Learning to be indigenous or being taught to be Kenyan: The ethnography of teaching art and material culture in Kenya

by

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Canadä

On art and material culture, anthropology and education

Swahili saying that primary school children learn.

Usiache mbachao kwa mswala upitao.

Do not throw away your old praying mat because you have a new one.

(One need not abandon old friendships when one finds new friends)

(Maryam Abudu and Baruwa Abdalla in Methali za Kiswahili 3)

Kikuyu proverb often told to children.

Kinya kiri itina niko kiigaga.

A calabash that has got a bottom can stand upright.

(A person with a will can do what he/she wants to).

(G.Barra in 1,000 Kikuyu Proverbs)

Maasai children's riddle

Ejo rrokirrok eito idia alo nejo mukumuk eitu ena ?

Il kirkuto le nkare.

What makes loud noise when going in one direction, but none as it returns?

The calabash

(When empty calabashes are taken to the river they rattle as they move along and as they hit each other. On the way back from the river they are full of water and thus do not move so much and make noise when touching each other.)

(Naomi Kipury in Oral Literature of the Maasai)

Abstract

Several independent African states promote teaching of a national culture as one culture and learning about ethnic cultures as separate and distinct aspects of other cultures of the nation. This is often articulated in development philosophies and political discourses that complement both being modern and being ethnic with almost equal emphasis. This dissertation is about learning African culture in the school system in Kenya.

The dissertation reviews the historical development of learning about culture in Kenya and particularly about material culture and the arts from pre-Christian and colonial times to post independence. This last period covers the presidencies of Jomo Kenyatta (1963 - 1978) and Daniel arap Moi (1978 - 1996). Exemplification of this learning is investigated first at the general national level and then at three particular regions comprising an all Christian, third and fourth generation school-going agriculturist community, a first generation school-going pastoralist nomadic community and a multi-ethnic urban community. In the three regions, the study examines the present situation as it is in the classroom at the level of contact between the art teacher and the pupil in primary schools during the formative years of children's growth. This also spans the period described as the golden years of children's art.

Through qualitative and quantitative material and analyses of political discourses and educational and cultural policy documents. The thesis demonstrates that the art and craft curriculum follows the presidential philosophy of Nyayoism. In theory this philosophy promotes modernization and maintenance of indigenous traditions but in practice leans towards modernization, in actual terms, Europeanization. Modernization is attempting to create one Kenyan national culture using schools as a vehicle.

The research demonstrates how the present national cultural heritage curriculum focusing on material culture is not likely to be an effective arts educational tool and a medium for transmission of indigenous aesthetic knowledge in three school sites representing three broad cultures and traditions of Kenya i.e. agriculturist, pastoralist and multi-ethnic urban.

Résumé

Apprendre à être autochtone ou apprendre à être kenyan : l'ethnographie de
l'enseignement des arts et de la culture des objets au Kenya.

par Somjee Rajan

De nombreux états africains indépendants favorisent l'enseignement d'une culture nationale comme étant une seule culture et l'étude des cultures ethniques comme étant des éléments séparés et distincts de la nation. Ceci est souvent expliqué dans les philosophies de développement et des discours politiques qui complémentent à la fois le fait d'être moderne et celui d'être ethnique avec presque autant de poids. Cette dissertation traite de l'enseignement de la culture africaine dans le système scolaire kenyan.

La dissertation examine le developpement historique de l'enseignement culturel au Kenya et en particulier l'enseignement de la culture des objets et des arts depuis les temps pré-chrétiens et coloniaux jusqu'aux années qui ont suivi l'indépendance, ce qui inclut les présidences de Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978) et Daniel Arap Moi (1978-1996). Ceci est, d'abord, illustré sur un plan national général, puis à partir de trois régions particulières composées de la troisième et quatrième génération scolarisée d'une communauté chrétienne, de la première génération scolarisée d'une communauté nomade pastorale, et d'une communauté urbaine pluri-ethnique. Dans les trois régions, l'étude porte sur la situation telle qu'elle se présente dans la salle de classe, au niveau du contact entre le professeur d'art et l'élève dans les écoles primaires durant les années formatrices de la croissance des enfants, années perçues comme étant les années d'or de l'art infantile.

Au travers de documents qualitatifs et quantitatifs, d'analyses de discours politiques et de documents sur la politique menée dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la culture, on peut démontrer que le curriculum pour les arts et les travaux manuels suit la philosophie présidentielle du 'Nyayoisme' qui, en théorie, promouvoit la modernisation et la préservation des traditions autochtones. En pratique, cette philosophie tend vers une modernisation qui, en fait, est l'européanisation. Moderniser, c'est tenter de créer *une* culture nationale kenyane en utilisant les écoles pour véhiculer cette idée.

Cette recherche montre comment le curriculum national actuel pour le patrimoine culturel qui porte sur la culture des objets a peu de chances d'être, dans le domaine de l'art, un outil pédagogique efficace ou un moyen pour la transmission du savoir esthétique indigène dans ces trois lieux scolaires qui rassemblent les trois grandes cultures et traditions de Kenya : les agriculteurs, les bergers et les citadins d'ethnies diverses.

My interest in art and anthropology continued to develop and consequently I spent my post graduate fellowships in Europe studying art and design in academies as well as in museums of ethnography. From 1976 onwards I worked in the material culture section of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi. During this time I had the opportunity to live among many ethnic groups of Kenya and to collect, document and study their art and artefacts. This led to the development of a teaching collection of material culture at the University of Nairobi which I later used to design and justify material culture curricula for schools and universities as a significant area in the study of Art and Anthropology. In 1985 material culture of Kenya was accepted into the curricula by the Ministry of Education. That was art, material culture and education as I knew in my childhood.

I believed then that since material culture was one of the living traditions of Kenya, it would be natural to bring the study of indigenous art and design into the classrooms. I also felt that since material culture was rooted in the aesthetic traditions and in the environmental and cultural knowledge of indigenous materials, skills and values, it would generate and sustain the continuity of this special tradition of creating and appreciating objects of function and beauty. Modern educational institutions, no doubt, would enhance this process. In my opinion education in the arts would further reflect and support living art traditions and realize post-independence visions of creating a national art curriculum that would bring to a close the otherwise unending quest for a national cultural identity. However, ten years after the introduction of material culture into the art syllabus, this did not happen, and in fact contradictions developed among what was viewed as modern, national and indigenous heritage. This dissertation developed as a result of my search to understand what was being taught as modern, national and indigenous and what was taught as art education in Kenya. In this study I attempted to understand how art and indigenous art traditions are transmitted in modern institutions and thus also to learn about the dynamics of the teaching culture in Africa.

I was fortunate to have four supervisors on my Ph.D. committee who are well known in the fields of education in the developing world, teaching of art and aesthetics, curriculum and second language studies, and anthropology in an East African context. I have learned immensely from Professor Thomas Eisemon, Professor John Galaty, Professor Boyd White and Professor Mary Maquire. They guided me and shared their scholarship to enrich my knowledge and skills. They even shared their unpublished and current research in order to better my research. Consequently, I was able to shape this dissertation by bringing together learnings of my four supervisors from four western academic traditions in education, school ethnography, art and anthropology. My supervisors were supportive of my academic interests and they gave me moral support during the lengthy and sometimes difficult times that I have had trying to meet the challenge of doing a Ph D. in North America. I especially remember their support when I almost lost my fellowship due to communication problems in 1991.

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To Boyd White and Marilyn Lajeunesse I would like to say special thank you for inviting me to their house whenever I came to Montreal on my Ph.D. work, for the use of their computer and for their hospitality. Without their support I would have found it difficult to spend extra time at McGill and reach a qualitative standard of this dissertation.

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My thoughts are with my mother, Mariambai, Nizar, Laila, Rifaat and Sadiq for the time that we could not spend together. Finally, I would like to thank my wife Zera and my children Ardhiat, Ummat and Jasiriat Mariam for their patience for they could not do computer art and play games until I finished the 'dissertation' which has become a household word not much appreciated and often used synonymously with the word 'father'. And for their tolerance, for they could not always do what children like to do because I was working on this 'dissertation' that ironically is about children. I hope this research will change education in the arts for children of Africa who share a heritage and through art and play learn to be who they are as adults.

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Introduction

The Setting, Problem and Study

Contemporary Kenya provides a good example of how educational policies relating to the teaching of culture are influenced by ethnicity and nationhood; these in turn are mediated through political discourses of colonialism, nationalism and modernization. The discourses are performed within metaphors of African development. African culture is valorized and praised, and presented as antagonistic to modernization. Simultaneously, development ideologies foster modernization of life–styles and deplore loss of traditional culture as a loss of cultural identity in overlapping statements. In Kenya, the political discourses negotiate many traditional cultural images within the *maendeleo* (Kiswahili – going forward or development) ideology in which education is the key vehicle of transformation as well as maintenance of indigenous culture. But teaching indigenous culture in ways that are consistent with principles of modern pedagogy, as well as state ideology, creates tension that is perhaps most apparent in art and craft lessons. This dissertation investigates the conditions that have led to this situation and how learning takes place in the art room.

Political discourses that overlap the indigenous and modern images of culture are apparent in President Moi's philosophy of *Nyayoism.*[8] The president presents *Nyayoism* as an ideology indigenous to African society and as an approopriate basis for building a modern political structure in Kenya.[1]

Nyayoism attempts to legitimize the role of modern political institutions in the 'trans–tribal management' of a nation in African philosophy. Indigenous philosophy is evoked in modern political discourse and signified in the objects of traditional material culture such as the elder's club that the President ceremoniously bears in staged performances and by which he commandeers ethnic authority and loyalties. In the capital city's parks, there are monuments celebrating *Nyayoism* symbolized by a gigantic clenched fist of the President holding an elder's club over the snows of Mt. Kenya. The mountain is a sacred symbol in African traditional beliefs and also a symbol of nationhood.

In the same discourse of *Nyayoism*, yet another voice emerges. Christian philosophy is evoked as much as African philosophy in the presidential speeches: "*Nyayoism* (by propounding and advocating peace, love and unity) singularly embeds the kernel of the principles of Christian life into the national philosophy" (Moi: 1986). In the new 8-4-4 education system, religious education has been strengthened in schools and each school is encouraged to have a choir that performs during school ceremonies. Modernity has two facets, secular and sacred, both of which have African values infused into them.

In political discourse African values, morals and beliefs are valorized while in schools Christianity, Islam and other non-indigenous religions are taught. In primary schools, African traditional belief systems are taught as pre-Christian customs in CRE (Christian Religious Education) syllabus while stories of origins of ethnic groups are learned under history in the GHC (Geography, History and Civics) course. Among the objectives of Christian religious education are:

> That the children at the end of Primary School Course will know the fundamentals of their faith as laid down in holy scriptures and traditions of their community and recognize and appreciate that traditional religion is an integral part of Kenya's cultural heritage and are able to operate within a religious framework for more development. (Syllabuses for Kenya Primary School, Volume 1, 1991, p. 17).

These are in agreement with the objectives stated in the GHC (Geography History Civics) syllabus:

- Identify and preserve valuable cultural artifacts and other aspects of culture.
- Tell stories of origins, myths and legends.
- Understand cultural norms in traditional societies and use this knowledge to adapt to changing society.

Significantly, African indigenous beliefs, legends and myths of creation are taught as history in the GHC syllabus, and as pre-Christian beliefs that integrate into a modern Christian tradition in the CRE (Christian Religious Education) syllabus. Other religions – Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism are taught but they do not make the mainstream, and their syllabi do not incorporate the projected religious values given by *Nyayo* philosophy, the presidential and state ideology. African indigenous religions are not taught as a subject.

Thus Christian Religious Education and GHC (Geography History Civics) curricula lay down the basis of a philosophy of education within the context of development. The objectives of the curricula explain that traditions have to be preserved within modernity and modernity, defined through Christianity and development, will be managed by indigenous traditions. This is affirmed by the President's philosophy. In some aspects the school scene today is reminiscent of pre–independence mission schools and the colonial discourse that the African had to be developed along Christian principles (Beecher Report: 1949). Nonetheless, children are also taught that the development ideology is rooted in pre-Christian traditions.

While the agriculturists have been Christians and going to school for four or more generations, the pastoralists have retained major institutions and aspects of their indigenous culture and many do not attend school. After thirty years of independence, no school text exists for teaching of African morals and values, an African world view that would explain the significance of heritage subjects within the context of development. Moreover, these heritage subjects are taught in English. Mastering English becomes the primary task in schools. Ethnic languages are taught in lower primary classes, Kiswahili is taught up to secondary level but is not the medium of instruction. English is the medium of instruction and as a subject it has the maximum classroom time. Thus, English, a foreign language, mediates perception of indigenous culture and material culture by school children and shapes development of notions of aesthetics by recontextualizing objects and concepts. In one of his discourses on *Nyayoism*, President Moi explains the role of African languages as "carriers of indigenous wisdom".

Again such statements give modernizing objectives to the transmission of cultural heritage. These statements also exemplify the basis of educational philosophy of the new 8-4-4 education system which is presented as being founded on the *Nyayo* philosophy and having its roots in indigenous culture. In practice, the new education system reveals simultaneous disassembling and maintenance of the educational traditions inherited from the colonial period. The aim of new cultural education was political for it intended to foster national unity. Meanwhile vocational education was retained from the colonial heritage for economic reasons as the training would provide employable skills. This has been articulated by the President and often retold by educationalists at the Kenya Institute of Education and the Ministry of Education:

> The dual aims of the 8-4-4 system of education are explained as fostering 'national unity and respect for Kenya's rich cultural heritage, by enabling Kenyans to learn more about one another's beliefs and life-styles and also to impart employable, technical and scientific knowledge at each stage, by promoting technical and vocational education.' (Moi: 1986, p. 42).

The voice of the president is the voice of authority, the voice of *mwalimu*, the teacher. The teacher symbolizes knowledge, wisdom as well as leadership and development. Praises are sung of Mwalimu Rais Moi (Teacher President Moi) who is celebrated on national days during public rallies and in the media. One example is illustrated by the following first two verses in a poem entitled Twakufuata (We follow you) from the collection Wasifu wa Moi (Praise Poems of Moi written in classical Kiswahili verse):

Twakufuata

We will follow you by Peter Mcharia Mwangi.

Mzee alipohama, dunia akaitoka,	When the elder (Jomo Kenyatta) moved away, left the world
Hakutoacha yatima, ovyo tukihangaika	He did not leave us orphaned, helpless searching
Mwalimu alisimama, hatamu akazishika,	The teacher took over, he held the bridle,
Mpendwa Rais Moi, Mwalimu twakufuata.	Beloved President, we follow you Teacher.
Tunakukubali umma, imani twakutunuka,	The people accept you, we put trust in you
Waziwazi tunasema, kakuchagua Rabuka,	We say openly that are chosen by God
Letu ni kukuegema, ongozi kukutwika,	Our (duty) is to be by your side, leadership you were bestowed upon
Mpendwa Rais Moi, Mwalimu twakufuata.	Beloved President, we follow you Teacher.

(Dumila: 1978, p.14)

It is the art and craft syllabus that best acknowledges the President's authority in education through his voice as the teacher because it is the only subject in the curriculum that is both responsible for imparting positive attitudes towards indigenous cultures and creating technical skills for self reliance through schooling.

There is no doubt that the 8-4-4 system has been designed because of the high rate of unemployment of the school leavers, especially in the rural areas. The vocationalization of primary education, which includes revitalisation of art and craft instruction, is aimed to retain the population in the rural areas. This was precisely the major African criticism of the Beecher Education Report of 1949 and of colonial educational policy in general (Sheffield: 1973).[2]

The response to Beecher's report was the Ominde Report of 1964 which was the first post independence educational inquiry into colonial educational policy. Dr. Kiano, the first Minister of Education of independent Kenya, spoke for many when he hoped "that the Beecher Report is dead and with that we will start a new phase in our educational system" '(Sheffield: 1973, p. 68). The Ominde Report places little importance on vocational subjects. Instead, it stresses academic instruction in primary schools to prepare a minority of youth for further education to increase the country's pool of highly skilled manpower. After almost a quarter of a century, the Kamunge Report (1988) emphasized practical subjects for some of the same reasons as those given by Beecher in his report of almost forty years ago. However, today the teaching of art and craft is viewed as a practical subject imparting employable skills as well as cultural heritage.

1 Cultural preservation and national development

The discourse of African nationalism which was often articulated by the first presidents of the independent states made references to preservation and utilization of African culture for purposes of national development. Later, in 1972 the first great Pan-African Cultural Festival in Lagos, Nigeria, was an exposition of this expectation brought together in staged performances. The artists challenged the white colonial interpretation of African culture and sought to foster African dignity, placing primary importance on Africanizing the content of school instruction. This position was supported in Kenya's Second Development Plan[3] and a reference was made to Material Culture in this plan :

> Many such objects are now being replaced by imported or locally manufactured items which do not express the traditions, values and beliefs of the people. Their preservation at this time along with the records of their meaning forms an important source of historical and technological information. (Development Plan 1970 - 1974, p. 546).

We note that the emphasis was on cultural preservation. *Nyayoism* changed preservation to conservation. This twist in terminology of the rhetoric of culture and development signifies a selective approach to maintenance of cultural heritage:

> ... the aim is not preservation but conservation. Properly managed and protected, therefore, a policy of cultural conservation will lead to progressive elimination of outmoded and insupportable aspects of our varied socio-culture. (Moi: 1986, p. 38).

Thus, cultural conservation becomes a process of selection of those aspects of African culture that would support modern institutions within the frame of *maendeleo* and nationalism. In other words, cultural instructions become an instrument for accommodating modernization, drawing upon only those elements of indigenous culture that would be congruent with state ideology.

However, apart from a list of banned literature, there is no other official guidance on what is acceptable and not acceptable cultural property, African or non–African. Nevertheless, the lack of specificity causes insecurity and tensions for teachers. Referring to the problems of education in Maasailand in post independent Kenya, a Maasai teacher writes:

> ... I constantly asked myself why education is such a problem for the pastoral societies of Kenya. As might be expected, I, tended to look at the problem from my employers perspectives. Schooling was used to arouse national loyalty by inculcating a language and value system which students did not share with their parents. Soon I realized that the problem of education in a new nation–state with development aspirations is political and a matter with important social and cultural implications. (Sena: 1986, p. vi).

Sarone Ole Sena resolved the conflict at a personal level but it still remains at the level of teaching for thousands of other teachers.

The document called National Goals of Education poses this conflict as a compromise. This is worded in the syllabus which is written in the characteristic style of political hectoring, telling what the teachers 'must' do, and 'should' do but how it could be done is not explained. The National Syllabus dictates that :

> Education in Kenya must prepare children for those changes in attitudes and relationships which are necessary for the smooth progress of a rapidly developing modern economy. There is bound to be a silent social revolution following in the wake of rapid modernization. Education should assist our youth to adapt to this change.
>
> However, adaptability to change cannot be interpreted to mean a passive undiscriminating acceptance of all change.
>
> What is meant is the development in the country's youth of an inquiring attitude towards traditionally established values. The children should be able to blend the best of the traditional values with the changed requirements that must follow rapid development in order that they may build a stable and modern Kenyan society.

What needs to be understood is how the teaching of culture, and of art and material culture in particular, creates a national and an ethnic identity in the classroom when the children in the classrooms in Kenya come from different cultural traditions. The next section elaborates on this concern.

2 Education through art and material culture: Fostering nationhood or ethnicity in multi-cultural Kenya?

At the all-Kenya national level, several images of material culture come to mind that link objects to ethnicities (that are closely defined by linguistic groups), customs, economic activities, social–classes, religious beliefs and political allegiances. These are observed, maintained and transmitted in varying degrees by the artefacts of function and, of ornamentation and rituals (Somjee: 1994). There are three principal African linguistic groups in Kenya: Bantu, Nilotic and Cushitic speaking peoples. (See Map 1). Most Kenyans acknowledge their ethnic identities by their languages and dialects within the three large linguistic clusters. But many speak more than one language.

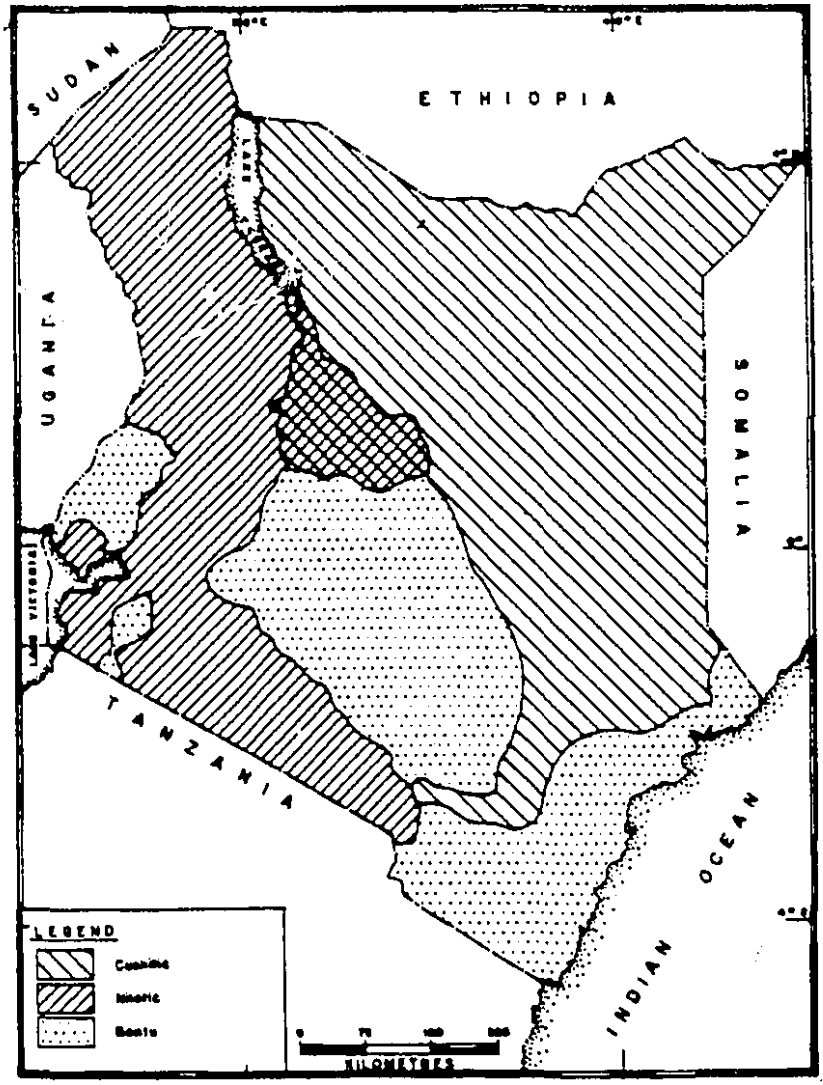
Kenyans also identify themselves with groups having common customs though their ethnicity may be different. For example, a Maasai man identifies himself with an Agikuyu male through the mutual custom of circumcision during the initiation rites, although the Maasai are Nilotic and the Agikuyu are Bantu and they have different traditions of material culture. Both the Maasai and the Agikuyu also describe their cultural differences with the Luo (Nilotic) through customs such as that of circumcision. [4]

The language, material culture and customs-based identities overlap identities based on economic activities. The two main ethno–economic groups in Kenya are agriculturists and pastoralists. But there are exceptions such as the Pokot (Nilotic). One group of the Pokot is agriculturist and the other is pastoralist. Interestingly their material culture is almost the same. On the other hand the Iteso and Turkana who share the same linguistic inheritance have distinct material culture traditions. The former are agriculturists and the latter are pastoralists. This is reflected in how their material culture has been adapted to their separate activities. For example, the Iteso knife *emulo* and the Turkana knife *egolu* have the same origin but one has been modified to become a millet knife and the other to be a meat knife. Both the knives are 'worn' on the finger and held in the palm (Somjee: 1994, p. 30).

Living among the agriculturists and pastoralists or between them are groups of hunter gatherers or former hunter gatherers such as the Okiek among the Maasai of Narok District. The fisher people, the El Molo, live among the Turkana in Northern Kenya. Several groups also practice mixed economies: the Pokomo of the Tana River and the Luo on the shores of Lake Victoria are agriculturists and fisher people; the Turkana are pastoralists, gatherers and fisher people. The District Map of Kenya generally follows ethnic boundaries (See Map 2).

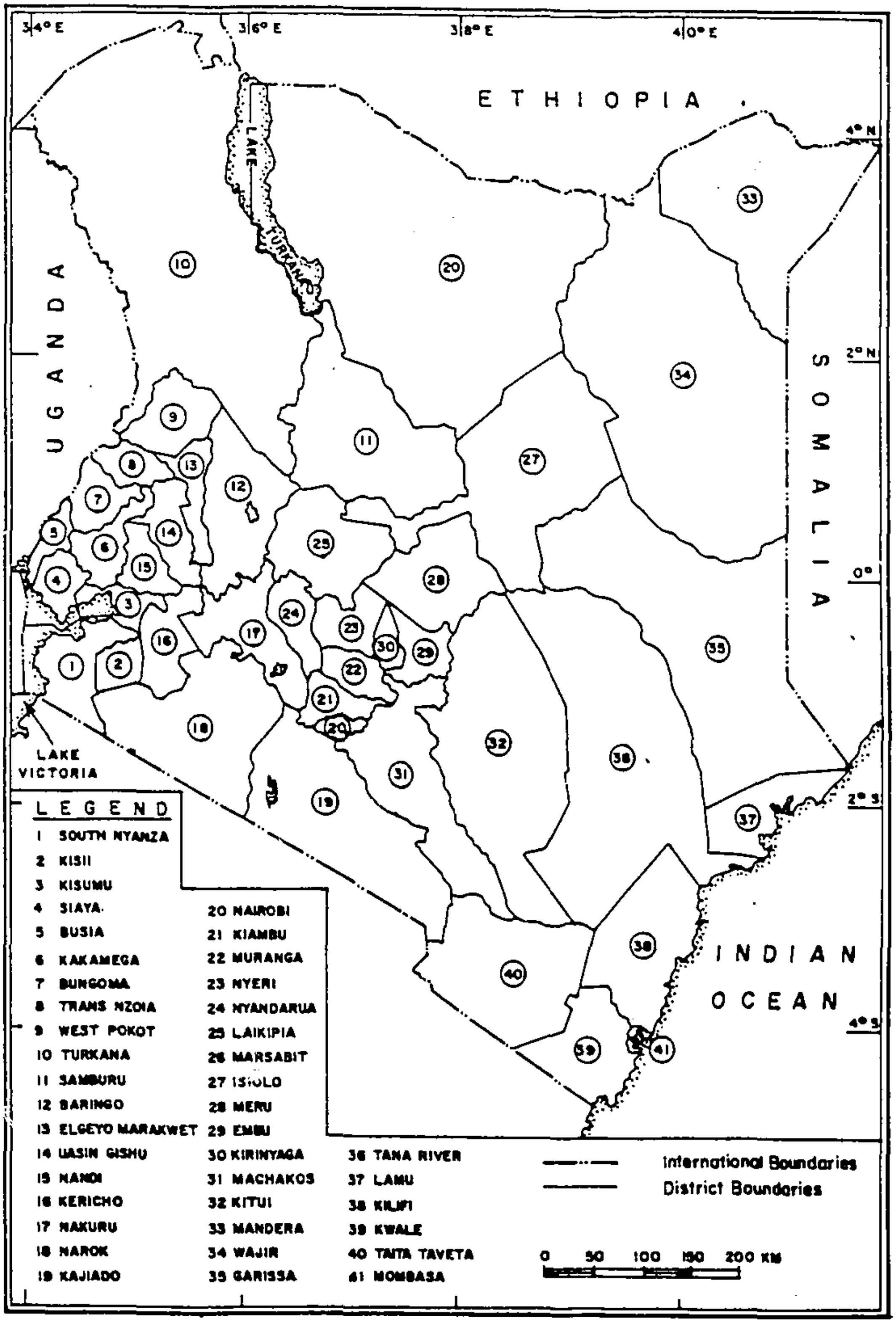
Map 1: THE THREE MAJOR LINGUISTIC GROUPS

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


SUDAN
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
INDIAN OCEAN
LAKE VICTORIA
LEGEND
Cushitic
Nilotic
Bantu
0
KILOMETRES

Map 2: DISTRICTS MAP KENYA

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


34° E
36° E
38° E
40° E
4° N
2° N
0°
2° S
4° S
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
LAKE TURKANA
LAKE VICTORIA
INDIAN OCEAN
LEGEND
1 SOUTH NYANZA
2 KISII
3 KISUMU
4 SIAYA
5 BUSIA
6 KAKAMEGA
7 BUNGOMA
8 TRANS NZOIA
9 WEST POKOT
10 TURKANA
11 SAMBURU
12 BARINGO
13 ELGEYO MARAKWET
14 UASIN GISHU
15 NANDI
16 KERICHO
17 NAKURU
18 NAROK
19 KAJIADO
20 NAIROBI
21 KIAMBU
22 MURANGA
23 NYERI
24 NYANDARUA
25 LAIKIPIA
26 MARSABIT
27 ISIOLO
28 MERU
29 EMBU
30 KIRINYAGA
31 MACHAKOS
32 KITUI
33 MANDERA
34 WAJIR
35 GARISSA
36 TANA RIVER
37 LAMU
38 KILIFI
39 KWALE
40 TAITA TAVETA
41 MOMBASA
International Boundaries
District Boundaries
0 50 100 150 200 KM

In towns, the working class communities, which generally have strong ties with their rural homes, are multi-ethnic. However, many of their cultural groups, societies and associations are based on ethnic affiliations.[5]

There are also urban multi-racial commercial and professional expatriate and Kenyan classes who support and manage sophisticated theater, art galleries and cultural centers. The literate middle and upper classes comprise a cohort of civil servants, teachers, artists, writers, clergy, intellectuals and politicians. They articulate and influence opinions on culture, education and development (economic, social and political) through fashion shows, the media, theater, church and art exhibitions. Some ethnic groups, in particular the urban Agikuyu, have influenced the development of their ethnic language and the arts through writing of novels, drama, music, dance and popular songs in the media.

Religious beliefs are especially important in defining group identities among communities of African indigenous churches like Nomino, Lego Maria, Akorino, and Kenya Israel. Each group displays its distinct religious material culture symbols, musical instruments and costumes on Sundays during open air prayer meetings. Material culture symbols are also of significance among Islamic ethnic groups of Somali, Pokomo, Burji, Borana, Swahili, Gabra, Oromo, Orma, Bajun, and among Muslims in the nine groups of the Mijikenda. For example, Somalis identify themselves as belonging to a Cushitic ethnic group, as pastoralists and as Muslims too (Schee: 1988) and their art forms and material culture distinguish their particular identities. Like other Muslims they differentiate themselves from the projected national cultural identity and the Church-inspired Presidential ideology by maintaining visible expressions of material culture such as their attire.

For example in 1991 the battle over wearing of the *hijab* (veil) to school became a national issue over what should be the school culture in Kenya. Headmistresses in a school in Nairobi and in two schools at the Islamic Coast, who abided by the rules concerning wearing of school uniforms, had expelled Muslim girls for wearing the *hijab* to class. It was only after a legal battle in the court that the girls were allowed to return to the school and have their right to wear the symbol of their identity (Daily Nation June 19,1991). Since then an increasing number of teenage Muslim girls have taken to wearing the *hijab* to school although they did not do that previously.[6]

In the pastoralist areas it is noticeable that Christians distinguish themselves from non-Christians by not wearing ornaments and clothing of their ethnic origins though Christian churches nowadays are not opposed to indigenous apparel. For example among the objectives of BTL (Bible Training and Literacy Programme of African Inland Mission) a large language research and evangelist organization, is to strengthen local elements of culture and assimilate them into Christian rituals and Christian life. Many Catholic nuns in Kenya wear *khanga* (also called *leso*)[7] during their normal work days and during the mass, some priests wear the ancient Roman ritual robes fashioned from modern African textiles.

At all levels of society, linguistic, customs-based, economic, religious and material culture, values and identity differences and similarities are promoted and contested. This is now more evident as Kenya has moved from a single–party to a multi–party system of governance. Single–party advocates infer in their political discourses that there is no single Kenyan national cultural identity, thus a multi–party state would represent multi–ethnic groups and would contribute to tribal conflicts. They argue that in the present political climate, multi-party connotes inequality, injustice and often violence. Multi–party advocates argue that ethnic differences are exploited by the government to perpetuate corruption and mismanagement of resources.

While the supporters of the single–party system justify a political one party democracy transcending multiple ethnic cultures, they also view the 8–4–4 system of education as forging all the differences into one united (ethnically) Kenyan nation that would retain its indigenous cultural roots and values within a European matrix of development.[8] The science-based subjects would equip the students with modern technological skills while the arts–based subjects would foster a new traditional African national culture.

Among the arts–based subjects are the teaching of history, African languages (in lower primary), art and craft, music and religion. Of these subjects, Christian religion, as already mentioned, is the one that clearly transmits socio–cultural values and demonstrates their validity through past and present, and for future experiences in community living.

Nyayo philosophy, which formulates a socio–political development ideology, proclaims Christianity as the national religion but contests the involvement of churches and the National Council of Christian Churches of Kenya in national and cultural policies. In the same vein, *Nyayo* philosophy legitimates itself as based on traditional African beliefs and values. In schools there is also a concerted effort by Christian churches to explain and justify cultural values and symbols in African traditions as harmonious with Christianity. But no Christian Church has ever stated that *Nyayo* philosophy is Christian-inspired or practiced as such.

The Ominde Commission of 1964 and the Kamunge Commission of 1988 viewed schools as modern institutions to promote indigenous values and nation-building instructions through a curriculum based on modern Euro-American educational theories, often using materials developed by expatriates.[9] In the 1989/90 national primary school-leaving examination, the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), some cultural heritage subjects like Kiswahili and history were made compulsory while others like music, art and craft were not. But every few years there develops a controversy as to whether art and craft should be an examinable subject in primary education. The reasons for this are obvious as only what are defined as important subjects are examinable. Partly the controversy is an inherited response to the colonial policy — sciences and other learned gentleman's arts were taught to European and Asian children while craft and technical subjects were taught to the Africans.

What is missing is an educational theory that would legitimize the teaching of the cultural heritage. This space is filled by Western educational theories emphasizing cognitive skill acquisition and conflicting political discourses on cultural maintenance and transformation.

Thus, while the objectives of the syllabus complement modern educational theories and policies derived from development plans guided by political ideologies, what remains uncertain is how these objectives are implemented at the level of actual teaching. In other words, how do lessons in art and craft create a sense of cultural identity based on the indigenous knowledge and simultaneously a sense of being modern fashioned on images of development from life styles in the industrialized world ?

I developed the methodology which is discussed in the next section, while planning and during field work to explore and understand the predicament stated in the question above. The methodology was in part a strategy designed to encounter the political situations that contextualized my research.

3 Methodology : Research contexts and methods

During the time of my field work between September 1990 to March 1993, there was a change from one-party to multi-party political system in Kenya. Ethnic differences had surfaced in violent fighting in several areas, drought and famine had set in Northern Kenya and parts of the Rift Valley Province. There were also episodes of physical violence in the cities and rural towns. (Daily Nation, 19th September, 1990). I experienced the day to day realities of the tensions between being ethnic and being Kenyan in varying degrees at the three research sites during the two and half years. Consequently, my methods were affected by the local political scenes at the community levels as well as by the discourses of the opposition parties and the government at the national level.

In academic discourses, Kenyan culture was debated as a composite of many ethnic cultures, as a part of the Pan African culture vis - a - vis the European culture, and as a one national culture segmented by class divisions. The President, representing KANU and the government, regularly repeated during his public addresses that the opposition parties stood for ethnic groupings and that to encourage opposition in Kenya was equivalent to promoting tribalism which is 'illegal'. Ethnic clashes were said to be (if not justified by the government to be) one of the manifestations of parliamentary democracy in multi-cultural Kenya.

During these times there were no efforts by the government or the opposition parties to discuss or appreciate cultural differences so as to move towards a national reconciliation. The system of education was questioned by academics and opponents of one-party rule and defended by the KANU (Kenya African National Union) government. However, the objectives of the syllabus that was intended to unite all the ethnic cultures of Kenya into one cultural group conflicted with the events.

First reports indicated that the Kalenjin, President Moi's ethnic group, in the Mount Elgon area were harassing the non-Kalenjin, mainly the Luhya settlers, to leave the area. Then they started to harass the Agikuyu in the Rift Valley and later incidents were heard of Maasai - Agikuyu conflicts in Narok District. Schools were closed down in areas of ethnic clashes. Teachers and students migrated as refugees to different regions of Kenya and to the neighbouring countries (Daily Nation, 17th August and 19th September, 1992).

Under these circumstances, my research required particularly sensitive inquiries into the national curriculum, teacher ideologies, ethnic components of classrooms and the school community, and opinions of the administrative personnel on the planning and effectiveness of the 8-4-4 system of education and its nationally-oriented policies, one of which was to eliminate tribalism.

3.1 Entering the field in three phases

In the following section, I discuss how I entered the field. The contexts of my inquiries are explained in three chronological phases (1.1 A - C) from September 1990 to March 1993 which correspond to stages of transition from one-party to an acceptance of a multi-party government, in principle if not absolutely in practice.

3.1 A Phase i. Preparation

Phase I corresponds to the period between September 1990 to August 1991. During this period the government constantly maintained that the 8-4-4 educational system was the best one in a developing country like Kenya (Daily Nation, January 9th, 1993). Thus criticism of or suggestion for improvement of the system were often construed to be anti-*Nyayo* which was also synonymous with being pro-opposition. After several attempts my proposal entitled "Assessing the Teaching of Material Culture in Kenya Schools" (Appendix I) was finally accepted and I was permitted to do fieldwork on education.

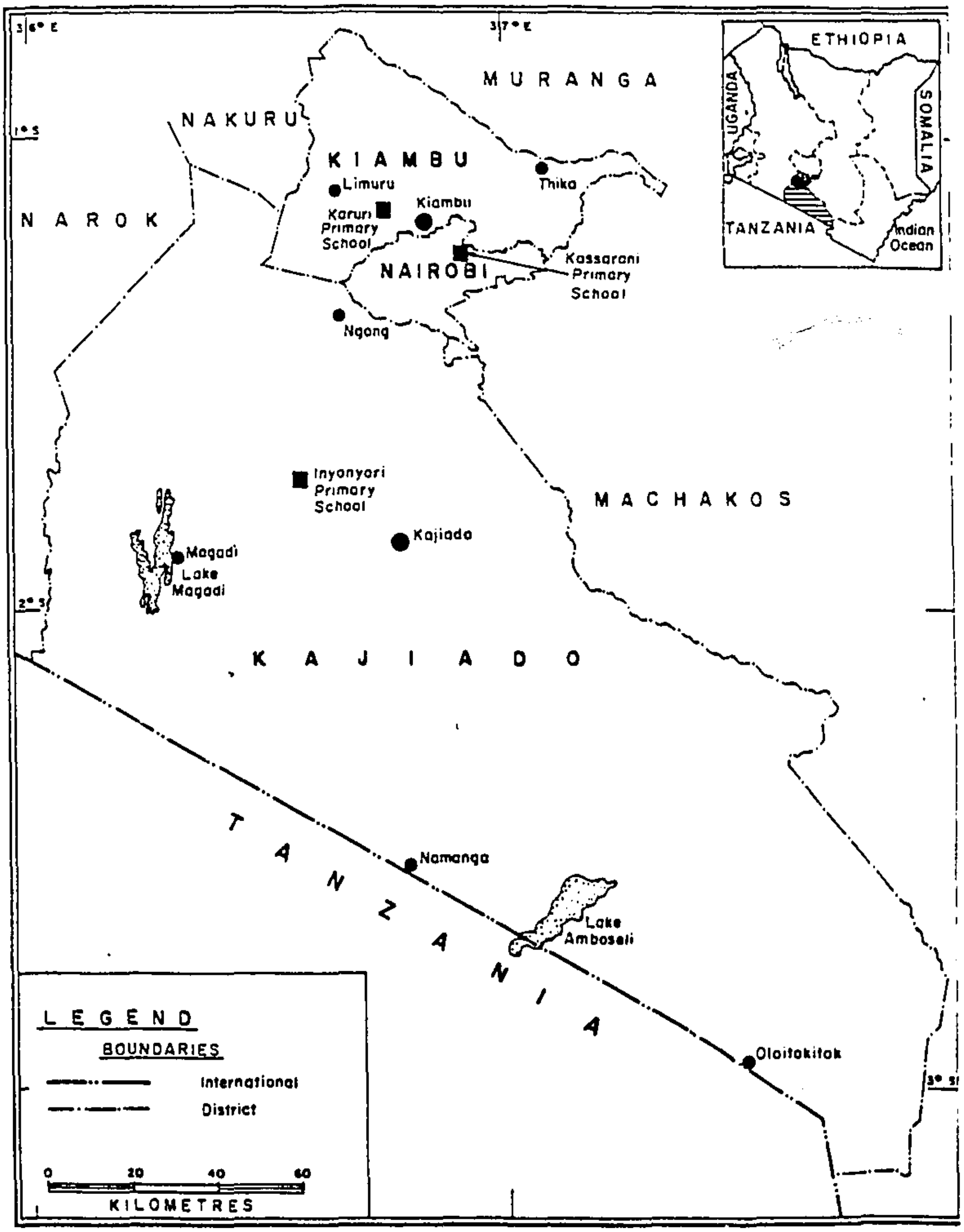
3.1B Phase ii. Identifying field sites

During Phase II (September 1991 – September 1992), I made several surveys in order to identify school sites and meet officials. I discussed a number of schools with the District Divisional Education Officers of Ngong Division in Kajiado District, Karuri Division in Kiambu District and with the Nairobi City Commission's Mathare North Division. Finally, I narrowed down to two schools in each area and began to visit the schools and talk to the staff.

My criteria for the selection of the schools varied. In Kajiado District I was particularly looking for a school where all or a large majority of the students would be from Maasai homesteads where there was a high maintenance of traditional culture, and they would be the first generation of a school-going population. In the Kiambu District I was searching for a site that comprised of children from one ethnic group, namely the Agikuyu, who had a low maintenance of traditional culture. In Nairobi I was interested in a school where there would be a good proportion of children from as many of the ethnic groups of Kenya as possible representing different levels of maintenance of traditional cultures. The schools that I finally decided to work with were Inyonyori Primary School in Kajiado District, Karuri Primary School in Kiambu District and Kassarani Primary School in the new industrial area of Nairobi.

Map 3: KAJIADO DISTRICT, KIAMBU DISTRICT AND NAIROBI

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


36° E
37° E
1° S
2° S
3° S
MURANGA
NAKURU
KIAMBU
NAROK
Limuru
Karuri Primary School
Kiambu
Thika
NAIROBI
Kassarani Primary School
Ngong
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
Indian Ocean
Inyonyori Primary School
MACHAKOS
Kajiado
Magadi
Lake Magadi
KAJIADO
TANZANIA
Namanga
Lake Amboseli
Oloitokitok
LEGEND
BOUNDARIES
International
District
0
20
40
60
KILOMETRES

The three school locations varied geographically. Inyonyori Primary School lies in a wooded grassland region that has a low population (below 100 per square kilometer) and one main tarmac road that is the artery of vehicle communication in the district. Kiambu is one of the highest densely populated areas of Kenya (over 500 per square kilometer) with a good infrastructure and once forest land that is now a vast green field of coffee and tea plantations interspersed with maize and banana groves. The population of the City of Nairobi is estimated to be over two million. Nairobi is a place of garden homes, housing estates and large sprawling slums with commercial, educational and social amenities that gives it a mark of being a distinctly class-structured city.

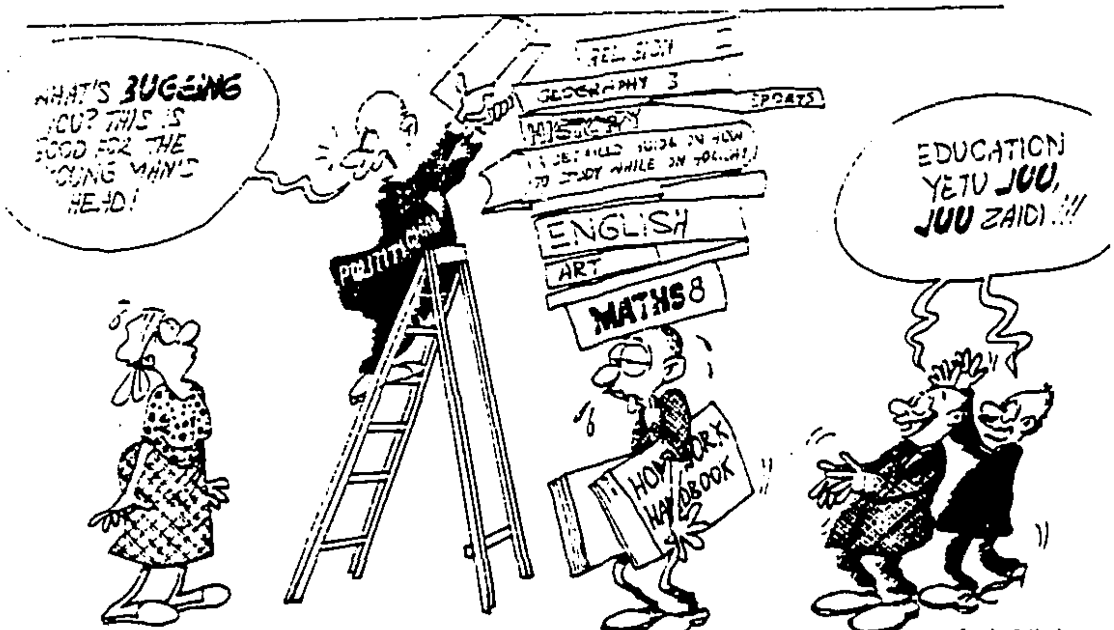
During this time it was difficult to interview teachers or head teachers at the schools. There was much suspicion because of the political situation. These were the times when there were pro–democracy demonstrations and much violence, banning of gatherings, detentions without trials and banning of publications both foreign and local. One of the major dissatisfactions expressed by the anti-government groups was how schooling was conducted in Kenya. The Minister of Education was not open to criticism, and in fact he continuously asserted that the 8-4-4 system was the best for the country as it would resolve Kenya's economic problems and create a sense of unity and patriotism.

Often I felt that the people tried to judge what party I supported as soon as we talked about the 8-4-4 system. At Kassarani Primary School I was asked to give a talk to a staff of twenty on what I was looking for. I felt that the headmaster tried to tell the staff that it was not he who asked me to come to the school and that the staff could decide whether my presence was acceptable. During my first meetings, I talked only about material culture and showed many artefacts. At Karuri Primary School I had to explain to the headmaster several times what I was doing and what I needed at the school. He asked many questions such as, " Do you think the system can change?" and, " They (Ministry of Education) have all the information, so what more do they want ?". I tried to tell him that I did not represent anyone during this research and that the information on the teaching of culture was not available.

Gradually the pro–democracy movement was gaining ground and I could feel teachers beginning to talk more openly and allow me to enter classrooms. But still I could not take pictures and audio–tape lessons and discussions. I took notes cautiously at the site of an interview, lesson or a discussion. Often I wrote out the points after leaving the site and checked them out with my research assistant.

Hura 14/3/92

COMMENT


WHAT'S BUGGING YOU? THIS IS GOOD FOR THE YOUNG MAN'S HEAD!
RELIGION
GEOGRAPHY 3
SPORTS
HISTORY
A DETAILED GUIDE ON HOW TO STUDY WHILE ON TOUR
ENGLISH
ART
MATHS 8
POLITICIAN
HOMEWORK HANDBOOK
EDUCATION YETU JUU, JUU ZAIDI..!!

The way I see it: A blunder difficult to admit.

... no matter what misgivings you may have had.

The whole process became politicised and its main objective was sidelined as a result.

In fact the 8-4-4 system has very laudable objectives like making learners more practical, enabling them to be more creative and increasing the overall stock of knowledge by offering more subjects.

All these laudable objectives could only be realised in a atmosphere conducive to free discussion and that is where the difficulties began.

Besides, there were the inherent problems Of revolutionising a system that had been in place for years.

The establishment of the system was a political decision and is in the field of politics that it will have to be resolved.

The 8-4-4 is only here with us because KANU won the last elections. It is one of the things that President Daniel arap Moi is committed to.

Given that is the situation, what can be done to ameliorate some of the worst features of the system and make it fairly acceptable to the majority?

For a start, the goals need to be re-assessed in the light of the prevailing conditions.

One of the plunks of the system, for instance. was supposedly to teach patriotism by giving learners a dose of blatantly propagandist political information.

The ruling party was given prominence, nay, the only place in the teaching of political history and civics. There was undue stress on. the role of a particular presidency in the whole political system.

No one is saying whether this is going to

...er for it failed to ...e youth.

... of the system were no less ... than the rest of the population during the last elections.

The elections showed that all those hours spent teaching the youth about the oneness of the Kenyan nation were probably wasted.

The political landscape has changed and, paradoxically, the new atmosphere may work positively for the much maligned educational system.

A free atmosphere is a mandatory if meaningful education is to take place.

It is highly unlikely that an oppressive society can accept truly creative individuals ready to challenge the assumptions of the day.

Any such attempts are met with bellicosity and heckling from sycophants who cannot, by any stretch of imagination, contribute to the development of the society.

Such groups of people are parasites because all they do is consume without in any way contributing to the replenishment of the whatever stock there is in the country.

And worse, they stifle, if not entirely kill free thinking.

With the liberalisation of society, it will certainly follow that how and what is taught will reflect the environment.

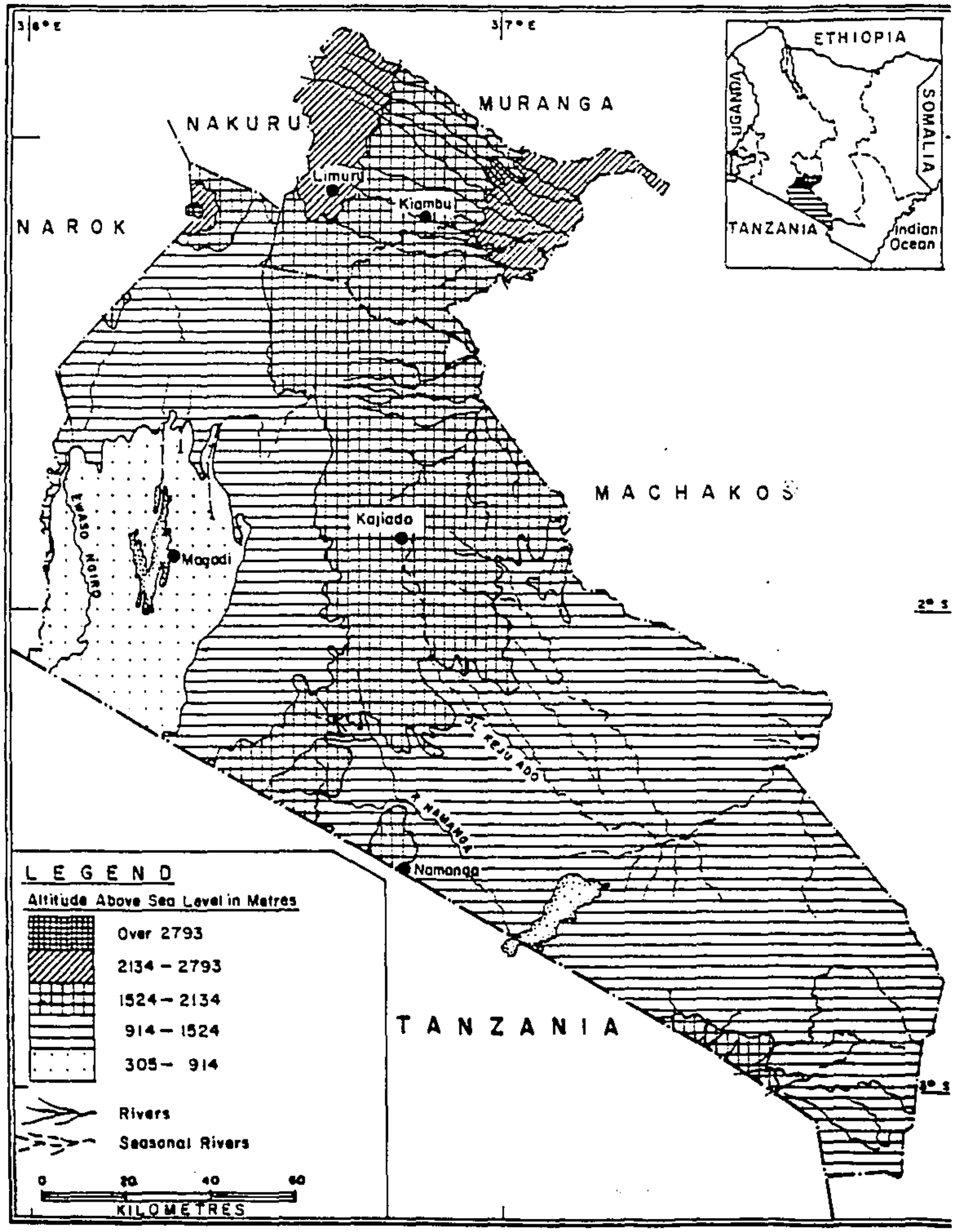
Even if there will be no changes in the structure or even content of the educational system; it is bound to produce some very good results.

These may not be the results envisaged by the framers of the system but they will be good for the society.

Given also that education is an inter-subjective process in which human beings communicate, encounter and interact with one another, it follows that freer individuals will be able to deal with one another more honestly.

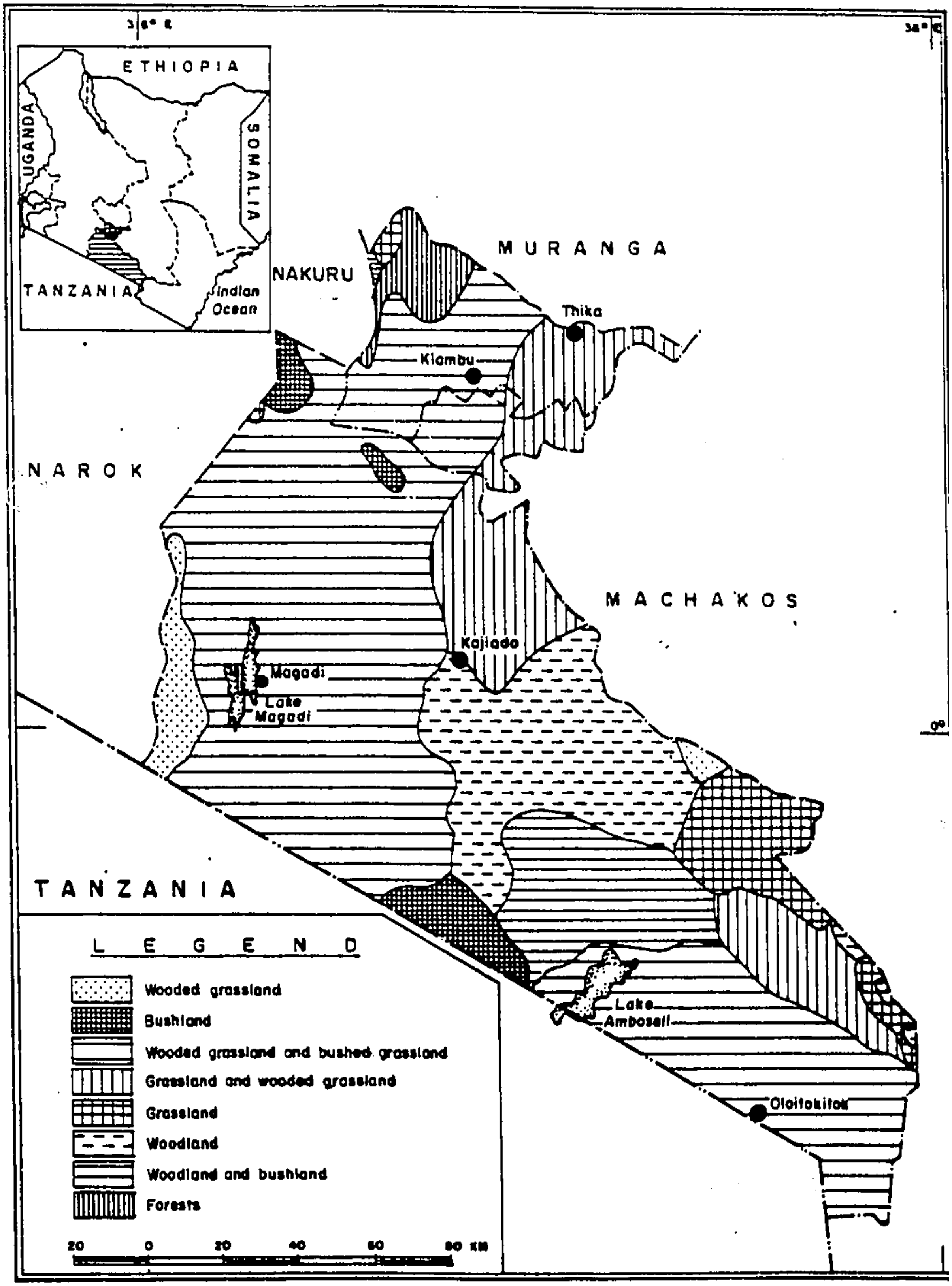
MAP 4: PHYSICAL FEATURES OF NAIROBI, KIAMBU AND KAJIADO

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


36° E
37° E
NAKURU
MURANGA
NAROK
Limuru
Kiambu
MACHAKOS
Kajiado
Magadi
EWASO NGIRO
OL KEJU ADO
NAMANGA
Namanga
2° S
3° S
TANZANIA
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
Indian Ocean
LEGEND
Altitude Above Sea Level in Metres
Over 2793
2134 – 2793
1524 – 2134
914 – 1524
305 – 914
Rivers
Seasonal Rivers
0
20
40
60
KILOMETRES

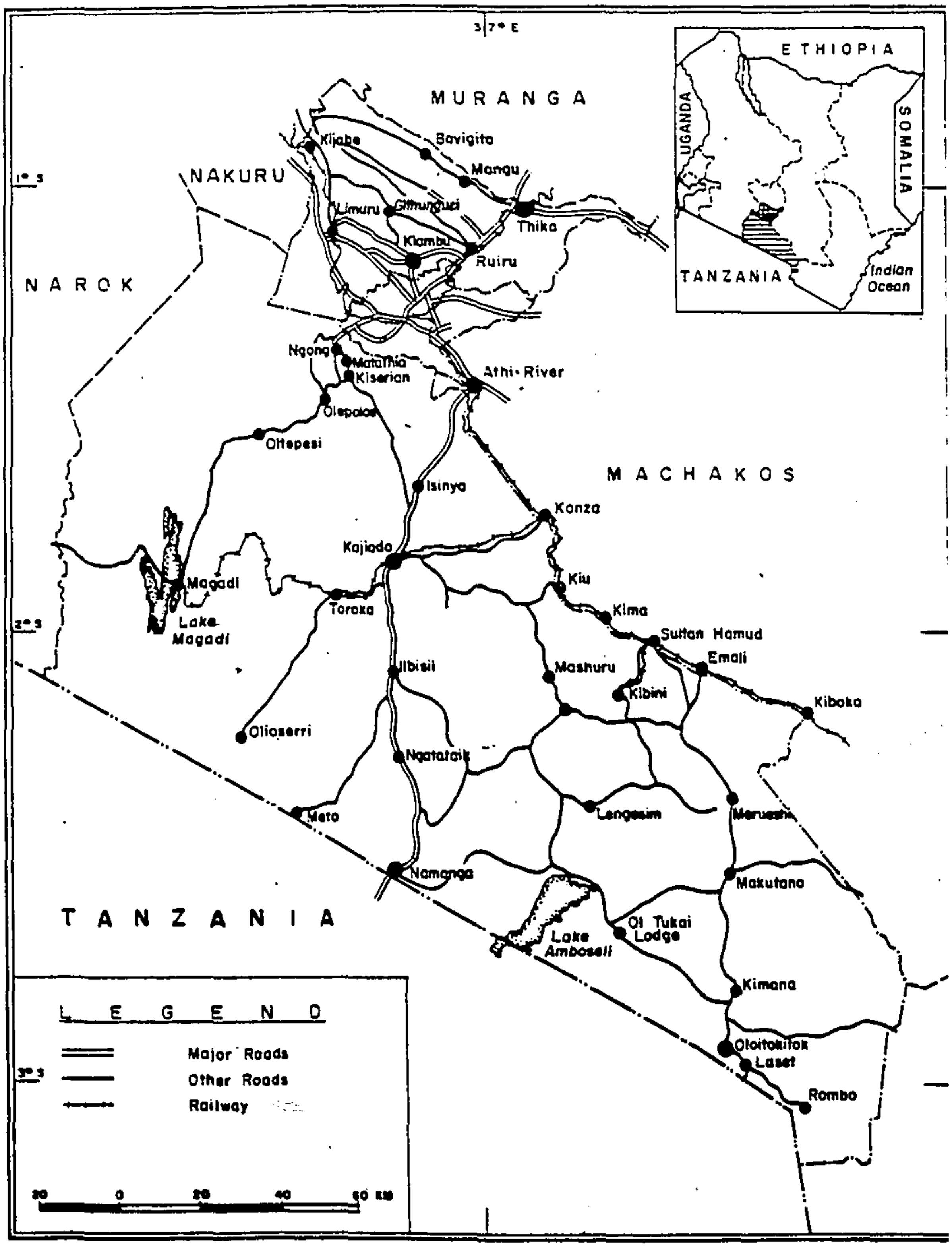
Map 5: VEGETATION OF NAIROBI, KIAMBU AND KAJIADO

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


36° E
38° E
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
Indian Ocean
NAKURU
MURANGA
Thika
Kiambu
NAROK
MACHAKOS
Kajiado
Magadi
Lake Magadi
0°
TANZANIA
Lake Amboseli
Oloitokitok
LEGEND
Wooded grassland
Bushland
Wooded grassland and bushed grassland
Grassland and wooded grassland
Grassland
Woodland
Woodland and bushland
Forests
20
0
20
40
60
80 KM

Map 6: COMMUNICATION NETWORK OF AND KAJIADO, KIAMBU AND NAIROBI

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.


37° E
1° S
2° S
3° S
MURANGA
NAKURU
NAROK
MACHAKOS
TANZANIA
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
Indian Ocean
Kijabe
Bavigito
Mangu
Limuru
Githunguci
Thika
Kiambu
Ruiru
Ngong
Matathia
Kiserian
Athi River
Olepolos
Oltepesi
Isinya
Konza
Kajiado
Magadi
Lake Magadi
Toroka
Kiu
Kima
Sultan Hamud
Emali
Mashuru
Kibini
Kiboko
Ilbisil
Olioserri
Ngatataik
Meto
Lengesim
Meruesh
Namanga
Makutano
Lake Amboseli
Ol Tukai Lodge
Kimana
Oloitokitok
Laset
Rombo
LEGEND
Major Roads
Other Roads
Railway
20
0
20
40
60 KM

3.1C Phase III. Collection of data

During Phase III (October 1992 – March 1993) I focused on collection of data. The government finally acceded to the demands of donor countries and accepted more than one party to represent the people. A clause in the Constitution of Kenya was changed to accommodate this. There was a big change in the attitude of the school staff towards me and my queries. In fact there was excitement for change for the better in the whole country. Kenya saw some of the biggest political rallies ever held after independence. These were held by the opposition parties and there was a feeling in the air that reminded many of the independence time. The Minister of Education who had hitherto defended *Nyayo* philosophy and the school curriculum based on it, joined the opposition party, Ford Kenya, that had earlier criticized schooling. In fact one election poster used by the Ford Kenya Party urged the people to change the KANU government in order to change the education system (See inserts next pages).

Now the 8–4–4 system was debated and discussed openly in the media. For the first time the Daily Nation clearly stated in its weekly education column that:

> The establishment of the system (of education) was a political decision and it is in the field of politics that it will have to be resolved. (Daily Nation, February 6, 1993).

The government responded to some of the criticism by accepting to make reforms, granting permission to selected research groups and promising to take decisions after receiving the reports. I found other researchers in the field. I was also able to take photographs and notes openly. Later, after about three months of visiting the sites, I began to videotape at the research sites as well.

But the excitement and the feeling of change lasted only a short time from November 1992 to January 1993. A few hurried changes were made in the educational curriculum within a month. Although many teachers felt that this was more of a technical matter to show that the government had acceded to the demands of the public and the opposition, than that of a fundamental change of attitude towards the 8-4-4 syllabus.

In the Art and Craft syllabus a few topics were moved from one year to another. Teachers were disappointed and in fact there was an anti-climax to all the pre-election enthusiasm that had built up. After winning the election the KANU government became resistant to practice democracy and listen to criticism. Thus the debate on the education system continued.

In the next section I explain my field methodology.

Map 7: POPULATION DENSITY OF KAJIADO, KIAMBU AND NAIROBI

Source: National Atlas of Kenya, Survey of Kenya, 1970.

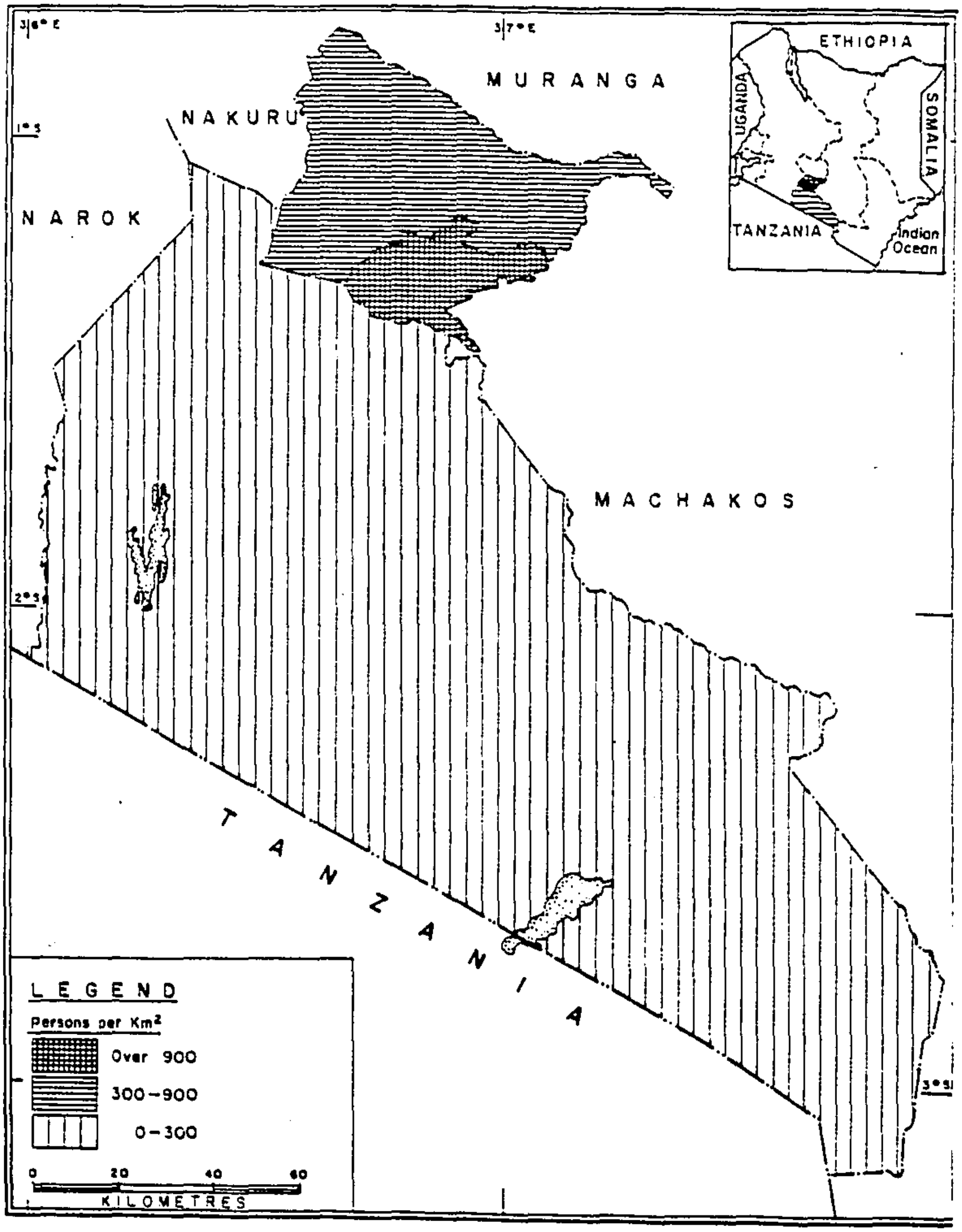
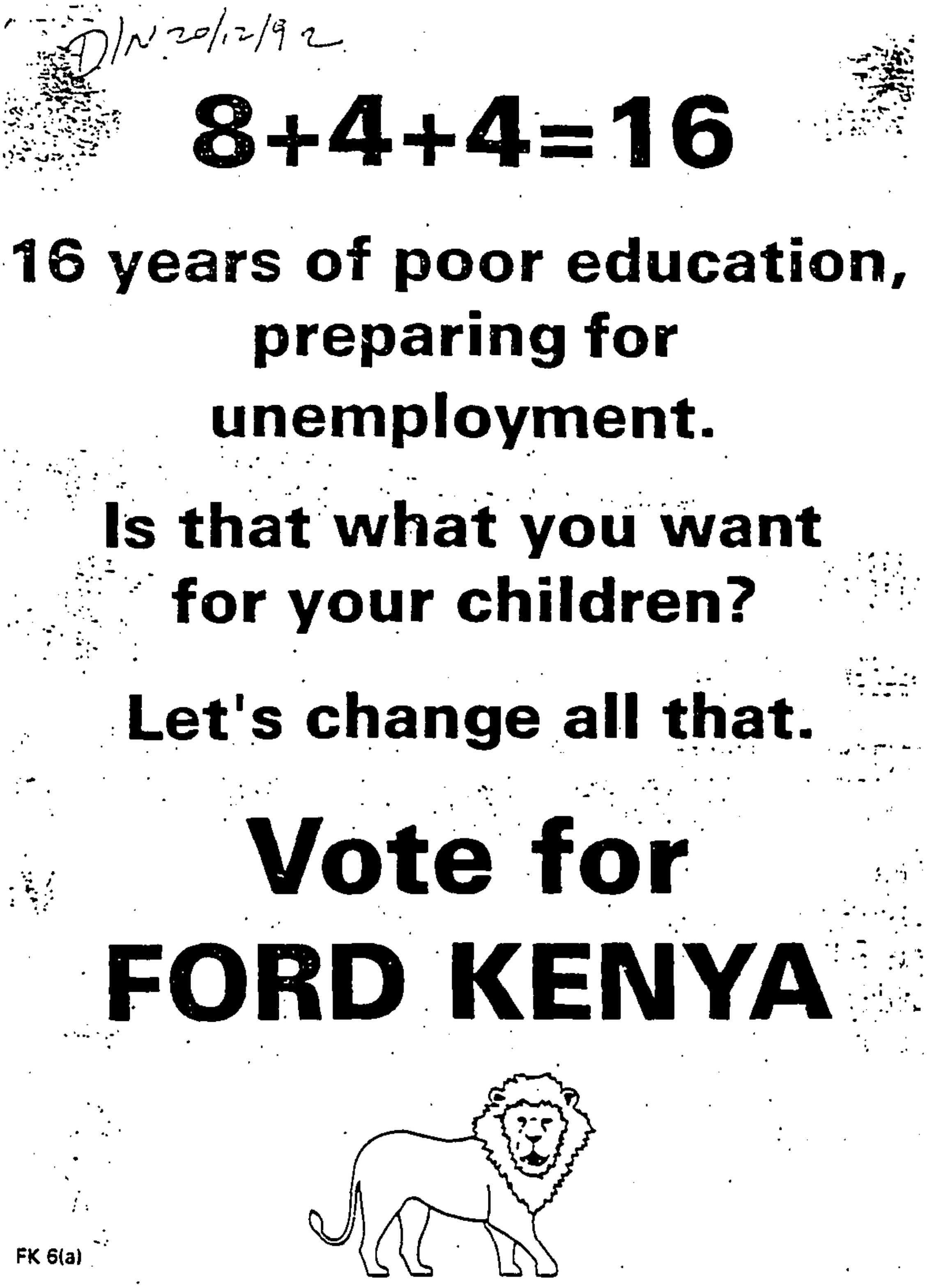

36° E
37° E
1° S
2° S
3° S
MURANGA
NAKURU
NAROK
MACHAKOS
TANZANIA
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
SOMALIA
TANZANIA
Indian Ocean
LEGEND
Persons per Km²
Over 900
300–900
0–300
0
20
40
60
KILOMETRES

Illustration 1: 1992 Election Poster



D/N 20/12/92

8+4+4=16

16 years of poor education, preparing for unemployment.

