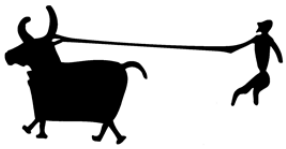
FROM RAIDERS TO RUSTLERS: THE FILIAL DISAFFECTION OF A TURKANA AGE-SET[1]



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Livestock raiding among East African nomadic herders has lately become increasingly violent in some areas, while significantly declining in others. Scholars attribute this change to a combination of causes including colonial encounter, environmental change, political disenfranchisement, penetration of capital markets, and introduction of firearms. This article discusses how these factors altered the age and generational organization of the Turkana giving rise to a permanent group of raiders known as *Ngoroko*, who are responsible for much of the intra-ethnic violence in the Turkana District today. Like the Suri and the Nyangatom, the Turkana suffer a similar crisis in the traditional authority system that had managed conflict. We broaden the argument to consider changes in the affective structure of Turkana society, especially filial sentiments between generations, due to a collapse in the generational system, and make a general case to consider affect in cultural analyses. (Livestock raiding; pastoral violence; age-set systems; Turkana; affect)

In their effort to understand a rise in violent livestock raids among pastoral groups in East Africa, scholars have focused on exogenous factors, such as climate change, widespread distribution of firearms, ethnic manipulation by politicians, and commercialization of livestock, to name a few (Buchanan-Smith and Lind 2005; Meier, et al. 2007; Straight 2009; Mwiturubani and van Wyk 2010). Along with the increase in armed conflict, scholars note that the violence has become more indiscriminate, and includes targeting defenseless women, children, and the elderly, who in the past had been spared such violence. One agent of violence in East Africa is the Turkana cattle rustler, or *Ngoroko*, who commits atrocities. During the 1980s, for example, a small group of Ngoroko would sometimes show up at water holes and demand livestock from herd boys, but by the mid-1980s Ngoroko began to take animals from homesteads and demand sex with adolescent girls. On one occasion Ngoroko attacked a series of homesteads, breaking one man's arm and throwing a baby into a fire, which luckily survived (McCabe 2004:102)

Few studies have addressed the significance of this change in the norms of armed conflict. The Ngoroko usually operate in small bands, attacking vulnerable homesteads lying in remote areas, stealing livestock, grain, fuel, wood, and household goods (Buchanan-Smith and Lind 2005:8–9; Eriksen and Lind 2005:17). The Ngoroko are a rogue age-set, which separated from the Turkana

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cultural system. The anthropologist Jon Abbink (2007) writes about "the slipping away of culture" among the pastoral Suri of southern Ethiopia and with it the fracturing of communities and the loss the elders' authority to enforce sanctions on juniors. We therefore examine the filial relationships between generations in which elders' authority is embedded, and argue that the loss of affect between generations is partly responsible for indiscriminate acts of violence that transgress traditional moral principles. While exogenous historical, economic, and environmental factors may have precipitated this change, it is also important that policy makers understand the internal cultural dynamics of the change if they want to employ more effective and empathetic strategies for conflict mitigation and peace building.

Eastern Africa has become one of the most violent regions in the world. In 2006, 41 percent of violent conflicts were concentrated in Africa (Pike, et al. 2009:47).[2] In the pastoral zones of the region, much of the conflict revolves around stealing livestock (Buchanan-Smith and Lind 2005:2). While this practice is widely reported among many herding communities, over the past four decades it has become especially violent in the Karamoja cluster (Meier, et al. 2007). The Karamoja cluster includes the Jie, Nyangatom, Turkana, and Karimojong, who live in border regions of Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Inter-government reports from the region recognize two major types of livestock raids. One type is large inter-ethnic raids across national borders resulting in many casualties. The other type is small-scale raids (often called "thefts") by bandits in which loss of life is minimal (Eriksen and Lind 2005:16–17). Although less severe, the small-scale raids are more frequent and have as detrimental an impact on a society as the less frequent large-scale raids (Buchanan-Smith and Lind 2005:9). Both the frequency and intensity of livestock raids in the region have increased in recent decades (Krätli and Swift 1999:iii; Buchannan-Smith and Lind 2005:2; Österle 2007:194; Witsenburg and Adano 2009:521). Most disturbing, the targets of violence have lately included vulnerable groups traditionally spared in the past: women, the elderly, and children (Österle 2007:200). There is little in the ethnographic literature on the Ngoroko. The anthropologist Terrence McCabe (2004) reports on a few violent incidents involving them. The historian John Lamphear (1992) traces their roots to a group of rifle-armed young warriors who in 1918 splintered away from a generation-set and lost its resistance battling invading British colonial forces. In the popular press and peace building initiatives, the name has become synonymous with bandits and cattle-rustlers, often referring to any raiding or criminal behavior (CEWARN 2006; Krätli and Swift 1999:35). The name took on mythic proportions with the Ngoroko Affair when, following the death of Kenyatta in 1978, a failed assassination attempt on his successor, Vice-President Moi, was blamed on a clique of factional MPs who used the

