling culture to tourists has had a positive impact on Maasai cultural revival and development process. The Maasai have increasingly become aware that their culture is a priceless asset to the tourism industry and therefore it has to be preserved. Respondents talked about the joy of interacting with tourists from different backgrounds from their own and sharing their culture and community lifestyles with them. Tourist interest had heightened Maasai appreciation of their traditions and customary practices. Many *boma* lecturers noted that they appreciated the opportunity to tell stories and share ideas about Maasai history, culture and wilderness. Several older villagers I talked to in the cultural *bomas* mentioned that tourism was promoting local knowledge especially among the youth about the past and traditions thus enabling them to connect with their cultural identity, traditions and the past as the grip of modernisation takes hold in the community. This confirms the assertion that tourism can reconcile the interests of economic development and cultural preservation (Graburn, 1983; McKean, 1989).

The opportunity to look at and talk to new people in a relatively isolated place such as Amboseli was important for many residents. Performing traditional song and dance and telling tourists stories about their past not only reaffirms the Maasai's unique cultural identity but also provides them with the opportunity to share visions about their past with each other and tourists. For many youths interviewed the exchange of ideas and experiences was a welcome aspect of tourism. "Tourism has taught me to be aware of my culture and identity", said one cultural lecturer. Yet another said, "Listening to tourists make positive comments about our culture and the performances we put up for them excites me". "Sometimes it gets very dull down here in our *boma* without tourists", one young resident noted. Several respondents noted that life in Amboseli was livelier during the tourist season when there was an increased flow of money within the community.

Increased local awareness about the potential economic significance of their cultural heritage as a tourist attraction can contribute to cultural preservation (cf. Cooper et al. 1998). For instance, the practice of *moranism*, an important avenue for passing on cultural traditions from one generation to another, was being preserved, albeit in an altered state (i.e. *morans* looking after

tourists rather than cattle) to be used as a tourist attraction. In addition, tourist demand for Maasai handicrafts has helped rekindle interest in producing traditional goods and preserving traditional skills, which otherwise would have been forgotten without tourism. Tourism has thus provided incentives for the Maasai to preserve their cultural traditions and identity that would otherwise have been lost under the influence of modernity. This confirms Glasson et al.'s (1995) assertion that in the absence of tourists the market for locally manufactured cultural products may be lost completely.

Improving Livelihoods: Tourism provides a diversification of livelihoods for households whose other sources of income are unreliable. Whilst earnings from the sale of curios are unpredictable, tourism fits well with the Maasai's established livelihood strategies. These advantages are particularly important for women and poor families, allowing them to spend more money on food, school fees, and health than they are otherwise normally able to afford. Cultural *boma* tourism has provided a supplement and support to the pastoral economy, thus helping to support local livelihoods and to stem out-migration and nomadism. Many people are benefiting from livelihood impacts, in the form of increased food security, access to transport, improved medical care and access to education. The flexibility of the source of income (the activity is done at home, in their own time and with low inputs) was particularly attractive to participants. These non-cash livelihood impacts are not only important to communities but they are spread more widely within the community than direct financial impacts.

Favourable feelings towards wildlife and tourism: Before the adoption of a participatory approach to conservation and tourism development, the relationship between the Maasai and park authorities had deteriorated considerably. However, with the increased participation and dependency on tourism as a source of livelihood, the Maasai have developed a positive attitude towards conservation and have stopped killing wildlife. As one local resident stated, "It is now our collective responsibility to ensure that wildlife is protected so that we can all draw benefits from it" (Lekolol, personal communication, 2005). Another resident, a female teacher said,

Many people have changed their attitude towards wildlife because of tourism. Now wild animals are earning them a living ... When tourists come to see the animals in the Sanctuary they pay us money and they also purchase our souvenirs ... now people have the attitude that if you kill wildlife there will be no tourism within this area and the community will no longer get money (Florence, personal communication 2005).

These new attitudes come from the realisation that most tourists come to Amboseli primarily to view wildlife in the park and thus without wildlife, the cultural *bomas* will not receive a single

visitor. In essence, cultural *boma* tourism is dependent on the park for the continued supply of customers thus rendering the Maasai indirect beneficiaries of the park and its tourists. Many residents consequently support wildlife conservation because of the potential benefits that could accrue to them from tourism. The following section presents a discussion of the problems associated with cultural *boma* tourism.

9.2 Problematics of Cultural *Bomas* tourism

From interviews with local residents and personal observations it became apparent that several tourism related problems have arisen in the cultural *bomas*. These include increased community tensions and conflicts, tour driver/guide exploitation, leadership wrangles, inter and intra-*boma* competition and rivalry. These problems and constraints can be seen as unintended outcomes of Maasai involvement in tourism development. This is not to deny that socio-economic benefits exist but rather it is necessary to emphasise that such an outcome does not come without an entailed cost. These are discussed in detail in the following section.

Inter and intra *boma* business competition and rivalry: The study has established that tourism related conflicts within the research communities were on the increase especially in the cultural *bomas*. Increasing competition for political control over benefits and other related business opportunities in tourism were identified as the main causal factor for such conflicts within the community. Several interviewees lamented that tourism had engendered intense competition, 'nastiness', and individualistic ways of thinking within the Maasai community. The competitive nature of cultural *boma* tourism had resulted in some community members engaging in unorthodox business practices such as price-gouging which contrasted with traditional Maasai practices of commerce. There seemed to be a general sense that the tourism industry had attracted business practices which were not only a major source of social conflicts which were responsible for factional antagonisms within the community but also threatened to negatively impact on profitability and the reputation of *boma* tourism.

The increased competition and power struggles to make the most out of tourism was making it difficult for some residents to feel comfortable living in the community with so much tension surrounding tourism. As stated in Chapter 8 there was originally only one tourist *boma* on the southern edge of Amboseli National Park. This *boma* was doing very well business-wise until towards the end of the 1990s when problems related to revenue sharing started to emerge. As one

Councillor stated, “Most of the problems emanated from the greed of the *boma* officials, particularly the chairman, who embezzled money (donations and tips from tourists and entrance fees) meant for the *boma* shareholders” (Saire, personal communication, 2005). Another pioneer member now a *boma* chairman said “Many people had started to feel exploited by the chairman who single-headedly controlled all the income” (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005). One old lady who served in the original *boma* phrased this in a different way: “Trouble started due to the greed of the chairman who misappropriated group money for personal gain” (Eunice, personal communication, 2005). A middle-aged woman who used to sell curios in the *boma* added, “Many people were dissatisfied with the way the *boma* was run, there was a lack of transparency and accountability ... there was a lot of hatred” (Jedidah, personal communication, 2005). In the absence of proper management structures to address members’ concerns, frequent conflicts and differences between the members became endemic in the *boma*, leading to a split.

As a consequence of these leadership wrangles in the original *boma* men started to sell handicrafts to tourists and to charge an entrance fee of Ksh.1, 000 per vehicle to cater for the salaries of the *morans* who performed songs and dance for tourists. One respected local woman told me that the women tried to oppose the idea of men selling handicrafts alongside theirs, but they were overruled. This marked not only the beginning of the *boma* levying entrance fees for all visiting tourists but also of both men and women being involved on more or less equal terms in tourism activities. As one local elite noted,

Prior to this time visitors were not asked to pay entrance fee, instead they were normally accepted out of curiosity and goodwill. When the prospects of bringing visitors on a regular basis became apparent a financial compensation amounting to Ksh. 1000 was set and readily accepted by the tour drivers and guides (Oletipis, personal communication, 2005).

One informant, with whom I discussed the earlier situation, indicated that soon after the introduction of entrance fees some tour drivers/guides started to complain about overcrowding, unhygienic conditions and overcharging. As Koitee, a *boma* secretary who was involved in the pioneer *boma*, told me,

*Problems started when we started charging entrance fee. The tour drivers complained that it was too much and many refused to deliver tourists threatening to take their clients to Maasai Mara where the entrance fee was Ksh. 500 per a vehicle. You know tour drivers are very strict, if they say they are going to pay Ksh. 500 they do not want us to bargain. Most of my age-mates (*morans*) realised that we were losing business. So we called a meeting of “marketers” to chart the way forward. We met with the tour drivers and proposed to reduce the entrance fee to Ksh. 500. However, when we approached the*

boma officials they rejected the proposal insisting that Ksh. 1000 was reasonable (Koitee, personal communication, 2005).

These drivers/guides, together with disgruntled *morans*, subsequently started channelling tourists to far distant non-commercial *bomas*. With time, however, these tour drivers/guides realised that this arrangement was not sustainable on a regular basis because of the transport cost involved and the wear and tear on their vans. Against the promise of a potential supply of business the tour drivers/guides “advised us to unite and build our own *boma* without elderly people. They also promised to deliver tourists even if the *boma* was to be located slightly further from the original one. In the meantime we continued to act as brokers taking tourists to far distant non-commercial *bomas*. We charged Ksh. 500 per van for the service but we also earned tips from tourists” (Koitee, personal communication, 2005).

I was told that with no advisory committee in place to solve the problems claims of unfairness escalated and, as a consequence, *boma* members were polarised into two factions. Over time tensions and uneasy communication between these two factions grew and eventually forced one faction to defect and start a new *boma* in the same vicinity. In large measure, the splinter group made the switch in response to assurances from tour drivers/guides that they would regularly supply tourists. Similar problems were replicated in the new *boma* thus again forcing another split. One of the factions subsequently moved out to establish a third *boma*. Through similar processes of *boma* fission, cultural *bomas* have mushroomed in an uncontrolled manner as hitherto business partners disagreed and defected to initiate new projects within the same vicinity. The mushrooming of cultural *bomas* offering the same cultural experiences has significantly contributed to endless power struggles for political control over tourism benefits and the problem of “driver exploitation” discussed in the next section.

The location of cultural *bomas* in one area provides confirmation of a highly centralised and controlled spread of tourism and its benefits geographically. The increasing number of local people joining the tourism business had put a great deal of pressure on the GRC to allocate further land for new developments. However, the GRC’s decision to deny or grant some groups permission to initiate new *bomas* seemed to create social rifts locally particularly within the group ranch level. Stories about verbal disagreements in GR meetings were not uncommon. Conflicts over favouritism, when it came to the allocation of land for tourism development, had generated severe political struggles for leadership positions within the GRC. I found it very difficult to rationalise, these competing and conflicting interests over land, because the Maasai traditionally

owned land communally. The social gaps between these villagers appeared to be widening as people struggled for leadership positions, to enable them to exert control over land, which was an important resource for tourism development. Land was to a large extent responsible for social tensions within the community

Inequitable benefit sharing: The most critical issue and cause of inter *boma* conflicts amongst residents appeared to be related to the distribution of tourism revenues and profits. In fact, in many cases this seemed to be the only cause of social conflicts and tensions within the community. The issue of inequitable revenue sharing arose in almost every interview and conversation that was held both in the commercial and non-commercial cultural *bomas*. As one local university student, stated that the people in the *bomas* are often at the forefront in attracting tourists and entertaining them with their cultural performances but when it comes to benefits they are always the last as they get nothing in return from the tourists going in and out of their *bomas*. Generally, the equitable distribution of tourism benefits has proven to be a challenging and painstaking problem which has adversely affected Maasai involvement in *boma* tourism. This is partly because those people directly involved in tourism have neither agreed on a transparent method of benefit sharing nor set up a proper management structure to guide participation in tourism development. The lack of a proper organisational structure and business orientation has led to a situation where a few people have taken advantage of the other *boma* members to gain more from tourism. For example, within the community the elites or rather those 'in the know' such as foreign language speakers were exploiting those who were less educated.