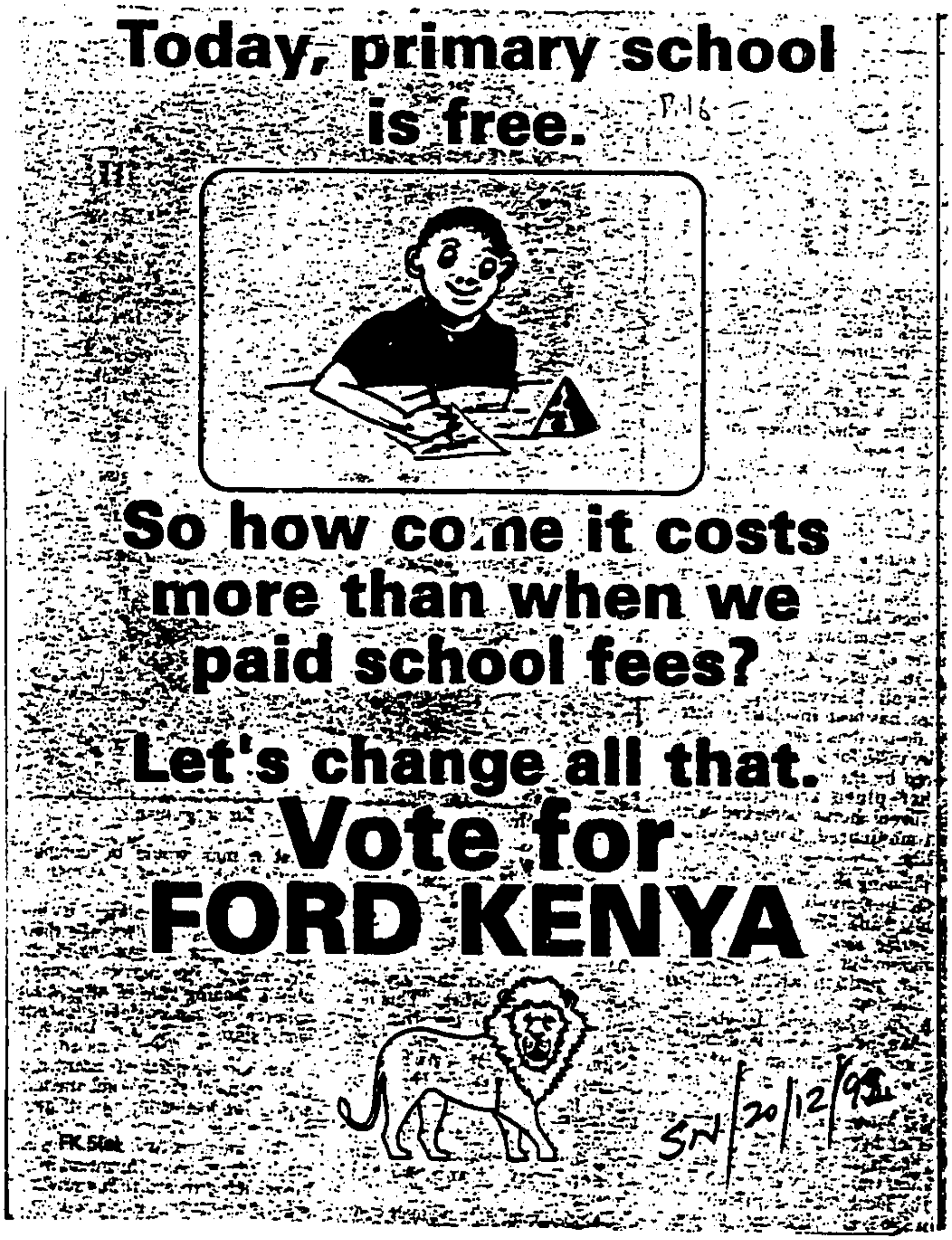
Is that what you want for your children?

Let's change all that.

Vote for FORD KENYA

FK 6(a)

Illustration 2: 1992 Election Poster

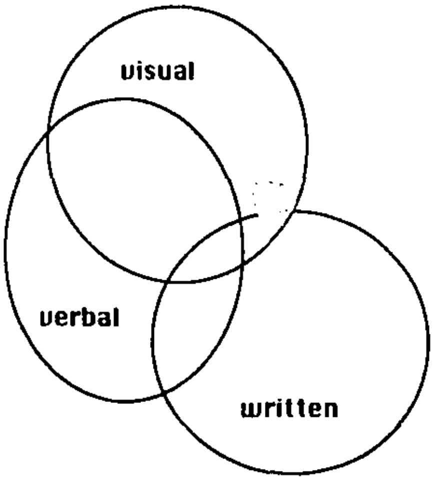

Today, primary school is free.
So how come it costs more than when we paid school fees?
Let's change all that.
Vote for FORD KENYA
FK.5tak

P.16

SN/20/12/92

3.2 Data categories

Diagram 1: Three categories of data collection



My preparation, collection and analysis of data is discussed under three categories of visual, verbal, and written data, and in four overlapping sub-categories of visual-verbal, visual-written, verbal-written and visual-verbal-written as illustrated in the diagram above and in later sections. Examples given in each category and sub–category are from my field notes. Within these categories I developed six instruments. These were student questionnaires which were designed in order to gather, manage and process information, and to qualify and quantify data from the three main categories (visual, verbal and written).

3.2 A Visual Data

Under the category of visual information, I documented school and classroom environments, samples of children's art and craft, wall drawings, diagrams, teacher's work and school exhibitions through photography. Later, I also recorded through video cassettes. Around Inyonyori Primary School, for example, I recorded on videotape and in photographs, examples of colours and patterns that the students were able to recognize and name in rocks, trees, animals and the sky. I also collected actual samples (e.g. of rocks). I photographed and recorded on videotape what the children made, how they were taught to make them, what was displayed in classrooms, what they wore (as ethnic art) and what they sold to the tourists (such as ornaments, key chains) and what they prepared for exhibitions.

Three sets of drawings and craft objects were studied. One was the drawings (and illustrations) in text-books to know the pictures influencing the children. The second was the examples and visual aids, including blackboard drawings, that the teachers used to communicate to their pupils. The third was the art and craft-work made by the children in the class and at home. For example, at Inyonyori Primary School, Maasai pupils were wearing ornaments that were made and presented to them by their friends and relatives.

Six questionnaires were designed to facilitate and hasten the process of collecting visual data in form of pictures and vocabulary associated with pictures and colours (Appendix 2 a-c). I realized that children often knew the information but could not express it orally in English or Kiswahili. It was easier for them to write art vocabulary in an examination style in which they were drilled from the day they started schooling. In this way they also had more time to think about answers. All the questions were answered during the class hour. I let the class teacher explain what was required and how the questionnaires were to be completed. Altogether nine hundred and sixty one questionnaires were answered in the three schools by pupils of Standards 5 and 8. The fifth year of schooling represents the year when the children are half-way through their primary education and have settled down to instruction in English. Standard 8 represents the final grade of primary education when the entire curriculum has been covered and the teenage students prepare for the national examination.

Questionnaire 2 (Appendix 2 b) was designed to test students' visual knowledge and in what language (i.e. English, Kiswahili or Vernacular) they best expressed art vocabulary. (Questionnaire 1 related to written data and will be discussed under that section). Art symbols in the questionnaire were adopted from text books, children's notes on the theory of art and craft, and from their practical exercises.

Through Questionnaires 3, 4 and 6 (Appendix 2) , I attempted to gather children's knowledge of and ability to express their traditional visual art environment in pictures and words.

All the questionnaires were explained to the students, distributed and collected by the art teachers. The questionnaires were marked on the basis of one mark for each correct answer and out of the total number of questions asked. The students in the Anthropology of the Arts course at the University of Nairobi, marked the answers in ethnic languages like Maa, Gikuyu, Kikamba, Dholuo and Luhya. In order to ensure accuracy, I also checked the results of the material culture questionnaires with them. These were then converted into percentages. Pupil responses were tabled in order to make comparisons among the three schools, in three languages and two classes (i.e. Standard 5 and Standard 8) in each school. Children in six classes were tested.

3.2B Verbal Data

Verbal data included interviews, both open-ended and structured, talks, comments, listening to classroom lessons and teacher conversations and discussions. (See the table under Data Management for numbers of interviews).

I made notes and recorded information in diagrams, audio–cassettes and video cassettes. Seven case studies were developed of students from the three schools and three case studies were made of art teachers, one from each school. These studies helped to qualify and give depth to the data collected through the instruments. Through the three case studies of art teachers, I learned how the teachers perceived themselves as transmitters of culture, what were their values and how the shifting political and cultural climates affected their understandings and interpretations of the national curriculum. I paid close attention to the use of words (both in Kiswahili and English), statements and ways of describing art learning situations. We spoke to each other in English and Kiswahili. I was conscious that these were second and third languages to me as well as to the teachers and the students and that our experiences in the use of English varied according to our different ethnic backgrounds and schooling. We were all tri-lingual for we were brought up speaking in our vernaculars at home and we learned to communicate in Kiswahili in broader social environments. We learned English in school.

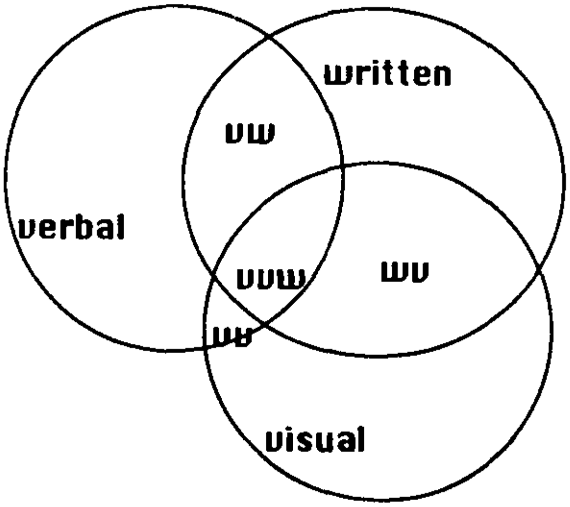
3.2C Written Data

With regard to collecting written data, I photocopied and took notes from teacher's diaries, lesson plans, test papers and answers, text books and teacher resource books, assessment sheets, and children's notebooks and responses to my written questions, which I sometimes formulated at the end of an interview and left for the teacher to think about and write about if possible. I found this useful and necessary as often the people whom I interviewed did not answer 'directly'. Often it would appear that no point was made after a lengthy interview and the answers had to be sensed and interpreted through choice of words and expressions. Culturally, it is also impolite to demand a 'straight' answer which in any case often results in repetition of the same long story. For example, one may not ask a simple question such as, " Where do you come from ? " Instead, the interviewer may remain conscious of any information that may hint on the person's home area during the conversation and build on it until it is clear where the person does actually come from.

Questionnaire number 1 (Appendix 2 a) helped me to study how and if the children, who were taught art in English, were able to associate and interpret art experiences with concepts in their own ethnic languages and in Kiswahili.

There were also times when all the three categories of data collection operated together as when actual teaching was done. This is illustrated in Diagram 2 below.

Diagram 2: Three data collection sub-categories



VW verbal written -- This is information that is both spoken and written as when a teacher says something and writes it down on the blackboard

VV verbal visual -- This information is spoken as well as illustrated as when a teacher says something and points to a chart or a picture

WV written visual -- This information is illustrated as well as written as when a teacher shows a picture and writes about it on the blackboard

VVW visual verbal written -- This information is given in visual aid, talked about and written -- as when a teacher reads out, shows a picture and writes notes on the subject.

4 Data management

Table 1: Interviews and questionnaires per school

	Inyonyori	Karuri	Kassarani	Total
Oral Interviews Teachers	16	15	15	46
Written Interviews Teachers	30	12	13	55
Student Questionnaires	124	115	78	317
Oral Interviews Students	5	14	9	28
Total	175	156	115	446

See Appendix 3 for samples of leading questions.

Most of the verbal and written information shown in the chart above could be defined and explained. However, I had difficulties in understanding and interpreting some data. Unclear data often came as ideas and from observations, sometimes as hunches, and at first it was not clear how to handle this. I temporarily tucked such ideas and observations and some puzzling quotations from the teachers and students under miscellaneous data. But miscellaneous data often opened up new venues for further inquires and thoughts later on. Thus often collection of data was more like eliciting information as this was preceded by two experiences. One was insights and hunches, and the other was the habit of interpreting data as I gathered it. Wolcott (1987) in On Ethnographic Intent explains this aspect of field experience:

> In ethnography, however, data and interpretation evolve together each informing the other. Additional data provide illustration, test the adequacy of the developing account, and suggest avenues for further inquiry. Fieldwork and interpretation go hand in hand as concurrent, rather than sequential steps. (Wolcott: 1987, p. 40).

Through this process I was able to compare one area of gathering information with another not only to cross-reference data but also to further validate and assess the validity of what was seen, said and observed. For example what the teacher said about a particular student's work was compared with what the student actually produced. Teacher's words were weighed against how she taught a lesson, the objectives of the lesson and ethnic background. Student's work was similarly assessed. At a later stage video taping facilitated this process. Earlier, I was not able to video tape because I was a stranger in the environment and I was sensitive to people's feelings. Generally in Kenya it is not acceptable for one to photograph someone before a comfortable relationship is established. During the time of my research people were also generally sensitive to accepting close relationships because of the political situation that caused suspicion and mistrust.

Table 2: Video recordings breakdown per school, number and hours of recordings

School	No of recordings	No of hours
Inyonyori	12	24
Kassarani	12	24
Karuri	11	23
Total	35	71

With the help of the video I was able to review the situations again and again, separate and organize data in my notebooks from the three strategy sectors and then bring them together as visual and verbal and check these with the written data.

The video viewing process, which was like re-visiting the sites, also helped me to arrange and triangulate the data that was gathered through other means such as direct interviews, questionnaires, audio-cassettes, drawings and others that have already been listed. I video taped approximately twenty hours of different aspects of my field work. These included classroom lessons, school environments, child and teacher interviews, exhibitions and classroom displays, and the processes of art production by the children.

5 Subjectivity in research situations

While reading field experiences and reflections of anthropologists Lambek, Dwyer and Crapanzano I became aware of how a researcher can become self conscious during fieldwork and how this 'objectification process' becomes an integrated part of the methodology and ethnography.[18]

I explored my own cultural identity in three cultural domains of research at the three sites. At Kassarani, the context was urban influenced by a dominance of Kiswahili and a culture created by a multi-ethnic working class. Here I was a *mgeni* (pl. *wageni*). In Kiswahili *mgeni* can mean a stranger, foreigner, visitor or guest depending on the context. *Mgeni* is never accepted as a part of a group for his (generic) relationship is temporary. The opposite of *mgeni* is *mwenyewe* (or *mwenyeji*) which can be used in several contexts like *mwenye nyumba*, who is an owner or occupier of the house or *mwenye shamba* who is the owner of a field. The *mgeni -mwenyewe* relationship is that of keeping distance and sometimes the relationship raises suspicion until such a time when the identity and intentions of the visitor are accepted by the host or hosts. The *mgeni* is aware of his situation when he enters foreign territory be it cultural, political or social. He is aware that his situation is temporary as a popular Kiswahili saying goes:

> *Mgeni ni wa siku mbili, siku ya tatu mpatie jembe*

Literally it may be translated as: Guest is for two days, on the third day give him a hoe (so that he may start to cultivate and provide for himself).

The *mgeni* is also expected to behave like a guest. For example generally in Nairobi the *mgeni* is the first to greet the host. He says all is well and then quickly identifies himself by stating where he comes from and the purpose of his visit. In return the host may offer his hand which is an indication of being friendly. If he does not, then formal politeness is maintained until such a time as when the host becomes friendly. Then the relationship may change from that of a stranger to that of a guest which connotes acceptability. My first contacts were with men. According to the local culture I, being a man, first approached men in situations where both men and women were present. Later I would approach women after being introduced to them by the head teacher or another teacher whom I had come to know well. I was also conscious that the majority of the people in the location where I was working belonged to the industrial working class which was highly politicized and active in everyday discussions and at pre-election rallies.

At Karuri I was aware of my ethnicity and race, age group, language and gender. The Kiambu people first identify a light skin person as *mundu mweru* (fair person). The reference is to the skin colour of the new person who may belong to any race or ethnic background. An Agikuyu male may be referred to as *mugikuyu.* or *mundu wa mucii* (man of our house). A woman is *mundu wanja* or 'the outside person', hence not one of us (men). A foreigner, if an African, is referred to as *muruuriri* ('the one who doesn't speak our tongue'). This was the reference given to my Luhya research assistant. A

European is a *muthungu* (from Kiswahili *muzungu*, pl. *wazungu*.) and an Indian a *muhindi* (from Kiswahili *muhindi*, pl. *wahindi*). Thus my identity was of an Indian man who came with the 'one who did not speak our tongue'.

At Inyonyori the context was a little different. Among the Maasai a guest for an important event like a ceremony is *oloyanyiti* (pl. *illoooyanyiti*) which is a respectful term as opposed to *olomoni* (pl. *ilomoni)* which refers to a foreigner or a visitor. The *oloyanyiti* is often an invited guest while the *olomoni* is not. Outwardly the *olomoni* is shown respect . He is offered food and a place to rest but he may be called by the elders at any time of his stay to explain the purpose of his coming to the area. Initially the researcher may also be called *olomangatinta* (pl. *ilimangati)* which connotes 'a strange being'. The quality of information and insights into the community may be dependent on how the researcher is perceived in the local cultural context. I made it known to the community that I was a teacher from Nairobi and that my business was with the school and not with the people of the homesteads. I visited the school at least once a week for one full day and for the first several months I did not leave the school compound. This helped in establishing my status in the community and I hoped that by then the children and the youth would have talked about me and my work to their parents and the community at large.

Then finally, I entered the homesteads for short periods of time and interacted mainly with women and children as the men folk were away grazing the cattle. I was conscious of not overstaying in the homesteads while the men were away and of following the Maasai code of greetings and talk etiquette based on age group and gender. For example, I did not shake hands with the children but instead touched their heads and I did not extend my hand to the women first. I let them do it first. I was aware of the physical distance that I was expected to maintain according to Maasai social rules. I did not talk directly to girls outside the classroom. A female teacher assisted me when I talked to Maasai school girls, who were often extremely shy.

At the three culturally and politically different sites, I was conscious of the variations and changes in the relationships that naturally occur during the process of contact and absence between the researcher and the people. When the relationships stabilized, I found that there had developed a one-one-one social interaction between individuals persons and myself. The sustaining of relationships depended on how I greeted people and sought information from them. The presence of national, communal and school politics and cultures affected and influenced these relationships. I carried with me three images that I was aware of and had learned to manage as a researcher in the field in Kenya. (1) As a lecturer at the University of Nairobi, I was often expected to engage in discussions. At Karuri I was often confronted and provoked into a discussion. On the other hand, and for the same reasons, the teachers at Inyonyori were reluctant to talk to me, especially when we were in a group. I became aware of these two situations at Karuri and Inyonyori, and accordingly acted my roles at the schools. (2) As an Asian I was judged by some persons to be apolitical (i.e. not belonging to any ethnic group or to a political party), non-tribal, and often someone safe to talk to. But sometimes this had its own problems. (3) Finally, as an artist who was interested in study of indigenous material culture, I was looked at with interest. I tried to maintain the impressions that the communities had of me in order to gain acceptability their trust.

At all times during the field visits I was sensitive to the local political feelings which affected how I sought information. These complex research situations may best be described by examples of interview situations. I was aware that interviews were staged performances and each performance was enacted within and influenced by its cultural and political contexts as well as by the community's perceptions of me. Often verbal play, pauses, expressions and gesturing, which the video film captured, reflected the cultural and political contexts of research situations. It also reflected the temporary relationships that had developed between me, the interviewer, and the interviewee. I was aware that often in Kenya, both while I was being interviewed and each time I interviewed, the one-sided structured questions did not lead to a fruitful discourse. In Mishler's (1988) view:

> In mainstream tradition the idea of discourse is suppressed. ... The suppression of discourse is accompanied by an equally pervasive disregard of respondents' social and personal contexts of meaning, both in the interview itself, where standardization overrules the particularities of individual and setting, and in the modes of interpretive theorizing about responses. (Mishler: 1986, p viii).

I attempted to keep my interviews less structured and more as discourses which proved to suit the cultural and political situations in Kenya. The following analysis of an interview with the head teacher of Karuri Primary School is an example. The interview was done in the head teacher's office during Phase 11 (September 1991 -September 1992) of the research period. I opened the interview by asking about the history of education in Kiambu District and the history of Karuri Primary School. The headmaster was very knowledgeable of the past but what I had intended to be a historical discourse became political. During our conversation he often and emphatically praised British colonial system of education. In this way he was indirectly criticizing the present 8:4:4 system. He made statements such as :

> In carpentry we learned about joints and wood. Even me, myself, I can make a chair today, a very good one. A graduate of 8:4:4 cannot do that.

At one point he said that under the former system primary school education was equivalent to today's secondary school one, and that one who had completed secondary school in the past was as good as a University graduate today. He felt that the University graduates were "quite useless" and spontaneously began criticizing University education due to overcrowding that had strained facilities. It was common knowledge that the President tried to gain popularity by gaining favour of parents.

During the interview I realized that as long as I let him speak on his own it would be acceptable but if I interrupted him with a question he would become thoughtful and perhaps suspicious. Thus I learned to show approval of what he said by not asking questions that might reflect on another possibility or perspective. My responses to his criticism of the government and the education system were very important for him. He liked to see me look surprised. Whenever he was not sure of what I felt, he would engage me in the conversation by asking me what I thought about the particular issue. Thus throughout the interview it was an expression of opinions and body language on both sides (i.e. of the interviewer and interviewee) that affirmed each other's points of view and trust. I built up from statement to statement, by gauging the headmaster's feelings as time went by and learned about the history of education, of the head teacher's personal experiences and opinions of the value of teaching art and craft.

This interview took place during the pre-election period after the constitution was changed to accommodate multi-party in Kenya that was discussed earlier. People were still suspicious of strangers and would not quite talk openly. I had built up a friendly relationship with the headmaster during my visits to the school. He always offered me his hand with a welcoming remark such as, "*karibu* " (welcome) whenever we met and I offered him my hand when we parted, with a good-bye remark like "*kwaheri ya kuonana* " (Good bye till I see you again, meaning, I will see you again). Thus through friendly words and talks, I tried to remove as much suspicion as I could in order to build up a format to discuss issues, and also to prepare him for a video interview.

The classroom was another situation altogether and I tried to comply with the formality, and according to how the teacher wanted and had prepared for the event for the sake of the 'good name' of his class. I was made conscious of the role I was expected to play by the formalities. My entrance into the classroom was always very formal. The children would all stand up and say in a chorus: "Good morning sir!". I would then reply, "Good morning children. How are you today ?" This established a relationship and they would sing out all together: "We are fine. Thank you." This always made a good start and the formality was maintained as a mark of good discipline and respect for an adult and visitor. Whenever I tried to go round the classroom making myself as inconspicuous as I could, the children would follow my movements and this interfered with the lesson. If I picked up a book from a desk the child at the desk would stand up as a mark of respect. The teacher often introduced me as 'our visitor' and sometimes as 'the visitor from the University of Nairobi ' which was prestigious but it also put me in a situation where I had to say something about culture as the teacher would then ask me 'to say something about our culture.'

Finally the video tapes showed my method of eliciting information in different cultural and political contexts. I had trained my assistant to video–tape the processes of information gathering as events in which I was an actor among others. Viewing video tapes after each field day and viewing myself on screen interacting with teachers, students, community and objects greatly influenced my day-to-day performances and made me acutely self-conscious about myself.

6 Constructing ethnography

There were two types of information. One was factual (e.g. there were 45 pupils in class) and the other was a process(e.g. an activity in the classroom). The first one was recorded and analyzed in figures and definite statements. In the second case I used four types of diagrams as tools to analyze and to show the analyses of the processes taking place. These diagrams were of spirals, intersecting circles, radiating circles and flow charts. I then started to group information areas from these `data pictures'. For example I would view information relating to pre-Christian traditions, the colonial period, nationalism and modernization in different ways using the graphs.

Diagram 3: **Spiral graphs facilitated the interpretation of data as building of inter-connecting layers.**

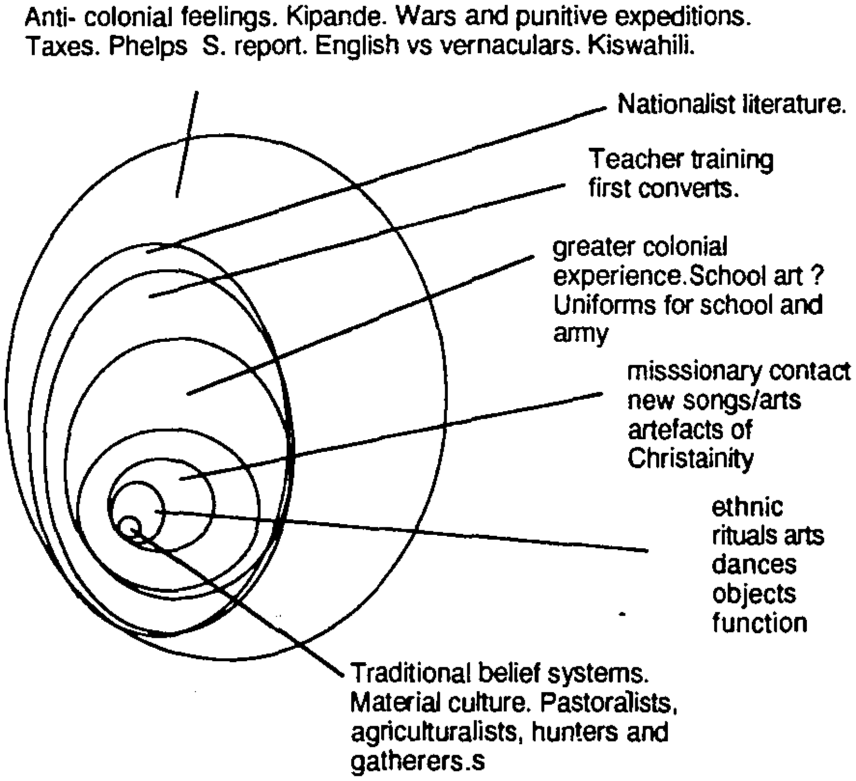
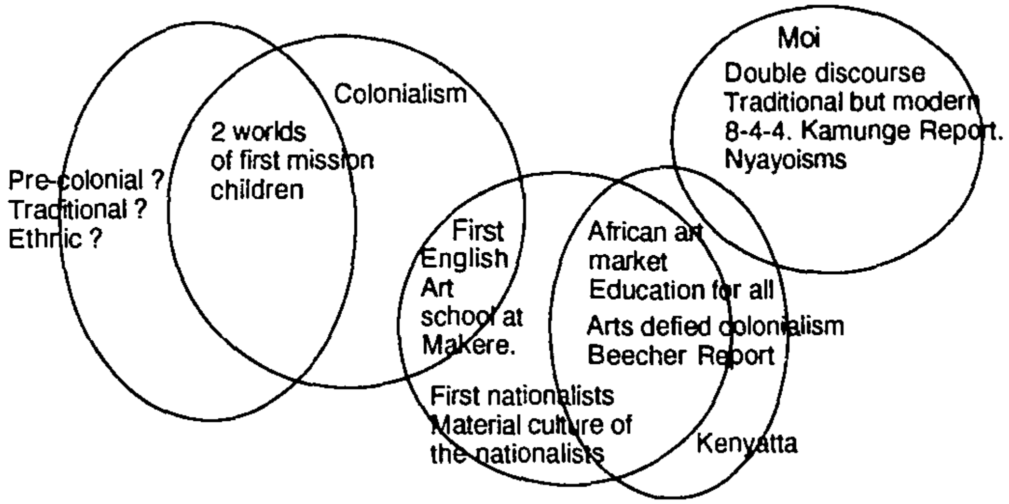

Anti- colonial feelings. Kipande. Wars and punitive expeditions.
Taxes. Phelps S. report. English vs vernaculars. Kiswahili.
Nationalist literature.
Teacher training first converts.
greater colonial experience.School art ? Uniforms for school and army
misssionary contact new songs/arts artefacts of Christainity
ethnic rituals arts dances objects function
Traditional belief systems. Material culture. Pastoralists, agriculturalists, hunters and gatherers.s

Diagram 4: Inter-connecting circles assisted to look at data as overlapping of layers.


Pre-colonial ?
Traditional ?
Ethnic ?
2 worlds
of first mission
children
Colonialism
First
English
Art
school at
Makere.
First nationalists
Material culture of
the nationalists
African art
market
Education for all
Arts defied colonialism
Beecher Report
Kenyatta
Moi
Double discourse
Traditional but modern
8-4-4. Kamunge Report.
Nyayoisms

Concentric circles were useful for viewing contexts of situations. The diagram below shows how the Inyonyori school culture existed in the context of the larger Il Keekonyoikee culture which was within the broader all Maasai culture that was in turn viewed as within the greater pastoralist in the encompassing all Kenya national culture.

Diagram 5: Concetric Circles

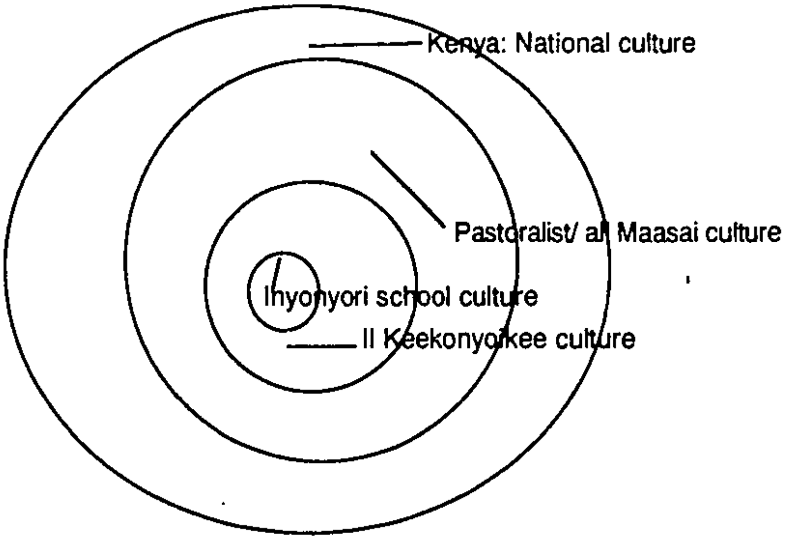
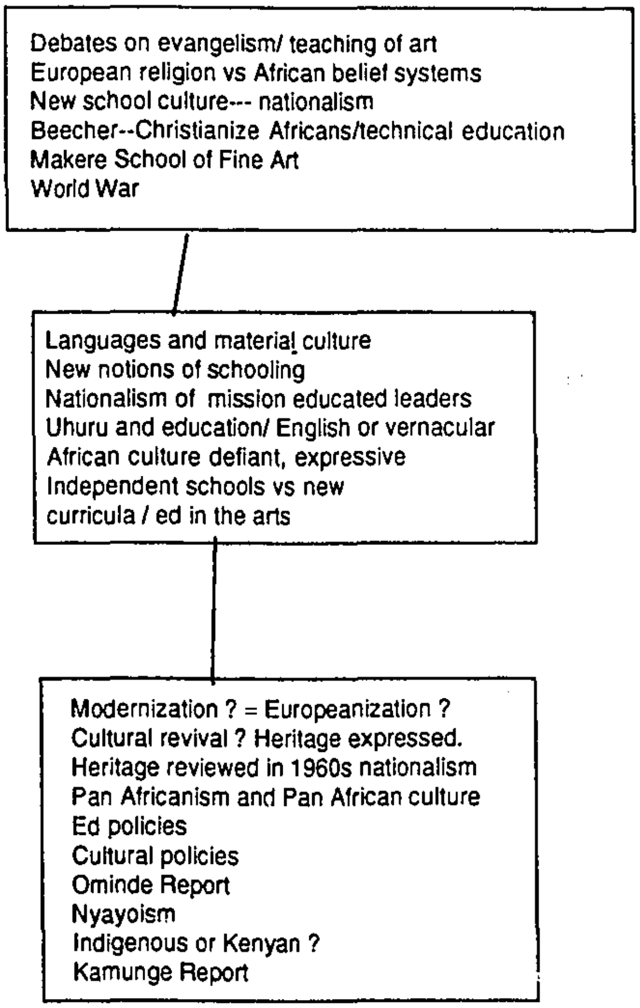

Kenya: National culture
Pastoralist/ all Maasai culture
Inyonyori school culture
Il Keekonyoikee culture

Diagram 6: Flow charts were useful in organizing the data in chronological order and reviewing the development of events and ideas



Debates on evangelism/ teaching of art
European religion vs African belief systems
New school culture--- nationalism
Beecher--Christianize Africans/technical education
Makere School of Fine Art
World War

Languages and material culture
New notions of schooling
Nationalism of mission educated leaders
Uhuru and education/ English or vernacular
African culture defiant, expressive
Independent schools vs new
curricula / ed in the arts

Modernization ? = Europeanization ?
Cultural revival ? Heritage expressed.
Heritage reviewed in 1960s nationalism
Pan Africanism and Pan African culture
Ed policies
Cultural policies
Ominde Report
Nyayoism
Indigenous or Kenyan ?
Kamunge Report

I began with the visual data. First I analyzed all the visual information I had recorded in the form of photographs, drawings, video and observations. For example I constructed the visual data during one lesson that I listened to in this way:

Classroom wall --- not painted, cement, calendar pictures: Maasai dance, pretty lady (European) with flowers, elephants with Mount Kilimanjaro in the background; , word lists - English 2, Kiswahili 1. Illustrations --tools- carpentry. Colour chart with felt pens. More magazine pictures -- Mount Kenya, City Square- Nairobi, President Moi inspecting guard of honour --- Maasai, rhino.

Corner table ---craft work on top: wire cars. Below wet clay in tin containers.

Teacher in brown coat and tie. Moi -- photo -- center B/B

Then I studied, compared and noted differences and similarities among visual, verbal and written data. I developed sketches (based on diagrams shown above) around the visual data and then connected them with sketches based on verbal and written data.

There emerged five distinct areas of information that needed to be understood and translated. The first group comprised of school cultures that had three variations (sub-cultures) signifying school settings in an urban, an agriculturist and a pastoralist region. The second group consisted of visual environments of the classrooms in the three schools that imparted aesthetic material, and visual languages of the 8-4-4 syllabus to the children as strong symbols of influence. Under the third group I organized my data on languages, and what and how they conveyed certain messages during lessons. Classroom lessons comprised the fourth group. The fifth group of data related to studies of the syllabus, text books, students exercise books and examinations.

My style of writing ethnography was influenced by my attempt to give equal importance to data from visual, oral and written sources. There are a number of graphic illustrations that I use as direct data findings. There are also spoken words of teachers, students and the community that are quoted as discourses and interview events. I use proverbs, songs and narratives as indigenous knowledge reflecting community opinion and wisdom. The visual and oral comprise statements in this thesis which are as valid as written documents to which I make reference. In this way the authority of the written word is placed on equal ground as the image and the spoken word. While working among and with the non-literate people, their voices are heard as much as the documents are studied in the archives. The documents studied in this research have been authored mainly by government officials or that they have been written for the government. Using this method I attempted to present results, qualify and bring up contradictions in a way that the voice of author is kept low so that voices and images of the teachers, children and the community make their presence.

During the last two years I was working as a project co-ordinator with Mennonite volunteers in Africa. The project attempted to sustain traditions through promotion of awareness of certain aspects of ethnic heritage among eight nomadic desert groups of Africa. My style of writing ethnography has also been influenced by the Mennonite tradition of writing and speech which is one that respects opinions, no matter how controversial they may appear to be at the time. The intention of expression is consciously articulated so as not to raise a conflict.

7 Dissertation organization

Chapter One, which is entitled From colonial ethnographies to school texts, reviews several key issues in the literature on material culture and education in art underlining the Kenyan experience. What is clearly missing in the educational policies and the curriculum are references to indigenous traditions of education in art and a history of teaching of the cultural heritage. The sources for these are found in ethnographies and the living material culture traditions of Kenya. While the former exists as anthropological records from the turn of the century, the latter are living arts of Kenya's pastoralist groups today.

It is apparent from the studies of early ethnographies that indigenous systems of education incorporated learning through the arts in general and visual learning in particular. This aspect of African educational heritage has not been given the attention it deserves in literature on indigenous education that emerged during the post-independence era and which influenced the school curricula, especially the teaching of cultural heritage.

Chapter Two traces the development of formal school education in the arts within the cultural, political and educational contexts of pre- and post-independence times. There were Qur'anic schools existing along the coast and northern regions of Kenya from the tenth century but the first formal schools with a secular education were started by Christian missionaries whose world view at the time influenced what culture ought to be taught in schools. This had a long lasting effect on learning of indigenous arts. The missionary teachers' negative view of African culture later provoked a discourse of African nationalism, African culture and education. The debate on culture and education continued after independence which, in turn, influenced the post independence curricula on cultural heritage.

In Chapter Three the locations and the three school cultures that comprise the field sites are described. The contemporary arts scenes of the three communities representing a multi-ethnic urban society (Nairobi), an agricultural group (Agikuyu), and a pastoralist group (Maasai), are discussed as traditions within which the schools are located.

several lessons on different topics such as Batik, Colours, Sculpture, Metalwork, Material Culture and Lines from the syllabus. The chapter explores how the teachers in the three schools approached the teaching of culture through art education as required by the national syllabus.

Chapter Five is on Visual and spoken languages. In this chapter, analyses of data on languages are discussed as affecting the transmission of values in the classroom.

In Chapter Six the content of the art and craft syllabus, and the examinations are then analyzed in terms of the emphasis placed on indigenous and 'modern' cultural material.

The last chapter, Seven, summarizes the dissertation and draws conclusions in terms of future recommendations for policy matters and research.

Chapter One

From colonial ethnographies to school texts

1.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews key issues in the literature on education in the arts compiled from sources in anthropology and education. Several early colonial ethnographies (1900 to 1940) are explored for records on visual arts during the first part of the twentieth century. This leads to a discussion on fashioning of the Kenyan identity and nationhood through academic discourses that, in fact, were responding to the image of ethnicity (or 'tribal' groups) created by colonial anthropology. Several post-independence ethnographies on the arts and texts on indigenous education are then reviewed in the context of their contribution to the understanding of art education in Kenya. The final section describes the development of the syllabus and texts on heritage subjects.

1.1 Colonial ethnographies: the first texts of education in the arts

The first texts on education in the arts are found in several early colonial ethnographies (Hollis:1909; Lindblom:1920; Hobley:1938). These make references to the fabrication of objects of art and craft among the ethnic peoples of Kenya. The texts also show how these objects were used to create contexts that set situations for children to learn about the origins and customs of their people. The children and the youth also learned about their age group and gender identities, and about their social roles through items of material culture. Pre- and post-independence collections of Kenyan material culture at the Museum of Mankind in London, England, at the National Museums of Kenya, the Kenya National Archives and the Institute of African Studies in Nairobi bear witness to this tradition.

Learning about the objects by making them, using them and observing them in their cultural situations was like learning about the society through oral traditions.

Ethnographic classification systems, under which the objects are grouped, stored and displayed as items of utility, of personal adornment and status, and of ritual, reflect on their functions as information sources on cultural heritage. In the colonial literature, these societies were referred to as 'tribes'. In the post colonial times, they have been called 'traditional' and also 'pre-colonial' societies although the ethnographies were recorded during the colonial period.

The significance of the objects as learning media is found in two ethnographies by Charles W. Hobley, a well known British anthropologist of the colonial period. In Bantu beliefs and magic, (1938), Hobley discussed the differences in patterns of Agikuyu shields made by young boys for their circumcision ceremonies and those made and used by adults for warfare (Hobley: 1938, p. 273). The young initiates' shield patterns represented training in art that they went through during the circumcision time.

In the chapter on 'Arts and Craft' in Ethnology of Akamba and other E.A. tribes (1910), Hobley describes the functional and symbolic values of stools, horns, gourds, snuff containers, ornaments and dress in terms of utility, ritual and status. As personal articles of adornment, they also reflected on ethnic, clan and gender identities. The Akamba were socialized partly through fabrication, use and observation of objects and learning about their symbolic representations.

In his ethnography, Lindblom (1920) referred to the 'pictographic literature of the Akamba' comprising a wide range of motifs used in tattooing and cicatrization, and as decoration on calabashes, stools, brass, ivory and bead ornaments (p.391). The graphic symbols were first learned and practiced in the sand by boys who were later examined on their knowledge during initiation. The boys were trained to read the motifs by their fathers who had them recorded on sticks called *misai (s.musai).* (p.85). Lindblom writes that these had been previously referred to as 'pictographic riddles' by Hobley because the visual art of the Akamba referred to oral literature (p.55). In an article on Carved initiation sticks and bows from Taveta, Kenya Colony (1950), Lindblom interpreted various Akamba symbols as representations of the sun, phases of the moon, stars, snakes, lizards, tortoises, millipedes, tracks and dancing places, open spaces and village paths, clan marks, stools and animal tracks among many others (pp. 5-6). However, this visual knowledge was gender specific and thus remained within the male domain. No reference is made to learning through symbols in women's beaded ornaments, pottery marks and basketry. Lindblom's chapter on "Toys and Games" in The Akamba in British EA further affirms gender-segregated art and craft learning experiences in traditional societies such as the Akamba (1920). He writes that the boys made bows and arrows, beehives and drums while the girls made and played with baskets, calabashes with earth that represented food, and vessels of clay.

Father Vittorio Merlo Pick (1973) discussed this mode of teaching and learning as hierographic art writings among the Agikuyu, a neighbouring Bantu group of the Akamba. He wrote that the *gicandi* was an Agikuyu term for a gourd decorated with hierograhic symbols, cowry shells and rattles and it was also 'a poem of enigmas elaborately expressed in good poetry'. It was an art form that incorporated visual and oral learning traditions of this Bantu group (pp. 149-150). In particular it was associated with *nai,* a collection of Agikuyu riddles:

> ... which supplied material for competition between young Agikuyu boys and girls, and showed their ready wit, their shrewdness, the richness of their imagination and their unusual spirit of observation. (p.18).

Pick writes that the *gicandi* visual art was learned by the initiates and was still known in the thirties (p. 18).

Merker (1904) and Hobley (1910) were the first ethnographers who recorded a variety of graphic symbols observed on Maasai shields and cattle. Their works reflect on an ancient visual tradition of East Africa.

1.2 African academic response to colonial ethnographies and fashioning of Kenyan nationhood

Although colonial ethnographies contained valuable information on visual arts they often portrayed Africans negatively. This led to the writing of cultural texts by indigenous Kenyans. These had a strong impact later on the teaching and scholarship about indigenous cultures.

In 1934 Parmenas Githendu Mockerie responded to colonial ethnographies by publishing a text in English on Agikuyu ethnic history and customs. He belonged to the Agikuyu Folklore Society that, as early as in 1928, was attempting to define the culture and identity of the Agikuyu. The Society's methodology of 'collecting facts', as Mockerie emphasized, through field interviews, and its intention of writing a book in Agikuyu were indeed academic :

> In 1928 a group of African teachers and students was formed at Kahuhia, Fort Hall, to study the Agikuyu tribal laws, customs and folk songs. This group called itself "*Ngwataniro ya Agikuyu Ahungi Wara*" , the Agikuyu Folklore Society. I was appointed President of the Society. Its members intended to journey through Agikuyu, interviewing old people and collecting facts relating to Agikuyu customs. After collecting these tribal laws, the Society intended to write a book in Agikuyu. (Mockerie: 1934, p. 64).

Mockerie and his group were the first indigenous Kenyans educated in the European school tradition who were responding to African ethnography written by European scholars, missionaries and administrators. The mystification of the African environment, its flora, fauna and the people was, in many cases, a confirmation of racial prejudices. For example, Scoresby and Katherine Routledge in With a prehistoric people: The Akikuyu of British East Africa (1910), described the Agikuyu, Mockerie's people, as primitive savages. Each ethnic group was prescribed a particular quality that was measured against its capacity to integrate into the colonial system. The following references to the Maasai in With a prehistoric people: The Akikuyu of British East Africa exemplify the texts that the first literate Africans aimed to correct.

The quotations that follow are extreme examples of racist statements from colonial anthropology. My intention in using them is not to expose the racism but to show that it was such statements that fanned cultural nationalism among the academics and literates, and a desire to rewrite ethnic history and anthropology.

Colonial anthropology projected negative images of African cultures as the discipline itself was founded on the study of primitive tribes during the heyday of colonialism. The following quotation referring to the Maasai is an example:

> The Maasai is by nature greed personified -- sulky, morose, and vindictive; a born thief, an arch liar; absolutely devoid of a sense of gratitude or the spirit of hospitality. (Routledge and Routledge: 1910, pp. 348-349).

This was the 'character' of the Maasai that the Europeans could not manage and consequently absorb into the colonial economy. Descriptions of customs and rituals had moral undertones. In fact, tribal morals were scaled against Christian virtues to weigh the primitivity of a particular ethnic group. The quotation further emphasizes that the Maasai could not be organized for purposes of military or manual work. This gives another piece of evidence of the failure of the colonialists to shape this culture into the service or work force sector :

> As a soldier he is unreliable, and only of use for fighting under certain limited and special conditions. The least exposure to cold or wet kills him; and if you

> put him into clothes he dies in consequence, in addition to not being able to fight previously. For any form of manual labour he is mentally disinclined and physically unfit. He is material that civilization cannot grind up in her mill. (Routledge and Routledge: 1910, pp. 348-349).

However, the true intention of the writer emerges in the next line that follows the above quotation. The colonialists were interested in Maasai land but they did not see this as a question of morality.

> His existence depends on the possession of those wide stretches of grazing lands which are the first thing that the white man must and will appropriate. (Routledge and Routledge: 1910, p. 348-349).

Such texts denigrated the African identity and culture, and placed Africans on an evolutionary time scale that also legitimated Christianization, education and Europeanization to a limited extent. This is elaborated in a colonial educational treatise and development policies of the Department of Native Affairs in Kenya. Descriptive texts on traditional beliefs and customs were seen as 'anthropological' though the writers were not always trained anthropologists. Post-independence African intellectuals generally refered to these texts as 'amateur anthropology' but recognized them as having made a major contribution to the invention of African anthropology in the Western European academic tradition. With reference to Africa, Mudimbe states:

> I believe that amateurism has strongly contributed to anthropology. Its presence had, in my opinion, exactly the same status as amateurism during the emergence of the discipline in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. . . . The Central African bibliography of anthropology, for instance, is filled with the works of amateurs, mainly missionaries, which are important documents of anthropological information. (Mudimbe: 1988, p. 64).

The second written text in English that responded to colonial anthropology was My people of Agikuyu and the life of Chief Wangombe written by Jomo Kenyatta. Kenyatta was not a trained anthropologist though he often participated in discussions at the School of African and Asian Studies while he was a student the London School of Economics. In the foreword to the second edition of My people of Agikuyu and the life of Chief Wangombe published in 1966, Jomo Kenyatta writes that there were two reasons why he wrote the book. One was in defiance of colonialism and as a tribute to those who had "spent and sacrificed their lives in service of African ideals", and the second was "that at least the culture of my people, the record of their traditions and systems and ideas, should be unleashed". Jomo Kenyatta claimed that his book was a beginning of a new study.

> This book tells just part of the story of just some of the beginnings. Immense tasks of historical study and social recording still remain to be undertaken. It is the whole culture of our people that now freely graces the present and will underlie our future. (Kenyatta: 1966, Foreword).

The new study, he hoped, would lead to the construction of the new African identity based on a discourse of European anthropological tradition and on notions of culture. Jomo Kenyatta's second book was published in 1938. Facing Mt Kenya : The tribal life of Gikuyu was later also published as Facing Mt Kenya: The traditional life of Gikuyu. The word 'tribal' was replaced by 'traditional' which, to the Kenyan literate audience, did not echo connotations of primitivity. This was the decade when streets and towns, and some geographical features were given African names. Attempts were made to construct new buildings in African architectural styles. Words like 'native' were replaced by 'indigenous' in the official discourse and many Kenyans either renounced their European names or made a compromise by having two first names, one of which was a 'Christian' name and the other was *jina la nyumbani* (home name) which located one in one's tribal and kinship structure.

Facing Mt Kenya , like My people of Agikuyu and the life of Chief Wangombe, was also on the Agikuyu people's history and social customs. In writing this book, Kenyatta addressed previous writings on Africans by Europeans whom he refers to as 'scientists' and 'professional friends of Africa'.

Though he says that he did not intend to argue about the writers of African culture, he would like "the truth to speak for itself" and he makes negative allusions to those Europeans who would have liked to maintain an intellectual authority over the African even when it came to the knowledge of the African's own culture. In the preface to Facing Mt Kenya and in several statements in the text, an antagonism is sensed towards intellectuals and non-Africans who write on African cultures. There is also a racialist undertone with emotional and political inferences. In order to grasp the full meaning in Kenyatta's language, it is necessary to present the following quotation in full:

> My chief object is not to enter into controversial discussion with those who have attempted, or are attempting to describe the same things from outside observation, but to let the truth speak for itself. I know that there are many scientists and general readers who will be disinterestedly glad to the opportunity of hearing the African's point of view, and to which I am glad to be of service. At the same time I am aware that I could not do justice to the subject without offending "those professional friends of the African" who are prepared to maintain their friendship for eternity as a sacred duty, provided only that the African will continue to play the part of an ignorant savage so that they can monopolize the office of interpreting his mind and speaking for him. To such people, an African who writes a study of this kind is encroaching on their preserves. (Kenyatta: 1978, p. xviii).

Kenyatta's point is clear here for he is giving the "African's point of view" versus that written by colonial Europeans who did not belong to the culture and were thus describing "things from the outside". He speaks as a spokesman for Africans and questions the validity of European ethnographic authority and simultaneously justifies his own authority to write about the Agikuyu on the basis of five points. "The reader will undoubtedly wish to know my credentials for writing this book" writes Jomo Kenyatta (Kenyatta: 1978, p. xviii). It is this voice of authority in writing ethnographies that asserted a people's right to define their own cultural identities.

First, Jomo Kenyatta says that he is 'a full bred Kikuyu', second, that he has participated in the rituals, third, that he has been his people's representative to the Royal Land Commissions, fourth, that he is the General Secretary of Agikuyu Central Association and, last, that he has been the editor of *Muigwithania*, an Agikuyu language newspaper, between 1928 and 1930.

Marshaling of tribal credentials challenged the credentials of non-African academics, missionaries and administrators to write African anthropology. The suggestion is that they were not qualified to write about African people's culture, no matter what their qualifications might have been, . This was the logic of democracy of a nation state, government of the people by the people, appropriate for the political arena, that Kenyatta stretches into academic discourse and uses to attack the colonial intellectual tradition. Even the title of his book My people of Agikuyu, has a similar connotation.

The title of Mockerie's book, An African speaks for his people, is more explicit. But then it should be noted that at the time of writing the book the interests of the African at the governmental level were always represented by a nominated European officer, who was often a missionary. Thus the demand of the African to portray his own culture was similar to his other demands in the area of education, religion, land and law. On this issue both Kenyatta and Mockerie had a receptive audience among British academics and Labour Party politicians and they both wrote and published their books in England. The sympathies accorded to Kenyatta, for example,were reflected in the introduction to Facing Mt Kenya : The tribal life of Gikuyu (1938), by the anthropologist Malinowski. Malinowski argued in favour of Kenyatta's authority to write anthropology: "Anthropology begins at home, has become a watchword of modern social science. " Malinowski continued to write that studies in Europe at the time had shown that :

> We must start by knowing ourselves first, and only then proceed to the more exotic savageries ...'Anthropology begins at home' is as true of Africa as of Europe. It obviously is. Mr. Kenyatta has acted upon the principle and produced an excellent monograph on African life and custom. (Kenyatta: 1938, Foreword).

If Malinowski was suggesting that European anthropology was racially or ideologically tinged, that "knowing ourselves first" might help to cure, then so was Kenyatta's anthropology a tactical discourse. Kenyatta used European anthropological notions such as the one stated by Malinowski to invent ethnic logic that addressed European anti-missionary and anti-colonial sentiments. For example, he explained how "The Agikuyu system of government was based on true democratic principles" (Kenyatta: 1978, p. 186).

Facing Mt Kenya valorized Agikuyu customs and pre-European life style, and also appealed for the occupied land to be returned so that the tribe might continue with its quiet existence. While it is true that land nurtures peasant cultures, Kenyatta's tale had a political message appealing through sentiments. For example, words like 'peaceful', 'undisturbed' , 'serenity' , 'magic' 'traditional ceremonies' and 'facing Mount Kenya' in one statement conjure an idyllic folk setting,

> It (*land*) secures for them that peaceful tillage of the soil which supplies their material needs and enables them to perform their magic and traditional ceremonies in undisturbed serenity, facing Mount Kenya.(Kenyatta: 1978, p. xxi).

Mudimbe (1988) suggests that during this period many African writers used anthropological representations that combined both the readings of the European texts and a growing up in tribal societies, to forward a political agenda. This was true of Kenyatta. In fact Mudimbe makes a direct reference to Kenyatta's book, Facing Mt Kenya:

> This consciousness (*Black African*) firmly relies upon an anthropological perspective but does not always seem to follow the mainstream of anthropologists' conclusions. .... In 1938 Jomo Kenyatta published Facing Mt Kenya, which is both a study of Agikuyu ways and style of life and a discrete political manifesto. During those years a very popular kind of anthropology developed. More and more Africans published traditional tales and legends....(Mudimbe: 1988, pp. 77-78).

The tradition of writing texts that Mudimbe calls 'very popular kind of anthropology' was continued by the first indigenous historians. These historians included Bethwell Ogot, Godfrey Muriuki, Gideon Were and William Ochieng, all of whom rank among the foremost professors in contemporary Kenya.

These social historians were responding more to colonial story writers, administrators, missionaries and soldiers, who were all termed 'anthropologists', than to the historians. Colonial historians wrote about the trade, 'discoveries', treaties, slave trade and wars among the foreign powers, the Omani Arabs, Portuguese and the English, for the supremacy of the East African coast. This did not raise a controversy because colonial history was not about ethnic groups. Likewise in schools the history that was taught during the colonial times was the History of Great Britain and the History of the British Empire. It was the missionaries, administrators and later the trained anthropologists who wrote in detail about the peoples of the interior. These texts initially helped administration of, and missionary work in, the colony, but later they played a significant role by becoming the object of academic discourse on African identity and culture.

Post-independence historians addressed the Kenyan literate public who included the African middle class and the student body, both of whom were vocal advocates of nationalism. They were also often the carriers of ideas from the forums of the University of Nairobi to the rural population. Here the political and academic genre met, and at this time in history the two complemented each other. The political genre was oral in form, comprising staged speeches in Kiswahili and vernacular languages which were addressed to the people at outdoor rallies. The academic genre was in English intended for publications and presented at seminars or read out as lectures to select audiences. The academic publications and high school level texts by historians were also not published in either the vernacular languages or Kiswahili though they were then, and to a large extent now, the only resource material available to schools on ethnic histories and customs by Kenyan writers. This is a reflection of the audience that the academics addressed.

Academic forums on African culture and identity at the University of Nairobi in the first decade of independence, were among the first forms of intellectual discourses on Kenyan African culture in English.[11] These later affected the modern African art movement and a literature of novels, short stories, drama and poems that carried the sentiments of cultural nationalism home to the body politic of the emerging African middle class and student population. Thus was the modern Kenyan culture legitimated on traditions, discoursed in English and backed by a policy of Africanization of the economy.

Africanization was the dominant ideology of the independence era. It supported the intellectual climate at the University of Nairobi. In fact, the ones who benefited economically from Africanization were the well educated. Colonialism was seen to be principally an embodiment of racism inherent in economic and administrative structures that had to be challenged and it was in the development of the challenge that the new Kenyan cultural identity was constructed. One way that this challenge was manifested was through texts on ethnic histories and customs written by Kenyans in response to the colonial construction of African culture which was first recorded in texts on tribal lore.

The post independence historians inherited the traditions of narrating nostalgic recollections of growing up in ethnic societies and challenging the colonial intellectual tradition in Kenya that was initiated by Mockerie and Kenyatta. In the sixties two Kenyan historians, Bethwell Ogot and Gideon Were, completed their doctoral theses which became publications on the History of the Southern Luo and A history of the Abaluhya of Western Kenya. They were followed by Godfrey Muriuki's A history of the Agikuyu (1974) and William Ochieng's A history of the Gusii (1974). These first four Kenyan academics, who wrote on ethnic histories and social customs, built a nucleus of independent Kenya's academic discourse on culture and contributed to the invention of new Kenyan identity through written texts. Teaching of cultural heritage was affected by this tradition.

The academic historians' accounts, particularly Ogot's and Ochieng's, differed from those of Kenyatta's and Mockerie's in that they did not make general references to colonial anthropology. Instead the young historians systematically questioned the individual European anthropologist's authority to write and the authenticity of their accounts. They also challenged the objectivity and the validity of anthropology as an academic discipline itself.

Neither Mockerie nor Kenyatta made such direct references to any author or discussed a particular approach, fact or concept in colonial texts. In the final analysis, the young African historians implied that anthropology was a construct of a colonial ideology. Nevertheless, they were motivated to present a counter-argument to expose colonial biases and have their points of view validated in print. European texts on world civilizations and on Africa served to stimulate a Kenyan discourse on its own history, culture and future identity. William Ochieng, for example, was provoked by Trevor Roper's public lectures that the BBC broadcast to the colonies in 1963 and which were later published as The rise of Christian Europe, and C.J. Wilson's Before the dawn in Kenya, to do a study that eventually became a text of Gusii culture and identity :

> In particular, the first chapter of the book by Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, The Rise of Christian Europe, and also that lucidly written book by C.J. Wilson, Before the Dawn in Kenya, made a great impact on my historical perspective. They made me ask myself what history is all about, and whether the Africans had participated in the general drama of human development. What, I asked myself, was the African doing between the Stone Age and Doctor David Livingstone ? (Ochieng: 1974, p. 1).

In 1974, after a decade of debates and publications dismantling colonial images of African culture and identity, Kenyan historians were ready to call a Conference of the Historical Association of Kenya to assess colonial and nationalist experiences. The

Conference on History and Social Change in East Africa was to become the first major rally of Nairobi intellectuals around the misdeeds of colonial anthropology. Bethwell Ogot, the foremost Kenyan historian, gave the opening address, entitled *History, Anthropology and Social Change - The Kenya Case*, which set the mood and direction of the Conference. The address is still one of the key texts in popular anti-colonial academic discourse in the Humanities at the University of Nairobi. In what follows I will analyse the significance of this discourse.

Ogot begins the discourse with a description how the African identity was first represented in written texts. He argues that in early texts, the peoples of the interior of Kenya were not considered to have an identity and the people of the coast were considered Asians. The 19th century texts that Ogot makes references to are J.S. Keltie's, The partition of Africa (1893), Sir Harry Johnston's A history of the colonization of Africa by alien races (1899), J.W. Gregory's The foundation of British East Africa (1901) and J. Strandes's Die Portuguiesenzeit von Deutsch-und Englisch- Estrafrika (1899). Ogot's intention is to show that these writers neglected tribal histories because they did not think that a tribe had a history or a culture or an identity. But then these were early European writers and their views were ethnocentric and their studies were on subjects that interested them. Moreover, in the 19th century the Africans of the interior would probably not have given the same value to the effect of these views as the mid-20th century academics because, then, the tribes constructed their cultural identities on the basis of their different institutions and oral literature. However, Ogot attempts to show that the prejudice against Africans was embedded in the European intellectual tradition before the establishment of the British rule. This prepared the ground for his criticism of colonial anthropology.

Ogot writes that a new period in recording Kenyan events began with the establishment of British administration from 1900 to 1908. A new group of observers arrived and the area of interest moved from the coast to the interior. Ogot's choice of words, as exemplified in the following quotation, reflects the associated restrained feelings that characterized the nationalist academic discourse on African culture and identity at the University of Nairobi during the first decade of independence:

> The interest shifted inland, and from then on the new invaders represented by the administrators, the settlers, the traders, the missionaries, the adventurers and the hunters, preserved their exploits in a large number of diaries, letters and memoirs. (Ogot: 1976, p. 2).

The rest of Ogot's address is delivered in the same argumentative tone. In his next paragraph he strikes at the heart of the colonial anthropology that angered the nationalists and gave cause to cultural nationalism; it was the question of morals. But instead of criticizing what was written on African morals he turns to the morals prevalent in the writers' society at the time. Ogot hints at the European community's "nefarious influences" and that "it is a lamentable fact that up to the moment, there is no historical or anthropological study of the European settlers as a community." The study would answer many questions such as: What kind of aristocracy emerged among the European settlers ? and

> It is a common saying among the Europeans in Kenya that either you married or you live in Kenya. If there is any truth in this statement, it would be important to have the history of the European family in Kenya. (Ogot: 1976, p. 2).

Ogot's statements make inferences about the morals of Kenya Europeans. Here the morality of Europeans, who wrote on morals of Africans is put to question. It hinges on the credibility of Europeans who authored works that portrayed Africans negatively. Then Ogot attempted to show how European writings on Kenyan people had been historically racially biased. In the first decade of this century there was an interest shown by the Europeans in the history of Kenyan people.However, first, this interest was more anthropological than historical and second,

> It stemmed from a misconception which was prevalent in the western world from the 1850s that non-western societies, especially African societies, represented ideal laboratories for studying the early stage of human development. Their cultures were referred to as "primitive cultures." The exponents of this culture saw a wonderful opportunity in Kenya, and in Africa, to observe and record how early Man lived and behaved (Ogot: 1976, p. 2).

Ogot quotes Harry Johnston (Britain across the seas: Africa, 1901) to support this view and then evokes Evans-Pritchard (Africa: 1945) as being of the same opinion. This leads Ogot on to elaborate on the prevailing theories of anthropology in the first two decades of the 20th century.

He explains the evolutionist and diffusionist schools of thought in anthropology and how both were 'condemned as conjectural history.' These schools of thought affected the portrayal of the Kenya African. The evolutionist placed the African at the bottom of the evolutionary scale and the diffusionist saw any signs of 'progress' by the African as attributes of mixing with non-negro blood such as Hamitic, hence the adoration of Abyssinia. Nevertheless, Ogot explained that these two theories had provisions for social change unlike the ones that developed later in the decade.

He was referring to the functionalist school developed by Malinowski and Radcliffe-Browne. The functionalists broke from the evolutionist's and diffusionist's lines of thought but committed "what Professor M. G. Smith has called the 'fallacy of the ethnographic present'. " Ogot pointed out that the functionalists saw the tribes as having no history and "indeed the tendency of functional anthropology was to assimilate indigenous history to the category of myth, which is timeless". He moved from the mainstream theories of North America and Europe to the contemporary scene in Kenya. He cited Walter Sangree (Age prayer and politics in Tiriki Kenya,1966), John Middleton (Administration and changes in African Life, 1912-45, 1965), Kivuti Ndeti (Elements of Akamba Life ,1972) as writers in structural-functional tradition. He refered to the first four major tribal works by Kenyan academics, Were, Muriuki, Ochieng and himself, as following the evolutionary approach :

> Most of the works dealing with the precolonial history of Kenya, such as the writer's History of the Southern Luo (1967), Were's A History of the Abaluhya of Western Kenya (1967), Muriuki's A History of the Agikuyu (1974) and Ochieng's A History of the Gusii (1974), have adopted an organic and evolutionary approach which have more in common with the evolutionary school of anthropologists. (Ogot: 1976, p. 8).

But he hastened to point out that the post-independence studies were different because "they are based on field-work and not on arm-chair conjectural history" and that "Unlike the works by the functionalists, these histories are not tribal studies- despite their titles: they are regional studies." Ogot did not elaborate on the differences between tribal and regional studies in the context of the new texts. Did tribal sound too anthropological or was he making an apology for the use of the word, or the concept for that matter ? However, Ogot's ambivalence is reflective of the broader ambivalence related to definition of cultural identity in terms of a tribe which is officially discouraged in favour of a national identity.

Ogot categorized the colonial anthropologists into three groups: He calls the first group, which worked mainly during the inter-war period, as 'amateur anthropologists'. Among these are C.W. Hobley who wrote Bantu Beliefs and Magic in 1922, Ode Browne, the writer of Vanishing tribes of Kenya (1925), G.W.B. Huntingford, best known for his initial work among the Dorobo and J.A. Maseam whose ethnography of the Elgeyo called The cliff dwellers of Kenya was published in 1927. Ogot named H.E. Lambert (The systems of land tenure in the Agikuyu land unit,1950, and Agikuyu social and political institutions,1956) the most able of the 'amateur anthropologists' in Kenya.

The second group that Ogot cited was of the missionaries such as W.E. Owen and Father Cagnolo (The Agikuyu -Their customs, traditions and folklore, 1933) who "decided to try their hand at anthropology." The next category was of professional anthropologists and historians. Ogot listed these as G. Lindblom, who wrote the Akamba in British East Africa (1920), J. G. Peristiany, author of The social institutions of the Kipsigis (1939) and Jomo Kenyatta who wrote Facing Mt Kenya (1938). Later the other professional anthropologists on Kenyan people cited by Ogot were Gunter Wagner, the author of The Bantu of North Kavirondo, 1956, A. H. J. Prins, (The coastal tribes of north-eastern Bantu, 1952, and The Kiswahili speaking peoples of Zanzibar and the East African Coast (1961), J. Middleton (The Agikuyu and Kamba of Kenya, 1953) and E. E. Evans Prichard (Luo tribes and clans). However, he condemned both the amateur and professional anthropologists whose names have been mentioned above, except Jomo Kenyatta, for being guilty of the "fallacy of ethnographic present". This led to three "unnecessary academic concerns", one was the importance given to collection of data :

> They all committed the fallacy of "the ethnographic present", and the overriding concern was with the accumulation of data. (Ogot: 1976, p. 6).

The other was the emphasis on kinship, law, government and cosmology. Again no explanation is offered as to why this was not a reasonable concern:

> The concern of all these anthropologists was with social structure, which led to a disproportionate emphasis on kinship, law, government and cosmology. (Ogot: 1976, p. 6).

There was also a third concern that related to salvaging data on tribal societies. Ogot uses irony to ridicule this one concern of anthropologists:

> It was further feared that as the unequal encounter with the West became more intense, the so called primitive cultures would disappear. It was therefore imperative to mount a kind of rescue operation to retrieve the social "facts" before the "primitives" disappeared. (Ogot: 1976, p. 6).

There were other consequences of committing the fallacy of "ethnographic present." The first was that the anthropologists would be prevented by their own fallacy from changing their methodology:

> By committing the fallacy of ethnographic present, it followed that they would not evolve any method for studying social change, for this was unnecessary . (Ogot: 1976, p. 7).

Second, it was in the scholarly interest of the anthropologists to ignore the changing tribal societies:

> And even in those cases such as culture contact where the notion of change was inherent, social change was posed as disintegration from some stable tribal system- whose essence the anthropologists wished to preserve- to a degenerate detribalized form. Worse still, such studies of social change were carried out within an accepted colonial framework. (Ogot: 1976, p. 7).