term "ngoroko" as a secret password (Ochieng and Karimi 1980). "Ngoroko" refers to the black and white markings on a bull or cow. Some interpret this to mean that Ngoroko can be your daytime friend and nighttime enemy (McCabe 2004:120). In any case, the Ngoroko are indeed a group of marginalized and disaffected young adults who are marauding bands of armed cattle rustlers.

For the Turkana, the Ngoroko are a sign of a "slipping away" of culture and the erosion of the mutual trust and respect that had existed between fathers and sons, albeit a relationship that has its tensions, especially in regard to the age-old problem of generational succession. In his study of violence among the Suri, a pastoral people in southern Ethiopia, Abbink (2007) points to many factors contributing to the fracturing of communities and collapse of the age-based authority system. He writes,

> One might almost speak of a traditional society passing through the "postmodern" phase: Suri no longer have an overarching cultural narrative giving meaning to society as a cohesive whole, and they evince a loss of ideological elements founding the social order. In the absence of *komorus* [ritual leaders] and the elders of the "reigning" *rórà* [junior elders] generation being able to exercise restraint and leadership, it is only the peer group, kinship bonds and the inescapable duties resulting from lineage or clan membership that bind Suri. (Abbink 2007:67)

It is similar with the Turkana, but for one addition. The elders' authority was never absolute, but embedded in mutual respect and filial affection between the generations (Gulliver 1955:134–35). Therefore, the "slipping away" of culture would also include the loss of affect between generations. Filial sentiments are an important aspect of the affective life of a people and a means to mediate peaceful relations between generations and peace in a society. Furthermore, the affective life of a people is partly constructed and managed by religious beliefs, rituals, and ceremonies; and the disruption of this religious system has consequences for affect in a society and the well-being of its people. In his study of violence in northern Uganda, Finnström (2003) tries to understand a "people's existential uncertainties, intellectual worries, political frustrations and religious doubts in situations of displacement and long-term violence" (Finnström 2003:7). According to Finnström, his informants' "intellectual strategies of coping," their "lived cosmologies," and their desire "to establish a new moral order" are as pertinent to their survival as meeting their daily material needs (Finnström 2003:7). While affect has not been a major theme in the ethnology of the region, ethnographers have reported on aspects of it, and this can be used to reconstruct some of the emotional life of the Turkana.

AFFECT AND SENTIMENTAL LIFE OF THE TURKANA

An interest in affect has rarely been a central focus of ethnology even though the emotional life of a people is a vital aspect of culture. While anthropologists have discussed emotions as adjunct to values, motivation, and memory, they rarely considered emotions taking precedence in any cultural practice (Lutz and White 1986). Emotions play a significant role in culture and cannot be ignored in discussions of interest, structure, or agency. The anthropological interest in kinship comes close to an emotional theory of culture. While kinship is a logical system of social relationships with rules and regulations, it is also an affective system that structures and manages empathy. Goldschmidt (2006) sees affect as a missing key to understanding human behavior and evolution. What he calls "affect hunger" is rooted in both nurturant and sexual love. "Human society has used the sentiments of the nursery to shape and order community social relationships" (Goldschmidt 2006:114). Affect nurtured in kinship relationships is extended outward to form wider social structures and attachments. Ritual sends these feelings outward. Ritual is the "language of sentiment" and "the second mode of communication" (Goldschmidt 2006:40; see also Leavitt 1996:526–27). Karimojong kinship also reinforced the generation-set system (Dyson-Hudson 1963:390), and the filial relationships of the generation-set are transposed from the filial sentiments found in the family.