I observed that the cultural *boma* committee members who receive payments, tips and donations on behalf of *boma* residents do not usually keep any written records and no auditing is done on how the money collected is spent. Thus, the money generated is usually appropriated by a few people especially those in management positions. So, unless a resident sells a souvenir directly to a tourist, the chances are that they will not receive any money from the entrance fees, donation or any money from the *boma*. As one local Councillor stated, "I do not think tourism in the cultural *bomas* is benefiting the ordinary members at all ... cultural *bomas* as constituted at the moment have only served to provide an opening for local elites and non-Maasai people to exploit the Maasai". Consequently, conflicts have often arisen over the inequitable sharing of the monies received from *boma* tourism especially donations and entry fees. Whilst tourism has expanded local incomes it has also increased social stratification and divisions within the wider community.

Tour driver/guide exploitation: As previously stated, in order to attract tourists, selected representatives from each *boma* - usually *morans* - visit the tourist lodges inside the park and strike deals with tour drivers/guides, to deliver paying tourists the following day. As already stated, tourists who arrive in the cultural *bomas* are required to pay an entrance fee. However this may be waived at the whim of the *boma* chairman. As one male high school student declared, “Everything in the *boma* is negotiable but the chairman has the final word” (Lemurs, personal communication, 2005). Whilst the tourists are taken on a conducted tour of the *boma* the full entry fees are handed back to the driver/guide who pays *boma* officials the derisory sum of Ksh. 300-500 i.e., US\$ 4-7 per vehicle and ‘pockets’ the rest. This exploitative revenue splitting arrangement is universally practised in Amboseli by tour driver/guides (Mvula, n.d: 1). Tourists are often not aware of where their money goes since they do not know how the system works. A large amount of the money that accrues to the residents is, ironically, used again to bribe tour drivers to deliver tourists.

The tour driver/guide exploitation issue came up in almost every interview and conversation that was held in the cultural *bomas*. It was revealed that tour drivers/guides were the main architects and driving force behind the initiation of more cultural *bomas*, although their role was often concealed. As already stated, competition has resulted in a situation in which each *boma* has agreed to take a lesser percentage of the entry fee from the drivers in the hope that members will benefit from the sale of curios to tourists. If a *boma* declines to present all the entry fees to the driver then he simply redirects business to a *boma* that will consent to his conditions. Thus bribing and keeping the safari drivers/guides happy is vital for the sustained delivery of tourists to a particular *boma*. Inter and intra *boma* business competition has pushed commission rates up as drivers/guides search for more cooperative *bomas* chairmen to provide them with the services they need more cheaply. By taking their clients to the highest bidder the drivers are in essence taking advantage of the competitive edge between the existing *bomas* to rip off the Maasai. Some youths have also established friendships with the drivers/guides which they exploit by attracting visitation to their new *boma* although sometimes this involves provision of unlimited bribes, thus contributing to the depressed economic benefits.

Tour driver exploitation of Maasai entrepreneurs in the cultural *bomas* has also been featured in both local and international media. For instance, a story in ‘Times Travel Online Magazine’ of June 21, 2007 had a banner headline “Briton challenges Kenya tourism scam” and a smaller

subheading “A British responsible tourism worker faces death threats after challenging jeep drivers she says are skimming off tourist dollars owed to villagers (Maasai)”. In the story the British woman who allegedly exposed the scam stated,

I wondered why villagers were pushing so hard to sell curios when they were supposedly making money from cultural tours. Then I found out that tour drivers were charging \$20 each for the tour and passing on as little as 1% to the villagers. The tours are largely popular and mean drivers are raking in more than 10 million a year at the expense of the Maasai (McGaret, 2007:1).

Reacting to this story a Maasai from Amboseli had this to say:

I am so thrilled to have this article. I am a Maasai living outside Amboseli National Park. We knew that drivers are keeping the money meant for villagers. They truly charge \$20 and give us only \$3 (ksh. 200). We tried to report the problem to tour operators but our voice went unheard. I am glad to finally see this story published. I hope visitors to Maasai villages will now be able to help the villagers to recover their money (Kakuta, cited in Times online Magazine, 2/6/2007).

Since villagers do not receive any share of the entry fees, they are excessively dependent on income from handicraft sales to supplement their incomes and livelihoods (Ritsma and Ongaro, 2000). Whilst it is clear that Maasai handicrafts are popular with tourists, the reality is that only a small number of tourists buy them. This is partly because the souvenirs sold in the cultural *bomas* are also available in game lodges/hotels and curio shops along tourist routes and in towns. This not only means that many tourists could have bought curios prior to visiting the cultural *bomas* but also, as already stated, that the Maasai have limited prospects to compete price wise with non local dealers in the supply of their stuff to the lodges. As one female curio dealer lamented, “We are not satisfied with tourists. They don’t buy anything ... when the *mzungus* come they only want to see our culture and buy curios back at the lodge” (Nkayso, personal communication, 2005). Different respondents had more or less similar opinions about the curio business as the quotes below suggest:

These drivers are exploiters. They all have their favourite curio dealers either along the route to Amboseli or in town where they take their tourists to purchase curios and they get a percentage of the taking. So when they bring tourists here they either manipulate or advise them not to buy anything (Nkayso, personal communication, 2005).

Things have really changed these days; tourists do not buy much and they only buy small items, which do not fetch a lot of money. American tourists are the best, they buy lots of curios, they never bargain and they give good tips (Kimiti, 2005)

The tourists of today are not the tourists of yesterday. The tourists of yesterday were more generous, they would purchase more souvenirs and sometimes pay more than they were asked or give generous tips. The ones of today are mean; they purchase less and give meagre or no tips at all (Sendeyo, personal communication, 2005).

I once asked one *boma* chairman why they bribed tour drivers/guides to deliver tourists to their respective *bomas*. He replied “*uwezi tafuta msichana bila sukari*” which literally means, “You cannot court a girl without sweet words”. In other words, this is seen as an acceptable way of enticing drivers to deliver tourists. A freelance tour driver with whom I shared a room at Amboseli Serena Lodge drivers’ quarters confirmed this situation. I asked him if they charged commission for delivering guests to cultural *bomas*. “Yes” he replied and further stated that he often earns extra income through commission charged for taking his visitors to certain curio shops or delivering them to specific cultural *bomas*. He also told me that the commissions received include free lunches and drinks, free accommodation, or a certain percentage of the total sales or cultural *boma* entrance fees. He argued that this was not exploitation since the tourists purchase curios worth a lot of money and hence the villagers benefit more from them than the tour drivers/guides. He pointed out that, assuming a *boma* receives five tourists a day, who can buy artefacts for example worth Ksh.100,000 all at once, he as a driver is only given a commission of Ksh. 5,000 which is ‘peanuts’ compared to what the villagers pocket.

Whilst civil society activists (such as the Briton who wrote the article cited above) and the Maasai themselves have helped to increase the level of public awareness about this form of economic exploitation, both the government and tour operators have failed to successfully tackle the problem. They have not acted on the complaints of exploitation by villagers and perceptive observers; instead they argue that they do not have the capacity to police the drivers once out in the main tourist circuits/resorts. Some of the tour drivers/guides who were willing to talk about the issue alleged that their employers are fully aware of this practice and have permitted this exploitation of the Maasai to continue unabated because it underwrites the meagre wages they pay the drivers and guides in the tourist industry (MacGaret, 2007). One tour operator told me, as long as drivers/guides get income from sources that do not cost the company they will not demand a pay rise. That is why this situation suits the tour operators and also the lodges too. The tour operators, it was claimed, did not want to offend the safari drivers and guides because the important roles they play in earning them money. A civil society activist claimed that the drivers have formed powerful cartels that are not only hard to control but also they have strongly opposed efforts to rectify the problem by threatening to go on strike. As a result much of the tourism industry has opted to ignore the problem because it does not impinge on them directly.

In my view the reason why tour drivers/guides continue to exploit the Maasai is because of their limited knowledge about the dynamics and complexities associated with running a modern commercial tourist enterprise and where they fit into it. As Mvula (n.d) observes,

The Maasai mistakenly believe that it is the driver/guide who 'sells' their village to visitors – and that he has a hard job doing this. Many believe that the driver has all the power in the tourism industry and don't realise that he is actually an employee himself. In reality the lodges in the area promote village excursions at welcome meetings, in literature in guest bedrooms, through reception staff at check in and via information boards in the lodges and on 'things to do'. Importantly, the majority of visitors actually ask if they can visit a Maasai village –they arrive with an inherent demand for such product, and hence it is not a difficult excursion to sell. Tour operators who send clients to the Mara in their own vehicles (as opposed to clients who fly into the Mara and are the direct client of the lodges) do not market Maasai village excursions, and the majority in fact actually forbid their drivers to take clients to these villages, as they are aware of the exploitation that exists. Despite this, their drivers still visit the villages and trade one village off against another to secure the maximum benefit for them. The Maasai do not understand the difference between the different types of drivers i.e. tour operator vs. lodge drivers, and that they have a product for which considerable market demand exists.

9.3 Culturally Negative Impacts

Although cultural *bomas* are important in allowing the Maasai to exert closer local control over their cultural heritage this study further recognised some negative cultural impacts that are associated with tourism activities in the area. These include:

Drunkenness, prostitution and promiscuity: The income accrued from tourism in the cultural *bomas* is associated with changes in the consumption patterns of men in particular. Men were using their new-found wealth to purchase alcohol in one of the several pubs that have sprung up within the community as a result of tourism. Many female respondents described these pubs as “dens of evil” where anti-social behaviours such as prostitution thrived. These social problems were a major concern to a great variety of local people. Many respondents alleged that the intoxicating beers, spirits and drugs now readily available within the community were not available before the advent of cultural *boma* tourism. Several women in the cultural *bomas* lamented that alcoholism had contributed to extra-marital relationships, increased incidents of wife beating, and men abandoning family responsibilities. Therefore drunkenness was a major setback to the community as it not only hindered some men from fulfilling their conjugal obligations but also threatened domestic tranquillity and peace within the family. I observed that these community pubs were less active during the daytime but gained momentum at sunset. In fact, hardly a night passed on all the occasions I visited the community pubs at night, when I

could not find a drunkard staggering home. A local pastor told me, “On several occasions drunks have been killed by wild animals as they crawled to their *bomas* through the wilderness at night”.

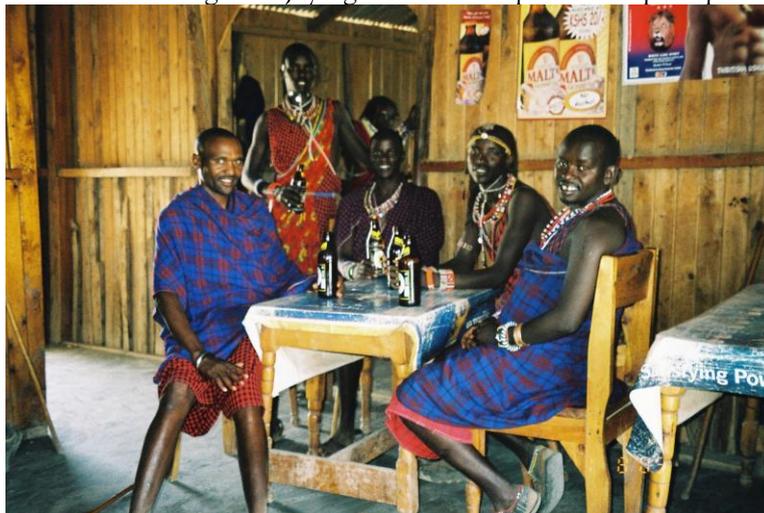
In addition to drunkenness, I observed that there was another problem - that of prostitution. Tourism in Amboseli had attracted women from other areas of Kenya and Tanzania to the community pubs where they engaged in commercial sex. Interestingly, virtually all the prostitutes were non-Maasai women and ironically, their clientele did not include tourists. Most of their customers were Maasai men and sometimes, tour drivers/guides and men working in local tourism. In addition to prostitution, cultural *bomas* residents were exposed to promiscuous behaviour. Since most cultural *boma* residents are men and women without partners they tend to develop casual sexual relationships with each other at the time of their stay at the cultural *bomas*. Young married and unmarried women with or without children and *morans* were pointed to as the most vulnerable groups for exploitation this way. Some of the local women have developed relationships with tour drivers/guides and staff at the game lodges. Although the link between prostitution and tourism in Amboseli is not clear, tourism was the main activity that brought people together from different backgrounds. Thus, it can be concluded that the deteriorating moral values were a result of tourism.