Ogot continued his criticism of the anthropologists who could not deal with the changes that colonialism and nationalism was imparting into the fabric of ethnic life and how "the so-called primitive societies metamorphosize into nation states, or how a tribal chief is transformed into a national president". In other words the anthropologists could not manage a study of a 'modern' African culture that involved the transformation of tribes, 'trans-tribal changes', into a nation because an anthropologist was trained to study the primitive tribe, small and static:

> It is important to remember that the "tribe" is usually the unit of study for the anthropologist. This means that the analysis is limited not only in the time scale but also in the size of unit studied. This also means that their works are tribal studies in the colonial sense. It also implies that the traditional anthropologists were ill-equipped to deal with trans-tribal social changes. (Ogot: 1976, p. 7).

Ogot called upon sociologists to make such a study. Eventually Ogot's discourse led to the new identity of the Kenyan as a citizen of a nation state, not a clansman of a tribal group, ruled by a president and not a chief. It is implied that this had been accomplished in Kenya during the first decade of independence.

Ogot's discourse ignored the Kenya European intellectual tradition that contested racist colonial and settler literature. He also ignored a study by the Canadian anthropologist, Donald Barnett, on the Mau Mau which challenged those that portrayed the movement as a revival of primitivism and in fact referred to what Ogot calls 'colonial anthropology' to draw support for their theory that savagery was inherent in African culture. Ogot also did not do justice to anthropology as an academic discipline that had its own contradictions both in Europe and America. There were contradictions that were emerging in anthropological methods, schools of thought and its history and future. The effects of these were made evident in Kenyan studies by writers that are quoted by Ogot though their concerns were different. For example, Evans-Pritchard in the forward to Jean Peristiany's study of the Kipsigis, which was published in 1939, recognized that anthropology had its defects largely because it had been left to the initiatives of individuals. And in Kenya,

> Most records were made when social anthropology was very immature, both in methodology and in field technique. and the information was, with the exception of Dr. Gerhard Lindblom's admirable monograph on the Akamba (1920), collected by laymen. (Peristiany: 1939, p. xix).

Claud Hollis mentions in the preface to G.W.B. Huntingford's ethnography, The Nandi of Kenya : Tribal control in a pastoral society, that Huntingford "corrected certain errors which I unwittingly made" (Huntingford: 1953 , p. vii). Huntingford critically addressed

Hollis on many occasions. For example, when discussing religions, he writes that according to Hollis,

> ... 'the religious beliefs of the Nandi are somewhat vague and unformulated'. This is often said about African religions. It might even be said about our own. The fact is that to discover and record the religious beliefs, as opposed to the visible practices, of an unlettered people is one of the most difficult of all tasks. (Huntingford: 1953, p. 122).

Colonial anthropologists like Huntingford, who worked during the latter part of the century, might have been influenced by mission school experiences of the first African nationalists such as Parmeas Mukeri, Gakara Wanjau and Harry Thuku. These nationalists made statements, through personal narrations of cultural conflicts in the first 'modern' schools. The nationalists felt compelled to contest colonial attitudes, and readings and interpretations of African traditions by European scholars and administrators. Their experiences were later published in their autobiographies.

It was Jomo Kenyatta's book Facing Mount Kenya (1948) that portrayed African nationalism through comparison of an African way of life before and after colonialism. The book was quoted in post-independence educational documents, development plans and cultural policies as a guideline towards the development of a national cultural policy, perhaps because it exalted African values and life-styles before the coming of the Europeans. Facing Mount Kenya was followed by publication of speeches by Kenyatta that centered on the Pan-African nationalist metaphor of the exploited people (versus the White colonialists) rising to build a nation (Suffering without bitterness (1968), The challenge of Uhuru (1971), *Harambee* (1964)). Kenyatta's oral speeches in Kiswahili and Gikuyu valorized African culture and introduced action oriented and community sponsored development projects mainly in the rural areas. Kenyatta's nationalist literature exhorted a philosophy of nationalism that guided government policy objectives and strategies regarding education and culture during 15 years of his presidency. (Towards a one party system; 1978).

1.3 "Indigenous education and the arts: Were arts for rituals, entertainment or education? Did indigenous education sustain cultures or did the writers view indigenous education and the arts as contesting colonialism?" Othieno Ochieng, Education and culture changes in Kenya 1844 - 1925

Several post-independence writers on African indigenous education (Sifuna: 1980; Monyenye: 1977; Kimilu: 1975; Njiru: 1981) often referred to the role of oral literature (stories, songs, proverbs and riddles) as a teaching medium. This has been elaborated by Odaga in her dissertation entitled Educational values of "Sigendini Luo": The Kenya Luo oral narratives (1980). Odaga discusses that among the Luo, a Nilotic agriculturist group, an oral art form called *sigendini*, led to the development of an indigenous educational institution of *siwindhe* . The *sigendini* comprised the curriculum and *siwindhe* was the major indigenous educational institution before the European type of school became popular in Nyanza and Kisumu regions around Lake Victoria during the colonial period.

The role of material culture in traditional teaching was mentioned by Njiru (1981). But the issue of how learning took place and especially how material culture actually transmitted cultural knowledge was not explored. Sheffield (1973) was of the opinion that :

> In Kenya institutions did not usually include the specialized preparation for artistic, religious, or professional functions that took place in some African societies. Instead, the initiates were given the basic knowledge necessary to assure that the identity of the tribal communities would persist from one generation to the next. (p. 2).

Evidence proves the contrary, for there have always been clans, families and individuals who specialized in iron ware, pottery, woodwork and basketry. These craft persons and individuals lived within the communities or if not, the communities had access to their products from the neighbouring groups. Skills and knowledge were handed to the younger generation through family apprenticeship training over many years. This has been problematic as Othieno Ochieng in his book on Education and cultural change in Kenya 1844 - 1925 (1970), pointed out. He stated that the problem of characterizing indigenous education system of " sixty tribal groups " was difficult but discussing the differences between the arts, rituals and educational training was even more difficult. Ochieng posed pertinent questions such as "Was the training important or the ritual?" (p. 27) and "Was Oral Literature for entertainment or education?" (p. 27). These were, however, left unanswered. This shows the difficulty that Kenyan educationalists have faced in linking indigenous arts with education in ethnic societies and perhaps, consequently, the practical aspects of incorporating indigenous culture into modern syllabi.

However, the first Kenyan education writers (mentioned above) agreed that indigenous education was a near perfect and proto-modern system of education for sustaining ethnic cultures. Several writers refer directly or indirectly to three components of school education (i.e. institution, curriculum and instructors) to show that the learning process in indigenous societies was comparable to that of a modern school. The institutions were said to be gathering places of age mates, homes and hearths of old women and especially the houses of the initiates. Othieno Ochieng (1970) gives the list of subjects taught in the curriculum as " religion, ethics, history, speech, dialectics, vocational skills and physical training " (p 7). Solomon Monyenye (1977) argued that learning took place during a child's "productive involvement " in such practical activities as farming, fishing, house building, weeding and harvesting while "participatory education" was evident during ceremonies, rituals, imitation and play, hunting and domestic work (p. 380).

The central argument in the texts by African educationalists was that African indigenous education inculcated values of honesty, bravery, endurance, respect for elders and a strong sense of ethnic cultural identity. These were the values which were also dialectically opposed to individualism, disrespect for elders and customs which were often cited as social resulting from the European system of education as known in Kenya. It was also argued that that was the type of education that disintegrated ethnic societies and the indigenous arts in the wake of colonialism while Shieffield (1973) put it differently:

> Traditional education could not prevent the often painful dislocation of tribal societies, nor could it meet the demands placed on them by the new order. (Sheffield: 1973, p. 3).

As traditional education was basically through the arts, it would appear that indigenous arts were weakened by social change. On the other the hand, works by Omondi (1973) and Ranger (1975) argue that the artists in the transitional societies during the colonial era expressed the changing social order through new art forms while some were even organized into an association to protect the 'pure' forms of ethnic dance and music.[12]

For several writers a short chapter on African indigenous education served as a preamble to the thesis work on missionary and colonial education which was often viewed critically, if not entirely negatively, vis–a–vis indigenous education. A more recent writer, Sorobea Nyachieo Bongonko (1992), incorporated environmental awareness and the 'learning–by–doing', as other aspects of pre–European indigenous education.

We may further note that most of the post-independence writers on indigenous education have written on specific agriculturist groups. Njiru's (1981) work, for example, was based on indigenous education among the Ameru. Monyenye (1977) wrote on the Gusii and Kimilu (1975) on the Akamba. Traditional education among the pastoralist groups was discussed by Holsteen (1982) in his Ph.D. thesis, Continuity and change in Samburu education. Holsteen wrote on the contemporary Samburu society and explained how a system based on gender and age group life-long learning process from age six to sixty, was also an integral part of Samburu cultural practices, religion and economy. These writers on indigenous education might have been drawing on the five principles of African traditional education, which Ocitti (1973) had popularized as "communalism, preparations, functionalism, perennialism and wholisticism."

1.4 Syllabi and curriculum development

During the first decade of independence there were changes in the content of the school syllabi in history and geography from a British perspective to one that was Kenyan and Pan-African. It took almost ten years for the Kenyan academic staff of the Department of Literature of the University of Nairobi to get African literature accepted in the school curriculum inspite of the policy of Africanization of education. The report of the first African Literature Conference held in Nairobi in September, 1994 made a strong statement on the situation :

> It was noted with shock and concern that even ten years after independence, in practically every school in the republic our students were still being subjected to alien cultural values which are meaningless especially to our present needs. Almost all books used in our schools are written by foreign authors; out of 57 texts of drama studied at EAACE level between 1968 and 1972, only one was by an African. (p. 7)

But indigenous music and dance were incorporated into the mainstream colonial syllabi of teacher training colleges and schools during the first few years of independence. This was followed by the writing of textbooks (e.g. Music of the Akamba by P. Kavyu), syllabi and examination papers on indigenous cultural heritage and publications of doctoral dissertations by the first African academics, (e.g. G. Were on the Abaluhya; G. Muriuki on the Agikuyu and W. Ochieng on the Gusii) on ethno-histories and cultures.

Prior to the independence of Kenya there were several resource books available on African art and craft for the teachers (Trowell: 1937; Young: 1940; Trowell: 1951) but then art and craft was not taught to African children as an academic subject. European and Asian children did the art curriculum from England. After independence when art and craft was introduced into the national curriculum for all the races, the emphasis was on the use of local materials and local subject themes. African aesthetic traditions were not seen as the sources for the development of history and theory of art. In 1965 the first post independence text on teaching of art and craft was produced by an indigenous Kenyan (Kareithi, P.M. Let the child create, Equatorial Publishers, Nairobi). In 1979, Njoroge Kamau also produced the second Kenyan text entitled, Foundations of creative work (East African Publishing House, Nairobi). The two texts are based on European methods of learning art but use local examples, like an African hut and a pot, and suggest use of local materials such as making pictures using banana fibers, making ornaments using seeds and printing with maize cobs. All written art examinations at college and secondary school level were based on European art history and theory. For example, Paper 7 of the Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education in the syllabus published in 1982 by the Kenya National Examinations Council, had the following sections:

Section A. Critical antiquity.

> Sculpture : Greek from Archaic to Hellenistic periods. A question on vase paintings to the end of the Attic period may be set. Some knowledge of Roman sculpture will be required.
>
> Architecture : Candidates should have general knowlede of Greek and Roman architecture orders.

Section B. The Gothic Cathedral in England and France.

Section C. The Italian Renaissance.

Section D. The Dutch seventeenth century with particular reference to Rembrandt.

Section E. Painting in Spain and Flanders, 1550 - 1700.

Section F. Painting and architecture in England, 1700 - 1780.

Section G. French painting of the nineteenth century.

It was not until 1985 that material culture of Kenya was introduced into the education system and the first school text on the material culture of Kenya was published eight years later in 1993 (Somjee: 1993) and exactly thirty years after independence. The reason for this may be explored in the history of education and teaching of indigenous arts during the colonial and post-colonial periods which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Ideologies, cultures, educational policies and education in the arts: An historical review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, schooling and learning of art are discussed in the context of several indigenous and non-indigenous ideologies operating in Kenya during colonial and post colonial periods. References are made to how the transmission of indigenous and non-indigenous dances and songs, art and craft, clothing and other items of material culture was rejected, manipulated and accommodated within a European development and educational model, and in turn how their transmission was contested, assimilated and manipulated by indigenous religious and nationalist institutions.

This discussion focuses on four periods. The first, 1840 to 1930, marks the coming of the missionaries, settlers and colonials, and establishment of the European model of schools. The second, 1930 to 1950, covers anti-colonial movements and establishment of African independent schools. The third period from 1950 to 1963, was the time of intense nationalism that climaxed in 1963, when Kenya achieved independence. The fourth period, 1963 to 1993, concerns the post independence era comprising presidencies of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi.

Nationalism and nation building were defined through political discourses, institutional policies and development plans as seen in movements leading to cultural displays, cultural recovery, economic independence, Africanization of the school syllabi and modernization of life-styles. This period was characterized by the projection and popularization of presidential ideologies of *Harambee* and *Nyayoism.* The development of three post-independence decades was influenced by several cultural events and two key educational policy documents that indicated to some extent what culture should be taught in schools.

The question that needs to be answered is how was the teaching of indigenous arts, and in particular visual art, viewed historically in schools that were clearly seen as instruments of cultural change during the four eras covering the colonial and post colonial periods.

2.1 Debates on evangelism and teaching of the arts (1840 - 1930)

In 1840, the establishment of Christian mission schools on the coast of Kenya presented an alternative system of formal schooling than that of the Qur'nic school.[13] At first the missionaries worked mainly among the freed slaves at the coast. They Latinized the Arabic script of written Kiswahili [14] and taught the converts to read the Bible. Reading of the Bible was accompanied by subjects like agriculture and carpentry that had not only economic advantages but were also said to inculcate love for manual work and a sense of discipline. Education in the arts was viewed by Christian schools, as in the Qur'anic schools, as developing the finer qualities of human nature. Thus, for example, instruction in European music and singing, more than other arts, were important subjects of cultural transmission in mission schools.[15]

There existed both cultural and theological differences between Catholic and Protestant churches that affected the evangelists' responses to the native arts of East Africa and consequently to what arts should be taught in schools.[16] One way in which these conflicts surfaced was through debates on evangelism, culture and education within the church. In these references were often made to native arts and the teaching of the arts which in turn was reflected in the churches' understanding of and attitudes towards native arts. For example, the writings of the Roman Catholic prelate, Bishop Lucas in Tanganyika raised important questions about native cultures and the Church.[17] The Bishop did not believe in suppressing tribal rites and customs but rather in Christianizing them and removing "obscene and immoral elements from them" (Ranger: 1975, p. 38) as he believed in retaining indigenous culture but living a Christian life. [18]

The disagreement between the churches and among orders on religion and culture, which affected the policy on education, was now seen in the African context. The main debate was whether or not a 'savage' could be baptized before he was educated and, therefore, civilized. The Protestant missionary. Livingstone, who found it difficult to convert Africans, believed that finally it would be the penetration of western civilization and education that would lead to conversion in Africa. However, Bishop Frere argued against this approach. He felt that the word of God and the material advantages of European civilization should come hand in hand with the conversion process (Oliver:

1952, p. 23). In fact he wrote an open letter of protest to the Archbishop of Canterbury stating that the earliest records of missions to the "barbarians of northern Europe showed that the missionary unit corresponded as closely as possible to a fully organized Christian community " and that it was concerned with not only teaching of religion and morals but also with "all the arts of civilized life." (Oliver: 1952, p. 23).

What was debated was whether the missionary should provide the right conditions for the spirit to enter the body or let the spirit enter the body through baptism and guide the native (through a certain spiritual state called 'grace') onto a Christian way of life. While one side of the debate required schools to proceed before Christianization, the other did not. In any case, both sides of the debate agreed that schooling would encourage the spirit to foster Christian character whether the person was baptized or not. Eventually, a good Christian character would foster the Holy Spirit. These debates remained unresolved in both Catholic and Protestant circles. The ambivalence might be attributed to the differences between dogmatic and liberal lines of thought within the churches, and Christian and Christian-influenced government educational institutions amidst indigenous cultures and institutions.

Debates on evangelism, the activities of 'Freedom of the Negro against Colonization', and the writing of East African ethnographies (mentioned in Chapter One) took place when the missionaries were primarily working with freed slave communities and the first missions were coming in contact with the inland people. Consequently two decades after the establishment of the first inland churches, the missionaries in fact began to support colonialism and the settlers in order to better transform the cultural behaviour and "idleness" of the Africans.[19] They argued that forced labour would stop immorality and some forms of cultural expressions such as the dances. This was a direct reference to the Christian belief in the link between labour, morality and the arts. In 1919 J.W. Arthur wrote to Governor Nortey clarifying a point in the 'Bishop's Memorandum' that the missionaries of the time had sent to the authorities:

> With regard to dances, idleness and drunkenness, naturally, we are at one with you in the desire to see industrious citizen of the country. (Temu: 1971, p. 4).

Soon after this, Africans' protests began against the settlers because of economic exploitation and against missionaries who were against their cultural practices. At the same time, European notions of God and civilization were changing individuals who came under mission influence. Africans who had studied in European schools contested as well as demanded more European education. This gave rise to new ethno-religious and nationalist movements at the heart of which was a protest against denigration of African heritage.

2.2 Contesting metaphors : European religion but African culture

The history of the Bible, in its many versions, and Christian inspired arts reflected nations and communities in search of political and cultural freedoms. Though this might not have been the message that the missionaries wished to give, the metaphor was adopted by African visionaries seeking freedoms at different levels and, consequently new cultures and institutions were invented. At the same time missionaries supported the colonial government and received some support from the British for their institutions, especially the schools.

Within the framework of colonial administration, indigenous belief systems and Christian evangelism, there developed a number of African messianic movements. Among the first were Nomiya, Lego Maria and Mumbo, as early as 1912 and 1913. They used Biblical metaphors from the Old Testament in ethnic linguistic and cultural contexts, and thus created symbols of a new identity which they use up to today. For example, they designed their religious material culture to mirror their new beliefs. They wore uniforms of cotton frocks and mitre like headgear for men and long scarves for women. They carried large wooden crosses and shepherds' crooks and trained their novices in speech and choirs. They congregated on hilltops and baptized the converts in rivers. Their members practised an austere moral code which prohibited smoking and drinking. They lived within ethnic societies and many participated in the rites and ceremonies of their clans and families. Their children were socialized through the codes of customs and the new forms of ethno-religious arts. Many were militantly against European culture and had a vision of a promised land away from the colony, and they posed a challenge to the colonial government. Their numbers continued to grow up to the first decade of independence when there were one hundred and fifty seven separate independent churches whose membership in total equaled that of the Protestant churches and almost that of the membership of the Catholic Church (Wipper: 1977, p. 2). This was reflective of the resistance of the first African Christian to European cultural domination.

2.3 Containing new cultures through education

It was in this context that the colonial government felt the need for better control over African education. The Phelps Stokes Report was published in 1925, and in 1926 the government, together with the Church of Scotland, began a teacher training programme for African teachers at Alliance High School near Nairobi. The teachers were taught fourteen subjects including European art, handcraft, and music. They learned to teach in vernacular languages in lower primary and in Kiswahili in upper primary schools. English was taught to teachers who went on for secondary education.

Mission and government schools viewed art and craft, and music as subjects which would help to discipline the body and, thus, complement moral education. Students were taught to appreciate the beauty of God's creation and the love of labour as often depicted in Christian symbolism in European art and material culture. To the early European educationalists, African art, music and dance did not reflect the serenity, order and control of passion and was contrary to formal education. Ranger (1975) in Dance and society in eastern Africa writes that:

> For the missionary European music represented a world of order in contrast to the inexplicable monotonies and sudden passions of African drumming; musical ability was taken as sign, a promise of potential civilization. (p. 12).

European music was encouraged, e.g. through singing of the hymns, while African music and dances were discouraged.

But the attitude towards indigenous art and craft was different. Some craft, such as pottery and basketry, presented pure art forms and products of labour. Others, such as bead ornaments and body painting, were associated with sensuality and heathen rites. Thus, missionaries viewed Kenyan material culture from their own points of view and were accordingly selective as to what should be taught in their schools. Some items of material culture such as the pot may have appeared to be an item of pure functional value to the missionaries, whereas to the ethnic people (e.g. those of Bantu cultures) it had many meanings. For example, the Akamba pot is compared to a woman's womb and is significant in a curse ritual.

Wood carving was discouraged in favour of carpentry. Wood carving was indigenous and thus it related to African belief systems while carpentry has a long tradition in European Christian belief and stories. Carpentry was viewed as labour work that inculcated discipline while wood carving reflected 'primitive' intellect. Interestingly, it was also during the 1920s that the first wooden objects of art influenced by European art values were beginning to appear from Ukambani in Kenya and from the Makonde and Zaramo ethnic regions of Mozambique and Tanganyika (now known as Tanzania). These were addressed to European markets. From the Gusii came the stone carvings of animal shapes and functional items such as stone vases. This development of East African art was not influenced by the school curriculum and neither did the schools integrate it into their curricula.

The growing political consciousness among African Christians in Agikuyuland in the 1920s and the use of ethnic rituals, material culture, songs and dances in defiance of Europeans' display of cultural authority alarmed the colonial administrators and the missionaries for it was interpreted as going back to 'primitivity'. There were spontaneous acts of defiance in the early 1920s such as violent protests against the government's ban on traditional practice of clitoridectomy in Agikuyuland. This was the beginning of cultural nationalism, an assertion of pride in one's own culture, which later became a militant movement imbued with political content. The authorities then began to systematically suppress it. In 1930, for example, the *Muthirigu* oral literature and dances were banned (Rosberg and Nottingham: 1970, pp 121–3).

2.4 The new school culture and the arts of nationalism

Cultural nationalism in Kenya was forging a new cultural identity for Africans. Through clever manipulation of both linguistic and material culture symbols, the nationalist leaders were creating a new trans-ethnic, racial and national identity. They contested colonial symbols such as the *kipande* (a metal identity card) and the sun hat, and asserted their identity through African beads and sandals. (Somjee: 1978). Jomo Kenyatta, for example, wore a beaded belt, and promoted his studio photograph of an Agikuyu warrior wearing a *shuka* (cotton sheet cloth) and holding a spear. In the Central Province, the nationalists who were often mission educated, started their own independent schools and a teachers' college at Githunguri (near one of my field sites) in the present Kiambu District. They designed their own curriculum based on European experiences and methods of school administration. None the less, the African Independent Schools also recognized their origins in the traditional age–set institutions within which the youth were trained by acting their roles in the society. They went through the various stages of rituals, some repeated at regular intervals while others, like initiation, were once–in–a–life time ceremonies.

African Independent Churches. New curricula were devised that confirmed African cultural heritage as positive and prepared the students for a future during the next forty years of the period of nationalism. Therein was the beginning of teaching of cultural heritage in an educational institution that operated on a European or 'modern' model. The colonial syllabi were first Africanized in Independent Schools:

> Soon, however, the KISA and its offshoots had developed an entire school system independent of the missions. Every effort was made to build education upon the new African attitudes of independent thought; for this purpose a new teacher training college was established at Githunguri, which rejected the Government syllabus and examinations, and substituted its own. (Sheffield: 1973, p. 28).
>
> (KISA : Kikuyu Independent Schools Association)

This meant that Independent Church Schools received no government grants, were not recognized as educational institutions by the Education Board in Nairobi and, in fact, were discouraged from operating by the colonial government. The success of the Independent Schools posed a threat to the colonial government for they were organizing the peasantry against colonial domination. African arts which were viewed as primitive became defiant performances against colonialism. In the end, the performances of indigenous arts symbolized nationalism and the assertion of African heritage. One Mau Mau song associated nationalism with the Independent Church Schools at Githunguri:

We are building our own school

The Seer predicted that
The base of the liberation of Kenya
Will be at Githunguri.
We must build this centre for our education,
Otherwise the British will humiliate us forever.

(Kinyatti: 1980, pp. 21- 22).

On August 11, 1936, representatives of Independent Schools were called to a conference on education at Jeans School in Kabete (Ndungu: 1969, p. 131). There was an attempt by the colonial authorities to negotiate an agreement with the Independent Schools Association on what should be taught in schools and to keep a certain measure of control and influence over education of Agikuyu children. At the time there were already forty four Independent Schools in the Central Province compared to only one government school (Ndungu: 1939, pp. 139 - 150). During the deliberations over the curriculum there was a disagreement over the level at which to start English instruction. The Independent Schools' representatives wanted instruction in English to start in Standard 2 while officers from the Education Department strongly recommended Standard 4. A compromise was reached whereby English medium would be introduced in Standard 3. At the conference the Independent Schools agreed to become members of the District education Board, follow a syllabus similar to the one read in the African government schools and be subjected to supervision by the Education Department.

2.5 A new school of art, art for self-employment and the Beecher Report on African education.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Picasso's discovery of 'primitive art' and the invention of cubism provoked intellectual interest in the novelty of an African art form in Europe and America. In Southern Rhodesia, European artists, oriented towards stimulating modern African art through exploration of ethnography, founded a school of Shona stone carvers. In West Africa, metal crafted objects and Benin Bronzes lent credibility to an African civilization and an African classical art period that in turn validated contemporary objects as having a tradition. In East Africa there came from the Makerere College in Kampala an intellectual interest in the teaching and development of African art. The person who founded the art school, Margaret Trowell, worked towards developing self expression of the African artists. This was the beginning of an East African art tradition in new media such as painting and printing in the region.

2.6 The Makerere School of Fine Art

Margaret Trowell, a graduate of the Slade School of Art in London, arrived in Kenya in 1929 with her husband Dr Hugh Trowell, a medical doctor, who was posted to Machakos in the Akamba land where new European-influenced wood carvings were just starting to come into the market (DN May 6, 1965).[28] In 1935 the Trowells moved to Uganda and it was here that Margaret Trowell researched and wrote about African material culture and education in art. Mrs Trowell's approach to the teaching of art to African students was based on a philosophy of art for the sake of art but with a good foundation in African ethnographic material (Court: 1985).

In 1939 the first overseas exhibition of East African art from the Makerere school of Art took place in South Kensington in London. Lord Hailey, a patron of art in London, who opened the exhibition, made an insightful observation that it was difficult to give guidance in art to students from a different culture :

I think that we should give to the Africans all that we have in our experience in the principles of art, the use of material, and the like, but that we should leave him as far as possible to express the African spirit in the product. We may then establish in time true African tradition in Art. (Trowell: n.d., p.106).

The statement reveals an early awareness by the British of respect for arts from another culture. Ten years later in 1949, a second exhibition of East African Art was mounted in London for an appreciative audience (Trowell, n.d. p.111). Also it was during this period that Lancaster cotton industry printed its first E.A. designs and called them 'Makerere Textile Prints' (Trowell: n.d. p.127). Later, a collection of religious paintings by African artists drew much attention in England in 1954. (Trowell: n.d., p. 127).

At the time Makerere was the only college in British East Africa and was known for its high standards. The Makerere School of Art, which was closely linked with and guided by the curriculum of the Royal College of Art in London, offered a diploma course in Fine Art. Almost a decade later, Elimu Njau, the first African artist from the Makerere School of Fine Art was commissioned to paint a mural in a church in Fort Hall (now called Muranga) in the Central Province.

The School of Art indicated the beginning of an academic approach to enhancement of African cultural heritage in East Africa through canvas painting and sculpturing in metal, wood and stone. The school also attempted to influence missionary and colonial attitudes to schooling of Africans in the visual arts and had African Roman Catholic brothers as trainee teachers in Fine Arts (Trowell: n.d., p. 127). Promotion of indigenous arts and craft, and art education for Africans was discussed at the conference of the Department of Education held in Nairobi in February of 1944 (KNA Education Deposit 1/2317 52 B). It was noted that while art was taught to European and Indian children, the African school syllabus provided for the teaching of only "craft of various kinds, few of them, however, being indigenous craft". Two of the issues raised were on the promotion of indigenous arts and craft, and artistic studies in the African schools. The need for the latter was expressed in these words:

> In Kenya, divorced as we are from a long and visible tradition of culture, it is more than ever important that children should be encouraged to develop their creative capacities.
>
> (KNA Education Deposit 1/2317 54)

The first indigenous art teachers of East Africa were trained at the Makerere School.[21] Some of them later helped to develop the Department of Fine Art and Design at the Royal College in Nairobi which later became the University of Nairobi. The first African art teachers for secondary and high schools were trained here by the students of Margaret Trowell. The first text books on the teaching of art and craft to African children were also published by tutors at the Makerere School of Art. Margaret Trowell, the founder of the School, later published a comprehensive book on African ethnographic objects which is even today considered to be the best resource material for the teaching of material culture of East Africa.[22]

2.7 Government's economic plans and training in art and craft

For the colonial government the objectives of schooling in the arts were more economic, perhaps to supplement war time and post war shortages, than educational. The later academic cultural bias given by the Makerere line of thought was probably not understood or taken for its educational merit by the Native Education Department in Kenya. For example, a set of archival documents that referred to formal training in art and craft stated that attempts by the colonial government were made to upgrade African pottery and blacksmithing, and to introduce weaving and spinning as rural small scale commercial enterprises (KNA 50/A, KNA 51/A). For example, during this period an East African Hand Spinning and Weaving Committee was started whose function was to foster the teaching of spinning and weaving (KWA 50/A). In East Africa, this led to the development of a large African craft market and it influenced artists who learned art through apprenticeship outside the mission and governmental institutions. However, this had very little or no influence on the teaching of art and cultural heritage subjects in the schools in Kenya at the time.

2.8 The Beecher Report on African education

The Beecher Report was commissioned in 1948,[23] and it attempted to stop the expansion of the Independent Schools by controlling their curricula and making it mandatory for all schools run by voluntary organizations to present their schools to the government for approval and possible funding. The reason given was to keep the 'quality of education' in review.

The colonial government 'modified' many of its policies based on racial segregation, such as the wearing of the *kipande*, the metal container and a chain that every male African worker was required by law to wear around his neck.[24] This item of material culture was used by the colonial government to differentiate the races and it was used by the nationalists to symbolize colonialism to the people of Kenya (Somjee: 1978).

The Beecher Report[25] stated that the objectives of the Commission were to examine "the scope, content, and methods of the African educational system". This covered almost everything on African education.[26] In the report it was recommended that there should be more involvement of Africans in decision making on school administration and teaching. This was later to have a significant effect on schooling. The report recommended that practical subjects such as industrial arts and agriculture be taught, and moral training be given to students.

The colonial government had been concerned about the growing number of African Independent Schools since the late 1920s. The schools were run by African Independent Churches and were visible signs of a political consciousness and an ability by the Africans to build institutions and eventually through them to organize the peasant population. The new churches were, in fact, reformed churches that disputed not only interpretations of the Bible but also the lack of African symbols in prayer ceremonies. Kieran (1966) made an insightful observation on the 'separatist churches' that reflected on the significance of the symbols in a performance :

> The lack of African symbology in a ritual that had come from Europe was something that separatist African churches tried to remedy. Instructions by itself, missiologists argue, is insufficient and the sacraments must be used by the church in the same way as tribal societies used initiation ceremonies. (Kieran: 1966, p. 153)

Coming from the church, the new cultural consciousness was hitting at the root of racially structured colonial society and economy. The missionaries were concerned because schools run by Africans threatened their monopoly over transmission of culture through an educational system that they hoped to use to cultivate a Christian society. But they did not have adequate finances to meet the growing African demand for education. Thus, they needed the government's financial aid to expand and improve mission schools and prevent the young from joining Independent Schools. At the same time, they did not want government interference in "securing a sound moral basis for all educational activity" for which "the Christian voluntary agencies have a large and essential party to play. Indeed, the task which they and they alone can perform increases as plans for educational development expand" (The Beecher Report, 1949: vii). The Beecher Report sought to reaffirm and expand the role of missions in African education specifically at this time when tension between African nationalism and the colonial government was building up. The missionaries were viewed as intermediaries between European and African culture, and mission education as a means to counteracting the new culture of nationalism.

2.9 Schooling, languages and material culture (1950 - 1963)

During this period there were two major ideological influences on school education in Kenya. One was the colonial-missionary-settler ideology which had its differences within itself but the three components of it were in general united by and against the growing strength of African nationalism, the other sphere of influence. Nationalism was spread by the literate and schooled persons who, though few in number, had a tremendous capacity to politicize and organize urban workers and rural people.

They were also able to manipulate and articulate symbols and sentiments of political and cultural freedom expressed by the Mau Mau, the African Independent Churches, the trade unions, the international liberation movements and movement of Black Consciousness. Simultaneously, they addressed British and international media within the matrix of a European intellectual tradition and Kenya European anti-colonial literary tradition. The nationalists preferred Kiswahili when addressing a multi-ethnic urban working-class population. They used the vernacular when addressing ethnic groups; and they discoursed in English while addressing the government and international audiences.

The hostility of the colonial-missionary-settler ideology fuelled anti-colonial feelings. Three anti-colonial groups developed which viewed European culture and schooling differently. Literate nationalists viewed European schooling and African culture as political tools to achieve self rule. They demanded more and better academic education for the Africans and stressed the value of indigenous heritage. Many of them carried material culture such as headgears, flywhisks, sandals and walking sticks as symbols of their "Africaness". Once in 1948 there was a riot in Nairobi when the nationalists demanded that all Africans wearing European hats remove them. Youths with the nationalist group forcefully took off the hats of people in the streets who did not take them off voluntarily.

Another line came from ethno-religious groups, such as *Dini ya Musambwa*, which attacked and burnt down mission schools,[27] and totally rejected European culture. In the 1950s the Musambwa group had been criticizing mission education and the missionaries " for having shown contempt for African Culture" (Wipper, 1977: p.181). Earlier Mumboism, another African ethno-religious church, rejected wearing of European clothes and European body hygiene which were taught at mission centers.

The third line was developed by the Mau Mau. The Mau Mau saw colonial-missionary schools as ideological institutions. At the same time, the Mau Mau Manifesto promised free and compulsory education for all after independence, and encouraged the youth to follow the white man in education as illustrated in the following Mau Mau song:

Father, I now demand education

If it were the time of Ndemi and Mathathi
Father, I would demand a feast of bulls
And after that, I would demand of you a spear and a shield,
But now, father, all I demand of you is education.

Now there are no bulls anymore
And the goats decrease daily
So I cannot ask you for any feast
But now, father, I ask you for education.

My mother has often told you
And I have also declared to you
That I will never demand any feast
Father, I want only education.

For a present day hero
His warrior's victory dance is education !
Is it not education that has made Mathu a hero ?
How else shall I be able to dance proudly the victory dance ?

Father, all of the Kenyan patriots have united
To defend our land against the British oppressors,
Why have you not thought of joining them ?

(Kinyatti: 1980, p. 20).

The Mau Mau word for a traitor was *tai–tai* (Kiswahili for ties) as most of those who went to school wore a tie after the English custom, and as it happened they were also the ones who did not join them in the forests. The Mau Mau were opposed as much to Christianity as to the African ethno-religious churches. But the Christian metaphors of freedom and messiah, and the lyrics had already a great emotional appeal among the Agikuyu. During this time, Mau Mau hymn books, called books of Mumbi and Gikuyu, appeared in print. The songs blended ethnic and Christian imagery and were sung to European Christian tunes in the vernacular. The hymn books were a powerful anti–colonial literature that organized the Agikuyu peasantry on the basis of their ethnicity. Muriuki (1974) writes that these hymns were "the rallying nationalist songs" that symbolized Agikuyu nationalist identification (p. 113).

2.10 Kenyatta's *Harambee* Period 1963–1978

It was during the first decade of independence that the racially structured governmental cultural institutions in Kenya began to change. Institutions, such as the Kenya Cultural Center, National Council of Arts and Culture and the Kenya National Theater, began to include African dance, drama and music among their activities (Ndeti: 1975). For the first time, indigenous arts were performed at the national arts institutions in the capital city and therefore, given political recognition.

The official cultural policy of the independent government was spelt out in Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965. This paper sought to develop an African personality within a trans-national ideology of African Socialism which was worded as constructed from the traditional ethnic roots of communalism set in the context of modernization and Africanization. But Africanization also meant modifying African traditions as explained in the first revised Development Plan of independent Kenya :

> Finally, the development of a modern economy will require changes in those traditions and patterns of behavior which, though appropriate to the traditional economy, are not conducive to development in the modern sense. (Kenya Development Plan 1966–1970, p. 60).

The nationalists were using a new language of modernization in policy documents and at the same time displaying support for traditional cultures in public. For example, when visiting ethnic communities, the President and politicians participated in rituals and accepted items of ceremonial material culture such as a skin cloak and a spear, a club or an elder's head gear, or a stool and fly whisk that symbolized their authority in indigenous traditions. Kenyatta, for example, wore a traditional Luo headgear and carried an Agikuyu fly whisk. In 1968 when Kenyatta disagreed with Oginga Odinga, a Luo elder and a politician, he symbolically removed his Luo elder's headgear, the *ogut teego*, but retained his Agikuyu flywhisk. Most of the major national political rituals that embodied indigenous beliefs and values were performed among pastoralist groups such as the Maasai, Turkana, Pokot and Rendille whose cultures were often also made objects of change. The pastoralists largely sustained their institutions in spite of the government's efforts to change them mainly through school education and at times through coercion, such as banning of certain ceremonies.

Meanwhile, the Independent African Churches which had begun as anti–colonial cultural and protest movements continued to exist and in fact increased in number and influence during Kenyatta's regime[28]. A contingent of the Mau Mau persisted in the forests of Mt. Kenya. The Islamic society lost its political and cultural center in Zanzibar after the revolution in early 1960s and Lamu became increasingly the center of Islamic learning and arts such as wood carving, poetry, embroidery and religious songs and poetic narrations of the Qur'an. There were large movements of people, especially from the Central Province, to the Coast and Rift Valley Provinces. For the first time in Kenya's history, these factors substantially changed ethnic values and compositions in the regions which had hitherto been culturally homogenous.

2.11 Performances of independence and cultural liberation

Ethnic arts were displayed at political rallies. They were highly politicized and they counterpoised against colonial and European cultures. Songs and dances praised the government's political ideology, the ruling party, African culture and modernity, the President and politicians. These displays of vernacular cultures in fact pledged ethnic loyalties.

Simultaneously, indigenous African culture was criticised as an impediment to progress in visions of the future and modern Kenya constructed in political discourses. All through Kenyatta's era indigenous cultures paid homage to the President and simultaneously performed as symbols of Kenya's self assertion against the dominance of colonial and European culture. Later, the costumes of the performers changed to incorporate colours of the national flag, party symbols and modern dress ornaments into the various ethnic attires.

The indigenous elite class which was influential in planning and policy making did not identify with the new visual art movement. There were not many indigenous patrons of African art[29] though Kenyan artists were commissioned by the government to paint and sculpt the president and politicians. These pictures and sculptures were often presented to them at ceremonies that they graced as guests of honor.

2.12 Modernization but not Europeanization

Harambee was a national slogan, if not a philosophy, central to which was the notion of working together to recover loss of national wealth and dignity from colonial economic exploitation and cultural suppression. The political and academic discourses spanned from African indigenous cultures to articulation of colonial experiences, and to socialist horizons that moralized ideologies. These were recounted, valorized and argued from new perspectives in schools of anthropology and theories of imperialism that were gaining currency in European and American scholarship during the sixties and early seventies. These also influenced Western press and media. Consequently, Kenyan politician's and intellectual's construction of the new African and Kenyan identity had an international audience and sympathy.

Simultaneously, and ironically, the white man became the patron of Kenyan art. The appearance of new African art and craft addressed to European and American markets defined and influenced post independence East African aesthetics and modern art production. Several European, and later, Asian owned art galleries opened in Nairobi and Kenyan art objects began to be marketed internationally. There was an influx of Western designers, artists, and art agents who either came as individuals or as members of educational or development aid teams.

2.13 Cultural revival through heritage learning and self help craft

Both the UN and OAU (Organization of African Unity) passed resolutions on cultural development and cultural policies with direct references to cultural revival, human dignity and inherent educational values in the arts. The United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided initial financial and moral support to the African nations. But most of all it provided a forum for academics and policy makers to debate on African culture and strategies for implementing issues that were projected mainly as sentiments and also for the purpose of rallying the masses during the struggle for independence. At a key UNESCO Conference on Education in Tananarive in 1962, it was resolved that :

> ... if the 'African personality' were to be asserted, then the African's cultural heritage must be rediscovered and transmitted to students through the schools. (Urch: 1968, p. 13)

This was a key conference on education in post-independence Africa that is said to have led to the establishment of a Curriculum Development Centre by the Kenyan Ministry of Education in February of 1966 (Urch: 1968, p. 15). The follow up of the 1962 UNESCO Conference on Education was the Conference on Teacher Education for East Africa, which was held in Kenya in 1965. At this conference it was strongly felt that African heritage subjects should be taught in schools as a means of preserving the culture.[38] But there was also a note of caution in another quotation:

> Along with the need to preserve the past is the desire to utilize selected traditions so that balance and direction can be given to national development. (p. 19)

Thus the complex issue of selection and keeping the balance between what to preserve or to remove from African culture, which started with political discourse and was echoed in the Development Plan of 1966 - 1970 (p. 60) was now carried into teacher education.

While Kenya government emphasized the school's role in preservation of African traditions and cultural values, foreign aid organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) aimed at developing self reliance through small scale industries based on cultural knowledge and traditions. Rural small scale manufacturing projects were also based on developing or transferring appropriate technologies and initiating labour intensive schemes; they explored both the informal craft sector and art markets. Craft projects, which changed the image of articles from Africa, were initiated among the urban poor, the disabled and women groups. Formerly the objects were 'curios', and later, several artefacts were considered museum quality ethnographic art objects from the colonies whose place was in the museums and galleries. Now they were products from the Third World sold principally to help economic survival of the marginalized communities. Simultaneously, a middle class of mainly European consumers, and a smaller African and Asian consumer, of African art and craft was created by national help organizations such as Cottage Industries of the National Council Christian Churches of Kenya (NCCK) and later international craft organizations such as Oxfam. Very many private art and craft enterprises developed as well. Among these, African Heritage, owned by a Kenyan politician, became the largest.

Meanwhile, tourism in Kenya expanded to become the second largest industry. Tourism is not only a source of foreign exchange but also one that supports local art and craft enterprises. The new European expatriate and tourist, who became patrons of African art, were unlike the missionaries and the colonials for they exulted the `Africaness' in the arts. Several foreign cultural centers opened in the capital city. They displayed new Kenyan art and sponsored Kenyan art and artists under new cultural exchange agreements that were signed hand-in-hand with economic aid contracts. Later the foreign cultural centres such as the French Cultural Centre, the Goethe Institute (German), Italian Cultural Centre, the British Council, American and Japanese Cultural Centres became the most significant urban locations for promotion of African art and discussions on the art involving academics, practitioners and dealers.

In the sixties the first graduates of Fine Arts and Literature from Makerere[31] met in Nairobi and started an African literature and art group, and an art gallery called the Paa-ya-Paa. They invited the public to the talks and viewing of African culture and were closely linked with the department of Fine Art and the intellectual discourses on African culture at the University of Nairobi.

2.14 Intellectual discourses in the arts: The post-independence challenge

At the University of Nairobi intellectual discourses on nationalism centered on the aesthetics of the Black Diaspora, the Negritude movement and later, on peasant cultures.

The Department of Fine Arts offered a five year diploma course which was closely linked with the Royal College of Art in London. There were several teachers from the Makerere School of Fine Arts who continued the tradition of exploring the African idiom in painting and sculpture. Peasant cultures and peasant protest movements, including the Mau Mau, were valorized through comparisons to other Third World anti–colonial experiences struggling to establish their cultural identity and human dignity. Peasant struggles and guerrilla movements in contemporary arts was inspired partly by the imagery of socialist arts and new arts of the Third World. Arts of the freedom struggles of Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique, and to some extent Chinese peasant based cultural revolutions stimulated the Kenyan academic artist's socialist vision within the interpolating contexts of the colonial past and neo–colonial present. When arts oriented intellectuals were detained or exiled,[32] this line declined and the center of intellectual artistic activity shifted mainly to the French and German Cultural Centres in Nairobi. Academic artists and writers who were critical of the government's ideology sought protection in foreign cultural centers and countries.

2.15 Policy matters on the teaching of art at the university and in the schools

In 1970 the Department of Fine Arts and Design at the University of Nairobi was separated into two departments. The planners were able to justify the existence of the Department of Design, with its two sections of Industrial and Graphic Design, studies that were of value to economic and scientific development ; but they had some doubts about the existence of the Department of Fine Arts. They argued that at the most it would produce only teachers of art. The Second Development Plan voiced this concern.[33]

In the school curriculum the presence of art and craft was 'justified' for it could help to mitigate tribalism and create national feeling. Clearly the purpose of teaching art and craft was political :

One of the influences that can be invoked for the development of national feeling is that of the arts and craft. Artistic creation is, often associated with particular tribes or localities and might seem to be, at first sight a divisive rather than a unifying factor. The contrary is in fact the case. The removal of the sting from tribalism does not depend on the abolition of tribal feelings (a hopeless task), but on their activity, for it can provide for the expression of tribal or racial identities in forms that give pleasure and enrichment to life without the taint of bitterness. Consequently, we feel justified in listing artistic activities among those that can bring about reconciliations between the many peoples that go to make up the Kenya nation. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 40).

The presence of other cultural heritage subjects was explained differently. For example, teaching of History was explained as "a source of that emotional security that gives maturity, stability and self-confidence" (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 82). Indigenous African music, on the other hand, had to be processed through modern institutions to renew its status in an independent nation. Here again was the notion of how indigenous culture had to be modernized through schooling.

Some politicians and planners also felt that after independence indigenous art and craft had to be refined and 'elevated' through training programmes for artists and craftpersons so as to present a proper image of modern Kenyan at the national level. A new art culture was invented that graced the galleries and promoted Kenya's 'modern' image and received the appreciation of foreigners. The following anecdote from the early post-independence nationalism further illustrates this notion.

In one of his political speeches shortly after independence, Jomo Kenyatta made a reference to the new art and craft movement :

> A group, of women, for example, at Kipipiri settlement scheme on the Kinangop – quite recently had sample of dyed cloth on display in the Art Gallery of the New Stanley Hotel. This cloth was bought by visitors of Kenya, and will help to spread abroad a good picture of Kenya and its people, the sort of things they are able to do. (Kenyatta: 1964, p. 70).

Tye and dye is not indigenous to Kenya but it projected an image of a modern African culture that did not embarrass politicians. There was already an international market for this cloth which came from Asian and West African cottage industries, and its appreciation by the European consumer was assured. Kenyan craftpersons addressed this market and were further encouraged by the growth of post independence tourism. The market expanded, and to the broad upper and middle class population this product became an aspect of the new and officially approved Kenyan culture . Several attempts were made to design a national dress from tye and dye cloth. This craft is taught in schools and colleges as "traditional" Kenyan art and dress material.

It was towards the end of Kenyatta's presidency that a concern for a national cultural policy was voiced. The policy had to be legitimated by nationalist ideals of unity and cultural identity and pride of people. It also had to be institutionalized by a National Council of Arts and Culture (Development Plan, 1974–1978 p. 490), whose policy statements aimed at strengthening and developing cultural groups for performing music, dance and drama, creating art in the country, and organizing cultural festivals inside and outside Kenya.

2.16 The Kenyan Education Commission Report (Ominde Report)

This was the context within which the Kenyan Education Commission Report, often referred to as the Ominde Report, was written and implemented. It was commissioned by the first parliament of independent Kenya under Jomo Kenyatta who had received his education in the mission school like many of the other parliamentarians at independence. Of the one hundred and three members of the House of Representatives, ninety started their careers as teachers.[34] The first Development Plan emphasized that education was more of "an economic than a social service" at the time of independence (Kenya Development Plan 1966–1970, p. 305) and would contribute towards a "rational development of customs and traditions" (Kenya Development Plan 1964–1970, p. 102).

In the Ominde Report (1964) no reference is made to the pioneering efforts of the African Independent Schools in Africanization of the syllabi, teaching of academic subjects, and to the process of political and moral education inspired by indigenous cultures. The Ominde Report did proclaim to break away from the tradition of locating itself in the historical continuum of British colonial education. But the distinctiveness it sought was constructed through a criticism of colonialism rather than through a new African perspective. The Ominde Report created its legitimacy largely on the basis of a difference from the previous colonial documents.[35]

The report states its concern against the ideology of colonialism that used the educational system to deliberately keep the Africans uneducated (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 22).[36] The report also argued that religion and moral training were explained by the colonials and the missionaries alike for the same purposes[37] that denigrated African culture:

> Under the colonial government, and more specifically under the influence of the Christian missions, much that was good and important in our indigenous cultures had been lost, or denigrated. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 23).

The Ominde Report states that morals and ethics should not be taught in schools as "ethics, as such, is no substitute for religion and no subject for primary school" (p 36). Perhaps the Commission was reacting to the teaching of morals and ethics because of their origins in missionary education. It suggested that at higher levels of learning, ethics might be studied as a subject but made it clear that religion and morals should not be subjects in schools thus affirming secularism.

The Ominde Report constructs a debate on the language issue in favour of English as the language of instruction and literature from the first year of schooling. Perhaps the root cause of the conflict between the language of being modern as justified by education pedagogy and being indigenous as stated in the political ideology may have been influenced by the views of the first African Kenyan academics who wrote the Ominde report. The Commission gives six pedagogical, not cultural or political, reasons, as to why English language is important in schools:

Firstly, the English medium makes possible a systematic development of language study and literacy which would be very difficult to achieve in the vernaculars. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

The second reason logically follows from the first:

Secondly, as the result of the systematic development possible in the English medium, quicker progress is possible in all subjects. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

The third explanation reinforces the second and compares English to vernacular languages:

Thirdly, the foundation laid in the first three years is more scientifically conceived, and therefore provides a more solid basis for all subsequent studies, than was ever possible in the old vernacular teaching (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

In the Beecher Report it is suggested that it is easy to make a transition to English from the vernacular which Ominde rejects and gives as the fourth reason for using English:

Fourthly, the difficult transition from a vernacular to an English medium, which can take up much time in Primary V, is avoided. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

The quality of education is based on acquisition of the English language:

Fifthly, the resulting linguistic equipment is expected to be much more satisfactory, an advantage that cannot fail to expedite and improve the quality of post-primary education of all kinds. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

English language would help modern learning techniques:

Lastly, advantage has been taken of the new medium to introduce modern infant techniques into the first three years, including activity and group work and a balanced development to muscular co-ordination. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

Ominde uses educational pedagogy to legitimate the use of English but strong nationalist sentiments are read in the text. This may have been directed to previous educational reports and to the British educationalists who still controlled the educational system in Kenya in the middle and late 1960s. There is an irony in this nationalist discourse for it favours promotion of English language at the expense of Kiswahili and other indigenous languages while the colonialists' promotion of Kiswahili and vernacular languages was interpreted as a means to limit opportunities for Africans.

Emphasis is placed on modernity, which in the Kenyan context often alludes to Europeanization, achieved through acquisition of the English language. It is implied that the European language, when learned early and, through "modern infant techniques" (Omondi Report), would help to provide a scientific cultural base for fostering technological knowledge and skills.

The Ominde Report retains the colonial language in the school and views the vernacular languages as having a function at home.[38] In the Report other cultural heritage subjects were treated differently. It emphasizes Africanization of History and Geography syllabi, and promotion of African Art, Craft and Music in the school system but the teaching of these heritage subjects would be mediated through English language. Culture becomes a tool to invent a new African personality that had been suppressed by colonial domination and a tool to promote a new political ideology. The British had been accused of dividing Africans through a policy of cultural regionalism. The Ominde Commission aimed to correct this; for, national unity was the political mission of cultural education after independence. [39]

2.17 President Moi and *Nyayo* philosophy 1978 - 1994

Moi's period of presidency is characterized by the projection and popularization of *Nyayoism*, a philosophy of development that aims at modernizing the nation while simultaneously retaining its traditional culture. *Nyayoism* became most pronounced in the school curriculum after 1985 when the 8-4-4 syllabus was introduced. President Moi was trained as a teacher during the colonial times and he taught for several years before joining politics. The voice of a teacher's authority emerges in the Presidential discourse when validating the 8-4-4 curriculum as based on the teaching pedagogy of "going from known to unknown." Consequently, the 8-4-4 syllabus was said to be based on dual principles of keeping the old (the known) and making the new (the unknown) and in that way it addressed both the social and economic issues. In schools children's choirs praise the 8-4-4 system and President Moi as a leader and a teacher. Children compose poems praising his leadership and guidance that is often equated to education for being guided to many also mean being educated.

The reform of the school system was explained in one principal educational document of the era while cultural policies were drafted in several conference reports on culture and development. These conflicted with actual events and administrative directives on matters related to culture which is the focus of the next section.

2.18 Conflicting indigenous and Kenyan culture

Moi began his presidency in 1978 by asserting his cultural authority first over the pastoralist minorities among whom he was born. The first demonstration of this took place in 1979 when he toured the northern regions of the Rift Valley Province. During this time there was a problem of cattle rustling which had resulted in ethnic fighting and led on to skirmishes with the administrative police as well. The government viewed this situation as a result of the primitivity of the people and lack of education. The authorities believed that the culture of the people had to be changed to redress the situation. President Moi toured the northern ethnic regions and gave *maendeleo* speeches. For example, during one public rally at Kapedo, which is north of Nakuru, he urged the pastoralists to modernize by changing their traditional attire to European dress. He displayed two girls on the rostrum in a dramatic scene, one standing on his right, the other on his left. One was wearing a traditional garment and the other a European dress. He pointed out the backwardness of the former, and the *maendeleo* (development) of the latter. Following the President's display and speeches exhorting the Pokot and the Turkana to move forward and to leave their primitive ways behind, the notorious GSU (General Service Unit), a paramilitary force, forcefully removed skin dresses and beaded ornaments from the pastoralists while looking for home made guns. (Personal talk with Hans Visser, Orwo, 24.07.1980).

Oyoe weri Pkiach,	Oyoe boy Pkiach,
oya poryo miron	oya men fought
Poryo Nyayo tokutoto lokonkonen	The battle of Nyayo until they handed over the home-made guns
Eoye eywey patrick aya poryo	Eoye woe, despair aya men fought
Eoye kikimut tirimoy	Eoye tirimoy * were slashed
Eoyoe kikimut lokotyoy	Eoyoe lokotyoy * were slashed
Eoyoe kikimut karin wey aya	Eoyoe beads were torn apart and burnt

(Song collected by by Hans Visser of Orwo Mssion, 1979)

* *tirimoy* and *lokotyoy* are sacred and personal items of Pokot material culture that are used in peace and conflict resolution rituals.

Other similar events took place. For example, during the early years of Moi's regime, important Maasai rites of passage were officially stopped, declared inappropriate for modern times and the participants threatened. In 1982 a District Officer in Samburu banned the use of ochre in Samburu District. These directives contradicted what was written down as the official cultural policy in the Development Plans of the era.

The Fourth Development Plan (1979–83), covering the first five years of Moi's presidency, emphasized "promotion of drama, dance, music, languages and creative art" and "documentation of the many rituals of the various tribes of Kenya" and " documentation of the religious values, morals and belief systems of all the tribes of Kenya " (Development Plan 1979–1983, pp. 188–190). The plans were written and influenced by academics, but they were not followed by the administrative authorities. This provoked some intellectuals at the University of Nairobi to start a movement that attempted to create cultural and political awareness through the arts. These intellectuals attempted to politicize the theater and the visual arts. The authorities reacted to this. They banned plays and stopped art exhibitions.

The period from early eighties to 1992 has often been called the time of the ' Culture of Silence.'[48] Government discouraged certain ethnic and protest based arts, while it organized large annual cultural festivals at provincial and district levels. These festivals displayed material culture, ethnic dances and songs. The publicity and oratory associated with these cultural performances often incorporated political content that favoured the government.

It was also at this time that several underground movements circulated leaflets opposing the *Nyayo* philosophy and the mismanagement of economic, social and cultural affairs by the government. The churches united to speak on freedom of expression, and break the ' Culture of Silence', and several foreign agencies sponsored projects on culture and development at the universities of Nairobi and Kenyatta. The agenda was to promote cultural expressions of the many ethnic groups of Kenya and of the new developing urban based cultural groups. One project by the Ministry of Economic Planning and National Development attempted to search for the causes of failures of development projects in the cultural roots of the rural people. These also reflected the growing awareness of ethno-based studies in the Western hemisphere and of applied anthropology to Third World development projects. The second Development Plan of Moi's era (1984 to 1988) established and mandated the Department of Culture in the Ministry of Culture and Social Services whose responsibility was "the revival and promotion of our culture through development of visual arts, performing arts, oral traditions and national languages." (Development Plan 1984–1988, p. 172). The emphasis was on cultural revival that was reminiscent of the cultural recovery rhetoric during the nationalism of Kenyatta's era. This was the context of the 'Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond' (1988). This report, which is also known as the Kamunge Report, set the background and parameters for educational reforms in Kenya.

2.19 The Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (1988)

The Kamunge Report, purporting to follow in the footsteps of the Ominde Report, evokes the same discourses that are mentioned in the Ominde Report, the KANU manifesto of 1963 and the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African socialism and its application to planning in Kenya of 1965. It also emphasizes continuity with Kenyatta's regime by referring to the 'spirit of the Harambee' philosophy that is found in three books of political speeches of Jomo Kenyatta. Through these documents the Kamunge Commission identified with the Ominde Report and paid its tribute to Kenyatta but added President Moi's 1986 printed discourse on *Nyayo* philosophy and principles of African nationalism as its guiding line[41]. *Nyayo* philosophy gave the Kamunge Committee the authority to change educational policies set by the Ominde Report because, as it stated, the philosophy of African socialism that was defined by the KANU manifesto and

Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African socialism and its application to planning in Kenya of 1965, was itself adaptable to change.[42]

We may note that the Kamunge Report re-introduced Christian moral education in the curriculum as social education on basis of African traditions.[43] The Beecher Report had drawn its justification for moral teachings on the basis of Christianity. The Ominde Report rejected teaching of religion and moral education.

The Kamunge Report also advocated political education based on two presidential discourses, the *Harambee Spirit* and *Nyayo Philosophy*, for all levels of schooling and training (The Kamunge Report: 1988, p. 9). The Kamunge Report, drawing from the experience of Beecher and Ominde discourses, marries Christianity with African traditions and political education. The purpose of the moral, cultural and political education was to cultivate a sense of self- reliance in the young people who were mostly from peasant and pastoralist homesteads. The Kamunge Report evokes self-reliance that was also one of the main political slogans at independencc. Moral uplifting and self-reliance were advanced as instruments for development and for solving the unemployment problem.

The most recent Development Plan (1988 - 1992) is the sixth one since independence and the third plan of Moi's era. It discusses "cultural policy through educational philosophy." One key principle of this approach is that:

The promotion and appreciation of the national culture in its various dimensions must be seen as prerequisite for meaningful national development. (Development Plan 1988 - 1992)

The second one was that:

All Kenyans must develop a sense of nationalism, patriotism, self–reliance and self-determination, the pillars upon which our national pride and dignity are built. (Development Plan 1988 - 1992)

2.2 Summary

Three approaches to the teaching of art to African children had evolved in Kenya. One line suggested the teaching of art, within the broader frame of cultural heritage, as a means of maintaining traditional values for the sake of sustaining social structures and morality.(This line was suggested at the height of the Mau Mau Emergency period between 1948 and 1960). Another justified learning of art and craft for economic reasons

(This was suggested and implemented during the two World Wars periods). The third line approached learning of art for the sake of art education. This line emerged from the University of Makerere when Primitivisim as an Art School was gaining recognition in Europe and America. From about 1920 to 1960 there also developed three distinct East African carving styles in wood and stone. These styles are known by the ethnic groups among whom the first examples emerged: the Akamba Wood Carvings, Kisii Soap Stone and Makonde Wood Sculpture.

During Kenyatta's time, political discourses expressed nationalism and notions of nation building. Academics and educationalists began to implement programmes based on African and Kenyan perspectives arising from a new awareness of the role of culture in educational curriculum. The Ominde Report was written within this context but it raised a contradiction between the teaching of indigenous and modern (European) culture through subjects such as religion, language, oral literature, and art and craft. English was valorized as a language of education and transmission of African heritage. While Kiswahili and ethnic languages, which were the languages of socialization and 'informal' learning of the heritage in the family and community environment, were given lesser status in schools. This contradiction was inherited by President Moi's government after Kenyatta's death in 1978. President Moi wrote a philosophy of development that explained how the country would develop towards a modern nation state while still retaining its indigenous roots.

During Moi's regime, the dichotomy between the indigenous and the modern became more pronounced than ever before as schooling expanded to the pastoralist regions of Kenya where there had been no schools before. There are no clear directions or studies that the teachers could follow on what it means to maintain indigenous cultures and be modern Kenyans as well. The past experiences in education had evolved from the nationalist ideology that first and foremost challenged mission education and racism; futhermore, it had developed among the subsistence agriculturalists, plantation workers and peasants mainly in European-occupied lands.

This chapter leads to a series of new questions that need to be understood. For example, how are indigenous cultures handled in schools which are seen as vehicles of modernization ? How is material culture taught to students who have lost or have a low maintenance of ethnic traditions due to colonization ? How is 'modernization' taught to children who come from homes where indigenous arts and values are predominant as among the pastoralists ? In the final analysis how do students respond to the 8-4-4 Art and Craft syllabus based on *Nyayo* philosophy and what is this syllabus achieving ? I sought to understand these questions during my fieldwork.

Chapter Three

Three school locations and their cultural, educational and *maendeleo* (development) experiences

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I draw comparisons and show differences among the three sites where the schools are situated in terms of their locations, cultural settings and educational histories. At the regional community levels, I explore the arts and educational traditions. The school cultures, which represent the 'modern' and Kenyan (nationhood) heritage, interface with the communities within which they are located. Nairobi has a multi-ethnic urban culture which in itself connotes modernity and nationhood. The Kiambu Agikuyu culture is ethnic but it is also Christian, maintains its ethnic language, and perceives itself as being modern, representing the mainstream Kenyan culture. The Maasai belong to a minority group. They have retained many of their indigenous arts, the language and the nomadic mode of existence, and are not generally counted as being either modern or in the mainstream culture of the nation. The three sites and their contexts are discussed in three sections (4.1A -C).

3.1A The City of Nairobi, its people and the arts

Nairobi has grown from a railway camp in Maasailand at the turn of the century into a cosmopolitan city of two million people. To the south of Nairobi, bordering the urban boundary live the Maasai pastoralists, to the East are the agriculturist Akamba and to the North are farmlands of the Agikuyu and coffee plantations. In the West, the road to Lake Victoria marks the dividing line between the Rift Valley Maasai and the highland Agikuyu. The road then runs into the traditional Kalenjin area which is demarcated into large plantations and cattle farms.

Nairobi is the center of tourism, Kenya's largest industry and a source of foreign exchange, of commercial trade in Eastern Africa, and a home to many multinationals, embassies, aid agencies and international organizations for the region between Somalia and Mozambique, and from Rwanda to Zimbabwe. Several international airlines fly into Nairobi every week and it is one of the three UN capital cities in the world (Sunday Nation July 11th, 1993). Its hotels, galleries and cultural centers situated in the City Square display African "high" art and fashions, ethnographic artefacts and Africana books. In the streets and lanes, between the buildings, there are hundreds of 'curio kiosks' and hawkers selling tourist art and ethnographic objects of the pastoralists. Every Tuesday, there is a large craft market where the hawkers and Maasai women from around Nairobi gather to sell ornaments and ethnographic art objects mainly to the tourists and the large expatriate population of the city. Nairobi is one of the focal points of African art market and is connected with museums stores and galleries in Europe, North America, Australia and Japan.

Surrounding the City Square "Art Shop Window" and upper class residential areas and the middle class housing estates, are the working class areas where 80% of the population live. In these areas are located homes of artists and the workshops that supply art to the City Square and the international market. One finds hundreds of Akamba wood carvers sitting in rows producing animal figures, Makonde carvings and functional items such as salad spoons and key chains. There are NGO (Non governmental organization) sponsored self-help craft workshops producing sisal baskets, leather items, costume jewelry, batik cloth, ethnic dolls and toys. Here are also located artisans called the "*jua kali*" craft-people who manufacture utensils, tools, garments, furniture and building equipment for the middle class and working class populations of Nairobi.

There are also approximately thirty cultural groups in the city and seventy craft groups (Appendix 4). A few are professionals and elite theater groups (such as the Phoenix Players) operating in European and colonial tradition. Their audience is the expatriate and a small percentage of the Kenyan elite and intellectuals. The majority (i.e. more than fifty) cultural groups represent and practice in the working class areas. Many of these are based on their ethnic origins such as Agikuyu, Luhya, Giriama and Akamba. (Examples of these are Bahati Women Traditional Dancers, Kariobangi Sukuti Dancers, Giriama Sengera Traditional Dancers and Akamba - Maringo Traditional Dancers.) Some are multi-ethnic and perform in three or four languages. (These include Jericho Utamaduni Dancers, Chelepe Dancers and Uzi Panama Dancers).

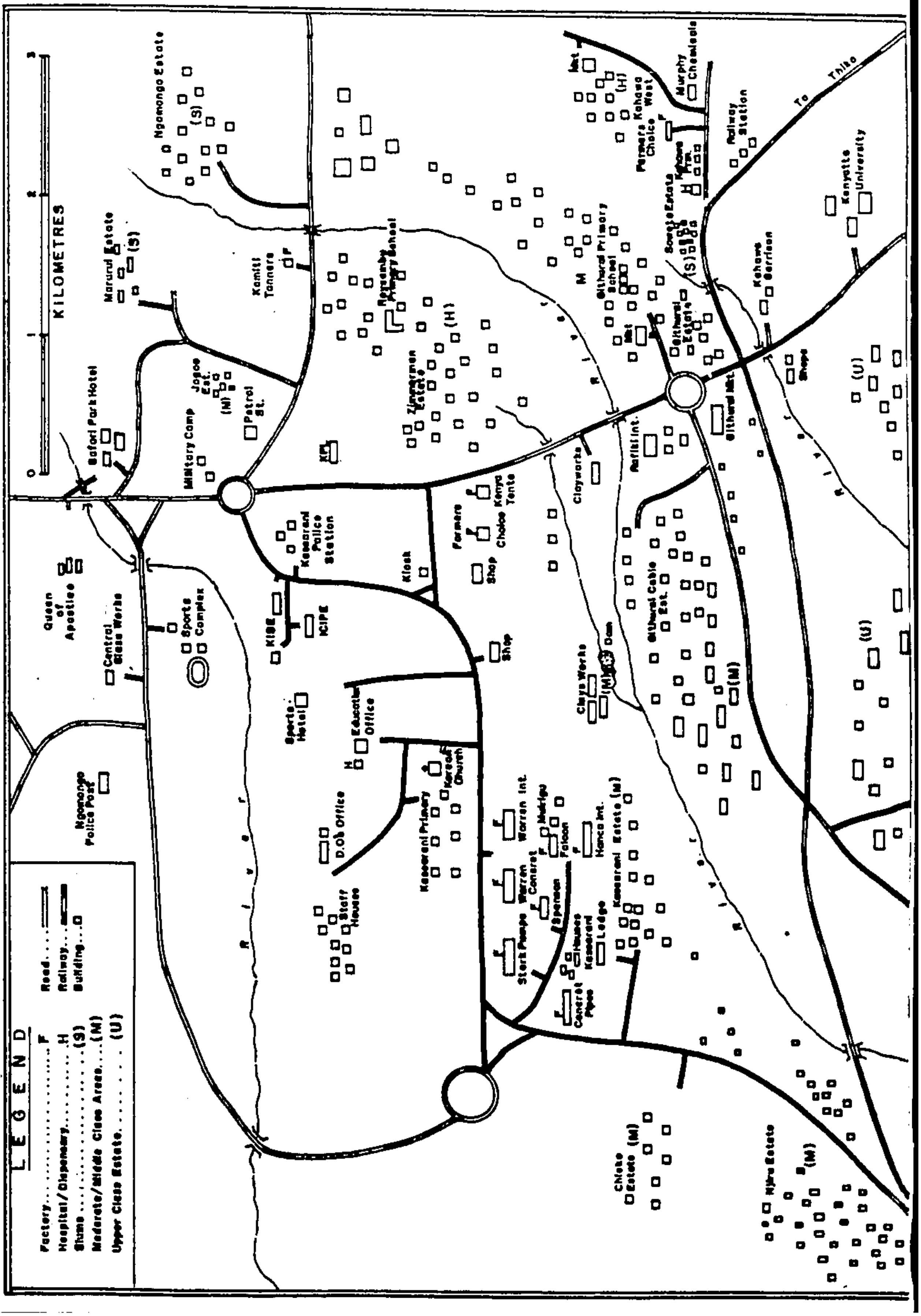
There are also others that are organized by political parties (for example, Dagoreti Women Dancers, who supported the Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) and its candidate, Beth Mugo, during the 1992 elections), NGOs (Street Children's theater) and churches (like St. Joseph's Catholic Church Youth Group) to advance party popularity, create social consciousness and raise funds. Some are private company-based cultural troupes (like Kenya Utamaduni Ngomas and Dafo Troupe). Several troupes (such as Dala Entertainers) are owned by Nairobi business people who market them to tourist hotels. The only ethnic theater existing in Nairobi is the Agikuyu theater comprising of several companies.

Kassarani Primary School (Refer to map)

Kassarani Primary School is situated in the new industrial area of Nairobi close to the main Nairobi to Thika Highway and adjacent to the new church that was built by the Korean community which resides in the vicinity. A road divides the school from six industrial companies that manufacture concrete pipes, pumps, metal binders, plastic ware, furniture, clay tiles and bricks. Three kilometers away is the Baba Dogo Road industrial area comprising of approximately twenty manufacturing firms. Their products range from perfumes to clothing, glass ware, beer and pharmaceutical items. About a kilometer away from the school is the administrative complex of Nairobi North District. It comprises the office of the District Officer, a dispensary, staff houses of the Nairobi City Council employees and the office of the District Education Officer.