> The affectionate respect, deference, and obedience which mark the junior generation-set's relationship with the elders is not merely analogous to a father-son relationship in Karimojong society but is a transposition, on a group scale and into public context, of actual filial relationships which obtain between the majority of members in both generation-sets. (Dyson-Hudson 1963:383)

Dyson-Hudson (1963) also sees the initiation rite as a means to extend the filial attachments of the family to broader relationship between groups of elders and juniors.

> The initiation ceremonies also provide a restatement, in a public idiom, of the father-son relationship. Individually, as family heads, fathers arrange for the initiation of their sons; collectively, as a generation-set, they conduct the ceremonies and create the groups for their sons to join. Not only is there a conceptual relationship of fathers-to-sons between adjacent generation-sets; their constituent members are actually for the most part fathers and sons, and, as the authority of fathers individually is final in domestic matters, so is their collective authority, as the senior generation-set, final in public affairs. (Dyson-Hudson 1963:367)[3]

The reorientation of affect flows from father to the elder generation-set occurs in the initiation ceremony (*athapan*), which for the Turkana occurs every four or five years, usually when food is plentiful. Youth are initiated in groups between the ages of 16 and 20, although some can be as old as 30. At the ceremony, an initiate spears a castrated ox or he-goat given by his father. The initiate is then dragged by his feet into a circle of elders, who are surrounded by an outer circle of senior wives. Members of the oldest existing age-set slit open the animal's entrails and smear the contents over the initiate's face and body as a form of purification. The spittle of elders is added as a blessing. The meat of the slaughtered animal is then cooked and eaten by all present. Certain parts of the meat are reserved for the elders to eat. Next, the initiate spends two weeks at the homestead of his godparents and enters into a liminal state, one of receptivity to socially broader flows of affect.

> The night on arrival, the initiate sleeps in the company of his godfather. At sunrise he enters the *ekol* [wife's house] of the godmother, who places him on a white cow skin. He sits with his legs outstretched, facing east. She strips off his clothes and beads, and gives him a new sheet, a chair, a spear, and shoes. She shaves part of the hair and smears oil and ashes mixed with red clay on the forehead and body. She puts on a red mud-cap on him and ties sinews around his head (*apusit*) analogous in name and shape to an umbilical cord. The whole headdress is called *akidany* (from 'smashing' with stones—the castration method used on billy-goats and donkeys). The initiate is now addressed *ateran* (bride). He stays in the godmother's *ekol* and sleeps together with the immature girls without touching them. During nights, he lays in a fetus position, covered with white skin. He spends the days together with women in camp, performing female tasks such as fetching water, firewood, preparing food, herding, and watering the stock under supervision of the godmother. He is not allowed to milk and sit on other men's chairs. (Broch-Due 1991:123)

After two weeks the initiate is released from his bride-like status and is considered a proper man. He can wear a man's mudded headdress, carry weapons, fight in war, and marry. He also may partake in rain-making, curing, and fertility rites (Gulliver 1958:901).

Before the Gullivers' fieldwork (1948–1951), initiated men from all over gathered to dance, feast, hunt, and raid. In such collective actions, fraternal bonds among age-mates are felt and formed through the "conscious feeling of amity and similarity of interests, problems, and desires among members of an age-group" (Gulliver 1958:914). Further,

> [i]t appears to an outsider that the integrative effects, the sense of communion and of belonging to the age-group, are highly accentuated by the emotional and physical impact of the group-dancing as the men rhythmically stamp and move together in a tight bunch, singing and miming as they go. In my experience, the Turkana are notably inarticulate but they do talk of feelings of great pleasure and of their sense of unity on these occasions. (Gulliver 1958:915)

During the wet season, when food was plentiful, members of a single age-group would gather to feast, sing, and dance. Even in the dry season, bored and hungry for meat, they would gather at a watering hole and "beg" an animal from one of their members who lived nearby and had sufficient stock. They would sing and dance until they got their animal even if it took all day and night. If the group-begging produced no results, they would force their way into the kraal to seize an animal to slaughter and eat (Gulliver 1958:914). Such behavior set a precedent for the Ngoroko, who expect gifts of cattle from homesteads and just take them if owners resist (McCabe 2004:101).