Prostitution posed a serious risk to the Maasai community given its potential to transmit venereal diseases including HIV/AIDS. One local AIDS activist living in Amboseli eloquently stated that most Maasai men in the cultural *bomas* did not use condoms even though they were “dipping their bucket into water from the same well”. The same activist also added that drunkenness and exposure to people from intermarrying clans (during their sexual prime age) in the cultural *bomas* had contributed to promiscuity which was a negative impact. During the tenure of my research the tolerance of women toward drunkenness and prostitution had drastically diminished as evidenced by an incident that took place on Friday, April 1, 2005, a day before the official opening of the first and only Christian church within the community (situated behind the largest shanty-trading centre). It was hard to tell whether this was designed to purge “evil” from the community before the church opening ceremony. On the material day women from all the commercial *bomas* met in a secret location and in one group they marched to the community pubs where they attacked all those women perceived as prostitutes and vandalised many pubs. Most of the prostitutes, caught unawares, were assaulted and their rooms turned upside down. For instance, the front wall of Alfa Wines and Spirits pub was partly ripped off and doors were

knocked down but no property was looted. Photo 34 shows the aftermath of the attack on Alfa Wines and Spirits pub.

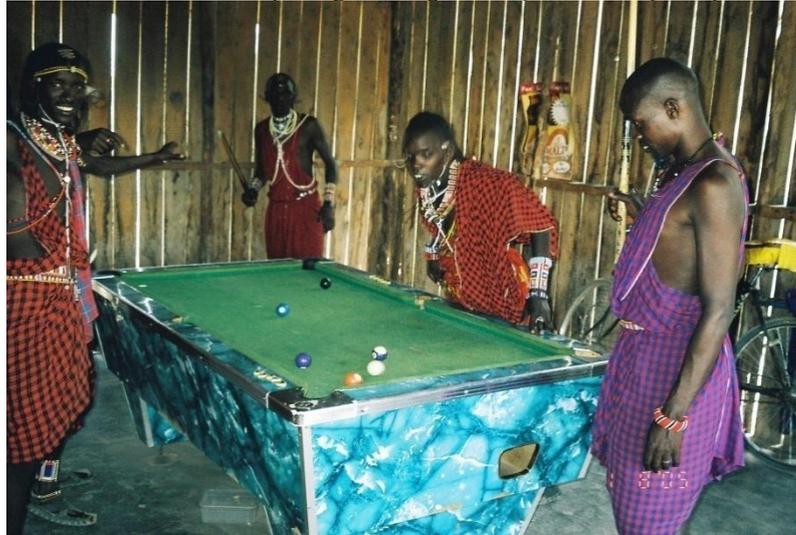
Social disruption: Despite the Maasai being directly involved in tourism development for a short period and limited host-guest contacts, many of the interviewees were concerned about the quickened pace of life especially during the peak season. The quickened pace of life was difficult for many villagers to maintain because they hardly had enough time to visit and socialise with family and friends, to attend obligatory social activities. Some respondents lamented the feelings of disjointedness in their social networks during the high season when social interactions were limited to ‘*bomamates*’ and close relatives. Several respondents complained that in the high season they were worn out by the demanding schedules of having to perform song and dance several times in one day for different groups of tourists. As one curio dealer noted, “The kind of stress during the high season is different in the low season when the main worry is about how to get food”. Tourism had, therefore not only disrupted the traditional division of labour but also customary livelihood activities. For instance, *morans* had cautiously begun to withdraw from pastoral activities in favour of self-employment in tourism. As a result an acute shortage of herders in Amboseli was a major threat to the traditional pastoral economy. The continued involvement of *morans* in tourism has meant a shift in the equilibrium of their daily lives and by extension the rhythm of community life.

Photo 32 Villagers enjoying a beer at the public campsite pub



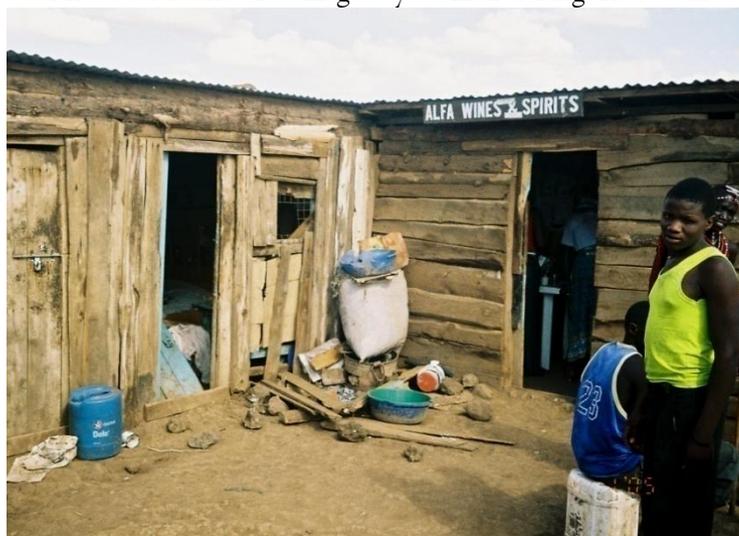
Source: Researcher

Photo 33 *Morans* pool gambling at the public campsite pub



Source: Researcher

Photo 34 Scene of damages by women during the attack



Source: Researcher

The other negative impact is the loss of family privacy. The conversion of their homesteads into tourist attractions and enterprises not only disrupted family privacy but also events such as weddings and initiation ceremonies which made many villagers too uncomfortable. The Maasai customarily undertake, within their ‘permanent home’ or non-commercial homesteads, rituals and ceremonies which every community member is free to attend. However, since the cultural *bomas* are shared with tourists during the day the Maasai do not have space for private family time and other customary activities. As a chief of the *morans* commented “people have made *bomas* their permanent homes where they conduct ritual ceremonies and women give birth without getting

cattle blood soup mixed with herbs which is contrary to the original mission of their establishment”.

Tourism was thus producing individuals who are less committed to their cultural traditions. The old Maasai custom of mutual reciprocity, for instance, was increasingly fading away. As a local Councillor stated, “Many of our people now shun the traditional emphasis on free services, generosity, friendliness and hospitality for economic reward ... Tourism has given way to acquisitiveness and greed especially amongst the young people” (Saire, personal communication, 2005). Many respondents lamented that it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain goods and services which were in the past customarily offered freely, as tourism slowly produced people who placed individual advancement above the welfare of their kinsmen. This confirms Stott’s (1978) assertion that tourism tends to loosen solidarities and increase individualisation.

One other negative impact identified by informants is that *boma* tourism may change young people’s behaviours. According to the Divisional Education Officer, tourism was responsible for the high school dropout rates amongst the youth. He noted that many Maasai youths attend school with the sole purpose of learning English and as soon as they are able to converse in the language they drop out of school. They then join the cultural *boma* tourism business where they use the English language to communicate with tourists. As a local manager at the community campsite said,

Tourism has affected the youth negatively. Many of them do not go to school. They stay in the cultural bomas to sing and dance for tourists in return for money. Many drop out of school in standard seven or eight when they have mastered the English language, which enables them to communicate with tourists. Tourism is therefore the reason why many children were dropping out of school. They have not realised the value of education ... however we are holding meetings in the community to sensitize our people about the importance of education and to encourage them to send children to school (Nkadayo, personal communication, 2005).

Although tourism hooks Maasai entrepreneurs and villagers from different clans, age-groups and socio-economic backgrounds into ever larger units, the fabric of local interdependence was disintegrating as competition for the same limited opportunities has engendered rivalries and conflicts which now threaten to tear apart the community. As villagers struggle against each other for political control over resources (financial, cultural and natural) community relations have become politicized to a scale hitherto unknown to the Maasai. Increasing social stratification and fragmentation are a manifestation of these changing power relations and the complexity of the emerging situation. This confirms the assertion that tourism increases stratification between

and have-nots in their culture (Hitchcock and Brandenburgh, 1990). In the next section, I present a case of overt conflict, in order to illustrate the social disruptions taking place amongst the Maasai, as a result of tourism.

9.4 Tale of a Conflict

Early in the morning of Thursday, January 6, 2005, a day after I shifted my fieldwork base from Loitokitok to the cultural *bomas* on the southern edge of ANP, a group of about 20 community leaders and government officials converged at Amboseli Serena Lodge. At around 10 o'clock they travelled together to Ilchurra Cultural *Boma* to witness and preside over a meeting to elect a new *boma* committee. However, as they approached the *boma's* main entrance they were unexpectedly belted with stones and other crude weapons. The attackers were supporters of the incumbent *boma* chairman who, sensing defeat, attempted to stop the imminent elections. The administration policemen who had accompanied the leaders were reluctant to intervene even though later they shot guns in the air to scare away the attackers. However, this was not enough to stop the attackers who appeared determined to carry on the attack. Reinforcements had to be called from the Tourist Police Unit at ASL to rescue the beleaguered leaders, some of whom had already sustained injuries. Paradoxically, none of the attackers were arrested and interestingly all the leaders left without saying anything or even condemning the attack.

During my research tenure, tourism-related conflicts such as the incident described above were on the increase. The prevailing view at the time was that residents were sitting on a time bomb that would explode at any time. Local leaders were incessantly working to end tourism-related conflicts which were negatively impacting on social relations and other aspects of community life. With tourism being such a 'hot' issue it made sense to ask respondents what was the root cause of the attack on the leaders and other inter and intra *boma* disputes. When asked to explain what had caused the attack on the leaders, respondents pointed to leadership wrangles, inequitable benefit sharing, clan and political party power struggles. Below I have organised these responses into broad themes that reflect a wide range of community perspectives.

One general trend emerging from the study is that the Maasai are struggling with the shift in their identity from being livestock herders toward a capitalistic economy with a growing prominence of tourism. This shift in economic organisation is accompanied by social changes that are not always welcomed or well understood by the Maasai. Most respondents agreed that

cultural *bomas* attracted people from diverse backgrounds who wanted to gain economically from the tourism sector. This pitted community members against each other in a severe competition and struggle to make the most out of tourism. Interestingly, whereas some residents pointed to the inherent leadership wrangles emanating from the inequitable sharing of tourism benefits as the cause of the disputes in the cultural *bomas*, others tended to attribute the conflicts to clanism and political patronage as analysed below.

Leadership squabbles: For many informants the incident was the culmination of a one-year-old leadership dispute between the incumbent and former *boma* chairman (hereafter referred to as the Initiator). It was alleged that trouble had started in April 2004 when the Initiator was ousted from his position as *boma* chairman. The purported elections in which he was ousted, it was claimed, were not free and fair so he was attempting to make a comeback. The incumbent chairman organised the attack in order to stop the looming elections from taking place. Most of my interviewees stated that the incumbent chairman felt threatened since he stood to lose a monopoly over the *boma's* hefty tourism income and decision-making power. The war was basically motivated by greed for money as each of the two protagonists sought to gain economic power and political influence as the *boma* chairman.