Kassarani Primary School, located in Nairobi North District, was founded in 1952 during the colonial period. It is administered by the Nairobi Education Board, under the Nairobi City Council. Generally, Nairobi City Council schools have a higher number of trained teachers and better facilities compared to schools outside of Nairobi. There were eighteen trained teachers and only one untrained teacher at Kassarani. The school had four stone buildings, a playing field, an art room and a home science room. Children were supplied with art material and thus could experience art using different media such as clay, wire, wood, paint, paper and metal. The school had two streams from Standard 1 to 8 and there were six hundred and twenty seven pupils altogether. There were almost as many girls in the school as boys, and in some classes there were more girls than boys. Students came from the nearby lower middle class and middle class housing estates, industrial worker quarters and from a number of shanty towns along the main Nairobi – Thika road. The Kassarani location itself borders one of the major Nairobi working class shanty towns known as Mathare Valley. In the shanty town there are numerous '*jua kali*' workshops that manufacture tin, metal and wooden articles for domestic use. (The '*jua kali*' are informal and small scale craft workshops.)

Map 8: KASSARANI PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ENVIRONS


LEGEND
Factory F
Hospital/Dispensary H
Slums (S)
Moderate/Middle Class Areas (M)
Upper Class Estate (U)
Road
Railway
Building
KILOMETRES
0
1
2
3
Ngomongo Estate
Maruru Estate
Kamiti Tanners
Jogoo Est.
Petrol St.
Military Camp
Safari Park Hotel
Queen of Apostles
Central Glass Works
Sports Complex
Ngomongo Police Post
Kasarani Police Station
KIBE
ICIPE
Sports Hotel
Education Office
D.O.s Office
Staff Houses
Kiosk
Farmers Choice
Kenya Tents
Shop
Clayworks
Clays Works
Dam
Kasarani Primary
Korean Church
Warren Int.
Madigo
Falcon
Hanco Int.
Kasarani Estate (M)
Warren Concrete
Spenson
Stork Pumps
Houses
Kasarani Lodge
Concrete Pipes
Chieko Estate (M)
Njiru Estate (M)
Githurai Cable Est.
Githurai Mkt.
Rafiki Int.
Githurai Estate
Githurai Primary School
Soweto Estate (S)
Kahawa Barracks
Kenyatta University
Railway Station
Farmers Choice
Kahawa West
Murphy Chemicals
Mkt
Zimmerman Estate
Roysambu Primary School
Shops
To Thika
River

The majority of the students at Kassarani Primary School was from the four major ethnic groups of Kenya, which are Agikuyu, Luo, Luhya and Akamba. There were a few students from minority pastoralist groups such as the Turkana, Samburu and Boran. The fathers of the latter were either security guards in Nairobi or soldiers stationed at the nearby military barracks at Kahawa, or policemen housed at the divisional police headquarters at Kassarani.

The teaching community was composed mainly of males and females from three of the majority ethnic groups mentioned above. They spoke in both English and Kiswahili in the school but used ethnic languages in private conversations among themselves if they belonged to the same group. Out of the seventeen teachers at Kassarani Primary School, ten were Agikuyu (four females and six males), Three Luhya (all females), two Ameru (both females), one Luo (male) and one Giriama (female).

The political preferences of the community were mixed, with some in favour of a one party system and others favouring democracy. When I talked to the teachers individually many expressed the desire for change of the government. One teacher's view summarized that of many when he said to me:

> Teachers blame the government for most of their misfortunes. They are against the ruling party and they are going to join opposition parties.

But then he continued to explain,

> They (the teachers) say that there is now a ruling tribe and they are eager to see this tribe out of power. Those who belong to this ruling tribe or party find it difficult to talk about politics when other teachers are around.

It is notable that the teacher thought of "the ruling tribe" and "party" as synonymous. The quotation reflects how feelings and opinions were expressed and the atmosphere in the school staff room. The important issue was that one's tribal roots and one's political preferences influenced the opinion that was expressed, how was it expressed and to whom was it expressed. That was one dominant aspect of the school culture at the time.

Section 3.1B The Agikuyu of Kiambu District and their arts

Four traditions affect the contemporary arts of the Agikuyu of Kiambu District. These are Christianity, formal education, the Agikuyu traditional culture, and the experiences of nationalism and the Mau Mau.

After the completion of the railway from Mombasa to Kisumu in 1901, the first concentration of missionary activities was in the Agikuyu country. In the next eight years, eight Christian missionary outposts were built at Kihuruko (1901), Kijabe (1901), Kiambu (1902), Limuru (1903), Waithega (1903), Kahuhia (1906), Mangu (1906) and Mahiga (1908) (Sheffield: 1973, p. 10).[44] This was also the period when Kenya was declared the white man's country and, as Sheffield puts it, "the Land Office was besieged by an impatient flood of settlers, and in its haste to accommodate them, a great deal of land North of Nairobi was alienated" (1973: p. 6). This was the Agikuyu country in the present Kiambu district of Central Province and the location of my fieldwork.

With Christianity came the European education system in Kiambu District, and later there developed African Independent Church and Independent schools movements leading on to nationalism and Mau Mau in the 1950s.

The four traditions are created by and linked through a ninety year old colonial and post colonial history that has produced some of the leading Kenyan writers, academics, clergymen and nationalists such as Jomo Kenyatta whose home was in Kiambu District. Chief Koinange was an educationalist who was involved in constructing the first schools for the Agikuyu. General Wairungi commanded the Mau Mau Kiambu contingent.

In the Kiambu District, there is a tradition of Christian concerts that are performed in Gikuyu. For example the most popular concerts are: Birth of Christ, Prodigal Son, Lazarus and the Rich Man and The Last Supper and Crucifixion of Jesus. Sermons in the village churches are enacted by Agikuyu priests who often draw from the four traditions. Examples of these were sermons by Father Apollo Ngigi (Orthodox Church), Leonard Mbogo Mwaura and Stephen Gitundu Njoroge (CPK - Church of the Province of Kenya) which were very popular on Sundays. During the last twenty or so years, many elderly couples, who had been married according to traditional rites, got married again in churches. Nearly every couple goes through a church wedding and simultaneously observes traditional rites and seeks blessings of the elders.

An elderly teacher at Karuri Primary School sums up the religious beliefs in the district as follows:

> Most residents around the school have left their traditional religious beliefs. At present they have been fragmented into new dominations: Christianity, Catholics, Anglican-Protestant and so on. However, others have maintained a middle road. For example the Akorino traditional values. They are not purely traditional for new Christian values equally contaminate their belief systems.

Regional writers in Kiambu District produce books in English and Gikuyu for adults as well as for children. Among these is Ngugi wa Thiong'o, an award winning but controversial novelist, who now writes novels in Gikuyu, and whose books are widely read and discussed. He also writes children's books in Gikuyu from exile in Europe and America. In 1986 in Brussels, Ngugi addressed The International Conference on African Languages in Gikuyu, an event that teachers in Kiambu still talk about with pride. They are especially impressed that Gikuyu had to be translated into English and French for the audience of the conference. Currently, Ngugi produces a Gikuyu academic journal called *Mutiiri* from New York University. Two other authors, Henry Kuria and John Karoki Njoroge, come from the vicinity of Karuri Primary School (my research site). Henry Kuria and his wife are well known musicians and dramatists as well. Kuria's best known book is in fact a Kiswahili play called, *Nakupenda Lakini* (I Love You But) which he wrote in 1958 and which was a set text in secondary school. At present, Kuria teaches drama and music at Senior Chief Koinange Memorial Secondary School which is named after one of the founders of the Kikuyu Independent Schools movements.

John Njoroge was one of the first trained teachers in the area. He wrote a novel called, The Land is Ours, in 1970 which described the local Kiambu scene during the Mau Mau period (1948-1960). The author's predicament and Kiambu Agikuyu nationalism is reflected in this comment on Njoroge's book by a teacher at Karuri Primary School:

> John Karoki Njoroge was growing up at troubled times that he describes so vividly in his novel. He tells of a series of events by which chief Elijah was torn between the loyalty of indigenous nationalism on the one hand and alien imperialism on the other, acted in his tribe in the tense dark days. The story unfolded the walled struggle like a Chinese magic box! But the greatest strain in Elijah's conscience developed when freedom became imminent. Countering forces within and without force him to the authority site, worsening the man's temperament. Holding a baton, Elijah controls the ridges, crushes the *Kiama Kia Muingi* (secret movement) of Agikuyu to fight Colonialists in order to get freedom quickly. Like the former - Mau Mau, it was very secret. The sentence of the member who revealed the secret was capital punishment.

Three novels by Ngugi wa Thiongo (Weep not Child, The River Between and A Grain of Wheat), which are set in the Kiambu physical, historical and cultural environments, echo the sensitivity and sentiments of the teacher. The novels are widely read and they describe the conflicts raised by ethnic and Christian traditions, schooling and colonialism in Kiambu District. In The River Between, the hero, Waiyaki, confronts colonialism and the white man's civilization but thirsts for education:

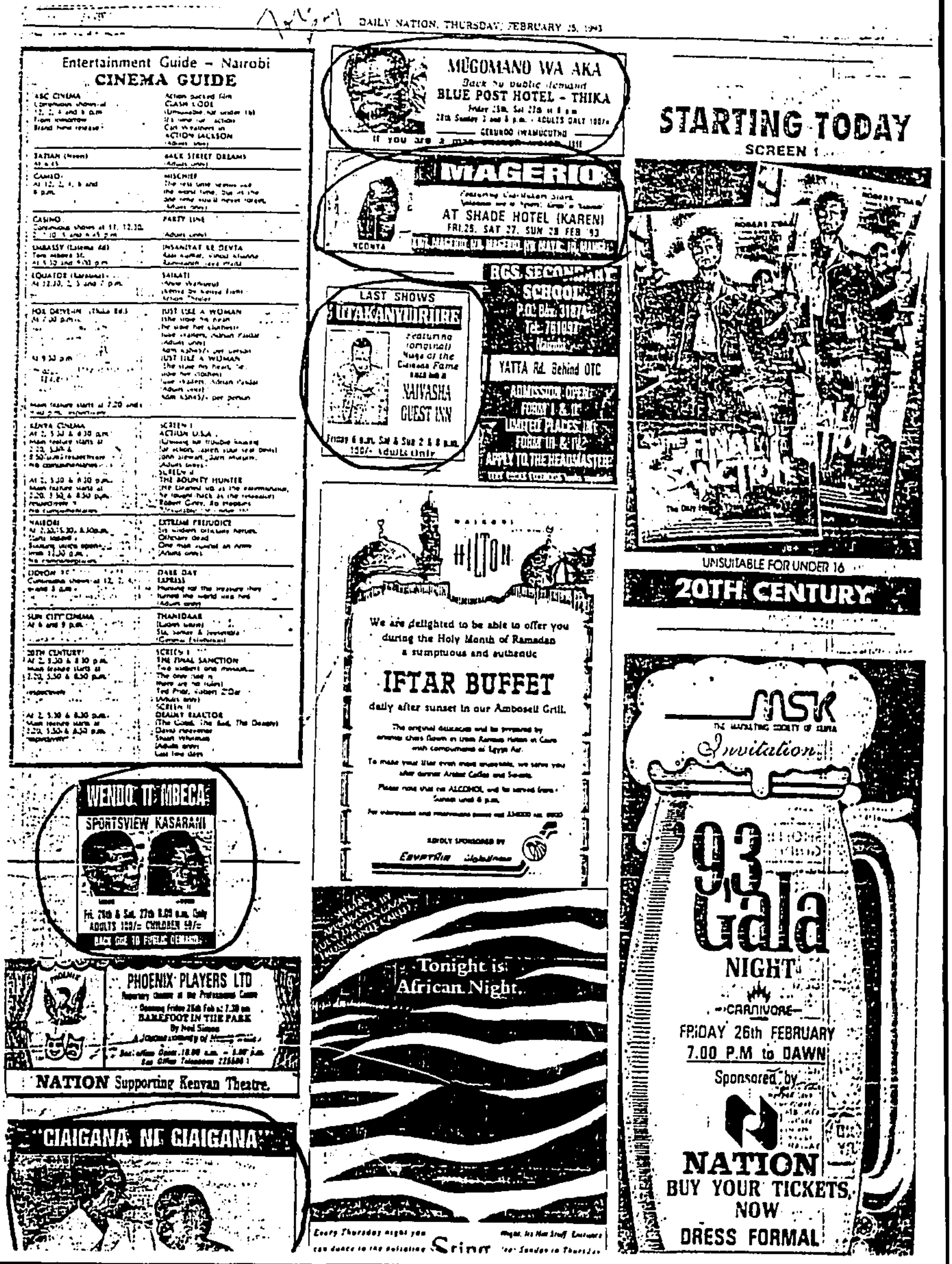
> Waiyaki went from ridge to ridge, meeting elder after elder. They came to him and felt comforted by the blaze in his eyes. He had a passion to live for. His god, education, quided him, showed him the light, made him overcome personal frustrations and hardships. It drove him through the hills and valleys, through the forests and darkness of the night. He had not yet stopped to think where all this was leading, whether the new awareness and enthusiasm he had helped to create would be quenched by education. If anybody had suddenly asked him a question in that direction, he might have burst out: Unite and build more schools. (Ngugi: 1981, p. 109)

There are several story tellers in the district, and around the school there are studios of visual artists. These artists participate in art shows in Nairobi, and in 1993 their work was displayed in galleries in Philadelphia (USA). Some of the artists paint on the freedom struggle and make critical social commentaries. Their works relate to the collections of the House of Mumbi, an art gallery set up by artists Riigii Karanja and Gatimu Maina. The House of Mumbi (Mumbi, the creator, is the legendary mother of the Agikuyu) has fifteen portraits of 'Kenya's First Liberation Struggle (1920 -1963)' and of various aspects of Agikuyu culture such as their traditional dances and ceremonies. The 'liberation struggle' paintings center on heroic deeds of Harry Thuku, Mary Muthoni Nyanjiru, Dedan Kimathi and Jomo Kenyatta who were all Agikuyu anti-colonial fighters. The exhibition catalogue (10th May, 1994) of the House of Mumbi reads:

> The sacrifices were manifold but the courage of people's conviction - that their cause was just was equally immense, as Karanja and Gatimu's priceless collection called The House of Mumbi clearly conveys. The pain of the struggle comes through sharply in work like The Harry Thuku Massacre; the courage and conviction to win is clearest in works like Oath of Patriotic Nationalism and Symbol of Struggle which features Kapenguria 6.

The regional artists, writers, intellectuals and the church leaders have had an impact on the Gikuyu language and literature which in turn has stimulated new vocabulary and concepts. The first Agikuyu rural theater was built in 1977 at Kamirithu, which is about 20 km away from Karuri School. The first play called *Ngaahika Ndenda* (I Will Marry When I Want) by Kiambu actors was banned after a few performances because of its critical comments on the society and the government. This was during Kenyatta's time. Their second play called *Maitu Njugira* (Mother Sing for Me) was banned in 1980 for the same reasons as the previous play. This was during Moi's time. Recently, the play, *Wangu wa Makeri,* based on the Agikuyu creation myth and acted in Gikuyu, was performed for six months as it traveled in the Central Province. Another play, *Caiman ni Ciagana* (Enough is Enough) was performed at weekends in hotels and clubs around the Central Province and in and around Nairobi. Traveling theater groups are very active among the Agikuyu and their popularity has grown during the last two years. For example, in February, 1993 out of six plays advertised in the Daily Nation, the most widely circulated daily in Kenya, five were in Gikuyu (Daily Nation, February 13, 1993. See Illustration 3).

Illustration 3: Five Kikuyu Plays



DAILY NATION, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1993

Entertainment Guide – Nairobi

CINEMA GUIDE

ABC CINEMA Continuous shows at 12, 2, 4 and 6 p.m. From tomorrow Brand new release	Action packed film [illegible] (Unsuitable for under 16) It's time for action Carl Weathers in ACTION JACKSON (Adults only)
[illegible] (Noon) At 6.45	BACK STREET DREAMS (Adults only)
CAMEO At 12, 2, 4, 6 and 8 p.m.	MISCHIEF [illegible] (Adults only)
CASINO Continuous shows at 11, 12.30, [illegible] and 6.45 p.m.	PARTY LINE (Adults only)
EMBASSY (Cinema 46) Tom Mboya St. At 5.30 and 9.00 p.m.	INSANIYAT KE DEVTA [illegible]
EQUATOR [illegible] At 12.30, 2, 5 and 7 p.m.	[illegible] Action Thriller
FOX DRIVE-IN (Thika Rd.) At 7.30 p.m. At 9.30 p.m. Main feature starts at 7.20 and [illegible] p.m. respectively	JUST LIKE A WOMAN [illegible] (Adults only) Adm KSh65/- per person JUST LIKE A WOMAN [illegible] (Adults only) Adm KSh65/- per person
KENYA CINEMA At 2, 5.30 & 8.30 p.m. Main feature starts at 2.20, 5.50 & 8.50 p.m. respectively No complimentaries At 2, 5.30 & 8.30 p.m. Main feature starts at 2.20, 5.50 & 8.50 p.m. respectively No complimentaries	SCREEN I ACTION U.S.A. [illegible] (Adults only) SCREEN II THE BOUNTY HUNTER [illegible] Robert Ginty, Bo Hopkins [illegible]
NAIROBI At 2.30, 5.30, 8.30 p.m. [illegible] No complimentaries	EXTREME PREJUDICE [illegible] (Adults only)
ODEON [illegible] Continuous shows at 12, 2, 4, 6 and 8 p.m.	[illegible] (Adults only)
SUN CITY CINEMA At 6 and 9 p.m.	THANEDAAR [illegible]
20TH CENTURY At 2, 5.30 & 8.30 p.m. Main feature starts at 2.20, 5.50 & 8.50 p.m. respectively At 2, 5.30 & 8.30 p.m. Main feature starts at 2.20, 5.50 & 8.50 p.m. respectively	SCREEN I THE FINAL SANCTION [illegible] (Adults only) SCREEN II [illegible] (The Good, The Bad, The Deadly) [illegible] (Adults only) Last few days

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In 1988 Jane Nyambura's hit song in Gikuyu, *Queen ya Musiamo*, sold 50,000 copies and in 1993 her song *Mwendwa KK* was declared the song of the year in Kenya. Jane Nyambura who is popularly called Queen Jane of music, composes songs that portray women positively and she is quoted as saying that her success "is not for me alone but for women in general" (Rainbow no. 431, April 1994. Back page see Illustration 4).

There is a section of Agikuyu intellectuals and clergy whose written and oral discourses both inside and outside the church and academic institutions, integrate African culture, liberation theology and more recently, human rights, multi-party democracy, protection of the environment and freedom of expression into their arguments. The home of Kenneth Matiba, a former minister and now an opposition leader, is near Banana Hill. Most people in Kiambu had allied themselves with the 'Matiba Section' of FORD (Forum for Restoration of Democracy, now called FORD-ASILI) and expressed their anti KANU government feelings openly even before the change of the constitution to allow for multi-party politics. During the anti-Agikuyu campaigns (called 'ethnic clashes' in the press), in the Rift Valley Province in 1992, a major refugee camp was set up near the town. At another level several popular Gikuyu songs by Joseph Kamaru, Sam Muthee and Nelly during the period 1990 to 1992 valorized Kenyatta's regime and critized detentions without trial. These also were protest songs against detention, corruption and one party government. They appealed to God, referring to metaphors of good and evil from Christian texts. The cassettes were widely circulated in homes, bars, restaurants and *matatus* (taxi-buses) in Kiambu district before they were banned by the government.

Illustration 4: Queen Jane of the Song

"QUEEN" JANE NYAMBURA

Queen Jane is congratulated for winning the 1993 Song of the Year award

"My greatest moment came in 1988 when I composed *Queen Ya Musiamo.* It was a hit which sold over 50,000 copies," says Jane Nyambura. This is the song that gave her the nickname "Queen".

Jane Nyambura is the eldest in a family of nine. She started her singing career as a member of her local church choir.

After secondary school, she sang with Ndenderu Church Choir and worked as a medical attendant.

She later quit her job to pursue a career in gospel music. None of the established gospel singers, however, were ready to try her as a soloist.

In 1987, Simon Kihara, a pop-singer, introduced Nyambura to pop music and her career began. She sang for audiences and in the studio. She went on to compose several hits with Mbiri Stars Band, including *Queen Ya Musiamo.*

She went to Wamaitu Productions in 1992. "I signed a deal there to release the now popular *Mwendwa KK,*" says Nyambura. *Mwendwa KK* was declared "1993 Song of the Year" and won a trophy.

Nyambura composes songs that portray women positively. Her success, she says, "is not for me alone but for women in general."

Nyambura is engaged to musician Jimmy wa Eunice. She now sings pop songs instead of gospel. Her new cassette is called *Ndimunogu.*

The Kiambu Agikuyu culture reflects strong ethnic coherence and values that take pride in being modern, Christian, literate and Agikuyu. Being modern and Christian are generally accepted as Agikuyu ethnic characteristics by both Agikuyu and non-Agikuyu. Sarah Ndegwa wrote that Kinuthia (77), a retired teacher once told her in an interview that:

> Wearing foreign ornaments and adopting western styles of adornment was a sign of development and flexibility, as far as the Agikuyu society is concerned. However, doing away with the traditional values meant losing identity, leading to lack of honor and respect to the Agikuyu god and ancestors. (Ndegwa: 1992, p. 149)

Kinuthia further confirmed that:

> Wearing western ornaments to represent Agikuyu values was acceptable but copying the Western and discarding the traditional values was not tolerable. (Ndegwa: 1992, p.149).

Kinuthia's thoughts capture the Agikuyu paradox of being modern and traditional.

In Kiambu District, where Karuri Primary School is located, the Agikuyu differentiate themselves in terms of being 'primitive' or modern. *Muthomi (thoma* in Gikuyu is to read, education; teaching) in Gikuyu is the educated and Christian. If a man, then he has one wife and generally is 'civilized.' *Mucenji (cenji* in Gikuyu is unschooled; savage, generally not Christian) is the opposite – uneducated and not a Christian, and if a man, then he may have several wives and, is not considered to be 'civilized'. One goes to school to become a *muthomi, (*and one who doesn't go to school is a *mucenji . Muthomi* (the educated and Christian) is the desired person *mucenji* (the uneducated and non Christian) is a derogative word that may also be used as an abuse.

Many teachers at Karuri Primary School felt that the Agikuyu were the mainstream *athomi* (plural for *muthomi)* who created the modern Kenya national identity and consequently a sense of nationhood.[45] Education and Christianity were central to their modern identity as reflected in the terminology of *muthomi* and *mucenji.*

For a number of generations the ethnic group has manipulated outside (foreign norms, values) to strengthen its identity. Modern school culture in Kiambu area confirmed this. The school community was able to manipulate symbols to create ethnic coherence and ensure their progress as a modern group. Circumcision, for example, which is known to be the key symbolic affirmation of ethnicity, is done in hospitals but there is a ritual feasting afterwards by relatives and clansmen and clanswomen. Christian prayers are offered and an age mate solidarity established which supports ethnic solidarity at the grassroots. Most Agikuyu Christian children also undergo a confirmation ceremony in the Church and retain two names, one Christian and one Agikuyu as their first names. The latter conforms to an age-old tradition of systematically naming children after the parents' relatives following a gender and seniority order that bonds the child to the extended family, clan and tribal lineage. Another example, which reflects the Agikuyu material culture tradition, is that of two calabashes, one for the beer (*kinya* pl. *inya*) and the other for sour milk (*gitete* pl.*itete*) that symbolize negotiations and agreements of the marriage contract between the clans (*ngurario*) before the church wedding.

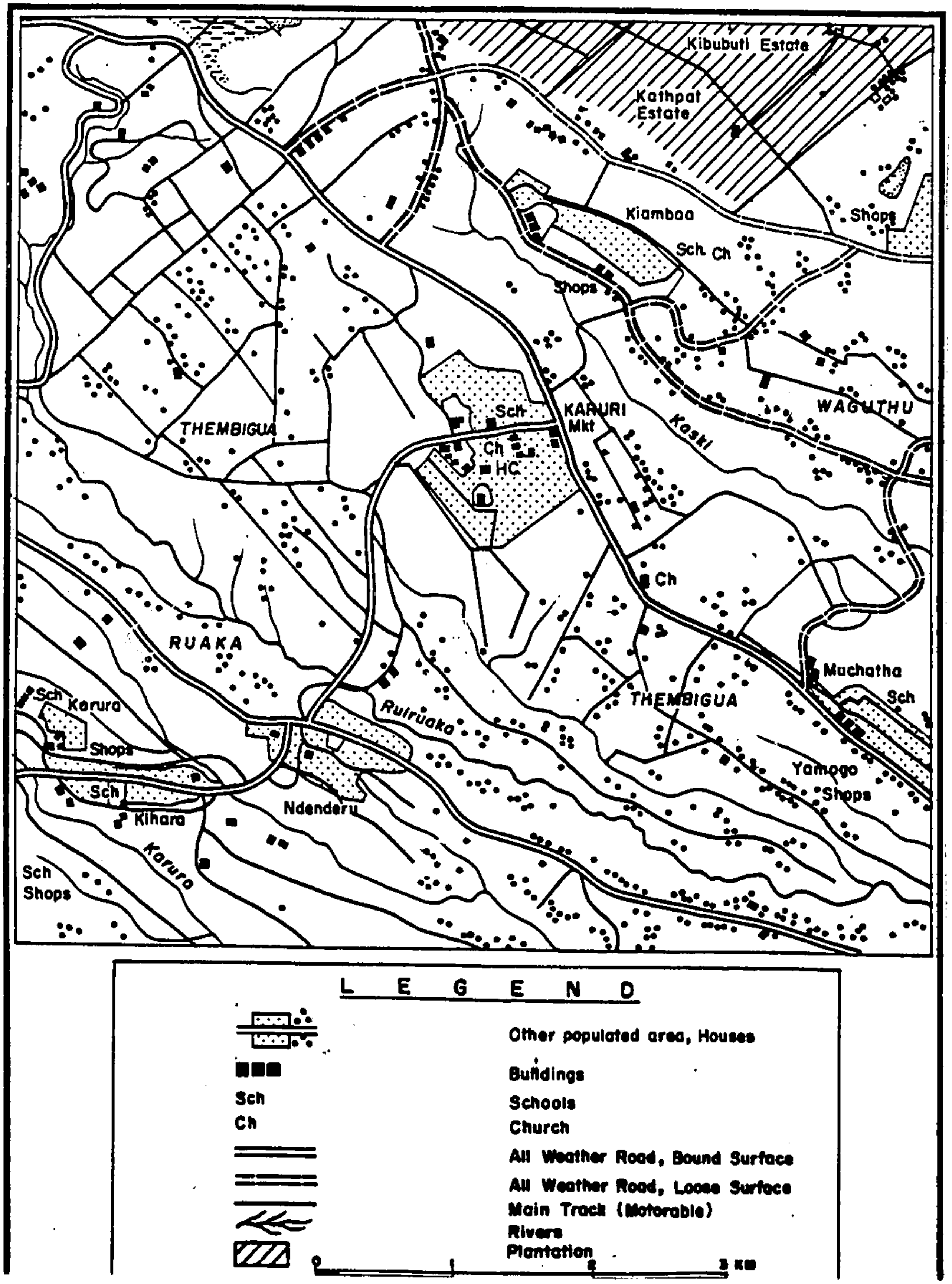
Karuri Primary School (Refer to map)

Karuri Primary School is centrally placed in Banana Hill township in Kiambaa Division of Kiambu District, a fertile and heavily populated region which is the home of the Agikuyu ethnic group. It was here that the first inland missionary schools were started around the turn of the century. Today in Kiambaa Division alone there are thirty-seven primary schools where over eight thousand pupils are registered. There are also several secondary schools, colleges and polytechnics for further education in the arts, sciences, commercial and technical subjects. The district's largest polytechnic, the Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology, that symbolized Kenyatta's *Harambee* era and the post-independence educational change in rural Kenya from the humanities to the sciences, is located near Kiambu town, the district's administrative headquarters. Today it is known for its Scandinavian style furniture. Many post- primary students also learn trades such as tailoring, motor mechanics, carpentry and welding through apprenticeship. About sixty years ago there were Independent Schools run by the Agikuyu in this area. Thus, the children in Kiambu District come from three to four generations of school-going families. There exists a cultural context that fosters positive attitudes towards school education, trades, professions and careers in the 'modern' economy. Those out of school, in fact, are looked upon as unfortunates. The Agikuyu word for the unschooled *mucenji* also means uncivilized.

Karuri Primary School was started by Catholic fathers in 1957. The year is significant for it marked the height of the Mau Mau uprising and the nationalist struggle against British colonialism. One group of pupils at Karuri Primary School came from Banana Hill town and Karuri Administrative Center. The parents were small-scale farmers, craftpersons and business people. There were many tailors, carpenters, hawkers and mechanics in the area. The parent community also comprised civil staff of the local administration, i.e. police, District Officer's Office and Post Office.

Map 8 : KARURI PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ENVIRONS

Source: Topo Sheet Kiambu, Survey of Kenya, 1973


Kibubuti Estate
Kathpat Estate
Kiambaa
Sch
Ch
Shops
Shops
WAGUTHU
Kaski
KARURI
Mkt
Sch
Ch
HC
THEMBIGUA
RUAKA
Ch
Muchatha
Sch
THEMBIGUA
Ruiruaka
Sch
Karura
Shops
Sch
Kihara
Ndenderu
Yamogo
Shops
Karura
Sch
Shops
L E G E N D
Other populated area, Houses
Buildings
Sch
Schools
Ch
Church
All Weather Road, Bound Surface
All Weather Road, Loose Surface
Main Track (Motorable)
Rivers
Plantation
0
1
2
3 KM

Another group comprised landless peasants, squatters, plantation workers and more recently refugees from the Rift Valley where there has been ethnic fighting since 1992.

Several Agikuyu refugee children were admitted to Karuri Primary School which influenced the atmosphere at the school during my fieldwork. Teachers often pointed out the refugee children to me as evidence when the newspapers reported government statements that denied anti–Agikuyu activities in the country. This situation perhaps made the Agikuyu look more inwardly into their own culture and community. Many felt that their status was changing from that of a dominant ethnic group during Kenyatta's time to that of a 'persecuted' one. That was strongly felt in Kiambu District during my field work. This was also the atmosphere at the school. The Agikuyu factor in present-day Kenya was frequently discussed in the daily newspapers and weekly magazines, evoking Agikuyu history, the Mau Mau, Agikuyu settlements in the ethnic lands of the Maasai and Kalenjin, the presidency and ethnic power structures in Kenyan politics and commerce. These issues would frequently come up even when I was interviewing teachers. Staff room discussions during the term of my research often reflected emotions stirred by the daily newspapers. Such feelings were also felt generally in the school. One day when I visited the school, three quarters of the children had run away earlier during the day because of fear of being attacked. There was a strong rumour that there were 'Kalenjin warriors' in the nearby forest. Some teachers with whom I talked that day believed that this was true.

The dominant school language was Gikuyu (the language spoken by the Agikuyu) which was spoken among the students and the staff. Out of the thirty four teachers, twenty nine were Agikuyu (twenty females and nine males), three were Luo (all females), one Mkamba man and one Abagusii man. Almost all the one thousand and two hundred students were Agikuyu, boys and girls in almost equal numbers. The number of children in each class varied between forty five to fifty five.

The language of instruction was English in upper primary and Gikuyu in lower primary. However, all examinations, including those in lower primary, were taken in English. Kiswahili was spoken as the third language.

Students and staff knew very little about their traditional material culture, art and craft. But they were eager to know more about their material culture in a way that would valorize their ancestry. For example, whenever I spoke about the Agikuyu material culture the staff and students became very interested and involved. Only the elder members of staff remembered names of the items. The head teacher and the teachers at Karuri Primary School were conversant with the popular Agikuyu theater and songs, and proud of their literacy tradition and of the Agikuyu writers, singers, playwrights and theologians. In the conversation with teachers the word 'modern' was often said to mean 'development'. Once I asked a teacher to explain some Gikuyu terms for modern. They were said as :

Uti wa mbere - development (literally)
dini - religion
uteti - politics
githomo - education
otheru - hygiene, cleanliness
atunga - rich
thitima - electricity
thibitari - hospital
mai - water

One teacher described modern to mean "change of life for the better." In his mind there was no doubt that better things were both modern and of European designs. In the Kiambu district development was accepted as a positive change both in terms of material and cultural change. It was implicit in the discussions with the teachers that they felt that the Agikuyu was a more 'developed' (and thus also modern, Christian and educated) ethnic group of Kenya that was persecuted by less developed tribes, mainly Kalenjin and Maasai, who were backward, non-Christian (and un-Christian) as well as uneducated. Modernity was vividly expressed in children's art. The results of short experiments on children's understanding of aesthetics surprised me at first. Modern household furniture, machinery, cars and European clothes and biblical angels were drawn as things which were beautiful . Ugly things were certain animals, the devil (drawn as in European tradition) and certain incidents such as a house on fire and a bag snatcher being beaten by the public. No traditional things of the Agikuyu were shown as beautiful. Once a teacher told me that the material culture part of the Art and Craft Curriculum was "intended to take us Kikuyus backwards". (See Illustrations 5-9).

Illustration 5: Kikuyu girl's drawing of beautiful things.

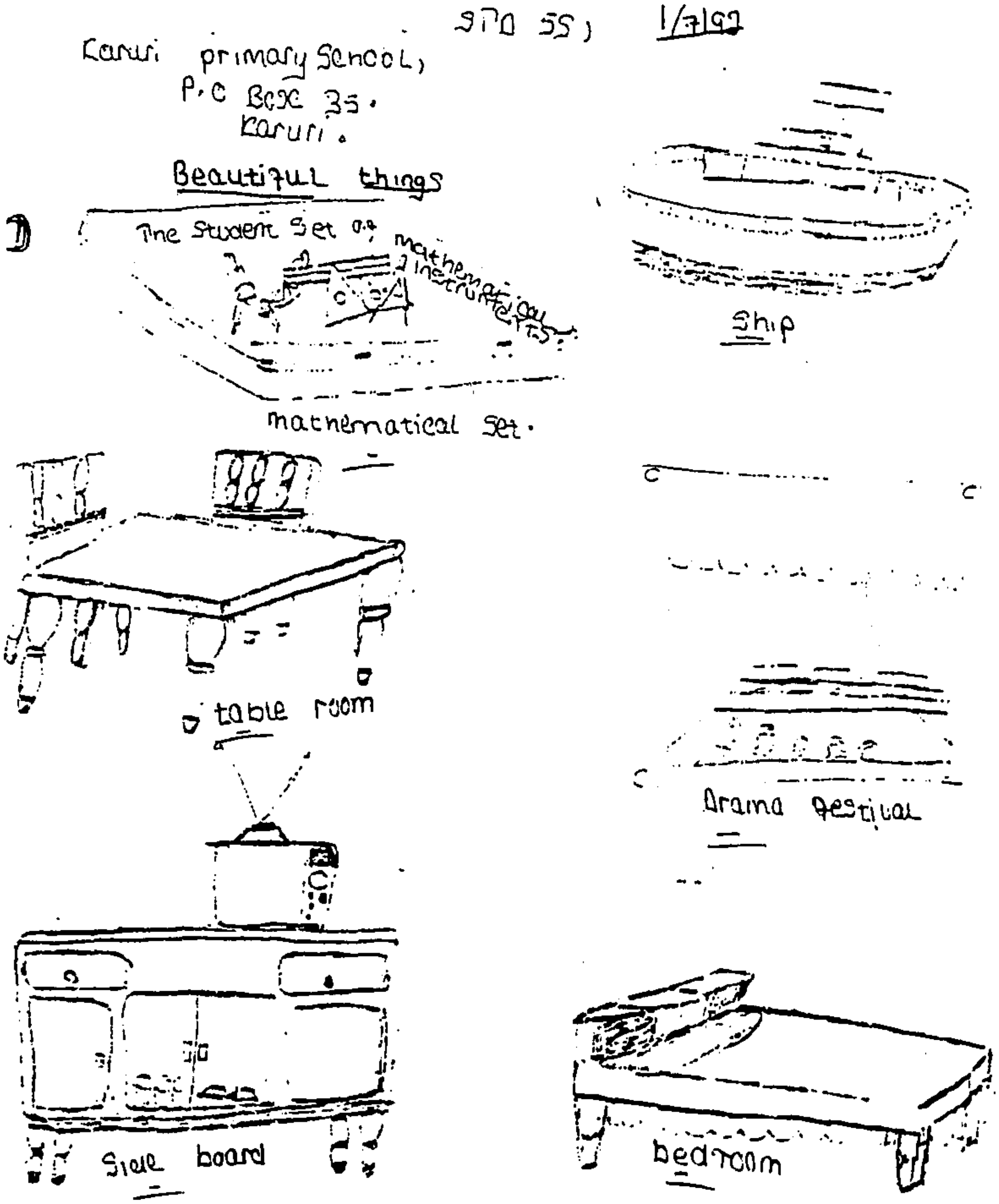

STD 5S) 1/7/92
Karuri primary School,
P.O Box 35.
Karuri.
Beautiful things
The Student Set of mathematical instruments
mathematical Set.
Ship
table room
Drama festival
Side board
bedroom

Illustration 6: Kikuyu girl's drawings of ugly thing

STD 8s
7S227 01S

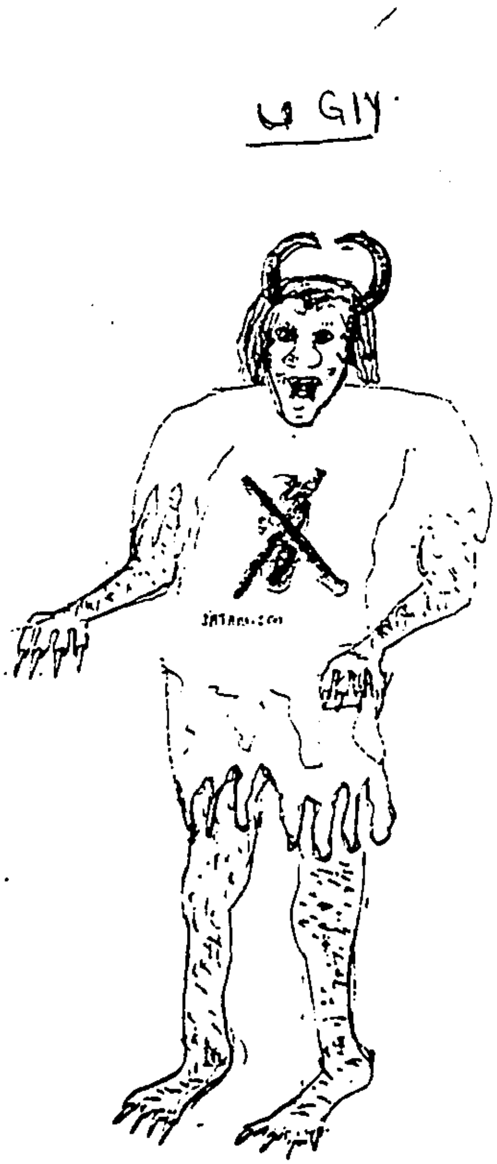
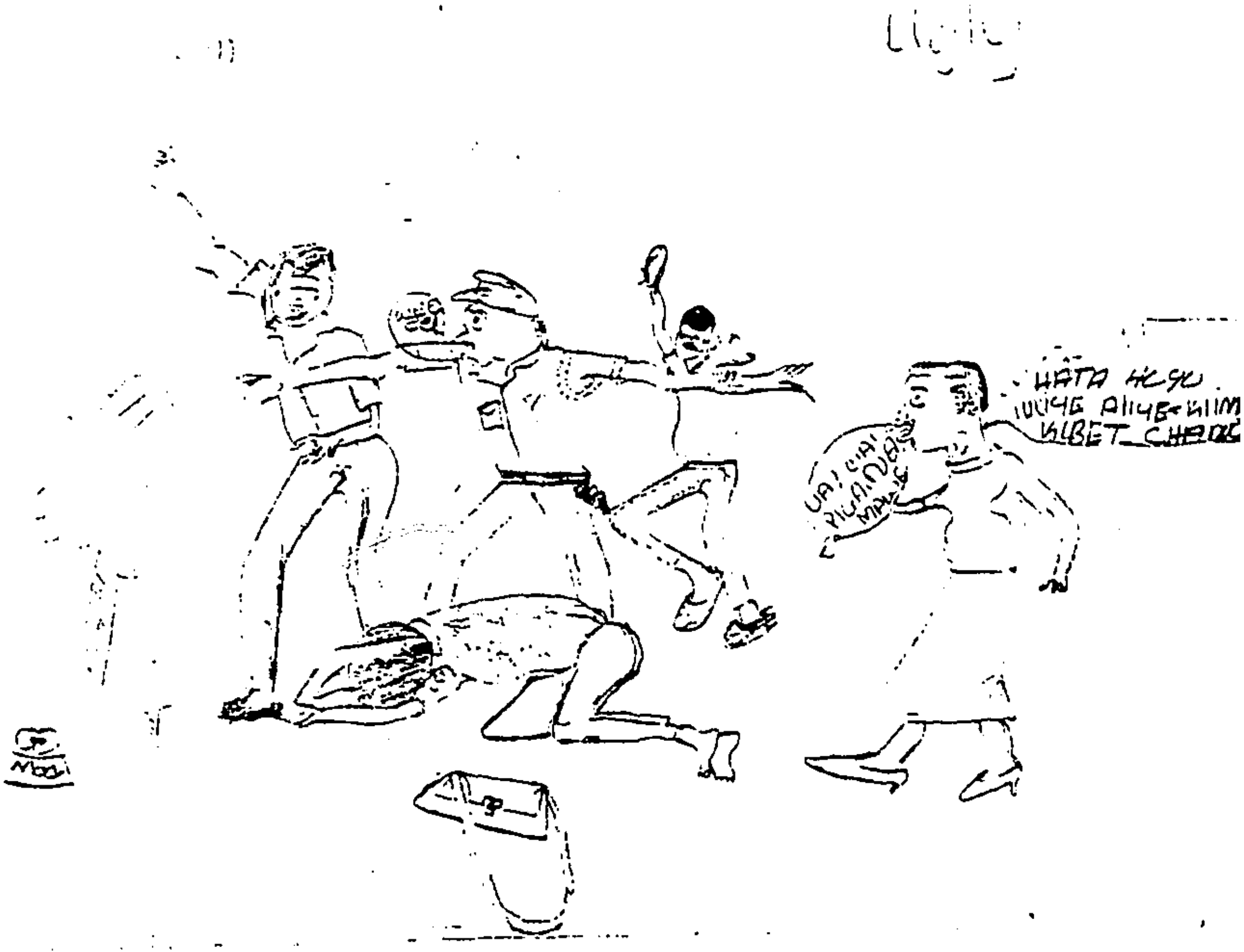


Illustration 7: Kikuyu boy's drawing of an ugly thing.


Ugly
HATA HIYO
IWUYE ALIYEKUM
KIBET CHEROG
UA! UA! PIGANWA MAWE
Moo

65

Illustration 8: Kikuyu girl's drawing of an ugly thing

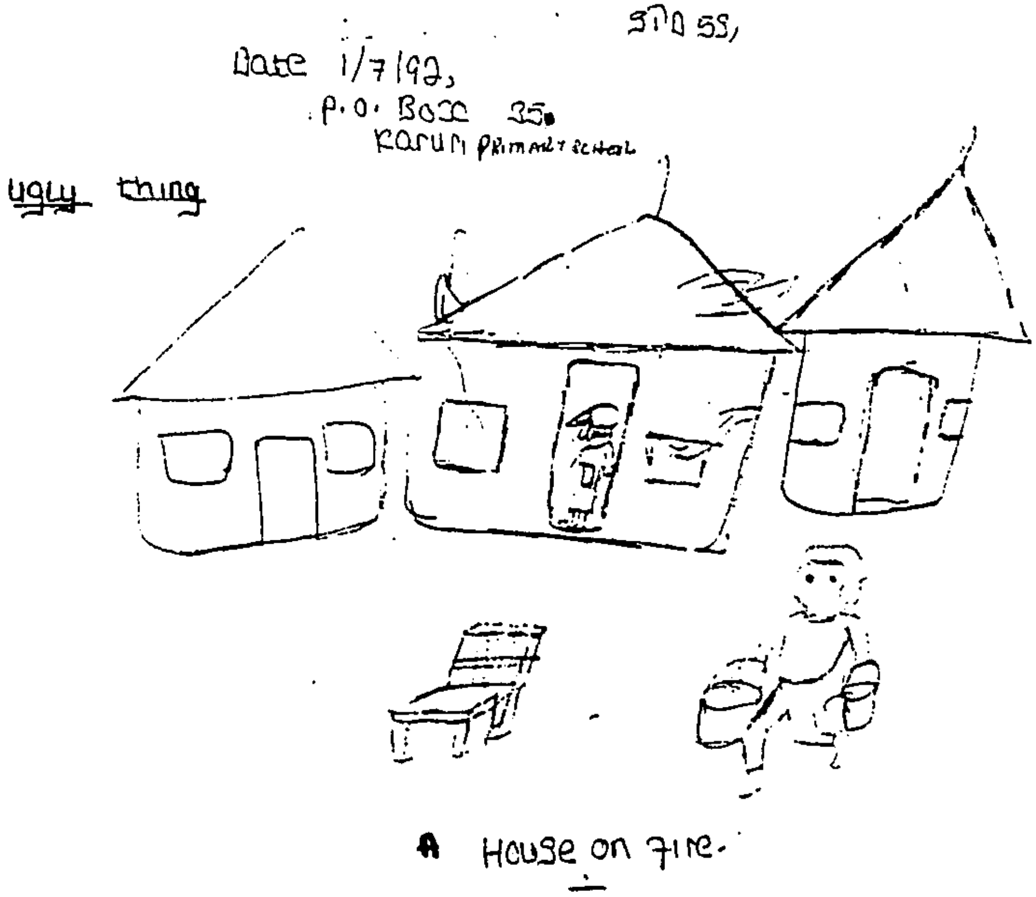
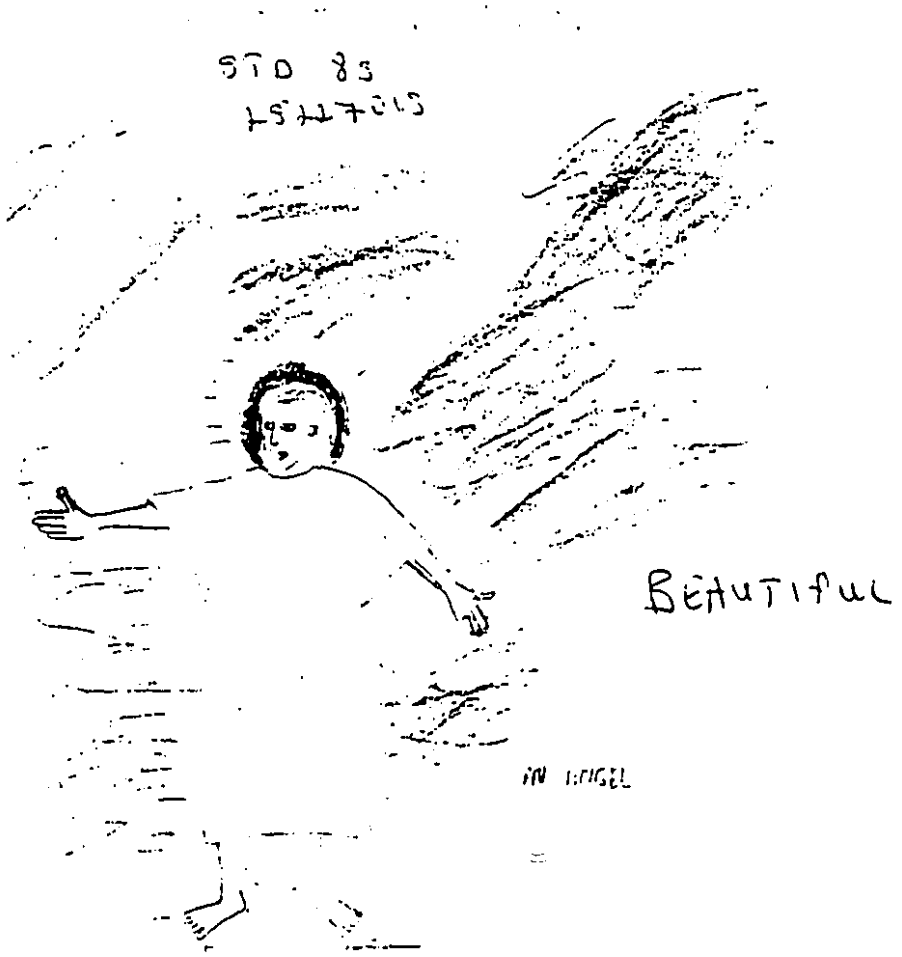

STD 5S,
Date 1/7/92,
P.O. Box 35.
Karuri PRIMARY SCHOOL
ugly thing
A House on fire.

Illustration 9: Kikuyu girl's drawing of a beautiful thing.


STD 8s
BEAUTIFUL
AN ANGEL

3.1C (i) Maasai arts, material culture and education

There is a high degree of maintenance of cultural heritage among the pastoral Maasai. This is most vividly displayed in Maasai ornamentation and functional items of material culture such as shields, stools, weapons, bags and clothing.

Maasai make and wear about one hundred and fifty different types of ornaments that speak about the individual's gender role and status in the community, rituals and differences with other ethnic groups such as the Okiek who live among them, and the differences among different sections of the Maasai. For example, one difference that the Il Keekonyokie Maasai display in their ornaments from the neighbouring Purko, Kaputei and Matapato, is the use of dark blue *saen* (*saen* is circular bead with a diameter of 1mm.).

There is a complex system of Maasai visual symbols that define situations and relationships. the Maasai make some one hundred and fifty different types of ornaments based on their aesthetic mode called in Maa, *muain sidain,* that has a close relationship with their environment, social structures and belief systems. The patterns appear on their containers, body wear and some tools. The Maasai material culture in total is also a medium of socializing and educating children; it supports transmission of Maasai beliefs, values and aesthetic sense from adults to the children (Klumpp: 1987). These are also aesthetic ways of knowing and sensing knowledge and the environment for which abilities and skills are developed from childhood. The close relationship of the Maasai visual art to language, literature and dance is central to their traditional learning process. The colours and patterns are referred to in their narratives, songs and proverbs (Somjee: 1992). Maasai material culture and oral tradition in total are also media for socializing and educating children. It is this education that supports transmission of the communities' beliefs, values and aesthetics from adults to the children. In all it articulates traditions and a mode of learning that is harmonious with their world views. For example, the pastoralists' identification of their livestock by their colour configurations relates to how certain environmental features are identified and known. They further relate to the use of colours during important ceremonies and learning of the social system (Somjee: 1992).

When I asked the Maasai children to illustrate for me things that they considered to be beautiful and ugly, they readily drew pictures from memory of cultural objects, events and wild animals . (See inserts and also inserts in chapter four).

Illustration 10: Maasai boy's drawing of a beautiful thing.

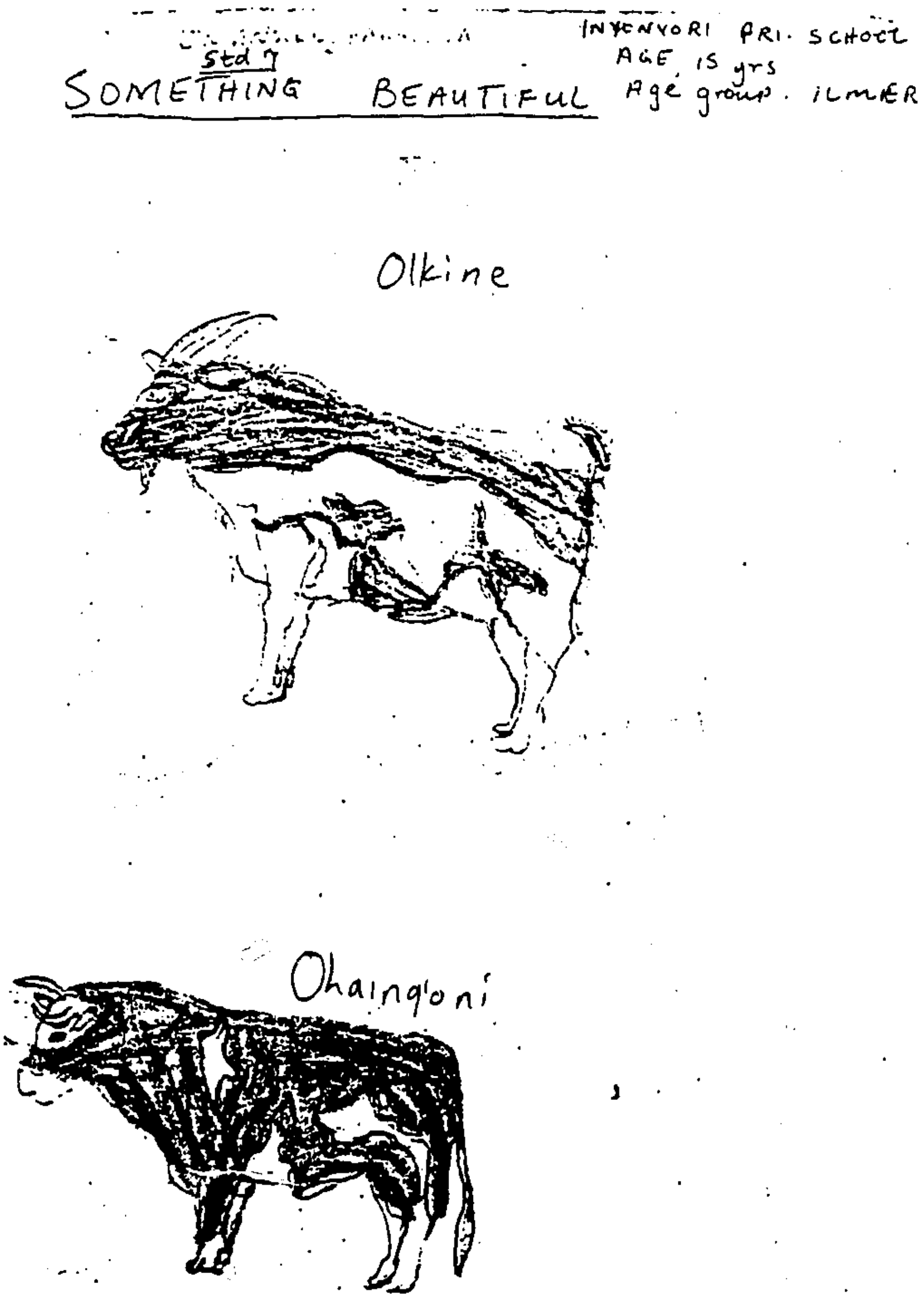

INYENYORI PRI. SCHOOL
Std 7
SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL
AGE 15 yrs
Age group. ILMER
Olkine
Ohaingoni

Illustration 11: Maasai girl's drawing of a beautiful thing.

SCHOOL INYONYORI
CLASS 8
AGE 16years

A BEAUTIFUL THING

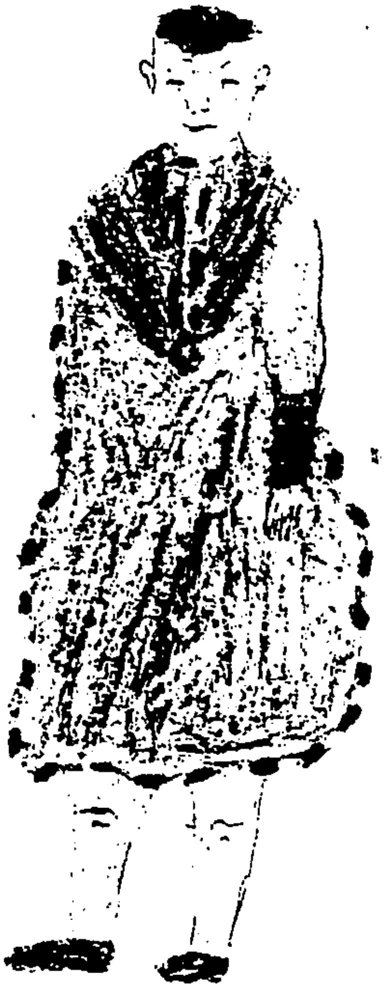
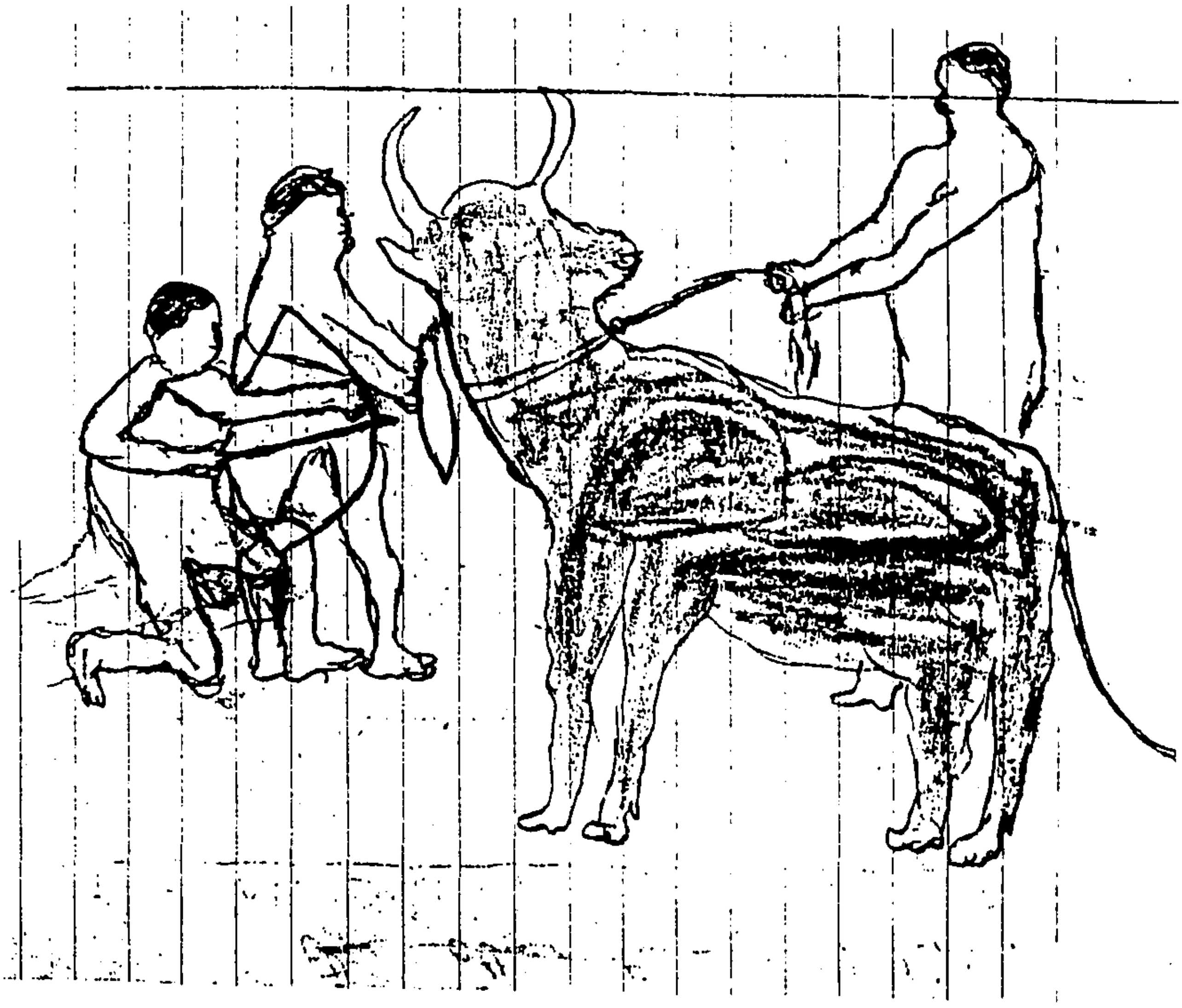


Illustration 12: Maasai boy's drawing of a beautiful thing



Thus through the arts, Maasai children are educated to observe a strict code of respect for the elders, age groups and genders. All males and females are generally conversant with Maasai gender and age group discipline and their related arts. Like other pastoralist groups, the Maasai are also highly knowledgeable of the cultural based and environmental aesthetics (Somjee: 1992).

3.1C (ii) The Maasai and 'development'

The study of Maasai language, arts and culture has a longer history than that of the Agikuyu. In 1854 Ludwig Krapf first published Maa (language spoken by the Maasai) dictionary and in 1905 Claud Hollis published a major work on Maa (Mol: 1978, p.vii). Hollis (1905) writes in The Maasai, their language and folklore - that Maasai were already communicating with each other in written Maa at the turn of the last century.

> (The) Philologist will possibly be interested to hear that there exist Masai (and possibly members of other tribes whose languages have ever been a closed book) who are able to correspond with one another in their Mother Tongue. I have in my possession, for instance, several letters written in Masai.
>
> (p. v).

In the early 1950, Ruth R. Shaffer wrote a book giving the first twelve lessons in learning Maa. Since then many school texts have been published in Maa. But scholarship in Maa and culture did not happen simultaneously with evangelisation and development of schools as in Kikuyuland. Thus, today the vast scholarship in Maasai environment and culture remains isolated and foreign to the broad Maasai community.

However, within the majority pastoralists there exists a minority of Maasai men and women who are literate, professionals and business people. But, unlike the Agikuyu of Central Province, their impact on the development of Maasai language and the arts in the context of modernity is not strongly felt. For example, there does not exist a Maasai theater or tradition of school and Church concerts in Maa. There are very few prominent Maasai theologians and writers of novels and children's literature in Maa. Among the theologians is Reverend Mpaayei, who is said to be the first Il Keekonyokee and one of the first Maasai to have gone to school. There is some Maa literature available. For example, in 1979 S.S. ole Sankan wrote a book in Maa on Maasai history and culture (*Intepein E Maasai*, Kenya Literature Bureau, Nairobi). A book on Maasai oral literature in English by Naomi Kipury is used in secondary schools. While there are many works of modern Kenyan art depicting Maasai culture and environment by European and African artists, Maasai expressions by Maasai artists on canvas and in wood is noticeably absent in Nairobi galleries. Nairobi based international African fashion shows and music festivals display Maasai and pastoralist inspired costumes, hairstyles and beadwork to represent the new Pan-African material culture which was previously dominated by West African styles.

It is the politicians who often speak for Maasai views and concerns. For example in June, 1993 the spokesman of the Maasai at the Human Rights Conference on the Rights of the Indigenous People in Vienna, Austria, was a prominent politician. He demanded preservation of Maasai environment and culture, as well as modern development. The representative defined the Maasai as the "indigenous" people of Kenya and others, such as the Agikuyu, as the "native" people of Kenya. The statement provoked a controversy for it made a difference between two ethnic groups, one an agriculturist and the other a pastoralist. The word 'indigenous' evoked connotations related to preservation of culture and natural environment. It also implied a struggle for justice and a certain feeling of righteousness and dignity of the struggle, for it linked with other global Human Rights issues. To many Kenyans, the word 'native' sounded derogatory because of its negative connotations with colonial history.

During this decade, the Maasai community and its culture have received more international attention than any other ethnic group of Kenya. The year 1993 was declared the International Year of the Indigenous Peoples and one of the very few communities adopted and used as examples by the United Nations, was the Maasai. The Maasai may have drawn even more attention because the major national parks of Kenya are in Maasai territory. Conservation of wildlife, the environment and indigenous culture are voiced as one objective in a new approach to community development through participation in and preservation of the natural environment. Since then the community's concerns about safeguarding its environment, life style and culture have been often expressed in oral literature. For example, there is a song about *Entim e Naimina Enkiyio* (Forest of the Lost Child) that is sung by the Il Loita Maasai of Narok District who do not want the Government to convert a part of their forest land into yet another national park in the name of development. The Narok County Council has planned the 'development' of the forest during the next five years in order to generate revenue and create employment. The song has to be read in full to appreciate the Maasai feelings for conserving their land and heritage. It goes like this :

Kira ilosupuka owang atua	We belong to the illuminated highlands
Osupuko lang le Karsayia	Our highlands of Karsayia which
Langorie enkidong e nkalamu	Our culture and education shall defend
Maape kiriama	Or together we perish
Kira ilosupuko owang atua	we belong to the illuminated highlands
Osupuko ontonie Mokompo	Where Mkompo resides
Lemaisho eeya nkuapi	We shall never sell you to outsiders.
Neshomo iloshon o loshon	Regions and regions have disappeared
Eshomo ilpurrkeli le Mara	The hot plains of the Mara
Neshomo osupuko le Mao	The cool highlands of Mau
Maibunga ole Loita	Let us hold onto that of Loita
Neshomo iloshon o loshon	Regions and regions have disappeared
Kaoningo nemanyorr	I hear of unpleasantly
Osupuko le Loita owang atua	The well lit Loita Highlands
Inkonyek oshi inyanyukie	You only equal my eyes
Aiguana ole sonkoi najoki	We the Loita community have counselled our messenger ole Sonkoi Shomo
Irriwai impala tejo	To communicate with those of ill hopes and motives
Tushuko emurrt	And tell them to swallow their pride and
Oloisiligu osupuko le Loita	Desire to conquer the Loita Highlands

(Written and translated by Loita Maasai at Ilkerin in Narok District).

During a meeting of Simba Maasai Outreach Organization (SIMOO), a self help development organization of Il Keekonyokee, held at Olosho-oibor on 27th November, 1994, the elders and women members discussed *elototo edukuya* or development as having two aspects. Among the good aspects were education, Christianity, improvement of livestock, agriculture, better housing and conservation of the environment. Negative aspects of development were discussed as selling of the land and decreasing pastoralism, intermarriages (with other ethnic groups), loss of respect among different age groups and between men and women, changes in the mode of dressing and decreasing use of Maasai language and material culture[46].

However, how the Maasai perceive their culture and people and the international image of the Maasai as seen by the UN and NGO development agencies may be different from how the pastoralists are perceived by mainstream cultures of Kenya. Material culture and language actualize the differences between the 'modern' and 'indigenous' peoples of Kenya . The former make the mainstream population of the nation and the latter are marginalized, "ethnics", minorities and pastoralists who are also the object of tourist interest.

There is, in general, a pervasive disrespect for pastoralist way of life in Kenya and recently, within the last three years, their image has been influenced by political events. During the last two years of my field work, the English word 'warrior' and the Maa equivalent '*moran*' acquired new meanings in the national politics and the media. The terms came to be associated with belligerent bands of pastoralists who attacked agriculturists, who had settled in the traditional pastoralist territories. The 'warriors' were said to use 'primitive' weapons such as bows and arrows, and spears. They lived in 'forests' and they were said to be supporters of one party and the KANU government. The agriculturist settlers, mainly the Agikuyu, were peaceful and Christians, and showed preference for multiparty government and the opposition parties.[47] Homes, schools and sometimes the Churches of the agriculturists were attacked. The displaced people vacated their farms and sought refuge in the Churches and camps. The results of these events have been a sharping of awareness of nationhood and ethnicity in Kenya, and often between being 'modern' Kenyans and being 'indigenous' ethnic people. It was in the context of past traditions of the three regions and the changing images of differences due to the politics of 1990s that I experienced fieldwork.

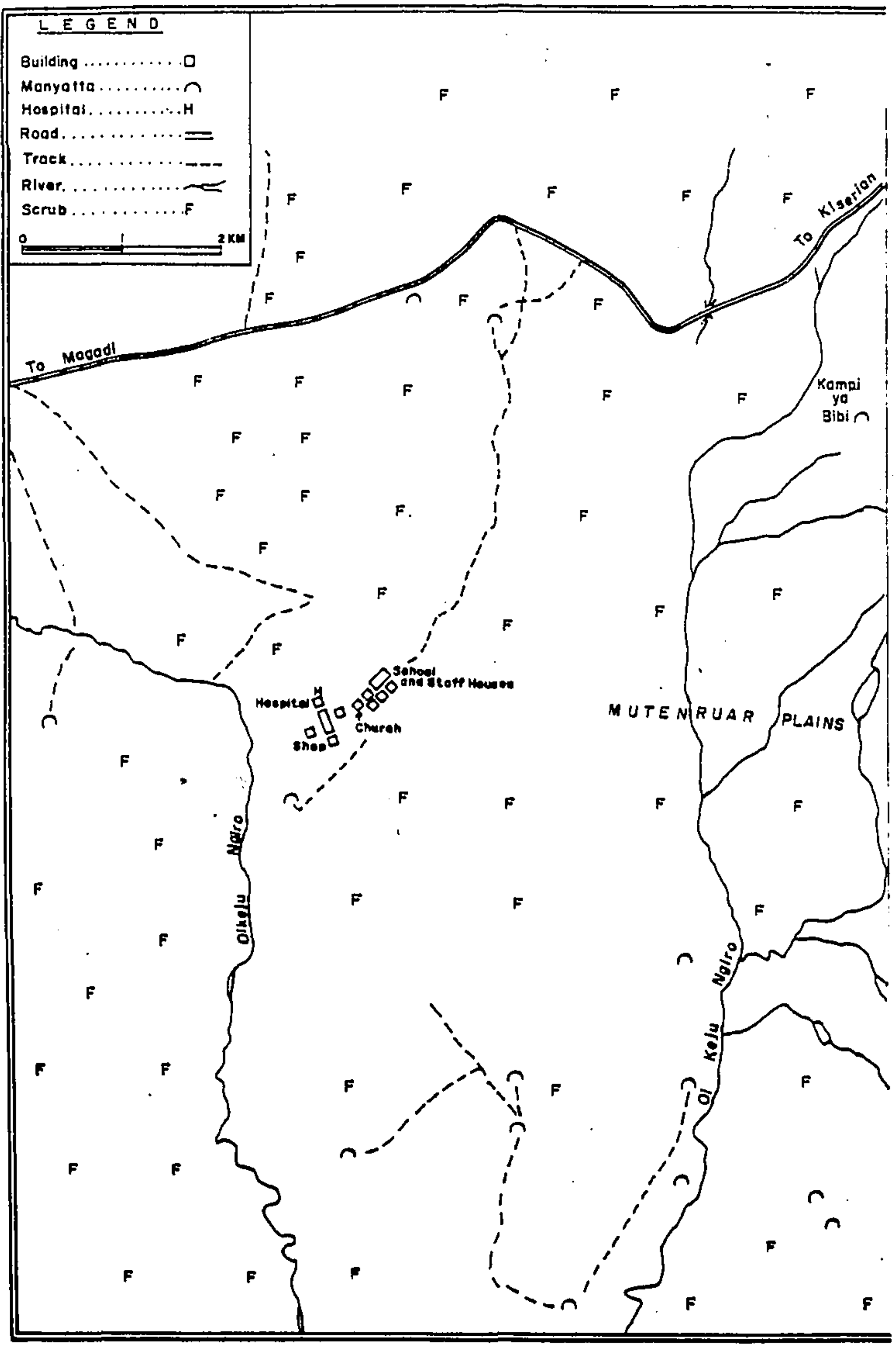
Inyonyori Primary School (Refer to map)

Inyonyori Primary School is one of the recent primary schools in the Il Keekonyokie Maasai territory. Older schools were started before 1980 in towns that bordered on the settlements of the agriculturists and the Maasai pastures. These were at Ngong, Kiserian, Ongata Rongai and Kisamis. The school at Magadi served the mining town population of mixed ethnic groups. Very few Il Keekonyokie attended these schools.