Raiding has been the principal means to acquire livestock for bridewealth and eventual recognition as an elder. Young men intensely desired raiding and never tired of talking about the subject (Gulliver and Gulliver 1953:79). The lure was excitement and the opportunity to prove one's manhood (Gulliver 1958:916). A raid was usually organized soon after initiation and required the blessing of the elders to carry out. A diviner chose an auspicious time and target. Regarding the Pokot, Bollig and Österle (2007) describe the ritual preparations prior to a raid involving dance, singing, and talks by elders to enthuse the participants to the desired emotional state of the ideal warrior. After the raid, for those who had killed, a ritual of purification and healing was conducted prior to their reintegration into the community.

AFFECT, AUTHORITY, AND CATTLE IN TURKANA COSMOLOGY

The Turkana lack an understanding of the biological or kinship origins of their emotional life as described in Gulliver's (1955) ethnography or Goldschmidt's theory. While emotional life may originate at a mother's breast and be further stimulated by youthful sexual attraction, in the initiation rituals emotions are transposed to a wider social and cosmological realm in which the source of affect is conceived as a downward flow of divine blessings from the high god Akuj to elders and from them to young adults. Instead of a bottom-up, inside-out theory of emotions originating in the body and family and extended outward socially, the Turkana have a top-down, outside-inside understanding of their emotional life, signified by their religious beliefs and mediated by religious ritual. Akuj is creator, protector, and comforter, and occupies the apical position in the hierarchy of authority and filial affection. He is considered the father of all the people and is addressed as "grandfather" and "ancestor" (Gulliver 1955:82).

Much of the elders' authority is gained in their role as exclusive religious practitioners and intermediaries between Akuj and the rest of society. Closer to death, elders are considered closer to Akuj and thus able to communicate with

him. As they exercise their ritual obligations and authority, elders gain in spiritual and supernatural power. Elders "are regarded as the repositories of tribal morality and law and their pronouncements have a sacrosanct quality. They can stop fights and insist on arbitration, conciliation and the restoration of amity" (Gulliver 1958:912–13). It is the same for Jie elders:

> Such divine recognition and support also gives a special aura to the old man concerned. One would not disobey such a man if only because of his seniority and because he can impose a penalty; but one dare not disobey him in anything to do with ritual matters because the High God would send punishment for what amounts to sacrilege. (Gulliver 1953:161)

A Turkana emotional theory follows Lacan more than Freud. In Lacan's psychology, emotions do not inhabit bodies and things, but occupy nodal points along a semantic surface of signifiers (Ahmed 2004:121). Sara Ahmed calls this understanding of emotional life an *affective economy*, in which emotions are not just psychological dispositions but are signifiers that circulate through the social body, mediating between the psychic and social and the collective and individual, working to bind or separate subjects (Ahmed 2004:119). As objects of great affection, cattle are an important set of emotional signifiers that circulate in the affective economy of East African pastoral societies. The classic example is that of the Nuer passion for their cattle.

> Start on whatever subject I would, and approach it from whatever angle, we would soon be speaking of cows and oxen, heifers and steers, rams and sheep, he-goats and she-goats, calves and lambs and kids. I have already indicated that this obsession—for such it seems to an outsider—is due not only to the great economic value of cattle but also to the fact that they are links in numerous social relationships. Nuer tend to define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle. Their idiom is the bovine idiom. (Evans-Pritchard 1968:19)

Anthropologists have long recognized East African pastoralists' love for their cattle and the instrumental role cattle play in the construction, maintenance, and reproduction of social relationships in their societies (Abbink 2003:342). Cattle are the currency of the kin-ordered pastoral affective economy. As storehouses of affection, cattle are the means by which affect is transferred between kin groups and between generations. Regarding the Nyangatom and the Karimoja group in general, Tornay sees the "spirit" of the generation system based on two rules: feed your fathers and feed your peers, which reinforces the filial and fraternal sentiments, respectively, that infuse public life (Tornay 1998:102–03). The filial offerings are sacrifices offered to their fathers "to pay an endless debt, that of life itself" (Tornay 1998:102–03). Sacrifices and feasting are acts of love wherein affection is transferred from cattle to elders.