As already noted, the *boma* chairmen enjoy immense power because of the range of linkages they have with political leaders, civil servants, NGOs, and tour drivers/guides. These chairmen are frequently listened to as speakers and active participants in the local political scene which buttresses their status. The position for instance gives the chairman a special opportunity to recruit new members, mobilise groups to participate in tourism and to represent the *boma* to the outside world. The success of *boma* tourism is usually ascribed to the capabilities of the chairman. For these reasons the position of *boma* chairman is not only highly contested but is also at the heart of tourism-related leadership and power struggles that plague the everyday life of Maasai entrepreneurs in the cultural *bomas*. The election controversy was then related not only to a wider political crisis but also lack of consultative decision-making. The self-interest process by which decisions were being made at the *boma* level demonstrated this problematic situation. Many people also shared a loss of faith in government officers who appeared clearly partisan and compromised.

Clanism: Another cause that came up during discussions and interviews was the contentious and factional nature of the relationship between members of the two main clans represented in the

boma. I asked Josephine, a wholesale curio dealer if clanism was a major cause of the attack and she replied,

Respondent: *Yes, there is a lot of clanism because one clan dominates. There are more people from one clan. They really make life difficult for people from other clans.*

Interviewer: Does it affect business?

Respondent: *No, not really because when it comes to tourists they all respect them.*

Interviewer: So when is clanism more visible in the *boma*?

Respondent: *During elections. That is when it is more visible. Also it is evident in profit sharing. If a person who does not belong to the big clan is progressing so much, they campaign against such a person and bring him down and remove him from that boma. He will then move to another boma.*

Several informants specified the domination of people from one clan in the *boma* committee as a possible cause of the conflict. As one *boma* chairman retorted, “The issue of clanism is prevalent as most chairmen come from the bigger sub-clans” (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005). A respected elderly woman in one of the *bomas* echoed the sentiment that, “In that *boma* one clan dominates and they need to give others a chance”. She pointed out that clanism was a major barrier for several people who wished to join that cultural *boma* tourism (Nanginy, personal communication 2005). As one respected elder stated, “Whilst there is nothing that stops people from participating in tourism there are clan barriers to entry for several community members” (Ntoinye, personal communication, 2005). A Councillor summed it up, “Cultural *bomas* are a hotbed for clan politics. There is always a clan angle to everything in the *bomas*”.

In a community fractured along clan lines, elections even at the most basic level of political organisation are important not only in encouraging or discouraging local participation in tourism but also in determining the overall pace of development. Since the incumbent chairman enjoyed overwhelming support from his clansmen, the majority in the *boma*, it was hard to remove him without protestation. Several interviewees indicated that part of the strategy for the Initiator to recapture chairmanship was through enlisting his clansmen as *boma* members and then filing the returns at the District Social Development Office. This tactic was bitterly contested by the incumbent. In fact, it was alleged that the GRC supported the initiator as part of a wider scheme to ‘plant’ his clansmen in strategic leadership positions to bolster his political supremacy in the *bomas* and by extension, the community.

Many of the residents hinted that the incumbent chairman had earlier recruited his clansmen to fill positions left vacant by those who had defected with the Initiator. Some interviewees claimed that the incumbent chairman was favouring his clansmen in the allocation of duties and benefits and thus polarizing members along clan lines. This clan polarisation not only inhibits social cohesion and community integration but also splits the Maasai into factional groupings. As one local Councillor suggested, “Rhetoric in the *boma* gets down to either you are for or against the chairman”. Many supporters of the incumbent felt obliged to act in favour of their clansman so as to continue enjoying unfettered access to the *boma*'s revenues. Many of those who participated in attacking the leaders did so to express their solidarity with a clansman. As the head teacher of the local primary school noted, “It is not easy to break the complex clan networks existing in the *bomas*” (Raphael, personal communication, 2005). Clanism continues to be a thorny problem that affects the smooth operation of cultural *boma* tourism.

External Interference: The general opinion within the *cultural bomas* was that the dispute was a result of external interference linked to the outcome of elections in which a new GRC took over control. Several residents suggested that the Initiator was ousted in *boma* elections called at the behest of the former GR chairman. The former GRC was allegedly composed of corrupt officials and those he was campaigning against were out for revenge. That is why they influenced members to vote him out or risk the *boma* being closed. The chairman in a personal vendetta had demanded that members vote out the *boma* initiator as punishment for ganging up with others to wage war against his style of leadership. As one *morán* said, “He used his influence and power to have his clansman replace the Initiator” (William, personal communication, 2005).

Some of the interviewees indicated that when the Initiator was ousted he teamed up with other disgruntled members to campaign against the GR chairman. As the present GR chairman told me, “He got into loggerheads with the former GR chairman. So he was forced out of office. This marked the beginning of problems. ... He formed a group which teamed with us to win the GR election” (Letureshi, personal communication, 2005). The aborted elections were therefore a deliberate move to reward the Initiator for the support he accorded the incumbent GRC to win their election. However, in calling for snap elections the right procedures had not been followed. As one aggressor said, “The elections were irregular because the incumbent had not served his one year term as stipulated in the *boma* by-laws”. The incumbent *boma* chairman and his supporters felt strongly that the Initiator was being imposed on them by the GRC which amounted to a form of external interference in the internal affairs of their *boma*.

As noted in Chapter 8, the GRC exerts a high degree of control over cultural tourism by virtue of holding authority over allocation of land including that for the construction of new *bomas*. Whilst these powers relate peripherally to tourism, what is important is that the GR chairman was trying to safeguard and further his political interests by vesting control of the *boma* into the hands of an ally. As Ole Mwangi, a *boma* chairman summed up, “If the GR chairman feels that you do not support him he will find a way to sabotage you. Unless your people rally behind you the GRC will incite *boma* members either to oust you or replace you with a person of their choice” (Ole Mwangi, personal communication, 2005). The other external actors accused of meddling in the affairs of the *boma* were the police and provincial administration, both of whom seemed to favour the incumbent. This explains why the police were reluctant to intervene, which is a strong indication that external interference was not only limited to the GRC but also to government officials. Just like the *boma* members, government officials were highly polarised, thus making it hard for them as servants of the people to intervene in resolving *boma* conflicts. Government officers also contributed to social divisions and stratification in the community by taking sides. This exacerbated the problems of factionalism within the wider community.

Control over tourism revenues: There appeared to be tension between the *boma* officials and particularly the chairman and the ordinary members over the distribution and control of tourism benefits. For many interviewees the former chairman who monopolised control over the *boma*'s revenues lacked in transparency and accountability. As one development worker told me, the incumbent chairman had no management skills because he was illiterate. As a result, he could not properly account for all the income earned from the *boma* tourism business. These thoughts were also echoed by several other respondents. On the other hand, the Initiator felt that since he had more or less single-headedly built the *boma* he had a right to benefit from its revenues. Many residents claimed that corruption exists within the *bomas* with those occupying the positions of power especially the chairman grabbing a bigger share of the benefits. Several respondents indicated that the chairman used part of this income to buy allegiance from *boma* members by coming to their aid in times of trouble such as when one is sick or buying food for them when in need and so on. No doubt those recipients of such favours felt obliged to defend the chairman in his hour of need such as when they attacked the community leaders.

Competition and business rivalry: The conflict was also attributed to competition and business rivalry. For many informants this was exactly the reason why the Initiator wanted to make a

comeback to his former *boma*. It was closer to the park and it attracted more business and thus earned more income. When the *boma* Initiator was ousted he moved out with several of his friends and clansmen. He boasted that he knew so many tour guides/drivers and therefore he would stop them from visiting the *boma*. He thought that it would collapse without him since the new chairman did not have much experience in arranging tourism. He moved to a new *boma* and started to compete businesswise with his former *boma*. As the incumbent *boma* chairman told me, “After moving out we marketed our *boma* and business thrived. He tried marketing his new *boma* but did not do well so he contemplated coming back”.

For several days after the incident business to the *boma* was paralysed as representatives of the other *bomas* turned the incident to their advantage. They skilfully manipulated and exaggerated the story in order to persuade drivers/guides to divert business meant for that *boma* to their *bomas* instead. Some of the *morans* involved in marketing told me that they usually cheated about their competitors to win business. In this case they told tour/guides many lies to the effect that members of the *boma* in question had fought and some had either been killed or arrested by the police whilst others had run away and the *boma* closed down. Deception is one of the key tactics employed in business competitions between the different *bomas* and it is often a source of intra-*boma* conflicts and hatred especially after the wronged parties find out what was said about them. As one incumbent *boma* chairman told me,

We have got to go out and convince our clients that ours is the best and only original Maasai homestead and that all those others near the park are commercial places where they cannot gain a true sense of traditional Maasai culture. In this way we are able to attract business even though we are situated furthest from the park (Ole Mwangi, Personal communication, 2005).

In this particular incident it was possible that the members from the other *bomas* could have incited the attackers so as to disrupt business there. In the interim drivers would not deliver tourists to the *boma* and if the conflict dragged on for a long time the other *bomas* could benefit from reduced competition and increased business. In fact some wished that the GRC would close it down all together as it enjoyed closer proximity to the park and thus more business. Others felt that the conflict was ignited by the seasonal nature of local tourism. One local university student observed, “People in the *bomas* sometimes get quarrelsome over money. Every high season people here end up fighting about money as those not making enough become irritable. This is a breeding ground for conflicts” (Saitoti, personal communication, 2005).

Political patronage: Most informants noted that the conflict was also linked to local and national political alignments in which powerful politicians plant their stooges in community leadership positions to gain political mileage over their opponents. The feud had roots dating back to 1991 when the country re-embraced political pluralism and the subsequent emergence of many political parties. The former ruling party, KANU which had been in power since independence, was faced with stiff challenges from new emergent opposition parties. As a consequence new political groupings emerged in the local scene to support parties that sponsored candidates for political office. Local politicians rely heavily on the people in cultural *bomas* for such support. It can thus be argued that internal divisions predated multi-partyism and tourism has only served to reinforce existing political differences and conflicts. It has been of political interest for local politicians to support their allies in the cultural *bomas* so as to consolidate their power base.

The following account (summarised from conversations with some *boma* residents) demonstrates the way in which people in power may gain or appease supporters: The Initiator after being ousted attempted to start a new *boma*. He and his supporters approached the GRC to seek permission to set up a new *boma* near the former one. Their request was declined for no apparent reason. However, a later application to establish a new *boma* near to the park by a group allied to the then GR chairman was granted. In the words of one resident, the Initiator was denied permission to set up a *boma* for “petty political differences”. Political connections are thus helpful in securing permission to initiate a new *boma* or rather to use any piece of land within the ranch. It was alleged that this was the reason why the Initiator spent vast amounts of money to campaign against the incumbent GRC, which was eventually ousted in the ensuing GR elections. He wanted to make a comeback because his allies had assumed GR leadership and therefore the power to dictate things locally.

Many villagers told me that it was public knowledge that the incumbent GR chairman was the one ‘stirring the pot’ to get rid of his political archrivals. As one female resident retorted, “politics is bringing down the whole village. The whole village is going down because of politics ... we are getting very few tourists coming because of politics ... we poor are not going to get anything from tourism for ourselves” (Nanginy, personal communication, 2005). The type of relationship illustrated here whereby someone cultivates political power and potential support through patronage demonstrates how particular community groups defend their interests against individuals who pose threats to them. In this case, there were certainly established relationships between the people in authority with political ambitions and their allies with the expectation of

their political support. It would be possible to extend the net of patronage relationships to other social relationships but this is not the objective of this study.