Inyonyori Primary School is located in the heart of the Il Keekonyokie pasture lands. Il Keekonyokie pasture area is in Kajiado District between the Ngong Hills and Kedong Valley in the North, the Nkama Plains in the South, Kaputei Plains in the East and Lake Magadi and Nguruman Escarpment on the West.

Map 10: INYONYORI PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ITS ENVIRONS

Source: Topo Sheet Kajiado, Survey of Kenya, 1973.


LEGEND
Building
Manyatta
Hospital H
Road
Track
River
Scrub F
0
1
2 KM
To Magadi
To Kiserian
Kampi ya Bibi
School and Staff Houses
Hospital
Church
Shop
MUTENRUAR PLAINS
Olkeju Ngiro
Ol Keju Ngiro

Their pasture lands border with those of the Purko, Loita and Matapato Maasai sections. The Il Keekonyokie section prides itself in being called *Il Maasai le N'gorno* ('Butter of the Maasai') for they are good peacemakers. It was explained to me that Il Keekonyokee elect peace-makers called *olemal* , who carry a bow (*inkai*) without a string because a bow without a string cannot pull an arrow. Thus it is a sign of disarmament and subsequently of peace. The women peacemakers are called *olamal loo ntomonok* , and they carry a bamboo stick (*olartat*) which is long and thin.

The Il Keekonyokee section is also well respected among the greater Maasai society because an elder called Oloonkoon, who is well versed in Maasai customs, lives among them. His homestead, in fact, is in the vicinity of Inyonyori Primary school. A Maasai community development officer, who is also a graduate of anthropology, once said to me that Oloonkoon had inherited all the wisdom and knowledge of the Maasai from Ole Karariet, his predecessor, who also lived near Inyonyori. "Oloonkoon has all the proverbs and culture of the Maasai in his head", the officer said to me, "and people come from as far away as Tanzania to seek counsel, especially in settlements of some difficult disputes". The *laibon*, (Maasai spiritual head) Ole Tiapapusha, who is a descendent of the great Maasai leader, Lenana, also lives near Inyonyori. This may be one reason why the Il Keekonyokee are often invited to be ritual masters and that in 1991 the great ceremony of 'Unwinding of the strap' *(Elaata engeene)* took place between Inyonyori and Lodariak. This happened during my fieldwork and it completely 'disrupted' the school routine and my fieldwork. It was a month of celebration when the *morans* (warriors), who were initiated almost twenty years ago (1971 - 1973), were becoming *Ilparakuo* (the cattle keepers). When the young boys were initiated, a strap was made from the skin of a sacrificial bull. The strap was then wound and kept tied for almost twenty years. The *Elaata engeene* ceremony marked the untying of the strap and closing of the present generation of moranhood of the Il Keekonyokee Maasai. It was a special period because the *morans* were also the right hand (*Ikitoipi* age set) who were receiving the blessed staffs of the pastoralists that would signify the change of their status from youth to adults, and from being fighters to being peaceful. Women had begun building a special ceremonial *boma* (homestead) days before the ritual month and they came from far away bringing gifts.

Ceremonies are important events for the Il Keekonyokee community for this section has been given the resposibility of initiating the circumcision rites for the making of a new age set. This is a prestigious status among the entire Maasai group who would look towards the Il Keekonyokee as keepers of traditions.

All the pupils at Inyonyori Primary School were Il Keekonyokie Maasai. They were also the first generation of Il Keekonyokie from surrounding homesteads to go to school. Pupils who either belonged to the *Ilkipali* age set (initiated betwen 1979 and 1983) or *Il majeshi* (yet to be initiated) came from eleven homesteads ranging from one to twelve kilometers in distance from the school. These homesteads were on the inner side of the Ngong Hills, well hidden behind thick growth and undulating hills. The school itself is situated on one of the steps leading into the Great African Rift Valley. It overlooks the Motenruor Plains which is the main pasture area of the Inyonyori community. Two semi-permanent rivers on either side of Inyonyori Primary School are the main sources of water.

Attendance in the classes was irregular and varied according to the Maasai calendar year as the children were expected to help with livestock and housework according to the different seasons. The Maasai calendar is based on the two rainy seasons, *Nkokua* - the long rains, *Oltumuret* - the short rains, and the season of drizzles, *Oloirurujuruj*, which comes between the long and short rains. Each season has four months which makes twelve months in a year. Each month has thirty days which are divided into two visually defined catgories of fifteen bright (or white) days and fifteen dark (or black) days. Several months are also known according to how the changes in the environment are visually perceived . For example :

> *Arat* is the month of scattered pools of water in the valleys.
>
> *Olodoyiorie* is the month of heavy rains when the skies are so clear at night that the star pattern *nkokua* (the plough) can be easily defined.
>
> *Kujorok* is the month when the short green grass springs up and moves in the wind like a hairy caterpillar.
>
> *Kushin* is the month when the white and black cattle birds appear.
>
> *Oloiborrare* is the month when the pools of water become clear (or white).
>
> (Sankan: 1979, pp.64-66).

Inyonyori Primary school was started in 1982 by a Maasai evangelist belonging to the American Inland Church and two Maasai teachers. There were forty-nine pupils then and no buildings. Between 1984 and 1992 the number of pupils increased to nearly one hundred, and five classrooms and a church were constructed. A hospital was built nearby, a small shop opened and the visiting workers and technical staff of the Ministry of Works and Water Departments constructed a camp. In 1984 the school was recognized by the Ministry of Education and it received trained teachers. In 1990 the first pupils who had registered at Inyonyori Primary School sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education after eight years of primary education. Of the forty-nine pupils who had registered in Standard 1 in 1982, seven made it to Standard 6 and three to Standard 8. Of the three, only one qualified for admission to the secondary school. Since then the trend has been that only one student qualifies to go on to secondary school every year from Inyonyori Primary School. In 1992 there were nine students in Standard 8 class. There were eight boys and one girl, and again only one boy qualified to go to the secondary school. This was probably because Maasai girls are married soon after their initiation which is usually between the ages of twelve and sixteen and also because the children at Inyonyori came to Standard 1 without going through any pre-primary experience. The Standard 1 syllabus assumes that the children have three to five years of kindergarten and nursery schooling.

A handful of Maasai adults at Inyonyori are Christians, and of these women are in the majority. Children use European Christian names like John, Peter and Thomas in schools but are not baptized and do not generally like to be called Christians. Some teachers believed that the boys had given themselves 'school names'. Naming ceremony among the Maasai (*ndalengo enkera*) is an important event that acknowledges the child officially joining the community when he/she reaches the age of three months. A teacher named the ceremony "a tribal ritual". During the ceremony the mother's and the child's heads are shaved. Then the child is smeared with red ochre and carefully made, delicate ornaments of sisal strings and green leaves of the tree *elokwa* are put on the child's neck, wrists and ankles. The community witnesses this first act of adornment that the child will later experience at different stages of growth into adulthood. Children are named after Maasai men and women, such as Parsaloi, Gilisho, Karsis and Soila, Silole and Silaau, who are remembered for their courage, wisdom, virtue and hard work. (Yiapan and Kaino: 1993, April, p.19-20).

Every Thursday morning an African Inland Church mission priest performed a Christian prayer ceremony at the school in Maa, and it was compulsory for all the children to attend this ceremony that the teachers called "a service". On Sundays, a few children occasionally attended the church where the congregation was mainly non-Maasai and where children were baptized and given names such as Jacob, Daniel, Paul and, Elizabeth, Tabita and Judith. Of the very few Maasai who attended the church on Sunday there were more women than men.

Girls in the school were about 10% of the total student population. The uneven boy to girl ratio at the school is an indicator of how the community viewed its gender roles. The table below shows the number of boys to girls in each of the Standards, 1 to 8 in 1990.

Table 3: Number of Boys to Girls at Inyonyori Primary School

	Girls	**Boys**	**Total**
Std One	4	17	21
Std Two	1	3	4
Std Three	1	7	8
Std Four	9	12	21
Std Five	8	8	16
Std Six	1	8	9
Std Seven	4	9	13
Std Eight	2	8	10
Total	**30**	**72**	**102**

Boys make up approximately 70% of the school student population and in standards One, 3, 6 and 8 the percentage of boys was above 70%. When I interviewed teachers on this imbalance, most said that parents feared the girls getting pregnant before they were initiated and that after initiation they were quickly married, as was the custom. A Maasai teacher told me that traditionally an uninitiated girl who became pregnant was asked to leave the homestead in a ritual exit that symbolized that she was never born in that homestead, so shameful was the incident. Initiated boys, who could be in Standard 3 to 8 ate their mid-day meals in seclusion away from the gaze of girls or women. If a female happened to see them eating meals containing meat or animal fat, they would abandon the food as being polluted. Women teachers (non-Maasai) complained that the initiated boys looked down on them and did not agree to be punished by women-teachers. One lady teacher said, "They associate us with children". I observed that the cooking classes (under Home Science in the 8-4-4 syllabus) were conducted for boys of Std. 8 with all doors and windows firmly closed! I also observed that at meetings men would not sit near the women on the same ground level. At one meeting of parents and teachers, male parents were sitting on the chairs and benches which were spread out under a tree, and the female parents were sitting next to them on the ground.

Children spoke Maa, which was the dominant language in the school. But the languages of instruction were Kiswahili and English in all the standards. In 1992, out of the 8 teachers at the school, only two, both men, were Maasai. One of them also acted as the headmaster. One woman teacher was half Agikuyu and half Maasai, four others were Agikuyu (Three women and one man) and there was one Mkamba woman. In 1993 one Maasai teacher left and was replaced by an Agikuyu. Teachers spoke in English and Kiswahili among themselves. The Agikuyu teachers spoke to each other in Gikuyu. Maasai teachers used Maa in Standards 1 and 2 and often in upper standards as well. All the children were tested in English which was the dominant language of instruction.

In our discussion I sensed that the Maasai teachers with whom I came in contact were in favour of Kanu government although there were land and ranch ownership problems in Kajiado District, and especially in the Loodariak region which is adjacent to Inyonyori location. The non-Maasai supported the opposition but interestingly they were not critical of the 8-4-4 syllabus, unlike their colleagues in Kiambu and Nairobi who cited the inappropriateness of the syllabus as one of the faults of the government.

Chapter Four

Classroom ethnographies and discourses

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter several lessons are described and discussed in each of the three schools. Though the schools did one uniform art and craft syllabus, how the content was selected and taught varied from school to school in a significant way. At Kassarani Primary School, a multi-ethnic Nairobi school, the teachers emphasized learning of terms related to tools, materials and processes more than on appreciating art. Teaching at Karuri in the Agikuyu region was almost like reading narratives from text books that did not lead on to experiencing art in terms of feelings, perception or imagination that art stimulates. In the Maasai school at Inyonyori, teachers taught more English than art during the lessons. But what is significant in all the schools is that different methods of instructions were vehicles designed for conveying values that the teachers interpreted from the syllabus based on their own attitudes towards and understanding of what was relevant in 'modern' and indigenous cultures. In total, it was the teacher's understanding of art education and aesthetics that mattered because it was that which mediated the children's representation.

4.1A Art and craft lessons at Kassarani Primary School

In this school it was evident that the aim of art lessons was first to prepare the students to read and answer the examination papers. For example, teaching names of tools, techniques and material in English was repeated in several lessons. In Standard 8 I observed a preparatory lesson on three different topics being taught simultaneously: mosaic, collage and montage. The teacher systematically taught names of all the tools, techniques and materials under the three topics. At the end of the lesson the teacher had drawn a large detailed table on the blackboard that the children tried to memorize.

Almost always art and craft lessons at Kassarani Primary School were conducted systematically in three stages under tools, materials and processes. This method was designed by the senior art teacher and was followed by the junior teachers. The method, which appeared to have been influenced by the KCPE format, emphasized the technical aspects of art more than the aesthetic, creative and cultural. The following two descriptions of lessons on Batik and Sculpture illustrate the teaching approach at Kassarani Primary School.

i A lesson on batik

The art teacher of Standard 6, Mr. Mutua, began the lesson on Batik by first writing the following four words on the blackboard one after the other: Craft Fabric Decoration Batik. Then he drew an outline of a chart with three sections and wrote topics of the three sections as Process Tools Materials. This large scheme on the blackboard set the format for the lesson. The teacher stood in front of a class of about thirty students seated in four neat rows and proceeded to talk. He first talked about the materials and wrote them down in the appropriate list. Then he did the same with the tools. The children listened quietly and copied down in their exercise books whatever the teacher wrote on the blackboard. Finally, he talked about the processes and wrote short sentences on the blackboard. Throughout the lesson the teacher gave instructions systematically and in details, both orally and by writing on the blackboard. He did not make one drawing on the blackboard and he asked only three questions during the double period. The chart on the blackboard looked like the following:

Craft

Fabric Decoration – Batik

Process	Tools	Materials
Boil the water	spoon	wax
Heat the wax in boiling water	brush	cloth
Apply the wax	basin	starch
charcoal	*sufuria* (pot)	newspapers
etc.	etc.	etc.

In the next stage of the lesson, the children were divided into groups of five. Each group had a piece of one foot square cotton cloth, one brush and a tin of wax. Mr. Mutua demonstrated how hot wax was applied to the cotton cloth and the students did exactly what their teacher demonstrated. They drew simple shapes like a zig-zag pattern, a star and a flower. The teacher went around and helped the groups. At the end of the class the teacher told the students about the next lesson and what material they should come to class with.

During the lesson the teacher did not at any one time talk about batik as popular new African art. He did not attempt to talk about appreciation of patterns and colours in batik, why batik was a special art form, its origin and the local craft industry. He had no visual aids such as samples of cloth.

ii Lessons on sculpture

Children learned sculpture under Craft and not Art. The teacher explained that was because sculptures were three dimensional objects. These are some of the definitions of sculpture that were given to the students:

- anything that is three dimensional is a sculpture
- a sculpture has depth; it has a head and a base
- anything that can stand on its own
- a sculpture has stability

During one lesson on sculpture, the teacher made the following chart on the blackboard that the students copied and tried to learn it:

Materials	Tools	Methods
clay	*panga*	carving
soap	knife	removing by cutting
stone	hammer	modeling
wood	chisel	adding material
papier mache	axe	
wire	adze	

I observed three double period lessons on sculpture during three consecutive weeks. Students learned about different types of sculptures, tools and materials but during these weeks of lessons on sculpture, that I continuously observed, no reference was made to Akamba, Kisii or Makonde sculptures that are seen in plenty downtown Nairobi. There are Akamba students in the school and many Nairobi hawkers are involved in the trade. They did not learn about famous Kenyan sculptors or galleries. No mention was made of statues and outdoor sculptures in Nairobi. Also during these weeks at no point did the teacher discuss the sculpture as a piece of art. I watched one teacher explain how he would make a sculpture:

> I want to make a human bust. When I talk about a bust it is from here to here (shows with one hand on the head and the other on the waist). For example, this is the bust I am making for myself (draws on the blackboard half a human body with hands hanging down to the waist). This is a bust I have made for myself. I am able to show the eyes, nose and even the mouth (draws them on the figure). How the head is. I make it round. If I want to see the back, I can see it. If I want to see the head, I can see it. But at the bottom I do not put the legs. But I make it stable so that anybody can see it, they can see that it has stability.

There was a lot of clay that the children had collected for the class but the teacher did not use it for demonstration. Thus, he could neither comment on the tangible aspects of a sculpture nor talk about how his own senses responded to the material and how the different shapes made him feel. He did not say when he felt that the sculpture was complete.

During those weeks of lessons on sculpture that I participated in, there was no mention of aesthetics except once during a radio lesson on sculpture for Standard 8 when the radio teacher briefly discussed the 'emotional state' and 'inner feelings' of the artist. Although the class teacher was systematically following the radio lesson by writing down its main points and terminology on the blackboard which the children copied into their note books while they listened to the lesson, he did not note comments on the emotions and feelings of the artist, although that was an important point in the radio lesson. Moreover, the teacher did not discuss this point when he elaborated later and questioned the children on what they had understood from the radio lesson.

When the lesson was over I asked the class (I was given some time to talk to the students) what the radio teacher meant by the `emotional state' and `inner feelings' of the artist. There was no student who could answer, so the teacher attempted to explain this to the class. He talked for a while and then asked me to explain. I tried but there was no response from the children. It was evident that neither the teacher nor I could communicate successfully how art expressed feelings. This was a completely new topic for students.

iii The practicals

Practical lessons at Kassarani involved many activities. Children had access to waste material such as wire, bottle tops, boxes of all sizes, scrap metal, cardboard and tin containers. They were also able to get good clay in the vicinity for modeling exercises, and various types of beans and plant fibers (mainly maize and banana). Every semester the school accumulated a large collection of pupils' practical work which was displayed and then stored in the cupboard in the art room.

I observed many practical art lessons. One of my intentions was to understand how sensitivity to lines, colours and shapes was expressed and explained in the classroom. The following remarks by Mr. Solomon, the art teacher, shows that aesthetics was not an issue to explore with the children. The girls and boys of Standard 6 were looking at and drawing a small stone building and a Jacaranda tree beside it which stood in the field about fifty metres from the classroom window. Mr. Solomon went around the classroom repeating several times:

> Draw what you can see and not what you are telling yourself.

Then he would look at a student's work and say:

> You have drawn not what you are seeing but what you are telling yourself.

Later I discussed the difficulty of teaching about aesthetics with another class teacher. I asked him directly during a discussion leading to the question on teaching of aesthetics:

> But then how do you teach the students to appreciate art?

And he replied:

> First of all you must show them how they can benefit financially. They have seen tourist places and how people make money there. They see no use of keeping the things they make in their homes. Just to say beautiful is nothing.

Later when I asked the same question to another teacher, who was also the senior art teacher in the school, he said to me:

> They have to do it (art) practically to understand aesthetics. Yet practicals are not assessed for points in the examination. There is no assessment scheme for practical art work developed by the KNEC (Kenya National Examination Council).

This was true for KNEC had no guidelines for assessing practical work, none the less, students did do practicals and were assessed by the class teacher. The following description of a lesson is an example of how assessment was done.

iv. Assessing the practicals

I observed a double period session by Mr.. Jeremiah on assessment of students' art and craft projects in his Standard 8 class of thirty five students. This was one of the preparatory sessions before the final examination. Mr. Jeremiah had laid students' work on his table comprising of wire toy cars, wooden and stone ash trays, and soap figurines of animals and humans. The class stood around the table in a semi-circle. This is how the first part of the session went:

Mr. Jeremiah: I want us to assess the constructed sculptures and you tell me the problems.
Student 1: This one is not attached to a wire
Mr. Jeremiah: This is what? That is (not using) joining materials. (Writes on the blackboard). What are we talking about? The problem or the mistake?
Student 2: This is non-balanced sculpture.
Mr. Jeremiah: Yes, it is non - balanced or not free standing.
Student 3: This one is abstract.
Mr. Jeremiah: Another mistake? (Does not comment on the student's remark)
Student 4: This one is missing wire.
Mr. Jeremiah: What do we say? Not finishing.
Student 5: The wires are not straight.
Mr. Jeremiah: That is (to say) non - balance.
Student 1: This looks like a cap.
Mr. Jeremiah: The form is not true, yes? What is the best word (to say that)?
Student 6: Abstract.
Mr. Jeremiah: No! Lack of true form.
Student 4: This one is not balanced.
Mr.. Jeremiah: This one does not have a true form of a car. (Laughter). Why?
Student 1: He has not used wire.
Mr. Jeremiah: This is a very big problem. Why?
Student 3: It is not firm.
Mr. Jeremiah: That is non-balance. Free standing. What is the big problem?

Student 7: Abstract.

Mr. Jeremiah: No ! It is not functional. Some of these items are not functional. If they are only for beauty, it is not good. It does not answer the function or beauty. What else?

Student 6: The arrangement of work.

Mr. Jeremiah: Yes. Poor arrangement of ideas. Ideas are just not on paper. What else?

Student 3: Lack of uniformity.

Mr. Jeremiah: Yes. What else? There is one thing . Who can tell me?

Student 4: Sizes are not the same.

Student 1: Did not collect enough material.

Mr. Jeremiah: Collection of enough material. What is lacking if one person is making a house, another is making a house, and another is making a house? What is that?

Student: Copying from your friend.

Mr. Jeremiah: What is that? It is called lack of creativity. You are making a cart, you are making a cart and you are making cart (pointing at three different students). This is a chance to copy. You don't want to use time. You copy the arrangement of ideas. You are not creating ideas in your head. You are not creative.

The teacher then went to the blackboard and wrote key words that came up during the session:

Non-balance
arrangement of ideas
not- finishing
lack of creativity
free standing
abstract .

Then the students retired to their desks and copied notes from the blackboard. After about fifteen minutes Mr.. Jeremiah called the class back to the table where the items were displayed and began the second lesson.

During the second part of this lesson on evaluation, some 'good points' about the students' work were discussed. Mr. Jeremiah went on in the same manner as before:

Mr. Jeremiah: Now what are the goodneses of this work? Are there advantages?

Student 7: For commercial purposes.

Mr. Jeremiah: How are you telling me the use? Look properly and say. There is aesthetics (checks spelling in his notes). That is beautiful, it is aesthetic. (Holds one object in his hand) If I keep this one, even my children enjoy it. What else?

Student 3: Free standing.

Mr. Jeremiah: Yes!

Student 8: Good ideas.

Mr. Jeremiah: Yes! Opposite of bad arrangement of ideas.

Student 1: True forms.

Mr. Jeremiah: That is creativity. It has true forms. What else? Some are functional. Others can be sold and you can get money. So all these are from your heads except the word creativity. What else?

Student 4: Others are funny.

Mr. Jeremiah: Yes! So some can be comic. It is comedy. Have you seen a pig talking on KTN (Kenya Television Network)? That is comedy. Some are abstract of which they do not resemble any available thing. So we have animal form, nature form, and abstract. A person with eight legs, a cow with a horn in the back, a cow with canine teeth - these are abstract forms. When we talk about trees, it is nature form. When we talk about humans, it is a human form. Ask any question? If you are not able to ask me a question, then I am the winner.

The students asked about the difference between construction and sculpture, three dimensional forms and sculptures and elements of art. The lesson went on as Mr. Jeremiah explained. At the end of the session Mr. Jeremiah wrote the key words, the good points this time, on the blackboard:

Advantages/ Goodnesses

Aesthetic value

Free standing and complete

Good arrangements of ideas

True form

Creativity
Functional
Sold
Funny - comics
Teaching aids.

v. Lesson on material culture

Mr Moses, a middle aged man with a black suit and tie, enters the Standard 6 class, picks up a chalk and writes the date on the blackboard. Then he writes CRAFT in the center of the blackboard and under that writes ORNAMENTS. There is pin-drop silence in the classroom. The children are following all the actions of their teacher. Mr Moses then turns round and begins the lesson without a pause or a word of greeting.

Teacher: This is the second lesson on ornaments. What is an ornament? How will you tell a person what an ornament is?

Student 1: Something we wear.

Teacher: Is a shirt an ornament?

Student 2: Some thing that adds beauty or decoration on you or to where you are staying.

Teacher: (Writes on blackboard: Anything that adds beauty or decoration). So you see some ornaments were made by our forefathers. What do you call them?

Student 3: Traditional.

Teacher: (Writes on the blackboard as he says aloud: Traditional ornaments are for old days). What ornaments do we call foreign?

Student 4: Modern.

Teacher: (Writes on blackboard: Modern ornaments for nowadays). So there are two types of ornaments. What are the uses, functions and work of traditional ornaments?

Student: To prevent witchcraft and diseases.

Teacher: Good. (Writes witchcraft and diseases on the blackboard). What else?

Student 5: For particular occasions.

Teacher: Yes. (Writes for particular occasions e.g. initiation ceremonies, music festivals on the blackboard). Yes. You had to decorate yourself. What else?

Student 6: For trade.

Teacher: Yes some ornaments were used as money and for selling. What is the other importance? There is witchcraft, diseases, decorations, money.What is the fifth point? I do not believe in witchcraft.

Student 7: They had other symbolic value.

Teacher: It is beauty. Beauty was the most important and it is still the most important. What did we talk about the two groups? What did we talk about the bangles? They can be (either) modern or traditional?

Student 3: Jeweleries.

Teacher: (Writes on the blackboard: Jeweleries worn on the bodies). Even that is a technique. That art of making jewels we call it jewelery. (Writes on the blackboard): Jewelery is a technique). Types of jeweleries? Types of examples?

Student 1: Anklets.

Teacher: Anklets. Next?

Student 8: Bangles.

Teacher: Yes. Others?

Student 9: Necklaces.

Teacher: Yes, necklaces. Others?

Student 10: Earrings.

Teacher: Yes, earrings. Others? Any others? How many have never seen a chain?

(Several students put up their hands and the teacher writes on the blackboard: Chains. After a while he writes: Bracelets). Now what do we call materials that we wear on our bodies? Yes?

Student 11: Decorating materials.

Teacher: Yes.

Mr Moses then writes on the blackboard:

Decorating materials

Anklets

Bangles

Earrings

Chains

Bracelets

and says: How about sculpture? We keep it on the table or hang it. Like an ash tray. Is it an ornament? Now take down notes. (Looks at the text from two books and writes on the blackboard).

1. Ornaments are material which are used to add beauty and decoration to somebody or something.

2. Ornaments are not only worn on our bodies but can be used to add beauty to where we stay e.g.,

Teacher: What does e.g. mean?

Student: For example.

Teacher (then continues to write: our houses).

3. Ornaments started to be used very many years ago.

4.Those ornaments of long ago are called traditional ornaments (underlines traditional). Those ornaments of nowadays are called modern ornaments.

Uses and functions of ornaments

1. Ornaments in old days were made for beauty.

2. They were worn to prevent one from witchcraft and diseases.

3. They were used in ceremonies and festivals e.g. wedding ceremonies, initiation ceremonies and music festivals.

4. They were used in trade or to trade with.

5. Ornaments were used to show different ages and also married and unmarried people.

6. There were ornaments for girls and for women.

Mr Moses: (continues talking:) I am going to give you some homework. When you go home ask your *shosho* (grandmother) about ornaments. What were they wearing? How did they make them? Go and ask. Then bring one ornament from your tribe. Ask your father to get you one for next Thursday. That is a long time. *Wangapi watapata?* (How many of you will get?). At least bring one. Then we can make one ornament.

It was clear from this lesson that traditional ornaments were associated with trade, witchcraft, diseases and ceremonies such as initiation rites and marriages. The way Mr Moses explained some of these associations reflected negative images of what was traditional to African societies. Mr Moses did mention at one time that traditional ornaments were used for beauty but beauty was adornment ("You had to decorate yourself for initiation ceremony or a music festival") for an occasion that was traditional. This lesson on material culture did not have a positive influence on the students to explore their ethnic cultures and consequently develop their artistic creativity from an indigenous heritage. Mr Moses also connected 'modern' with 'foreign'. The implication is that Kenyans cannot be modern without foreign influence. An art lesson such as this would adversely affect the students' self image and identity as Africans.

4.1B Art and craft lessons at Karuri Primary School

At Karuri Primary school the approach to teaching of Art and Craft varied from one teacher to another. The following short descriptions drawn from my observations and participation in the lessons exemplify the variation.

i. Lesson on colours

Mr. Gitau began the lesson on colours in Standard 5 by first explaining how all the colours were divided into primary and secondary groups. He spoke in English and compared division of colours with `groups' of sums in mathematics. He explained that like sums, some colours were in 'plus groups', others in 'take away', 'multiplication' and 'division' groups.

After this introduction, Mr. Gitua suddenly began talking in Gikuyu to explain symbols and emotions related to colours. The children were attentive and agreed with him by nodding their heads when he said that black expressed sadness as at funerals and red was for danger. Mr. Gitua wrote in English on the blackboard though he spoke in Gikuyu. When he asked the students what colours they used when they had a party at home, they named almost all the colours except black.

After the lesson I asked the students what the colour red reminded them of when they said it in Gikuyu. Many replied that red was for blood of Christ and for the blood shed during the Mau Mau uprising. When I asked about black, they said that black was for black people. Once during our discussion I asked Mr. Gitua what colours meant to him in the traditional sense. He replied:

> Even I don't know some of the colour names in vernacular and nothing of what they mean traditionally. To me they mean nothing.

Then we talked about his education in the Teachers' Training Colleges and the teaching of colours in the colleges. He said that he was teaching what he had been taught about colours and that was what I had observed in his class. Mr. Gitau did not show sensitivity to how the word 'black' has become a metaphor for negative meanings in the English language e.g. black market, black money, black book, black sheep.

ii. Lesson on tie and dye

During a double lesson (80 minutes) on tie and dye in Standard 6, the teacher explained how to produce designs on cloth. He read from the textbook and explained as he went along, e.g., he said :

> Random patterns are produced by tying the cloth any how. Linear patterns are used by tying the cloth in straight lines and so on.

Mr. Njagi used diagrams to explain (he did not demonstrate practically) and he wrote on the blackboard from the textbook, e.g.:

> Take the material as shown using nylon threads. Gather material by pulling ends of the threads as shown (and he pointed to the blackboard diagram).

In Standard 6 the lesson on marbling was based on teaching the children about materials and processes. This was first explained using diagrams drawn on the blackboard, then it was demonstrated and the children were allowed to experiment and make their own patterns.

iii. Lesson on metal work

The lesson on metal work (double period) was about properties of metals, types of metals, different types of tools and techniques used in metal work and safety precautions in the workshop.

When the class was over, I asked the students what things made of metal they had seen in the town. They gave many examples of tools and functional items that were all industrially manufactured. The students did not mention any metal item made by a traditional blacksmith or the *jua kali* craftsman. When I asked how they would judge the appearance of a metal object in terms of its design, many said that it was the usefulness of an object that made one appreciate it.

The lessons in woodwork and metalwork were based on conveying an extensive vocabulary related to modern tools, techniques and materials. Use of many diagrams and detailed notes was common. The teachers used four to six different resource books and past examination papers to plan this lesson.

iv. Lesson on material culture

For the lesson on material culture of Kenya, Mr. Njagi combined body covers and ornaments, which are two separate topics in the syllabus. He had carefully prepared seven large posters from illustrations in text books and had them displayed in a line on top of the blackboard and right in front of the class. The children had copied the illustrations from the texts and the wall into their note books before the lesson began.

Mr. Njagi began the lesson by pointing to the seven large posters on the wall. He said that the lesson was on Traditional Body Covers which were in two forms. One was called clothing and the other was ornaments. The ornamental form was also known as decorative form. Mr.. Njagi explained that any item that covers the body is called body cover, no matter how small the item may be. He then gave examples of clothing as trousers, shirts, hats and such other items that he said were 'modern' and further explained that:

> Modern is what we have now. Traditional is what we used to have a long time ago.

Mr. Njagi went on talking about traditional body cover for the rest of the forty minutes lesson. The children remained very quiet and attentive. He used the visual aid that he had made and demonstrated how the leg rings were worn but he did not ask questions or move away from the front of the class. He introduced traditional body covers by saying that the Turkana used skins and beads, and that the Agikuyu once used them. He gave examples of Maasai, Kalenjin, Agikuyu, Luo and Giriama traditional material culture items which were on the wall. Some of the examples were incorrect (there was no book available on the teaching of material culture) but the meanings of what was traditional material culture and which were the traditional groups of Kenya, versus the modern, were well conveyed. During the rest of the lesson Mr. Njagi read from the text as he systematically went through each of the seven posters.

The first picture on the manila sheet was of a skin apron that Mr. Njagi said was used by Agikuyu boys. The second showed a Maasai head dress which Mr. Njagi said was used by warriors when they went to fight the enemy. He told the class that traditionally the Maasai and Agikuyu were enemies and they fought each other. The third poster was of a seed and wood necklace which the teacher said belonged to the Kalenjin. The fifth picture was of a sisal skirt which, Mr. Njagi said was used by the Luo and Giriama because they lived in places where it was very hot. The five pictures had words written in English such as necklace and head dress, and also names of ethnic groups such as Luo or Giriama. The next two illustrations were of an Agikuyu man and woman in their ethnic attires. Mr. Njagi explained how the Agikuyu dressed a long time ago and he spoke about the significance of the ornaments e.g. ornaments indicated different stages of an individual's growth and status, how certain diseased persons like the lepers wore certain types of ornaments and how ornaments were also symbols during ceremonies like the initiation ceremony. Mr. Njagi did not talk about the shapes and colours of the traditional Agikuyu ornaments. He gave other information: Agikuyu women made their skin clothing soft by applying castor oil and coloured them with red soil. Beads were sewn to make the skins look beautiful. No man was allowed to wear woman's ornament. On the posters of Agikuyu man and woman there were both in Gikuyu and English words:

hangi (earrings)
githi (cloak)
mwengu (inner skirt)
muthuru (outer skirt)
kigukuo

rings
chain
tabacco container

After the lesson while we were talking I found that Mr. Njagi (55 years) had been through several Agikuyu rituals in his childhood and youth and regretted that much of the culture was forgotten. At the same school, young Agikuyu teacher (25 years) who was a recent graduate from a Teachers' Training College, and who was also vocal in his criticism of the government, once said to me while we were talking about material culture:

> In Agikuyu areas the syllabus is seen as a way of trying to pull back the Agikuyu who are known to be always academically advanced.

While discussing teaching methods, Mr. Njagi told me that his approach to teaching was moving from known to unknown. Thus in teaching geography he would first talk about the geography of the school area that the students were familiar with and then about other parts of Kenya. Similarly, while teaching material culture (lessons that I had participated in) he first talked about modern objects such as trousers that were known to the children, and then went on to teaching about the traditional items which were unknown to his pupils.

I looked at some examples of material culture that the children had brought to the class. These were two necklaces that were not traditional for Agikuyu nor for that matter to any ethnic group in Kenya. They were modern ornaments made from beads. One was a *tashbih*, a Muslim rosary, which the teacher demonstrated was worn around the neck traditionally by the Agikuyu. It was obvious that knowledge of the details of colours, shapes and patterns in beadwork that signified the art of ethnic cultures could not be explained and that it was incorrectly transmitted in the school.

4.1C Art and craft lessons at Inyonyori Primary School

In this section learning about colours and lines in the classroom is described and later discussed in the context of the indigenous knowledge of the Il Keekonyokee Maasai art.

i. Lesson on colours

Miss Muthoni began a well-structured lesson on colours in Standard Two by writing the names of colours on the blackboard. She wrote in English but spoke in Kiswahili to the children, who spoke and understood best in Maa. During the 40 minutes' lesson Miss Muthoni gave examples of several coloured items around the classroom, e.g., chalk, pens, shirts and book covers. In the next stage of the lesson Miss Muthoni asked the children to point out the colours and their names that were written on the wooden wall of the classroom. Most children were able to correctly point out the colours and their names chalked on the wall. Then Miss Muthoni pointed to the names of colours written on the blackboard (without the colours) and asked the children to read them. Most pupils could not read the letters so she repeated them and the children repeated after her.

This was their third lesson on colours. Pupils were learning English words for red, yellow, blue and so on. No Kiswahili or Maa equivalents for colour names were used. Miss Muthoni was a non-Maasai who had no knowledge of the Maasai colour system, terms or examples from the environment. When she went out to get some chalk, I began to talk to the children about colours using Maa terms. We discussed the colours that the teacher had just been talking about but, this time, we used Maa names and made references to Maasai material culture. The class responded with enthusiasm and it was evident that they were able to speak and discuss colours with confidence and interest. The children recognized many details about the colours (i.e. in their different hues and contexts).

In upper primary, children also learned about colours during lessons on painting. During one lesson that I observed in Standard Five, the teacher spoke in English and attempted to explain the use of colours. The teacher was not a Maasai, thus had no knowledge of Maasai art. He attempted to explain two categories of colours, primary and secondary colours, as written in the syllabus and textbooks.

Then he began to teach about the symbolic value of colours as they were known in European culture. The teacher had difficulty in communicating that. He read from the book but perhaps he did not himself understand about European culture and traditions. The situation was that the teacher from an Agikuyu ethnic background was teaching European cultural symbols to Maasai children. Thus, both the teacher and the students had difficulty in understanding why some colours were cool and others were warm. These concepts are culturally grounded in the English language and among cultures where English is the first language. Both the teacher and the students made mistakes; for example, they named orange a cool colour.

Towards the end of the lesson the teacher went on to explain the meaning of the English word 'symbol'. He gave an example of the crucifix that he said stood for the church or a hospital. In European culture (that is, its visual vocabulary) the cross of Christianity and the cross of medical aid (red cross) are read as two different symbols, through differences in the positioning of the vertical and horizontal lines. Mr. Njuguna then taught about the Kenya flag whose four colours, he said, stood for the land (green), the people (black), peace (white) and the struggle for independence (red). This explanation of the flag colours defined and gazetted by the new government was derived from European cultural contexts more than from African ethnic experiences at the time of independence.

Later, during break time, I walked around the school with a group of students from lower and upper primary. We looked at and talked about colours and patterns of plants, flowers, soil and stones. I was able to specify and record ten different colours of rocks in Maa with the help of the students. Later I discussed the rocks in a lesson on colours that I was requested to give on colours in Standard 8. The students were able to associate colour and pattern references on rocks with those on animals, clouds, hills and objects of material culture. The following table which the students and I developed in the classroom was the result of this exercise. It indicates the richness of knowledge of the colours that the Maasai students have of their environment:

Table 4: Colour patterns in the rocks in the school compound

	COLOUR PATTERN NAMES	ASSOCIATION	VALUES
Maa	*olonykie*		
English	red	cow	beautiful, good
Kiswahili	*nyekundu*	*mtu (person)*	
Maa	*olmuge*		
English	indigo/violet	cow, goat, sheep	beautiful
Kiswahili	*turungi*		
Maa	*olerai* *	cow, tree	good
English	pink		
Kiswahili			
Maa	*oltara*		
English	spotted	cow, goat, giraffe, leopard	good
Kiswahili	*madoadoa*		
Maa	*sindet*		
English	blue and white	cow, goat, sheep	beautiful
Kiswahili	*madoadoa*		
Maa	*oloitibil narok*		
English	black eye/ sport	cow, goat	good
Kiswahili		*paka* (cat)	
Maa	*orbarikoi*		
English	light brown	stone	good
Kiswahili			
Maa	*ornyero*		
English	brown	stone	good
Kiswahili			

Maa	*olarus*		
English		cow, clouds	good
		snakes	ugly
Kiswahili			
Maa	*olarusha*		
English		buffalo, cow, goat, sheep	good
Kiswahili			

* *Olerai* was described as pink by the students although the colour was closer to orange

I had in fact conducted a lesson based on the children's ethnic culture. I used both English and Kiswahili during the lesson and encouraged the students to discuss among themselves colour names, their symbolic values and associations in Maa. Then they talked about them before helping me to record them.

The data in the above chart shows Maasai children's understanding of aesthetics. They were able to move from one sight area to another. For example, they moved from rock patterns to animal patterns and from rock patterns to patterns on trees. Each sight area had a context which was different from and independent of the other. The students were systematic in identifying patterns on different objects based on familiar aesthetic codes such as spotted configuration of colours, one colour shade and one colour spot on a surface of different colour. They were able to place value to the patterns such as good, bad and ugly.

The results of the experiment described above which was conducted outside the classroom, and while looking at the actual objects in the environment, led me on to do a systematic classroom test on objects and values based on drawings from the students' imagination. My objective was to understand Maasai students' concepts of aesthetics. I was also interested in knowing if teaching of art and craft had influenced their strong ethnic aesthetic foundation. I used paper and pencil (and not beads and rocks) with the intention of training their attention away from the homestead and towards the school.

I provided paper and colour pencils to the Standard 8 class of eight students and asked them to draw anything that they thought was beautiful. When they finished drawing, I collected the sheets, gave out more paper, and then asked them to draw something that they thought was ugly. The results are given below in two columns: Beautiful and Ugly.

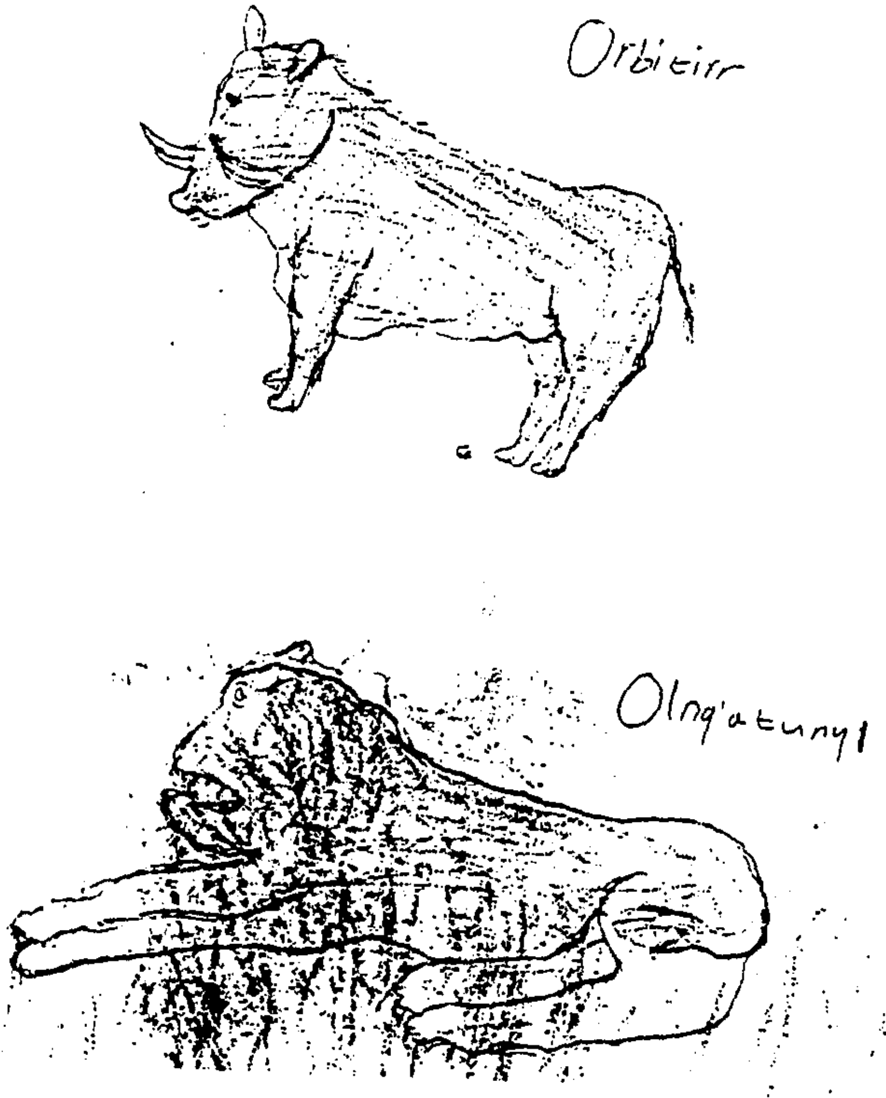
Table 5 : Things beautiful and things ugly

Object	Beautiful	Ugly	Reasons
Elephant		x	It is too big. The nose is too long. The head is too big, not in proportion
Monkey		x	It is too hairy.
Warthog		x	Hairy and ugly face. Big teeth.
House	x		People make it.
Snake		x	Dangerous to people.
Fox		x	Hairy animal.
Jackal		x	Like a fox, hairy.
Cows	x		Beautiful skin. Shinning. . They have patterns. They are useful to people
Trees	x		Green and are useful.
Goats	x		They have patterns and are useful to people.
Birds	x		Colourful.
Mt Kenya	x		It shines and is black and white. Keri pattern.
Mt Kilimanjaro	x		It is white and beautiful. It shines.
Ostrich		x	It's neck is like a snake. It is not smooth.
Lion		x	It's head is ugly, too big, not in proportion to his body. Bearded animal.
Zebra	x		It is beautiful, black and white. It has a pattern. It's body is in proportion.
Giraffe	x	x	It is beautiful because it is decorated. But it is also ugly because it is too tall like an ostrich. It is not in proportion.

Illustration 13: Maasai boy's drawing of an ugly thing.

17 SOMETHING UGLY

INYONYORI PRI. SCHOOL
AGE 15 yrs
AGE GROUP ILMERISHI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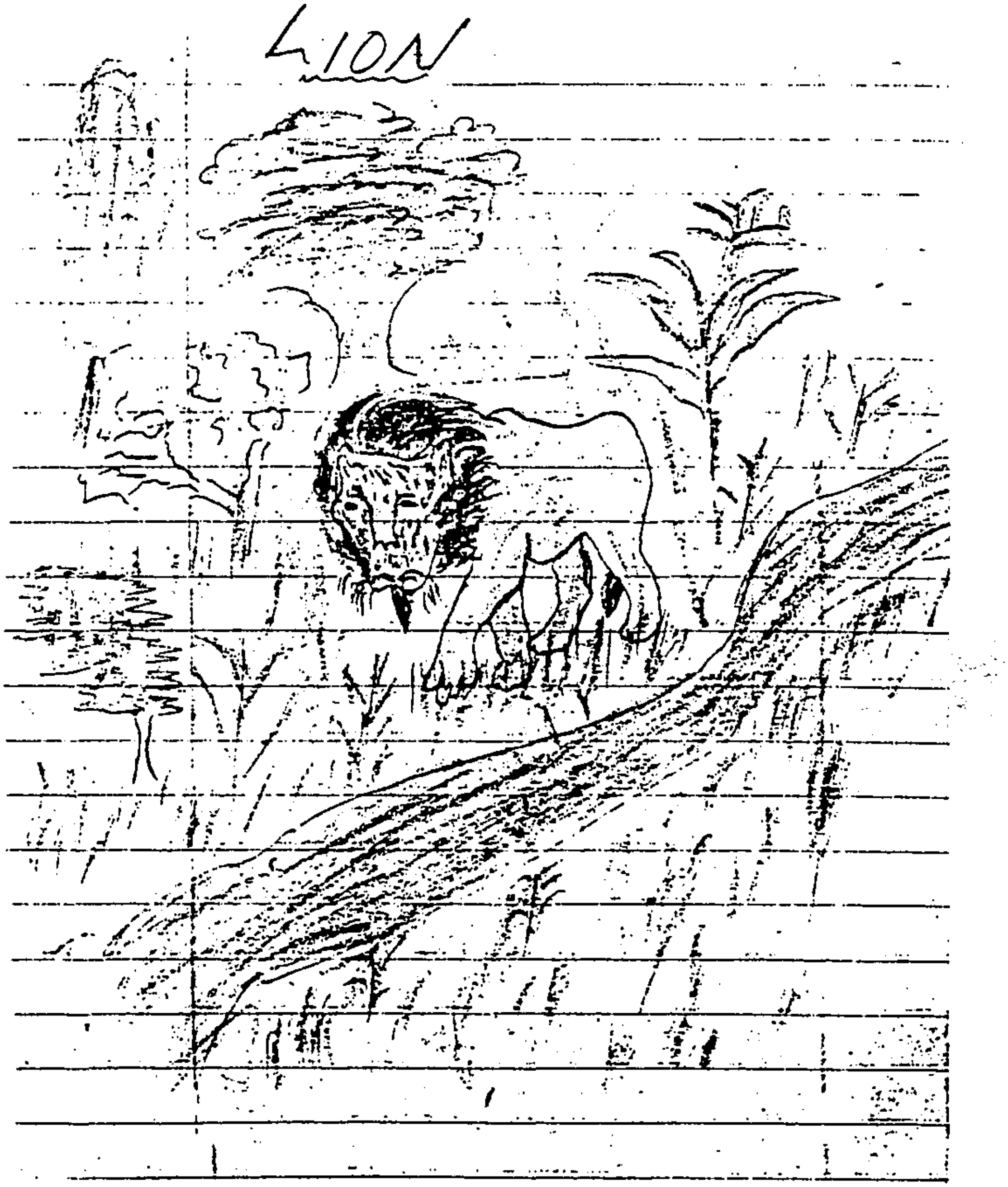
Olng'atunyi

We discussed each drawing. The answers given were unanimous and if there was a disagreement, the age mates would discuss among themselves in Maa and then give me one answer. In an age group setting where unity is respected, I did not press for individual's opinions. The students were very attentive during the discussion and thoughtful when I raised a difference of opinion. For example, when I asked why a cow was beautiful and not an ostrich, many spontaneously replied that because one could not eat an ostrich and that its neck was like a snake. When I argued that people also did not eat a zebra, and yet it was beautiful, they replied that the zebra had a pattern black and white which made it look beautiful. Then I said that an ostrich (male) was also black and white and that it had beautiful feathers that the Maasai used in their headgear. The students laughed and said that I did not understand that inspite of the colours and the feathers it still looked like a snake. There was no doubt that the students had a good understanding of aesthetics and that they were prepared to discuss it and think about it. They were able to connect patterns and colours in different sights in various contexts, make judgments on their values and give reasons. I was amazed by their willingness to discuss and know my point of view although none of them agreed with what I said.

On another occasion, I talked to two students, ole Sekuda and ole Mpoke, and two teachers (both non-Maasai) about the Inyonyori school uniform which consisted of pink shirts and blue shorts for boys and blue skirts for girls. The teachers said that the uniform was 'smart'. One teacher told me that the boys removed the uniform as soon as they reached home and wore the *shuka* . I asked the boys why they did not wear the shirt and shorts outside of the school. The boys, who were over sixteen years old and in Standard 8, laughed and said that the uniform was 'not good'. (I understood the discomfort of wearing shorts and shirt in the semi-desert, and especially when one has been used to a *shuka*, so I did not pursue this point. The male teachers wore long trousers and all of them came from the much cooler highland areas of Kenya). Instead, we discussed colours of the uniform which the boys said were 'bad'. We discussed the ornaments of the patterns *keri* (black and white) and *narok* (black) that they were wearing and compared the Maasai colour compositions to the pink and blue combination of the uniform. The boys said that the colour combinations in their ornaments were more beautiful than 'their (the teachers") uniform of the school'. (Kiswahili impolite: *Uniform zao za shule).*

Illustration 14: Maasai boy's drawings of ugly things.



We then talked about Art and Craft as a subject and what they learned during the lessons such as metal work, wood work, drawing, painting and colours (At Inyonyori all subjects were taught as theory lessons). When I asked ole Sekuda and ole Mpoke if they enjoyed Art and Craft lessons, they both said that they did. Then one of them asked me, to my surprise, " What is the use of studying Art and Craft?" I told him that it was to know how people like those who lived in Nairobi and other parts of Kenya, made their ornaments and other things like stools and milk containers which they used in their homes and fields. I felt that I did not give a convincing explanation. It may be because the students were not able to validate school art on the basis of their cultural and aesthetic experiences. On the other hand the teachers were not able to validate Maasai art on basis of the 'national curriculum.' This was made clear when later, after the students had gone home, I continued to talk to the teachers who made statements such as:

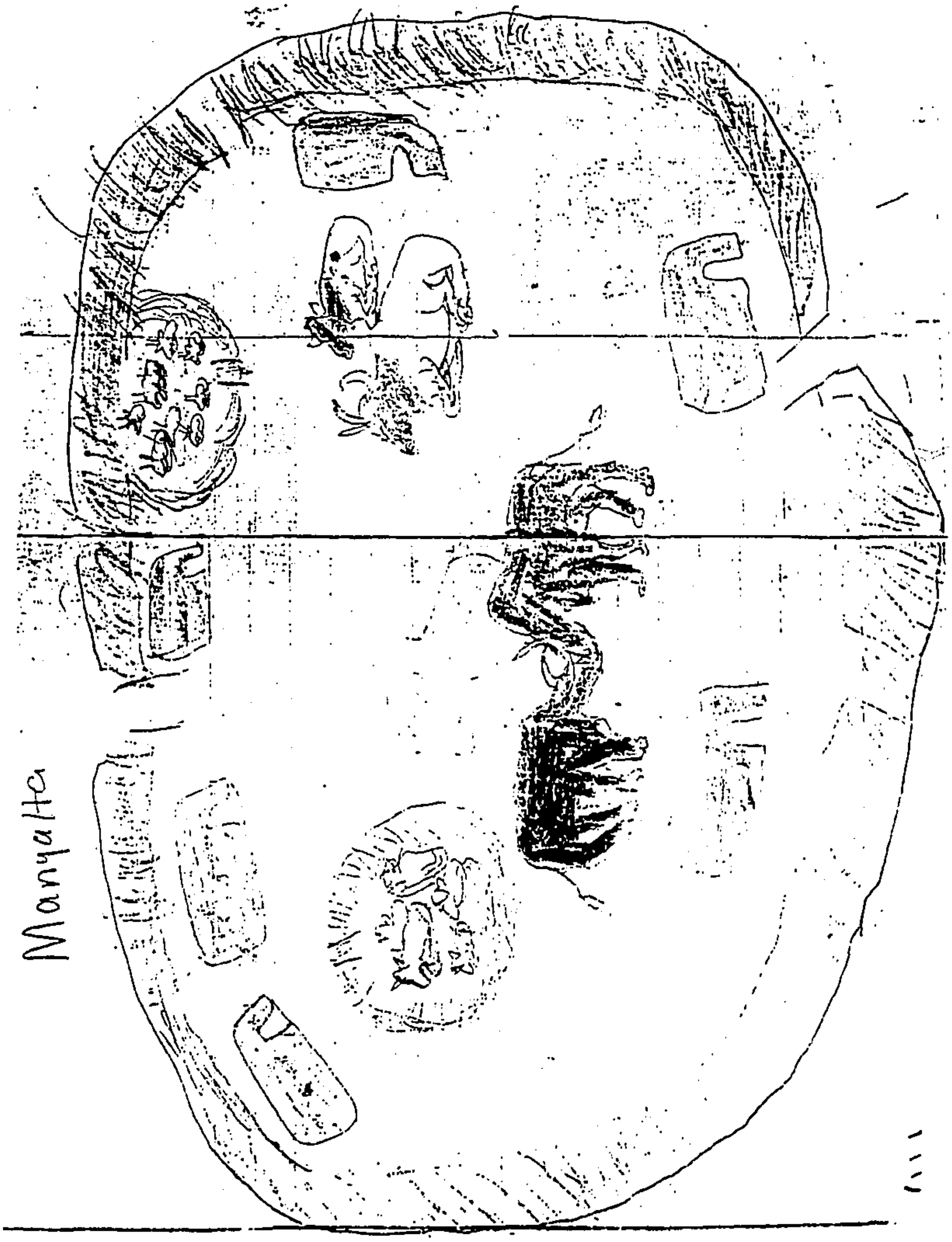
> They (Maasai children) bring their culture to school
>
> Teaching of Art and Craft is done by professional teachers while this is not the case with Maasai Art and Craft
>
> Cultural background of the Maasai does not expose them to real life situations
>
> Culture of the Maasai prepares children for certain roles in their society (which conflict with the roles that the teachers are attempting to prepare them for).
>
> Maasai culture interferes with teaching of culture.

These statements reflected tensions (and contradictions) that teachers experienced in the classrooms, perhaps because of lack of preparations in the teaching of minority and pastoralist children during their training, but certainly because of their understanding of art education as a means to promote a 'modern' culture over an ethnic culture. Or, to state it in another way, the tensions reflected a dichotomy between nationhood and ethnicity which is a conflict of values, that was also physically apparent at Inyonyori, between the classroom and the community cultures. The implications of this conflict of values need to be understood in terms of art education which is precisely articulated by Boyd White in Aesthetic judgement as a basis for value judgements (1993):

> Further, we must show how aesthetically derived value experiences may be educationally validated. What is the educational significance of a value located in aesthetic experience? Or, to state it another way, what is the purpose of art? (White: 1993, p.107).

White's questions to art educators reflect on a universal concern between educational and aesthetic experiences. But in a situation such as the one in pastoralist Kenya, the purpose of art may be read as a directive within the general curriculum policy, i.e. to transform aesthetically derived ethnic value experiences in order to create new and more 'national' and 'modern' values, and thus validate the role of education in a modern nation building. The two students ole Sekuda and ole Mpoke who questioned the purpose of learning art, and the teachers who said that Maasai culture interfered with the teaching of culture make visible the conflict between ethnicity and nationhood, and how it gets played in the classroom.

Illustration 15: Maasai boy's drawings of beautiful things.



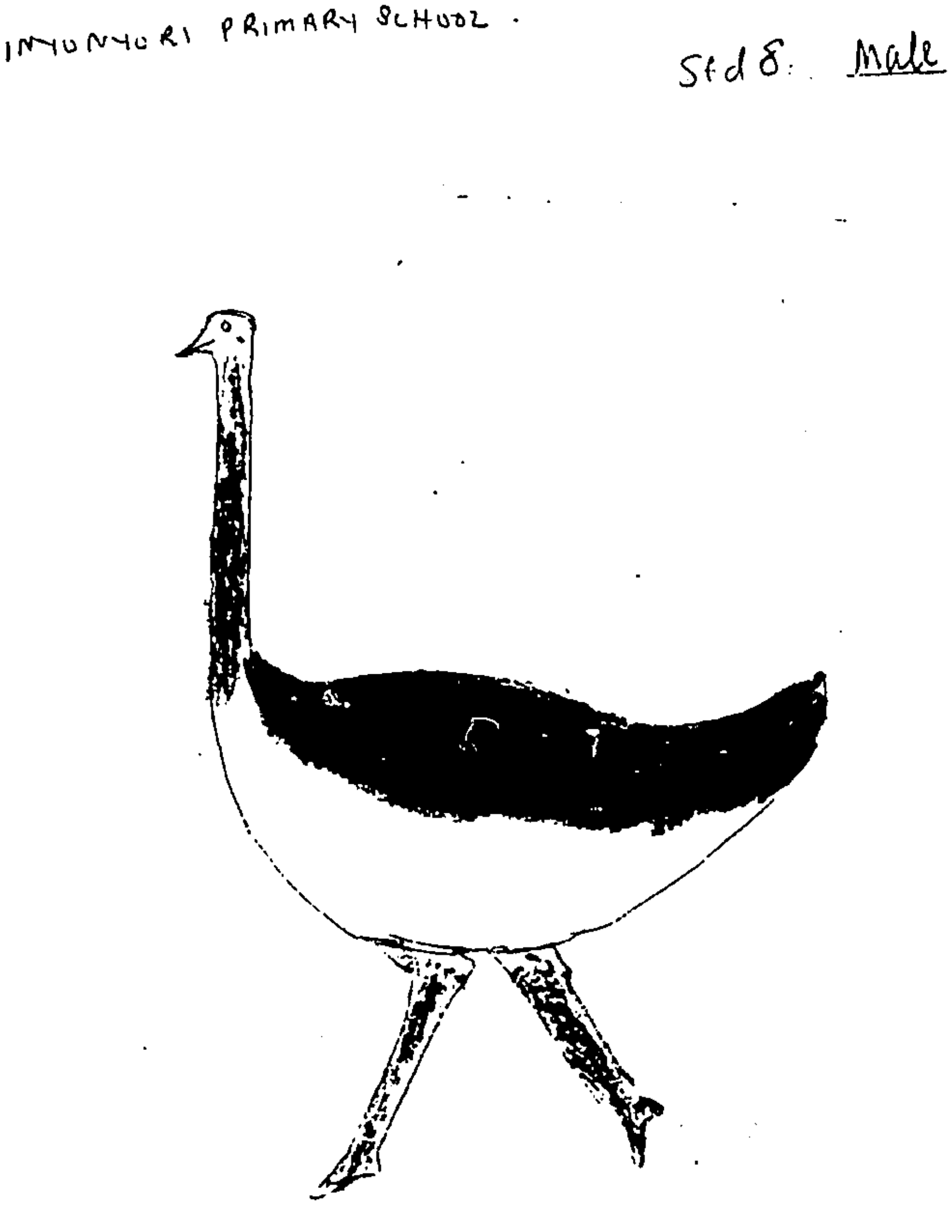
ii. Lesson on lines

At another time at Inyonyori Primary School, I observed Ole Kantai, who is an Il Keekonyokee Maasai from the vicinity, teaching art in Standard 1. There were fifteen children in the class. Six were seated on a bench desk on one side of the room and ten were on the other side. On the blackboard there were drawings and writings from the previous lesson which was in English. There were stick figures of humans with the following names under them: Boy - Tom; Woman - Mrs. Judith Kamau; Girl - Mary; Man - Mr. Daniel Kamau. (the names were European and Agikuyu). The lesson was on Lines and was systematically delivered in five steps. Mr. Ole Kantai spoke in Maa throughout the double period.

Mr. Ole Kantai began the lesson by writing Art on the black board and saying the word 'art' several times. The children repeated after him. Then he took a long stick in his hand and spoke in Maa. He explained that the stick was straight like a straight line. Then he drew a straight line on the black board using the stick and a chalk, and again explained a straight line in Maa. After that, he said 'straight' in English several times and the children repeated the word in English after him each time. He then said the word 'line' in English a couple of times and the children repeated the word in chorus after him each time. Finally Mr. Ole Kantai began to say 'straight line' while pointing to the line on the black board and the children sang 'straight line' after him. In the next step he taught 'curved line' following exactly the same procedure. Then Mr. Ole Kantai taught 'short line' and 'long line'. The entire lesson developed into a rhythm of long explanations in Maa followed by short punctuating words in English (like straight, short, short line). The teacher spoke in Maa, then came the English words and the children sang in chorus after him. Occasionally Mr. Ole Kantai would ask a pupil to come up to the black board and point to the 'straight line', 'curved line', 'short line', 'long line' ,'long straight line' etc. Three times during the class, Mr. Ole Kantai asked the children to stand up and sit down two times each time. These events helped to break the monotony of the teacher's monologue and children's sing song. Later, after the class, when I was discussing the lesson with Mr. Ole Kantai, he said to me:

> I make the children see and remember so that they are learning art and English at the same time. They do not know English at all but they know about lines and colours.

Illustration 16: Maasai boy's drawing of a thing that he dislikes


INYUNYORI PRIMARY SCHOOL .
Std 8. Male

4.2 Discourses of Learning and Teaching Art and Material Culture

The following are extracts from my talks with a headmaster, teachers and students in the three schools that I have been visiting. In a way the talks were open-ended interviews that developed from one or two leading questions which are indicated in italics.

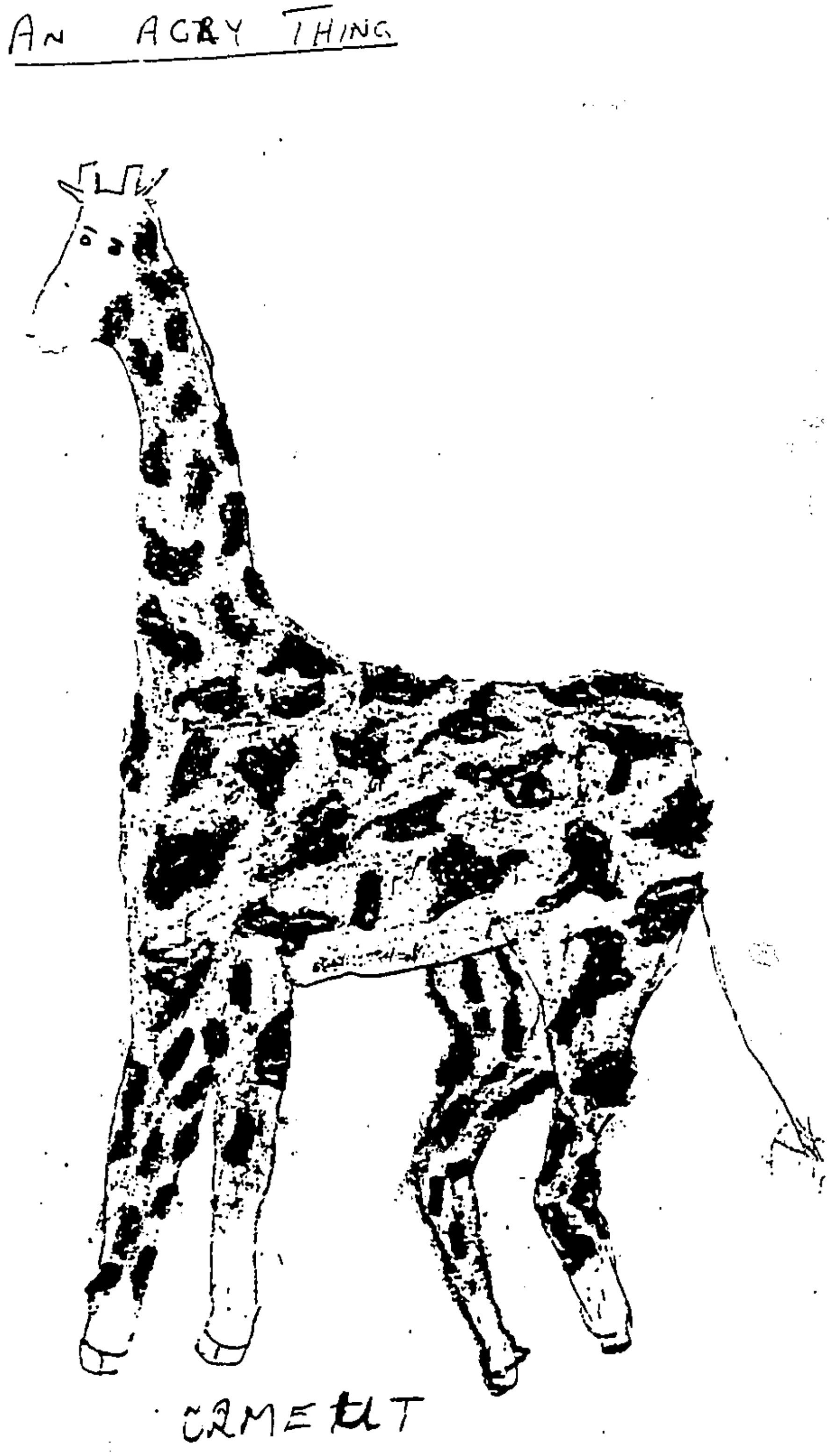
Discourse One. Art, education, history and politics.

The Headmaster, Mr. Zakariah Solomon Kungu of a primary school in Kiambu District.

I asked Mr Kungu if he learned how to teach art at the Teachers' Training College, and he said to me:

> When I went to Teachers' Training College, there was no teaching of art. That was at Thogoto in Kikuyu, around 1968. You know the place? Art is something personal. Can it really be taught? What I call beauty, is not what you call beauty. Can you be taught that, eh? That is perhaps why people do not take art seriously right from the college, and from the Ministry of Education to the ... (points his finger to the ground).
>
> Yes, science is taken seriously. But when it comes to art, it is something inborn. Science can be taught because you are not born with it. Not art. Art is inborn. That is why teachers are not ready to teach art. So what do you do as a headmaster when your teachers are not interested to teach art and craft. So we use our authority and force teachers to teach art and craft. They do not like it and say that they are not trained. But can you teach art? Can they be trained as art teachers? Maybe people who understand art can be trained, but most of us do not understand art. But why do we teach art and craft anyway?

Illustration 17: Maasai boy's drawing of an ugly thing.


AN AGRY THING
CRMEKLT

> I don't know what is wrong with our society. They want more and more. It is the politicians who want us to teach more and more. So we keep on trying to do what they want. The other day ... did you read in the Nation? They want us to teach moral education, and that other thing, Sex Education. Who is going to teach that? Now, are we trained to teach that? Ask the art teachers? Do we need training to teach that (Sex Education)? The other day, I was thinking. Yes, sure, Aids is a problem in Kenya but how does a teacher teach that (says that emphatically) subject to children? How can an old man like me teach such a subject to children? These politicians, they can only talk and command.
>
> The Ominde Report brought the African way of thinking to education. It was the politician's way. So some more subjects were introduced, all subjects were introduced. New subjects never stop being introduced. In the colonial days we learned a few subjects and we learned them well. I can milk a cow because we did Rural Science. Now we want to do everything. There is no specialization.
>
> You see, Bwana Somjee, in colonial times only the very bright students studied more and became teachers. The not-so-bright went to technical schools. Girls did home science. European children (of the settlers) went to Laikipia and Egerton to learn Agriculture and farm management. Asians learned business from their fathers. Now, we Africans, want to learn everything at the same time, and that also in primary school. The politicians decide. We as civil servants, implement. But are we really implementing? Who decides? The politicians say that we are successful in our education system. How are we teachers to say, "No". But, I tell you, I cannot produce one employable youth after Standard 8.