The loss of cattle to drought, disease, or war could have a devastating impact, undermining affective flows within the society and its reproduction. What is perhaps the best description of the Turkana love for their cattle appears in a description of how the loss of cattle affected the Turkana during the colonial wars. Near the end of their 25-year war against the Turkana, the British shifted their military policy to one aimed at confiscating livestock. The Labur Patrol of 1918 seized over a quarter million animals, leaving northern Turkanaland destitute (Lamphear 1992:196).

> Quite beyond what the loss of their herds meant economically, the religious, psychological, and social impacts also were devastating. There was hardly a facet of Turkana life that did not include domestic animals. Marriages were formalized with them; disputes were settled with them; a man's wealth and prestige gauged by them. By their ritual slaughter, maturity was conferred on men. Only their death captured God's attention, so that the prayers of elders could be heard. Men took their names from them; they sang to them; they called out the colours of their hides and imitated the shape of their horns with their hands in battle. Old men, who had amassed a thousand or more, could recite the names of each one; could distinguish them at a glance; and sometimes, with the emotion known to only those who struggle to raise domestic animals season upon season, would weep to watch strong sons, nurtured on the milk and their blood, bringing them home for the night. The loss of their herds was the emasculation of the Turkana people. (Lamphear 1992:198)

THE INTRODUCTION OF GUNS

Guns were first introduced in northern Turkana District a year before the Labur Patrol. An elite corps of riflemen, mostly splintered from an age-set called Ngiruru, formed a band which became the predecessor of today's Ngoroko. Existing studies attribute the emergence of this group to the combined effects of two processes on the traditional Turkana political system. One was the emergence of ritual leaders or "Great Diviners" who, beginning in the 1870s, wielded supernatural powers to usurp the leadership role of senior elders to command warfare. The other was the availability of modern firearms in the region which enabled ambitious warriors to resist British colonial occupation and also defy the authority of their own elders.

Prior to 1870s, the Turkana lived in decentralized territories called "sections" in the literature. Residents of each section were organized along age- and generation-sets in which elders wielded influence as parents, cattle owners, and herding unit heads. Juniors were related to the elders as sons and grandsons and served as warriors and herders. Power was traditionally held collectively in a council of elders whose authority was bolstered by the generation- and age-set system. However, the expansion southwards against weaker opponents increased the power of diviners and war leaders who predicted and conducted successful raids. The first of the Great Diviners, named Lokerio, appeared in

the 1870s. He made himself "the hub of military activity" by commanding a large army of warriors recruited from several sections of Turkana society (Lamphear 1992:198). With the arrival of the British and modern firearms into the region in the 1890s, the power of diviners and war leaders further increased. To resist the more powerful British and Ethiopians set against them, those Turkana war leaders or diviners who amassed a large following of warriors (which cut across traditional territorial sections and age-sets) became powerful. By the turn of the twentieth century, another Turkana war leader named Ebei used the supernatural powers of trusted diviners to represent himself to the British as "the fighting chief of all Turkana," which was true in the sense that he assembled a sizeable group from different sections and age-sets, ultimately fielding a force of 3,000 warriors (Lamphear 1976:231).