The study reveals that tourism was an easy avenue through which outside political interests penetrate the Maasai community to create electoral support and secure the economic interests of the cultural *bomas* because of the strength of inter-organisational rivalry. Some interviewees noted that political parties had pulled the Maasai apart and tourism has heightened power contests and struggles within the community. This became apparent in a reconciliation meeting chaired by the Member of Parliament and Divisional Officer. At the meeting the Initiator's group, whose political allegiance was to the late Member of Parliament, demanded that the attackers be arrested and charged with assault. However, the incumbent MP who allegedly was allied to the aggressors refused to grant the request. Instead, he castigated the GRC and other leaders who supported the elections. He accused the GRC of meddling in the affairs of the cultural *boma*. At the meeting it also emerged that the former GR chairman was involved in planning the attack which was largely viewed as a deliberate attempt by the incumbent GRC to remove his clansmen from all positions of power and influence within the community.

Several informants stated that a combination of clan and national party politics contributed greatly to the dispute. Generally, *boma* and GR officials are linked vertically to national politicians and local party leaders. Due to political patronage some *boma* leaders have become authoritarian and those who try to oppose or question their decisions are often thrown out and replaced with relatives and cronies of the *boma* officials, particularly the chairman. Unscrupulous GR and political leaders use the cultural *bomas* leaders to fight their political battles on their behalf. Since the *boma* initiator or chairman recruits new members they owe total allegiance to him and consequently he easily manipulates them to serve his personal interests as payback, as when they fought the leaders. One result is that the *boma* officials have monopolised the tourism business and income with little confrontation. Politicians work closely with both GRC and *boma* leaders to build their political and power bases at the grassroots level. It is not unusual for local political party leaders to spend huge amounts of money to campaign for their supporters to win *boma* chairmanship since they would support them in return. Some people keep shifting alliances in parallel with changes amongst the electorate.

9. 4.I Analysis of the Conflict

At face value, the incident seems like a fairly straightforward case of competition between insiders and outsiders and it is one in which, perhaps, the outsiders were trying to meddle in the internal affairs of a cultural *boma*. Underneath the surface, however, run deep and entrenched power struggles for political control over tourism and its benefits at the local level. The incident shows the various ways in which the Maasai both react and cope when riled and how precarious the villagers feel about tourism and community relationships with each other, their leaders and outsiders. The issues of competition and conflict strike at the centre of the villagers' chances of future wealth from tourism and are also at the centre of Maasai social relationships. Simply put, the incident was a manifestation of the competitive and tense atmosphere in the cultural *bomas* that external forces of change including tourism and capitalism have engendered amongst the Maasai of Amboseli.

This incident provides an excellent depiction of the issues and problems that the Maasai must face up to on a daily basis in their engagement with tourists and tourism. The voicing of opposition towards the elections was just a mere expression of the deep sense of frustration in the community about tourism. The monopolisation of leadership positions, decision-making processes, and tourism revenues by a small elite group are manifestations of the many problems that encapsulate cultural *boma* tourism. *Boma* membership is typically heterogeneous and comprises of people from diverse social and economic backgrounds as well as with different competing and conflicting interests in tourism development. In such circumstances, there is no equitable sharing of tourism benefits within the community. As a consequence, problems relating to equity are bound to crop up. Thus, competition and power struggles for political control over tourism benefits has polarised the Maasai into splinter groups based on a complex interplay of factors including clan, age, gender and socio-economic status.

The conflict therefore depicts a highly fragmented community and one that not only lacks entrepreneurial skills but is also weak in terms of cohesiveness and teamwork. Ritsma and Ongaro (2000:20) have observed that cultural *boma* tourism has not been "spared the nascent wrangling and infighting which characterise the teething stage of many organisations". This incident makes it clear that business competition and rivalries, as well as lack of vision and good leadership not only constrain Maasai entrepreneurial activity in tourism but also the realisation of

greater benefits. The entrepreneurs not only lack a clear consensus on any issue, least of all on the value of conservation and tourism, but enterprise leaders also lack adequate skills to guide members to prosperity in tourism. Thus, social divisions and rivalries deny the Maasai the opportunity to organise themselves and press for better conditions especially in conservation and tourism. These conflicts tell us something about the political context in which tourism among the Maasai occurs and rule out the possibility for cooperative action which is incidentally important for the success of community tourism.

Although ownership of resources (natural and cultural) provides the basis for local participation in tourism, the Maasai have not benefited economically as they should have from their cultural tourist enterprises. For decades, the Maasai were known to be herders and not aggressive entrepreneurs. Internal divisions, which now dominate Maasai social and political relationships, reflect how tourism can transform a native community in destination areas. These conflicts between the Maasai entrepreneurs involve dynamic power interrelationships, not only amongst the villagers themselves, but also between themselves and the outsiders. In the next section, I focus on attempts to address the structural problems in the cultural *bomas*.

9.5 Attempts to Regulate Cultural *Boma* Tourism

In 2002 the Africa Wildlife Foundation observed that unregulated growth of cultural *bomas* in Amboseli had led to the mushrooming of huge inauthentic centres unsafely situated along wildlife corridors. Subsequently, there was fear that this mushrooming of *bomas* at the periphery of the park was going to destroy an authentic landscape. As a result AWF organised workshops at the community level and study tours for cultural *boma* leaders to well-run *bomas* outside Amboseli where they learned from their peers how to successfully plan and manage the business of a cultural venture. Subsequently, the idea of creating an umbrella organisation, called Amboseli Cultural Centres Association (ACCA), for all cultural *bomas* in Amboseli was mooted. Some of ACCA's objectives were to define the activities and operations of cultural *bomas*, identify their problems and draw up strategies to mitigate them, define key stakeholders and their involvement, establish an organisational management structure for them, improve business and benefit sharing, and in conjunction with KWS and AWF to regulate the number, size, location and quality of cultural *bomas*. As the *boma* chairman stated:

They put a lot of effort and even brought us their legal advisor. We tried to enlighten the people about it, we even wrote a constitution but when it came to implementation

everybody wanted to go their own way. This was a good idea and I think the bomas are regretting now because it would have helped them very much. The GRC then did not take the lead to help pull the people together because they did not understand how beneficial this could have been. You know when you are a leader if it means forcing noble ideas on people you have to do it as it is for the common good of all. The leaders opposed it and that is why it was not implemented (Daniel, personal communication, 2005).

ACCA, however, was abandoned because it did not attract support from the GRC and *boma* officials. Although the organisation was formed, interim officials appointed and a constitution written, the body was never registered. Apart from involvement in marketing and revenue distribution, ACCA had also aimed to relocate the cultural *manyattas* that are situated in critical wildlife corridors and dispersal areas. As one resident stated:

The reason why ACCA did not succeed was the suggestion that all bomas amalgamate into one, open one bank account, and stop marketing at the lodges. Besides it was proposed that entrance fees be raised to Ksh. 1000 but the villagers thought that drivers will not bring visitors there, and they might miss the business. In fact the drivers had threatened that they would stop bringing tourists if they allowed ACCA to operate (Daniel, personal communication, 2005).

Through ACCA the government and other interest groups did attempt to control and reduce the haphazard development of cultural *bomas*. The decision to terminate construction of new *bomas* was taken because of oversupply and the fact that *bomas* were increasingly being situated on important wildlife migration corridors. Political interference became a major drawback since the GR and *boma* leadership did not fully accept ACCA. There was fear that if allowed to control the operation of cultural *bomas* ACCA would dispossess the GRC and *boma* officials a useful tool for exercising power and political influence at the grassroots level. The group ranches felt threatened by the potential loss of power to outsiders. Most community members felt that AWF was attempting to take control over this, supposedly, lucrative sector and thus exerted pressure on their leaders to oppose ACCA.

In this sense the attempt to regulate cultural *bomas* is instructive (Chapter 7). The Maasai are often suspicious of foreign interest in their community and activities. The attempt to provide greater definition to the number, structure and procedural aspects of cultural *boma* tourism appeared to have the full support of community leaders. Some of the leaders spent considerable time and energy consulting community members on instituting change. Whilst community members offered support they remained sceptical about the motives of AWF and the other external participants. In the end the whole idea lost momentum and ACCA did not take off. This

resistance and rejection of external inputs is what makes cultural *bomas* stand out from other dominant forms of tourism in Kenya. Cultural *boma* tourism therefore not only entrenches local ownership and control but also at the same time helps build local skills, knowledge, resources and entrepreneurial capacity. Many international tourists to Kenya are attracted to cultural *bomas*, at least in part, because they are locally owned and offer authentic cultural experience.

9.6 Summary

This chapter has offered a presentation of the several actors involved in cultural *boma* tourism and the complex and dynamic power interrelationships between them. The chapter has also identified and discussed the opportunities, constraints and less quantifiable socio-cultural impacts associated with cultural *boma* tourism. Constraints include: business competition and rivalry, inadequate and inequitable revenue distribution, driver/guide exploitation, social disruption, and external interferences. These constraints imply that attempts by the Maasai to work together as a unified group in order to gain from tourism and tourists have not been very successful. Political rifts between various interest groups within and without the community have inhibited the Maasai from developing consultative decision-making processes that could increase their confidence to pro-actively engage with outsiders and capture more benefits from tourism. Consequently, the opportunity for the Maasai to benefit from commoditising their culture is lost. Rather than empowering the Maasai and fostering unity and social cohesion, tourism has served to divide and impoverish the community further.

Chapter 10: Conflicted Tourism: Power Inequalities and Barriers to Development

10.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises the dissertation's main findings, elucidates the contributions this study makes to the discipline of the anthropology of tourism, and presents a final discussion of how issues of power and politics intersect with local participation in community-based conservation-oriented tourism development, and the transformations produced by these intersections. The research has answered the three questions posed in this study: (1) How and on what terms are the Maasai involved in tourism development? (2) What initiatives have the Maasai undertaken to gain closer local control over the organisation, economics and impacts of tourism? (3) What opportunities and constraints does tourism provide for local economic development? Maasai communities living in two group ranches bordering Amboseli National Park in southern Kenya have provided the empirical ground from which the broad issues of power and politics associated with Maasai involvement in community-based tourism development have been examined.

10.1 Contributions of the Study to the Anthropology of Tourism

This study has contributed to the discipline of the anthropology of tourism by generating a new body of knowledge on the contemporary situation of the Maasai, an indigenous community grappling with a shift from livestock production towards a capitalist economy with a growing prominence on tourism. This study adds ethnographic depth and richness to our understanding of the various ways in which Maasai involvement in the global political economy through tourism has transformed community relations. This study is unique in the sense that unlike previous ethnographic works on the Maasai, the present study has been conducted by a Kenyan anthropologist thus adding a local angle to the anthropological literature on tourism in Kenya in a way perhaps no other study has done.

The other contribution is the confirmation by the findings of the usefulness of political ecology and actor-oriented political ecology conceptual frameworks in understanding the complex interactions among various tourism stakeholders at the grassroots level. The most important contribution lies in the integration and weaving together of ideas from political economy,

political ecology, and actor-oriented political ecology with opinions from local residents and public sector stakeholders in understanding how tourism affects community power relations. Unlike political economy which focuses on macro-level analysis, political ecology has proved to be a useful framework for explaining unequal power relations and how political relations among different stakeholders operating at local, regional, national and global levels shape conservation priorities and tourism outcomes.

In selecting a suitable methodology for this study, the merits and demerits of various research techniques were considered and a decision made to employ methodological triangulation. Triangulation combined with a multi-sited ethnographic approach and extended residence within the research communities has permitted me to identify the different tourism stakeholders and gain a deep understanding of their interactions with each other in different tourism contexts. This has also enabled me to bring together a diversity of perspectives from a multiplicity of tourism stakeholders including ordinary villagers, community leaders, tour operators, and development workers. The study therefore provides a holistic and in-depth anthropological analysis of community tourism in a way that would have been difficult to achieve by using standard survey techniques. By being reflexive about the weaknesses and strengths of my methodology and positioning in relation to the research subjects, I have been transparent and truthful, and strongly believe that the reader gets a true picture of my research. The study has particularly given research participants the power to speak for themselves through extensive verbatim quotes in the final text. In other words, it adds a local voice perspective to tourism research.