When I asked if there was a solution to this problem, Mr Kungu went on to say that:

> This is a political government. 8-4-4 is made by them (the politicians), whether we pass or fail, they will say we are a success. Then you also say that too. Even if you don't see that (pointing to a book on the table) you say that you see that, eh?

Discourse Two. Ethnic arts and the national syllabus: Views of non-indigenous teachers in indigenous contexts

During lunch with a group of non-Maasai teachers at Inyonyori we often discussed politics and the elections in Kenya. Newspapers from Nairobi which I would bring would often stimulate discussions. We often talked about ethnic fighting in the Rift Valley and about patriotism and nationhood. Sometimes I cautiously asked a leading question on the role of schools in creating a sense of national identity. In the following I narrate one significant discussion as it took place.

Lucy:	I think competitions help (*to create a national identity).* Competitions like athletics, football, volley ball and music festivals. But our school is too remote so we do not compete with other tribes.
Waithira:	For those of us who do not understand Kimaasai (Maa language), we communicate in English and Kiswahili. These are national languages and we encourage the pupils to use these languages when talking to visitors in school.
Lucy:	We arrange to go to the Nairobi Agricultural Show with some senior students every year. But it is expensive and many cannot afford to go . Such events are national and children can see many tribes of Kenya integrating together to build the nation.
Njoroge:	Debating.
Waithira:	In G.H.C. we teach about our national flag and the loyalty pledge. In Standard 6 when the students are mature they learn this before any other topic.
Lucy:	They sing the national anthem in both English and Kiswahili.
Waithira:	In G.H.C. we also teach them about different tribes of Kenya. Their origins, festivals and customs.
Njoroge:	Some tribes. Just a few.
Waithira:	I usually teach the students about songs and dances from other tribes.
Lucy:	History makes you feel patriotic. How the colonialists took our land and how we fought. Scramble for Africa, African Reaction to Colonial Rule and the Struggle for

Independence. Art and Craft also helps to develop the nation.(*Often in Kenya the notion of helping to develop a nation is similar to that of being patriotic*).

I felt quite certain that the last sentence was for me as the teachers knew my interest. So I took the opportunity and asked what they felt was the difference between Maasai art and craft from what was in the national syllabus. I further enforced the point by asking myself aloud: " I wonder why Maasai art and craft cannot become a part of the national syllabus for all Kenyans to study? Their material culture is so rich." The teachers laughed and said:

Lucy: Maasai art is only from their own environment. Maasai environment is limited. One cannot find many things here that we use for art and craft. Maasai art and craft is a part of their culture which is not the culture of other tribes. Some topics in art and craft are not found in Maasai culture like Drawing, Woodwork, Collage, Printmaking,...

Njoroge: They are good at leather work.

Lucy: We use ordinary paint. They make things complicated by using crushed bones, soil, milk and stones.

Waithira: Maasai art and craft is both sex and age group oriented. In schools we teach to some degree according to age but we make no difference between boys and girls.

Lucy: Maasai art and craft is not as wide as that in the syllabus. They do not have topics like Drawing, Graphic Design, even Weaving and Basketry. Think of Printing, Metalwork and Collage for them. On the other hand the syllabus does not have such subjects as Tattooing. In painting Maasai use only shades of red - all shades of red that you can think of. We use many colours.

Waithira: Furthermore, areas in Maasai art and craft are not well defined as in the syllabus. These areas get mixed up for them like ornaments, beads, leatherwork, colours, patterns...

Lucy: Yes! The topics in the syllabus are systematic and build up in stages according to the grades. This means that a topic reappears in different classes, getting deeper and deeper as the students advance. Maasai art and craft is learned from childhood. They learn to make things themselves and are not taught. Like making a *rungu* (club). The boy teaches himself. He goes to the forest, cuts a branch and starts making a *rungu* (club).

Waithira: Maasai art and craft has no theory, it is only practicals. There is no planning, designing.

Lucy: In schools art and craft is taught by professionals. Among the Maasai everyone learns by himself.

Discourse Three. From ethnic to national art and craft: Conflicts in changing aesthetics.

Mr Ole Kantai, an Il Keekonyokee Maasai art teacher

Mr ole Kantai (was looking at an art and craft text book for primary school as he talked to me): The patterns in this book cannot 'match' Maasai culture. (*Mr ole Kantai used the word 'match' to mean appropriate to or liked by. He looked at the monotone grey and blue pages on which were circles and semi-circles and continued talking):* These colours are not good for the Maasai, especially the Il Keekonyokee would not find them beautiful. I find it difficult to teach the children to like the patterns that cannot 'match' with what they know. Look at these shapes by themselves. (*Speaking in Kiswahili now).* Maasai cannot appreciate that. The Il Keekonyokee don't consider shapes by themselves as patterns. There is no colour, so there is no pattern. (*Pointing to the triangles, semi-circles and squares in the text book).*

To the Maasai patterns are ornaments. And there is no pattern or ornament if there is no colour. But in the syllabus there are three separate topics on Patterns, Ornaments and Colours. What do you do to make the children understand? So there is a problem. First I teach about colours even when I am supposed to teach about patterns. The children, they know the colours, so I teach the colours. They have learned the colours 'by nature' so they know. Then I put the colours in a triangle and square, and so I teach the patterns of triangles and squares 'through colours.'

I asked Mr ole Kantai how he prepared the students for examination questions on moods and emotions such as happiness, sadness and anger that related to colours. He replied *that it was difficult because among the Maasai all beautiful patterns 'matched' with all good moods and all ugly patterns 'matched' with all bad moods. This was a clear indication of how meanings of colours are context laden.*

Mr ole Kantai	*(continued to talk)* There is a topic on Ornaments in the syllabus. That is a problem. So I teach how to make ornaments with beans and maize the way I learned in the college. Here among the Il Keekonyoikee I (being a male) cannot use beads. Girls do that and they make better ornaments than their teachers. There is a problem. When the children go home with ornaments made of beans and maize, the people laugh at them and ask them, "Is this what you learned in school today?" There is a problem. The children are ashamed to take home the ornaments they make in school.

Finally I asked Mr ole Kantai if the Art and Craft Syllabus was useful to the Maasai and he said:

> We give them the knowledge in theory and they can apply it at home if they have the interest. I give them the methods as practicals are difficult to do here. As long as they have the knowledge and interest they will benefit. They can always apply theory to practice. They learn useful theories for pottery, weaving and basketry.

Discourse Four. Maintaining two codes: Home art and school art

Ziborah Nafula, a Standard 8 student in Nairobi.

Ziborah Nafula was a mature fifteen years old girl about to complete her Standard 8 and her primary school education. Ziborah Nafula came to Nairobi when she was nine years old to look after her father who worked as a messenger in the city. Ziborah Nafula did housework and cooking, and also went to Kassarani Primary School. Ziborah Nafula's mother lived in Western Kenya where she looked after her other children and tilled the family land. Every school holidays Ziborah Nafula went to her rural home and spent about a month with her mother. She was interviewed several times during one year in her mother tongue, Kibukusu, by Mr Eric Wamalwa who came from around Bungoma where

Ziborah Nafula's ethnic people lived. The following are three extracts from her talks with Mr Eric Wamalwa.

Mr Eric Wamalwa: Tell me what you know about the art and craft of our people, the Bukusu.

Ziborah Nafula: I know about a wide range of objects of Bukusu people. We make pots, cooking sticks, digging sticks, bangles, necklaces, earrings and jingles. We also make yokes, granaries, arrows and bows, hunting traps, stools, spears and knives. And beer drinking straws.

I acquired skills and knowledge from my people, the Bukusu, and I can make many things. For example, I can make cooking sticks, baskets, pots, necklaces, bangles, earrings, dolls, beer drinking straws and brooms.

Our culture is such that one should learn to make traditional art and craft whether one likes it or not because one will have to make something or other at one time. Girls like me should know how to make brooms, baskets and sometimes pots just as we should know how to cook and keep the house clean. When I am married I will know how to live with my family.

I like traditional items of material culture because they show our heritage from our ancestors. Most the items that we learn in schools have actually been used in our homes. Modern items of art and craft have been modified from our traditional material culture.

Mr Eric Wamalwa: Do pupils in your school get an opportunity to talk about and make items of material culture from their own ethnic people?

Ziborah Nafula: No. You can only make those things you are told to make by the teacher and these are in the syllabus so that we can concentrate on them for the examinations. Sometimes we make something from our ethnic groups but that is very rare and we do not get marks for them because that is not in the syllabus. But what I learn in school will help me to get employment or become self employed.

Mr Eric Wamalwa: How do you judge if an item of material culture is good or not

Ziborah Nafula: First I see if the item can function well. If it is a cooking stick, does it qualify to be a cooking stick? If it has all the characteristics of a cooking stick then it is good. Apart

	from that, the finishing should be good enough to attract the user to use the item and the buyer to buy.
Mr Eric Wamalwa:	How can you relate Art and Craft to other subjects like Agriculture, Science and Music?
Ziborah Nafula:	Art and Craft is like other subjects we learn in class. It should be encouraged. It can enable one to get employment or be self employed like in the case of other subjects. The only problem is that it is not given enough time like other subjects such as English and Mathematics. It is a practical subject. We need a lot of patience to appreciate Art and Craft.

4.3 Summary

What is apparent is that teaching of art is about 'modern' things like learning of the English language, tools and techniques, and certain European principles of art that are, for example, taught under graphic art and during lessons on colours and sculptures. But lesson descriptions also indicate that teachers did not always fully understand or appreciate these principles, and that the whole subject of aesthetics, which is central to art education, was not understood and thus avoided. In the Agikuyu school, the teacher attempted to show the relevance of traditional material culture by comparing it first to 'modern' material culture while Maasai children's living art was ignored in classroom learning. The Maasai teacher, who understood the double problem that the children had in first perceiving art on paper, and secondly in understanding art in English, used indigenous ways of perception and knowledge, to teach modernity.

Chapter Five

Visual and Spoken Languages

5.0 Introduction

This chapter argues through analyses of visual and spoken languages that teaching of art and material culture was viewed as a means to transmit cultural values which inclined more towards 'modernization' than towards strengthening of indigenous aesthetic material. The first section examines visual languages in the classroom and the second deals with the spoken languages. The third and fourth sections deal specifically with naming and understanding of colours and certain art terms and words in the contexts of the school and home cultures. There is the presence of the Teacher President in the classroom and his voice in the curriculum emerges as the art teacher negotiates between the indigenous and modern values.

5.1A Visual languages

In every room in the three schools there was the officially approved picture of President Daniel arap Moi. The President's black and white picture in a one foot by one and a half foot black frame hung exactly in the same place in every classroom: in the front of the students, above the blackboard, and just in the middle of the wall. In the picture the President is wearing a black pin striped suit with a rose bud in the lapel and a large tie. Similar hand-touched pictures, showing the President, whose official age is reported to be seventy years (born 1924), as a broad shouldered elder in late middle age with a soft smile and a direct and authoritative look at the viewer, appears on every bank note in Kenya, in every shop and in every office. The head teachers' offices had a larger slightly different and coloured version of the President's picture. In the classroom the teacher stands below the President's portrait symbolizing wisdom and authority which the teacher projects as well. All the visual images of the President have to be respected by law. An

American Newsweek journalist was threatened with deportation because of his comments on the President :

> His (the President's) face stares out from every bank note, his portrait hangs in every office, his name adorns every airport, stadiums, streets and schools... His towering physique, trade mark scepter and grave but avuncular manner elicits hushed deference from even the most hostile opponents.
>
> (DN March 25, 1995)

In other aspects classroom visual environments in the three schools varied. Classrooms of Karuri Primary and Kassarani Primary had many similarities. For example, in both the schools, I found large manila sheets illustrating different aspects of the art and craft syllabus. The illustrations were copied from the texts and magnified many times over. Both the schools had posters illustrating lines, one of the first topics in the theory of art that a child learns in Standard 1. Thick and thin lines. long and short lines, and wavy and zig zag lines were drawn and named. There were colour charts and colour wheels. One poster at Kassarani Primary School had words and no colours:

Colour Chart

Primary Colours

Blue + Yellow = Green

Yellow + Red = Orange

Red + Blue = Purple

Many of the classrooms in the two schools had English art vocabulary lists pasted on the walls. These lists comprised of words such as paint, brush, leaf print, mask, ear-ring, puppet, bracelet, pattern, dot design and modeling. One small poster at Kassarani Primary School was entitled Art and Craft. There were six words with tiny drawings on it : Mask, Necklace, Ear-ring, Dot Design, Bracelet and Lines, which had three sub-headings, namely, Zig Zag, Thick and Thin. Both at Karuri and Kassarani Primary Schools there were posters illustrating traditional musical instruments but all the names except one (i.e. *kyamba* , a seed and reed rattle from the coast region) were in English. Under the drawings of ethnic instruments were the following names: jingles, drum, horn, shakers and guitar. The latter is a popular working class and rural musical instrument.

The Christian Religious Education (CRE) section was often the best illustrated with drawings or written stories from the Bible. The characters were all European wearing long hair, beards and Middle Eastern clothing. Traditionally Nilotic and Bantu elders do not keep beards and long hair.

Geography, History, Civics (GHC) posters depicting Kenyan environment and society reflected the community's image as depicted by the teacher and how it viewed others. For example, colour pictures of well dressed 'modern' Kenyans, cut out from family monthly magazines (e.g. Parents) were on the walls with one word captions like 'father', 'mother' and 'family' written on them. Beside them were glossy pictures of the pastoralists set in scenic environments from tourist magazines and past calendars with captions such as Maasai and Turkana under them. In the GHC syllabus there is a topic on the family and another one on the tribes of Kenya. The 'modern' Kenyans are also often called citizens and others are often and generally referred to as tribes. For example, one large poster in a Standard 6 classroom at Karuri Primary School (Agikuyu area) had twelve coloured pictures which had been cut out from magazines pasted on it. There were three separate pictures of a man wearing a smart woolen suit, a lady in a nice short frock and a baby in a frilly dress. The teacher had written 'Father', 'Mother' and Baby' under the respective pictures and in the middle she had written 'The Family'. There was another picture of a group of people eating at a table. Under this picture was written 'People'. There was a colourful picture of a group of Maasai warriors dancing. They were wearing the *shuka* (loin cloth) and had bright red ochre on their long pleated hair, heads and bare chests. The glossy picture was from a calendar of a previous year and under it the teacher had written the word 'Maasai'. Another picture showed lions with the word Lions under it. There were also pictures of a bird, fish and a butterfly. There was one picture of Presidents Moi and Kenyatta sharing a happy moment. Under this there was only one boldly written word: 'Kenyatta'. Jomo Kenyatta was born and lived in Kiambu District, where the school is located.

In a Standard 3 classroom at Kassarani Primary School I studied twelve large beautifully illustrated black and white printed posters from the Ministry of Education that the teachers used as visual aid for GHC lessons. The posters were pasted a head above the children's eye level, running from left to right, in a line along one side of the classroom wall. The opposite side had windows so the drawings were well lighted and stood out clearly on white sheets. The twelve posters had no titles and were pasted to the wall in the following arrangement:

Table 6: Classroom posters.

Traditional beer drinking party of elders sitting around a large beer pot sipping beer with long straws.	Pastoralist lady in ethnic dress pounding grain using pestle and mortar.	Two hunters wearing *shuka* and carrying bows and arrows while stalking antelopes.
A man in a *shuka* making fire using fire sticks.	A large cave with a group of cave dwellers. Three men skinning an animal.	A pot, a sisal bag and strings. A pastoralist woman in ethnic dress.
A homestead. Grass thatched homes.	Material culture items 2 clay pots, 2 wooden digging sticks. 2 stone axes with wooden handles.	Material culture items 4 ethnic containers gourd, drinking horn,clay pot,half gourd.
Two men wearing *shuka* skinning an antelope.	Line of chained slaves wearing loin cloth; portrait of an Arab, a missionary (explorer ?); dhow and a European sail ship.	Children in school uniform at a modern post office.

When the contents are studied it becomes apparent that the primitive (i.e. pre-historic) and the present-day ethnic indigenous cultures have similar features such as items of material culture like tools, containers and clothing. Often teachers have felt that learning about pastoralist material culture was learning about history. For example, once, after I gave a talk on the material culture of the Maasai, Turkana, Pokot and Boran at a school in Nairobi, a senior teacher brought the discussion to an end by thanking me for an educational presentation on the history of Kenya !

Standards 5 and 8 classrooms at Karuri Primary School, which I frequented, had displays of children's work on the walls. Most frequent were pattern-work displays. A wooden table in a corner of the classroom displayed art and craft work from previous years. Each day children saw classroom displays which they were able to associate with lessons and pictures from the texts. These displays connected classroom instructions and readings with exercises in visual learning and thinking for the children of the schools. Kassarani Primary School had an art room where artwork from previous years was displayed and where the children worked on their handwork.

The Karuri and Kassarani schools also participated in art and craft competitions with other schools. At Kassarani Primary School all the classes from Standard 1 to 8 participate in the Nairobi Provincial Art and Craft Competition during the second semester of the year. In 1993 there was considerable activity with children making mosaics, cardboard houses and cars, paintings of animals and scenery, beadwork and other examples from almost all the topics of the syllabus. The best work from each class was selected and displayed in the school hall for several days. Then it was transported to another school where it was displayed with items from all the schools from the Mathare Division and the best art was again selected for the Nairobi Provincial exhibition. During these weeks children were exposed to many objects and informal talks on art and craft. At the national level, students from Kassarani and Karuri also participated in competitions organized by environmental and wild life groups (e.g. Save the Rhino Painting Competition) and multi-nationals (e.g. Spread the Colgate Smile Painting Competition). A student at Karuri Primary school once won a prize in a competition organized by the National Museum Society. Every year art and craft items from Karuri Primary were selected and exhibited at the Kiambu Agricultural Show. Parents and the community viewed these exhibitions that demonstrated practical aspects of the curriculum and skills learned during the year. They also integrated and linked classroom cultures with those of the community through displays of functional and decorative items for the home and for sale. School exhibits were like displays of craft in the local markets and *jua kali* (small scale) workshops that the children experienced on their way to and from school.

The best art work was sometimes framed and it adorned the walls of the head teachers' offices at Karuri and Kassarani. The two offices had certain similarities in the display and the way the furniture was arranged. There were the headmaster's desk, bookshelves with sliding glass doors and sport trophies on top of the bookshelves. Beside the trophies stood two or three clay busts and human sculpture made by students. There were one or two framed paintings of children's work, portraits or landscapes, a calendar and on top of all was the President's photograph. At Inyonyori Primary School the headmaster did not have an office for himself. He shared the office and the one table with other teachers. Clay and wooden art work, mostly human and animal figures, and hand craft work such as ashtrays and soap dishes, were kept on shelves together with textbooks and neat piles of exercise books that were collected for marking, in one corner of the room. There were no drawings or paintings on the walls or in the shelves.

In Karuri and Kassarani schools, children scribbled and drew on desks and outside walls of the classrooms. They drew pictures of houses (non traditional) and animals, and lines and cubes. Every semester the walls of Kassarani Primary were scrubbed and washed to remove the 'mess' created by the children. For the students of Karuri and Kassarani Primary Schools, visual stimulation of the classrooms contrasted with the built up urban and semi-urban environments of concrete housing estates and the wood, cardboard and plastic waste material that helped to build houses in the shanty towns.

The situation was different at Inyonyori Primary School. Classroom walls were bare and during the two years of my fieldwork no exhibitions took place. In the Standard 8 classroom there was one picture, an outline of a giraffe, drawn with white chalk on an A3 size piece of cardboard. In Standard 5 there was an A2 size poster of a chemical product pasted on the corrugated iron partition that sub-divided one large room. There were no scribbles on the walls but I observed a few tiny patterns drawn with a lead pencil on the desks and on the wooden window of the staff room. Some rocks in the school compound had large patterns drawn on them with white chalk by the children. While the children at Kassarani and Karuri Primary Schools drew pictorial wall art, the Maasai children had drawn patterns comprising horizontal and vertical lines. There were no displays of children's art work or of Maasai material culture in the classrooms. Children's work from previous years was kept on tables and shelves of the staff room which were not accessible to the students. The school did not participate in any divisional or provisional exhibitions. Classroom walls contrasted with the walls of teachers' houses which were covered with colourful and glossy calendar and magazine pictures, including those of the Maasai and the savanna environment. But the young boys in Standards 6, 7 and 8 wore at least one beaded ornament on the wrists. Some wore beaded necklaces too. The women in the school area who came to cook children's mid-day meal wore the traditional attire and colourful ornaments of the Il Keekonyokee Maasai. During the day many men and women dressed in ethnic clothing passed by the school to the ICROSS hospital or the *duka* (a small shop). Herds boys and girls occasionally brought goats to the grass in the school compound and travelers to Lodariak, the next town settlement, used the path that cut across the school area. They wore the ochre and red striped *shuka* (cotton sheets), and beads according to their traditions.

At Inyonyori, Maasai children saw and lived with colours and patterns in the open skies, earth and vegetation. Giraffes browsed on the acacia trees around the school, impalas and Thomson's gazelles sprinted along the school paths. Everyday they observed and handled objects of material culture in their homesteads. The visually rich home environment at Inyonyori was a contrast to the bare, grey concrete and corrugated iron sheet walls of the classrooms. While art was created to be staged and viewed in Kiambu and Nairobi schools, it was a part of the living traditions of the Kajiado children. Maasai material culture is functional and comprises personal adornment of individuals, their age-mates, families and sections. There is a presence of the link between Maasai art and the environment around the school.

The differences in the visual languages reflect the differences in the structures of the schools which are due to variations in the cultures, geographical environments and the *maendeleo* experiences of modernization. Among the latter are different histories of education in Nairobi, the capital city, and among the agriculturist Agikuyu and the pastoralist Maasai. These aspects were discussed in Chapter Three under descriptions of the three field sites. Spoken languages in the schools further reflect the differences which affect how culture, specifically art and material culture, is learned in the classrooms.

5.1B Spoken languages

i. Learning art in English, Kiswahili and Mother Tongue

When the children in Standards 5 and 8 were tested on visual art vocabulary that they learned in school, they performed better in English than in Kiswahili or their mother tongue. The tables below show results of Questionnaire 2 which tested children's ability to translate visual art terms that were learned by looking into English, Kiswahili and Mother Tongue (Also see Appendix 2b samples of Questionnaire 2 from the three schools):

Table 7: Questionnaire 2 Standard 5 English

Students in % Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	5	12	83
Karuri	4	7	89
Inyonyori	6	24	70

All the schools scored high in translating visual symbols into English. Only 5% at Kassarani, 4% at Karuri and 6% at Inyonyori failed (scored below 40%). This shows that children had learned to associate the visual symbols from the text books with English words which was not the case when the students were asked to name the same symbols in Kiswahili.

Table 8: Questionnaire 2 Standard 5 Kiswahili

Students in % Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	82	18	0
Karuri	89	7	4
Inyonyori	100	0	0

Majority of Standard 5 students in the three schools performed unsatisfactorily when it came to translating the visual art symbols into Kiswahili. Generally in Standard 5 there is greater emphasis on learning English than Kiswahili. English is the medium of instruction with eight language-learning periods of thirty-five minutes per week out of fifty-eight while there are only four Kiswahili learning periods and Kiswahili is not a language of instruction except in lower primary and city schools. From my observations in the classroom it was clear that the teachers efforts were directed towards drilling the children in learning key English words that occur in the curriculum and that would help them to interpret examination questions. At Kassarani 18% of the students achieved over 40% marks while at Karuri only 4% passed. No student at Inyonyori was able to achieve 40% pass marks.

Table 9: Questionnaire 2 Standard 5 Mother Tongue

Students in %			
Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	92	8	0
Karuri	90	2	8
Inyonyori	64	36	0

All the children in the three schools had difficulty in writing down visual symbols into their Mother Tongues. 36% passed in Inyonyori while there were only 8% and 10% passes in Kassarani and Karuri respectively. The results showed that the Maasai children performed better in recalling the visual symbols in their ethnic language than the children in the other two schools.

Table 10: Questionnaire 2 Standard 8 English

Students in %				
Marks in %	-40	40-60	60	
Kassarani	0		11	89
Karuri	0		3	97
Inyonyori	20	30	50	

Kassarani and Karuri Primary Schools (Standard 8) performed extremely well when it came to expressing art terms in English with 89% and 97% of the Standard 8 classes achieving more than 60% marks and there were no failures in the two schools. Only 50% of the students at Inyonyori scored over 60% marks and 20% failed as their marks were below 40% indicating that it was difficult for the Maasai children to comprehend art in English. This may be due to several factors such as lack of exposure to English reading material ranging from library books, to newspapers, comics and magazines. The children also did not have access to radio and television which have daily broadcast in English. When I examined the Standard 8 children in Kiswahili using the same art words as in the English test, I found that they did not do as well as in the English test.

Table 11: Questionnaire 2 Standard 8 Kiswahili

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	6	26	11
Karuri	24	76	0
Inyonyori	90	10	0

In this test the children at Karuri Primary School had 76% passes while Kassarani had 37% and Inyonyori had only 10% passes. Again, Maasai children had the most difficulty in expressing art in Kiswahili. These children do not have opportunity to listen to or read Kiswahili in the Il Keekonyokee pastureland until the time when they are initiated into adulthood and are able to travel to small towns in the neighbourhood. When the children were tested in their Mother Tongues on their knowledge of art vocabulary, Karuri and Inyonyori had interestingly almost the same scores. But in general the children at all the schools performed poorly as compared to the same test in English.

Table 12: Questionnaire 2 Standard 8 Mother Tongue

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	82	3	15
Karuri	61	39	0
Inyonyori	59	40	1

Karuri and Inyonyori scored almost equally with 39% and 41% passes while Kassarani had 18% passes in Mother Tongue test. 15% of the children at Kassarani who managed over 60% came from pastoralist families and were recent migrants to the City.

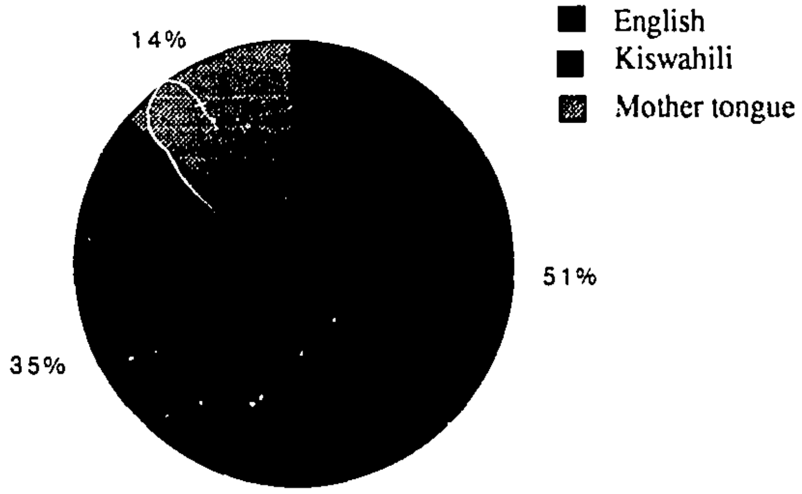
ii. Spoken languages and languages of instruction

> But art has many languages. Technical words. The shadow is silhouette. Is this French, English or Italian? Intaglio for sculpture. Look at papier mache, collage, montage and mosaic -- Art teacher at Kassarani Primary School.

The use of English, Kiswahili and ethnic languages in classroom teaching at different stages of the learning process is considered a means to promote modernism, nationalism and cultural heritage. English represents modernism, Kiswahili stands for nationalism and ethnic languages signify promotion of indigenous cultures. In the school curriculum the three languages are distributed over the eight years in the following manner: Ethnic languages, also called Mother Tongues, are the medium of instruction and all learning activities in lower primary, that is up to Standard 3 (ages of 7 to 9). Then, English becomes the medium of instruction in upper primary (Standards 4 to 8 ages 10 - 14). Kiswahili is taught as a subject in both the upper and lower primary section and is not a medium of learning and communication in the classroom except in certain multi-ethnic situations such as at Kassarani Primary School in Nairobi. The curriculum separates and compartmentalizes the three languages as three different units corresponding to different levels of education. Thus, it does not accept the trilingual heritage and culture of Kenya.

The actual teaching time allocated to each language also varies according to how the planners perceived the importance of the languages in school education. The chart below illustrates in percentages the relative language instruction time during the eight years of primary education in total.

Diagram 7: Instruction time for the three languages per week in total from Std 1 to 8

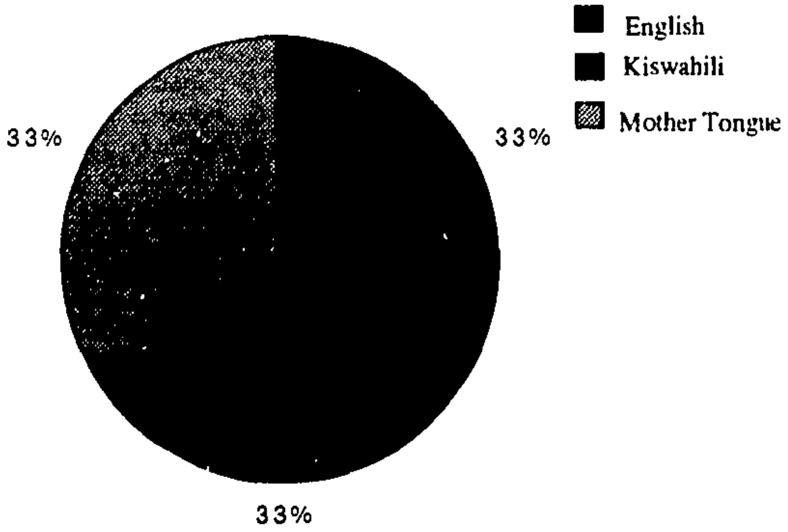


(Composed from data given in Syllabuses for Kenya Primary Schools: 1991 Vol. 1 p. xiv)

Mother Tongue (ethnic language) which is taught in order to retain a national heritage, is allocated 14% of the total language teaching time during the eight years of primary education. Kiswahili, the all Kenya national language, has 35% of the total time while English, the language that represents modernization has the maximum of 51%, besides being the dominant language of instruction.

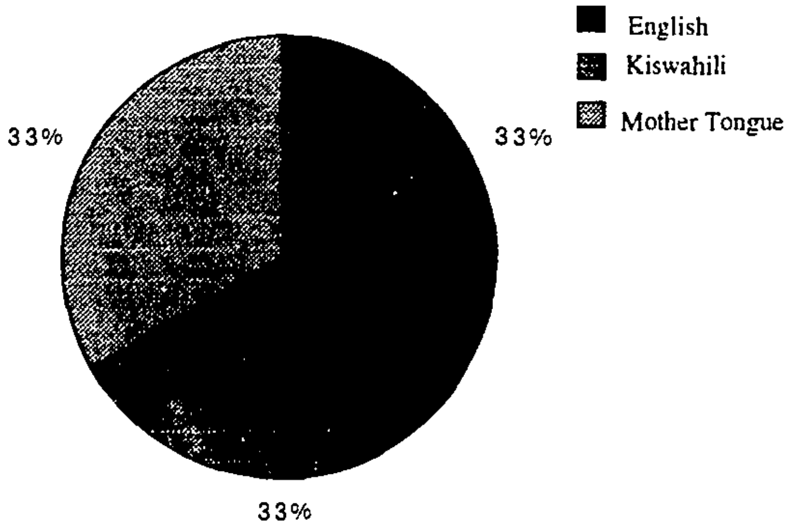
In lower primary all the languages have equal instruction time of five periods of thirty minutes per week. This shows that children are introduced to schooling with a view that all the three languages are equally important in the school curriculum. But the breakdown of the teaching time allocation for each of the three languages in upper primary illustrates that after three years of schooling English has prominence over Kiswahili and Kiswahili over Mother Tongue. The difference in the importance of the three languages in lower and upper primary clearly indicates that being 'modern' has priority over nationalism and nationalism over ethnicity as graphically depicted in the following two pie charts.

Diagram 8: Allocation of teaching time for languages in lower primary



(Composed from data given in Syllabuses for Kenya Primary Schools: 1991 Vol. 1 p. xiv)

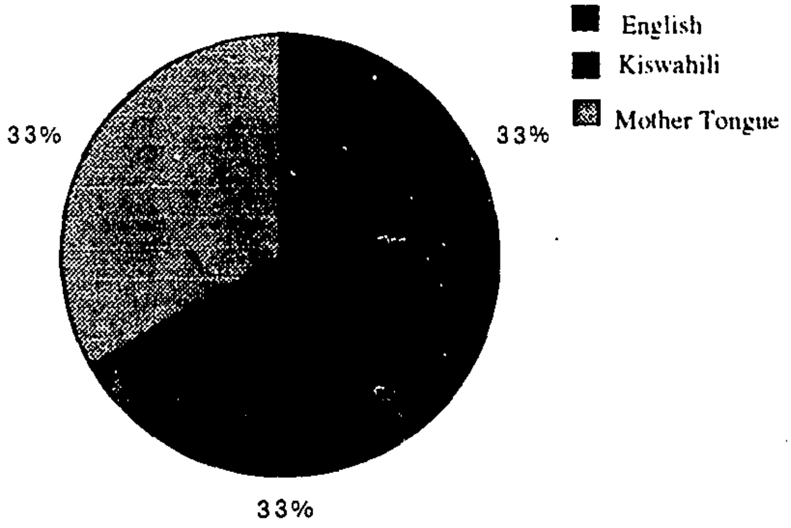
Diagram 9: Allocation of teaching time for languages in upper primary



(Composed from data given in Syllabuses for Kenya Primary Schools: 1991 Vol. 1 p. xiv)

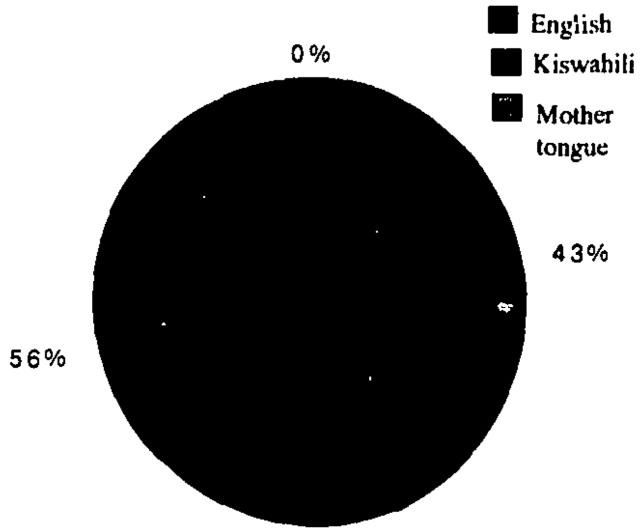
However, when language instruction time is compared to exposure to the three languages during a school day, the picture is quite different. Children in lower primary spend about five hours at school and in upper primary they spend about eight hours. What is immediately noticeable is that students in the three schools have varied exposure to the three languages. This acts as an indicator, to some extent, of the regional tensions between school and home cultures. Languages spoken by children both within and outside the classroom also reflect on a situation that prompts Kenyan children to become modern, nationalist (as having a Kenyan identity) and ethnic. This is illustrated by six sets of pie graphs below on language experiences of children in lower and upper primary in the multi-ethnic Nairobi school, in an Agikuyu agricultural market town and a Maasai school in a pastoralist region.

Diagram 10: Languages spoken during one school day at Kassarani in lower primary



(Composed from school time tables and observation)

Diagram 11: Languages spoken during one school day at Kassarani in upper primary



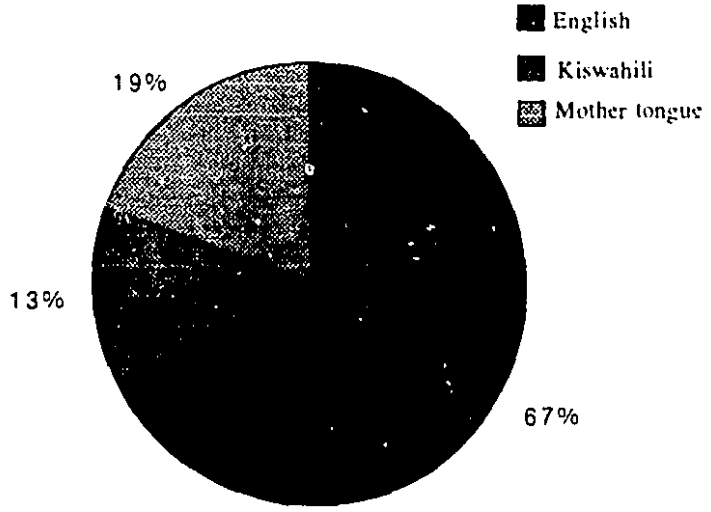
(Composed from school time tables and observation)

At Kassarani Primary School, where the children came from many ethnic groups, teachers in lower primary taught in Kiswahili but used English words for all key art terms such as for shapes, colours, lines, techniques and tools. In upper primary, teaching was conducted in English and very rarely did the teacher use Kiswahili words. Students spoke in Kiswahili among themselves both inside and outside the classrooms in both lower and upper primary sections. I did not observe children speaking in their mother tongues and the teachers confirmed this fact. I asked one teacher why the children did not speak in ethnic languages at all when in each class there were groups of children from Agikuyu, Akamba, Luo and Luhya groups. He explained to me in this way :

> When they speak in Mother Tongue, others laugh at them. So everybody speaks in Kiswahili. Here children feel Nairobians. If you ask who is from Kambaland and if they are few, they do not put up their hands.

The above is an example of how pride in cultural identity is downplayed. The 'modern' school curriculum does not help to counteract this situation. At Karuri Primary School teaching in lower primary was conducted in Gikuyu but English was used for all art terms and vocabularies. In upper and middle primary English was the medium of teaching but Gikuyu was frequently used whenever they felt that the explanation in English was not adequate. Teachers, the large majority of whom were Agikuyu, spoke in Gikuyu when talking to students informally and students communicated in Gikuyu in both the sections and both inside and outside the classrooms. I observed that Kiswahili was often used to give commands such as: "Come here!" "Sit down!" "Bring a chair!".

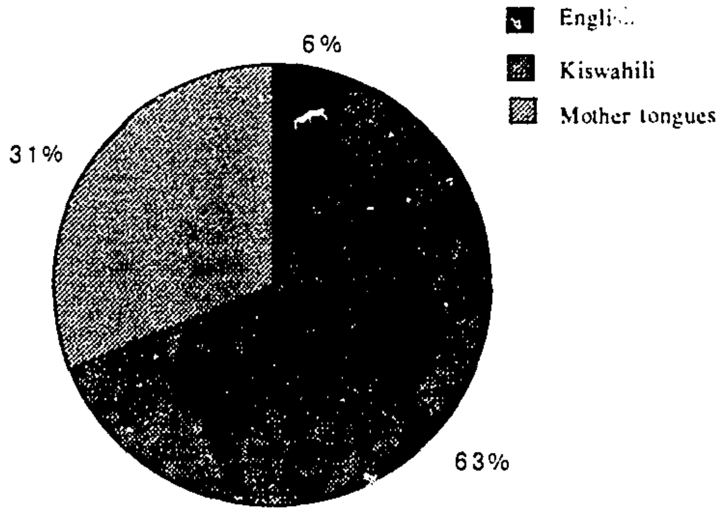
Diagram 12: Languages spoken during one school day at Karuri in upper primary



(Composed from school time tables and observation)

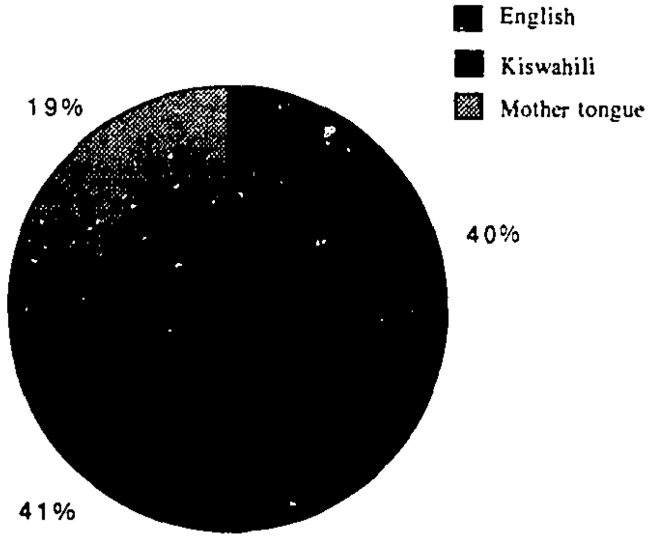
The situation at Inyonyori was different. In lower primary classes, Maasai teachers (who were only two and were not always present) taught in Maa, using English words for key terminology, while the non-Maasai teachers taught the same classes in Kiswahili and used English terminology. In middle and upper primary English was the medium of instruction as was the case at Karuri and Kassarani. The only difference was that teachers continued to use Kiswahili as well, often explaining both in English and Kiswahili simultaneously. For the Maasai children at Inyonyori Primary School their first exposure to English and Kiswahili was at school (This was not the case with the children at Karuri and in Nairobi). The children spoke to one another in Maa at all times. Once I watched a football match that the boys were playing. They spoke in Maa but used English and Kiswahili words such as goal, goalie, *leta* (pass), *chenga* (dodge) and tupa (throw).

Diagram 13: Languages spoken during one school day at Inyonyori in lower primary



(Composed from school time tables and observation)

Diagram 14: Languages spoken during one school day at Inyonyori in upper primary



(Composed from school time tables and observation)

I attempted to understand and quantify through questionnaires how children used the three languages to conceptualize and express meanings of words and notions that they learned in theory of art lessons. In the following sections the findings are discussed.

iii. Naming colours in Kiswahili and Mother Tongue

Section I of Questionnaire I (Appendix 2 a) assessed children's ability to translate colour names from English, the language of instruction, into ethnic languages which are the children's first languages, and Kiswahili, the national language of Kenya. Colour names in English were frequently used by teachers as descriptive aspects of art appreciation and to explain feelings and emotions. Children were also tested on naming of colours and how the colours expressed feelings and emotions in different media. The material for the test in this section was listed from the resources available to the teachers which comprised the syllabus, teacher' guide books and classroom texts.

The first two sets of graphs and tables show the results of testing children's abilty to translate names of colours from English to their Mother Tongues in Standards 5 and 8 in the three schools :

Table 13: Questionnaire I (Section I) Standard 5 Colour Names English to Mother Tongue

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	44	22	31
Karuri	69	26	5
Inyonyori	0	15	85

Table 14: Questionnaire I (Section I) Standard 8 Colour Names English to Mother Tongue

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	36	30	34
Karuri	73	27	0
Inyonyori	0	0	100

The results show that children at Inyonyori were excellent in naming colours in Maa, their Mother Tongue. 85% and 100% (in Standards 5 and 8 respectively) of the Maasai children scored over 60%. Results in the other two schools were not as good. Only 31%

and 34% (in Standards 5 and 8 respectively) at Kassarani and 5% and 0% (in Standards 5 and 8 respectively) at Karuri achieved over 60%. The higher marks at Kassarani were scored by immigrant children from the rural areas to Nairobi. It was clear that the Agikuyu children were not conversant with names of colours in their own ethnic language. When I discussed this situation with colleagues at the departments of Literature, and Linguistics and African Languages at the University of Nairobi they told me that they had observed that it was common for many ethnic languages in Kenya to adopt English names and terms for numbers, days of the week, years, new items on the market and names of colours. This may be partly because of school education and partly due to the linguistic influence of the large and growing urban working class which maintains strong links with the rural and ethnic population.

But it was a different story when it came to testing of colours in Kiswahili as shown in the next two sets of graphs and tables.

Table 15: Questionnaire I (Section I) Standard 5 Colour names English to Kiswahili

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	36	40	24
Karuri	78	22	0
Inyonyori	100	0	0

Table 16: Questionnaire I (Section I) Standard 8 Colour names English to Kiswahili

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	3	10	87
Karuri	0	3	97
Inyonyori	0	0	100

Performances in Standard 5 and 8 were very different. No Maasai child in Standard 5 was able to score more than 40%. Agikuyu children in Standard 5 also performed unsatisfactorily in their Kiswahili tests (78% scored below pass mark of 40%). The best results in Standard 5 (65% passes) came from Kassarani Primary School in Nairobi where Kiswahili is the principal language. But in Standard 8 all the schools achieved excellence (over 60%) in testing of colour names in Kiswahili with Inyonyori (Maasai) leading with 100% of the students in the over 60% bracket. It is clear that once the Maasai children had grasped the language, it was easy for them to know the colours in Kiswahili. It is to be noted that for reasons of building a national culture, Kiswahili is a compulsory subject which is also examinable every semester and at the end of primary education. But evidence from tests done in Standard 5 shows that Kiswahili is not an effective language in schools for understanding and communicating art in lower primary during the formative years of art education, which is seen as one vehicle for developing a national cultural awareness in schools.

iv. Expressing art from English to Mother Tongue and Kiswahili

Section II of the Questionnaire I tested students knowledge of art vocabulary in Mother Tongue and Kiswahili (Appendix 2 a). Words (in English) were listed from the syllabus and text books as explained in the Introduction under the section on Research contexts and methods. The purpose of this questionnaire was to test the children's ability to express what was learned in the classrooms into languages that they spoke outside the school.

The first two sets of graphs and tables indicate that students in both Standards 5 and 8 had difficulty in naming English art terms which they learned in school in their vernaculars. Maasai children at Inyonyori found this test most difficult and no one achieved a pass mark of 40% in either Standard 5 or 8. Only 21% and 20% of students in Standards 5 and 8 respectively passed at Karuri, and 19% and 42% of the students in Standards 5 and 8 respectively passed at Kassarani. The figures indicate that generally students in all the schools found it difficult to translate art vocabulary from the language of instruction into their first languages. This may be due to difficulty in translation. I did not observe any written practice in the schools in English to Mother Tongue translation. It may be also because the children lacked the experience of using ethnic art vocabulary and aesthetic material in non- ethnic ('modern') contexts which is set by schools.

Table 17: Questionnaire I (Section II) Standard 5 Art Vocabulary English to Mother Tongue

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	81	15	4
Karuri	80	21	0
Inyonyori	100	0	0

Table 18: Questionnaire I (Section II) Standard 8 Art vocabulary English to Mother Tongue

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	58	20	22
Karuri	80	20	0
Inyonyori	100	0	0

When the same students were tested in Kiswahili, they performed better in Standard 8 than in Standard 5, indicating that the students had better knowledge of Kiswahili in upper classes than in lower classes. Kiswahili is one of the compulsory and examinable subjects in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). The standard of Kiswahili examination is high as it is a national language, thus treated as the first language in schools as far as examinations are concerned. In reality majority of Kenyan children do not speak Kiswahili as the first language and that may be the reason why the children in Standard 5 did not perform well in testing of art vocabulary in Kiswahili. No other Kenyan language is examinable in KCPE. The next set of graphs and tables show these results.

Table 19: Questionnaire I (Sect II) Standard 5 Art Vocabulary English to Kiswahili

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	61	29	7
Karuri	88	7	0
Inyonyori	100	0	0

Table 20: Questionnaire I (Sect II) Standard 8 Art Vocabulary English to Kiswahili

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	60
Kassarani	51	49	29
Karuri	3	12	85
Inyonyori	56	44	0

Summary

It is clear that the majority of Standard 5 children in all the three schools were unable to translate English art terms for shapes, techniques and principles of art (such as perspective) to either their Mother Tongues or Kiswahili. At Inyonyori no student was able to score a pass mark in Maa (Maasai language). One reason for this is that children lacked the experience of using art and material culture terms in Kiswahili and Mother Tongues out of the context of their home and cultural environments. Another reason may be because certain words such as principles and perspective require a phrase in Kiswahili and ethnic languages to convey the correct meaning. There is also the possibility that the children in Standard 5 might not have fully understood the art vocabulary that was not only from a foreign language but was also often used in foreign contexts (like balancing hot and cold colours) and was presented through unfamiliar media such as paper, blackboard and text book illustrations. At Inyonyori I did not observe any practical lesson nor did I ever see the results of a lesson on drawing, painting or sculpture.

The majority of the Standard 5 students in both Kassarani and Karuri Primary Schools was unable to achieve 40% pass mark in Kiswahili. However, the performance of Standard 8 students was better in Kiswahili than in their Mother Tongue. This indicates that the children's articulation and verbal expression of artistic experiences learned in school were limited first to English, the language of instruction, second to Kiswahili, and third to the Mother Tongue.

This supports the previous findings, which were based on testing of colours. Children in the foundation years of their education (six to twelve years) do not have adequate knowledge of Kiswahili for translating and expressing art concepts learned in school. But in Standard 8, when they are in their teens, they perform very well as they have a better grasp of the language and have also learned examination skills. The tables indicate that in Standard 8, 97% of the students at Karuri Primary School passed with a mark of 85% in the distinction grade. At Kassarani 78% passed and 29% received distinctions. Only 44% of the Maasai students passed the test and there were no distinctions at Inyonyori Primary School which reflected an inequality in the teaching standards and facilities at the schools as well as differences in the exposure of the children to modernity. Otherwise all the children were tri-lingual. Lower standards among the Maasai children in Standard 8 was due to the same reasons as those discussed in the previous paragraph that related to the performance of children in Standard 5.

The results of this chapter indicate that children's aesthetic expressions are affected by the familiarity of the languages that they speak at home as their first language, and the language of instruction in schools where art is learned and examined. The curriculum that tests children's knowledge of art in English through rote learning of vocabulary does not ensure that learning of art takes place. Knowing aesthetics is sensing art which is cognitive function grounded in the culture of the child. Genuine aesthetic experiences are cultural experiences as well.

The issue of maintenance and loss of mother tongue has been extensively discussed by second language scholars (Cummings: 1989; Hakuta: 1986; Chamot: 1987). The intention of this thesis is not to discuss this literature but to focus on aesthetic encounters in languages used in the classroom in Kenya. One significant point resulting from this chapter is to review teacher education and art curriculum. A question leading to more research is posed for English as Second Language (ESL) teachers who teach in culturally different environments from their own, where English is not their students' Mother Tongue.

Chapter Six

The syllabus and examinations

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents analyses of the syllabus and examinations which show that contents of the syllabus and examination questions are a structured means to transmit cultural values that incline more towards 'modernization' than towards strengthening of indigenous aesthetic material.

6.1 Practical modernism and theoretical traditionalism: The syllabus and examinations

The purpose of this section is to show how the teacher is monitored through a set of formulae constructed through the syllabus and model examination papers. A teacher at Kassarani Primary once said to me :

> Children need 'freeness' in art and craft which they cannot get because of the syllabus.

And it is the syllabus that sets the criteria for what is to be tested and how should it be tested.

6.1A The syllabus

In lower primary eleven topics in the art syllabus are covered during the first three years of schooling. In upper primary there are nine topics, some of which overlap with those in the lower primary. Each year pupils study several topics, some of which are the same as the previous year albeit more developed. For example Painting in Standard 1 was taught under three sub-topics:

a) Colour recognition
b) Colour in the environment
c) Free use of colours at random.

In Standard 2 Painting had two topics:

a) Colour mixing exercises
b) Painting definite forms and shapes

In Standard 3, two sub-topics were further emphasized:

a) Further exercises in colour mixing
b) Controlled use of colours for free expression

Each topic covers theoretical and practical aspects of art and craft. Children are expected to learn about 'modern' tools, materials and techniques through intensive rote learning of vocabulary. In Standard 1 the children memorize at least fifty new English words related to structuring of questions and definitions of art, craft, tools, materials and techniques that would equip them to answer a written examination at the end of the year. Examples of these words are: elements, characteristics, linear patterns, indefinite, curling, formation, and miscellaneous. Every subsequent year they memorized many more new words with little or no practical experience of them. When compared to texts in English, GHC and Religion these words were completely outside the reading and linguistic contexts of functional use. I recorded two hundred and seventy art words that the children tried to memorize, learn the meanings of and spell during the eight years of primary education:

Art and craft vocabulary in the syllabus

Standard One

1. Elements
2. Design
3. Art
4. Line
5. Characteristics
6. Different
7. Thick Lines
8. Thin Lines
9. Zigzag
10. Exploration
11. Media
12. Linear Patterns
13. Contour Drawings

28. Curling
29. Curving
30. Scouring
31. Rolling
32. Twisting
33. Simple Mosaic
34. Collage
35. Simple
36. Modeling
37. Manipulation
38. Materials
39. Formation
40. Forms

Standard Two

1. Texture
2. Brush Strokes
3. Motifs
4. Recognizable
5. Memory
6. Diagonal
7. Geometric
8. Technique
9. Dough
10. Plasticine
11. Packets
12. Available
13. Neck

14. Memory
15. Imagination
16. Random
17. Pattern
18. Indefinite
20. Doodling
21. Miscellaneous
22. Corks
23. Wood Blocks
24. Bottle Tops
25. Paper Folding
26. Cutting
27. Tearing

41. Construction
42. Sticks
43. Weaving
44. Pliable
45. Puppetry
46. Ornaments
47. Threading
48. Hollow
49. Reeds
50. Bones
51. Seeds
52. Beads

14. Basketry
15. Cardboard
16. Composition

Standard Three

1. Concentration
2. Intersection
3. Clusters
4. Dots
5. Create
6. Expression
7. Resist
8. Wax
9. Stenciling
10. Dabbing
11. Print Making
12. Spraying
13. Rubbing
14. Painting
15. Arrangement
16. Transferring
17. Decorating
18. Pictorial
19. Shell
20. Straw
21. Planned

Standard Four

1. Cylindrical
2. Development
3. Observation
4. Selected
5. Produce
6. Screen
7. Crafts
8. Fabric
9. Tie
10. Dye
11. Pottery
12. Ceramics
13. Coil
14. Graphic
15. Envelopes
16. Folder
17. Leather
18. Trimming
19. Gumming
20. Finishing
21. Cutting
22. Strap
23. Purse
24. Grooving
25. Peg
26. Etching
27. Notch
28. Leverage
29. Double
30. Mobile
31. Wheeled
32. Wheelbarrow
33. Disc
34. Crayon

Standard Five

1. Variety
2. Interruption
3. Obstacles
4. Symbol
5. Direction
6. Human bust
7. Fine
8. Warm
9. Cool
10. Expensive
11. Behaviour
12. Balancing
13. Models
14. Structure
15. Length
16. Slab
17. Album
18. Acquired
19. Smoking
20. Tools
21. Chopping
22. Involving
23. Rolling
24. Pin
25. Axe
26. Adze
27. Planning
28. Washing
29. Stand
30. Concept
31. Repeat
32. Bending
33. Hollowing
34. Reverting

35. Calligraphy
36. Reed
37. Cards
38. Folder
39. Double
40. Montage
41. Relief
42. Sculpture

35. Kit
36. Firing
37. Lids
38. Chiseling
39. Documentation
40. Implication
41. Site
42. Seam
43. Roof
44. Coat
45. Foundation
46. Lap
47. Permanent
48. Bending
49. Label
50. Locality

Standard Six

1. Quality
2. Balance
3. Rhythm
4. Harmony
5. Unity
6. Tones
7. Depth
8. Space
9. Distance
10. Amateur
11. Papier Mache
12. Exploring
13. Marionette
14. Airplane
15. Traditional
16. Selected
17. Batik
18. Containers
19. Research
20. Materials
21. Throwing
22. Lettering
23. Bamboo
24. Layout
25. Conservation
26. Classification
27. Storage
28. Cross-halving

Standard Seven

1. Perspective
2. Overlapping
3. Logo
4. Multiple
5. Theme
6. Stitching
7. Mortise
8. Tenon Joint
9. Trademark
10. Principle
11. Precaution
12. Possibilities
13. Treatment
14. Proportions
15. Seams
16. Limitations
17. Diorama
18. Production
19. Flexible
20. Rack
21. Butt Joint
22. Tray
23. Layout
24. Facilities
25. Mixing
26. Ratio
27. Curving
28. Storing

Standard Eight

1. Landscaping
2. Psychological
3. Framing
4. Abstract
5. Realistic
6. Purpose
7. Dimensional
8. Vanishing
9. Atmospheric
10. Elimination
11. Environment
13. Placement
14. Assembling
15. Accessories
16. Presentation
17. Seasoning
18. Storage
19. Staking
20. Formula
21. Perception
22. Excavation
23. Resources
24. Samples
25. Demonstrations
26. Oblique
27. Visual
28. Interesting
29. Employed
30. Following

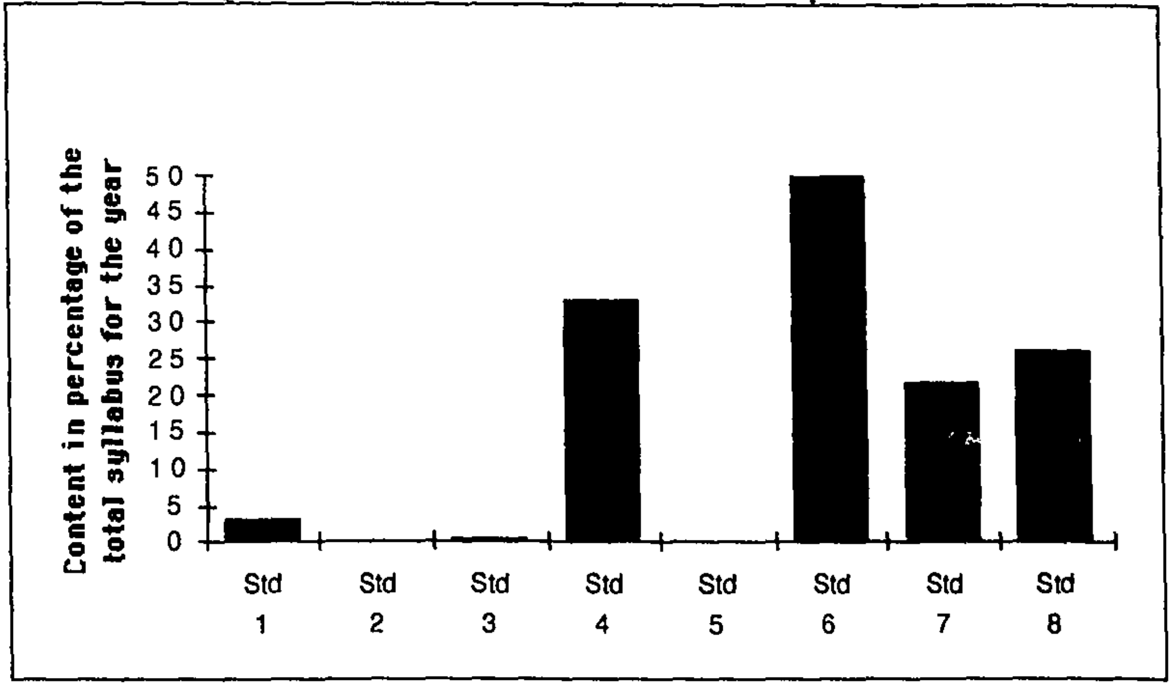
There was no equivalent list of art and material culture vocabulary in Kiswahili and ethnic languages given to the children in any of the classrooms. When I talked to teachers and queried why the art vocabulary was in English, they said that they found it difficult (and some even said that it was 'impossible') to give equivalent words in Kiswahili and ethnic languages. When we discussed the following list of thirty words that the Standard 8 students had memorized in one of the schools, the teachers were able to either give an equivalent Kiswahili word or a phrase that gave the meaning :

1. Landscaping
2. Psychological
3. Framing
4. Abstract
5. Realistic
6. Purpose
7. Dimensional
8. Vanishing
9. Atmospheric
10. Elimination
11. Environment
13. Placement
14. Assembling
15. Accessories
16. Presentation
17. Seasoning
18. Storage
19. Staking
20. Formula
21. Perception
22. Excavation
23. Resources
24. Samples
25. Demonstrations
26. Oblique
27. Visual
28. Interesting
29. Employed
30. Following

Students also memorized diagrams of tools and learned to recognize materials, techniques and skills related to the tools from illustrations in the text books and past examination papers. In all the three schools children learned these by studying the illustrations and re-drawing them in their exercise books as exactly as they could. Thus, for example, they all had the drawings from the same perspective and angle, illustrating one specific movement of a specific model of a tool. I did not observe any practical lesson that demonstrated any of the tools in the illustrations, nor were there facilities for practicals (art classes).

Students were also required to know traditional objects in English and the associated cultural values (e.g. Luo cooking pot; Maasai wedding necklace) as important means for sustaining the African social fabric in modern times. Again these were rote learned and no examples were shown. Unlike the topics on 'modern' education very little and often incorrect information was available for an adequate lesson in the classroom. There were a few unattractive and not well drawn illustrations in the texts. Pupils did not redraw these illustrations of material culture and there were no notes on material culture in their exercise books. Thus, the visual and written information in the pupils' notes inclined more towards the 'modern' side of the curriculum than the indigenous. This imbalance was directed by the syllabus. The following bar graph gives a comparison of the material culture content in the syllabus for each year (i.e. Standard 1 to 8).

Diagram 15: Material culture content in syllabus



The bar graph clearly illustrates that there is much less emphasis placed on the indigenous content in the syllabus in relation to the 'modern' content. (Less than 5% in Standards 1 and 3, 0% in Standard 2 and 5, the maximum is 50% in Standard 6, and about 20% to 25% in Standards 7 and 8). The graph also indicates that children learned more about indigenous cultures after Standard 3, and most in Upper Primary (Standard 6, 7 and 8) after they have had a grounding in the 'modern' in Lower primary. Ironically, the children learn in mother tongue in Lower primary (up to Standard 3) during the pre-initiation period. Thus, vernacular language learning experiences do not complement learning vernacular art and aesthetics. In other words children are taught European art in indigenous languages and indigenous art is learned in a European language.

The above graph further confirms a remark that an art teacher at Kassarani Primary School once made on indigenous cultures and the syllabus :

> The syllabus is wide open but it does not guide us to study our different cultures.

Yet another teacher (non-Maasai) at Inyonyori Primary School said to me:

> Teaching subjects like metalwork and woodwork is more national than (teaching indigenous) material culture.

Distribution of `modern' and indigenous content in the syllabus consequently affects the setting of the examination questions at KCPE level. The layout and questions of the national examination, in turn, affects the settings of quarterly and annual examinations for each grade, from one to eight. Teachers view the questions set by the Examinations Committee in the Ministry of Education as models to follow and guide their instruction time and student assignments.

6.1B The examinations

At Kassarani Primary School, I observed the setting of an examination for Standard 8 by the head of the Art and Craft Department. The teacher recorded the exercise in steps, as he spoke partially to me and partially to himself, and as he selected and wrote down the questions. He sat at the table with a thick file of question papers on one side and text books on the other. I sat on his opposite side. The teacher said that he went through the task twice every term, once for the mid term tests and once for the end term tests.

The teacher's first remark was:

> I look at the past papers and model questions in revision books. If there is a paper that they have not done, then I just give that to them.

The teacher then opened the file of examination papers, looked at some questions and began to write from a text, Art and craft for standard 8 by Njagi and Berluti (1990). He made a list of topics that were:

One.	Drawing and Painting
Two.	Printing
Three.	Mosaic
Four.	Sculpture
Five.	Fabric Decoration
Six.	Metal work
Seven.	Building and Construction

Then Mr. Gatimu took the 1988 KCPE trial paper and began to read each question. He compared the question to the list of topics, and marked several questions. The following remarks reflect the basis of his selection :

> Question 13. This is on leather work. They should know something about this one. They touched it in Standard Five.
>
> Question 16. Page layout. I have not done this one. Leave it out.

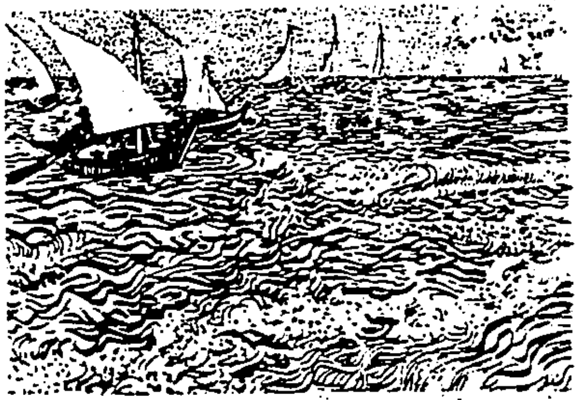
> Question 26. Is this collage, mosaic or mural ? (He read the question aloud again and again). They are talking about what? Is this collage, mosaic or what? Just leave it.
>
> Question 27. Dominance ? Is there such a word in art ? Is this balance and dominance, proportion or forms ? Ah! This one I can't do.
>
> Question 29. This is not a good picture. Let's take another paper.

(The picture from the 1991 KCPE paper was of sail boats on a rough sea. Later I discussed this picture. Mr Gatimu had not been to the sea and he told me that he did not understand "all those lines" (representing the waves). He asked me if they were called the "beach". See insert (Question 1) on the next page).

Illustration 18: 1991 KCPE Examination Paper. Q.1.

ART AND CRAFT

1. The most distinct principle of Art and Design in the composition below is



A. harmony
B. rhythm
C. balance
D. dominance.

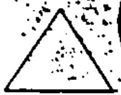
2. Which one of the following pairs of colours can be classified as complementary colours?

A. Red and Green.
B. Yellow and Orange.
C. Blue and Purple.
D. Yellow and Green.

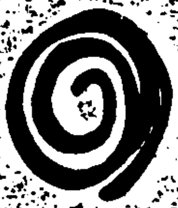
3. Which one of the techniques listed below can be used for transferring textures directly from one surface to another?

A. Etching.
B. Spraying.
C. Hatching.
D. Rubbing.

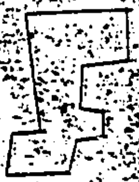
4. Which one of the following shapes creates the best impression of movement?



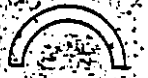
A



B



C

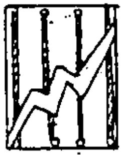


D

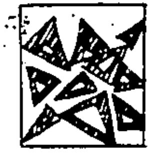
5. Which one of the following painting media will take the longest time to dry?

A. Oil paint.
B. Tempera paint.
C. Poster paint.
D. Acrylic paint.

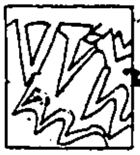
6. In which one of the following illustrations is the principle of dominance most effectively portrayed?



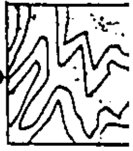
A



B



C



D

7. The factor that most affects balance when drawing a still-life composition is the

A. size of paper
B. number of objects
C. texture of paper
D. arrangement of objects.

8. To create an illusion of distance in a landscape painting, the forms in the

A. middleground and the background should be of the same brightness
B. background should be duller than those in the foreground
C. foreground should be duller than those in the middleground
D. background should be brighter than those in the foreground.

9. Which one of the following materials can be used to block out unwanted areas on a screen in order to produce the sharpest images in screen printing?

A. Varnish.
B. Wax.
C. Cut-out shapes.
D. Starch paste.

Mr. Gatimu then picked up KCPE 1985 examination paper and repeated the exercise, talking to me and to himself, he said:

> Question Six. This is on texture. But maize cob can produce this or that (pointing to two pictures in the multiple choice question paper). Keep it aside.
>
> Question 26. This is about tools. Wood work tools. This is not the one they can fail in. This is about project.

Mr. Gatimu selected 30 questions from two past examination papers that fairly well covered the seven topics that he had initially listed in the beginning.

Art teachers in all the three schools had difficulty in understanding the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination evaluation reports. I observed this to be due to lack of training and experience of the teachers in both indigenous and European art traditions. Consequently, the examiners also did not consider whom they were testing, how the candidates were taught and the purpose of the art examination. I discussed some of the questions and comments by the National Examination Board with the teachers. The following are some examples of the questions which the candidates found difficult to answer :

Example 1 – Question 1 in KCPE of 1986.

> *Which one of the following groups of colours would be appropriate to print a composition based on the theme, ' It was a joyous occasion' :*
>
> *A* *Black, purple and grey*
>
> *B* *Red, yellow and purple*
>
> *C* *Purple,blue and grey*
>
> *D* *Blue, black and purple*

These were the evaluators' comments :

> The correct answer is B. The question was testing more than an understanding of the symbolic values of individual colours, it was testing the language of colours in combination.

The teachers felt that it was difficult to have a general answer for this question because 'symbolic values' of colours varied from one ethnic group to another. Secondly, the use of colours in the traditional society did not change from one event to another. For example, the Maasai do not change their colour ornaments from one ceremony to another although they recognize particular colours as objects for particular ceremonies which have social significance.

Example 2 – Question 12 in KCPE of 1986.

> This question attempted to test the students' knowledge of material culture.
>
> *The selection of colours in making traditional ornaments is mainly based on the:*
>
> *A* *Availability*
> *B* *Symbolic value*
> *C* *Attractiveness*
> *D* *Age group of the weaver*

The correct answer given in the examination report is B. But attractiveness and symbolism is closely linked in traditional societies. Often a Rendille, Pokot or a Turkana will say that an ornament is beautiful when it represents symbolic colour values as well. Among the ethnic groups ornaments are made to be worn according to the age groups. Ornaments are often not made when beads of certain colours and shapes are not available. Thus, availability of materials does affect the making of the oranments.

In the newsletter of 1987 from the Kenya National Examination Council it was explained that not many children were able to select the correct answer which is B (symbolic value). The majority chose C (attractiveness). Failure of the candidates to give the correct answer was explained thus by the Examination Council:

> To obtain the correct response, the importance of ' traditional' in the stem has to be understood and the cultural context of the question realised. This was so for only the very able candidates (as) such understanding and realisation is not there; they (majority) answered the question through the phase ' selection of colours', and chose C 'attractiveness'. (A similar misunderstanding of 'traditional' was also detected in Question 10).

The following is Question 10 in the 1986 KCPE examination:

Which of the following is not a traditional method of decorating gourds:

A. Incising

B. Smoking

C. Painting

D. Embedding

The problem arises when what is traditional to one ethnic group may not be traditional to another and both the children and teachers (as well as the examiners) may not have the knowledge about traditional decorating methods among all the forty five ethnic groups of Kenya. No art teacher in the three schools with whom I discussed this evaluation from the Examination Council understood what the explanation meant !