Ebei may have started his career as a leader of the Ngiruru age-set. Members of this age-set were from families that lost livestock to disease, confiscation by colonial forces, drought, and raids by rival ethnic groups (Dyson-Hudson 1999:34). In 1917, the age-set sought to recover some livestock by raiding the Pokot. Instead of disbanding after the raid, the group became a permanent or semi-permanent force. Part of the justification for this is believed to be the group's ambition to wage armed resistance to the British occupation. But it is also reported that members of this age-set used their new status as armed bandits to take livestock, rape women, and disobey elders (Dyson-Hudson 1999:34). Because of their atrocities, they became known as *Ngiakitiba* (those the elders curse) (Lamphear 1992:22). In 1924, Ebei and the entire corps of Ngiruru were defeated by the Dasenech of Ethiopia. Those who survived established themselves in the mountains of northern Turkana where colonial powers could not reach them (Dyson-Hudson 1999:34). Elements of this group carried the tradition through to the 1950s when they re-emerged as well-armed bandits now called *Ngoroko* (or *Ngimoroko*) (Lamphear 1992:253). As in the past, the Ngoroko attacked neighboring groups (probably in the name of defending Turkana), but also continued to rape and pillage among their own people.[4]

Very likely, an escalation of fighting in the region in response to incursions of colonial powers forced unusual power into the hands of warrior leaders, who were backed by diviners, and able to usurp the authority of the elders. Although the age of great diviners and warrior chiefs has passed, it appears that the generational rift has had a lasting effect, as evidenced by the continued existence of the Ngoroko.

INSTITUTIONAL COLLAPSE

There is also evidence suggesting that the generational system was compromised, which would also account for the persistence of the Ngoroko, or at least their ability to regenerate under certain conditions. In Gulliver's (1958) study of Turkana age organization, he does not mention generation-sets. Instead he notes what he calls "alternations" within the age-set system. Turkana alternations are one of two groups an age-set initiate joins at initiation. "The two groupings do not refer to tribal generations, for they are coexistent among a crowd of males of the same age such that about half will belong to each" (Gulliver 1958:902). On all public occasions men separate into alternations for feasting, dancing, war-making, and ritual (Gulliver 1958:903). The alternations also affect the pattern of authority within the tribe, such that young men seek advice and accept orders only from the senior men of their own alternation (Gulliver 1958:903).

Puzzled by the Turkana alternations, Gulliver (1958:919) writes, "analytically there appears to be little or no significance in the contemporary system, for the division of initiated males into two groupings provides no additional principle of organizational values." He suggests that the alternations are the relic of an earlier generation-set system (Gulliver 1958:919) because the neighboring Jie do have a formal generation-set system in which all males are initiated into the generation below their fathers', and their initiation cannot begin until all members of their fathers' generation are initiated. Unlike the Turkana, the Jie maintain a clear separation and sense of continuity between generations.

For Lamphear (1992, 1988), the transformation of the Jie-Turkana generation- and age-set system and loss of elder status was part and parcel of Turkana ethnogenesis, beginning in the eighteenth century. Turkana legend tells of eight young men who left the Jie and descended the escarpment into the Rift Valley in search of a lost bull. Finding the bull and liking the country, they stayed. Over the next two hundred years the Turkana would settle the valley between the escarpment and Lake Turkana, an area of 67,000 square kilometers. Although initially all senior elders of the tribe met together in a central location, by the 1830s, the Turkana population was too dispersed to congregate for councils and rituals, including the periodic initiation rites. Separate ritual centers were formed, and the grand ceremony of generational succession that occurred about every 50 years was abandoned. A system of alternations based on biological age replaced the father-son distinctions of the generation system (Lamphear 1992:17). "The cohesive authority of the senior elders was inexorably diluted and the age-class system itself quickly began to lose the essential integrative focus it had once afforded" (Lamphear 1992:19). Although

Lamphear regards this transformation as a creative adaptation to circumstances, it did open the way for war-leaders to organize and sanction raiding outside the generation system.

An alternative theory for the change in the generation system is based on cattle loss. Müller (1989) identifies three periods in Turkana history when marriages were not carried out because of severe loss of cattle. Without the requisite exchange of cattle as bridewealth, legitimate marriage was not possible. Nevertheless, young adults still formed unions and had children, but their offspring were reckoned to belong to their grandparents and therefore of the same generation as themselves (Müller 1989:138). The first episode of terrific cattle loss occurred with a terrible drought and rinderpest epidemic in the 1880s, which affected all of Turkanaland. The next episode was the Labur Patrol of 1918, when the British set out to pacify the Turkana by confiscating all their livestock. The herds were further diminished the following year by disease and famine (Müller 1989:146). The Turkana refer to this period as the time of scattering. Another severe drought and famine in the 1930s cost the Turkana three-quarters of their livestock, again preventing the exchange of bridewealth to formalize marriages (Müller 1989:147). By the time of Gulliver's visit the distinction between generations had all but disappeared.