Little attention seems to have been paid to the issues of power and politics in community-based tourism. The existing research documents and other publications on tourism, community development and indigenous people focus almost exclusively on protected areas and tourism's impacts. However, there is a paucity of anthropological research focusing on local participation in tourism development and how this shapes community power relations. This study responds to such a challenge. The research contributes a new body of empirical knowledge to fill the gaps in the literature and in our understanding of the diverse ways in which local participation in conservation and tourism development in Kenya is embedded in a complex web of micro-politics and economy linked to the objectives and agendas of external interests operating on multiple scales.

This research is of great value to the state and conservation planners whose efforts are directed at promoting local participation in tourism development and benefits as an incentive for people within the vicinity of protected areas to support and undertake conservation. This research would also be of great value to the state and conservationists particularly KWS which have prioritized research on local participation in tourism, conservation, and development in the group ranches that surround ANP. The study has identified various problem areas and constraints to local participation in resource management and tourism development which require immediate attention. The dissertation suggests that, the more attentive tourism policy planners and stakeholders are to the concerns of the Maasai, the more support they are likely to receive for their conservation initiatives. Tourism promoters and planners must also recognise the political dimensions of community-based tourism and introduce wide-ranging measures to support indigenously home-grown tourism initiatives such as the *cultural bomas*. Finally, the insights gained might benefit the development of community tourism in other parts of Kenya and elsewhere.

10.2 Summary of Findings

This dissertation has used a political ecology framework to analyse the broader issues of power and politics associated with Maasai involvement in community-based conservation-oriented tourism development. The actor-oriented political ecology provided the lens through which the interactions among the various tourism stakeholders were examined. Findings reveal that various types of conflicts had arisen at the community level due to unequal benefit distribution, competition for political control over resources and tourism benefits. Stonich's (1998; 2000) similarly found that tourism was a major source of social conflicts and tensions within the community and Young (1999) also found that conflicts over user rights and access to environmental resources increased because of tourism. This dissertation argues that such conflicts have the potential to alter community power relations and ultimately, to become a serious obstacle to local participation in conservation and tourism development. Thus, understanding community power and political relations is vital when considering tourism's future prospects and sustainability.

This dissertation, through a case study of Kimana Community Wildlife Sanctuary, has highlighted the unpredictability of partnership projects between local communities and outside tour operators in tourism development and the delicacy of the relationships among the different

stakeholders. This dissertation argues that leasing landscape resources such as KCWS to foreign tour operators imposes a hegemonic tourism development model. This not only runs counter to the ideals of the participatory approach but also renders local communities passive, dependent and powerless clients of foreign tour operators. The case study provides a good example of how the Maasai have lost potential control over tourism and critical natural resources to a foreign tour operator and how competition and power struggles for political control over resources (natural and financial) has undermined the prospects of the community prospering from wildlife tourism. The dissertation suggests that there is need to put in place a new institutional framework that both achieves the vision of the participatory approach and meets the needs and aspirations of the local people, the state and tour operators.

Through a case study of Maasai *cultural bomas*, this research has explored the opportunities and constraints of cultural tourism but within the framework of Kenya's participatory approach to conservation. *Cultural bomas* represent one example of a community-based tourism venture that presents better prospects for more 'genuine' local participation in the sector and for communities to voice their own concerns and aspirations, thereby contributing meaningfully to development (Mann, 2000). Cultural *boma* tourism appeared to have a positive resonance with the local people because it is culturally compatible with their ways of life, in the sense that it builds on locally available resources and materials, it draws on indigenous knowledge (Charnley, 2005), and allows villagers to continue engaging in their traditional activities (DeLuca, 2002). Additionally, *boma* tourism was highly favoured because is owned and run predominantly by the local people according to their priorities. Local ownership reduces capital leakage as the money tourists spend in the community goes directly to the local people (Honey, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). However, like other forms of tourism, *cultural boma* tourism is too subject to community power dynamics which enable a few people to benefit more than others.

The main factor motivating the Maasai in Amboseli to participate in tourism development was the desire to obtain economic benefits. The generation of economic benefits for communities living in the areas bordering national parks is also one of the primary goals of the participatory approach. To the contrary, this study found that most tourism benefits were realised at the national and international levels leaving a large majority of the local people who bear the costs of conservation with limited opportunities (Wels, 1992; Honey, 2008). When a large proportion of the benefits accrue only to some actors, it can, in a subsequent cycle of development, result in a tourism oligopoly (Gössling, 2003). My experiences from Amboseli suggest that tourism

revenues and employment opportunities that have accrued to the Maasai are not particularly large. The only people who had benefited in one way or another were those with some form of education, language skills, and connections with the national political elite and tour operators. Many people within the community, cut-off from yet another part of their resource base, were becoming poorer. This confirms Crick's assertion that "the tourism industry is notorious for the 'uphill' flow of benefits: profits normally flow to those who are already wealthy, and thus the overall effect of tourism is often to reinforce existing patterns of inequality" (1994: 94).

Inequitable participation in the decision-making processes and benefit distribution were found to be pressing problems that will continue to confront the Maasai in their long journey to sustainable development. Elite domination, corruption and mismanagement were also identified as the main contributors to the problems of factionalism, social stratification and exploitation within the community. This confirms Cohen's (1984) assertion that on the level of internal relations tourism can loosen solidarities, increase individualisation and create stress and conflict within the community. The dissertation suggests that inequalities can only be minimised when communities start to participate and receive an equitable share of tourism's benefits (Ashley, 1998). This dissertation supports Fennel's (1999:217) suggestion that "there is need to be open about expenditures and to share information in an attempt to dispel feelings of mismanagement or corruption and to be transparent in one's approach to management". The dissertation suggests that, at whatever level money is managed, there is need to take up a more transparent and accountable approach in its distribution.

This study also found that power struggles for political control over tourism and its benefits were a major hindrance to the smooth operation and cooperative management of communally-owned community-based tourism enterprises. This power struggles not only precluded community members from collaborating to reclaim what is rightfully theirs from the natural resources in their territory but also broad based participation in natural resource management, tourism development, and equitable benefit sharing. The dissertation suggests that for effective local participation in tourism development and equitable benefit distribution, which will in turn further the conservation goal, these power struggles need to be overcome. This dissertation suggests that, in as much as dealing with this power struggles is important, more efforts should be put on programmes to assist and guide the Maasai on equitable benefit sharing.

Much of the tourism literature depicts local communities as a homogenous group of people having complementary interests in community conservation and tourism efforts. However, as this study has illustrated to think of communities as a homogenous group is to assume that everybody in any given community has the same wants, needs, and expectations (Liepins, 2000). The two case studies presented in this dissertation have illustrated that communities are typically heterogeneous, dynamic, and internally differentiated by gender, clan, wealth, age, etc. No wonder the Maasai “do not have one voice on international tourism, any more than (they have) only one voice on any important public issue” (Crick, 1994: 14). Communities often harbour divergent and conflicting viewpoints about tourism and hence they evaluate and respond to it in different ways. This dissertation suggests that the heterogeneity of local communities must always be taken into consideration when planning for community participation in natural resource management and tourism development, and the vested interests of the different groups within and outside the community must be acknowledged.

To recapitulate these findings, I first revisit the connections between power and politics, how these intersect with local participation in community-based tourism development, and the relationships produced by these intersections. Second, I summarise how land and natural resource related conflicts have affected Maasai community power relations and development. Third, I summarise the implications of cultural commoditisation on Maasai development. Finally, I conclude that a participatory approach to natural resource management and tourism development does not necessarily empower the local communities to take greater political control over their own development.

10.2 Power and Politics in Tourism Development

“The political aspects of tourism are interwoven with its economic consequences ... tourism is not only a ‘continuation of politics’ but an integral part of the world’s political economy. In short, tourism is a tool used not only for economic but also political reasons” (Edgell, 1990: 37).

International tourism is, undoubtedly, not only a political fact but also a fundamental ingredient of the global political economy. Tourism in most countries takes place against a background of unequal power relations at the local, national and global levels (Gössling, 2003). Competition for a piece of the tourism cake constitutes the politics of tourism. According to Hall (1994:77), “Politics is about power, who gets what, where, how and why”. Power relations in tourism play a very important role in determining the experiences gained, who gets involved and how, and how benefits are shared within host community. Thus, power and political control are salient features

of tourism in developing countries such as Kenya where local participation in the industry “takes place in the context of great inequality of wealth and power” (Rao cited in Mowforth and Munt, 2003: 45; 2008: 48). While economic interpretations of power are well represented in tourism literature, analyses have “downplayed relationships of power, which remain either implicit or are absent’ (Mowforth & Munt (2003:45; 2008:48) in tourism involving indigenous communities.

One of the fundamental issues that political ecology addresses pertains to how the benefits and costs of environmental change are distributed (Neumann, 2005). Political ecologists assume that the benefits and costs of environmental change are inequitably distributed among different stakeholders, and that this could either strengthen or weaken social and economic inequalities (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). Findings from this study suggest that conservation benefits particularly from community-based wildlife tourism and revenue sharing arrangement with the park have not been able to outweigh the costs that the Maasai have had to endure from wildlife. The dissertation supports Barrow and Emerton’s (2002) suggestion, that it is not enough to allocate a fixed proportion of the revenues from wildlife tourism to the community. The level and type of benefits provided must be tied to the magnitude of wildlife costs accruing to the communities. Similarly, Emerton (2001) argues that community approaches to wildlife conservation can be judged to be economically successful if they not only generate benefits but also ensure that these benefits are of a sufficient value, and accrue in appropriate form, to offset the costs that wildlife imposes on communities and to make wildlife an economically viable land use compared with other wildlife-displacing livelihood alternatives.

Participatory approaches are often promoted as a sustainable approach to natural resource management because of the potential to free communities from the hegemonic grip of tour operators and a few local elites (Pearce et al., 1996; Scheyvens, 2002). Successful local participation in community-based tourism can and does empower communities to manage resources according to their own priorities (Zeppel, 2007). However, as this study found local participation in tourism development had not contributed to any form of empowerment for the Maasai in Amboseli. It is on such grounds that political ecologists have argued that weaker actors are marginalised and they are hard hit by the costs of environmental change whilst the powerful actors are able to benefit disproportionately from the resource in question (Byrant & Bailey, 1997; Adams & Hutton, 2007). The dissertation suggests that empowerment of community members - though often avoided or sometimes, contested by partners and foreign operators - through local participation and control of tourism decision-making, employment and

training opportunities, and increased entrepreneurial activities by local people is essential to successful tourism operations (Honey, 1999; Zeppel, 2007). The conservation effect of 'empowering participation' is that it can help build skills in leadership while also strengthening local institutions so that residents are enabled to translate economic benefits from tourism into broader goals (Scheyvens, 1999; Stonich, 1998, Young, 1999; Stronza, 2007). Empowering forms of participation can subsequently lead to social foundations for conservation.

Tourism among the Maasai appeared to reinforce the power disparities inherent in the local, regional, national and global political economy. As already argued, such inequalities not only run counter to the ideals of the participatory approach but also create asymmetrical power relations within the community. Such relations to a large extent affect conservation priorities, the modalities for benefit distribution, and flow of tourists at the community level (Adams and Hulme, 1999). This dissertation argues that local participation in tourism development is one of the ways through which relations of power and domination are produced and reproduced in host communities. This dissertation suggests that issues relating to equitable benefit sharing, good governance, and local control need to be carefully addressed, if efforts to integrate local communities into sustainable community development are to succeed. This dissertation further suggests that active local participation in planning, decision-making and other control measures would play an important role in achieving sustainable natural resource management and tourism development.