Example 3 – Question 5 in KCPE 1988.

Which one of the groups of colours listed below will best express the feeling of excitement in a painting :

A Blue and green

B Yellow and orange

C Red and grey

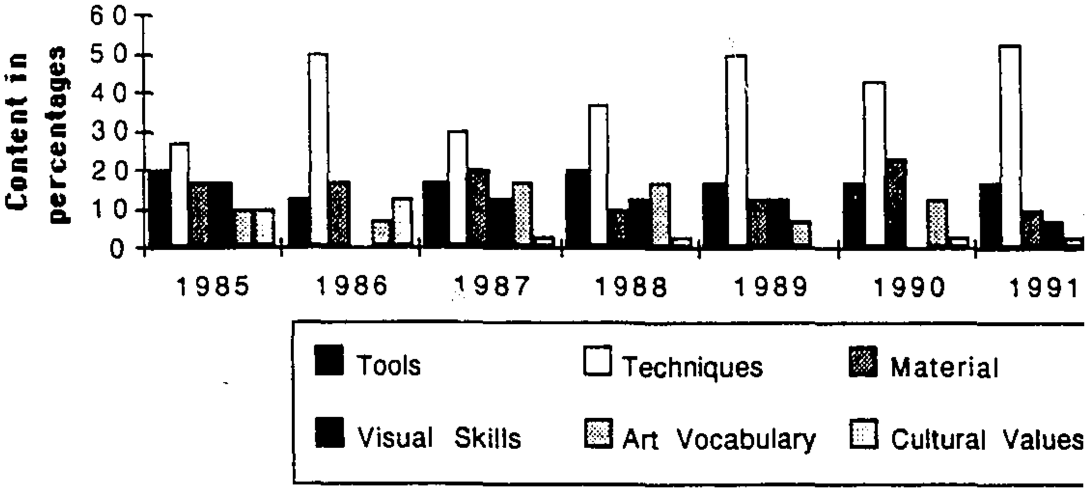
D Green and purple

The correct answer given by the National Examinations Board is B. Many students were unable to answer this question as, " It appears that the candidates were not exposed to the expression of colours and their meanings in paintings." (Evaluator's comment). Although there is an implicit blame on the teachers in the above statement, there are other factors to be considered in an art examination that involves experiences of observation, practical work, of feelings and development of visual skills. The appropriateness of the questions for second language primary school children is however not discussed. In fact the inappropriateness of the questions in art examinations was pointed out by a researcher on Kenyan children's drawing ten years ago. The situation appears not to have changed much. In a report to the Kenya Institute of Education, Elsbeth Court had made the following observation:

> Unfortunately, but understandably, many of the questions on the 1985 theory papers (Nairobi, Wamunyu and "sample") are based upon redundant content from the old syllabus. Very few of these questions involve reasoning; most test specific information, rotely memorized information. Many of the questions are confusing; others are incorrect. In a brief perusal of the Examination Council's sample, I estimate that 60% of the questions are biased against rural children. I also note that a number of questions were borrowed from previous Teacher Art Education papers which isn't fair.
>
> (Court: 1985, p. 2)

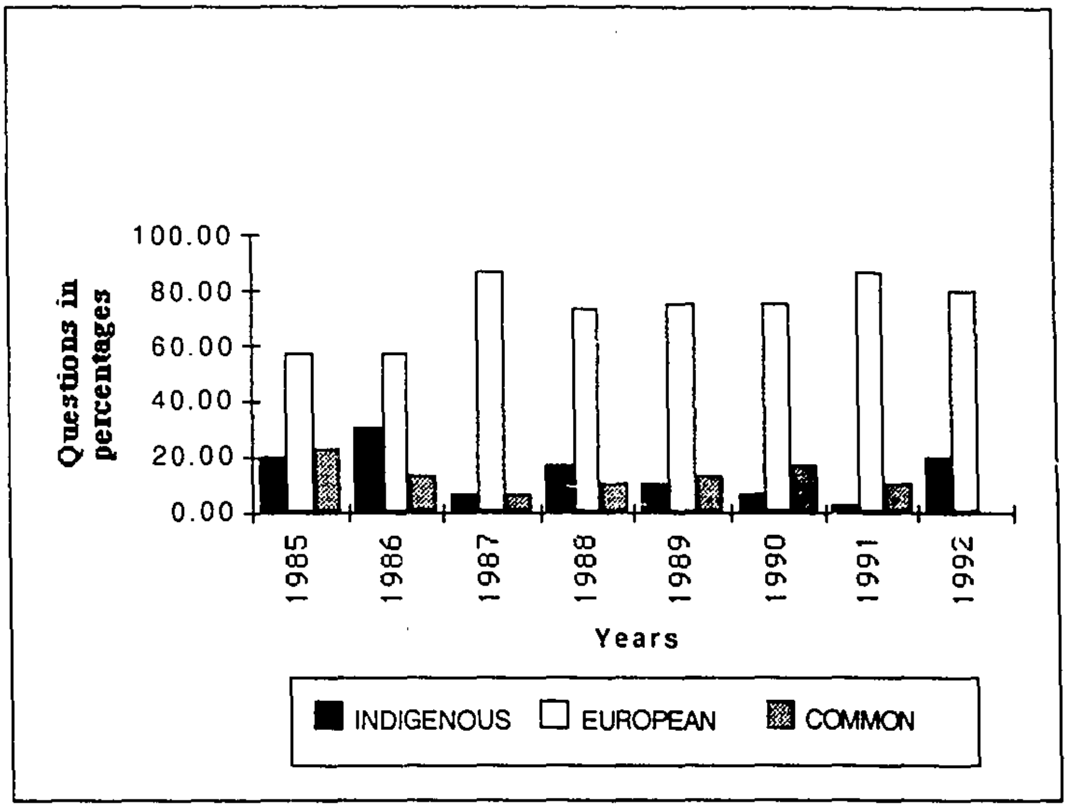
All the questions in the past national examination papers from 1985 to 1992 may be classified under six subject headings: Tools, Techniques, Materials, Art Vocabulary, Visual Skills and Cultural Values. Students are tested on knowledge of both the indigenous and modern (European) art and craft in these five classifications. The following two charts are the outcome of analyses that compared (1) the number of questions in each of the six subject headings and between the indigenous and modern (European) content in the examinations during the last eight years, and (2) the frequency of occurrence of questions in the two areas during this period.

Diagram 16: Examination content in six subject headings



The above chart shows that there is a heavy bias towards testing of tools, techniques and materials relative to testing of art vocabulary, visual skills and cultural values. Consequently, the emphasis is drawn towards creation of employable skills based on 'modern' technical knowledge. This has little to do with art education which best addresses individual values.

Diagram 17: Comparison of occurrence of indigenous to modern (European) content in examination questions (1985 - 1992)



The diagram above shows that more than 90% of the questions during the last eight years revealed preferences for European tool designs, techniques and materials. This was also the case with testing of visual skills, art terms and cultural values which again showed a bias towards European contexts.

6.2 Testing knowledge of material culture

When I tested children's knowledge of their ethnic objects (such as clothing, ornaments, containers and tools) in the three schools, a clear pattern emerged that is easily read in tables below. Maasai children in Standard 5 excelled far above the other two schools in all the tests on material culture. Their answers were also varied and did not show a similarity with the notes in their exercise books. This reflected that they had an depth knowledge of ethnic art and craft, and of their environment and culture in general since Maasai material culture is closely related to the environment and the social structure. The tests were very simple; they asked the children to name or draw only five items of ethnic artefacts in each of the three categories, namely, clothing and ornaments, containers and tools. These topics, except Tools, were covered in the 8-4-4 syllabus. This is reflected in the tables below. (For a sample of Questionnaire 3 see Appendix 2).

Table 21: Questionnaire 3 Standard 5 Ethnic Clothing and Ornaments

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	7	15	78
Karuri	0	3	97
Inyonyori	0	0	100

All schools did well, and Inyonyori had 100% in the over 60% mark in the test on clothing and ornaments. The following two tables show the results of the test on ethnic containers and tools (See Appendix 2 for samples of Questionaires 4 and 6).

Table 22: Questionnaire 4 Standard 5 Ethnic Containers

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	16	6	77
Karuri	5	9	85
Inyonyori	0	0	100

Table 23: Questionnaire 6 Standard 5 Ethnic Tools

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	19	11	70
Karuri	28	51	21
Inyonyori	0	0	100

Only 21% of the children at Karuri achieved 60% and above. This was understandable as large scale plantations for cash crops were first started in the Agikuyu region that completely changed the farm tool designs that the peasants were used to for subsistence farming. In the art and craft syllabus, teacher's guides and texts the tools referred to are only European. Test marks at Kassarani were raised by the presence of pastoralist children who were recent migrants to Nairobi. The Maasai children scored 100% in the distinction class. Children from pastoralist areas included weapons among ethnic tools test for which they were awarded marks.

The next set of tables shows the results in Standard 8 classes in the three schools. The answers in the returned questionnaires from Kassarani and Karuri were all very similar and almost exactly to the notes in the exercise books. But at Inyonyori there was much variety and originality in naming ethnic items.

Table 24: Questionnaire 3 Standard 8 Ethnic Clothing and Ornaments

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	13	0	87
Karuri	2	0	98
Inyonyori	0	0	100

This questionnaire tested the children's basic knowledge of ethnic clothing and ornaments and all the schools did well in the test. Maasai children were 'original' for they did not use text book examples as the children in both Karuri and Kassarani. No child from pastoralist background at the Nairobi school used examples from his/her own ethnic group. And unlike their juniors in Standard 5, these pastoralist children in Standard 8, redrew text book illustrations like their classmates from agriculturist background.

Table 25: Questionnaire 4 Standard 8 Ethnic Containers

Students in %

Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	9	5	86
Karuri	3	7	90
Inyonyori	0	14	86

In the test on ethnic containers only 9% of the class failed at Kassarani and 3% at Karuri, while there were no failures at Inyonyori. Containers is one category of material culture that has survived among the Agikuyu and among many other ethnic groups inspite of modernization. In Banana Hill and Mathare North, where Karuri and Kassarani schools are respectively located, one sees a variety of pots and both sisal and reed baskets made by the agriculturists Agikuyu, Akamba, Luo and Luhya groups. The children's knowledge was probably from observation than from classroom teaching as I found no evidence in their notebooks, test papers or text books on the containers that they drew for me.

Table 26: Questionnaire 6 Standard 8 Ethnic Tools

Students in % Marks in %	-40	40-60	+60
Kassarani	5	14	81
Karuri	8	0	92
Inyonyori	0	0	100

Inyonyori leads with 100% distinctions confirming again the Maasai children's superior knowlege of their material culture.

6.3 Summary

Children in all the three schools performed better in English, the language of classroom instruction, than in Kiswahili and their ethnic languages which are the languages spoken outside the classroom during their daily interaction with the society. This is indicative of the importance of learning art in English, the language of a modern nation. It may be said from these findings that learning art in English divorced the children from developing and expressing art experienced using their Mother Tongues and Kiswahili during their formative years in the primary school. This phenomenon also separated expressing and discussing indigenous and environmental art knowledge from classroom discussions and learnings. It created a difference between learning about heritage from parents and grandparents and from teachers.

Maasai children performed better in identifying colours and items of material culture than the Agikuyu and multi-ethnic group of Nairobi children. This indicates that the Maasai children had a better understanding of indigenous art forms than other children and they knew more than what was taught in the national syllabus.

Paradoxes are seen between objectives and content of syllabus and examinations. In the syllabus knowledge of the artistic heritage of Kenya is stated as being necessary to retain national identity and unity. But acquiring employable skills for small scale workshops, and becoming self-sufficient on the basis of ability to address the needs of a 'modern' consumer class, is the goal of art and craft education as demonstrated by the content of the syllabus and examination questions.

This chapter also raises two questions. One is the question of suitability of the test form (multiple choice) given the nature of art education (i.e. ambiguity is an inherent feature of art). Thus description and meaning of experiences in classroom art events are ill served by simplistic and technical answers. The second question is whether traditional and 'modern' have to be in opposition for aesthetic education can both preserve and build on the traditional by fostering critical reflection on values in transition.

Chapter Seven

Summary and Conclusion

7.0 Summary

In this dissertation, teaching of art and material culture is explored in situations which are conditioned by political discourses, educational policies, and historical and cultural realities. These situations have created the present tensions between teaching art for change of cultures and simultaneously learning art to retain cultures.

The political ideology embodied in the Presidential philosophy of Nyayoism creates conflicts first at the theoretical level whilst articulating that modernity is inherited from indigenous traditions and a Christian doctrine. This is the concept of *maendeleo* (or development) as popularly known in Kenya, and is said to be practiced in schools. In this research I attempted to understand how the teaching of visual arts at the level of interaction between the teacher and students was accomplished in schools in Kenya.

Early ethnographies recorded visual arts among agricultural and pastoralist societies that were not then influenced by the coming of the Europeans to Kenya. It is of significance to note that visual arts were the media of education in traditional agricultural societies as they are today among the pastoralist groups. Later ethnographies further confirm the role of material culture in socialization of the young to the norms of the society. But this aspect of education in the arts has not been written about, perhaps because it is not considered to be an important component of African education today. Comparatively, much has been written on the educational value of the oral literature heritage in the national curriculum while the relationship of indigenous art to education is overlooked or not understood. In this respect, the thesis contributes towards examining and discussing this phenomenon.

In Chapter Two I examined the historical evolution of the present situation relating to the teaching of culture. Schooling is discussed in the context of dominant and vernacular ideologies operating in Kenya during the colonial era and nationalist ideologies in post colonial times. During the colonial period there was direct teaching of culture through music, religion and craft in mission and government schools. Colonial anthropology and education was regarded by the upcoming nationalists as degrading African culture which led to an African academic answer to colonial anthropology and schooling. On the other hand the nationalists demanded equal opportunities to modern education for African children as those given to European and Asian children. Culture and education were two key issues during half a century of struggle for freedom from colonialism. The Mau Mau, for example, rejected Christianity and prayed to the Agikuyu god, performed traditional rituals, songs and dances but they encouraged education and promised free formal education for all after independence. The nationalists insisted on English medium education in line with the English grammar schools.

Political and academic discourses after independence valorized African cultures and performances of African arts at the national level which became highly politicized. School syllabi were changed to reflect African traditions and values as well as to reflect a progressive and modern society. But the language of school education remained English. The second half of the post colonial discourse represented re-emphasis on Christianity and technical education which was said to address the nation's moral and employment concerns, but in actuality it was reminiscent of a colonial education policy for African children. The difference was an additional line that reassured the important role of indigenous cultures in policy making, education and a national life style. Hence, development practices resulted in conflicting ideologies derived from the colonial discourse and the anti-colonial discourse, and the post independence discourse on Christianity and indigenous cultures and modernization. These emerged as four overlapping discourses (colonialism, nationalism, Christianity and modernization) that were most apparent in the post independence school curricula. Among the arts-based subjects are the teaching of history, African languages, art and craft, music and religion. Of these subjects, Christian religion in the 8-4-4 curriculum is the one that clearly transmits socio-cultural values and demonstrates their validity through past and present, and for future experiences in community living.

While the objectives of the new school curriculum complement modern educational theories and policies derived from development plans guided by political ideologies, what remains uncertain is how these objectives are implemented at the level of actual teaching. In other words, how do lessons in art and craft create a sense of cultural identity based on indigenous knowledge and simultaneously a sense of being modern fashioned on images of development from life styles in the industrialized world ? What appears as a missing point is an educational theory for legitimizing these objectives. This space is filled by Western educational theories emphasizing cognitive skill acquisition and conflicting political discourses on cultural maintenance and transformation. Then in this context what needs to be understood again is how under a uniform national curriculum the teaching of culture, and of art and material culture in particular, creates a national Kenyan and an ethnic indigenous identity in the classroom where there are children from different cultural traditions.

The selection of three field sites for my research represented three cultural traditions in Kenya. One site was located in an agricultural region at Karuri Primary School in Kiambu District which is heartland of the southern Agikuyu people and culture. The Agikuyu theater, language and songs flourish as popular arts today but art by Agikuyu artists is mainly addressed to expatriate and international audiences. In Kiambu District there is a thirst for education and the majority of the young people are trilingual, in Gikuyu, English and Kiswahili.

The second field site at Inyonyori Primary School contrasted with the Karuri site. Inyonyori is in Kajiado District which is inhabited by the Maasai pastoralists. At Inyonyori, the first mission school was started only about ten years ago and the children from the community went to school for the first time. Thus the children, among whom I researched, were first generation going to school and they came from homesteads where there was a high maintenance of indigenous culture. Adults and children displayed traditional ornaments on their bodies and participated in traditional rituals and arts. Schooling was not a priority in this region. Not all the children went to school and of those who joined school, only a few went on to upper primary and to secondary school. Maa was the dominant language and culture at Inyonyori.

There was a significant difference between the cultures of the community around the school and in the school. The Il Keekonyokee Maasai community was not Christian and its belief system was traditional African. Customs, rituals and day to day activities were harmonious with a pastoralist way of life and economy. In the school compound, the teachers spoke different languages, they dressed differently and their body language was different from that of the children's community. The children were taught in English and Kiswahili for the most part and they wore shorts and shirts of different colours and designs than those found in the homesteads.

The third site that was selected was at Kassarani Primary School where modern and traditional cultures were represented by the children in the classroom. At Kassarani Primary School there were children from several ethnic groups of Kenya, both agriculturists and pastoralists. There were recent migrants from the rural areas as well as those who were born in the city. Here it was clear that the 'modern' and Nairobi culture was the dominant culture in the school that children tried to be accepted into.

The three learning environments had evolved from three different traditions that were created by indigenous societies which came in contact with colonial administration and its school systems, and later during the two eras of independent Kenya signified by the presidencies of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi.

My research methods were developed through readings and from my experiences in Kenya as a teacher, designer, and as an ethnographer. This comprised three areas: education, art and anthropology. I used questionnaires to assess students' knowledge of material culture, visual traditions and modern art in three languages of the school community. I tried to incorporate field methods based on three sources of information, namely, visual, oral and written which affected classroom learning environments. I used open ended interviews as research tools and often built on the interviews as I experienced school and community day to day life, and the changing political situations.

During my field work between 1989 and 1992 Kenya was passing through a period of transition from a formal acceptance of a multi-party state, which happened through a change of a clause in the constitution, to a multi-party election. Many diverse events happened during this period which affected how I entered the field, how I interviewed and participated in schools and communities. I discussed going to the field as three phases of methodology that relate to changes in the political situations from an almost dictatorial one-party governance to one that would lead to a multi-party through constitutional changes.

During the last thirty years one national art and craft syllabus has been justified as an instrument that would end 'tribalism' and create employment opportunities equally for all the ethnic groups of Kenya. However, these did not happen. During the last four years ethnic fighting has escalated beyond any precedent in Kenya. There has been no evidence to show that learning of art and craft has led to children becoming self-employed after leaving primary school. Furthermore, most schools lack basic tools and workshop facilities to learn the skills necessary for employment.

In political discourses learning and maintenance of indigenous languages are viewed as carriers of indigenous knowledge necessary for post-independence development :

> Thus linguistic expressions, literature and proverbs are vehicles for the delivery of indigenous wisdom – the wisdom required for the sustenance and continuity of the process of nation– building, stretching from the past, through to the present, and on to the future. (Moi: 1986, p. 8).

But in practice (as it shown in Chapters Four, Five and Six) learning and examination of a heritage subject such as material culture is neither in an indigenous language nor in Kiswahili. The use of the English language gives a semblance of modernity even when the content requires experiencing and expressing indigenous art or art that is immediate to the children's home environment where the first languages are ethnic and Kiswahili. Thus schooling in art compliments the pervasive presence of the president's voice in a double discourse of retention of indigenous culture presented as a small symbolic aspect of the content, and modernity through a European language which is the dominant mode of transmission of cultural knowledge.

Two statements may be drawn from this dissertation. One is that indigenous content is clearly under-represented in the practice of teaching and examination of the national curriculum and what is projected as 'modern' is rote learning of terms that specify European tools, technology and materials without parallel experiences in drawing, painting and sculpting. Consequently art education does not fulfill one of its primary roles of imparting cultural heritage as stated in the syllabus :

> Respect and development of cultural heritage.
>
> Education should respect, foster and develop Kenya's rich and varied cultures. It should instill in the youth of Kenya an understanding of past and present culture and its valid place in contemporary society. It should also instill in the youth a sense of respect of unfamiliar cultures. (Syllabuses for Kenya Primary Schools: 1991, pp.ix-x)

The second statement is based on learnings in the schools where I researched and from readings on the historical and present day experiences of formal education in the arts. There is the question of whether art education is viewed as 'serious education' at all.

In the next section the two statements above are further detailed and discussed in the context of the Kenyan education system and society comprising the multi-ethnic urban people, the mainstream 'modern' agriculturists and the minority 'traditional' pastoralists.

7.1 Art and material culture education in Kenya

This dissertation registers four main concerns that are related to the objectives, theories and methods of teaching art and material culture during the formative years of children's education.

The first concern refers to the teaching of art that puts emphasis on rote learning of English vocabulary and terms associated with art, craft and design, materials, techniques and processes. Students are examined on this through written examinations called Theory of Art. Very little practical work is done and there is no systematic evaluation of handwork. This affects the validation of practical lessons in drawing, painting, mosaic, pottery, sculpturing and other practicals. The result of this is that teaching, which is largely theoretical and based on learning of the English language, is instructional that provides little opportunity to explore children's world, perspectives and imaginations.

Teachers come from different backgrounds and aesthetic traditions. Many of them have not had an opportunity to appreciate either the indigenous or European tradition in education in the arts. Consequently, teachers may not be conscious that they may be denigrating indigenous African art in schools as reflected in a little news item (DN 13th May, 1995). It was reported that two hundred pupils of St. Kizito Primary School in Isiolo District were sent home because their hands were painted with henna patterns.. The children were from Islamic nomadic backgrounds and henna body painting is one of their indigenous art forms. In a Christian school perhaps there was a prejudice towards Muslim presence that emerged in an art form. But the teachers' attitude may also be influenced by their feelings towards art education in general. Many teachers feel that art is not an educational subject but that one 'knows' art by nature, that is, that it is an inborn talent that has more to do with entertainment than with schooling. In 1994 this was once again explicitly expressed by the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) representatives at a press conference in Nairobi which they gave to inform the public and parents about their grievances:

> The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) branch officials told a Press conference that the Ministry of Education made the situation worse by a "useless and time-wasting" syllabus that did not benefit pupils.
>
> They cited arts, craft, music and home science which they said were purely talent areas where teaching and examinations were a waste of time as certificates were never issued for those disciplines. (Daily Nation: September 15, 1994).

This raises a key research question of how the notion of education and examinations in general or the relationship between the two is understood by teachers in Kenya and subsequently how education and examination in the arts is viewed by the society and educationalists in the Ministry of Education. It is known that teachers' attitudes towards different subjects affect their effectiveness in the classroom. The representatives of the teachers' union are vocal in expressing their frustrations about teaching such "useless and time-wasting" subjects as art and craft there is a need for re-thinking about education in the arts for Kenya, and perhaps for other countries in Africa. My learning from this research has been that in Kenya it is possible that teachers in the public schools are generally not well inclined towards art as an educational subject. Part of the problem may be with their training in art education at the Teachers' Training Institutes and their attitude towards art education which is often considered for pleasure more than as an academic subject. Very few teachers actually believed that art education created employable skills although they might have been telling the students that art was a useful subject to help them acquire jobs if they are unable to continue after primary school.

The second concern relates to the teaching of indigenous material culture. As shown by the analyses of the syllabus and examinations (in Chapter Six) there is much more teaching of European art than of indigenous art. This conflicts with the national objectives of creating a cultural identity through heritage subjects such as art. Learning foreign art traditions in the Kenyan situation means learning English first and art later. There is interference of second language in learning the first basic art concepts. Although children speak English it is not the language of their people be they agricultralists, pastoralists or urban. The syllabus may serve an ideological purpose in promoting 'modernization' through learning of a language of a 'modern' nation but it does not serve an educational purpose for it does not relate to the immediate cultural experiences of the child, and for that matter of the teacher.

This concern may have a link with the first one. It would be of interest to know if some of the teachers' frustrations are not due to the emphasis in the syllabus on the teaching of European art with which the teachers themselves are unable to relate to, and thus cannot recognize its educational value in the African context. During the period of fieldwork and from my past experiences, I found that the art teachers that I talked with often wished to know more about material culture and how to teach it.

The third concern is related to how a heritage subject such as material culture that is no longer a living tradition is learned at primary level. Kenyan children of agriculturist groups, such as the Agikuyu, have in general become remote from the visual traditions of their parents and consequently from the metaphors that enrich the (indigenous) visual language and its associated aesthetic material. In Chapter Five I related my experiences in the classroom in Karuri Primary School (in Agikuyu region) where the children and the teacher could not identify Agikuyu ornaments. The Agikuyu children also did not perform well in tests on colours and art terms in their ethnic language and Kiswahili which indicated that they relied on learning English to learn art. It was evident from the tests that the Agikuyu teacher and students experienced neither the indigenous nor the European art and aesthetic experience.

The fourth, which is a grave concern, is about teaching the national art syllabus to the children of the pastoralist groups. In addition to the three concerns discussed above there is an additional dimension when the 8-4-4 curriculum is taken to the pastoralist regions. The problem is that the national syllabus though called 'national' does not take account of the visual arts of the pastoralists. The cultural component of the national syllabus is based on European and Kenyan colonial experiences arising largely out of contradictions in mission schools (among the agriculturists) that placed emphasis on different set of principles of aesthetics and needs for art and craft than those experienced by traditions and present life styles of the pastoralists.

The pastoralists of Kenya inhabit dry lands of the north and are of Nilotic and Cushitic stock. Generally the pastoralists have a high maintenance of indigenous material culture that distinguishes them from the agriculturists and from one another. Very few among pastoralists are Christians though Christianity is spreading steadily through mission stations. Some Cushitic groups such as the Somali and Sekuye are all Muslims while others like the Boran, Gabbra and Rendille are partially Muslim. Those who have been Muslim for many generations have incorporated Islamic elements into the pastoralist art. Recently, some Christian groups, such as the Roman Catholic, have shown respect for ethnic arts and attempted to incorporate their arts into the Church and Chritian community life.[48]

During recent years, nomadic cultures and material culture have also been adversely affected by the sub-Saharan droughts and wars. Some NGOs such as Oxfam, and Churches like the Catholic Church, are helping the pastoralists to develop craft markets based on their material culture. [49]

None the less, today the visual traditions of the pastoralist communities of Kenya are living arts that sustain Africa's mode of education and particularly of visual education which is the principal means of sustaining community integrity and esteem. These are vital today during the times of wars and prolonged famines in the pastoralist regions of the Rift Valley and northern Kenyan. The material culture heritage of the pastoralist peoples of Kenya such as the Maasai, Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Rendille, Gabbra, Boran and Somali is prolific, personal and aesthetically founded. It integrates many aspects of their lives. It was discussed in Chapter Four, for example, that the Maasai make some one hundred and fifty different types of ornaments based on their aesthetic mode which in Maa is called, *muain sidain,* that has a close relationship with their environment, social structures and belief systems. The patterns appear on their containers, body wear and some tools. Maasai material culture in total is also a medium of socializing and educating children and it supports transmission of Maasai beliefs, values and aesthetic sense from adults to the children. In all, the visual arts sustain community integrity and esteem.

Similarly the other pastoralist groups of Kenya have an elaborate range of material culture items that speak of their traditions, knowledge of the environment, visual skills and their identity as a desert people. [50] Like the beadwork of the Maasai that tell stories of their origin, beliefs and traditions through colour metaphors, the Somali and Boran pattern-work on their artefacts speak of their being Muslim and pastoralists. They incorporate decorative Islamic line patterns onto the items of their material culture. The designs blend into their leather work, wood work, woven mats and embroidery on the caps and household furnishing such as bed and pillow covers. The frequent use of geometrical and floral motifs reflect on an Islamic mode of art that is integrated into and has become a significant aspect of the pastoralists' meticulously and consciously crafted aesthetic environment.[51]

Within the homestead of a pastoralist there is a harmony created by familiarity of pattern motifs on material culture. They create an aesthetic experience that is familiar with other elements in the visual environment which is also shared by many pastoralists groups of Africa. Monica Lawlor, who experimented and researched on West African visual patterns, discussed in her paper on Cultural influences on preference for designs (1954), that :

> It is possible that the culture offers the individual opportunities for a certain type of aesthetic experience rather than others and that through the familiarity which comes through this experience he develops his attitudes towards the aesthetic material. (p. 169).

The familiarity with and attitudes towards aesthetic material are learned to be appreciated from childhood. They are observed during and experienced by the order of daily living, which is the order of work, ablutions, prayer routines, reading of the cloud patterns, identifying animals by the colours when they return home in the evening, and sharing of social customs. This order is reflected in the groupings of material culture associated with work and rites. [52]

The artefacts and the patterns on the artefacts such as the prayer mat, the cap, walking stick, sheaths of knives and certain ornaments become personalized and identifiable with the names of their owners. They follow conventions that are particular to the items known by their functions, forms and social importance. For example there are separate ranges of symbols used on metal ornaments and on leather sheaths. Thus to the sensitive eye they evoke feelings through associations as metaphors. [53]

The sensitivity is felt by thoughts arising from previous visual experiences which may be through both informal and formal learning that happens for example, during festivals of rites of passage. Visual thinking skills that differentiate, recognize and create semiotic references to shapes and patterns are enhanced through a discipline that teaches control of the hand and the eye at a tender age. It teaches the power of concentration, reflection and association which is the essence of visual education. [54]

The sensitivity, perception and cognition of colours, textures and line images are acquired and appreciated within the cultural and religious practices of pastoralist community life, and strengthened by education that is specified within the age group system. This is the significance of the art metaphor in the material culture and education of the pastoralists.

Art educators have argued that art forms that stimulate visual thinking have a great educational value for they see them as components of a second language. Dewey (1980) for example, has written that :

> Because objects of art are expressive, they are a language. For each art has its own medium and that medium is especially fitted for one kind of communication. Each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue. (p. 106).

Like the Maasai children who learn to perceive complex colour designs as aesthetic material and symbols of social importance in their material culture, the Somali, Gabbra and Boran children develop perception on a different plane. They develop the ability to perceive simultaneously the interacting of the geometrical lines and spaces; design elements based on the new moon, the stars and the minarets, and the poetics of stenciled flora and fauna shaped from the environment. These they distinguish in inverse and mirror images, as intricacies worked into an order of continuity and beauty that is enforced by repetitive images. Skills of perception are closely linked with the intellect and education.

Crawford (1987) argues that of the five 'clusters of concepts' used by aestheticians, it is the cultural concept that often interacts with the others which enlarges the scope of the aesthetician's inquiry. Other concepts are the art object, appreciation and interpretation, critical evaluation and artistic creation. The cultural concept used in aesthetic appreciation helps to develop critical thinking and understand the society's higher values, morals and inter-relationships among cultural institutions (Crawford: 1987, p. 236).

The above argument concludes that there is a need for research in art education that relates to indigenous modes of perception associated with fabrication and use of material culture.[55] Such material emerging from research on visual heritage may be incorporated into the syllabi, especially of the pastoralist children, who represent the 'non-mainstream' and ethnic peoples of Africa and who are also often referred as the 'marginalized groups' of the Third World, that would link their living arts with school curriculum. For these children, a curriculum that focuses on their arts as a starting point to develop reading and other skills in critical thinking and management of a curriculum from outside the borders of their experiences may be a subject of further research in Africa. The significance of this type research is underlined by Ann Alenjanadro's experiences working with poor Mexican 'non-maintream' children in the State of Texas in the United States. :

> Not only are the arts not a fringe in the curriculum, but they may also represent a unique hope for getting beyond the skill-and -drill curriculum that is so often imposed on children from poor and "non-mianstream" backgrounds. (Alenjanodro: 1994, p.12)

7.2 Conclusion

This research has shown that the concept of Art Education needs to be examined in the reality of the African situation where political discourses on preservation of indigenous culture and modernization of life styles influence what is learned in schools and how it is learned.

First is the political context. There is no doubt that in a country such as Kenya the President is often the one who states what education should be about. For example, in the eighties when a controversy arose between learning 'New Maths' or continuing with 'Old Maths', it was the President who decided to put a stop to the academic debate by declaring that the old system should continue. No educationalist could then challenge this decision. Many teachers and parents are aware that their children's schooling is affected by 'traditional' political discourses rather than by 'modern' educational objectives. For example, when there was a little more freedom of the press (i.e. after the constitutional change that allowed opposition parties to operate in Kenya), an education reporter, taking advantage of the situation, said it all when it became evident that changing of the 8-4-4 curriculum in 1983 was not an educational issue but a political one :

> The 8-4-4 is only here with us because KANU won the last election. It is one of the things that President Daniel arap Moi is committed to. (Daily Nation, February 6, 1994)

Many parents and teachers that I talked to agreed with what the education reporter wrote in the Daily Nation of February 6th 1993.

While the supporters of the single–party system justify a political one party democracy transcending multiple ethnic cultures, they also propagate the 8–4–4 system of education as forging all the differences into one united (ethnically) Kenyan nation that would retain its indigenous cultural roots and values within a European matrix of development. An education system thus becomes an ideological instrument supporting a one party rule. As stated earlier, the 8-4-4 educational system has been propagated by the President's party, the Kenya African National Union, as a major achievement of President Moi and the party since independence. *Nyayoism* has often been quoted as evidence of the President's love for children of Kenya who are affectionately called *watoto wa Nyayo* (children of *Nyayo*) . *Nyayoism* is a philosophy that is also personified by the President in his image of the father of the nation.

During the last three years the underground opposition, illegal pro–democracy organizations, the vocal clergy and teachers' unions have been contesting the government's rhetoric in praise of an educational system which they argued was an academic failure, and one of the major causes of public dissatisfaction with President Moi's government. The dailies, journals, and pastoral newsletters opposed in strong terms the government's defense of the education system. During the 1992 elections most of the opposition parties campaigned against the education system that the government promoted as a symbol of KANU's success and wisdom of the President.

The second reality is at the level of the classroom. There is a need to study the impact of methods of teaching of art on the creativity and self expression of the African students. Teaching methods are influenced by the content which is often stated as a dogma (the objectives of the syllabus states what the teacher 'should do' and 'must' do) that the teachers do not always fully understand or agree with. The examinations then reinforce this authoritarian approach as shown by this research. The teachers of primary education become instructors whose task is almost to 'impose' a curriculum that they do not often identify with and feel they can teach it.

The problem of methods becomes more complex when art lessons are geared towards written examinations that require a certain proficiency in English. This is the language of testing artistic abilities of children whose first and second languages are other than English. (For most Kenyans the first language is an ethnic language and Kiswahili is the second and often the inter-ethnic language. The exception is the elite group who may know only English and some Kiswahili). The metaphors and subtleties experienced during the child's growing process may not be expressed as well in a second language as in the first. Secondly, as creativity and development of the visual language, like the written language, comes through its use in the social environment, the primary context of visual learning is the child's home environment that is reinforced by schooling, the secondary context.

There is another point. The art teacher is faced with the double task of teaching art and language for which no allowance is made in the syllabus. It is assumed by curriculum planners that language skills learned during the English Language periods are sufficient but art teachers, as shown by this research, know that the children must learn the broad English vocabulary during their lessons, often by memorizing it more than through artwork, if they are to complete the school schedule and pass the national art examination. This contradiction emerges clearly in the schools : During the English Language class, English is taught as the second language, but during art lessons English is the medium of learning, and consequently viewed as the first language. Outside the class, the Maasai and Agikuyu children speak in their vernacular languages, and Nairobi children speak in Kiswahili.

All these factors point towards the central isssue of learning aesthetics in the classroom. Understanding aesthetics is a personal sensual experience, an event that the teacher may only help to facilitate as aesthetics may not be instructed. The event may center on dialogues between an object and the student, the teacher and the object, and between the teacher and the student as sharing of their aesthetic experiences. My findings show that this does not happen during the art lesson in Kenya due to the content of what is taught, the method of teaching and the medium (language) of learning.

Where there is an indigenous tradition of learning art as among the pastoralist groups, it may be maintained and supported by the Ministry of Education. Teaching of the 'other' culture in the classroom, which is often referred to as 'national culture', to ethnic children creates a cultural conflict which points towards obliteration of their living arts. The national art and craft curriculum has very little to do with the pastoralists' way of life and the immediate environmental aesthetic experiences of the students. The 'modern' curriculum does not have the approach that reflects on drawing from the heritage and environmental experiences of the pastoralist children. Ethnic children in general often have a superior knowledge of environmental aesthetics and visual skills than their art teachers who are seldom from the same communities as the pupils. On the other hand children of the agriculturists, who have low maintenance of traditional material culture are neither exposed to the existing living traditions of Africa nor to their own heritage for reasons of attitude towards the past, lack of art education resources, and the design and areas of emphasis in the curriculum.

This study points towards research into Education in the Arts for teachers in Africa with the view to changing the approaches to learning art in the classroom. There are three reasons for this. One is that the significance of Education in the Arts may then be better appreciated by teachers of art as an important aspect of development of a child. Second, cultural diversity of indigenous arts and modes of learning through these arts may be recognized as valuable to the maintenance of children's and the nation's (such as Kenya's) education system. Last, a reconstructed curriculum may change teachers' attitudes from being instructors to being participants in the teaching-learning processes. At present teaching of art imparts norms and values that cannot be identified as having roots in any one of the many indigenous heritages of Kenya but the art curriculum is on record for promoting values that are said to be Kenyan. This is coherent with the political ideology of *Nyayoism* that chooses to create one national Kenyan culture rooted in traditions that thrive in a modern society. Such an all encompassing ideology as it is articulated, may be a way to keep in check what culture is transmitted and therefore expressed in Kenya. As James Kangwana, the one time Director of Culture and a key person in media policy making, states :

> Past experience has shown that national central authorities have been unwilling to allow for the free cultural expression for the fear that this could shift the control of political power in society. But this is as it should be because the exercise of political power is itself a cultural activity and it is this shift which allows for democratic groundwork and change in society, otherwise, in the long run, the community destroys itself.
>
> (Communication Structuring and Content: The Cultural Dimension, 1994)

However, to be indigenous and Kenyan, and to appreciate schooling and learning of the heritage, can be an on going development (*maendeleo*) process which may only be decided and articulated with the participation of the communities themselves, be they agriculturists, pastoralists or urban multi-ethnic, as they change traditions and experience changing political discourses in Africa approaching the twenty-first century.

Notes:

Nyayo in Kiswahili means footsteps. President Moi invented this name for himself when he took up the office. In the first presidential speech he explained that he was following in the footsteps of President Kenyatta, his predecessor. This was perhaps a political strategy. Traditionally he was paying homage to the deceased elder by not taking his title name of *mzee*, the respected old man. Thus Moi was not replacing Kenyatta but following him, the ancestor was with him and he was the junior elder.
Daniel arap Moi became the president of Kenya in 1978 when the first president, Jomo Kenyatta, died. Moi's presidency has come to be known as the *nyayo* era and during the first ten years of his office, he fashioned a discourse on development called *Nyayoism*.

[1] This has been explicitly said in the book by the President:
....*Nyayoism* is a pragmatic philosophy which crystallizes and articulates what has always been African, indigenous and formative in our societies. *Nyayoism* is neither foreign nor unfamiliar to traditional Africa, but it is new as a philosophy for the trans-tribal management of a nation in a plural, multi-racial community. Thus, it is rooted in the African past, but new in its trans-tribal application to the management of Kenya. (Moi: 1986, p. 6).

[2] As Sheffield (1973) puts it, "One writer described Beecher's plan as a definite attempt to keep the majority of primary school children in the rural areas." (p.43).

[3] In the Development Plan 1970 - 1974 it is stated that
The development of new and distinctly national expressions is a natural growth arising from the people themselves, but it must be nurtured and supported by systematic investigations which preserve and analyze records of traditional culture and make them available to the public. (Development Plan 1970 -1974, p. 546).

[4] The Luo do not circumcise their male children and this often becomes an issue at the social level (Daily Nation, Nov. 18th, 1992; Daily Nation, May 1st, 1992). For example, on 17th of September 1992, about a hundred Luo men demonstrated in Kitale town in protest against forced circumcision performed on four Luo men living in Bukusu (Bantu) ethnic region. (Daily Nation, 18th September, 1992). At times it even becomes an issue at the level of national politics when the cultural identity of the future President is debated in terms of rites of passage (Daily Nation Nov. 1st, 1992). In such case customs and artefacts, such as ornaments and weapons, become symbols that are manipulated to emphasize ethnic identity, and implicitly an African identity.
Take other examples. The Waatu of Kilifi District, who speak a Cushitic dialect and share many cultural and economic similarities with their Mijikenda Bantu neighbours, show their differences through customs such as that of the taboo on eating fish, which is the staple protein diet of the Mijikenda (Heine and Mohlig:1980, p. 71). Others like the Bantu speaking Abasuba are rapidly becoming culturally assimilated into the larger and encompassing neighbouring Nilotic Luo community. One significant custom abandoned by the Abasuba is that of circumcision (Heine and Mohlig:1980, p. 76). On the other hand the Luhya, a Bantu group and a neighbour of the Luo, whose material culture has many similarities with material culture of the Luo, practice circumcision. There are strong similarities in the ornamentation styles of Rendille, a Cushite pastoralist group, and Samburu, a neighbouring Nilotic pastoralist group though their languages and customs are distinct..

[5] In 1993 I made a survey of cultural groups in Nairobi. The results which are discussed in Chapter Three confirm ethnic affiliations of the groups.

[6] Another similar event in the school centred on customs. During the Ramadhan of 1993 seven girls were suspended by the Consolata Girls Secondary School in Meru for observing the rite of fast. They returned to school and were allowed to observe their custom only after a court order. (Sunday Nation 7/03/93).

[7] The *khanga* or *leso* originated among the Waswahili people in the last century. It is widely worn by women in East Africa. The government of Kenya does not recognize the *khanga* as a national dress but in Tanzania the *khanga* is popularly known to be the national dress.

[8] The 8-4-4 educational system has been propagated by the President's party, the Kenya African National Union, as a major achievement of President Moi and the party since independence. *Nyayoism* has often been quoted as evidence of the President's love for children of Kenya who are affectionately called *watoto wa Nyayo* (children of *Nyayo*) . *Nyayoism* is a philosophy that is also personified by

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the President in his image of the father-teacher of the nation. Another name for the President is *Nyayo* (Kiswahili for footsteps) or the follower of Mzee (the elder) Kenyatta.

During the last three years the underground opposition, illegal pro-democracy organizations, the vocal clergy and teachers' unions have been contesting the government's rhetoric in praise of an educational system which they argued was an academic failure, and one of the major causes of public dissatisfaction with President Moi's government. The dailies, journals, and pastoral newsletters opposed in strong terms the government's defense of the education system. During the 1992 elections most of the opposition parties campaigned against the education system that the government promoted as a symbol of KANU's success and wisdom of the President. FORD KENYA also had election posters specifically on the 8-4-4 system of education urging the voters to vote for FORD KENYA in order to change the education system (See illustrations 1 and 2).

[9] The following example of the selection of text books on Art and Craft for the curriculum that developed out of the recommendation of the Ominde Commission illustrates this point: Of the nine text books recommended by the Ministry of Basic Education in 1983 for use in primary schools for Arts and Craft education in standards 1 to 6, one was on printing (Mell and Fisher: 1973), one on working with paper (Mell and Fisher: 1981), one on modeling, building and carving (Mell and Fisher: 1974), one on picture and pattern making (Mell and Fisher: 1974) and four on handwriting (Inglis, et all: 1974). All of these books were published by Thomas Nelson, Schofield and Sims of London.

[10] The discussion on the self awareness of the three anthropologists, who may have been influenced by Geetz's classic work, From the Native's Point of View, is best illustrated by reading their own words.

Lambek (1998), writing on ethnographic research, puts it in these words:

The fact is, that the questions we ask and the assumptions we make about the rationality of the natives -- why they say what they say and do what they do -- are integrally connected to the questions of our own rationality as anthropologists and as members of contemporary society. Questions about the knowledge and practice of the Other cannot be separated from questions of our knowledge and praxis. (Lambek: 1989, p. 4)

Lambek in the foregoing quotation comments on the invention of research subjects who answer to the needs of the anthropologists within their experiences. In a way the researchers are cautioned and made aware of themselves as manipulators of interviews.

In Tuhmai, Portrait of a Moroccan, Crapanzano discourses with himself on his discourses with Tuhami, the subject of his research. On his ethnographic methodology in Morocco, he writes that:

In ethnographic encounter, where the matter at hand is the knowledge of the Other and his reality, there is a very strong compulsion to attribute the negotiated reality to one's informant. There are, to be sure, all sorts of analytic strategies that have been devised to distinguish between what is specific to an encounter and what is typical, general, or even universal. Such different contexts, the use of several modes of elicitation, the search for patterns, consistency, and redundancy, confirmation in the search of others, the evaluation of informants, and, ultimately, self-reflection and evaluation, must be regarded with a certain skepticism, for they may --and often do -- serve as rationalizations for the objectification for the negotiated reality and its attribution to the Other. (Crapanzano: 1980, p.x).

Dwyer (1982) begins his Moroccan Dialogues: Anthropology in Question with the following statement:

I arrived in Morocco in June 1975 with no specific research task planned. I suspected that a clear research project, designed to respond to current theoretical concerns in anthropology, would tend to suppress and severely distort the spontaneity and normal behavior of people I encountered, forcing them to fit into categories, modes, and aspects defined by the project. (Dwyer: 1982, p. 21)

As days went by, and one situation led to another, Dwyer developed a fine, sequential repertoire of questions that became his discourses with Faqir Muhammad, the Moroccan. Dwyer created the Faqir Muhammad of his discourses in his ethnography - in his question and answer sessions, observations and analysis. In a way both Crapanzano and Dwyer invented relationships with the Moroccans for the sake of their fieldwork and development of their professions. They were not the market vendors, the water carriers, mosque *mullahs* or kinsmen from the next village but anthropologists from another culture and new social relationships had to be invented to accommodate and contain their intrusion into the social and economic melieu of the villagers so as to facilitate anthropological field work and to legitimize their findings. Friendship was carefully nurtured so that they, the anthropologists, could 'open up' the subjects by allowing themselves to feel close to and comfortable with the natives and vice

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versa. The two anthropologists make it clear to the readers that they too were being observed and analyzed by Faqir Muhammad and Tuhami which changed the course of their discourses. A part of my methodology was self preparation for entrance into new relationships. It was a role, like a new situation personality, that I was partially making up for myself and partially, it would be made up for me during ethnographic encounters.

[11] The first discourses were by Taban Lo Liyong, Okot P'Bitek and Ngugi wa Thiongo.

[12] Omondi (1973) studied how the *thum* (a Luo string instrument) changed due to European influences. He writes that:

As western influences started to be felt among the Luo, some condemned the lyre as an object of the devil, while those who were influenced by Western secular practices were attracted to the modern 'civilized' instruments such as the guitar and the accordion. The later group invented new names for the lyre such as *thum atielo* (literally 'foot instrument'),*thum arin'go* (literally 'meat instrument'),*thum nyatiti* (a derogatory reference to the onomatopoetic naming of F and G strings). (p. 5).

There were changes in the pitch, mode and scale, in the physical appearance of the lyre and how the songs were rendered. The dance form, accompanying the *thum* performance, also changed. So much so that:

The old men saw the lyre no longer as the bearer of the best of their tradition but as another agent for destroying the standard of the society like the guitar. As a result they condemned the instrument and its exponents. (p. 6).

The traditional players of the *thum* felt that the instrument was losing its value as an ethnic object and consequently its artistic standards were falling. In 1966, they formed the Nyatiti Association of East Africa whose chief objective was to 'eliminate offending elements' in the performance of the lyre.

Ranger, T.O. (1975) described how the *Beni Ngoma*, an East African urban dance form, originated during the colonial period as an artistic expression of an experience "of colonial invasion, of resistance, of accommodation, of protest and repression of protest". Ranger's Dance and society in East Africa, 1870–1990. The Beni Ngoma, also analyzed symbolism in the dance, and in the dancers' costumes that commented on and characterized Christianity, African traditional beliefs, Islam, settlers, colonial administrators and soldiers in open air performances. It performed the discourse of colonialism, nationalism and modernization in dance and material culture. In fact the *Beni Ngoma* symbolized in totality how the different domains of the arts expressed changes as conflicts and harmonies. Appearance of the triple discourse in the arts was first seen in urban areas and then it gradually permeated into the villages.

[13] Prior to the coming of the European missionaries, formal instruction in religion, mathematics, reading, writing, history, and geography existed in the Muslim *madarassah* (Qur'anic schools) of the East African coast. The Lamu school tradition is traced to the ninth century *madarassah* in Arabia, while from fourteenth century, schooling in Mombasa, Malindi and Witu were mainly influenced by the Yemeni and Omani traditions. Muslim pastoralists of Kenya such as the Somali and the Boran followed a much earlier Islamic schooling traditions from Mogadishu and Ethiopia that had longer and closer connections with ancient Islamic schools.

Though schooling was primarily for religious instruction in the *madarassah*, teaching of secular subjects was a part of the *kuelimisha na kuislamisha* process, a Kiswahili term which means both to educate and make Muslim. Hand written books and oral poetry were produced by students of the East African *madarassah*. Students of art and craft attended the *madarassah* part–time for compulsory Islamic academic education and did apprenticeships with master craftsmen and women. The arts of the Waswahili and of the Islamisised coastal Bantu groups adhered to age–group and gender norms that were also reflected in the social structures of the coastal societies. Aesthetic principles were influenced by middle–Eastern Islamic art traditions. Representational art, for example, was considered blasphemous, heathen and primitive, while geometric designs, calligraphy, and floral patterns reflected discipline and purity of an art–form that was symbolic of a clean and religious life. The coastal cultures also contained secular arts that incorporated Islamic symbols into indigenous art and aesthetic material. The religious arts were overtly expressed while the secular were more covert. For example, until recently, Muslim women in Lamu district wore traditional beaded patterned belt on their waists under Islamic attire and the veil.

[14] Latinization of the Kiswahili script and Europeanization of the arts isolated the first European educated literates, their literature and the arts from an ancient East African literary and art tradition which had existed along the coast and among the Northern Cushitic tribes. It also stopped the spread of the Swahili literacy culture inland. It was almost half a century later that the first East African literature

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appeared in Latin script, and teaching of African music, oral literature and art were accepted, to some extent, in the school curricula.

[15] Ranger (1975) writes that music and singing were central to Christian worship and that: Missionaries in the 1880s had few doubts of the civilizing and disciplining value of music. (p. 13).

[16] The two came from different evangelistic traditions and cultures. The Roman Catholics, with their headquarters in the Vatican, had as their cultural bases the art and aesthetic traditions of Italy, Spain, and Portugal. These countries were also non–industrial European nations of the 19th and early 20th centuries. (Italy later developed into an industrial state).

The Protestant missionaries came mainly from the United Kingdom and the United States with a philosophy born out of protest movements, Protestant work ethics, and a progressive outlook towards education and social welfare, especially on issues relative to poverty of the new industrial working classes. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, had a longer and broader church history and history of evangelism and working with native cultures in the Americas, Asia and the Pacific. This history is reflected in large collections of ethnographic objects in the Vatican Museum in Rome.

[17] In the Catholic evangelist tradition there have been debates on religion and culture since the 'Age of Discovery' when Asia and Americas presented two different cultural traditions. One most significant statement recorded was in 1659 when Rome, declared that the missionaries were to bring to other lands their religion but not their culture and stated that converts should be allowed to practise their customs and rites unless these were contrary to faith and morals. (Kieran: 1966, p. 1)

However, in 1742 and 1744 Pope Benedict XV did not allow Chinese and Indian converts to take part in certain traditional ceremonies (Kieran: 1966, p. 2) and in the Americas the missionaries orders were determined to eradicate religious beliefs and rituals, and to replace them with Christianity as ideally practiced in Europe (p. 3). This was probably the line carried forward to East Africa when missionary activities started in the middle of nineteenth century.

[18] For example, Bishop Lucas would bless initiation rituals and allow the initiates to go to church. But he tried to change the matriarchal homestead into patriarchal one apparently because "the woman did not have an ideal of Christian womanhood" (Ranger:1975, p. 67). Bishop Lucas is remembered for his campaigns against Beni dancers, the speaking of Kiswahili and the wearing of shorts and trousers by Africans (Ibid: p. 127).

[19] It should be noted that this was not the case when, previously the missionaries opposed taxation of the natives and compared the treatment of Africans by Christian settlers with the slavery practised by the coastal Muslims. In the first decade of the century the Church in Kenya sent a memorandum to the British Government complaining about the behaviour of the settlers towards their African employees (Roland: 1952, p. 8). Later, however, the missionaries' attitudes changed, probably because the inland ethnic people were not responding to the Bible as well as the freed slaves had responded.

[20] Later when at Makerere Margaret Trowell engaged a Mkamba carver to teach her class (Court: 1985)

[21] Among the first artists and art teachers are Gregory Maloba, Elimu Njau and Francis Nnagenda.

[22] Reference to this section is made from archival documents from 1944 onwards which mention subjects that were covered by Art and Craft syllabus for primary schools in Kenya (KNA 52/A) and to conference details on teaching of Indigenous Art and Craft in schools (Makerere College Report of the Council to the Assembly for the year 1943; Report of Inter–University Council Delegation to E.A. 1949; Newsletter Makerere College 1952.

[23] 1948 was the year that demarcated two lines of struggle for *Uhuru* (Kiswahili for freedom) as a result of a split in Kenya African Union, which was the most active political body at the time. One line voted to continue the freedom movement through round table talks, politicization of the people, and winning the sympathy of the British public through the media. The other opted for an armed uprising and began organizing a guerrilla warfare. This line later came to be known as *Mau Mau* which continued for the next fifteen years.

It should also be noted that the Beecher Report was an official government document that was tabled in the Legislative Council at a critical time in Kenya's history when the colonial government was negotiating for compromises between the demands of the Africans and those of the economically powerful group of white settlers.

[24] Another modification, the one which was strongly opposed by the white settlers, involved greater African participation in governmental and municipal affairs. These changes were finally answering some of the demands that nationalists like Harry Thuku and Eliud Mathu, first mission educated Africans, had been making to the Legislative Council for the past thirty years. They were also intended

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to strengthen the non-violent political line of African nationalism and consequently to weaken the *Mau Mau*. The Beecher Report's recommendations for better quality and steady expansion of African education and for more involvement of African staff in the school system were similar to other contemporary recommendations for changes in administration of , allocation of finances to and social services, such as housing and health, for the African community.

[25] The Beecher Report was published twenty eight years after Kenya was proclaimed a colony of Great Britain, and it records the first detailed statement on African education by the colonial government. Before that, government's interest in education was almost totally centered on European and Asian populations, leaving African education to Christian missionary and voluntary community organizations.

[26] Specifically, the Report examined how the quality of African education could be improved through greater supervision and provision of more qualified staff. This would, of course, lead to an increase in expenditure, and it was suggested that the necessary finances could be found through more contributions from Local Native Councils, Local Authorities, parents, and an increase in the colonial Government's grant to mission schools.

[27] Wipper (1977) writes that :

Missionaries were harassed and several mission churches and schools burned down. Approximately eight hundred Musambwa followers invaded the Roman Catholic Mission at Kibabii. (p. 181).

[28] Wipper states that by 1971, there were 157 independent churches with 5,650 congregations, and that:

The membership of the independent churches of 1,694,840 now equaled the membership of the Protestant Churches in Kenya and was not far below the Roman Catholic membership of 1,998,000. (Wipper: 1977, p. 2)

[29] Joseph Murumbi, the second vice president, had a large collection of Pan African material culture and ran an African heritage business. He was also instrumental in promoting sculptors Maloba, Nnaggenda and Elkana Ongesa to international fame. Other patrons include Mwai Kibaki, the leader of the opposition party (Democratic Party of Kenya) who also collects Inuit art and B, Kiplagat, the former Kenyan High Commissioner to Britain.

[30] The following four quotes from George Urch's paper on 'Africanization, socialization and education in Kenya' (1968) saw how strongly the participants at the Conference on Teacher Education in East Africa felt about the role of the teacher and school in teaching of indigenous culture :

The teacher was viewed not only as an agent who could co-ordinate the schools activities with the community development plans, but also as a person aware of the fact that the existence of the community implied the presence of traditions and cultural values which have helped sustain the community. (p. 16)

The school could help serve as a custodian of society's heritage. (p. 17)

The school has been selected as an instrument which can be used to inculcate the chosen traditions. The success of the school in this endeavour will be watched by those who feel that African Culture has a place in the modern world. (p. 20)

[31] At Makerere there was a popular cultural association called Transition, after an academic journal that it published by the same name. Several Kenyan intellectuals were contributors of Transition.

[32] Here reference is made to Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Ngugi wa Mirii, Kimani Gicau who all had to flee the country after Kenyatta's regime detained Ngugi wa Thiong'o and began a persecution of intellectuals in 1977. There was a censorship on the freedom of expression in the arts and the media.

[33] During the first year of the Plan Period, the Department of Design will be separated into two departments -- a Department of Fine Arts and a Department of Industrial Design. The status of the former department is still uncertain, pending a decision on the part of University officials with respect to how much the University should be involved in the training of teachers of Art. (Development Plan, 1970-1974, p. 475).

[34] Of the 103 members of the House of Representatives, 90 had started their careers as teachers and when they entered the parliament the break down of their job descriptions in the educational field was as follows:

55 teachers; 23 headmasters; 8 education officers; 4 lecturers (French: 1960, p.161).

[35] For example, it gave three reasons for emphasizing its difference from the previous colonial educational commissions: One was the abolition of the racial basis of schooling:

In the first place, as our terms of reference remind us, our Commission has to think of education as a function of the Kenya nation. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 22).

The second reason referred to the right to education for all :

The second difference between our problem and that of previous committees is a matter of social objectives . (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 22).

And the third was secularization of African education :

The third difference that separates us from our predecessors is a question of religious attitudes. In 1949, 'African Education' was still almost entirely provided by the Christian mission and inspired by their ideals and purposes. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 22).

[36] The Ominde Commission evoked two nationalist printed discourses to justify its philosophy, objectives and recommendations. One was Jomo Kenyatta's anthropological essay on Agikuyu history and customs, Facing Mt. Kenya (1938) and the other was a political document, KANU Manifesto (1963).

[37] On this point it directly addresses the Beecher Report by referring to how the missionaries supported government curricula to promote their own aims :

In 1949 'African Education' was still almost entirely provided by the Christian missions and inspired by their ideals and purposes. ....Our approach must be the approach of the secular state, pledged to respect the convictions of persons of all religions, and of none. To the secular state the use of any public service to entrench the claims of any religion is repugnant . (The Ominde Report: 1965, p. 22).

[38] The Ominde report has the following concurrent comment on vernacular languages:

We apprehend, therefore, that the vernaculars will continue to serve their historic role of providing a means of domestic verbal communication. We see no case for assigning to them a role for which they are ill adapted, namely, the role of educational medium in the critical early years of schooling. (The Ominde Report: 1964, p. 60).

During this time several journalists were arrested among them was Wahome Mutahi, who wrote on art and literature in the dailies.

[39] 'The Committee has concerned itself particularly with the need to promote national unity and culture'. (The Ominde Report: 1965, p. xix).

[40] In 1982 an art exhibition called Sisi Kwa Sisi, which was staged in a working class area of Nairobi, was banned. The exhibition showed paintings by young artists and which depicted mainly social realities in Kenya. A year or two earlier Kibacia Gatu's painting of the incident of Monica Njeri, a Kenyan prostitute who was brutally murdered by an American sailor of the Seventh Fleet, was confiscated. Kibacia was an art teacher at Kilimambogo Teachers' Training College where he had started a material culture collection with a colleague. In 1983 when Kibacia did a painting of two little girls on a Del Monte pineapple plantation who were savaged by Alsatian guard dogs, he had to flee the country. The painting was called 'Mbwa Mkali' (Kiswahili for fierce dog)which the authorities did not approve perhaps because the rich keep fierce dogs to guards their homes and put up a sign 'Mbwa Mkali' at the gate.

Some of the plays that were banned during this time were: Shamba la Wanyama (Animal Farm), Can't pay? Won't pay! and , Fate of a cockroach. These presented views that were critical of economic and social development, and the post-independence 'Culture of Silence'.

It is interesting to note that when a copy of the play Can't Pay? Won't Pay was returned from Nyayo House.

Among the lines heavily underlined by the censors in the introduction is "if you want to give to the poor, give five coppers, two for bread and three for culture, and culture does not only mean being able to read and write but also to express one's own creativity on the basis of one's own world view (DN: March 12th 1991).

[41] This justified the main objective of the report which was to:

Review generally the whole educational philosophy, policies and objectives to ensure that they are in consonance with changing social, cultural, economic and political demands of the country. (The Kamunge Report: 1988, p. vii).

[42] Kenya's social and cultural values, as stated in Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on 'African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya' are based on African traditions and are adaptable to the changing times. (The Kamunge Report: 1988, p. 6).

[43] The philosophical foundations underlying the teaching of social education and ethics is that there is a corpus of values that are inherent in our African traditions. There can be development through

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conceptual analysis and made part of the educational process in order to improve the moral standards of the nation to understand and appreciate the African personality and its particular mode of relating to reality and the acceptance of the originality of African values and way of life. (The Kamunge Report: 1988, p. 14).

[44] Many of these were in the present Kiambu District which was an area of one of my research sites.

[45] Every now and again there is a debate in the newspapers and journals that only the Agikuyu fought for the independence of Kenya as the Mau Mau movement was Agikuyu based. It is also argued, mainly by the Agikuyu, that Kenyatta, who was from their ethnic group, led the country to independence and he created the nation.

[46] This meeting was recorded by Francis Sekuda, the director of SIMOO. There were forty five members present during the discussion.

[47] During the last general elections the Maasai population of Kajiado and Narok in general voted for the one party KANU government while the Agikuyu in general voted for the opposition parties. The Vice-president of Kenya, Prof. Saitoti, is a Maasai and one of the prominent KANU leaders.

[48] None the less, adaptation of non indigenous religion leads to changes in social order and aesthetic values that eventually affect changes in the fabrication and use of material culture.

[49] The most successful of these is a project on the Turkana baskets made from doum palm leaves. Pastoralist ornaments are sold to tourists and exported in forms that are modified to suit western consumer tastes. Very many functional and decorative items made of beads such as table mats, key chains, waist belts and beaded T- shirts, marketed from Kenya have been developed by pastoralist women groups. However, the bulk of art and craft trade from the pastoralist communities comprises ethnographic items which are old and authentic. These are highly priced by European and Japanese tourists and they bring some income to the families during these difficult times. But the sale of the heritage results in depleting material culture that affects the age old tradition of transmitting ethnic art material and values. Recently, there has been an increased market demand for authentic ethnographic objects and beads due to greater interest in these items shown by fashion designers, media and magazines. Many urban based agents travel to the pastoralist areas to purchase their material culture that leaves the country in large quantities.

[50] The array of milk and water containers for different uses, items of light nomadic furniture, body ornaments, clothing and objects related to the camel, cow and the goat survive the droughts and famines, and in these times of hardships and uncertainties, they signify continuity of a tradition and a people. In the homesteads where the day to day survival of the infants and unity of the family has become the struggle and priority of human existence, it is the presence of visual and oral arts that the people can call their own for they remain to help sustain the human spirit. There is the song, the narrative and the tangible object of material culture, a red bead, which is a family heritage, and a water container woven from the roots of a desert plant and decorated with cowry shells that convey social values, environmental aesthetics and often indigenous knowledge and skills for economic gain that have sustained pastoralist cultures for generations.

[51] Art aesthetician John Dewey (1980) suggested that:

The expressiveness of lines as mere lines is offered as proof that aesthetic value belongs to sense qualities in and of themselves; their status may serve as a test of the theory. Different kinds of lines, straight and curved, and among the straight the horizontal and vertical, and among the curves those that are closed and those that droop and rise, have different immediate aesthetic qualities. (p. 99).

For example, carved on the Boran wooden containers *budunu* and *qori* are circular and geometrical designs that heighten the beauty of the hand crafted vessels. The patterns relate to those on the *qalim* and *kome*, the aluminum necklace and anklets, that the married women display on their bodies. The triangular lace work is found on such personal objects as the comb (*fila*) and on the *kofia* (cap).

[52] For example, the day to day work of herding animals of Boran pastoralist is reflected in the leather band *hadd* and the leather whip *licho* . The range and variety of material culture associated with the camel that has been developed by the Somali based on their knowledge of the locally available materials and traditional skills indicate that they are a people of the camel and the desert. There is the goat skin prayer mat, with designs branded on it, that the Somali pastoralist carries with him all day so that on it he may offer his midday prayers on the open desert rocks amid his camels.

[53] Dewey (1980) explains that:

The arrangement of lines and spaces is not enjoyed in perception because of its own experienced quality but because of what it reminds us of. (p. 90).

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[54] Howard Esbin (1990) further elaborates on visual thinking:
Visual thinking has been defined as the non-verbal sensitivity, perception and cognition of observable form. (p. 8).

[55] For example the Samburu make fourteen different types of staffs that are recognizable by their shapes, functions and the wood of the indigenous trees. They are carried according to codes of gender and age group functions. The Rendille make twelve different types of ropes, strings and twines that are associated with the camel and building of the home. They use different techniques using wild sisal, leather and sinews to make the ropes that serve their need for a craft. A well made object of utility becomes an object of admiration and of value beyond the economic. Consequently it becomes an object of art among many other items of material culture, and it enhances a need for expression and appreciation of beauty.

Appendix 1

Project Proposal

Assessing Innovation in Curriculum: The Case of Material Culture in the Teaching of Art and Craft

June, 1991

Six years ago in January 1985, Material Culture of Kenya was introduced into the Kenyan School curriculum. This was an innovation at the curriculum level designed to improve the quality of learning and teaching of cultural heritage subjects.

The innovation came as a result of findings of a research project entitled 'Material Culture and Education' which was sponsored by the Kenya Educational Research Bureau. The project emphasized the need to change the Art and Craft Syllabus in order to introduce indigenous art and artifacts of Kenya to schools and it demonstrated how a new approach to the teaching of art and craft could be developed.

The project's findings were accepted by the Ministry of Education and the Kenya Institute of Education and a new art syllabus was drafted and implemented in 1985 with the 8-4-4 system of education.

This project aims to examine the following:

a) What material has been produced in the past five years since the implementation of the project.

b) How are the teachers prepared to teach the new curriculum.

c) How has KIE organized its services and what services does it offer to teachers for managing the new syllabus.

d) What has been the effect of the innovation on students' art production.

e) What has been the effect of the innovation on the teachings, history, geography, languages and literature in Kenya. Has the perception of science, for changed through the use of examples indigenous material culture to explain scientific principles. How have concepts of history, technology and mathematics been affected by school collections of indigenous material culture and its use as educational aid.

f) What has been the effect of the innovation on development of art syllabus as an educational tool, planning of curriculum based on a national heritage for a national identity and as a tool to meet economic needs.

g) What has been the effect of the syllabus on the children's and their parents' perception of the physical and cultural environments.

h) What have been the attitudinal changes among the staff, students and parents towards indigenous cultural artifacts and understanding of art education and indigenous culture in general.

On completion of the project I would like to organize a three day seminar to disseminate the results and receive feed back before publishing the report.

Scope and Methodology

Research will focus on the teaching of art, craft and design in primary schools.

(i) Examination of documents.

Educational documents will be collected from the Ministry of Education and from institutions such as the Kenya Institute of Education as well as from schools. These materials will include syllabi, teachers guides, examination papers, time tables and text books prepared for the teaching of African languages, religion, music, history and material culture.

ii) Interviews with curriculum specialists and policy makers.

Open ended interviews will be conducted to draw information on 8 points stated in paragraph 4.00. I will seek interviews with personnel in charge of policy making at the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE); specifically, members of the subject panels. I will also interview those responsible for KCPE examinations at the Kenya National Examinations Council.

iii) Case studies

I intend to conduct three case studies, of these two will be conducted in rural areas. Of the two primary schools selected, one will be in an area where the tradition of making material culture for home use still exists and the other in an area where much of the traditional material culture is no longer made or used. I intend to conduct the former in Kajiado District which is in the home area of Maasai ethnic group and the latter in Kiambu District which is in the Kikuyu ethnic region. The third will be a Nairobi school where the children are from different ethnic backgrounds.

In so far as formal instruction is concerned, I will observe classroom teaching whenever possible and be a participant observer in the construction of learning tasks. This will involve participation in a series of lessons in different standards to understand the general pattern of teaching. The context of teaching (i.e. in what language and on what theoretical framework is a lesson based) will be of particular interest.

In addition to classroom observations, I will gather information through interviews with the head teachers, teachers and staff of the Teachers' Advisory Centres. From the teachers, I will seek information on their education and training, participation in upgrading courses and in-service programmes, whether they are practicing artists and craftspersons, their attitudes towards traditional material culture and teaching of art and crafts, and about their ethnicity and familiarity with the cultural artifacts of the various peoples of Kenya. Both upper and lower primary school staff will be interviewed. The staff of the Teachers' Advisory Centres will be interviewed to determine the support they give to teachers. For example, do they help to supplement teaching resource material and give guidance on lesson plans? Next I will study students' work. I will solicit information from students in the upper standards on art objects that they produce, how they perceive what they do in art and crafts class and what they understand to be the purpose of their lessons. More specifically, I will examine the following :

a) How do the students understand aesthetics in objects that they produce in class ? To what extent are their aesthetics notions those taught in school or those derived from social experience ?

b) How do they learn to value an object of art ? The art curricula attempts to foster a transition from valuing objects mainly for their functional uses, which was the traditional purpose of craft production, to an eventual appreciation of their decorative and pan cultural significance. Does this occur ?

c) Do they perceive the importance of art and crafts lessons in terms of giving them skills and knowledge that would make them employable, self reliant and self employed? Can they relate their experience of working with indigenous material culture to other subjects ?