The case of the Nyangatom, another tribe in the Karamoja cluster, might help explain how a disruption in the generational system could result in a weakened authority of elders. According to Tornay (1998), the Nyangatom generational system was "blocked" at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the senior generation failed to became the "Fathers" of the country due to the conquest of the region by the Ethiopian Emperor Menelik, who usurped the position of the Father, thus depriving the senior generation of its status. Never becoming true Fathers, they could not initiate the succeeding generation of Sons. When this junior generation eventually demanded to be recognized, the seniors refused. The juniors then attacked the seniors with sticks. In response, the Fathers cursed their Sons for defying the system: "If you eventually accept initiation which has been refused to us, may you all die!" (Tornay 1998:110). In this case it is clear that generational authority and succession was not automatic but required constant mediation of the tensions between fathers and sons. The push for generational succession would always come from below. Tornay suggests that if this junior generation-set decides to initiate itself, it would be following the same path set by the Turkana over a century earlier.

While the Nyangatom elders could bear up to sticks, guns are a different matter. With guns, youth can defy their elders and assume power through naked aggression and without their elders' blessings. Guns reduce the costs of raiding with respect to organization and risk, permitting a handful of youth to raid on their own without community support. Guns have become the desired and

prestige objects, replacing cattle and spears as symbols of male authority, status, and prowess. Among some herders in the region, the transformation is complete. The Kuria cattle raiders from northern Tanzania, for example, are interested strictly in raiding to sell stolen cattle to markets in Nairobi (Fleisher 1999:238). The commercialization of cattle is another form of cattle loss as cattle are removed from circulation in the affected economy. Abbink (2007) writes about the cult of the gun among Suri youth and the new hyper masculinity it engenders that strain domestic relationships. Guns have facilitated the slipping away of culture that had previously regulated the complimentary flows of affect between generations and genders. Guns have allowed a permanent rift to occur and set adrift a rogue age-set, which now lives between two worlds.

CONCLUSION

The Turkana generational system with its associated ritual and sentiments helped to constitute the authority of elders. However, with the collapse of that system, elders lost prestige, respect, and the ability to control their juniors. Today, for some young Turkana men, the fraternal sentiments that bind members of Ngoroko bands trump their feelings for parents, children, and women, resulting in behavior that brings harm to their own people. While it is easy to lay blame on the aggressiveness of wayward youth, an effective response to the problem should focus on the entire cultural system that has come undone and is no longer able to manage sentiments and behavior. The question is not what to do with the youth, but what to do with the culture, especially that part of it which most readily deals with affect. Piecemeal responses to the violence in East Africa, whether it be education, jobs, resettlement, police presence, disarmament, or branding cattle will not resolve the basic problem of a fractured community and cosmology, and the consequent loss of affect. Any successful policy would consider the affective dimension of culture in helping to reconstitute a new moral and social order.

NOTES

1. This research was supported by the Office of Naval Research under MURI Grant no. N00014-08-1-0921 to George Mason University with a sub-award to the Human Relations Area Files (PI: Claudio Cioffi-Revilla; co-PIs: Carol R. Ember, Sean Luke, and Kenneth De Jong).

2. Although age-set societies on the whole had a high frequency of warfare (Ritter 1980), ethnographers of the Karamoja cluster state that age-sets are not military organizations per se but provide a general function of organizing social relationships, activities, and meaning among a dispersed pastoral population (Dyson-Hudson 1963:377; Gulliver and Gulliver 1953; Gulliver 1958:916–18).

3. Dyson-Hudson (1963:367) also writes: "What changes from domestic to political life is the scale rather than the nature of obligations. The continuity provided between family and political life, between familial and public status, also strengthens the sanctions of authority."
4. The Ngoroko may have been reinvigorated during the Second World War when British troops raised and armed two infantry battalions of Turkana to fight the Italians in Ethiopia (Mburu 1999:97).

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