The study found that the Maasai have evolved new institutions of governance for their community-based tourism enterprises such as the *boma* executive committee, with hierarchical power structures. These new political institutions place decision making and control over tourism benefits in the hands of a few people, including group ranch and *boma* officials who are placed at the top of the community hierarchy. These management structures have created a situation in which powerful actors dominate the decision-making processes and control over resources both financial and natural. This dissertation argues that these power differentials among the different stakeholders are difficult to overcome and slow to change through participatory processes alone. This is because, unlike traditional Maasai systems of governance, the new structures are embedded in a foreign cultural milieu – one which tends to produce and reproduce power inequalities. It is therefore not surprising that the enterprise leaders had failed to unite their members to undertake joint action in tourism development. This dissertation suggests that

training of enterprise leaders in financial and micro-enterprise management, marketing and business negotiation skills would be necessary.

Charnley (2005) has argued that lack of political power underlies several of the other barriers to Maasai participation in community-based conservation and tourism development. It limits not only their influence over the amount of revenues they receive from the tourism revenues generated in the park but also their ability to obtain jobs and training opportunities in tourism. Additionally, it limits the benefits they receive from tourism and prevents them from amicably addressing the problems of corruption, and exploitation especially by tour drivers/guides and operators. Finally, it prevents them from having an effective voice in natural resource management, land use planning, and benefit distribution. The dissertation suggests that any attempts to empower local communities politically and redistribute power between stakeholders lies in conservation benefits that accrue being shared equitably (Stonich, 2000).

10.3 Tourism and Land Rights

One of the recurring themes in this research relates to the issue of land rights. Land issues are also at the core of political ecology inquiry (Neumann, 2005). Land ownership confers power and status to those who own it. This means that without secure land tenure rights local communities are rendered powerless as they cannot make decisions regarding land use. As Drumm and Moore (2005: 41) have rightly observed “where communities are well organised and have title to traditional lands they have been more successful in capturing a greater share of tourism spending in natural areas”. This study found that this opportunity has been elusive for the Maasai of Amboseli who have lost user and access rights to vast areas of their lands to tourism, conservation and other interest groups. The dissertation suggests that lack of secure land rights has made it exceedingly difficult for the Maasai to invest in tourism and to bargain for equitable and sustainable relationships with other tourism stakeholders.

The study established that lack of secure land tenure rights has been a major contributory factor to the Maasai’s loss of access rights and power to exercise political control over critical environmental resources. This dissertation suggests that the creation of ANP in one of the pastoralist Maasai’s most important dry season livestock grazing and watering refuge, together with land use restrictions favouring conservation and tourism interests has undermined Maasai livelihoods and economic activities. Loss of access rights to natural resources particularly pasture

and water and human-wildlife conflicts resulting from wildlife-induced damages to property and crops were found to be major sources of local resentment towards tourism and conservation. The study found that these hardships have not been adequately counter-balanced by the revenue sharing arrangement with the park nor mitigated by tourism benefits (Charnely, 2005). The dissertation suggests that the government has to ensure that local communities bordering protected areas understand the principles of shared natural resource management and their roles in order to participate in conservation and tourism development as equal partners. In addition, human-wildlife conflicts need to be addressed so as to maximize economic benefits and minimize the negative impacts. This dissertation suggests that KWS must recognize that it is in their best interest to support, rather than undermine, Maasai livelihood strategies and cultural integrity. Thus, the ability of the Maasai to sustain a pastoralist economy is essential to enabling them to sustain their environment and associated socio-cultural institutions which are integrally linked to conservation and tourism.

The study also found that local participation in land use planning and natural resources management was constrained by lack of decision making powers. Epler Wood (2002) has argued that local participation in tourism often leads to loss of decision making power over land and natural resource management. The study suggests that communities in Amboseli have not been actively and effectively involved in decisions regarding the amount of money allocated to them from park revenues. Top-down decision-making especially by KWS has denied the local people the chance to participate in decisions concerning tourism and conservation within their communities. From a political ecology perspective, such deprivation is one of the mechanisms employed by powerful actors to control the lives of weaker ones. It is for such reasons that locals harbour feelings of exclusion and suspicion towards tourism and conservation within their communities. Such feelings coupled with lack of a sense of ownership and stewardship often act as serious constraints to sustainable use of natural resources (Jones & Murphree, 2004).

Studies focusing on tourism and conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa suggest that the Maasai are not the only indigenous community in this situation (See Charnley, 2005, Murphree, 2001; Neumann, 2000). Loss of land rights to conservation, tourism and other forms of development is a universal problem that confronts many aboriginal communities around the world (Drumm & Moore, 2005; Fennel, 1999; Kiss, 2004; Honey, 2002). This dissertation suggests that for local participation in community-based conservation-oriented tourism development to flourish communities must have secure land tenure and all stakeholders need to have a consensus on the

land to be used and land rights thereon (Fennel, 1999; Epler Wood, 2002). Studies in Kenya have shown that wildlife in general receive higher levels of protection and management on private game ranches and privately held lands than in game reserves and national parks (Norton-Griffiths, 1998). Unfortunately, in Maasailand as in many developing countries land ownership is not secure. Many people still live in communally held lands as squatters and that is the reason why they are pushing for individualisation of land ownership. Faced with such a situation, it is understandably difficult for local people to make long-term investments in their land.

This dissertation argues that without secure land tenure rights communities may not have the incentive and/or the ability to invest in tourism or even to support its development and conservation efforts. The study suggests that secure land rights, unlimited access to landscape resources in the protected areas, greater investment in community development, and a strong participatory role in the decision-making process over land resources could perhaps provide incentives for local communities such as the Maasai to actively and effectively participate in conservation. Failing this the outcomes of community-based conservation-oriented tourism development may be jeopardized. There is, therefore, need for the formulation of a 'political ethic of justice' as suggested by Low and Gleeson (1998) and for meaningful authority over the control and use of resources to be delegated to local communities so as to enhance their participation in tourism. KWS would do well to recognize that policies to promote economic, political and social justice for the Maasai would further the conservation and tourism interests it is striving to protect.

10.4 Tourism and Cultural Commoditisation

Some of the literature reviewed in chapter 2 showed that turning native cultures into market commodities for tourist consumption has negative consequences for destination communities in the developing world (cf. Greenwood, 1989; Erisman, 1983; Stronza, 2001; 2008). However, research that explores the global-local nexus of the tourism industry, host communities are often depicted as powerless victims of predetermined 'global' development processes including tourism (Dahles & Meijl, 2001). However, this study did not want to perpetuate such generalisations. Through a case study of Maasai *cultural bomas* tourism, I have illustrated that local communities are not passive victims of tourism-induced socio-cultural and economic change. The dissertation argues that, rather than accepting their predicament; the Maasai have refined and manipulated tourism not only to achieve their own ends but also to redirect some of the industry's undesirable

impacts. The dissertation suggests that designing cultural events and providing entertainment and information to satisfy tourist needs shows not only that the Maasai are in control of the situation but also that they have positioned themselves as the traditional owners of their culture (Venbrux, 2000). The study further suggests that local ownership and management of cultural *boma* tourist enterprises has enabled the Maasai to creatively turn the negative effects of cultural commoditisation “into economic and cultural opportunities” (Dahles & Meijl, 2001: 54). Thus, it can be concluded that the Maasai have a good deal of control over the face and pace of tourism development in their community. This dissertation supports Brown’s (1999) suggestion that cooperative tourism ventures such as the *cultural bomas* may be the most appropriate for indigenous communities in Africa because they reflect the interests and aspirations of the local people and have the potential to distribute tourism benefits more equitably.

The dissertation has also illustrated that though from the outside the Maasai seem relatively unchanged by the forces of ‘modernization’ including tourism, capitalism and development, the reality is that like other indigenous peoples around the world, the community is in the throes of stupendous transformations. While cultural commoditisation has contributed to the destruction of the authenticity of Maasai culture, the study also found that at the same time tourism was contributing to the production of new forms of authenticity (Hollinshead, 2007). In this respect I contend that cultural tourism is a potential vehicle through which indigenous communities can both preserve their traditional culture and adapt to a changing world. The Maasai attract tourists to their villages because of their ascribed status as ethnic Others. However, in a time where the Maasai serve both as objects of the tourist gaze, cultural producers and entrepreneurs actively selling their culture for commercial gain, it becomes more problematic to market them only as authentic ‘ethnic Others’. The reality is that they combine community development with commercial business arrangements. In other words, they are both ‘ethnic Others’ and ‘modern Subjects’.

But how does this duality impinge on the tourists’ perception of the Maasai’s authentic Otherness? This dissertation suggests that rather than conceal their status as modern Subjects, the Maasai have opted to ‘stage their ascribed status as authentic ethnic Others in the *cultural bomas* for economic gain (Ritsma & Ongaro, 2000). In this way it becomes apparent that everything, including the authentic Maasai, is in a state of transformation. This dissertation argues that these changes are not necessarily determined by the power of Western culture or logic of the market but by the concerns and practices of the Maasai. Thus, tourists are offered transformed or staged

authenticity. Therefore, cultural commoditisation and tourism are not just about exploitation or destruction of indigenous cultures but also are about the reproduction, transformation and adjustment of cultural traditions.

Then, what does tourism mean for Maasai cultural identity and development? As I see it the positive feature is that the Maasai have not attempted to conceal the ways in which the modern world including tourism and capitalism has changed their lives. Tourism permits indigenous communities to be modern without having to compromise their cultural traditions and vice versa. I have argued that aboriginal peoples have the power to materially and symbolically construct their community as a tourist product and in the process reassert and (re)produce their local identity thus giving new meanings to their involvement in tourism. Through their participation and entrepreneurship in tourism, indigenous communities enter the national and global stage negotiating the margins of their involvement in tourism (Dahles & Meijl, 2005: 55). This gives them leeway to decide how much they want to apply their stereotypical image as ethnic Others, and how much they want to assert their identity as modern Subjects. In this respect, it can be argued that tourism has become a valuable asset and tool for strengthening cultural autonomy, redirecting the negative influences of cultural commoditisation, and for self-determination, economic advancement and empowerment.

10.5 Conclusion

The insights gained from this study and main lines of argument in this dissertation allow me to make the following conclusions. One, the growth of participatory tourism development in Amboseli has important implications for local economies and natural resource management, especially with regard to wildlife conservation outside state controlled national parks and game reserves in Kenya and other African countries. Maasai communities living adjacent to ANP, faced with declining levels of subsistence, limited livelihood options, and hostile climatic conditions, have embraced tourism development as a major force for economic diversification, poverty reduction and improvement of their living standards. These developments are critically important in a regional and national context where natural resource management and by extension, tourism are highly dependent on the goodwill of the local communities. While local participation is increasingly being promoted as an important and sustainable strategy for reconciling the needs of conservation and rural development in Amboseli, community tourism among the Maasai is far from reaching its potential.

Two, Maasai involvement in community conservation and tourism is a recent development in Kenya. Subsequently, the guidelines for participation have not been written and tourism development has thus far been ad hoc and unplanned. The dissertation argues that without a proper organisational and regulatory framework for local participation, the problems and conflicts identified in this study are likely to crop up again and escalate to unmanageable levels, thus posing enormous challenges to the communities concerned. The dissertation suggests that there is need for a responsive institutional, policy and legal framework that meets local aspirations to guide participation and regulate local participation in tourism development. In addition, formal education, capacity building and training for community members may be necessary to boost local management skills and abilities to initiate and run a modern business-oriented tourism venture.