In analyzing these data and the information obtained through classroom observations and interviews with staff, I will make comparisons of the three schools; the school in the Maasai area, where there is a high level of cultural maintenance, and the school in a Kikuyu ethnic region, where there has been a significant loss of traditional material culture, and the Nairobi school where the children come from many ethnic backgrounds and are influenced by the urban environment.

Training and community participation

Embedded in this project are two educational sub-projects.

a) Assist the schools to develop their own school museums which will be used as teaching resource material for themselves and neighbourhood schools. They will also serve as community museums showing regional cultural traditions.

b) In the process of starting the three museums, three art teachers will receive on the job training which will upgrade their skills and give them insights into the local cultural environment.

Seminar on the Teaching of Material Culture in Primary Schools.

> In August, 1992 I hope to organize a three day seminar covering six sessions and involving fifteen teachers of Art and Craft. The seminar would take place at the schools where the research has been conducted.

Expected results

a) Since its inception in 1985 no evaluation has been done of curriculum innovation of subjects related to transmission of cultural heritage. This project will provide evaluation reports to the Ministry of Education and Kenya Institute of Education.

b) There has been no training of teachers for managing the new syllabus in Art and Craft. The project aims to train three teachers and provide an example of how skills could be upgraded in cultural heritage subjects.

c) The project will initiate three regional teaching museums and solicit community participation. Seminar participants will be exposed to the museums and the results will be published.

Background preparation

During the last 12 I have studied the possibility of implementing this project. I have studied the need areas, talked to KIE officials, Ministry of Education officers, DOs, EDOs, head teachers, teachers of Art and Craft and students. I have also studied examination reports and done the technicalities, such as obtaining a research permit and getting a promise of time off from the University where I am employed. I have located the three schools sites and established friendly relationships with the schools. I have done much of the library work. These preparation will enable me to embark on my fieldwork in January, 1991 and follow the following schedule.

Summary

This project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the 1985 innovation in learning of indigenous culture in terms of the quality of teaching materials and social response. The affected society is defined as the school community of students, teachers and administrators as well as the ethnic and regional community where the school is located. The embedded sub-projects, the seminar and the publications are intended to make statements on the significance of curriculum innovation as cultural innovation for educational, economic and social growth of a community.

(Bibliography not included).

Appendix 2

Samples of Questionnaires

In this appendix there are six completed questionnaires (no. 1-6) from each the three schools.

Total number of questionnaires is eighteen (6x3).

Questionnaire 1

Questionnaire No. 1.

School KASSAANI
Standard 5 TIGER
Student Name [redacted] [✓ M] F
Age 14. years old Age Group
Age set Ethnic Group Kikuyu

English	Kiswahili	Mother Tongue
Red	nyekundu	
White	nyeupe	Jero
Blue	Samawati	Bururu
Green	Kijani kibichi	
Black	nyeusi	airo X
Yellow	manjano	
Orange	rangi ya machungwa	
Pink		
Purple		
Brown	rangi ya kitiri X	Gitiri
Grey		
Pattern	Pateni	
Spotted	madoadoa	
Design		
Art		
Craft	ufundi	
Material Culture		
Lines	mistari	Laini
Drawing	Kuchora	goshora
Painting	Kupaka	kohaka
Decoration	Kupamba	Kugemia
Ornament		
Graphic		
Pottery	utengenezaji wa vyungu	
Weaving		

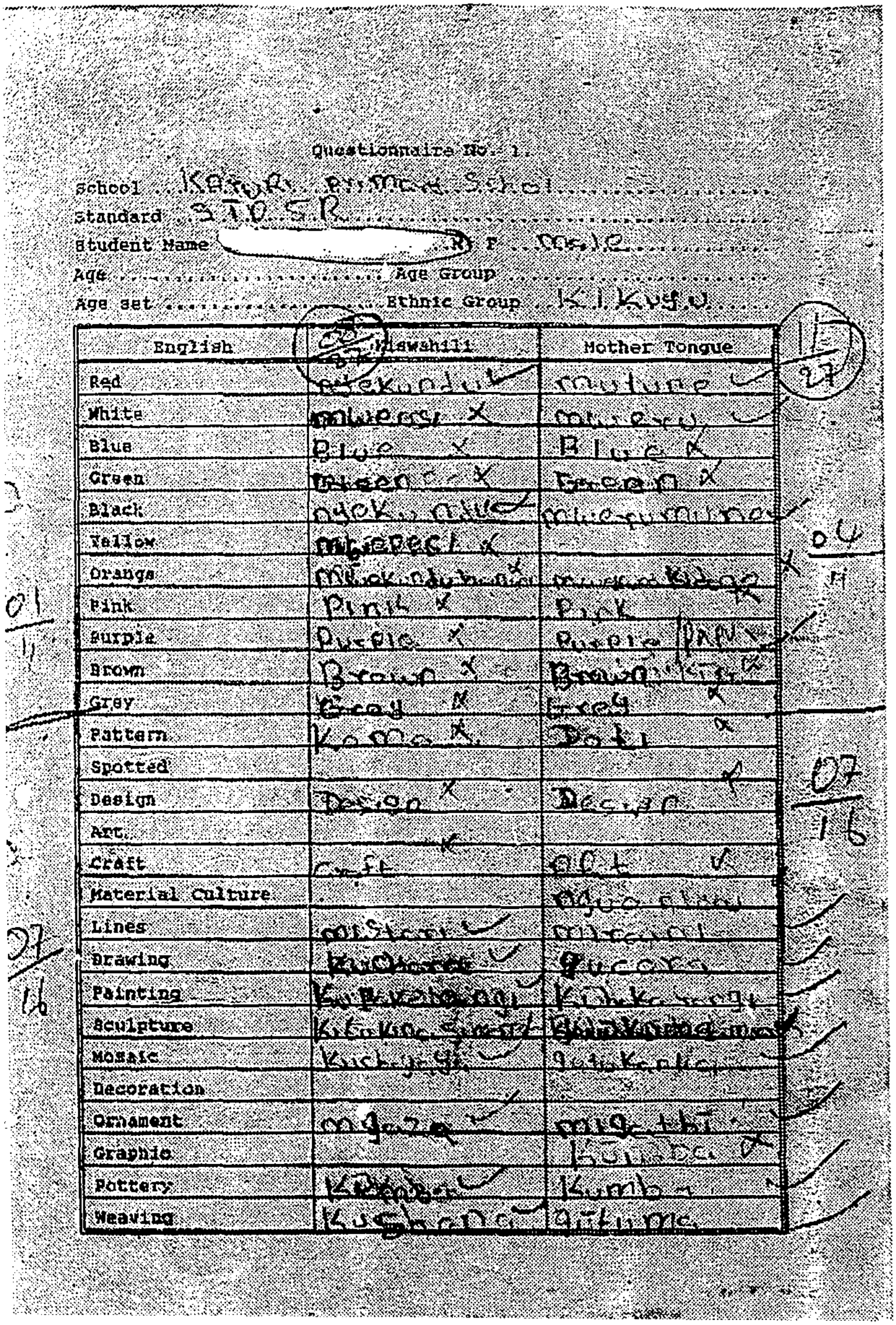
07/11

03/11

04/11

20/16

Questionnaire 1



Questionnaire No. 1.

School ..Kaburi Primary School..

Standard ..STD 5R..

Student Name [redacted] M/F ..Male..

Age .... Age Group ....

Age set .... Ethnic Group ..Kikuyu..

English	Kiswahili	Mother Tongue
Red	Rekundu ✓	mutune ✓
White	mweusi ✗	mweru ✓
Blue	Blue ✗	Blue ✗
Green	Green ✗	Green ✗
Black	nyeusi ✓	[illegible] ✓
Yellow	[illegible] ✗	
Orange	[illegible] ✗	[illegible] ✗
Pink	Pink ✗	Pink
Purple	Purple ✗	Purple PAN ✗
Brown	Brown ✗	Brown ✗
Grey	Gray ✗	Grey ✗
Pattern	Kama ✗	Doti ✗
Spotted		✗
Design	Design ✗	Design
Art	✗	
Craft	Craft	aft ✓
Material Culture		[illegible]
Lines	mistari ✓	[illegible]
Drawing	Kuchora ✓	gucora
Painting	Kupaka rangi ✓	Kuhaka rangi
Sculpture	[illegible]	[illegible] ✗
Mosaic	[illegible] ✓	[illegible]
Decoration		
Ornament	mgaza ✓	[illegible]
Graphic		Kumba ✗
Pottery	[illegible] ✓	Kumba
Weaving	Kushona	gutuma

11/27

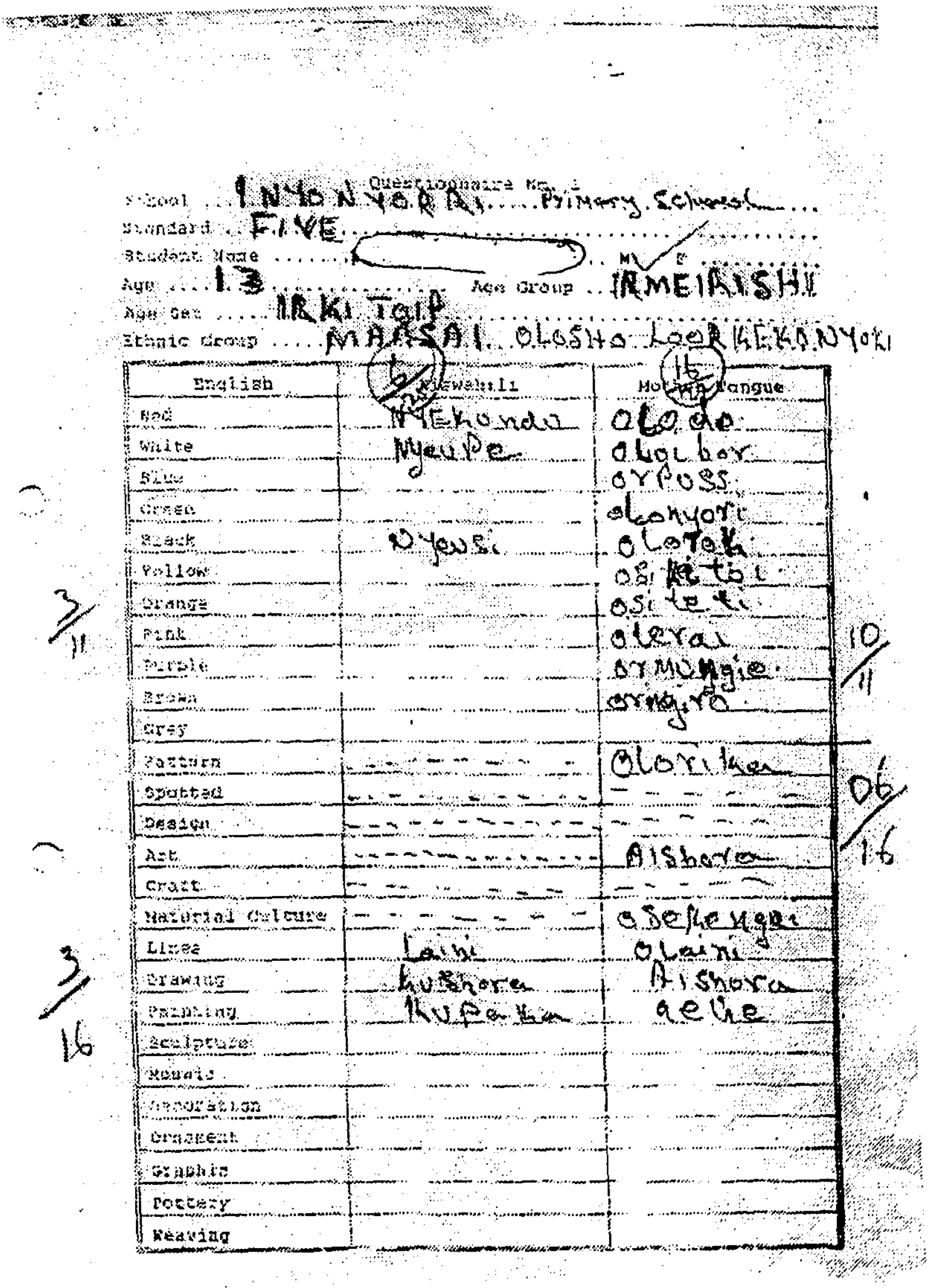
04/11

01/11

07/16

07/16

Questionnaire 1



Questionnaire No. 1

School ... INYONYORI ..... Primary School ...

Standard ... FIVE ...

Student Name ... ... M ✓ F ...

Age ... 13 ... Age Group ... IRMEIRISHI

Age Set ... IRKI TOIP

Ethnic Group ... MAASAI. OLOSHO LOORKEKONYOKI

English	Kiswahili 6	Mother Tongue 16
Red	MEkundu	olodo
White	Myeupe	olobor
Blue		OYPOSS
Green		olonyori
Black	Nyeusi	olorok
Yellow		osiKitoi
Orange		osi teti
Pink		olerai
Purple		OYMONgie
Brown		orngiro
Grey		
Pattern	- - - - - - -	Oloriken
Spotted	- - - - - - -	- - - - -
Design	- - - - - - -	- - - - -
Art	- - - - - - -	Aishora
Craft	- - - - - - -	- - - - -
Natural Culture	- - - - - - -	oSekengai
Lines	Laini	Olaini
Drawing	kuchora	Aishora
Painting	kupaka	aeke
Sculpture		
Mosaic		
Decoration		
Ornament		
Graphic		
Pottery		
Weaving		

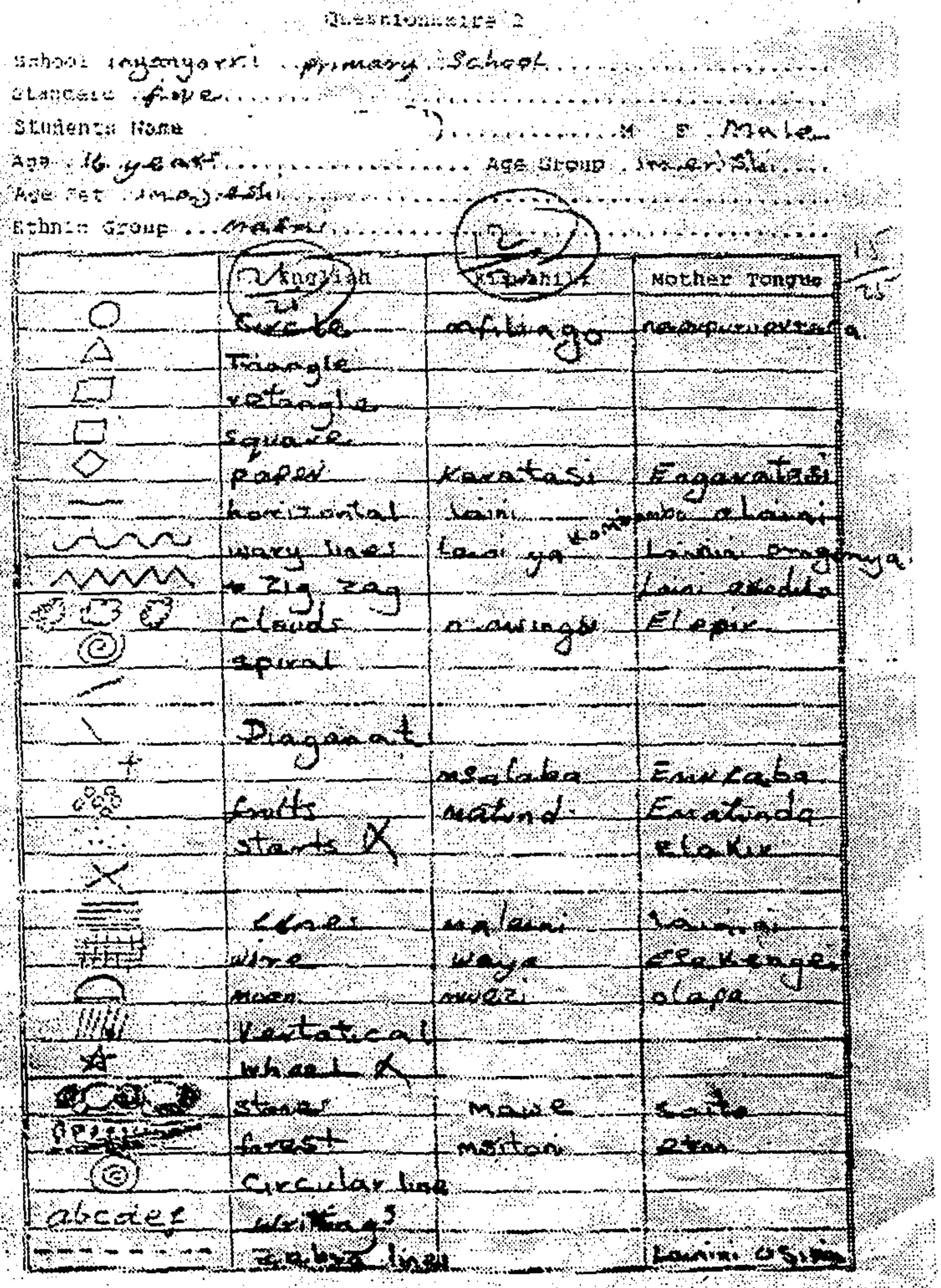
3/11

10/11

06/16

3/16

Questionnaire 2



Questionnaire 2

School Ingonyori primary School

Standard five

Students Name .... M F Male

Age 16 years .... Age Group Inter)Sta

Age Set Imajash

Ethnic Group ...mafru

12

15/15

	English	Kiswahili	Mother Tongue
○	Circle	mfilingo	naapurupurta
△	Triangle		
▱	retangle		
□	square		
◇	paper	karatasi	Engaratasi
—	horizontal	laini	olaini
∿∿∿	wavy lines	laini ya kombo	Laini engongya
⋀⋀⋀	zig zag		Laini ekodidu
	clouds	mawingu	Elepir
◎	spiral		
/			
\	Diagonat		
+		msalaba	Essalaba
	fruits	matunda	Enatunda
	stars X		Elakir
✕			
	lines	malaini	laini
	wire	waya	Elakengei
	moon	mwezi	olapa
	Vertatical		
★	wheel X		
	stones	mawe	soito
	forest	msitoni	etoo
◎	Circular line		
abcdef	writings		
- - - - - - -	broken lines		Laini osipa

Questionnaire 2

Questionnaire 2

School KARUKI PRIMARY SCHOOL

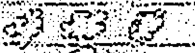
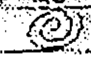
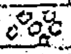
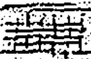
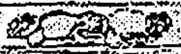
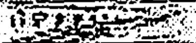
Standard STD 7 S

Students Name [redacted] ▲ F

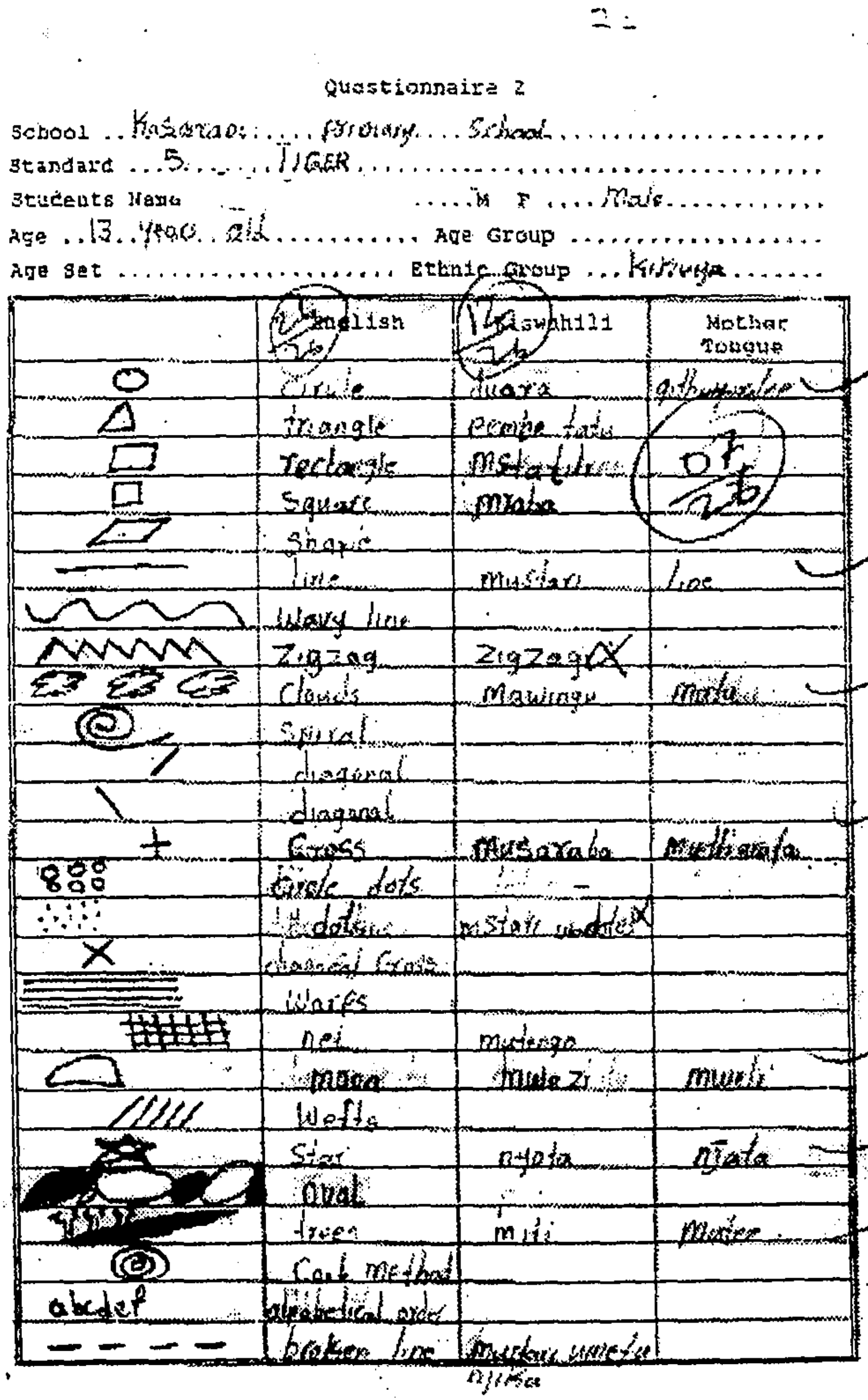
Age 13 years Age Group

Age Set

Ethnic Group Bantu

	22/24 English	13/24 Kiswahili	11/24 Mother Tongue
○	circle	mviringo nduara	githiũrũri
△	Triangle	pembe tatu	
▱	rectangle	mstatili	
□	Square	mraba	
◇	hexagon ?	[illegible]	
—	line	mstari	mũrari
〰	wavy line	mstari mkorozi	[illegible]
/\/\/\/\	Zig zag line	zigi zagi	zigi zagi
	clouds	mawingu	matu
	spiral		
/	Diagonal		
\	Diagonal		
+	Addition	kuongeza	gũtare
	circles		Tũthiũrũri
⁘	dots	Vikomo	~~[illegible]~~ [illegible]
×	multiplication		kũingĩhia
≡	~~[illegible]~~ horizontal		
	[illegible]		
◠	Semicircle	Nusu nduara	Nuthu gĩthiũrũri
////	~~[illegible]~~ vertical		
☆	Star	Nyota	njata
	Tree and dye		
	perspective		
◎			
abcdef	~~[illegible]~~ alphabets	Alfabeti	ndemwa
- - - - - -	hidden lines		

Questionnaire 2



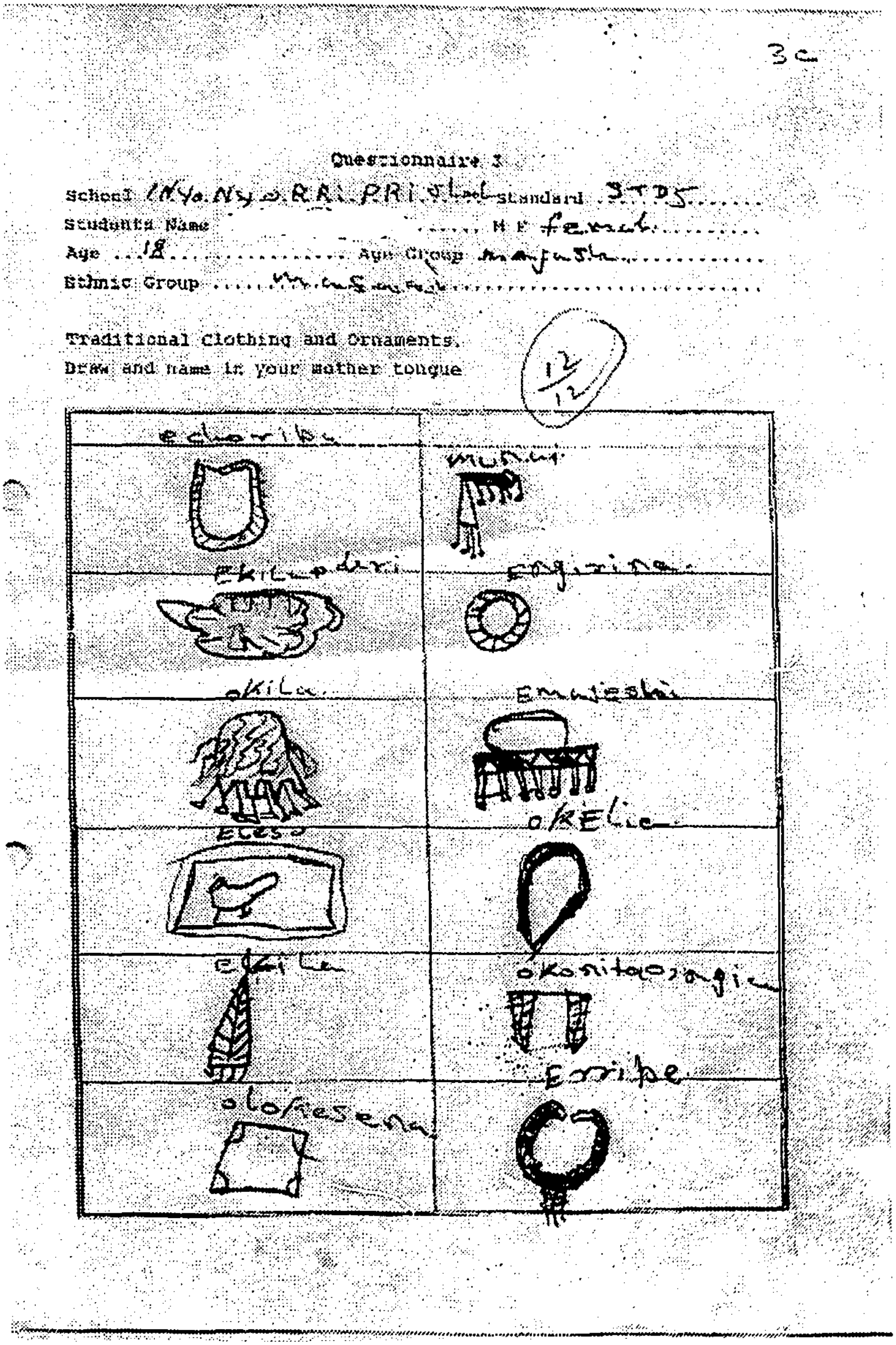
2

Questionnaire 2

School ..Kasarao:.....Primary....School.....................
Standard ...5......TIGER....................................
Students Name .....M F ....Male............
Age ..13..year..old........... Age Group ....
Age Set .... Ethnic Group ...Kirinya.......

	12/26 English	14/26 Kiswahili	Mother Tongue
	Circle	duara	gathuwalwe
	triangle	pembe tatu	07/26
	Tectangle	Mstatiliu	
	Square	mraba	
	Shape		
	line	mustari	line
	Wavy line		
	Zigzag	Zigzag ✗	
	Clouds	Mawingu	matu
	Spiral		
	diagonal		
	diagonal		
	Cross	Musarabo	Muthiamfa
	Circle dots	–	
	dotline	mStari wa dotsi ✗	
	diagonal Cross		
	Warfs		
	net	mutengo	
	moon	mwezi	mweri
	Wefts		
	Star	nyota	njata
	Oval		
	trees	miti	Mutee
	Cork Method		
abcdef	alphabetical order		
	broken line	mustari uliokatika njiani	

Questionnaire 3



3c

Questionnaire 3

School INYaNyaRAL PRI Schol Standard STD5
Students Name
M F female
Age 18 Age Group majusha
Ethnic Group [illegible]

Traditional Clothing and Ornaments.
Draw and name in your mother tongue

12/12

echoriba	munai
Ekilaperi	engirina
okila.	Emujeshi
Ecess	okElie
Ekila	okonitaosagie
olokesena	Essipe

Questionnaire 3

Questionnaire 3

School .Kassarani...Primary Sc.Standard ..8 Leopard....

Students Name ...... M F ....

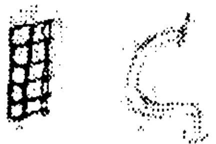
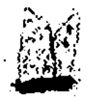
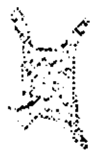
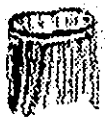
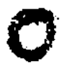
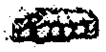
Age ....13 years....., Age Group ....

Ethnic Group ....Kikuyu.......................................

Traditional Clothing and Ornaments.

Draw and name in your mother tongue.

06/12 — 12/12

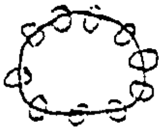
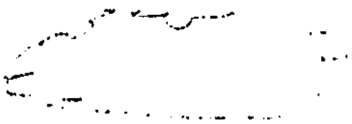
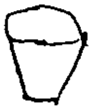
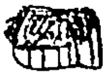
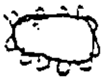
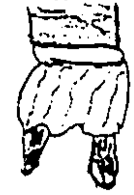
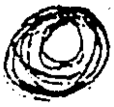
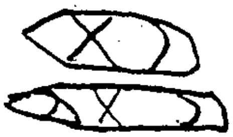
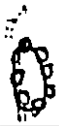
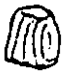
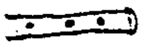
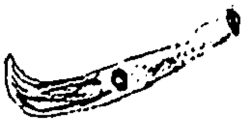
	hangi ✓
	ngũfia ya ruua ✓
	rũua ✓
	rinda ya makongo ✓
	bangili ✓
	mũingili ✓

Questionnaire 3

School ...KARURI....PRIMARY Standard ...5Q............
Students Name ... M F ....
Age ....~~4~~...11.years... Age Group ....
Ethnic Group ..Kikuyu..................................

10/12

Traditional Clothing and Ornaments.
Draw and name in your mother tongue.

 Mugathi	 Rũa
 Muthuru	 Gitukũ
 Nyinga	 Kigutari
 Mbargiri	 Nyanuga
 hangi	 githii
	 ?

Questionnaire 4

4a

4a

Questionnaire 4

School ...[illegible]................ Standard ...[illegible]..[illegible]...

Students Name .... M F .male...........

Age ...[illegible]..[illegible]..[illegible]...... Age Group ....

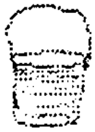
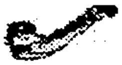
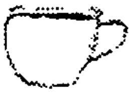
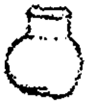
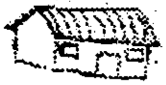
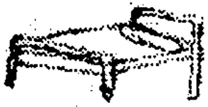
Ethnic Group ..Kikuyu.......................................

Traditional Containers of my people.

Draw and name in your mother tongue.

04/12

08/12

	Kio ko ✓
	Keraiko ✓
	ge ko be ✓
	nYogo ✓
	nYoba ✗
	getada ✗

Questionnaire 4.

Questionnaire 4

School ...Karuri primory Standard ...5.P........

Students Name [redacted] M F ...Girl.......

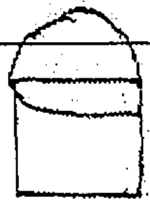
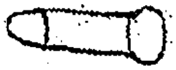
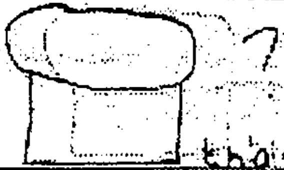
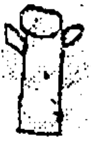
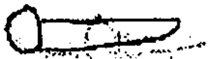
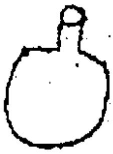
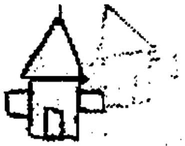
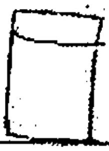
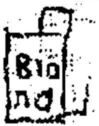
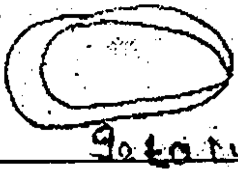
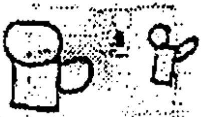
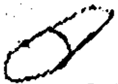
Age 1993 11 Yearold Age Group ....

Ethnic Group ..Kikuyu...............................

11/12

Traditional Containers of my people.

Draw and name in your mother tongue.

 kTondo	 muatu
 thaburia	 nyungu
 ruhTa	 kTnTa
 ikumbT	 ikuba
 mukebe	 gotaruru
 ikobe	 Coro

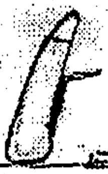
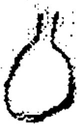
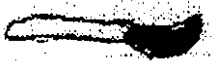
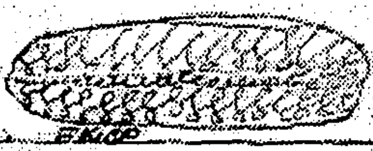
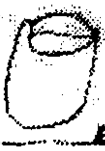
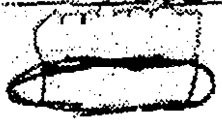
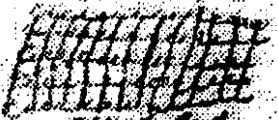
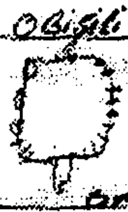
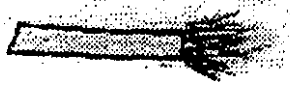
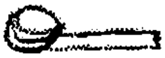
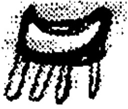
Questionnaire 4

Questionnaire 4

School iNYonYabAi Primary..... Standard .StD5.......
Students Name ..... M F .FEmale..........
Age 13. Yrs............., Age Group .EModiShi..............
Ethnic Group Maasai....................................

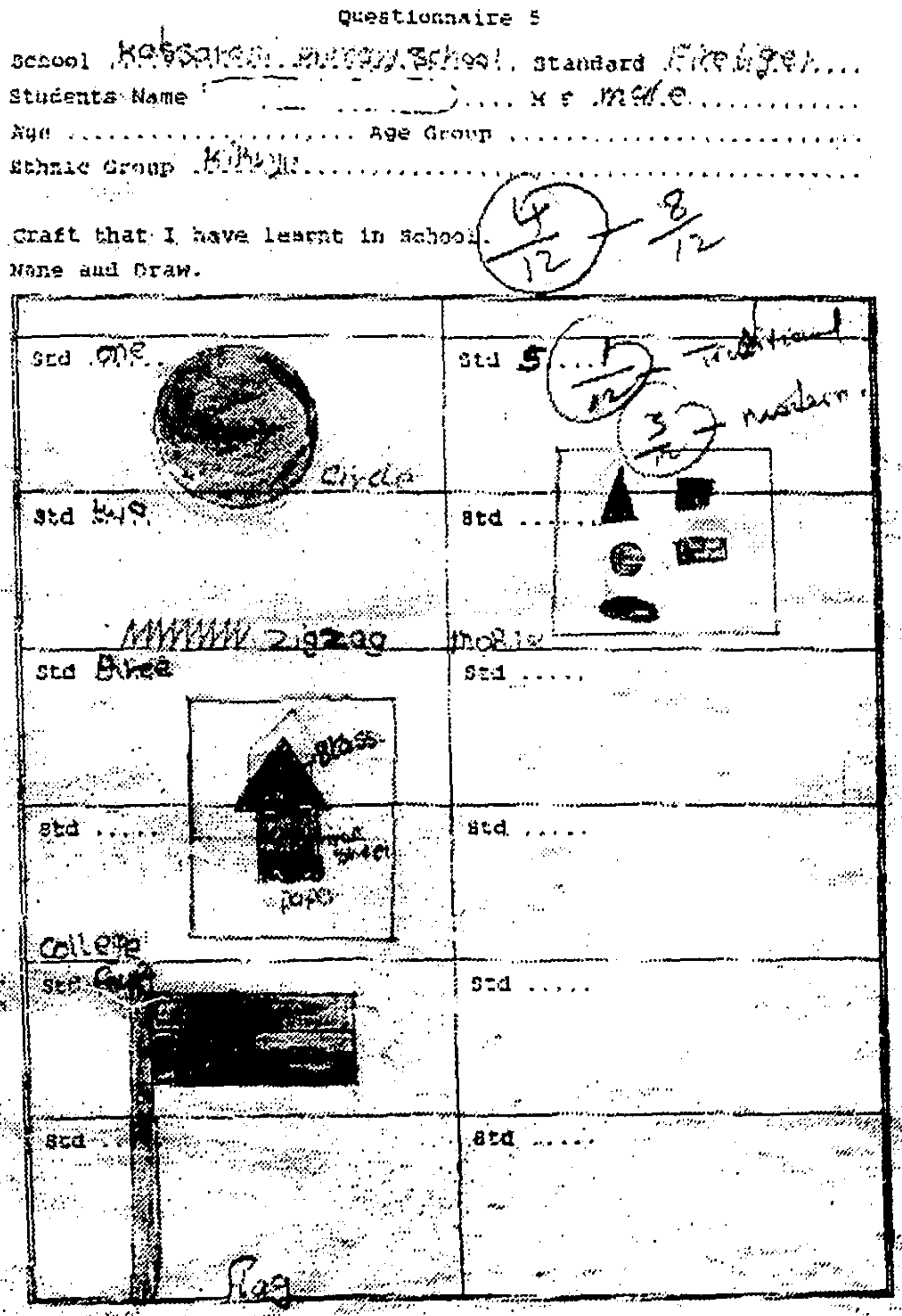
Traditional Containers of my people.
Draw and name in your mother tongue.

12/12

Ekukuvi	EMalua
 EKukat	 iadareto
 Osigaru	 EKOP
ekidon	 Ebozi
 OBigili	 Okudagol
 omoti	 olerika
	

Questionnaire 5

Sa.



Questionnaire 5

School Kasarani Nursery School. Standard [illegible]

Students Name [redacted] M F male

Age .... Age Group ....

Ethnic Group Kikuyu

Craft that I have learnt in School. $\frac{4}{12}$ – $\frac{8}{12}$

Name and Draw.

Std one Circle	Std 5 $\frac{1}{12}$ – traditional $\frac{3}{12}$ – modern
Std two zigzag	Std ..... mobile
Std three grass [illegible]	Std .....
Std	Std .....
College Std Craft	Std .....
Std ... Flag	Std .....

Questionnaire 5

5c

3/12 traditional

5/12 modern.

Questionnaire 5

School Bamni Primary ...... Standard ..8S..........

Students Name .... ✗ F ....

Age 13 Years........ Age Group ....

Ethnic Group .. Bantu ....

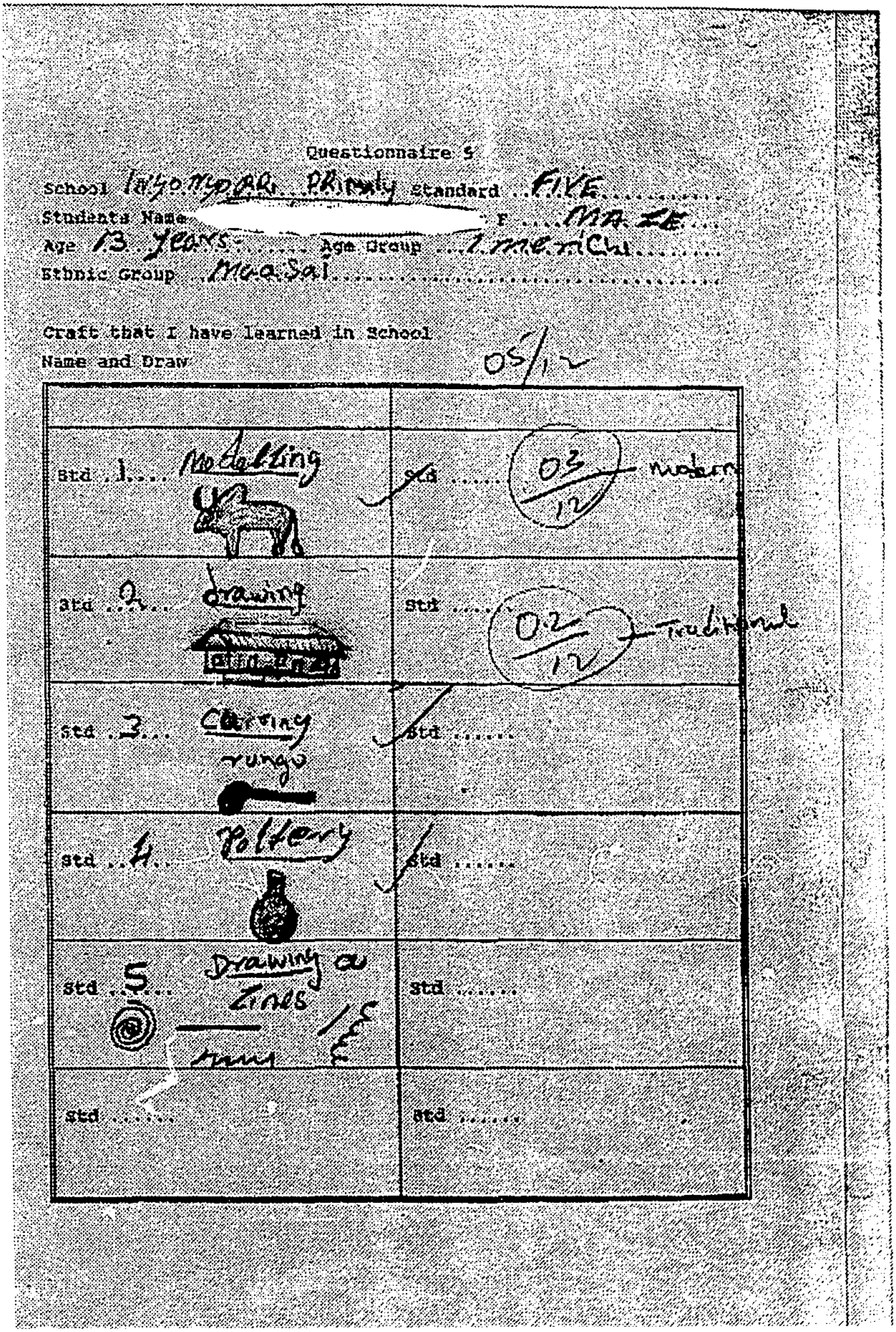
Craft that I have learned in School

Name and Draw

08/12

Std ..1.. Pot ✓	Std 7...... Joints
Std ..2.. calabash ✓	Std ..8.. Tie and dye.
Std .3... Basket ✓	Std ......
Std ..4.. Picture Making.	Std ......
Std 5...... Batik.	Std ......
Std 6...... Sculpture.	Std ......

Questionnaire 5



Questionnaire 5

School [illegible] Primary standard ..FIVE..........

Students Name [redacted] F ....MALE...

Age 13 years-...... Age Group ...Imerichi........

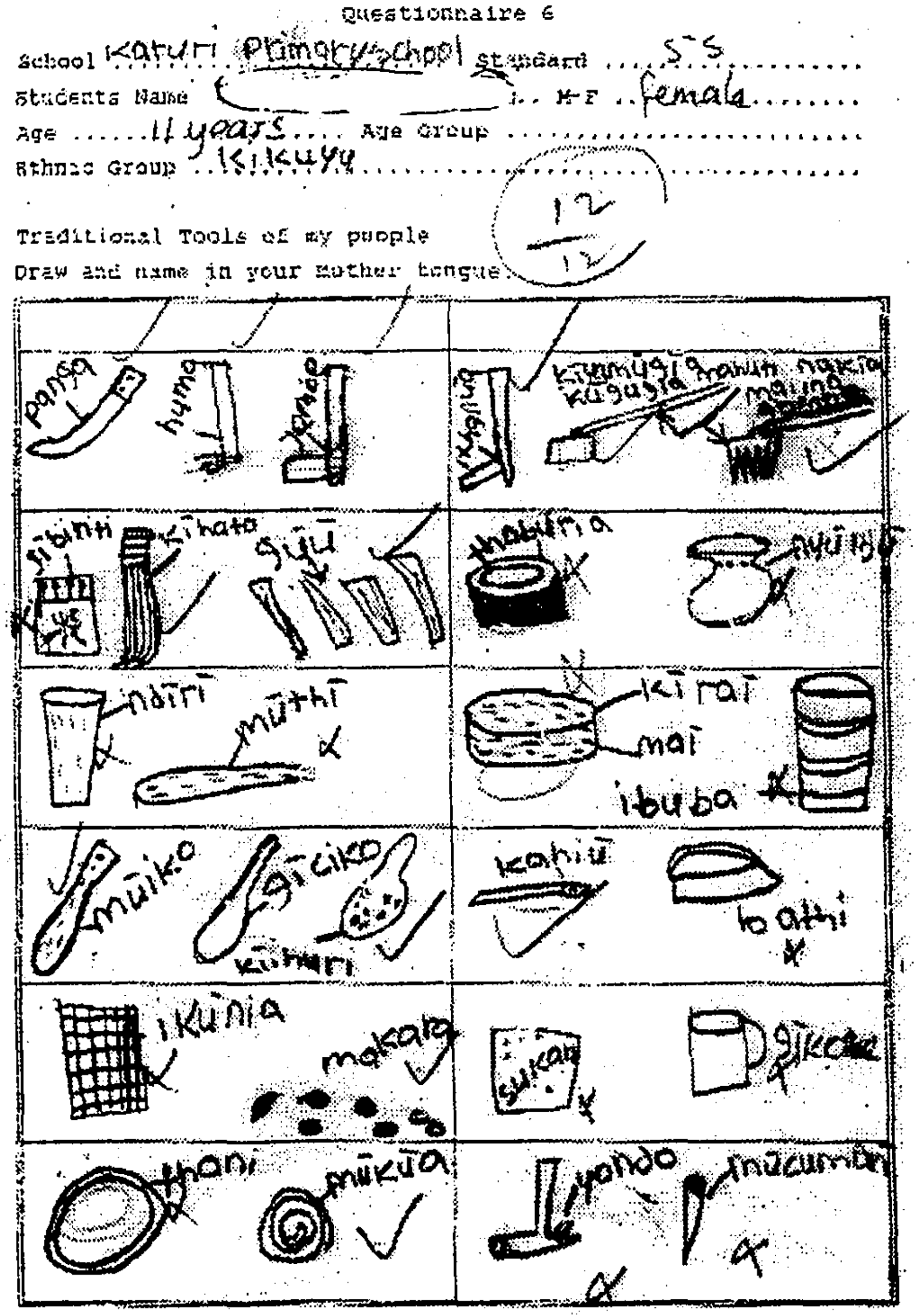
Ethnic Group ..Maasai..................................

Craft that I have learned in School

Name and Draw 05/12

Std .1.... Modelling	Std ...... 03/12 modern
Std .2... drawing	Std ...... 02/12 Traditional
Std .3... Carving rungu	Std ......
Std ..4... Pottery	Std ......
Std .5... Drawing a Lines	Std ......
Std	Std ......

Questionnaire 6



Questionnaire 6

School Katuri Primary School Standard ...5 S...........

Students Name .... M-F ..female........

Age ......11 years.... Age Group ....

Ethnic Group ..Kikuyu..................................

12/12

Traditional Tools of my people

Draw and name in your mother tongue.

panga
huma
kande
kagina
kuamugia rawia nakia
kugusia
maina
sibiriti
kihato
gĩũ
thaburia
nyũngũ
ndiri
mũthĩ
kĩrai
mai
ibuba
mũiko
gĩciko
kũhuri
kahiũ
bathi
ikunia
makara
sukari
gikombe
thani
mũkuta
iyondo
nduuma

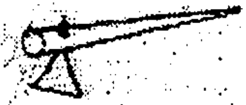
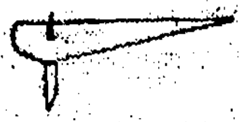
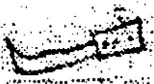
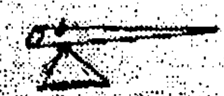
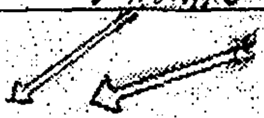
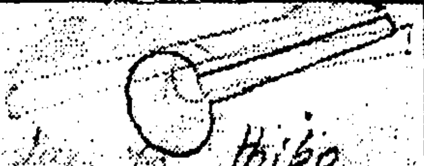
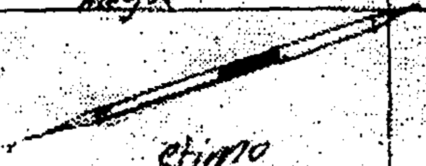
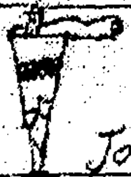
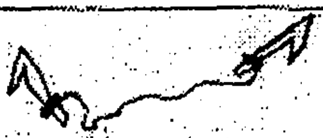
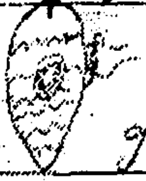
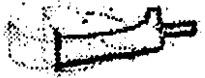
Questionnaire 6

Questionnaire 6

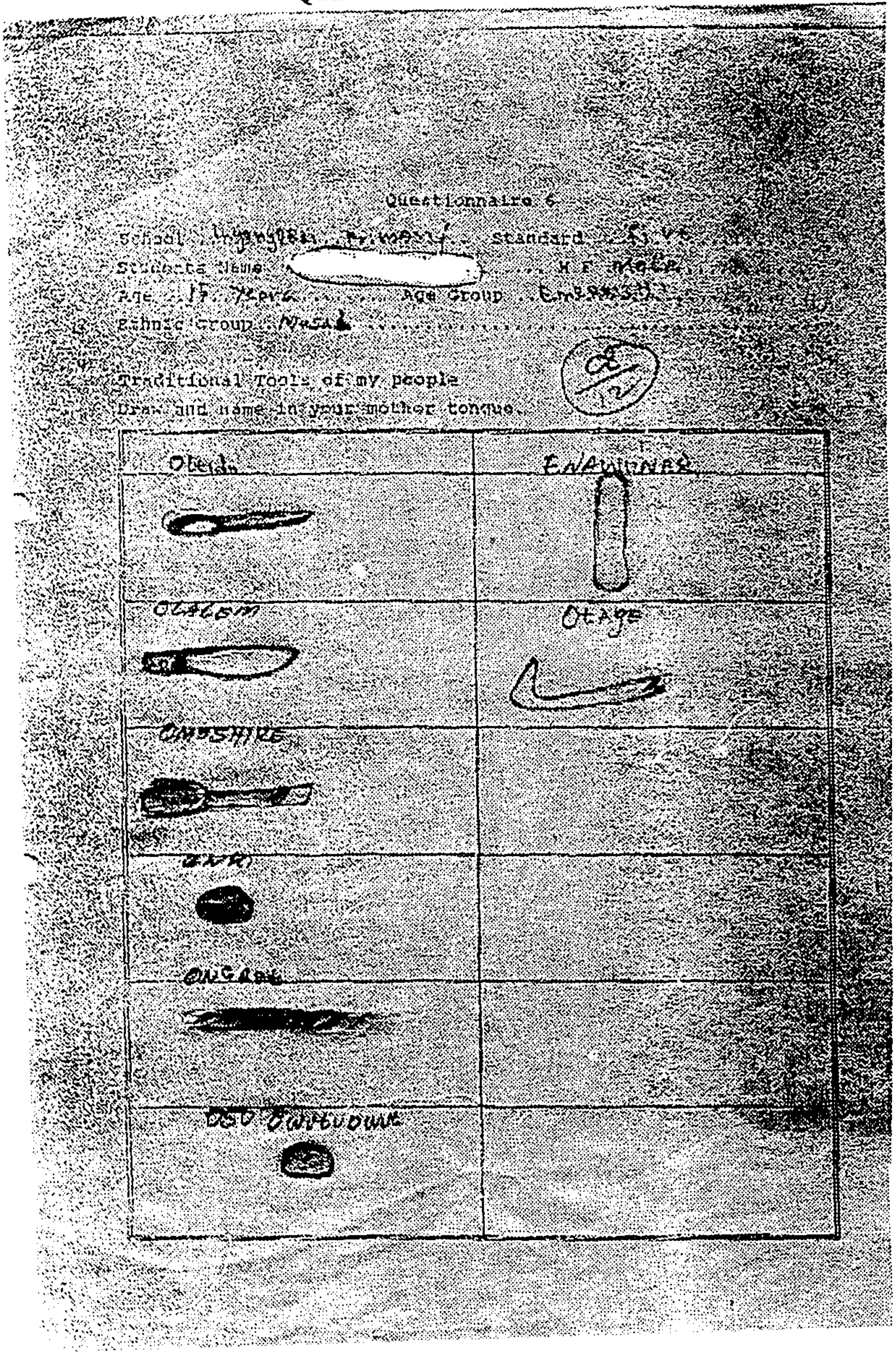
School .KASS. BANI....... Standard ...5 TIGER.....
Students Name .... [✓ M] F ....
Age ....14 Jears Age Group ....
Ethnic Group ....

11/12

Traditional Tools of my people
Draw and name in your mother tongue.

 iSebE	 ike S
 Ikahio	 Ithanoa
 megue	 Ihibo
 etimo	 Jora
 Boyoko Sia kahoa	 go
 faga	

Questionnaire 6



Questionnaire 6

School ..Ungugitu Primary.. Standard ..5 VI

Students Name [redacted] ..... M F Male

Age ..15 Years .... Age Group ..Emurran..

Ethnic Group ..Masai ....

Traditional Tools of my people

Draw and name in your mother tongue.

Olela	ENAUWNAS
OLALEM	OtAge
ONOSHIRE	
ENKI	
ONGABE	
OSO OWUOWUE	

Appendix 3

Questions around which open-ended interviews were constructed. Many of the questions developed from one interview-talk to another.

1. Who were the first persons to be educated in the region ?
2. Where were they from ?
3. What standards did they reach ?
4. What work did they do after school ?
5. What families did they come from ?
6. When did the first schools start in the Division ?

   Name, schools and year -
7. How did they develop ? What is the present situation?
8. How many primary school students are there in this location (approximately)?
9. How many students are there in the secondary schools in the area ?
10. How many students are there from the regions who go or have gone for post secondary education ?
11. Post Primary education ?
12. How many students have left school after secondary education?
13. How many students go to village polytechnics ?
14. Are there any local authors ?
15. Local priests involved in the arts ?
16. Local artists?
17. What are popular songs nowadays ?
18. How do people understand development?
19. How do the people respond to Christianity ?

20 Do teachers and pupils feel that art and craft is an educational subject ?

21. How does teaching in Rift Valley Province differ culturally from teaching in Central Province ?
22. What problems as a teacher do you face when teaching

particular topics (in particular standards) in Art and Craft ?

23. How do students' cultural backgrounds affect teaching of arts and crafts ?
24. How do you teach national culture ?
25. Teachers life history ?
26. What art and craft topics were covered during your school and college days and how were they taught ?
27. How do you teach the children to appreciate e.g. basketry, pottery, sculpture, textile, puppetry ?
28. How does art and craft encourage self-reliance ? What particular topic make the children self-reliant ? And how ?
29. How does the rich cultural background of the students affect negatively when teaching of art and craft syllabus ?
30. In each standard, how many text books are there in: English, Kiswahili, and Maasai ? (Gikuyu and other Kenyan languages)
31. How do stories, proverbs and songs show gender differences ?
    1) Behaviour of men and women?
    2) Taboos and customs about man and women ?
    3) Position in society ?
32. List items of male and female material culture (traditional objects) used in the *bomas*.
33. Write in Maasai/ Gikuyu and translate proverbs, songs and stories.
34. How are women looked down upon in oral literature relating to material culture or about relationship ?
    about men and women ?
35. Make a list of 20 items of material culture of Il Keekonyokee Maasai.
36. How do you teach pupils about the importance of art and craft ?
37. In your view, what is the difference between Maasai art and craft and what is taught in the syllabus ?

38. What and how much do you know about Maasai culture and arts (songs, dances, stories, language, proverbs)? or about Agikuyu.

39. How do you help Maasai children to have a feeling of national identity ? Give examples of subjects and topics. What approach do you take ?

40. How does the rich traditional and cultural background of the Maasai affect the teaching of 8-4-4 ? Go subject by subject in different standards that you teach.

41. What problems do you have teaching the syllabus to Maasai pupils because of their rich cultural background ? Give examples of topics. Go topic by topic.

42. What are your objectives when teaching ? What would you like them to be after school ?

43. How does Maasai culture interfere with school education ends ?

44. How do you make children appreciate an object of art ?

45. How is an object beautiful? (interview) ?

46. How many pupils are employed in workshops or self-employed in workshop after std. 8 from Kasarani ?

47. What ceremonies took place in this area during 1991 to 1993 ?
Name dates, age-groups involved (men or women)
Describe them.

48. What are the age groups and generation sets of the students, their fathers and grandfathers area?

49. Educational history of the Il Keekonyoikee to the present day.
- When did the schools start?
- who started the first one ?
- Present enrollment, boys and girls ?
- How many and who are educated in the Il Keekonyokee ?

50. What arts are practiced by the children and their parents ? e.g.
-traditional
-Christian
-dances
-songs

51. How many local craftspersons are there around the school community ? e.g.

artists, carpenters, blacksmiths and weavers.

52. What problems (difficulties) do you encounter while teaching traditional material

    culture of Kenya ?

53. What affects meeting the objectives and aims of the art and craft syllabus?

54. How is the syllabus wide open ? How does that prevent teaching cultural heritage ?
55. Is there ever a conflict in the classroom between the teacher and students over

    value of learning art ?

56. Can you comment on staff room talk on national unity, culture, party politics and

    tribalism ?

57. Is the syllabus political ?

Appendix 4

Cultural Dance Groups in Nairobi as of February 1993

1. The Abeingo Performers (Luhya)

Head office: Next to Nairobi City Commission Kawangware Sub-branch.

Practice mostly Luhya songs. Perform on specific occasions such as:

- National Public Holidays
- Ceremonial welcoming of very important persons at the airports.
- During certain events e.g. Public rallies, fund-raisings.

They normally meet on Saturday (4.00p.m.).

2. Kamukunji Women Traditional Dancers (Kikuyu)

(mostly women)

Locality: Kamukunji.

- Practice Kikuyu songs (*Nyakinyua*).

Performs on the following occassions:

- Political rallies
- Welcoming of very important persons
- National Public Holidays
- On special hire

Practice: Not regular. Only performs during campaigns for Ford Asili.

3. Akamba-Maringo Traditional Dancers (Akamba)

Locality: Maringo - Eastlands (Female & male adult).

- Practice: On special hire for cultural events.
- Political rallies (mostly KANU).
- Fund-raisings
- National Public Holidays.
- International days like World Aids Day.
- Can be hired by interested persons.

4. Kariobangi Sukuti Dancers (Luhya) (adult & youth mixed)

Locality: Kariobangi

Composition: Membership open to all

- Practises Luhya songs

Performs during public gatherings like:

- Football matches
- Political rallies
- Cultural festivals
- Offer hire services to interested persons.

5. Bahati Women Traditional Dancers (Kikuyu)

Locality: Eastlands (Jericho, Uhuru, Maringo, Kimathi Estates)

Composition: Mostly elderly women and a few men.

- Practice: Kikuyu songs.

Membership open to all. However, it is not a stable group because of political differences between Democratic Party & Ford Asili.

Performs during:

- Political rallies
- Cultural functions lie cultural festivals
- National Public holidays
- Interested persons/groups can hire them

6. Giriama Sengera Traditional Dancers (Female)

Locality: Eastlands (Jericho, Uhuru, Maringo, Kimathi Estates)

Membership open to all, however, currently, most members are from the Coast

- Practice: Mostly Giriama songs
- Also practises Pokomo and Taita songs
- Songs are of cultural value and so is the performing regalia.
- Performs when invited in functions like:

Political rallies - e.g. M.P. meetings

fund-raisings

National Public Holidays.

International days like World Aids Day

Can be hired by interested persons.

7. Jericho Utamaduni Dancers (Multi-ethnic)

Youth and adult

Locality: Jericho Estate

Membership open to all in interested but once you enroll, attending practices and meetings become mandatory.

Sings mainly in Kiswahili. However they also practise other ethnic songs like Luhya, Luo and Giriama among others.

Performs during :

- National Public Holidays
- In social halls, to entertain the public (aim is to advertise themselves to the public)
- Political rallies
- Welcoming of dignitaries mostly at State House or at the airport.

Kiswahili songs mostly emphasize nationalism.

8. Muungano Dancers (Young 18- 30 yrs.)

(Muungano mostly from Kakamega and Ford Asili area in the Western Province)

Most members are from various Luhya groups.

Practises mostly Luhya songs.

Locality: Uhuru, Kimathi, Jericho and Maringo Estates.

Performs during:

- Cultural festivals.
- Can be hired during certain occasions like funerals and for entertainment purposes.
- Sometimes entertains people within their practice area.
- Performs during political rallies.

9. Jericho Women's Traditional Dancers

Practises Kikuyu songs (*Nyakinyua*).

Composition: Members mostly elderly Kikuyu women from Murang'a District.

Few elderly men.

Locality: Jericho.

Group stability: Group not functionally stable.

Other members pulled out because of political differences among DP , KANU & Ford-Asili. Performs during, mainly, political rallies. Most songs are political. Certain songs are coined to flatter politicians and political parties.

10. Chelepe Dancers (Youth & middle ages)

Membership: Mixed ethnic

Practice Luo, Luhya, Giriama, Kamba and Kiswahili songs among others.

Area of practice: Kenya National Theatre.

Nature of songs: Mostly cultural songs. Aim is to preserve and promote cultural songs from various Kenya's ethnic groups.

Performance regalia - Mostly to suit the cultural occasion being portrayed in the song.

Performs mostly during functions at the Kenya National Theatre.

Group divided into various professional sections. One sections deals with graphic design and drawings. Another one collects songs, data on Kenya's various cultural and ethnic groups.

11. Kenya National Dance Troupe

(Young and middle aged)

Practises songs from most of the Kenya ethnic groups: Luhya, Luo, Giriama, Pokomo, Taita, Maasai, Nandi, Pokot and Kikuyu among others.

Undergoes vigorous rehearsing exercises before actual performance.

At times cultural experts from certain ethnic groups are hired to coach them.

Composition: Diverse ethnic groups. Mostly young and middle aged.

This is a Kenya National Theatre dance troupe and thus performs mostly there. They entertain audience just before the beginning of a play.

Act as curtain raisers at the theater.

12. Maringo Dancers

Membership: Mixed ethnic.

Practises Luo, Luhya, Giriama, Kamba and Kiswahili songs among others.

Area of practice: Kenya National Theatre.

Nature of songs - Mostly cultural song. Aim is to preserve and promote cultural songs from Kenya's ethnic groups.

Performs mostly during functions at the Kenya National Theatre.

Group divided into various professional sections. One section deals with graphic design and drawings. Another one collects songs from and data on Kenya's cultural groups.

13. Kenya Posts ad Telecommunication Dance Troupe

Locality: Come to practise at Kenya National Theatre.

Membership: Most members are POSTA employees.

Perform songs and dances from various ethnic groups of Kenya.

These include, Kuria, Turgen, Maasai, Nandi, Swahili, Taita, Digo, Meru, Embu, Kikuyu among others.

- During any Posta function.

– During National Public Holidays.

– During Festival Competitions.

14. Kenya Power and Lighting Dance Troupe

Come to practise at Kenya National Theatre

Most of the members are from Kenya Power Company.

Aims:

(1) To entertain guests/audiences during Power Company functions.

(2) For preservation and promotion of indigenous cultures through songs and dances.

(3) To show solidarity by joining other Kenyans in the participation and observance of national days.

(4) For entertainment purposes as means of creating more leisure activities.

Practises songs from various ethnic groups of Kenya which include: Kamba, Luo, Luhya, Giriama, Meru, Kisii among others.

15. Uzi (Panama) Dancers

(Young & middle aged).

Come to practise at Kenya National Theater.

– Membership is open to all - (Multi-ethnic).

– Practises songs and dances from various ethnic groups.

16. Kenya Bomas

Practises and performs at Bomas of Kenya - Karen.

This is a special dance group for the Kenya Bomas Management Limited.

- Practises songs and dances from various ethnic groups of Kenya.

The common ones being: Luhya, Luo, Kamba, Taita, Giriama, Digo and Swahili.

- At times experts from various ethnic groups are hired to train the dance troupe.

- In the 1980s, used to move around in social halls, entertaining, educating and creating cultural awareness amongst the people. Owing to financial constraints, cultural tours have decreased.

Major aim of the group is to entertain guests who come to pay a visit to the Bomas of Kenya.

17. Langata Kanu Traditional Dancers (Organised by P. Leakey)

Most of their songs are in Kiswahili language. However, they also practise songs from various other ethnic groups of Kenya like Maasai, Pokot, Giriama, Pokomo, Kamba and Luhya.

- Most of the songs are political in nature.

- Songs composed to praise the KANU Party which is also the main financier of the group (KANU Langata Branch).

- Membership open to members of KANU and not to any other political party.

18. Dagoreti Women Dancers - from Beth Mugo, lost 1992 to Ford Asili

The group was active during the campaign period

- Supported by Democratic Party of Kenya (DP)

- Most of the songs were political in nature

- Sung in praise of the party and the parliamentary candidate of the area.

Currently not as active as before

Practises Swahili songs, Kikuyu song

19. Kaloleni Traditional Dancers - (Mixed ethnic)

Practises mostly Luo, Luhya, Kamba, Giriama songs.

Most of their activities are centered in Kaloleni Social Hall.

Most of the members are young and middle aged

Many of the songs require vigorous dancing.

20. Kawangware Traditional Dancers

Practises mostly Kikuyu songs

The group up-to-date not very active due to political infiltration by DP and Ford Asili – Its future is uncertain.

21, Sienyu ne Shienyu Abana ba Ingo Sukuti Dancers/Band

(Sisi kwa sisi watoto wa nyumbani).

Practises Luhya songs.

Based at Kibera.

22. Kamaru and Selina Band

Practises Kikuyu folk songs.

23. Ujumbe Cultural Academy for Performing Arts

(Commercial)

Practises 33 dances from Akamba, Tugen, Turkana, Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Maasai, Kisii and Boran groups and *Ngonda, Ngoma, Mabububu, Chakacha, Sengenya and Chuka* from the Coast Province.

Each of the above ethnic groups above has 3 - 4 dances numbers.

From outside Kenya they perform:

- *Kisekire* and *Todi* from Tanzania
- *Namasola an Sidiba* from South Africa
- *Doe* from Ghana

24. Kenya Utamaduni Ngomas (Commercial)

Practises same songs as Ujumbe Cultural Academy.

25. Dafo - Troupe (Commercial)

Songs from various ethnic groups of Kenya. Among them: Kikuyu, Giriama, Luo, Luhya, Maasai, Pokomo. Based at Chester House in Nairobi.

26. Peter and Marky Travel Dancers (Commercial)

Practises cultural dances from various ethnic groups of Kenya for instance:- Orutu - Luo, Sukuti - Luhya, Matiti - Luo, Sengenya - Giriama, Nyakinyua - Kikuyu and many others.

Based at Chester House Box 50401. Tel. No. 219487.

27. Dala Entertainers Group (Commercial)

Practises songs from various ethnic groups of Kenya.

Among them: Luo, Luhya, Swahili, Giriama, Taita, Pokomo, Meru, Maasai songs. Based at Lilian Towers.

28. Amani Cultural Dancers (Hotel based)

Based at Shade Hotel - Karen

Practises songs from various ethnic groups. Among them:- Luhya, Luo, Kamba, Giriama, Zulu.

Remarks by field assistants:

Most groups mistook our identity and thought we were from the Government. Despite our identification, they raised many questions, such as:-

- If we could recommend them or guarantee them a financial loan to improve their performance ?

- If we could assist them to get better places to perform and audiences who would pay them well ? are

- What plans the Government and cultural institutions had to preserve indigenous music ?

However, despite the hardships, most groups face, they looked to the future with a lot of optimism, hope and confidence. Hope they will transform their dreams into reality.

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DN 13/9/1991	Churches want 8-4-4 system overhauled
DN 14/9/1991	The burden gets heavier for parents
DN 21/9/1991	8-4-4 on trial yet again
DN 14/1/1992	Politics and culture inseparable entities
DN 6/2/1992	Let's keep polities out of education286
DN 13/2/1992	Pluralism, the youth and 8-4-4 education system
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DN 22/2/1992	8-4-4 system needs further overhaul
DN 7/3/1992	8-4-4 is not balanced
DN 8/3/1992	Narok clashes: Nitimama hits at Lempaka
DN 14/3/1992	8-4-4 system given unwarranted credit
DN 26/3/1992	Education Ministry , TSC should act
DN 10/4/1992	The secret behind Ciaigana's long run
DN 20/4/1992	Opposition party proposes overhaul of education system
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DN 25/7/1992	The god that has failed it's worshippers

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DN 2/4/1993	Kiswahili sysllabus need urgent review
DN 24/4/1993	8-4-4 under the microscope
DN 29/4/1993	8-4-4 system review overdue
DN 8/5/1993	Demoralised Teachers behind mass failures
DN 15/5/1993	The case for 8-4-4 system
DN 24/5/1993	What ails our education system
DN 17/6/1993	Teachers blame structure of 8-4-4
DN 7/8/1993	Proposals on how to save the 8-4-4 education system

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Nyayo in Kiswahili means footsteps. President Moi invented this name for himself when he took up the