Three, the Maasai in this study stated that, they wish to play a greater role in tourism development and a fairer share of the benefits. They not only viewed tourism as one of the few remaining potential income-earning opportunities but also as an alternative to urban migration and supplementary livelihood strategy. The dissertation suggests that for Maasai communities to effectively participate in tourism and benefits, which will in turn help further the conservation goals, there is an urgent need for the vast array of ecotourism resources in Amboseli – whose potential has remained largely untapped - to be exploited to ensure suitable returns for the local people and their partners. Another way to increase benefits for the local people would be to increase their levels of formal education, language skills especially in Kiswahili and English, and training which could in turn enable them to compete for employment and other opportunities in community tourism. In addition, there is an urgent need to address issues of social and political justice such as equitable distribution of benefits, land rights, access and user rights to natural resources, transparency and accountability, and democratic decision-making processes. Once addressed, tourism can then provide opportunities for empowerment and sustainable development in the areas bordering protected areas.

Four, it was also made clear during the research that the Maasai want secure land rights, power to make decisions regarding how and when to use their lands, unlimited access to critical natural resources mainly water and pasture, and a greater participatory role in wildlife management and tourism development. According to Charnley (2005:81), for community tourism to contribute to sustainable rural development and communities to benefit from their involvement, tourism must

be structured in a way that is culturally appropriate, communities must have secure land rights and power to make land use decisions, and tourism benefits to communities must be more than economic. Failing this, tourism may fall short of its promise to provide economic benefits, and local communities may lack the incentives and/or ability to invest in tourism, thus support conservation.

The dissertation concludes that there is little or no chance of participatory approaches in locales like Amboseli to succeed in promoting sustainable conservation through tourism unless the human and political dimensions are given equal importance. The overarching themes in local participation in community-based tourism are rights and capacity, themes which resonate about governance at the local and national levels. The ability of local communities such as the Maasai, to realise the benefits that accrue from their involvement in conservation and tourism development depends largely on the future of local rights and decision-making authority. These fundamental issues of authority and devolution are yet to happen in Maasailand. Community tourism must therefore embrace a broader agenda of empowering local communities through a bottom-up approach to planning and decision-making. In addition, the implementation of participatory conservation and tourism projects should be based on the development goals, priorities, participation and capacities as identified by and to the mutual benefit of, its residents. This would involve full participation by the local community, drawing on local skills and expertise, and providing empowerment of local community. Thus, political power is a prerequisite for obtaining economic as well as other benefits from tourism.

Overall, I believe that community tourism can contribute to the improvement of Maasai livelihoods and standards of living, and can be integrated into community life with manageable social and cultural consequences. This, however, depends on how adequately policy-makers and communities deal with the challenges identified in this study particularly those that relate to critical issues such as people's rights to land and livelihoods, and desires for democratic environment decision-making processes. The Maasai need to develop tourism in ways compatible with maintaining and enhancing the lifestyle and sense of community that presently exists, and ways that conserve the natural and cultural resources. This will be reflected not only in active participation in decision-making, natural resource management and tourism development as well as equitable benefit sharing but also in increasing income and improving local living standards and reducing pressure on natural resources. Further, it will also improve local knowledge of how

to deal with business, to widen understanding of the surrounding world, and to create a base for further social and economic development.

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Appendices

Appendix I Personal Communications

1	Isaac	Male resident
2	Koitee	Male <i>Boma</i> secretary
3	Mengatii	Male resident
4	Selele	Male resident
5	Sipei	Women's leader
6	Ruto	Warden in ANP
7	Sitonik	Primary school teacher
8	Parpai	High school graduate
9	John	Male resident
10	Eunice	Women's Leader
11	Olempaa	Resident and ranger at ANP
12	Onetu	Male resident
13	Florence	Female teacher
14	Lekanaiya	Male resident
15	Kipaa	Former Councillor
16	Kilelu	Teacher
17	Momoi	Retiree
18	Saire	Councillor
19	Nkadayo	Resident and campsite manager
20	Raphael	Head teacher
21	June	Lodge manager
22	Matiko	Male resident
23	Sakuda	Ranger-Kimana Game Scouts Association
24	Ole saina	Official Kimana Game scouts Association
25	Saitoti	University student
26	Saita	Male resident
27	Jeff	Male tourist
28	Daniel	Former GRchairman
29	Letureshi	GRchairman
30	Ole Mwangi	<i>Boma</i> chairman
31	Monica	Female resident
32	Kayso	Female curio supplier
33	Metito	Male resident
34	Sangik	Female resident
35	Mekanika	Cultural <i>Boma</i> Lecturer/guide
36	Thomas	Cultural <i>Boma</i> Lecturer/guide
37	Steve	Male tourist
38	Harry	Tour guide
39	Jedidah	Female resident
40	Oletipis	Male resident
41	Lemusa	Student
42	Josephine	Curio Supplier
43	Nanginy	Female resident
44	William	Male resident
45	Ntoinye	Elder
46	Jane	Female resident

Appendix 2 ASAA/NZ - Ethics Review



Date: 8 May, 2003

Purpose: To discuss procedural and ethical concerns that may be encountered as part of research for a PhD thesis.

Proposed Title: Maasai Perspectives of the Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in Kenya.

I am aware and do recognise that there are many and diverse competing interests in Maasai tourism especially between government, NGOs, national and international tourism stake holders and the Maasai, and within various local groups.

I am also aware of political influence on the inter-ethnic relations between my Gusii community and the Maasai.

I will endeavour not only to be sensitive to above issues but will also explain and emphasize to the participants in an honest way my role as non-partisan academic researcher.

It was agreed that:

- The proposed research will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Ethics guidelines of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/ New Zealand.
- A letter outlining the purpose of this research with an invitation to participate will be forwarded to those participants giving life histories, participating in Focus Group Discussions and interviews.
- Informed written consent will be obtained from participants before commencement.
- Participants will be able to withdraw without any cause at any time
- Participants privacy and confidentiality will be endeavoured to be maintained however cannot always be guaranteed. To assist with this, participant names and addresses will not be recorded, instead a numbered coding system will be used
- All data used such as tapes and transcripts will be held securely
- The researcher reserves the right to retain data for future research; should this information be used in the future, participant privacy and confidentiality will be carried out in accordance with point number five
- This thesis is for private and academic use only. All participants will be entitled to a completed copy of the thesis if they choose
- At all times the integrity of participants and the university will be maintained.
- Should problematic ethical issues arise in the course of the research; the researcher will discuss them with the Ethics Review Panel in order to get guidance and feedback.

Mr. Tom Ondichó 9-5-2003

Dr. Jeff Sluka 13/5/2003

Prof. John Overton 13/5/03

Prof. Jeff Sissons 13/5/03

Appendix 3 Massey University Ethics Approval



Massey University

10 December 2004

Tom Ondicho
Achilles Court Hostel
42 Achilles Court
PALMERSTON NORTH

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
(ETHICS & EQUITY)
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North
New Zealand
T 04 350 2503
F 04 350 3622
tom.ondicho@massey.ac.nz
www.massey.ac.nz

Dear Tom

Re: Maasai perspectives of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Kenya

Thank you for the Low Risk Notification that was received on 7 December 2004.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Massey University Human Ethics Committee Annual Report.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by a campus human ethics committee.

Please ensure that the following statement is used on Information Sheets:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research."

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority, or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to a Campus Human Ethics committee. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair
Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity)

cc Dr Keith Ridler, Dr Regina Scheyvens & Prof John Overton
School of People, Environment and Planning
PN331

Professor Michael Roche
School of People, Environment and Planning, PN331

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council



Appendix 5 Research Authorization Letter

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "Education", Nairobi
Telephone: Nairobi 394411
When replying please quote
Ref. No. MOEST LB/G01/33C 124/2
and date



KOGOD HOUSE "B"
HARAMBEE AVENUE
P.O. BOX 30040-00100
NAIROBI

23rd June 2004

Tom Gesore Ondicho
P.O. BOX 30197
NAIROBI

DC noted

Dear Sir

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION

Please refer to your application for authority to conduct research on 'Maasai perspective of Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in Kenya A case study in Kajiado District'. I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorised to conduct research in Kajiado District, for a period ending 31st May, 2004.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer Kajiado District before embarking on your research project you are further advised to avail two copies of your research report to this Office upon completion of your research project.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]
A. G. KAARIA
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY/EDUCATION

CC
The District Commissioner
Kajiado

The District Education Officer
Kajiado

Noted
[Signature]
DEO Kajiado
13/6/04
D.E.O. KAJIADO

Noted
[Signature]
DEPUTY DISTRICT EDUCATION
OFFICER
LOITOKITOK SUB-DISTRICT.
21/02/2005

Noted
[Signature]
15/11/2003
DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER
Kajiado District

Appendix 6 Research Permit

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
 Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss TOM GESORA ONDICHO
 of (Address) UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. BOX 30197, NAIROBI
 has been permitted to conduct research in _____
 _____ Location,
KAJIADO District,
RIFT VALLEY Province,
 on the topic MAASAI PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIO-
-CULTURAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN KENYA:
A CASE STUDY IN KAJIADO - DISTRICT

 for a period ending 31st May, 19 2004

PAGE 3

Research permit No. MOEST 13/001/33C 124
 Date of issue 23rd June, 2003
 Fee received Shs. 1,000



Applicant's Signature _____
 For: A. C. KAARIA
Permanent Secretary,
Office of the President,
EDUCATION
 For PERMANENT SECRETARY,
 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
 Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss TOM GESHORA
ONDICHO
 of (Address) P.O. BOX 30197
NAIROBI
 has been permitted to conduct research in _____
 _____ Location,
KAJIADO District,
RIFT VALLEY Province,
 on the topic MAASAI PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIO-
CULTURAL IMPACTS OF TOURIM IN KENYA

 for a period ending 30 May, 20 05

PAGE 3

Research Permit No. MOEST 13/001/33C 124
 Date of issue 7th June, 2004
 Fee received Shs. 500



Applicant's Signature _____
 For: A. C. KAARIA
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education,
Science and Technology
 For PERMANENT SECRETARY,
 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Appendix 7 Interview Guides

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MAASAI RESPONDENTS

1. How many members are there in your group ranch?
2. What are the most important resources in your group ranch?
3. How are members of your group ranch involved in wildlife management in the park and community
4. Who in the community is involved in conservation and tourism development?
5. Does wildlife and tourism benefit you directly? If yes, how
6. What benefits has your group ranch obtained from the park and tourism?
7. What tourism related activities are members of your community undertaking and what benefits do they realise from those activities
8. Who are the major actors in the management of the park and community sanctuary
9. What is the relationship between your community and the park like? Any challenges and concerns
10. What is your role in community based conservation and tourism development
11. What challenges have been faced with regard to participation in conservation, tourism development, benefit sharing, land rights, and access to resources especially pasture and water?
12. How does the community feel about wildlife now compared to the past
13. What problems has tourism posed to the community in general?
14. How has the community tried to resolve these problems
15. What future plans does your group have for tourism, conservation and local development?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NON-MAASAI RESPONDENTS

1. What are the specific objectives of local participation in community-based wildlife management and tourism development?
2. What strategies have been put in place to encourage local participation in conservation and natural resource management, tourism development, and benefit sharing?
3. What are the challenges does your organisation face from the local communities
4. How does the park or lodge benefit the local people
5. What benefits have been realised in terms of tourism revenue, employment and community development
6. What mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that the local people are enjoying the benefits from tourism and conservation
7. What are the challenges that have been faced with regard to local participation in tourism development and conservation and how have they been dealt with
8. What are the major bottlenecks that hinder local participation in tourism development
9. What opportunities exist for the local people in conservation and tourism and how can they realise them

10. What future plans exist for tourism development in Amboseli?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Community tourism benefits realised from tourism both in the park and locally owned tourism ventures
2. Community's involvement in tourism management- decision making, planning and benefit sharing
3. Local response to community based conservation and tourism ventures/projects
4. Challenges posed by community tourism to local people and development
5. Effects of exclusion from critical tourism and livelihood resources including land, pasture and water
6. Possible solutions to challenges identified above
7. Other relevant issues and conclusions